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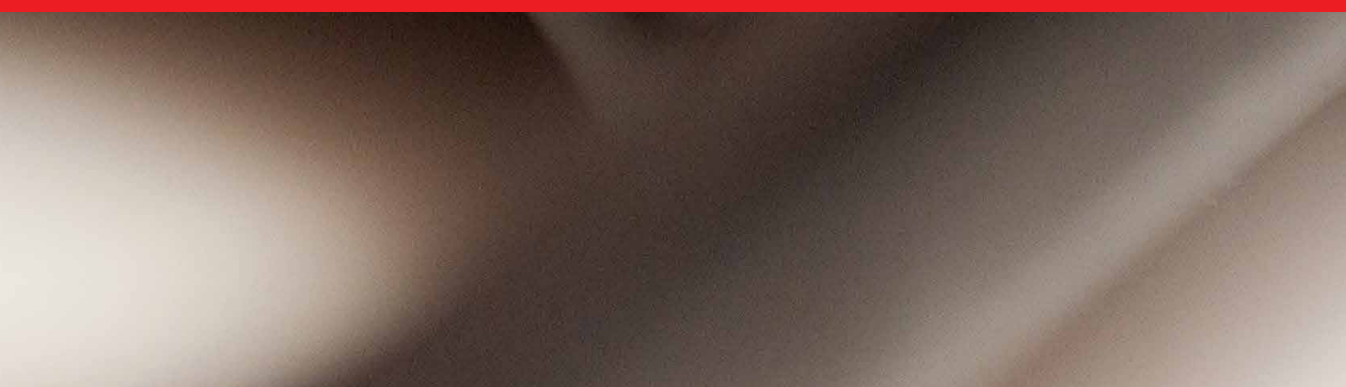
Gun Violence and Prevention

Connections, Cultures, and Consequences

Edited by Jack David Eller



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Meet the editor

Jack David Eller is a cultural anthropologist, Head of Global Anthropology of Religion at the Global Center for Religion Research, Denver, USA, and Distinguished Professor of Anthropology at Woxsen University, Hyderabad, India. His research interests include religion and religious violence, ethnicity and ethnic conflict, psychological anthropology, and contemporary populism and authoritarianism. He is the author of multiple articles and books, including *Violence and Culture: A Cross-Cultural and Interdisciplinary Approach*, *From Culture to Ethnicity to Conflict: An Anthropological Perspective on International Ethnic Conflict*, and *Cruel Creeds, Virtuous Violence: Religious Violence Across Culture and History*. He is also the editor of *The Anthropology of Donald Trump: Culture and the Exceptional Moment*.

Contents

Preface

Gun violence is one of the scourges of the modern world—along with economic inequality, social injustice, drug abuse, and state failure—all of which are closely correlated with this violence. For understandable reasons, the United States receives more than its share of attention on the subject, due to its high levels of such violence among Western societies, its prodigious gun trade, its unique gun culture, and its paralyzed gun regulation. However, guns injure and kill large numbers of people around the globe, and more effort needs to be committed to documenting, explaining, and addressing violence in those places and the toll that guns take on them.

Accordingly, this volume features chapters on countries other than the United States. One chapter looks at India. Another chapter surveys the broad region of Latin America and the Caribbean. Three chapters examine specific countries in Africa, including Uganda, Democratic Republic of Congo, and Nigeria.

Gun violence, or violence in general, was not my main focus in the early stages of my education. However, soon after earning my doctorate in a more traditional area of anthropology, I was invited to contribute to a paper on ethnicity, which naturally led me to a consideration of ethnic conflict and my first book, comparing ethnic conflict in several sites (Sri Lanka, Bosnia, Kurdistan, and Rwanda). This opened a door into thinking about violence as a broad cultural phenomenon for my textbook on violence and culture, which inspected religious, ethnic, and political violence, which further necessarily entailed a consideration of American gun violence and its bizarre manifestations (school shootings, workplace shootings, domestic shootings, etc.). So when IntechOpen announced plans for a volume on gun violence, I jumped at the opportunity. The call for papers, of course, did not exclude the United States, but the contributions that flowed in had a decisively global perspective, which led to the book before you.

The introductory chapter by Jack David Eller provides context for the examination of the topic. It begins by unpacking the concepts of "gun" and "violence" before surveying the kinds of damage that guns to do victims, their families, and the wider society. Then it turns to the very important questions of the diversity in, causes of, and preventive measures against gun violence.

This is followed by Yogesh Kumar's chapter on the gun culture of India. Kumar applies the concept of gun culture to a comparison of three Indian states—Punjab, Uttar Pradesh, and Jammu and Kashmir—describing how that culture manifests in different settings before diving into governmental initiatives to curb the consequent violence.

Expanding on the issue of diversity, Jack David Eller takes a region-wide look at Latin America and the Caribbean in the next chapter. The countries in the region have some of the highest gun violence (and overall violence) rates in the world, which are tempting to blame on a Latino gun culture and/or on the history of colonial and postcolonial violence and on drug trafficking. All of these factors contribute to the problem, but the data show that gun violence varies dramatically from country to country, even from city to city, as well as over time, demanding more nuanced and local understandings.

Much of the attention to gun violence focuses on interpersonal conflict or crime (the two are oftenrelated, as people may use guns to defend themselves against criminals), but we cannot ignore the gun violence that states and non-state actors perpetrate against each other and against their populations. Vakhtang Maisaia's chapter turns to this urgent issue, studying the proliferation of small arms in the context of terrorism and "asymmetric warfare," defined as a war between parties whose military power is significantly unequal and who pursue different military strategies. Central to this matter is the (licit and illicit) gun trade.

The final three chapters share a concentration on Africa. Moses Obete takes us to Uganda, where gun violence—not uniquely—is related to personal insecurity, caused by internal armed conflicts and the diffusion of violence from neighboring countries such as Sudan and Somalia. In particular, Obete explores gun violence in the Karamojong region, which is scarred by tribal conflicts, struggles against the state, and armed public security forces.

Serge Balaga Essasi highlights the "sacralization of violence" in the eastern part of the Democratic Republic of Congo. In that country, state failure and institutional instability have contributed to the legitimation and even valorization of gun violence as a means of political power and conflict resolution. Consequently, as also documented in Latin America and elsewhere, the results have been an increase and diversification of armed actors and what Essasi rightly calls "predator's governance."

Finally, Ishaku Hamidu discusses gun trafficking in Nigeria, which predictably has contributed to problems beyond interpersonal gun violence. Rather, he illustrates how easy access to weapons has escalated multiple conflicts in the country, from ethno-religious clashes to herder/farmer competition, banditry and abduction, and electoral violence. The effects, as he shows, have been devastating to the politics and economy of the country.

A modest volume such as this one cannot hope to investigate all of the ramifications of political competition, crime and drugs, international gun trafficking, and the weakness or failure of state governance that often exacerbates if not necessitates gun violence in the cause of personal security. Hopefully, though, the insights contained in these chapters can and will inspire researchers to direct more energy to parts of the world besides the United States, where there is a profound need for more and better quantitative and qualitative scholarship on gun violence. With the data that this research will eventually generate, we can begin to answer elusive questions like the relationship between gun ownership and violence, the relationship between gun violence and illicit economies, and the gun policies and laws that can effectively curb the tragic global loss of life. Presumably, whatever our politics and culture, we can all agree that gun violence is all too common in our world and that the price we pay for our access to (if not love of) guns is too high.

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Chapter 1

Introductory Chapter: A World of Gun Violence

Jack David Eller

1. Introduction

As of the date of this writing (September 3, 2023), there have been almost 13,000 gun killings in the United States this year, plus another 16,000 suicides and more than 25,000 gun-related injuries. Further, according to the Gun Violence Archive, there have been 480 mass shootings (roughly two per day), over 900 police officer-involved shootings, and over 1600 accidental shootings [1]. The United States, with just 4% of the world's population, accounts for approximately 25% of global gun deaths. The United States also outpaces the rest of the world in gun ownership and, most obviously, in mass shootings at sites like schools, shops, and churches, which Australian Prime Minister John Howard called "the American disease."

Because of its epidemic of firearm violence, the United States monopolizes much of the attention on the subject. However, since gun violence is not unique to that country, nor is American gun violence or its gun culture and gun-centered politics typical, we cannot use America as a lens through which to understand and intervene in such violence everywhere. Accordingly, in this introductory chapter—and in this volume—we will take a cross-cultural and interdisciplinary approach to gun violence. Here, we will first unpack the concepts of "gun" and "violence," then explore the facts of firearms-related death and injury around the world and its human, economic, and political cost, before considering some explanations for the international plague of gun violence and comparing policies and practices for preventing the pain and suffering caused by people with guns.

2. Understanding the "gun" and "violence" in gun violence

Gun violence is one of those subjects on which almost everyone has an opinion and which almost everyone thinks they understand, whether or not they know the facts and have thought seriously about their meaning. Indeed, we cannot grasp gun violence until we have clarified what we mean by "gun" and "violence."

When most people think of guns, they probably picture either handguns or "assault rifles," if not both. However, there is much greater variety of guns that must be considered if we are to think usefully about controlling and regulating them. To start, the American Bureau of Alcohol, Tobacco, Firearms and Explosives (ATF) uses the term "firearm" to cover the diverse category of guns, which it defines as any weapon "and all components and parts thereof, not over .50 caliber which will or is designed to or may be readily converted to expel a projectile by the action of an

explosive," explicitly excepting BB guns, pellet guns, and antique guns such as muzzle loaders, matchlock, and flintlock guns ([2], p. 8).

Firearms are commonly divided into two major classes—handguns and long guns. Handguns, consisting of pistols and revolvers, are shorter and normally held in one hand. Long guns, as the name suggests, have longer barrels and are usually held with both hands. They include rifles and shotguns; the term "carbine" is sometimes reserved for compact rifles, and the class of long guns also features so-called "assault rifles" or military-style weapons like AK-47s and AR-15s (the preferred device of American mass shooters). Finally, the category of firearms also includes machine guns and sub-machine guns, which are seldom owned by civilians.

In addition to these familiar types, there are other and often newer forms of guns that have made policing and tracking guns much more difficult. Among these are 3D printed guns, which individuals with the proper equipment can make at home. There are also "ghost guns," which are often assembled from kits or parts bought separately; as such, they do not possess serial numbers, allowing owners to circumvent licensing, registration, and background checks. Also problematic are "concealable" firearms that resemble everyday objects such as pens and phones and are thus harder to detect; on the other hand, less problematic but still potentially deadly are "craft production" firearms (handmade by artisans), "rudimentary" firearms (made, often by criminals, out of materials or parts not explicitly intended as guns), and "replica" firearms (copies of historical guns, for collectors) [3].

If the concept of "gun" is complicated, the concept of "violence" is still more so. Dictionary and encyclopedia definitions of violence begin (and often end) with the simple notion of physical force, as in *Britannica*'s "an act of physical force that causes or is intended to cause harm," at least acknowledging that the resultant harm can be physical or psychological and that violence is not synonymous with aggression [4]. However, two of its most articulate students, Nancy Scheper-Hughes and Philippe Bourgois, insist that violence "can never be understood solely in terms of physicality—force, assault, or the infliction of pain—alone"; hence, they expand the concept to include "assaults on the personhood, dignity, sense of worth or value of the victim" ([5], p. 1). Violence is also obviously not synonymous with crime: all crime is violation and harm, but some crimes are nonviolent (e.g., property crimes), and some violence is noncriminal, such as when committed, within bounds, by police or soldiers.

All attempts to analyze violence concur with Scheper-Hughes and Bourgois that it "is a slippery concept—nonlinear, productive, destructive, *and* reproductive" ([5], p. 1). For instance, even if force is implied, there is no quantitative cutoff for the amount of force required to constitute violence. Naturally, there are also many kinds of force, from physical to emotional or psychological to "structural," that is, the social or institutional forces or conditions that disadvantage and harm individuals or groups unequally (hence the term "structural violence"). There is also the matter of *intent*: did the perpetrator intend or plan to harm the victim, or was the injury unintentional, accidental, or negligent? This takes us to the subjective or internal state of the perpetrator, which may be difficult to determine—also raising the issue of mental incompetence or insanity. Finally for the moment, there is the variable of legitimacy. Another renowned scholar of violence, David Riches, rightly asserts that some acts of physical harm, up to and including death, are legitimate uses of force, at least from certain perspectives [6]. There are circumstances when deadly force is justified, as in self-defense. There are entire roles and institutions of legitimate violence, such as the police and the military. Granted, as Riches admits, such legitimacy can be contested, and the right to legitimate force can be abused

(as in police brutality), but questions of legitimacy seriously complicate our understanding of violence. One thing we cannot say is that all uses of force are illegitimate, but that compels us to ask if legitimate force is "violence."

Another problem is the operationalization of violence, that is, the specific ways in which we recognize and count violent acts. This question is essential for generating meaningful and comparable data on violence, gun-related or otherwise. For instance, different countries, or even different jurisdictions within a country, may operate with different definitions of violence, which affects what they *count as violence*. Then, someone must report incidents of violence to record-keeping authorities (unreported violence does not get counted), and authorities must organize and collate that information. In the United States, the Uniform Crime Report of the FBI is one method for compiling and publishing data, dependent on input from local police departments (again, if those local data are incomplete, inaccurate, or inconsistent, the UCR will also be). Another tool is the National Crime Victimization Survey prepared by the Bureau of Justice Statistics, based on interviews of a national sample of the population. As a more active method, the NCVS tends to yield higher numbers than the passive UCR. In countries where methods for counting and reporting violence vary or do not exist at all, the quality and availability of information will also vary or not exist.

3. The violence that guns do

Regardless of these inescapable complexities, guns are involved in many acts of violence (although some gun enthusiasts maintain that guns do not *do* the violence but that *people* do the violence). Even so, it is indisputable that not all violence is gun-related and that not all gun use is necessarily violence, by the standards just discussed (from hunting to self-defense). On the former matter, in 2019, the FBI calculated that of the nearly 14,000 murders in the US, just over 10,000 were committed with firearms (6368 handguns, 364 rifles, 200 shotguns, and 3281 unspecified type), but Americans were very creative in their homicidal means, including knives (1476), blunt objects (397), body parts like fists or feet (600), fire (81), and asphyxiation (92) [7]. Worldwide, things are roughly similar: according to the United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime, firearms were used in 54% of all homicides, while 22% were committed with knives and 24% with fists, blunt objects, poisons, and so forth ([8], p. 19). More recently, the Small Arms Survey has claimed that of the 531,000 people who died violently (not counting suicide) in 2020, 40% died by firearms (90% of whom were male) [9]. (One problem evinced in these and similar studies is the lack of current information.)

The UNODC makes another pertinent distinction, between "conflict deaths" or killings directly related to war or conflict and "non-conflict deaths." The number of conflict deaths varies with the incidence of war in any given year, but the UNODC estimates more than one million people died in political or ethnic conflicts between 2000 and 2017, while many more died from non-conflict violence; organized crime killings alone equaled the number of conflict deaths during that period. Non-conflict deaths further divide between intentional homicide, killing in self-defense, killing in legal interventions without excessive force (that is, during the normal and legitimate use of police force), and non-intentional homicide (including negligent and non-negligent homicide). Finally, intentional homicides encompass deaths due to criminal activity, interpersonal confrontation, and sociopolitical reasons.

As mentioned previously, homicide is not the only or even prevalent form of death by firearm. In the United States, more suicides than homicides are attributable to

guns: the Gun Violence Archive calculates 21,000 American homicides by gun versus 26,000 suicides in 2021 [10]. Suicide is a greater problem in some countries than in others (in 2019, Greenland had the highest gun-related suicide rate in the world, 16.36 per 100,000, followed distantly by the US at number two, 7.12, and by the tenth place occupied by Venezuela the rate falls to 2.5 [11]), so suicide accounted for a far lesser percentage of global than American firearm deaths in 2016 (under one-third) [12]. And of course, not all firearm-inflicted injuries are fatal: in 2022 Americans suffered another 38,540 nonlethal gun injuries, on top of the 44,365 fatalities. And those figures do not capture the toll of gun violence on individuals, families, and societies, which reaches beyond individual pain and death to the grief of kin and friends, the loss of parents or children or siblings, the cost of medical care and the burden on the healthcare system, and, in many countries, the sense of omnipresent danger and the threat to governance and the legitimacy of political leaders and law-enforcement authorities. To begin to put a price tag on the tangible costs of gun violence,

> *A 2019 report from the US Congress Joint Economic Committee concluded that the costs of lost income, employer costs, health care, and police and criminal justice expenses due to gun violence amount to a staggering $229 billion every year. A 2021 study by Everytown for Gun Safety puts the figure at $280 billion annually. Everytown's numbers include a $34.8 million daily taxpayer tab for medical care, first responders and criminal justice, as well as $1.4 million in economic productivity that employers lose every day when their workers are victims of gun violence [13].*

Returning to homicide, the categories of firearm-related murder are highly diverse. Many deaths occur in altercations between individuals, as in interpersonal disputes or domestic violence. Globally, a high proportion of gun (and other) death is related to crime and gang activity, especially in Central and South America, which are often further related to drug trafficking. A particularly if not uniquely American form of firearm violence is mass shooting, in which four or more people die in a single outburst of violence. These incidents tend to receive the most attention in the American media, partly because they seem so senseless and because their victims are usually entirely innocent, but they actually constitute a diminishingly small percentage of total deaths: according to the Associated Press, more than 560 mass killings have taken place in the US since 2006, leaving 2900 dead and another 2000 injured, but compared to the 40,000-plus who die every year in that country, they are a tiny fraction (the 28 mass killings [only one *not* involving guns] in the first 6 months of 2023—more than one per week—left only 140 victims, a little over 1% of the total 11,000 homicides or less than 1% of the 26,000 combined homicides and suicides during that time) [14]. Still, Americans are properly horrified by mass death in schools, churches, and shopping centers, and much of the rest of the world is stunned and confused by this behavior, which is comparatively rare outside of the United States.

4. Diversity in gun violence across cultures

Some of the preceding observations indicate that gun violence, like most or all human actions, is quite diverse across time and space. We must be cautious not to generalize about the numbers or causes of gun violence when we move from one country to another or even from one part to another of the same country—and we

must surely not take the American experience as typical or diagnostic of global gun violence.

First and foremost, countries diverge profoundly in their rates and totals of firearm-related death and injury. Naturally, more populous countries tend to have higher absolute numbers of gun-related death, with some major exceptions (China and Japan have exceptionally low numbers). Brazil and the United States far and away lead the world in total deaths, as depicted in **Table 1**.

The picture is slightly different and quite revealing if we consider gun-related homicide rates per 100,000 of population, as in **Table 2**.

It cannot escape our notice that the countries in these two lists are predominantly located in the Americas. Indeed, the Small Arms Survey documents that North, South, and Central America had the highest percentages of violent death by firearms in the world in 2020 (78%, 71%, and 63%, respectively), while some global regions were at the far opposite end of the spectrum (Western Asia 34%, Eastern Africa 31%, Western Africa 27%, Southern Asia 24%) [9]. This does not mean necessarily that those areas had low violent death rates, only that homicides were not perpetrated with guns. Indeed, in 2016 just six countries—all in the Western hemisphere—contributed half of all international firearm-related fatalities, namely, Brazil, the United States, Mexico, Colombia, Venezuela, and Guatemala ([12], p. 792). In stark contrast, Japan suffered only 25 total firearm-related deaths that year and South Korea an unbelievable two [15]. Sadly, the rates of gun-related homicide run parallel to the rates of overall homicide, the Americas leading the world in 2017 with a total murder rate of 17.2, with its closest competitor Africa at 13.0, followed by Europe (3.0), Oceania (2.8), and Asia (2.3) ([8], p. 11). The global homicide rate was just 6.1, a third of the rate in the Americas.

Further—and further complicating matters—countries vary dramatically in their rates of gun ownership. One would expect, perhaps, that the more firearms in a society, the more firearm-related injuries and deaths, but the picture is not so simple. One estimate suggests that in 2017, there were more civilian-owned guns than people in the United States—120.5 guns per 100 of population; no country had even half that many guns per person, with Yemen in second place at 52.8, Montenegro and Serbia tied for third at 39.1 and Canada, Uruguay, and Cyprus in the 34s. No other countries had even one gun per three citizens [16]. The differences are partly explained by

Rank	Country	Total gun deaths (all causes)
1	Brazil	49,436
2	United States	37,038
3	Venezuela	28,515
4	Mexico	22,116
5	India	14,710
6	Colombia	12,169
7	Philippines	9267
7	Guatemala	5980

Source: World Population Review [11].

Table 1.
Countries with the highest total gun deaths, 2019.

Rank	Country	Rate
1	El Salvador	36.78
2	Venezuela	33.27
3	Guatemala	29.06
4	Colombia	26.36
5	Brazil	21.93
6	Bahamas	21.52
7	Honduras	20.15
8	US Virgin Islands	19.40
9	Puerto Rico	18.14
10	Mexico	16.41

Source: World Population Review [11].

Table 2.
Countries with the highest rates of violent gun death per 100,000, 2019.

culture and history (see below) and partly by the fact that guns enter into homicide unevenly around the globe. For instance, between 2007 and 2018, firearms were only used in one-third of murders in South Africa, and, although the data are spotty, so far in the twenty-first century, the Democratic Republic of Congo has usually seen less than 200 gun deaths per year, although total annual homicides in that country typically exceed 10,000 if not 18,000 [15]. On the other hand, Amnesty International claims that more than half (58.9%) of all killings in Honduras involve guns, with an astounding 72% of Brazilian killings and 91.1% of Salvadoran killings coming at the end of a gun [17].

Upon closer inspection, other variations appear. For example, in all societies some gun deaths are related to policing. According to the Police Violence Report, 1200 Americans were killed in office-involved shootings in 2022, with at least 1000 killed each year over the past decade [18]. In head-spinning contrast, GunPolicy.org claims that Brazilian police were involved in over 6000 firearm homicides in 2019, the country infamous for its militaristic style of policing, especially in poor favela neighborhoods [15]. In many other countries, gun violence is connected with gang activity (often gang competition for territorial control) and drug production and trafficking. Hence, within any given country, some areas (and not always urban areas) experience more gun violence than others, sometimes concentrated in particular neighborhoods or in border regions.

One other factor that must be considered is history. Gun violence is not perfectly consistent over time, as shown by the Brazilian statistics. Before the year 2000, firearm-related homicides in that country did not exceed 30,000. Around that year, gun murders began to escalate, reaching 36,000 in 2009 and 40,000 in 2012, where they remained for several years, peaking at more than 47,000. Guatemala also saw its gun-involved death toll rise in the early 2000s, reaching a high of 5000 in 2009 before settling down to just over half that total. Likewise, El Salvador had an uncomfortably high but steady gun homicide rate until around 2000, when it started to jump, more than doubling to over 5000 in 2015 before dropping to less than half that number 4 years later [15]. Clearly, very specific local and chronological variables must be added to the analysis to make sense of these swings in gun violence.

5. Causes and correlations of gun violence

These comments lead us to the next obvious and urgent topic, which is the cause of gun violence and the correlation between specific social and historical variables and that violence. Each of these issues raises serious research questions that have been and will continue to be subjects of scholarly examination and public debate.

5.1 Gun ownership

It goes without saying that firearms cannot be implicated in violence if they are not available to violent actors. Yet the correlation between guns in a society and gun violence in a society is controversial. Granted, the United States has high rates of both gun ownership and gun violence, but some countries in Latin America have much lower gun ownership together with firearm-related injury and death rates comparable to or in excess of those in the US. At the same time, Switzerland records one of the world's highest rates of gun ownership—in 2007, the Small Arms Survey counted 46 per 100 citizens—paired with extraordinarily low firearm homicides (15 in 2007 and not more than 30 in any year for two decades and no mass shootings in that time) [19]. Unsurprisingly, the American National Rifle Association points to Switzerland as proof that more guns do not make society more dangerous, but the country has stringent gun regulations that would be inconceivable in the United States.

At the same time, there is also evidence that more guns *do* make society more dangerous, depending on the society. In a survey of 26 high-income countries, Hemenway and Miller determined that "where guns are more available, there are more homicides" ([20], p. 985). In a subsequent literature review, Hepburn and Hemenway concluded that "households with firearms are at higher risk for homicide, and there is no net beneficial effect of firearm ownership" ([21], p. 417). Clearly, this question will remain open for the foreseeable future.

5.2 Demographic factors

Gun ownership is not an independent or decisive variable, but it is intuitively appealing that other social factors such as poverty and urbanization are linked to gun violence. Here too the evidence is inconclusive or, we might better say, subject to national and regional variation. Altheimer and Boswell compared three parts of the world and found very different patterns. In Western countries, "economic inequality, sex ratio, and urbanization significantly influence gun homicide levels. Importantly, the effect of economic inequality is in the expected direction" ([22], p. 693). In Eastern Europe, though, while inequality, male population, and urbanization correlate to gun homicide, "all of these variables influence gun homicide in a manner opposite of what might be expected;" Latin America is the most curious, where social support for guns significantly increases gun violence but urbanization appears to have a negative effect ([22], p. 694). As for economic inequality, they reasoned that it "exhibited strong positive effects on homicide [in] Eastern European nations, negative effects in Western nations, and no effects in Latin American nations" ([22], p. 697).

5.3 Crime, gangs, and drugs

Depending on the society, crime, gang activity, and illegal drugs—often closely connected—are major factors in gun violence. Firearms are surely used in the

commission of other crimes, such as assault, robbery, kidnapping, auto theft, and rape; as mentioned above, some of these crimes are interpersonal (e.g., personal disputes and fights and spouse abuse), some are purely criminal, and some are sociopolitical (among which we might possibly include the recent kidnapping of an American nurse in Haiti, just one of almost 300 so far in 2023).

As gangs have proliferated locally and globally in recent decades and become more violent, gang-related gun violence has become a greater problem. Gangs may use guns against the populace and the police (and the police against gangs in response), but much gang violence occurs between rival gangs, or even within a single gang, as individuals and groups jostle for power and prestige and for the control of territory in which they rule and conduct their illicit activities. Gangs also tend to foster macho attitudes that contribute to male bellicosity and resultant violence, featuring guns or otherwise.

Among these activities, but by no means the only one, is drug production and trafficking. In many instances, drug manufacturing and sale is a relatively simple, highly lucrative, and entirely illegal enterprise, making it attractive to various elements of society. Drug traffickers must defend their business against rivals, government authorities (corrupt authorities sometimes participating in or enabling the trade), and a public that disapproves of their conduct. Americans are most familiar with drug trafficking and so-called drug cartels in Mexico, where reportedly more than 30,000 people have died each year since 2018 in murders, kidnappings, "disappearances," and other violence (not always by guns). In 2006, the Mexican government "declared war" on drug cartels, greatly intensifying the reciprocal violence, including against journalists, one killed on average every week for several years. In 2022, Mexico militarized its response to the drug trade, empowering the army to perform law enforcement, which observers have already complained "has eroded the treatment of civilians, who face arbitrary detention, rape, and extrajudicial killings" [23].

5.4 Insecurity, weak governance, and failed states

These comments highlight the growing sense of insecurity and imminent danger among many of the world's citizens. In the United States, one of the primary reasons that people give for gun ownership is self-defense. Carlson calls these gun-wielders "citizen-protectors" [24], and Kohn calls them "citizen soldiers" [25]. By whatever name, Yamane views their "decision to carry a gun as a response to a very broad pattern of socio-economic decline, the feelings of economic and physical insecurity it produces, and related concerns about crime and police ineffectiveness"; in their minds, these protector/soldiers "are morally upstanding citizens exercising their historically masculine duty to protect their families and others" ([26], p. 6). Reflective of this attitude is the spread of "stand your ground" or "make my day" laws in the US, which permit householders to use deadly (usually gun-involved) force to defend their homes and persons.

If many Americans feel unsafe in their homes or on their streets, this feeling is greatly amplified in other parts of the world. Globally, one of the leading reasons for acquiring a gun is self-defense and protection from crime, which is often linked to the perception of the government's inability to provide security. Law enforcement may not penetrate into the urban neighborhoods or into the remote rural districts where residents feel unsafe and where crime, gangs, armed insurrections, or drug trafficking are rampant. In the best of cases, police and courts may be weak and ineffective; in the worst, they may actually be corrupt and complicit. At the extreme, as with Haiti

and its endemic violence, observers may refer to such countries as failed states that cannot perform the basic functions of governance, that is, providing not only security but also basic services like water and electricity.

In many such countries, researchers have chronicled the rise of two complementary forces—the multiplication of "violent actors" and the privatization of security. Violent actors may include everything from gangs and drug traffickers to armed citizen-vigilante groups, professional security companies, and militarized police. All of these players increase the likelihood of violent or deadly confrontations and the proliferation of guns in society, supplied by a licit and illicit international gun trade, much of which emanates from the United States. Privatization of security, then, results when individuals and communities accept or usurp the ideal role of government to guarantee safety and order and arm themselves, or hire armed professionals, to do what police and courts cannot or will not do. In a vicious circle, though, the abundance of guns and of unregulated private security may actually make society *less* safe and orderly, leading to greater self-arming and violence.

5.5 "Culture of Violence" and "gun culture"

We cannot understand gun violence or violence in general, and especially the differences in violence between even neighboring countries or communities, without considering the role of culture. Culture is a result, an accretion, of history and experience, and various historical experiences mold or scar groups or societies. The notion of a culture of violence (like that of a culture of poverty) is controversial and can never be the full explanation, but it also cannot be ignored.

Among many of the world's peoples, there are traditions that valorize violence generally (for example, values of honor or vengeance) or guns specifically. Processes of colonization and decolonization often deepened violence and introduced new inequalities and grievances, as in Rwanda (although the explosion of genocidal violence there in the 1990s was largely committed with machetes). Subsequent and recent wars and ongoing gang and drug violence further traumatize populations, as do surging crime, social disorder (e.g., riots, kidnappings, etc.), insurrectionist and guerilla movements like Peru's Shining Path, and state oppression and violence. Nordstrom chronicles the impact of "living in a state of fear" in Guatemala where terror became routine [27], and Abramowitz discusses how Liberia was rendered a "traumatized nation" after years of war, with fighting in the streets, sexual violence, and a general mood of fear and foreboding [28].

A subset of the culture of violence is the culture of guns or "gun culture," a phrase coined by Hofstadter in 1970 to characterize American society [29]. America's gun culture arises from its revolutionary origins, its frontier and hunting traditions, and its unique constitutional guarantee of gun rights. Yet even in the United States, gun culture is diverse and mutable over time. Boine et al. identify three components of this culture—a recreational element, a self-defense element, and an anti-government element tied to the Second Amendment. Indeed, they assert that there is not one American gun culture but several and that emphasis and rhetoric have shifted over time from recreation to self-defense and, more ominously, armed mobilization against an allegedly tyrannical government [30]. Yamane, as noted above, regards this change as the emergence of "Gun Culture 2.0" in the rise of the armed citizen [26].

Springwood among others has studied gun culture around the world, stressing that guns have a "social life" that must be viewed in context [31]. The main point, as Hultin suggests, is that guns, like every other object and artifact, are "invested with

particular, often group-specific, meanings" ([32], p. 23]). Among these meanings, of course, is the common association of firearms with masculinity and allied values of power and independence. But gun cultures can be much more varied and nuanced: in another article, Hultin describes two different gun cultures in the Gambia, one centered on freedom from government interference and the other on the respect for a hunter's skill and expertise [33]. Whatever the details, research must attend to the attitudes and values that encourage or discourage gun ownership and use.

6. Regulating and preventing gun violence

Almost everyone (except for a few radicals who believe that injuries and deaths are the price a society has to pay for gun rights) desires not only to understand but also to reduce or curtail gun violence. In some cases, this can be achieved through the cessation of war and other armed conflict. But for civilian non-conflict gun violence, many solutions have been offered, and their success depends on the myriad factors discussed above.

Countries and jurisdictions within them have enacted a variety of gun regulations and restrictions, some of which would be virtually unthinkable in the US. For instance, while there is, paradoxically, a lively gun culture in Switzerland (gun ownership and training are popular and commonplace), both gun sellers and owners are subject to strict rules. Not only permits but also records of who owns guns are required, and concealed-carry permits are rare. Furthermore, individuals who seek guns for self-protection must pass a test on loading, unloading, and firing the weapon, and anyone convicted of a crime or who "expresses a violent or dangerous attitude" is ineligible [19]. Likewise, after the nationally upsetting mass shooting at Port Arthur in 1996, Australia took strong action against guns. Almost immediately (and with a conservative government in office), Australia's National Agreement on Firearms instituted mandatory licensing and registration, required applicants to demonstrate a "genuine need" for the weapon, banned nearly all automatic and semiautomatic "assault" rifles, and bought back roughly one-sixth of such rifles from the public [34]. Several countries in Latin America have adopted more-or-less strict gun laws, although others like Brazil under Bolsonaro attempted to liberalize gun access.

Governments have also taken regional and global action against guns, recognizing that gun availability and gun violence are not entirely local problems. The 2014 Arms Trade Treaty demanded that signatories obey clear rules on international arms sales and transfers; perhaps unsurprisingly, the US formally opted out of the treaty. Regionally, African leaders in 2013 adopted the "Silencing the Guns in Africa" initiative, followed by an "African Union Master Roadmap of Practicing Steps to Silence the Guns" in 2016. Since the goal has obviously not been reached, representatives renewed their pledge to extend the program to 2030.

Meanwhile, on the national or local level, many other solutions have been proposed or enacted. Among them are:

- better mental health intervention, on the assumption that gun violence is caused by mental illness (an individualization of a societal problem)

- prohibiting certain kinds of firearms or accessories like high-capacity magazines and "bump stocks" that convert guns into semiautomatic weapons

- waiting periods and age minimums to purchase firearms, along with background checks on buyers
- "red flag laws" to enable authorities to confiscate guns from people deemed to be an immediate threat
- gun buyback programs like the one in Australia
- placing metal detectors and armed guards in schools (which would potentially make schools safer, but not other public spaces)
- arming and training teachers so that they can defend their students against shooters (a responsibility many teachers prefer not to accept and which does nothing to address shootings in other venues).

Ultimately, many of these policies are unachievable in certain national and political climates, and their effectiveness is still a subject of hot debate.

7. Conclusion

This brief introduction sets the terms and the research agenda for academic investigation and informed public decision-making about guns and gun violence. Scholars must widen their lens to examine countries other than the United States and forms of firearm violence (lethal and nonlethal) beyond the high-profile mass shootings that plague that country. They must understand the specific local contexts and cultural meanings of gun ownership and use, and they must consider fully all of the causes and correlations of gun violence at work at multiple levels—local, national, regional, and global. The chapters in this volume aim to contribute to this project and to offer realistic assessments of the challenges and opportunities for minimizing the ravage of individuals, families, communities, and countries by gun violence.

Conflict of interest

The authors declare no conflict of interest.

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Chapter 2

Gun Culture: A Hidden Evil in Indian Society and Its Implications

Yogesh Kumar

Abstract

India faces a serious issue of gun violence in many states. Despite having strict laws for firearms, there are many loopholes from where criminals and normal citizens acquire guns. Reasons can be many from portraying themselves as powerful to threatening someone or to protecting and even killing someone. Few surveys have revealed that the numbers of licensed firearms are very low as compared to unlicensed firearms. Government and police have taken severe measures to bring an end to the gun culture, but corruption and politics have given hope to the culprits. States like Punjab, Jammu & Kashmir and Uttar Pradesh are the worst affected regions. Art and culture such as the music industry have witnessed the glorification of guns through music videos and lyrics by many singers and artists. Thus, this chapter tries to bring out this situation, reasons and solutions for the prevailing evil form of gun culture in India.

Keywords: gun culture, gun violence, guns, firearms, India, Punjab, Uttar Pradesh, Madhya Pradesh, J&K, gun laws, NCRB, Indian gun laws, glorifying gun culture

1. Introduction

What is a gun culture? The term was coined by Richard Hofstadter in 1970, in an American Heritage article critiquing gun violence in the United States (**Figure 1**) [1]. Gun culture refers to the attitudes, feelings, values and behaviors of a society, religion and social group towards the usage of firearms for various reasons [2, 3]. Basically. It denotes the normalization of guns in a society or a social group, but unaware of the consequences it holds for everyone. India was ranked 5 in a survey of countries with the highest total gun deaths in 2019 with 14,710 casualties by gun violence [4].

Despite having strict gun laws under the Indian constitution, a huge number of unlicensed firearms exist in the country as compared to licensed firearms. With the increase in possession of guns the crime related to guns increased drastically and death toll got worse. In recent times, states like Punjab and Uttar Pradesh are known as the hub of gun culture. Other states like J&K, Maharashtra, Madhya Pradesh have been engaged in illegal supplying of guns and ammunition. Government to tackle the growing gun culture, has banned many illegal manufacturing factories of guns in these states recently [5]. Reports have shown the rapid spike in gun violence for reasons as petty as honor killing but whom to blame? the government or the police? or the

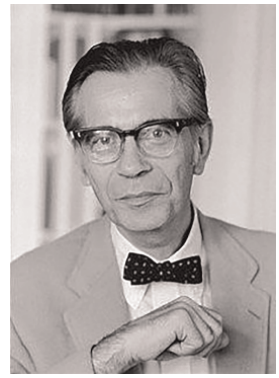

Figure 1.
Richard Hofstadter (6 August 1916–1924 October 1970), American public intellectual of the 1950s, historian and DeWitt Clinton professor of American history at Columbia University. Photograph by Bernard Gotfryd, circa 1970 taken from Wikipedia.

political parties? Well, the web is woven so complex that it's not easy to find real culprits. Who use the loopholes in the state administration for personal gains. The Halka system in Punjab is one such loophole.

The government and police have tried to bring down gun violence and destroy the roots of gun culture existing as a parasite in India. They have taken up various measures but nothing promising could be done. The black market of firearms has persisted under such restrictions. People are more fearless nowadays in keeping guns and displaying them publicly as if it is a symbol of dominance. Social media has played a massive role to foster the growth of gun culture. Teenagers posting pictures with guns and posting videos of shooting in air can be seen surfacing the internet. Such normalization has created a mindset amongst young children and youth that guns are cool, especially in villages of Punjab, Haryana and Uttar Pradesh.

Is it only a state issue or is it much more complex than it looks? Well, the case is not so simple that only internal factors are responsible for the growing gun culture in the country but in recent times links from foreign countries have been unfolded in terms of spreading instability in the country. Pakistan has been accused of building conspiracy and supplying firearms through illegal means in the regions of Punjab and Kashmir. The Kartarpur corridor inaugurated by PM Modi on 9 November 2009 has been used to create a network of illegal supply of firearms in Punjab and on December 2, an NRI was arrested at the Kartarpur corridor for carrying cartridges in a bag illegally [6]. Not only the bothering neighbors of India but links from foreign countries like Canada, UK and USA can be traced in contributing to the growing gun culture in India [7].

2. Gun culture in different states

2.1 Punjab

"Punjabis crave guns" was the statement given by an IAS Officer 'Chander Gaind' who served in Patiala. This tells us the situation from the ground level and from the perspective of a civil servant who handled one of the key states of Punjab. Coming to the facts, the number of licensed arms in Punjab can be estimated by the fact that ahead of 2022 Punjab Assembly elections almost 4,00,000 weapons were deposited,

said Chief Electoral Officer (Punjab) Dr. S. Karuna Raju [8]. There are various reasons for the situation in Punjab and the gun culture existing in the state. Let us briefly go through some of the key factors for the same.

2.1.1 Militancy in Punjab

According to the ministry of home affairs in Punjab, most of the active licenses were allotted in 1980s when militancy was at its peak in Punjab [9]. In 1985, Punjab elections, Akali Dal pulled a move and promised to release the prisoners who were arrested during 1980 militancy in which a lot of innocent civilians were present, and along were some extremists too who later got freed along with prisoners due to which the crime rates increased and anti-national activities saw a spike in those years [10]. Moreover, the number of unlicensed guns started to increase in Punjab. Amongst the prisoners were some terrorists too who later created instability in the state. As the reports suggest, year 1990–1991 more than 5000 civilians were killed and many police personnel lost their lives too. A prominent Akali Dal leader, Balwant Singh, was killed by extremist groups and flow of guns and weapons gained moments in these years [11].

2.1.2 Halqa system

A system of police administration in which the MLA elected or non-elected gets the power to appoint SHO (station house officer) of their constituencies. SHO plays a very significant role in issuing gun licenses as they give the final clearance certificate to the SDM for issuing a license to a citizen [12]. Lately, the district police administration was all under an SSP (senior superintendent of police) who with the help of subordinate officers and constables used to run the administration of police but when SAD & BJP won the elections and came to power, they introduced Halqa system which later got misused a lot because the party leader in order to win the support of their cadre got their gun license cleared easily due to their own SHO being installed at the station who to maintain his position had no choice but to give the clearance in order to keep the party leader support. Corruption never took a step back in any political system thus Punjab has been a victim of very dirty politics.

2.1.3 Pop culture

A very crucial factor that has contributed to the gun culture is the pop culture of Punjab. Many singers and writers started glorifying guns in their songs. Music videos of Punjabi songs flooded with open displays of guns as they were showcased so something very common and normal. This normalization of guns brought a new mindset amongst the youth of Punjab. Punjabi youth adopted this as their real lifestyle and social media became a tool for showcasing guns boldly through pictures and videos as if it was so cool or macho. Prominent Punjabi singers like Babu Mann, Jazz B, Mankrit Aulakh, Karan Aujla, Sidhu Mossewala and many more started to glorify guns in their songs and because of having a crazy fan following the youth was influenced heavily by their songs and they started mimicking them by posting pictures and videos using guns. Many of them face serious charges for openly displaying guns but get out of the charges due to political connections. Recently, Sidhu Moosewala was murdered in a broad daylight by a rival gang which raised many questions on the administration to have strict laws on firearms. He was also charged earlier for

publically displaying gun but went underground to avoid the arrest [13]. There are many such instances that pop culture has been used to glorify guns and weapons which have become a serious issue now.

2.1.4 Symbol of status

Guns in Punjab have become a symbol of status and prestige. Research by Rajesh Gill who is a professor of sociology tells that cast plays an important role in Punjab's gun culture [13]. Popularized by upper caste Jatt Sikhs, guns are associated with money and power. The scenario has got worse over time and many Punjabis now see guns as masculinity and want to hold a gun to display their pride and manly hood. Such a mindset has taken over the youth so much that villages of Punjab are witnessing illegal activities and gun violence on a rapid scale which shows that a psychological change of radical mindset is taking over the youth.

2.2 Uttar Pradesh (UP)

Uttar Pradesh is the largest supplier of guns whether replica or original according to a report published by NCRB (national crime records bureau) about arms seized by police in 2020, in which UDP alone accounted for 50% of unlicensed arms amongst all the states of India with a staggering number of 32,776 UP is the sole hub for gun culture. (**Table 1**) Its districts such as Mirzapur, Munger, Purvanchal, Ghaziabad etc., have been on the news for their nonstop illegal supplies of arms and ammunition and the growing gun culture in the region.

2.2.1 Hub of replicas

Munger District of UP is famous for its black market of weapons and more than it is famous for making replicas of guns which come with a tag name - 'made in Munger' which works just like the original ones [14]. People there are just fond of guns and see them as a symbol of pride to keep it with them but the scenario during the 90s era was not quite the same.

2.2.2 Kattas to AK-47

During the 90s the district of UP was ruled by mafias of different groups. Criminal activities were at their peak, and from being ruthless with blades and knives, the criminals went on to acquire guns. At first, the Desi Kattas were used heavily as they left no traceable clue for police to find the culprits but the era changed and hand revolvers flooded the markets of UP and criminals went on to upgrade their artilleries with assault rifles like AK47, made in Russia. Guns became a part of UP and it came to be recognized as the biggest hub of gun culture and gun violence. Imported weapons just became a new craze for gangs and mafias of UP who, despite being in jail, carried out various criminal activities without fear. The districts of Uttar Pradesh developed their own market of desi guns (made locally) and imported guns [15].

2.2.3 Organized crime

Purvanchal district of UP is well known for its organized criminal activities. The mafias in jail run their racket under the nose of the administration and police. It starts

Seizures under Arms Act - 2020											
Sl.	State/UT	From Anti-National Elements[a]				From Others[b]				Total	
		Licensed		Unlicensed		Licensed		Unlicensed		Arms	Ammunition
		Arms	Ammunition	Arms	Ammunition	Arms	Ammunition	Arms	Ammunition		
[1]	[2]	[3]	[4]	[5]	[6]	[7]	[8]	[9]	[10]	[11]	[12]
STATES:											
1	Andhra Pradesh	0	0	6	22	1	12	50	72	57	106
2	Arunachal Pradesh	0	0	32	274	0	0	2	40	34	314
3	Assam	15	0	0	0	11	11	339	3440	365	3451
4	Bihar	0	0	108	827	4	0	3630	11,290	3742	12,117
5	Chhattisgarh	0	0	102	249	0	0	479	0	581	249
6	Goa	0	0	0	0	0	0	15	17	15	17
7	Gujarat	0	0	0	0	40	69	610	554	650	623
8	Haryana	0	0	0	0	1	0	2427	2577	2428	2577
9	Himachal Pradesh	2	0	0	0	16	0	11	16	29	16
10	Jharkhand	0	0	117	906	1	0	587	1908	705	2814
11	Karnataka	11	0	12	2	26	37	121	178	170	217
12	Kerala	0	0	2	0	7	5	127	147	136	152
13	Madhya Pradesh	0	0	278	4	269	3	10,841	2733	11,388	2740
14	Maharashtra	0	0	0	0	0	0	2646	1336	2646	1336
15	Manipur	4	0	54	4676	1	20	40	206	99	4902
16	Meghalaya	1	0	0	0	3	0	23	331	27	331
17	Mizoram	1	0	0	0	0	0	9	1	10	1
18	Nagaland	0	0	79	3116	4	6	38	148	121	3270

Seizures under Arms Act - 2020											
Sl.	State/UT	From Anti-National Elements[a]				From Others[b]				Total	
		Licensed		Unlicensed		Licensed		Unlicensed		Arms	Ammunition
		Arms	Ammunition	Arms	Ammunition	Arms	Ammunition	Arms	Ammunition		
[1]	[2]	[3]	[4]	[5]	[6]	[7]	[8]	[9]	[10]	[11]	[12]
19	Odisha	0	0	0	0	2	0	19	7	20	7
20	Punjab	0	0	38	243	4	3	839	6412	881	6658
21	Rajasthan	0	0	0	0	6	13	5447	3450	5453	3463
22	Sikkim	0	0	1	0	0	1	2	0	3	1
23	Tamil Nadu	0	0	0	0	12	13	352	403	364	416
24	Telangana	2	0	10	141	3	25	73	5	88	171
25	Tripura	0	0	5	10	0	0	6	3	11	13
26	Uttar Pradesh	373	7	3904	1738	563	1400	32,776	9763	37,616	12,908
27	Uttarakhand	0	0	0	0	23	451	812	167	835	618
28	West Bengal	0	0	0	0	1	55	1851	3715	1852	3770
	TOTAL STATE(S)	409	7	4748	12,208	997	2124	64,172	48,919	70,326	63,258
UNION TERRITORIES:											
29	A&N Islands	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
30	Chandigarh	0	0	0	0	0	0	35	178	35	178
31	D&N Haveli and Daman & Diu	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
32	Delhi	0	0	0	0	2	2	3734	4724	3736	4726
33	Jammu & Kashmir	0	0	474	27,083	4	0	6	20	484	27,103
34	Ladakh	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
35	Lakshadweep	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0

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Seizures under Arms Act - 2020											
Sl.	**State/UT**	**From Anti-National Elements[a]**				**From Others[b]**				**Total**	
		Licensed		**Unlicensed**		**Licensed**		**Unlicensed**		**Arms**	**Ammunition**
		Arms	**Ammunition**	**Arms**	**Ammunition**	**Arms**	**Ammunition**	**Arms**	**Ammunition**		
[1]	**[2]**	**[3]**	**[4]**	**[5]**	**[6]**	**[7]**	**[8]**	**[9]**	**[10]**	**[11]**	**[12]**
36	Puducherry	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
	TOTAL UT(S)	0	0	474	27,083	6	2	3775	4922	4255	32,007
	TOTAL ALL INDIA	409	7	5222	39,291	1003	2120	67,947	53,841	74,581	95,265

• *As per data provided by States/UTs.*
Note: Others may Include Criminals, Gangsters & Smugglers etc.
[a]*Terrorists/Extremists/Insurgents etc.*
[b]*Criminals/Smugglers etc.*
• *States/UTs may not be compared purely on the basis of crime figures.*

Table 1.
NCRB report 2020 for Indian public usage for research works.

from small loot or burglary and people keep joining different groups to raise their influence. The group leaders assign tasks to the members and accordingly, it is carried out carefully, most of the time for money but also for revenge from different rival groups [16].

2.3 Madhya Pradesh (MP)

It is the largest state of India and has been through a furious journey of criminal activities, revolts, rebellious groups, targeted killings, caste-based killings and many such activities which raised a lot of questions about the government itself. According to NCRB report MP accounts for the second largest state with unlicensed firearms. NP accounts for the second largest state with unlicensed firearms. Many articles have been published that brought out the gun violence of MP. An Interview with the victim's family showed how the gun culture affected the lives of their family members [17]. Madhya Pradesh has seen a lot of encounters due to this gun culture.

2.3.1 The history of Chambal

Gun culture first flourished here only when the band lands of Chambal were ruled by 'Dacoits'. Dacoits are armed gangs of robbers who spent their lives in criminal activities and revolting against the state police. The region was full of dacoits and people and police used to fear taking action without proper backup. Moving forward to April 14, 1972, more than 600 dacoits surrendered AT Gandhi Ashram of Chambal district. The movement was led by Mohar Singh & Madho Singh (two notorious dacoits of their time) but surprisingly it wasn't due to the police or the govt. But efforts of social activists Jayaprakash Narayan and Vinobha Bhave to make the dacoits leave their vice way of life [18, 19]. So, guns became a part and in past few decades that now people see them as a normal thing in the region.

2.3.2 Rajputs of MP

Guns in MP and especially amongst the upper caste section like Rajputs find their pride in keeping guns to protect their families. An interview carried out by 'Brut India journalist' [17] in the district of Morena with the local groups of Rajputs, shows the attitude of locals towards gun culture in their region which astonishingly is not for the sake of protection but a matter of pride for them and for their generation, The caste-based factors speak a lot about gun culture in these small regions of M.P. The lower strata of caste are not allowed to have guns which are normed by the upper caste section. Thus, it increases the vulnerability of the lower section to acquire guns by any means to symbolize their status as equal to other sections of society.

2.3.3 Baaghis of MP

Not everyone picks up a gun for banditry but there were groups of rebels who were called Baaghi who fought against the administration in as revolt against taxation on poor people [19]. According to the Brut India interview on YouTube, Asha Sikarwar, who lost his grandfather who was a baaghi got shot down and her father too was killed in an encounter by police, now fights against the gun culture in Chambal and expresses deep concern for other families who normalize keeping a gun [17].

2.4 Jammu and Kashmir (J&K)

"There is only solution, Gun Solution Gun Solution" - A slogan quoted from a group of protesters in Kashmir [20]. Leaving the political scenario aside of the state being under constant instability. The state of J&K has been on a boil since independence. Guns are over following in the state and almost every house is equipped with guns [21].

2.4.1 Terrorism

J&K has witnessed terrorist activities more than any state of India. Several terror groups are heavily equipped with modern-era weapons & firearms. Indian forces are trying hard to fight against these groups. Apart from these terrorists, there are locals who possess arms and use these against the security forces in the name of freedom. Infiltration and cross-border illegal activities have given parallel access to gun violence in J&K [22].

2.4.2 Gun factories

Kashmir famous for its beauty, is well known for gun factories too. During lockdown in India, these factories and shops witness a rapid fall in gun sales. According to an interview, Zoroo Gun factory house in of the last surviving groups of gunsmiths in Kashmir valley [23]. Their production, which used to be 500+ in 1 year, came down to 20–50 guns only. People now use to visit them for gun repair. Once the valley used to be crowded with gun shops and factories, but the Indian government had cracked down the gun culture through long-standing battles against anti-national forces [24].

3. Causes for gun culture

After going through the brief analysis of states in India the causes for the spreading of gun culture goes on from being physiological to necessity. For example, in Punjab initially, it was caused because of militancy which brought guns to the main stage and after that, the pop culture promoting guns became the new norm to acquire guns just to look cool. In U.P. people found it to be more related to mafia & criminal activities and in M.P. it was due to dacoits & baaghis. J&K faced terrorism & political tension which made it the most affected state with gun violence.

- Unemployment is one such factor that cannot be neglected. The youth radicalized are influenced by others and tend to move towards criminal activities. Proper development would lead to job opportunities and people would feel worthy to leave crime and go for a better life.

3.1 Foreign conspiracy

This section needs to be addressed separately because these are cross-border activities trying to destabilize the peace in India by any means. If we talk about gun culture only then Punjab feels the worst pressure because Pakistan as a neighboring country has been sending weapons through illegal means to support the anti-national elements in the state. The Khalistan movement to declare Punjab as an Independent state for

Sikhs has its network spread over several countries like Canada, England, Australia, & USA. Weapons and money are being smuggled to India from these countries. J&K faces terrorism fueled by Pakistan and other anti-national elements outside the country. Infiltration of terrorists & radicals is what killing the state from the inside. Thus, the foreign conspiracy has come up as an alarming issue for promoting gun culture in India.

3.2 Social media

The content being consumed from social media platforms is one of the prominent causes of spreading gun culture. From pop songs to radical speeches are brainwashing people to pick arms for different causes. Posting pictures or videos on social media platforms. That is, Instagram and Facebook youth as a symbol of pride and to look cool has been an itch for the government. Misuse of such platforms has led to extremism amongst the people [25].

4. Efforts by the government to stop gun culture

India has one of the strictest gun laws in the world but still, the nation is under a serious threat of growing gun culture. The govt. and administration have been involved in constant efforts to finish this gun culture. Talking about a recent step in Punjab by the current government of Bhagwant Mann, they have imposed a ban on songs promoting gun culture [26]. Also, 800 licenses were canceled in Punjab [27]. Many search operations were carried out to track down unlicensed arms. Printing QR codes on bullets was such an initiative to track the owners by the administration of Morena in M.P [17]. Ban on public displays of guns in Punjab [26]. Gun laws were amended under the arms act of 1959 [28]. Engaging with foreign diplomats to crack down on the illegal supply of guns. Policies were introduced regarding gun laws and a ban on certain weapons. As a whole, many efforts have been laid down by the government but still, we need robust implications to get the desired results.

5. Comparison at a glance

According to the data of NCRB (**Table 1**) the state which has been the hub of gun culture seems to be Uttar Pradesh and Madhya Pradesh. Punjab seems to be the lowest among the state compared and even if we take different districts of Uttar Pradesh then the single region of UP accounts for way higher arms-related crimes than the state of Punjab (**Figure 2**) [29]. UP, Bihar & MP have been the sole centre of Gun Culture. Most of the unlicensed guns were seized from UP only (**Table 1**). Though gun culture whether micro or large is still not healthy for any state of India. The reports published by NCRB give us an idea that this gun violence flamed by Gun culture is a national issue which needs to be dealt with more vigor measures and actions (**Figure 3**).

For further addition, the comparison must be made by taking the different factors responsible for gun culture in the states. The factor that Punjab is considered a hot tub for growing gun culture and has been singled out due to its pop culture glorifying guns then the same pop culture of different states, such as Haryana, Uttar Pradesh and Madhya Pradesh, is also doing the same where you can find many Haryanvi songs glorifying violence and gun culture with million streams on YouTube [29].

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Figure 2.
Taken from the print article which is sourced from an open national crime record data for public and non-commercial use. (modified as per ref. [29]).

Figure 3.
1878 – British East India company soldiers - photo by Hulton archive on Getty images gallery of vintage images of British India in the ninteeth century - (modified as per ref. [30]).

Moreover, the terrorism factor is also affecting the states of Punjab, MP and UP which prevail in J&K. Foreign conspiracy and usage of loopholes in the Indian system is seen in other states too such as Maharashtra and southern states like Karnataka & Tamil Nadu. The coastal routes are used to smuggle and supply illegal guns and weapons to different regions of the Indian states.

Undoubtedly, each state has its own factor which is connected to different states effecting pointing in the same direction of growing gun culture in India.

6. Gun laws in India

The first arms act in India was brought in 1878 by the Britishers after the revolt for independence in 1857 by Indian soldiers who were sepoys in an infantry division of the British East India Company [30, 31]. The laws introduced in 1878 regulated the conditions and procedures that who can acquire, deal & assemble guns.

Kodava community (**Figure 4**) - a special mention of this race must be made which got an exception to keep guns as a part of their long-running culture but under strict conditions of not to publicly use them outside their community. This community belongs to Karnataka and in 2019, the high court issued an order extending the

Figure 4.
Kodava community (photograph courtesy: Codava National Council – Modified according to ref. [32]).

gun rights of the community till 31 Oct, 2029 [32]. They can carry rifles in their district and community and outside they must comply with state laws.

In 2019 the Arms Act of 1959 was amended and more strict measures were added to it. Along with the Arms Rules of 1962, these two laws regulate firearms in the country. They prohibit the arrangement, manufacture, proprietorship, acquisition, import, fare, and transport of firearms and ammo except if under a grant and is a stringent methodology [28].

Requirements for acquiring gun license [33].

1. The minimum age requirement for acquiring a gun license in India is 21 years.

2. The applicant must not have been convicted of any offense involving violence or moral turpitude 5 years prior to commencing the application, not of an 'unsound mind' and not a threat to public safety and peace.

3. Property qualification is not a criterion for acquiring gun license.

4. Upon receiving an application, the licensing authority (i.e., the Home Ministry), asks the officer in charge of the nearest police station to submit a report about the applicant after thorough vetting within a prescribed time.

Other Features of the Act:

1. It defines 'prohibited arms' as those that either discharge any noxious liquid or gas, or weapons that seek pressure to be applied on a trigger for discharge.

2. It allows the use of smooth bore gun with a barrel of not less than 20 inches for crop protection or sport.

3. No entity is permitted to sell or transfer any firearm which does not bear the name of the maker, manufacturer's number or any other visible or stamped identification mark.

Amendment to the Arms Act:

1. The Arms Act amended in 2019 reduces the number of firearms that an individual can procure from 3 to 2.

2. The validity of the license has been increased from the present 3 to 5 years.

3. It also enlists specific provisions on curtailing the use of licensed weapons to ensure social harmony.

4. Punishment: The punishment of imprisonment is increased between 7 and 14 years, along with a fine for the offense of acquisition, possession or carrying of prohibited ammunition without a license.

5. It prohibits the conversion of one category of firearms to another without a license.

6. Unlawful manufacture, sale and transfer are liable for an imprisonment term of not less than 7 years which could be extended to life, with a fine.

7. Suggestions and solutions

In 2016, a dancer at a marriage ceremony was shot dead in celebratory firing by a drunk man [34]. This is just one such case near Bhatinda but many more such cases can be seen due to such negligence and casual behavior. This must be addressed with caution and seriousness otherwise this normalization of guns can be devastating for the nation.

- A revisit to firearms is a must by the legislatures and some new policies which regulate firearms with more surveillance are needed.

- The Halqa system in Punjab must be changed and SHOs should be free from the dominance of MLAs on getting clearance certificates to acquire guns.

- Review the license given in the last 10 years.

- Strict checks on imported weapons and illegal supply of weapons in the country from any source.

- Public displays of guns should be banned in all states and open fire at public ceremonies like marriages should be banned for better good.

- Public awareness regarding guns and gun laws should be noticeable.

- As a duty, even citizens should come forward to join hands to fight this gun culture.

- Police should be given more authority to capture and seize firearms without the political intervention of parties and leaders for their own gain.

- Radical elements must be tackled with immediate effect.
- Social media should be used by the government to spread more awareness about gun culture and its consequences.
- More employment opportunities can crack down the situation amongst the frustrated youth who see criminal activities as an easy way.
- Innovative measures such as Chander Gaind started by making it compulsory for the citizens who get gun licenses to plant trees [35].

8. Conclusion

Gun culture in India is a recent phenomenon that has its roots connected to the past when almost every state used to face insurgency for various reasons. Mafias and gang wars were common in states like Uttar Pradesh, Maharashtra, Punjab, etc. and guns were new weapons that eliminated the enemy in one go. Whether it is seen as a symbol of pride or seen as a tool to spread dominance, the fact that people have developed the mindset of conceiving power with the possession of guns. That hunger for power is brutal for others. Amidst all this, the real advantage of such power struggles is used by political leaders and parties for personal gains. Politics is never ending in the nation and how many times in such cases, that is, in illegal gun activities, political leaders were involved.

The states which we discussed were a brief analytical representation of the situation in the nation. Punjab state was recently in news due to the murder case of famous singer Sidhu Moosewala whose responsibility was claimed by a rival gang leader Goldy Brar who currently resides in Canada and connections were found with Lawrence Bisnoi who is in Jail in India. They both are of the same gang and wanted to take revenge for the murder of one of their gang members Middu Kheda in which Sidhu Moosewala was involved too as claimed by the news portal and the opposite gang members [36]. This whole scenario pulled out gun culture and brought it to the mainstream. Now whole nation is concerned about the gun culture and gun violence persisting in the country.

Though the facts and numbers of NCRB and police records bring different realities on the ground as their records show the worst affected state and the hub of gun culture is Uttar Pradesh and Madhya Pradesh. These two states have the highest death numbers through guns. A single district of Uttar Pradesh surpasses many big states when brought to light the gun-induced killings in the region [37]. Punjab stands 3 times below the national average for gun violence (**Figure 5**). Thus, it means Punjab is not influenced by gun culture. No, this is not the case. Punjabi youth are psychologically so influenced by songs and temporary sense of power through songs. Guns are flowing in regions of Punjab which are induced by Khalistani forces and supported by Pakistan ISI. Gun culture is being run from foreign countries by anti-national forces.

The causes are many but government needs to step up with more strict measures and action plans. They must be aware of all the nuances which are sole cause for such growing culture of guns but the alone government cannot do much. Civil society and citizens need to feel their duty to stand up against such culture which is venom for the society. 'Prof. Panditrao Dharenavar from Karnataka, who is serving as Assistant Professor of Sociology at Post Graduate Government College in Chandigarh, has been

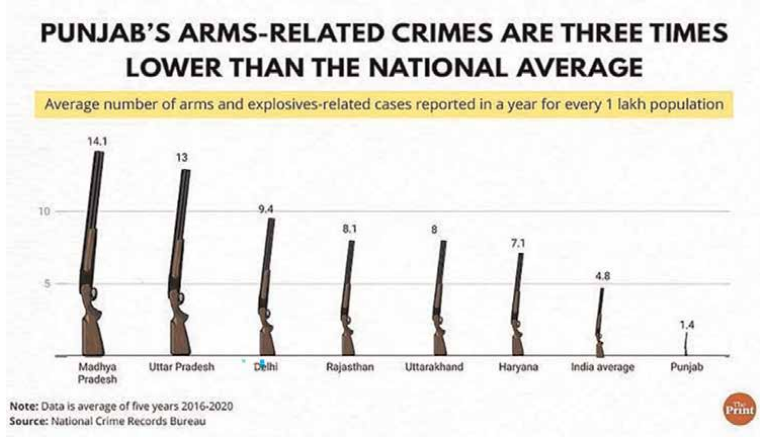
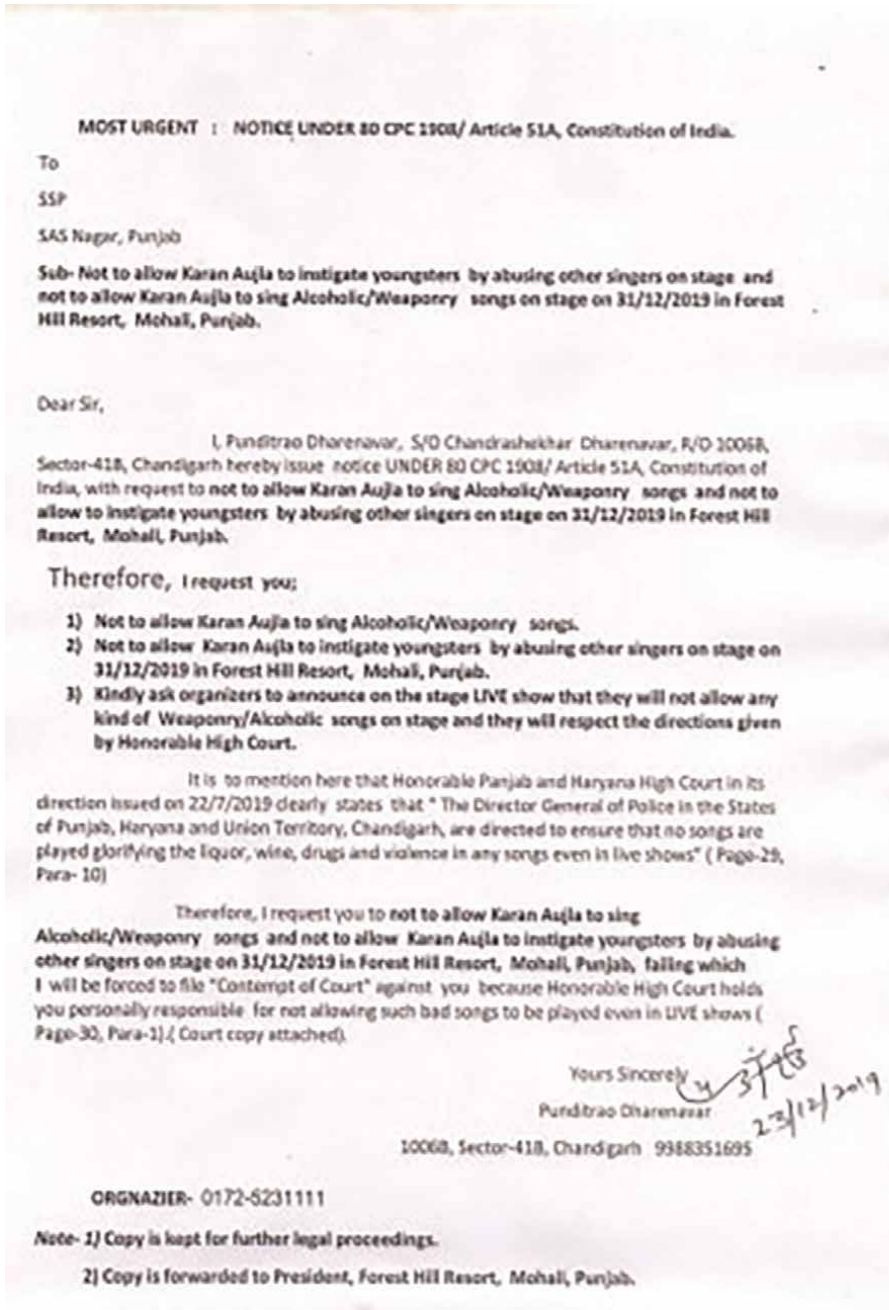


Figure 5.
State-wise comparison of arms related crimes - taken from the print article which is sourced from an open national crime record data for public and non-commercial use.

Figure 6.
Panditrao Dharenavar holds a protest in Patiala on Saturday. Picture taken from 'the tribune newspaper' article written by Rajesh Sacher [39].

teaching Punjabi to South Indian doctors and nurses working at Post Graduate Institute of Medical Education and Research (PGIMER), besides slum children, for the last 11 years. When he is not doing that, he is fighting against the glorification of gun culture, drugs, liquor and violence in Punjabi songs' (**Figure 6**) [38, 39]. He stands holding placards with a message not to promote gun violence, alcohol & drugs in Punjab through Punjabi songs and, he stands outside marriages holding placards saying – do not dance on Punjabi songs promoting drugs and weapons [40]. Plus, he has written letters to the SSP of Punjab states to stop the singers from singing who promote gun culture through their songs (**Figure 7**) [40]. Such initiatives and awareness should be within every citizen or at least inside the future generation of the nation, the youth.

People have lost so many lives through guns. From mishandling to revenge, a single shot fired comes back with a heavy price for someone's life. At a shop in Punjab,



MOST URGENT : NOTICE UNDER 80 CPC 1908/ Article 51A, Constitution of India.

To

SSP

SAS Nagar, Punjab

Sub- Not to allow Karan Aujla to instigate youngsters by abusing other singers on stage and not to allow Karan Aujla to sing Alcoholic/Weaponry songs on stage on 31/12/2019 in Forest Hill Resort, Mohali, Punjab.

Dear Sir,

I, Punditrao Dharenavar, S/O Chandrashekhar Dharenavar, R/O 10068, Sector-41B, Chandigarh hereby issue notice UNDER 80 CPC 1908/ Article 51A, Constitution of India, with request to **not to allow Karan Aujla to sing Alcoholic/Weaponry songs and not to allow to instigate youngsters by abusing other singers on stage on 31/12/2019 in Forest Hill Resort, Mohali, Punjab.**

Therefore, I request you;

1) **Not to allow Karan Aujla to sing Alcoholic/Weaponry songs.**
2) **Not to allow Karan Aujla to instigate youngsters by abusing other singers on stage on 31/12/2019 in Forest Hill Resort, Mohali, Punjab.**
3) **Kindly ask organizers to announce on the stage LIVE show that they will not allow any kind of Weaponry/Alcoholic songs on stage and they will respect the directions given by Honorable High Court.**

It is to mention here that Honorable Panjab and Haryana High Court in its direction issued on 22/7/2019 clearly states that " The Director General of Police in the States of Punjab, Haryana and Union Territory, Chandigarh, are directed to ensure that no songs are played glorifying the liquor, wine, drugs and violence in any songs even in live shows" (Page-29, Para- 10)

Therefore, I request you to **not to allow Karan Aujla to sing Alcoholic/Weaponry songs and not to allow Karan Aujla to instigate youngsters by abusing other singers on stage on 31/12/2019 in Forest Hill Resort, Mohali, Punjab, failing which** I will be forced to file "Contempt of Court" against you because Honorable High Court holds you personally responsible for not allowing such bad songs to be played even in LIVE shows (Page-30, Para-1).(Court copy attached).

Yours Sincerely

Punditrao Dharenavar

10068, Sector-41B, Chandigarh 9388351695

23/12/2019

ORGNAZIER- 0172-5231111

***Note- 1)* Copy is kept for further legal proceedings.**

2) Copy is forwarded to President, Forest Hill Resort, Mohali, Punjab.

Figure 7.
Letter to SSP of Punjab SAS Nagar by Panditrao Dharenavar. Picture from Aditi Chattopadhyay's article in the logical Indian journalism [40].

a police officer accidentally fires a shot that hits a customer in that shop who dies on the spot only [41]. Marriages have seen so many such casualties in the name of celebratory firing through rifles or guns. Youth in colleges have illegally acquired guns to spread their dominance who without knowing the consequences roam around

casually in groups to make themselves feel cool or powerful which ends up with gang rivalry and then gun violence.

The point to be noted is that most of the cases or almost every case are related to men only. When talking on the basis of gender then the pistols which were made for the safety of women's after so many brutal rape cases in Delhi and UP, never got accessible to women due to strict firearm laws but on the opposite side men tend to acquire guns illegally from various sources.

At last, the scenario brought out through this comparative case study is a national issue and must be dealt with keeping in mind national security and national threat from both inside and outside. To mention, when compared on a world scale then India ranks low in the table of gun violence and gun culture in different countries where the top rank is undoubtedly of the USA with a massive percentage difference from any other country for gun-induced homicides [42]. Though India needs to dig deeper into this issue and shall bring an immediate end to this evil named 'Gun Culture' which is growing its roots in India.

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Conflict of interest

"The author declares no conflict of interest."

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Chapter 3

In the Shadow of the Giant: Gun Violence in Latin America and the Caribbean

Jack David Eller

Abstract

The United States dominates most policy debates and academic studies of gun violence, but this dominance overshadows the often much higher rate of firearm-related injury and death inflicted in its southern neighbors. This chapter explores guns and gun violence in Latin America and the Caribbean, where some countries experience war-level death rates from firearms despite considerably lower rates of gun ownership in those countries. The chapter presents data—which is unfortunately often scarce, incomplete, or dated—on the region as a whole and on specific countries, identifying trends but also distinct and important variation, both geographically and historically. This variation challenges simplistic explanations in terms of the region's violent past or an enduring "culture of violence." The discussion thus then turns to the elucidation of factors that influence the incidence of gun violence, from poverty, urbanization, gangs, and drug trafficking to concerns about weak states and personal security. Finally, the chapter shares some of the gun policies and regulations in the region, surveying the steps that countries have taken—and others like its great northern neighbor can take—to curtail the damage and loss of life attributed to guns.

Keywords: Caribbean, drug trafficking, gangs, gun violence, Latin America, privatization of security

1. Introduction

The nature, scale, and political controversy of gun violence in the United States disproportionately consume the attention of politicians, the public, and scholars alike. This is particularly curious and serious in regard to the country's southern neighbors, where rates of gun violence (and violence in general) are commonly higher than in the United States. Americans have a vague notion that crime and violence are rampant in Mexico, and news of violence in Caribbean countries like Haiti often diffuses to the United States, but Diego Sanjurjo—one of the few to focus on Latin America—stresses that research on firearms in Latin America commenced only recently and has been conducted by "a limited number of scholars with highly empirical research agendas," frequently concentrating on state and anti-state violence (for instance, revolutionary or terrorist groups and government responses). Despite the fact that crime, gangs, and drug trafficking are so prevalent in Latin America, leading

to the widespread sense of danger in their societies and hence an impulse toward self-defense, "the role of armed citizens in the regional provision of security has not been examined" ([1], p. 3). Further evidence of this neglect appears in Springwood's volume on "global gun cultures," which features just one chapter on a Latin country, Brazil, plus a chapter on gun talk in Jamaican popular music, and four chapters on the United States [2].

Not only has Latin American gun violence been comparatively overlooked, but when noticed it has inevitably been perceived through the lens of US behavior and debates. The obvious inappropriateness of this approach is underscored by the Mexican reference to "gringo-style" gun violence, like school shootings, that rarely occur in their country; admittedly, "dozens of homicides and shootings are reported daily and attributed to organized crime, but…lone shooters opening fire for no apparent reason at a school, a church, or a supermarket are almost unheard of" in Mexico [3]. Predictably too, gun control is a different and often lesser issue in Latin America, and equally predictably, as Sanjurjo writes in another essay, gun control in that region has only recently become a subject for scholarly investigation ([4], p. 271).

The present chapter, then, fills a conspicuous gap in the literature on gun violence. It organizes and summarizes current knowledge about firearms injuries and fatalities in Latin America and the Caribbean, acknowledging that the information on the region is quite uneven and often not up-to-date. The chapter proceeds in three sections. First, it presents the best data on gun violence in the context of general violence, highlighting both regional trends and the rather remarkable diversity between countries and even areas within countries, as well as over time. The second section explores factors that contribute to the extraordinary and, in several parts of the region, increasing levels of gun violence, which is regularly but not exclusively attributed to gangs and drugs. While we cannot avoid confronting the histories and values of the various populations, we will resist the temptation to blame all of the gun play on a "culture of violence." The third section will discuss what has been attempted in terms of gun policies and regulations.

2. Measuring gun violence in Latin America and the Caribbean

The neglect of Latin American and Caribbean (LAC) gun violence is all the more stunning in view of its extreme prevalence, and the overall high rates of homicide, in those countries. Robert Muggah, a primary investigator of gun violence and research director of the Igarapé Institute in Brazil, notes that Latin America, home to 8% of the world's population, accounts for roughly one-third of the world's murders—400 per day in 2016 [5]. Indeed, according to Sanjurjo, "Most Latin American countries have homicide rates that are considered to be at epidemic levels by the World Health Organization" ([6], p. 3). In fact, he adds that seven countries—Brazil, Colombia, El Salvador, Guatemala, Honduras, Mexico, and Venezuela—are responsible for one-fourth of all homicides on the planet.

Not all murders are accomplished with guns, of course, nor are all gun-inflicted deaths homicides (globally, around 20% are suicides) nor all gun-inflicted injuries fatal. Nevertheless, turning to gun-related deaths specifically, the World Population Review estimates that nearly two-thirds [65.9%] of the more than 250,000 such deaths were located in six countries, four of them Latin American (Brazil 49,436, Venezuela 28,515, Mexico 22,116, and Colombia 13,169), plus the United States (37,038) and India (14,710). If we consider instead firearm-related death rates per

100,000 of population, LAC countries fill almost all of the top slots in the world, as depicted in **Table 1**.

In fact, the next 13 places are occupied by Western hemisphere countries (except for Greenland at number 11), including the United States (10.89) and Panama (10.30) in the 22nd and 23rd places, followed by Iraq (9.72) and Eritrea (9.44) before returning to LAC with Paraguay and Costa Rica [7]. (At the low end of the scale are Asian countries like South Korea, Japan, and China, tied at 0.08.) Incidentally, only three Western hemisphere countries make their way onto the top 10 of gun-related suicides: the United States (7.12) at number two, Uruguay (4.74) at number three, and Venezuela (2.50) at number 10. (Greenland again has the dubious distinction of leading the world in firearm-related suicide per capita.)

As is conveyed by the table, and by the presence of Mexico, Haiti, Trinidad and Tobago, Jamaica, Dominican Republic, St. Vincent and the Grenadines, St. Lucia, and Panama in the top 23, Central America and the Caribbean islands are overrepresented among the countries most plagued by gun violence. To be sure, their small populations potentially skew the rates (the US Virgin Islands, fifth on the list, saw only 23 gun deaths), but these are countries where gun violence has remained high or actually increased in recent years. We will have more to say about this shortly.

What is still more startling about gun violence in LAC is the proportion of homicides that are committed by firearms relative to the number of such weapons in those countries. Globally, approximately 42% of murders result from gun violence. Yet, according to the decade-old Small Arms Survey 2012, 21 of 23 LAC countries for which figures are available suffered higher death rates by guns than the global average. Central America led the way with 70% of homicides being gun-related, followed closely by the Caribbean at 61% and South America at 60%. Among the worst sites for firearm-related homicide were Honduras, Guatemala, Venezuela, Panama, and Puerto Rico, while Cuba defied the trend with only 4.8% of homicides perpetrated by firearm, consistent with its comparatively low homicide rate of 4.5 per 100,000 ([8], p. 9).

Another exception for LAC is its high incidence of female death caused by guns. Globally, 90% of gun-related deaths are men, particularly young men. In LAC, on the other hand, both overall female mortality and female morality due to guns are higher than the global average. Sanjurjo reminds us that most of the top 25 countries

Global rank	Country	Gun-related death rate
1	Venezuela	36.75
2	El Salvador	36.34
3	Guatemala	33.06
4	Colombia	25.29
5	US Virgin Islands	23.29
6	Brazil	22..84
7	Puerto Rico	20.95
8	Belize	19.96
9	Bahamas	19.87
10	Honduras	19.74

Table 1.
Global rank of countries by gun-related death rate (source: World Population Review).

for femicide sit in LAC and that, while around the world one-third of female deaths are caused by guns, in Brazil, Colombia, El Salvador, Guatemala, and Honduras that figure exceeds 60% ([1], p. 10).

What is especially confusing about this excessive rate of gun violence in LAC is that it occurs in a part of the world where gun ownership is not very common. For instance, it is often commented with a mixture of bemusement and alarm that the number of guns in the United States exceeds the human population (at 120.5 per 100 people). The rate of gun ownership in LAC is dramatically lower: Uruguay leads with a mere 34.7 guns per 100 people, and the rate falls to less than half that number in Honduras. In total, the gun ownership rate in the United States is 12 times higher than in LAC (which possesses on average less than 10 guns per 100 people), but the gun-related homicide rate in the US is seven times lower ([4], p. 274). It is easy to see, thus, why Sanjurjo concludes that, for reasons that we will consider soon, "the lethality of civilian firearms in many parts of Latin America is extraordinary" but also contradictory: "in countries like Guatemala, Honduras, or Jamaica, even low rates of firearm ownership (<12 per 100 residents) produce some of the highest firearm homicide rates in the world (>40 per 100,000)" ([1], p. 10). Clearly, it is not simply the number of guns but how and when they are used that makes the difference.

Another point that bears emphasis and analysis is the extensive variation of gun violence across the LAC region. Regional or continental averages mask a great deal of diversity and confound explanation of this violence. To start, as we previously documented, although both are higher than the international average, the difference between Venezuela's firearm-related death rate of almost 37 and Panama's of just over 10 is substantial. At the regional level, Central America's aggregate 67% of homicides involving guns stands far above South America's 53% and the Caribbean's 51%. At the national level, El Salvador, Guatemala, Honduras, Jamaica, and Venezuela occupy one end of the spectrum of homicide rate (more than 30) and proportion of homicides by firearm (more than 70%), whereas Argentina, Chile, Cuba, Peru, Suriname, and Uruguay occupy the other end (homicide rates of just over 10 and percentage of homicides by firearm at under 60) [8]. Uruguay is a particularly interesting case, because it is "by far the most heavily armed country in the region, but its homicide rates are closer to Canada's than to those of most neighboring countries," due to its "relatively trusted security institutions" and its "rigorous and well-respected registration system" ([1], p. 10).

Because of their unusually high incidence of violent crime and gun violence, the Caribbean islands have been the subject of focused attention. A very recent study by the Caribbean Community Implementation Agency for Crime and Security (CARICOM-IMPACS) reveals that violent death rates in the surveyed states of the Caribbean approach three times the global average, with guns implicated in up to 90% of those homicides—all while civilian gun ownership is strictly controlled, leading to low rates of legal ownership (1.63 registered guns per 100 people). On the other hand, illegal guns circulate widely in the area, mostly from the United States (see below). Within the region, some countries like Antigua and Barduda and Dominica have notably lower murder rates, while others such as Jamaica, Haiti, Trinidad and Tobago, and the Bahamas are among the highest, with guns used in the overwhelming majority of those killings. Guyana stands at the opposite pole, with a much lower proportion of firearm-caused death (see **Table 2**) ([9], p. 38).

Across all of the LAC countries, internal diversity of gun violence is also immanent. There is little disagreement among observers that cities tend to be more deadly than nonurban areas. Indeed, the Igarapé Institute reports that more than half of all

Country	Percentage of homicides by firearms
Jamaica	90
Haiti	84
Trinidad and Tobago	78
Bahamas	75
Guyana	17

Table 2.
Percentage of homicides by firearms, selected Caribbean countries (source: Weapons compass: The Caribbean firearms study).

Latin American cities with a population over 250,000 are victimized by higher-than-regional-average homicide rates and that 43 of the 50 most deadly cities in the world are housed on the continent [10]. The most dangerous cities in the region, however, lie in five countries—Honduras, Mexico, Belize, Brazil, and Colombia—and are not the largest cities in those countries (for instance, Veracruz and Acapulco in Mexico or Ananindeua and Maceió in Brazil) [11]. Among large cities, Koonings and Kruijt provide such disparate numbers as 122 homicides per 100,000 in Caracas and 116 in Guatemala City but only eight in Mexico City and four in Buenos Aires (these statistics do not all cover the same year) [12]. Within Guatemala, it is not urban areas as such that are more violent but particularly southern and border areas, associated with the production and smuggling of drugs; along the southern border, murders increased significantly in recent years, more than 80% committed with guns [13].

Within LAC cities, gun violence is often concentrated in particular neighborhoods. Muggah teaches that four districts alone in Mexico City "account for more than 25% of all violent crime there. In Bogota, 1.2% of street addresses account for more than 98% of homicides, and in Rio, roughly 5% of street addresses account for 95% of all homicides" [5]. Violence is similarly overrepresented in the Altavista section of Medellín, Colombia, with a staggering homicide rate of 140 per 100,000 compared to the city rate of 24.5 ([14], p. 34). But the most interesting and consequential dimension of diversity is the temporal one. Rates of violence generally and gun violence specifically have changed over time and not in the same direction in every location. Nationally, for example, murders decreased in Paraguay and Colombia in recent years as they increased by a factor of two or three in El Salvador, Honduras, Mexico, and Venezuela [6]. Returning to Caracas, Briceño-León stresses that the city was reasonably calm before 1990; within a short span "Caracas had become one of the most dangerous cities in the world. In the lists of homicides in the megacities of the world, Caracas appears, with 122 deaths per 100,000, as the most violent" ([15], p. 53). Much of this negative trend he ties to a coup d'etat in 1992 and then the election of Hugo Chavez in 1999, after which gun violence in the capital city soared by two-thirds.

In country after country, violent death rates grew between the 1970s and 1990s, marginally in some places (from 2.6 to 3.0 in Chile, from 3.9 to 4.8 in Argentina), drastically in others (2.1–10.9 in Panama, 11.5–19.7 in Brazil, and 20.5–89.5 in Colombia) ([16], p. 3). From the 1990s gun violence and violent death began to tick up in Central America and the Caribbean, although it actually dropped in South America [8]. Again in Guatemala specifically, rates rose steadily from 2001 to 2009, easing slightly in 2010 and 2011 [13]. The greatest increases between 1995 and 2010 occurred in Panama, El Salvador, Honduras, Jamaica, and Trinidad and Tobago [8].

Adopting a deeper historical perspective, it is well known that LAC countries share a legacy of violent colonialism, independence struggles, and oppressive dictatorships. Indeed, "By the late 1970s, 17 out of 20 Latin American nations were ruled by dictators" [17], leaving permanent scars on the institutions and psyches of those countries (see below). Military or other autocrats ruled violently in states from Paraguay (1954–1989), Brazil (1964–1985), Chile (1973–1990), Ecuador (1976–1979), and Haiti (1957–1986) to Argentina (1976–1983, infamous for its "dirty war"). As Kooning and Kruijt summarize, during that era of strife, violence in LAC "was mostly political, instigated on behalf of the state by military forces, paramilitary units, and police forces and policing extensions" ([12], p. 3). The end of these regimes and the return of democracy (such as it is) did not inaugurate an era of peace and nonviolence, but neither, Koonings and Kruijt warn us, should we regard the continuation and even rise in violence as a mere extension of the previous period. Instead, they adamantly insist that we understand general violence and specific firearms violence in the region as a form of "new violence" different from its predecessor. The old violence, prosecuted with guns and other weapons, largely aimed to maintain the power of the state and socioeconomic elites or, alternatively, to contest that power (as in populist, revolutionary, or leftist movements). In contrast,

> *new violence does not aim at conquering state power or changing or defending a regime per se. New violence instead occupies the interstices of the fragile and fragmented formal legal, institutional and political order. As a tentative definition we therefore suggest that "new violence" is socially or politically organized to wield coercion by evading or undermining the legitimate violence monopoly of formally democratic states ([18], p. 8).*

Not only is the new violence of the twenty-first century not less lethal, but it tends to be more so, partly because it is more "democratized," that is, carried out by a wider number and range of participants for a greater variety of reasons. The result, in many countries, is the creation and perpetuation of an "uncivil society," that is, one in which individuals or groups "force their interest upon the public domain on the basis of coercion and violence, in such a way that the legitimate aspirations of other groups or sectors in civil society are jeopardized and the rule of law is fragmented or shattered" ([18], p. 7), often provoking still more violence. Certainly much of this violence is perpetrated by criminals or by citizens attempting to protect themselves against crime (see below), but much is also still committed by the state, sometimes at a scale exceeding the height of political violence in the previous century. For instance, "in 2009 alone, there were over five times more deaths caused by routine police violence in Rio de Janeiro than the number of politically killed or disappeared in 21 years of military rule in Brazil"; concurrently, "Gang and police violence in El Salvador since 1992 has killed more people than the civil war between 1979 and 1992." Koonings and Kruijt conclude that this lethal violence can be directly linked to "the high proportion of deaths by small firearms" ([12], p. 4).

3. Explaining gun violence in Latin America and the Caribbean

Just as the facts of gun violence are complicated and diverse across regions, countries, cities, and time periods in Latin America and the Caribbean, so are the reasons for this violence. Some variables naturally obtain throughout the entire area, but many other variables are unique to disparate parts of the area. According to the

United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime (UNODC), the conditions that describe many if not most LAC countries and that contribute to "significant levels of lethal and non-lethal violence" include:

- persistent high levels of income inequality
- high levels of unequal access to services, including education and health
- gender inequality
- lack of opportunities for youth
- perceptions of prevalent corruption and impunity
- expanding levels of social unrest
- increased vulnerability to environmental threats
- since 2020, the socio-economic impact of COVID [19].

Before delving into these factors in this section of the chapter, a word is in order about the proliferation of what Kooning and Kruijt call "armed actors" in LAC countries. No longer is deadly force only or even mainly deployed by agents of the state (e.g. military or police) or enemies of that same state (insurrectionists, revolutionaries, Maoists, etc.). The panoply of armed actors undoubtedly embraces legitimate (but often heavy-handed if not militarized and unnecessarily deadly) law enforcement agents but also local, national, and international gangs and organized crime syndicates (in the drug trade and other branches of the illicit economy) as well as unofficial or extra-legal parties engaged in law enforcement and self-defense such as "urban vigilantes, lynching parties, and private security companies" and various paramilitary groups acting in the absence or failure of state authorities and in an atmosphere of "insecurity, fear and distrust" ([12], p. 1).

3.1 Poverty, unemployment, and inequality

The correlation between poverty and socioeconomic inequality on the one hand and violence (firearm-related or otherwise) is obvious and well understood. Unfortunately, as Muggah claims, Latin America contains 15 of the 20 most unequal countries in the world [5]. Sanjurjo, seconding this assessment, adds that in 2012 22% of young people (ages 15–29) were neither employed or in school, amounting to 30 million Latin American youths [6]. Global statistics support these claims. Latin America is far from the poorest area on earth; that depressing distinction belongs to Africa. However, Haiti consistently ranks among the poorest countries, 27th on the list compiled by the International Monetary Fund, and LAC countries like Honduras (59), Nicaragua (61), Venezuela (62), Bolivia (68), and Guatemala (70) hang in the middle of the pack. But the question is not simply the total national wealth of a country but how that wealth is distributed. Using the measure of Gini coefficient, which expresses the inequality of wealth distribution, Brazil occupies the ninth-most unequal spot, with Belize, Colombia, Panama, Guatemala, Honduras, Costa Rica, Nicaragua, Ecuador, Paraguay, Jamaica, and Mexico not far behind [20].

Some gun-related and other violence stems directly from such inequality. In El Salvador, for example, the infamous "fourteen families" formed an oligarchy and were willing to use force to maintain their status. In that country and similar ones in the region, small elites continue to monopolize most of the wealth, to constrict the options of the vast majority, and to contribute to gun violence directly (by employing private security companies or organizing paramilitary units) and indirectly (by driving poor people into gun-related criminal activity). Predictably, poor people can be attracted to the lures of the drug trade (see below) when employment options are unavailable. "A lack of work, particularly for youths, often translates directly to crime. 'In Brazil, every…2% increase in unemployment results in a 1% increase in homicide,' Muggah said. 'There's a pretty linear relationship'" [5].

3.2 Urbanization and hyperurbanization, often without sufficient city services

Gun violence is hardly exclusive to urban settings, as we have seen, but it is often particularly prolific there, especially in the poorer neighborhoods. Sanjurjo instructs us that not only is Latin America among the most unequal parts of the world, but it "is also the most urbanized, with over 80% of its citizens living in cities, characterized by rapid and poorly planned urban growth" ([4], p. 276). Some of these city populations live in hyperurban settings, where a troubling percentage of the country's people inhabit just one city. For years, 40% or more of Chileans have lived in its largest city, Santiago, while a whopping 75% of Paraguayans reside in its mega-city of Asunción.

This massing of humanity is compounded by inadequate services for these residents. According to Muggah,

> *Latin America urbanized before it industrialized, and within the space of two generations it went from being a profoundly rural society, with roughly 40% of the population in the 1950s living in cities, to being a predominantly urban society, where now you have got over 82% of the population living in cities….*
>
> *No other part of the world has urbanized so quickly. Sao Paulo added 8 million people to its population in about 25 years. New York took about 150 years to become a million-person city.*
>
> *Such rapid urbanization strains social structures and a city's ability to provide services. What you tend to get is a rapid informalization and peripheralization of the population as they are pushed to the margins, and your surplus labor, as it were, ends up living in slums, or what we call here favelas or shanty towns [5].*

Inevitably in such locations, a significant chunk of the population ends up in slum neighborhoods—between 10 and 60% in most LAC countries, although perhaps as much as two-thirds in Haiti, over half in Jamaica, and nearly half in Bolivia. Brazil's hilltop *favelas* are only the most famous example, where gun violence is perpetrated by gangs and militarized police alike.

3.3 Criminal gangs

Probably the first thing that most outsiders—and even many locals in LAC countries—think of when they ponder gun violence in those states is gang activity. One of the most notorious gangs is Mara Salvatrucha, also known as MS-13, which arose

in the so-called Northern Triangle of Central America, composed of countries like El Salvador, Guatemala, and Honduras but has spread to plague the United States itself. Many of the region's gangs are much smaller and more local, patrolling and exploiting specific cities, towns, or neighborhoods. Some if not many are involved in the drug trade (see below), but they also engage in other illicit (and often licit) activities that implicate them in gun violence.

That gang activity and violence is not identical to drug trafficking and its related violence is made apparent in a study of gangs in Guatemala. The United States Agency for International Development (USAID) compared gang areas and drug trafficking areas and found that there were actually more homicides by firearm in the former than the latter. This situation was exacerbated by the abundance of guns, Guatemala recording the highest rate of gun ownership in Central America (15.8 per 100 people in 2007, more than twice the next-highest rate of 7.0 in El Salvador and Nicaragua). Frustratingly, almost half of all homicides in the mid-2010s had an undetermined motive, but rivalry between gangs accounted for almost 100 per year during that period. Gangs were hardly responsible for most homicides: in 2015 gang rivalries killed 91, but armed robbery killed 184, personal arguments 70, crimes of passion 37, and family violence 15 [21].

Gun deaths due to gang rivalries highlight the fact that the victims of gang violence are not always innocent civilians but often members of other gangs. This process is at work in the surge of murders in northern Ecuador. The province of Esmeralda witnessed a doubling of homicides from January to August 2022, yielding 325 deaths from gang wars over territory that is central to the drug network and a former home to Colombian guerrilla forces. Consequently, the vicinity "has been in the grips of a spiraling crisis for years, a mixture of an inconvenient geographical situation, its role as a drug transit hub, and the presence of increasingly violent gangs" [22].

As others have noted in similar areas of gang violence, gangs often function as de facto rule-enforcement and even service-providing institutions, although often if not always in their own interests. Violence, including but not limited to gun violence, constitutes what Savenije and Van der Borgh call "perverse social organizations" that maintain a kind of social order, to be sure, but in ways that benefit some individuals (gang members and those they protect, who often reciprocally protect them) but damage entire communities ([23], p. 155). In fact, one line of business for gangs is precisely the "protection racket," a form of "violent entrepreneurship" in which gangs extract payment from citizens in exchange for the citizens' "rights" to use their land, do business, even travel through their neighbors, or seek gang "justice" for local disputes ([14], p. 28). Of course, control is exercised through threats and acts of violence: in one year (1998), El Salvador experienced 22,000 firearm injuries but also 96,000 beatings, 29,000 knife or machete attacks, and 285,000 death threats [23].

Finally, such gang activity, which is disproportionately male here as elsewhere in the world, perpetuates what Zaluar, in the Brazilian context, dubs the "masculine warrior ethos." For young members, "the main source of pride lies in the fact that they are part of the gang, use guns, join in robbing and looting, become famous for this, and, if they have the proper 'disposition,' may someday ascend in the hierarchy of crime." As mentioned, guns are central to this value-system: "there is no respect except for the other man's gun.... All the men carry guns; to carry a gun is to 'walk mated' or 'to have iron in your belt," and this macho performance is as much for the women they want to attract as for the men of other gangs—or even their own—they want to intimidate ([24], pp. 149–50).

3.4 Drug trafficking

The drug trade is not equivalent to gang activity, but the latter would not exist, at least not in its current form, without the former. Indeed, scholars and activists have observed an escalation of gun and other violence since the 1990s along with the escalation of drug trafficking, and outbursts of the "war on drugs" have commonly resulted in simultaneous outbursts of deadly violence. Since the drug business is both illegal and lucrative, it is an inevitable quarter for fighting between traffickers and police, between traffickers and the general population, and between one gang or cartel of traffickers and another. Very recently, InSight Crime, an institution that studies organized crime and security issues in LAC, reported that rival drug gangs "battling over control of Costa Rica's cocaine trafficking infrastructure and the domestic market are fueling an increase in violence in the country," resulting in a 36% rise in homicides from the previous year. In a stunning revelation, professional murderers or hitmen were responsible for almost one-third of all killing in the current year, and the dead, "for the most part, are drug dealers who did not want to give up their *plaza*, did not want to pay a quota for the right to sell drugs, or simply tried to fight another criminal group" [25].

Writing from the Andean context, Vellinga reiterates that coca production "became the 'big business' that we know today only two and a half decades ago"—that is, right about the critical moment of 1990. It is particularly appealing because growing coca requires little skill or investment, inclining many small players to enter the field. At the same time, the illegality of the substance "has turned violence into an indispensable element of market operations"—making violence a "market strategy" in this and other drug trades—in a number of ways: for "ensuring compliance in business transactions," "to protect one's market or market share" and a code of silence, "to conquer and defend sources of primary materials" as well as "smuggling routes," "to protect property obtained through unlaundered, illegally begotten funds," and "to pressure authorities or eliminate those in the law enforcement branch" who threaten their livelihoods ([26], pp. 78–9).

Speaking of law enforcement, certainly one stream of gun violence is the battle between police and drug traffickers. At the same time, we cannot overlook the complicity, even the participation, of legal authorities in this illicit business. Brazil emerged in 1985 from a military dictatorship known for abuses of power, illegal arrests, and torture. Consequently, "Some of the officers who had adhered to those unlawful practices became members of extermination and extortion groups, or became involved with *bicheiros* (racketeers controlling the illegal *jogo do bicho*, the 'animal game' lottery) and drug traffickers." Not only did firearms deaths not decrease after the end of the junta, but they actually increased and dramatically so: in 1980, before the military government fell, the gun death rate among adolescents was 59 per 100,000, but by 1995 it had soared to 184 per 100,000 ([24], p. 141).

3.5 State failure, insecurity, and privatization of security

Many critics inside and outside LAC countries have complained about the inability of the state to enforce laws and manage economies, let alone provide decent services, housing, and job opportunities for their people. Drugs and gangs specifically and gun and other violence more generally serve as both a cause and an effect of this incapacity, allowing criminals—and corrupt police and officials—to act with impunity while exposing the citizenry to pervasive insecurity. As Sanjurjo put it bluntly, "Latin

Americans frequently acquire guns in a context of state neglect, corruption, and illegitimacy. It is thus for many an attempt to counteract feelings of living in 'no man's land,' at the mercy of violent criminals and illegitimate state authorities" ([4], p. 287).

It goes without saying that LAC countries have a long and deep history of violence, dating back to the first contacts with European conquerors and colonists (and in some places, predating colonialism in brutal local states and empires). Indubitably "Latin American history since independence has been marked by conflict and the violent struggle for political power," conflict and struggle that it central to the construction of modern nations and their national identity ([27], p. vii). (Certainly the same could be said of virtually every country today.) The military dictatorships laid another layer of violence and injustice onto LAC history and culture, and scholars like Savloff have argued that the "afterlives of political violence" resonate today, inspiring a "pedagogy of cruelty" (a phrase borrowed from Rita Segato) throughout the region ([28], p. 44). The effect is not only a dispersion of violence into the fabric of society but a tolerance or acceptance of violence in which "people tend to resort to solving problems their own way, the sort of vigilante approach" [5].

While this may well be, a history and culture of violence alone, as we have contended, does not explain the intensification of firearms-related and other violence in the past 25 years. To any such history and culture we must amend the ongoing and growing environment of fear, mistrust, and insecurity. States have proven unable to guarantee peace and order; in fact, states have often been prime agents in conflict and disorder, especially against the poor, workers, and indigenous peoples. Those empowered to protect citizens often exploit and abuse citizens, delegitimizing governmental institutions and officials. Indeed, Sanjurjo holds that.

> *political illegitimacy prevails in all Latin American countries to a greater or lesser extent. Public opinion surveys show that in 2011, only 33 percent of Latin Americans trusted the police and just 36 percent considered that the police actually protected them from crime. Another 43 percent even thought that the police were involved in criminal activities. The perception of criminal injustice is not much different. In all but two countries, more than half of survey respondents said they had little or no trust in justice courts to be helpful in the case of suffering a robbery or assault ([1], pp. 7-8).*

And this feeling is not unfounded; for instance, in 2003 more than a 1000 homicides were attributed to the Rio de Janeiro police department. One *favela* dweller expressed it thusly: "we live in a state within a state… the law that operates is the 'law without law'" ([29], p. 65).

In such circumstances, it is little wonder that criminal gangs, drug trafficking cartels, and corrupt police are able to operate with relative immunity. It is little wonder too that individuals, families, communities, corporations, and elites take security into their own hands, spawning new armed actors on the LAC stage including vigilantes, lynching parties, self-defense militias, paramilitary units, and private security companies [4]. For the poor and vulnerable, guns (and other weapons) are a cheap and accessible form of self-protection, and of course for criminals guns are effective and culturally-attractive tools to achieve their interests and expand their influence. Godoy among others has examined lynching (which does not always involve guns) as a method of criminal justice or justice crime [30]. Scholars and journalists have also documented the persistence of paramilitary groups throughout the region; non-state or extra-state organizations which sometimes function with the tacit or explicit

support of the state, paramilitaries may be spontaneous local militias or private armies mobilized "to eliminate those who are perceived as threatening the socioeconomic basis of the political hierarchy." Tragically but not incomprehensibly, "The tactics and victims of paramilitary groups are reminiscent of the old counterinsurgency wars sponsored by some Latin American states during the late 1970s and 1980s" that once again evince "the usurpation or delegation of part of the state's monopoly over the legitimate use of violence to an extra-state actor" ([31], p. 6).

For those who do not take the extreme step of mobilizing a militia, an alternative is to hire a private security firm. Ungar has studied this "privatization of citizen security," noting that "the combination of democratization, neoliberalism, and record crime has converged to spur such a phenomenal growth in private security that private security guards not outnumber public police officers in nearly every country" ([32], p. 20). The number of such businesses and the guards they employ has skyrocketed since the 1980s, in concert with the explosion of gangs, drug traffickers, and gun violence across the region. Ungar estimated in 2008 that as many as 1.6 million private security officers worked in Latin America, with anywhere between 80,000 and 200,000 serving in Guatemala alone. Six thousand private security firms operated in the Mexico City area with between 140,000 and 450,000 employees, the majority of them former police officers.

Armed citizen security is not necessarily a bad thing in every incarnation (although vigilantism and lynching can hardly be justified), but scholars like Sanjurjo judge it to be both a sign of state weakness and a source of that weakness. Firearms in private hands are corrosive to social order, prompting "behavior which delegitimizes authorities and harms state security policies," which are singularly fragile in LAC "due to the legitimacy deficits of authorities and the lack of information regarding firearms and users, which hinder state capacities to control armed citizens from a distance" ([1], p. 1).

3.6 Proximity to US gun market

The afterlife and culture of violence and the armed privatization of citizen security would not be so bad if not for the access to a steady supply of guns. While a few large LAC countries have domestic gun manufacturers, a great many if not the majority of firearms owned and used flow from the United States, both legally and illegally. Loads of guns—and not just small arms—were shipped to countries like El Salvador by the United States during the right-wing fight against leftist guerrilla movements. According to Muggah, little El Salvador received more than 32,000 M-16 rifles (not to mention hundreds of thousands of grenades and other lethal devices) over a dozen years; three decades after the cessation of armed struggle, "at least half of the weapons turning up in crime scenes in the country can be traced back to the United States" [33].

Many LAC countries have been beneficiaries of American guns. Muggah also reports that over 70% of the firearms seized by Mexican officials originated in the US. That country, Chile, Colombia, and Brazil consumed almost two-thirds of the guns exported from the US to LAC between 2000 and 2014—Colombia and Mexico accepting almost half of the entire amount. As America's nearest neighbor, Mexico unsurprisingly took the lion's shared, passing along the rest to countries further south by various gun selling and smuggling routes. As Grillo, who has investigated the Western hemisphere gun trade, writes, between 2007 and 2018 the Bureau of Alcohol, Tobacco, and Firearms (and Explosives, as of 2002) linked over 150,000 guns in the hands of criminals to US manufacturers and retailers [34].

Authorities in LAC recognize the threat of American firearms. In August 2022 the Mexican government filed a multi-billion dollar lawsuit against several major US gun makers, alleging that 880,000 American firearms cross the border illegally each year [35]. The suit was predictably dismissed in a Boston federal court, but the plaintiffs have vowed to appeal. Meanwhile, leaders in other countries demand action from the US: in early 2023 the prime minister of the Bahamas pressed American vice-president Kamala Harris to curb the pipeline of illegal guns onto his island, and almost simultaneously the prime minister of St. Vincent and the Grenadines declared, "The United States has to do something about…the easy access to guns and the easy exportation of guns. They have the resources to help us with that" [36].

4. Gun policies and regulations in Latin America and the Caribbean

In January 2023 Dickon Mitchell, prime minister of Grenada, acknowledged the "constant threat" of small firearms in his small and relatively safe country. Despite that comparative calm—or maybe because of it—he stated, "I am not a fan of private people holding firearms, and that actually includes ex-police officers… I intend to take a zero-tolerance approach to firearms in our communities," arguing that "the idea that we should be walking around with firearms in my view is inimical to our culture, to our way of life" [37]. Like him, although perhaps less adamantly, governments throughout LAC are aware of or concerned about the multiplication of guns and the concomitant propagation of gun violence in their territories. Yet, while LAC leaders do not labor under the equivalent of the American Second Amendment, restricting and regulating guns is a daunting task, given the factors just discussed.

Sanjurjo considers it bizarre that, "Despite being the region in which the dreadful consequences of gun violence are most notorious, gun control is largely absent from public and political discourses"; worse, with its many countries and their disparate politics, LAC is and always will be at best a patchwork of gun policies and, as we have already noted, "the literature and overall knowledge on guns, gun violence, and gun control are very limited and usually focus on the particular situation of a given country" ([6], p. v). In his own summary of five countries in the region, he finds that four (Brazil, Ecuador, Panama, and Uruguay) do not ensure private citizens' right to own guns, although Mexico grants the right with some regulations. All five ban automatic weapons, and most prohibit at least some semi-automatic guns. Several also set limits on the number of firearms a person may possess (10 in Panama, 10 including one handgun in Mexico, three in Uruguay). All require some form of license and registration, and two (Brazil and Ecuador) forbid carrying weapons (the others allow carrying by permit or limited number). All but Mexico demand that the owner demonstrate a need for a gun, self-protection being the most basic valid reason. Of course, Sanjurjo is the first to admit that "it is uncertain how many gun owners actually go through the bureaucratic formalities needed to get a license and register their firearms" ([4], p. 282).

Other countries, especially in Central America and the Caribbean, have strict gun laws on the books:

- Barbados will not allow anyone convicted of gun violence in the past 5 years to acquire a license

- El Salvador, Panama, Costa Rica, and Honduras restrict legal access (license suspensions and/or gun confiscations) for individuals who commit domestic violence

- St. Kitts and Nevis seizes guns in cases of threatened domestic violence

- Antigua and Barbuda and the Bahamas allow revocation of licenses or seizure of weapons if the owner is deemed dangerous or mentally unhealthy, and both can refuse to issue a license in the first place [38].

These statutes indicate that authorities comprehend the association between domestic violence and gun violence.

In recent years, some countries have passed tougher gun laws. For instance, in 2022 Argentina enacted Resolution 157/2022 to prohibit firearms from persons accused of domestic or gender-related violence and to take their guns. Even so, abusers are seldom denied their current weapons or the freedom to buy new ones [39]. Others have tried and failed to strengthen their laws. Goldstein described the case of a 2005 Brazilian gun ban referendum. This Disarmament Statute would have "legislated sweeping restrictions on the selling and carrying of firearms"; specifically, it would have

> *required very strict legal procedures for the possession of firearms, increased the age limit for those who could own firearms, lengthened prison sentencing for those who carried firearms illegally, forced gun manufacturers to imprint bullets so that homicides could be traced to the original weapon, and made arms trafficking illegal in a manner parallel to the illegality of drug and animal trafficking ([40], p. 31).*

Unfortunately, it was defeated by a 64% no vote. In fact, during his 2018 presidential campaign, Jair Bolsonaro promised to abolish the gun laws already in effect and to "liberalize their acquisition and use by civilians," a common right-wing refrain ([6], p. 3). Finally, despite the fact that homicide increased by 80% in 2022, Ecuador rolled back gun regulations adopted in 2011 that successfully reduced murder rates. However, with the current surge in homicides (almost five times the rate in 2017), president Guillermo Lasso reasons that Ecuadorians need greater freedom to carry weapons "in response to growing insecurity" [41]. Time will tell which approach is wisest.

5. Conclusion

Most countries in Latin America and the Caribbean have a gun violence problem, some an extreme problem. But theirs is not the problem as witnessed in the United States, with its profligate and anomic mass shootings associated with interpersonal disputes, hate crimes, or simply wanton desire to hurt people. Accordingly, this chapter's presentation on gun violence in LAC countries offers several salutary lessons:

- The United States cannot serve as a model or lens for understanding and curbing gun violence in other countries.

- Gun violence must be understood within the broader context of violence, homicide, and non-lethal injury.

- Like politics, gun violence is local, with significant variations by country, city, neighborhood, and time period.

- In gun violence, culture and history matter, but they matter not as destiny but as legacy. A culture and history of violence may make violence more likely, but outbreaks and escalations of violence are much more related to specific contemporary forces and experiences.

- There is no simple linear correlation between rates of gun ownership and rates of gun violence.

- While gun violence is frequently linked to gang activity and drug production and trafficking, it cannot be reduced to those factors.

- Gun violence is often related to real or perceived danger and insecurity, flowing from the state's inability to rein in crime or in many instances the state's participation in crime.

- Taking security into citizens' private hands tends to increase the number of armed actors and can potentially increase, not decrease, gun violence while further eroded the legitimacy of the state.

- Finally, much more—and more current and more consistent—research on gun violence in Latin America and the Caribbean is urgently needed.

Hopefully this chapter has demonstrated this last need and helped to point scholars to immediate areas of investigation.

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Chapter 4

Small Armaments Non-Proliferation and Terrorism Security Dilemma Smuggling in Aegis of the Asymmetric Warfare

Vakhtang Maisaia

Abstract

The topic will reveal how armaments proliferation effects on terrorism developments cases and how is possible to correlate new type of terrorism, like Jihadist Terrorism with small armament proliferation issues. All of these factors are linked to asymmetric warfare provisions and attacks perception. The regime of non-proliferation recognizes only large arms and armaments restrictions and proper international law provisions are provided that deal with collective security prerequisites. The small arms and armaments proliferation is limited only with national legal, even sometimes non-binding provisions that makes possible increase scope of terrorism activities at any level. Small armaments are good case for promoting hybrid attacks and guerilla operation and even urban combat wagging by terrorist and aggressive non-state violent actors that easily transformed into security dilemma modality from national to international level. All of the activities are being performed in military scientific terms in aegis of the Fourth Generation Warfare Strategy.

Keywords: disarmament, non-proliferation regime, geopolitics, Jihadist terrorism, security dilemma, non-state violent actors

1. Introduction

With regard transformation of military strategy concept in conjunction with new realms of contemporary international security environment and threat perceptions, it should be considering fresh approaches in military analysis, forecast, planning and conducting combat operations aiming at demoralizing and debilitating of enemy forces by military and political means. Having considered the transformation in field of Military Strategic Thoughts that is connected with new strategy of the Fourth-Generation War (FGW), getting accustomed to processes of 20th and the 21st century processes. In aegis of academic conceptualizations – FGW strategy is linked with concrete military conflicts that foreseen the following components:

- sophisticated technological developments
- warfare with terrorist attack elements
- a non-national nature of warfare
- a threat toward culture of enemy
- psychological warfare and media manipulation
- imposition a sense of vulnerability and debilitation toward enemy with short-run attack and counter-strike [1]

It necessary to identify that whilst performing FGW operations, the ones contain also non-military elements. Among others, one of such elements is being considered – Arms Illegal Smuggling pattern as Asymmetric Challenge case (*see below Jihadist Arms/Drug Transit case)*. In this regard, new security challenge classification could be perceived in case of Actor-Centered Challenge – having clarification of new type of threat emanating from such actors as are international terrorist organizations or networks and international criminal organized groups. In this retrospect is important take into consideration new approach in waging a war and its criteria in conjunction with FGW format. Since 18th century till 21st century military strategy has been changing drastically from classical into modern type of modality origin. Nowadays, in case of the FGW strategy planning is possible to consider elements of Asymmetric Warfare tactics that are necessary sought for waging wars in the 21st century. There are several approaches in identification of the Asymmetric Warfare doctrine, including academic ones. One of the identifications defines that: Asymmetric Warfare – a war between belligerents whose relative military power differs significantly from each other and who have disparate military strategies [2]. It drastically contradicts to so-called "symmetric" or conventional warfare strategy where parties engaged in the warfare game possess equal and similar military capabilities and resources and only they are differ in details of execution [3]. There are various examples of waging asymmetric wars at regional levels, for instance in the Central Asia and in the Caucasus ones. The FGW strategy as new military doctrine plays vital role in transformation of modern military conflicts that characterized with high dynamics of combat activities and so-called "blitzkrieg" oriented provisions. Hence, namely, the asymmetric warfare is being considered as central-pillar pattern in contemporary war games. Due to geostrategic implications, one of the type of asymmetric warfare is sought newly emerged so-called "Jihadist Asymmetric Warfare" strategy demonstrated in conflicts developed in Syria, in Afghanistan and in Iraq and reflected as a decisive factor at regional level too, on case of the Caucasus region. Therefore, namely the strategy exploited by various Jihadist military groups and organizations similar to "Al-Qaeda", "Islamic Caliphate" (DAESH) or even "Taliban" in Afghanistan made possible for dragging out the NATO ISAF mission for more than 20 years followed up with complete withdrawal of the NATO and USA Forces in 2021. Initially, the NATO ISAF mission de-facto completed when "Al-Qaeda" leader Osama Bin Laden was killed in Pakistani city Karachi and all "Al-Qaeda" network moved to Pakistan territories not controlled by the Pakistani government. Naturally, if the "Al-Qaeda" and DAESH problem were be dissolved, the "Taliban" could not be considered as a challenge to the western community. However, the situation in Afghanistan is still stalemate and

is undermining security conditions not only at regional but also at global levels. The geopolitical situation over Afghanistan remains as very unstable and is caused to penetrate into security dilemma of geopolitical dialectics.

In accordance to the classical military theoretical assumptions provided by Carl von Clausewitz – any kind of war is a real chameleon because it changes its nature in every concrete case and notable the phrase is becoming true content withregard the Black Sea Regional Security. The contemporary content of war defines inclusion of asymmetric threats that provides implementation of sophisticated national security politics by the actors of the global security system and envisages the following components: power, chance, astonishment with involvement of national Armed Forces and their doctrines and armaments. The conventional and asymmetric military conflicts are vital to be recognized at the regional level, including with involvement of so-called "Non-State Violent Actors" ("DAESH, "Al-Qaeda", etc.). After the Russian annexation of the Crimea of Ukraine, the Black Sea Region has already transformed into a global conflict zone. The International Community witnessed that there are two regional hegemons: Russia and Turkey pursuing their own geopolitical and economic interests in the region and the area around the Caspian Sea. Recently, new challenger, China, as a global power, with its "One Belt and One Road" Initiative (OBOR), expresses its own interests toward the region, including from the asymmetric threat perception points of view. Suffice it, the Asymmetrical wargame scenario has been demonstrated precisely in Tskhinvali Region (wargame between Russia and Georgia) and in Crimea (hybrid war between Russia and Ukraine) cases. Namely the scenarios have been occurred in aegis of the Black Sea Region. It was clearly demonstrated asymmetric threats in a Military Strategically and Operational levels.

A political jargons, mainly used in strategic studies, "asymmetry", "asymmetrical threat" or "asymmetrical warfare" refer to counter diction to methods exploited in conventional battles and employed by terrorist groups and organizations of different origin (including mainly Jihadist ones). According to some academic scientific assumptions, asymmetry is an opposite to symmetry, i.e. causing of an imbalance. This imbalance could be reviewed in various forms. There are five components of asymmetries:

- the promote imbalance condition,
- the distinct motivation,
- the different content of statehood or legal status-quo of actors
- the different methods used by the parties
- the different resources and methods quality

In this sense, a conflict is always asymmetrical when there are significant differences in terms of the forces, means and methods used, but also in terms of the motivation and morality of the opponents [4]. "The terms Asymmetric Warfare and Asymmetric Threats are used for the type of security threat that is directed against political, strategic, military and economic structures in a form that does not correspond to the typical conventional threat scenarios. Asymmetry always exists when one of the conflicting parties behaves unexpectedly differently, for example through a new form of tactic, with an unexpected use or a different use of existing weapons,

or through attacks against ,,other targets" [5]. Asymmetries of strength arise from the fact that one side gains a lead over its opponents through permanent innovations in military organization and weapons technology, which can no longer be made up within a foreseeable period of time. Tried doing it the superior side of shooting up new spheres and new spaces for the purposes of warfare, into which the other side cannot follow to technological inferiority [6].

Asymmetry of strength is opposed to the asymmetry from weakness, where the loser tries to evade the superior side with the help of creative strategies and tactic. A classic form of strategic asymmetry out of weakness is the partisan war, the aim of which is not to reveal oneself, to evade open combat, and to act from behind the scenes, attack like a raid and then go into hiding again. The asymmetry based on the idea that the fighters tend to be unrecognizable. The aim is to extend the war over space and time, and to wear down the superior enemy [7]. The guerilla war doctrine was considered one of them that applies to the asymmetric strategy with implication of defeating superior opponent by offering technologically and organizationally resistance methods and techniques. It casual that key mission of the guerilla war was to get transformation into state-actor status and by doing so achieving rebalancing. The most important difference between guerilla struggle and terrorism is that guerilla struggle is basically of a defensive nature, while the terrorism strategy also offers offensive options for the defeated opponent [8].

At time being, there is no any precise lines between war and peace, mainly in conjunction with key actors of the international security – states. The states are destabilized from inside, for example by inciting minorities perhaps that indicate that the hybrid warfare has a mission to achieve political goals. The hybrid warfare doctrine indicates some kind of flexibility mode that included mixed form of components – open and covertly applied actions, regular and irregular, symmetrical and asymmetrical, military and non-military means of conflict transformation with the purpose of blurring the threshold between the binary states of war and peace, particularly in aegis of the international law.

The hybrid wars included three different areas as so-called "front-lines":

- conventional battlefields;
- population and public society of the attacked state;
- the international public community

Hence, the hybrid war participants are both state and non-state actors. Both of them are using multimodal activities at operational and tactical levels aimed at achieving synergy effects in the physical and psychological dimensions of the conflict [9]. It concludes that any type of hybrid wars could be wagged with exploitation of both conventional and irregular combat modes, not characterized only in the military but also in the economic senses and with intensive use of the media to wage an information war too. A shift transformation takes place in realms of contemporary century warfare doctrinal planning and the transformation has already implicated of identifying new type of warfare strategy – asymmetric war with representation of hybrid warfare that contributing in re-shaping a grand strategy that allows policymakers to steer through the uncertainties of a complex international security environment. By the way, recalling the definition, information warfare consists of activities that deny, exploit, corrupt, destroy, or protect information. Traditional means of conducting

information warfare include psychological operations, electronic warfare, military deception, physical attack, and various security measures.

Arms smuggling and asymmetric warfare concept are inter-correlated as providing basics for inspiration of military conflicts and terrorism attacks performed mostly by new global actors – Violent Non-State Actors.

1.1 Chapter one: asymmetric warfare and terrorism and geopolitical implications

In the 21st century, the theory and concept of hybrid war have become one of the types of military conflicts that have a great impact on international political processes. In a general formulation, hybrid war is a pre-planned process of influencing (or) and changing the government, and an indirect way of overthrowing the government of another country using military and non-military methods and techniques. In contrast to full-scale conventional warfare, during hybrid warfare, more attention is paid to the use of non-military methods, among which the following can be distinguished:

1. Methods of economic influence (economic sanctions, economic blockade, and economic war), the purpose of which is to weaken and destroy the economic potential of a given country (i.e. a hostile state);

2. Methods of influencing the internal political system (disturbing the stability of the political system using various open and hidden methods), the purpose of which is to influence the government of another country and change the government. In parallel with this, the influencing the foreign-political course of the given country is being implemented;

3. Methods of foreign political discrediting, the purpose of which is to shake the prestige and positive image of the mentioned country on an international level. At this time, diverse methods of disinformation are used.

The above-mentioned non-military methods of hybrid warfare combine the following specific tools: terrorist acts, the use of elements of psychological warfare, cyber-terrorism, disinformation, assistance to separatist groups within a given country, and the establishment of proxy governments (for example, the occupied Donetsk and Lugansk regions of Ukraine), covert support for international terrorist organizations, etc. [10]. The Reporter Lord Jopling (Great Britain) from the NATO Parliamentary Assembly provides a credible identification of term "hybrid warfare". By his definition: "Hybrid warfare is a special tactics aimed at testing and determining the weakness of an adversary via non-military capabilities (namely, political, informational, economic and manipulation provisions) that is pushed through symmetric and asymmetric military tools" [11]. It is the existence of the information war component that represents the constituent part of the so-called "Fourth Generation War" (FGW) concept. On the other hand, part of the information war is considering the theory of psychological warfare with aiming to achieve military goals. In that regard, it is considering holding a propaganda campaign as a necessary part of the hybrid war in order to cheat and manipulate with people as prescribed by propaganda. The propaganda becomes an integral part in realizing military deception and as a part of the hybrid warfare plays important role as a tool [12]. Herewith, having considered military analysis pattern, so-called "Kinetic Operation" is indispensable part of the hybrid war. Under the concept it is meant involvement of professional militaries as

civilian personnel with the effect of so-called "little green men". In contemporary cases, "hybrid war" strategy envisaged involvement of private military company representatives with different military missions and goals as it were demonstrated on case of the so-called "Wagner" group in Syria and in Libya, which are personally supervised by the personal Vladimir Putin's, the President of the Russian Federation, famous Russian tycoon Yevgeniy Prigozhin who was killed in 2023. Here are some identifications of "hybrid war" modality that are to be revealed within the scope of this definition:

1. The factor of "hybrid war" plays great role in shifting contemporary international security system in most phase of instability. Moreover, the war concept implies two specific approaches: theoretical-conceptual and realistic ones.

2. The theoretical-conceptual approach recognizes is represented by the fact that the actors of the existing international order have already recognized the importance of "hybrid war" and the extent of its influence and have made appropriate compact in their strategic documents – for example, the President of the Russian Federation, Vladimir Putin, approved the military strategy of the country in 2014, where the basic elements of hybrid war strategy mentioned – for example, according to Article 32 of the new military doctrine adopted on December 28, 2014, one of the main tasks of the Armed Forces of the Russian Federation in peacetime is the protection of the economic interests and strategic communication and transport nodes of the country [13]. As for NATO – at the 2014 summit in Wales, the leadership of the alliance identified four specific asymmetric threats that include the following:

   - **Cyber war and cyber-attack** – The non-conventional threat that was mentioned as a response provided in aegis of the Article 5 of the NATO Washington Treaty, with an appropriate response given to it;

   - **Energy security** – Uninterrupted energy supply carriers in the Euro-Atlantic space, protection of critical infrastructure, and security of energy reserve potential is the main pain points for the member states of the alliance, and in this direction the use of its military potential at the appropriate level;

   - **Terrorism** – In the document of the declaration, the asymmetric threat of terrorism is presented quite widely with special geopolitical spatial implications (for instance, Afghanistan and Iraq);

   - **Hybrid war** – Under the jargon is perceived new type of threat that was identified at first time in the NATO lexicon. The mentioned asymmetric threat refers to what is currently taking place in Ukraine – that is, the fight against military separatism, which may have global dimensions [14].

As for the realistic approach, it is expressed by the fact that after 2014, following the occupation and then annexation of the Crimean Peninsula of Ukraine by the Russian Federation, a new geopolitical era has already begun – the "New Cold War" and the conditions of the world order have shifted into multipolarity model with involvement at least three global power actors [15].

3. Certainly, the strategy of "hybrid war" with involvement of certain types of actors (for example, the USA, Turkey, the Russian Federation, "DAESH", Taliban, etc.) influences on realms of the regional security processes and there are several specific examples of the one in case of the MENA (like situation in Libya, Syria and Iraq) and the Caucasus region. On case of the Caucasus region (notable South Caucasus area) demonstration of hybrid war strategy against Georgia in a way of so-called "creeping occupation" becomes Russia's military offense action since August of 2008;

4. The formulation of "Information war" conducted at the national level is manifested in formation realization of specific propaganda initiatives tailored with manipulation and disinformation media flows in order to influence on public opinion trends, and through the establishment of so-called "Reflexive Control", which precisely corresponds to the strategy of hybrid warfare. The method aims at bringing the desired government to the power in respective states [16]. The concept of "Information war" includes very interesting components such, for instance, cyber-attacks, disinformation, surrogate informal and formal structures, cyber sabotage, etc. It should be noted here that a new version of hybrid war may also appear – by conducting cultural-educational and special dissertation research and special studies, in the post-Soviet space, to implement informational-psychological influence and covert neurolinguistic influence. The Chinese military leader and philosopher Sun Tzu wrote about this kind of tactic [17].

It is important to formulate conceptual and even theoretical identification and classification of jargon "terrorism: and review it from scientific background. Initially, a distinction between terms of "terrorism" and "terror" is necessary to clarify and accept. The two ones are referring quite different modalities.

The term "Terror" appeared in political vocabulary as a modality of political behavior in time of the "Great Revolution" in France. The definition implied by eradication with coercive measures, including formal killing, mainly political opponents to the Revolution. It is agreed that both jargons "Terror" and "Terrorism" include both involve settle any kind of political problems by forceful means. It possible figure out several cases in world history where state exploited fierce measures against its political foes and opponents as well as contrary, various underground groups committed brutal activities against the ruling political elite and state structures. Hence, the definition "terror" refers repression and persecution its citizens and political opponents that performed by a state governmental structures and the definition "terrorism" envisages an activity carried out by opposition radical political groups against state institutions and the ruling political elite.

Considering some geopolitical aspects of terrorism, is possible defined the following models:

- Political Terrorism
- National terrorism
- Social terrorism
- Religious terrorism [18].

Those models clearly underscores of rapid transformation of terrorism phenomenon from political into ideology formats starting from 19th century. However, contemporary forms of terrorism emerged in Europe during the epoch of the enlightenment, namely in the nineteenth century. In that respect, even at scientific and academic levels, there are not precise definitions either to "terrorism" or "international terrorism" that could be acceptable to qualified specialists. Nevertheless, problems linked with terrorism still reflects enormous security dilemma in the 21st century global politics. For instance, in accordance to international law provisions: "terrorist act is a killing of a head of government or a member of diplomatic missions and any other interference with the intention to influence the politics of a particular state" [19]. At present, terrorism has much more large identification and transcends its original definition and scope of activities demonstrated by the various international terrorist organizations.

In global security modality, terrorism is also correlating with arms smuggling development and mostly, in recent time, small arms smuggling and illegal transfers are being popular, including 3D printed weaponry. The ultra-left terrorist oriented organization members also have a few high-qualified terrorists in Africa who are capable to deal with modern weaponry systems. As for, 3D printing weaponry elements, it is noteworthy to mention that some the ultra-left oriented terrorists can quickly adopt technological advances with data encryption in order to terrorize population.

It illustrates how the small armaments smuggling could be considering as the asymmetric threat, even non-military identification, however, in case of the terrorism and mostly, new terrorism combat cases, it could be transferred into the military identification cases, mainly in aegis of the "Al-Qaeda" and "Islamic Caliphate" terrorism examples. The cases demonstrate that any kind of arms smuggling is to be enlisted in the asymmetric attack and threat dimension modality.

1.2 Chapter two: small arms smuggling and influence on geopolitical processes - Conceptual and theoretical methodology

Having considered new realms of the security globalization, there is new tendency in unification of the threat matrix perception. Currently, as asymmetric threat for contemporary international security perspective, namely the illicit trade in small arms that is a part of the global arms business that transcends realms of such criminal transnational activities as are: civil conflict, corruption, terrorism, and random acts of massive violence. Originated in 19th century, the illicit arms trade has been composed of serious problem for international society. Being not a large in scope of global arms illegal transfer, the small arms illegal transfer remains infamous and dangerous. The small arms illicit transfer has character of less transparency and being incomplete and inadequately substantiated. Suffice it to say, the form of criminal transactions, is very well-scrutinized and researched. Despite of the fact, that in some cases, trade in small arms and light weapon are accepted by the governments as legal provision, there is a consensus among the levels of government, business and civil society that the activity is illegal and contains elements of aggressive remedial behavior [20].

Having considered the scope of small arms smuggling cases and their illicit arms trade, is important to identify three levels of the "market" perspectives that is being conducted with involvement of the concrete actors – state and non-state actors. The actors are diversified by the its political origin, geopolitical implications, foreign and defense policy priorities and political system stability provisions. One of the United

Nations definitions of illicit trafficking is from a 1996 UN report. The report deals with conventional arms transfers, which states that" illicit arms trafficking is understood to cover that international trade in conventional arms which is contrary to the laws of States and/or international law" [21]. Due to the contemporary international security realms, at present, provision of the small arms illicit trade and smuggling, together with global and regional arms smuggling cases, could be considered via current military conflict occurrence and development ones and reviewed via the geopolitical and geostrategic landscape perspectives. The conflicts of the 21st century mainly gone between the state and non-state actors and are more dynamic rather than the conflicts held in Cold War period. Free and ability to get access to official and historic records and information, including governmental sources, provide credible assistance to those groups engaged in illegal activities. Namely, these three groups, including arms illegal transit, consider to be a proper actors vis-à-vis their geographical locations, ideologies, government opposition and relatively high public visibility.

By and large, there are three types of the "Market" geopolitical modality that is linked with transfers of firearms, weaponry systems and global arms. The scheme is divided into three main market type perspective and it has very clear geopolitical identity. The classification is very general and needs some kind of sophistication however the scheme is acceptable from security study provision (see in detailed **Figure 1**).

- **"Gray Market" (Illegal) – Illicit gray-market transfers**: the illegal transactions include, mainly in way of covert operations, transfers conducted by a government of a state (in hidden policy agenda provision), or brokers/entities sponsored by (or acting on behalf) of the government. The pattern of the "Gray Market" relies on state and non-state actor interaction behaviors where the armaments are key phenomenon for pursuing concrete, in most cases, asymmetric military mission achievement. The market size is predominately concise and small in scale. It mainly oriented on small arms illegal transfer or trade transactions, like hand-made construction of simple weapons or copies of existing ones in private workshops or homes without legal authorization.

Figure 1.
The illegal arms smuggling "Market" geopolitical identification.

Generally to say, these transactions could have legal origin albeit is possible to act in illicit manner, mostly in conducting authorized import and export trade operations. In any case, "Gray Market" examples are possible to take place when the governments and their representatives are seeking to avoid any legislature and legal provisions and could easily violate the law. It is worthy to note that the term "gray market" would be used to clarify the illegal procurement of arms from such kind of semi-governmental entities, as are representatives of Armed Forces and other governmental actors. For example, arms transfer occurs between governmental forces and rebel ones as well as seizure arms during the combat actions and looted weapons from governmental and law enforcement caches are cases of the arms illicit seizure and transfers. Those weapons which are classified as "Gray Markets" ones could have identification of non-registered origin, aimed at used for concrete criminal transactions purposes and considered as illicit market products" [22]. These kind of transactions are performing when the governments, their agents, or individuals exploiting loopholes or intentionally circumventing national and/or international laws or policies. The type of the market could also linked with so-called "State Sponsored Terrorism" example when on the territory of a country with consent of the hosted government or authority providing shelter to a terrorist group leadership to complete, equip and train para-militarized grouping for performing special terrorist attack or mission at any desirable direction (for example, "Laphankuri Special Operation" Case on August 28, 2012 see below). The market orientation is more prone toward so-called "southern" or developing country cases and oriented toward more small arms smuggling or transfers;

- **"Black Market (Illicit)" – Black Market Transfers**: This illegal transactions and market segment contains transfers (including small arms) that clearly violate national and international laws. All transactions are taken place without any official or covert government consent and control. The "Black Market" with small arms illicit transfers has very evident global scope and indeed is a product of the globalization. Certainly, it is important to make clear clarification of organizational chart of the arms illicit arms transfer encompasses segments of "Black Market", "Gray Market" and industrial production. The itinerary of small arms transfers starts as the legal action and later transforms as illegal conduit. It could be considered various examples how is possible to transform legally organized small arms deal into illegal transfer. There are many types of indications of the transactions. Like, corruption, arms seizure in military conflict zones, plunders, delivery via unsafe paths, etc. [23]. Albeit the "Black Market" is being considered as part of the global illicit trade network, the main feature remains of operating beyond the official governmental structures and entities. Certainly, when is being considered the role and mission of the governments in these transactions, it is noteworthy mention that their involvement in it is illegal, even without their knowledge, control and consent. In case if it occurs in anyway, the motivation of the official governmental actors links with matters of corruption, personal gains and even having no idea where the ones engaged with. Ironically, when the illegal small arms transfers take place, even without awareness of the governmental actors, the "Black Market" is anyway a matter of business of great deal and have much more big scope and volume of transfers [20]. The "Black Market" with arms smuggling cases are worldwide known and main case was linked with Viktor Bout example, the Russian Arms "Black Dealer". It is also

interesting point that the type of the market are intertwined such asymmetric challenges providers as are the terrorists, drug smugglers and arms illegal traders. The interconnection could be visional at any regional level and in the European one. There were several facts of arms illegally seizure and smuggle in France. At the national level, the majority come from thefts from individual gun owners, which represents approximately 9000 weapons stolen each year [24]. At international level, main channel of illegal arms supply foreseen in Balkans. In aegis of the terrorist threat, arms trafficking considered as an element of organized crime, and mainly drug traffickers, in order to protect and extend their drug trading territory are seeking to obtain these arms. In conjunction with sophisticated underground criminal and illegal networks and via their interconnections with drug traffickers, many terrorists have managed to arm themselves before carrying out their acts, equipped with long guns that give them a much greater operational capacity [25]. Another case where these three asymmetric challenges – drug smuggling, arms illegal trade and terrorism are intertwined and operated in common is Sahel area in the African continent. Namely, the Sahel has been transformed into territory which is considering as a "black" hub between Sub-Saharan Africa and North Africa for two decades. Exactly abovementioned asymmetric challenges really subverted social security background in the region. It has become a key link in the geopolitics of organized crime. Mainly illegal arms and drug trafficking promote strengthening criminal economy and subvert development of financial and social prosperity and cause of demonstration of weakness of the State to cast these challenges [26]. All type illegal arms delivery, drug smuggling and terrorism become dominant factor in these zones are driving force for creation of holistic organized crime networks. For instance, drug trafficking organized groups in the Sahel has transformed the area into hub for the global network.

As for how is possible that two asymmetric challenges are to be intertwined and have common roots, meaning arms and drug smuggling.

The asymmetric challenges, including small arms smuggling and "Black Arms Market" promoters are indeed so-called "Non-State Violent Actors". Violent Non-State Actors (VNSA) – Aggressive non-state actors – politically motivated groups operating independently from states that have corporate interests and are carrying out collective violence against victims. The VNSA are product of decolonization [27]. The VNSA include eleven categories:

1. Para-military Religious Movements (Al-Qaeda terrorist organization

2. International Criminal Organized Network ("Camorra ", "Coza Nostra", "The Institute of Lawful Thieves")

3. Radical Tribal Movements ("Taliban" movement in Afghanistan)

4. Warlords

5. Clans exploit kleptocracy power (Father-son "Duvall's Clan" in the Dominican Republic)

6. Private Military Companies ("Wagner" Group)

7. Ecological fighters and activists ("Greenpeace" union)

8. Radical Nationalistic Movements ("Sinn-Fein" party)

9. Private Secret Intelligence Companies (Russian tycoon Boris Berezovsky's private security service "Atoli")

10. Private Military Companies of the multinational corporations (Russian "Gazprom")

11. Narcomafia (Drug smuggling "Medellin" Cartel in Colombia)

Namely the non-state actors are really consumers and suppliers of the "Black Arms Market" segments and their operational capabilities are predominantly high and compatibility with posing concrete and real threats to the international society;

- **"White Arms Market" (Legal) – Legal Arms Transfers**: this is absolutely legal binding transactions carried out by the international law actors – states among themselves and the manufacture, production, transfer and transit operations of any kind of armaments conducted in accordance and with respect to national and international laws. The market provisions are being reviewed and controlled by strict legal binding regulation of the inter-governmental international organizations and various international and national legal acts. Even special Arms Control Registration envisaged to get under control all formal provisions among and between the states in arms trade transactions in accordance to the UN Charter. In conjunction with several international law documents (for instance, the Firearms Protocol and the Arms Trade Treaty), the jargon "arms transfer" mostly affiliates with international transfers. According to the Protocol "arms transfers" are the cross-border movement (import, export and transit) of firearms, their parts and components and ammunition, and their unauthorized movement from or across at least two State territories, as well as to the movement of firearms without proper marking as illicit trafficking. As for, the Arms Trade Treaty, it outlines the term "transfers" to refer to the international trade in general, which comprise a broader category of transfers, namely "export, transit, trans-shipment and brokering, hereafter referred to as 'transfer'" [28]. The other regulations on the "White Arms Market" was adopted in 1990. In 1990, two very important legal bounding documents were adopted – the Charter of Paris for a New Europe (Paris Charter) and the Treaty on Conventional Armed Forces in Europe and the Vienna Document 1990 that reinforced international security environment. Having compared the two previous documents that were negotiated within the framework of an antagonistic division between East and West, it should be mentioned that both of them played positive role in approaching peace and stability at regional and global levels [29]. A key provider in globalized arms trade sector transparency adherence and promotion are international global think-tanks which aim are to provide credible informative coverage of the legal arms deal transactions and arms treaties (one of the key provider is being considered Stockholm International Peace Research Institute – SIPRI). Generally to undermine, the "White Arms Market" takes place with direct or indirect involvement of a government or its affiliated agents and the action is congruent with national and international law criteria.

Taking into consideration the scope and range of the arms trade and arms smuggling transactions and deal-makings is possible to identify and classified the ones with geopolitical diversification varieties and framed them into four main categories:

- Small Arms Range Trade and Smuggling (for instance, pistols, hand-made weaponry elements, automatic guns, 3D printed weapons, etc.)
- Medium Arms Range Trade and Smuggling
- High Arms Range Trade and Smuggling
- Global Arms Range Trade and Smuggling

The classification is correspond to conceptualization framework of the Arms Smuggling and Trade cases and indeed provide good basis for promotion of its analytical modalities and forecast frame missions.

Regarding the theoretical methodology platform for such specific area of security studies and international relations as are arms trade and smuggling with arms control and transfer transparency could be considered the following theoretical school approaches, like:

- The concept of network security governance
- The Securitization theory or "Copenhagen School"
- The "New Wars" theory
- The Political Realism
- The Regional Security Complex Theory and Security Dilemma

The most acceptable are two of them that indicated the political, cultural, social and even economic parameters of the area of research. Dr. Mary Kaldor's theory, reflects conflict transformation not on a state-on-state basis, but more on non-state origin (as for example, low-intensity conflicts, civil wars and insurgencies). Additionally, the theory reviews those conflicts developing within states rather than between them. Notable, such components as are: particular ethnic diversity, sociopolitical inequality, class systems are parts of the new types of wars. Having considered so, so-called "New War" theory scrutinizes civilians and non-combatant as key targets by insurgent and non-state groups as a primary mean of their combat attacks. Therefore, the "New War" theory is relatively one that could be applicable to this field of studies and practical researches as are arms smuggling and transfers [30].

The other concept also linked with security studies is to be the "Securitization" theory, promoted by so-called the "Copenhagen" school. The theory reviews the conditions that affect the object and lead to its politicization, as well as the process of assigning the status of a security threat to an object. It becomes interesting point that a new approach toward security problems do not automatically rise the list of threats, which include, apart from military, non-military threats [31]. The main example of such "macro-securitization", the USA government fight against terrorism [32].

The Regional Security Complex Theory is very unique modality in security studies. The theory created and promoted by Barry Buzan, Ole Waever and Jaap de Wilde who belong to the so-called "Copenhagen School" of security studies. The theory framed its origin in 1983–2003 and considered security as a social construction (securitization). The theory describes that international security should be reviewed as a phenomenon from a regional perspective in order to provide a theoretical justification for constructing world politics in regional frames. The authors defined a security complex as "a group of states whose primary security concerns link together sufficiently closely that their national securities cannot realistically be considered apart from one another" [33]. Those mentioned complexes are exposed of special relations between enmity and amity as main preclusions between states in aegis of the security dimensions. As for amity, it is viewed relations ranging from friendship to expectation of protection or support. On its turn, enmity reflects a relationship based on suspicion and fear [34]. In some cases, namely arms smuggling also could be considered as one of the complexes of the regional security that transcended into security dilemma puzzle in geopolitical game at regional and global levels. Mainly military conflicts taken place in 21st century are conducted namely in aegis of the two theories provisional frames forecast promotion of asymmetric challenges or threats.

1.3 Chapter three: arms and drug smuggling and terrorism correlation cases – Pankisi/Laphankuri Gorge Event-Analyze (Georgia)

New dimension scope of the modern global security architecture determines globalization of the not only positive tendencies but also negative ones. Among negative tendencies could be inspired of merging and intertwined such asymmetric challenges and threats as are arms illegal transfers, drug smuggling and international terrorism. As for how the globalization effects to transformation of the challenges into new realities is possible to identify on case of so-called "Jihadist Terrorism" case-study with involvement such dangerous militant groups as are" "Taliban", "Islamic Caliphate-DAESH" and "Al Qaeda".

Upon some sources, the jargon "Jihad" became broad well-known for international society in aegis of the 9/11 tragic event in the USA albeit it was originated from mediaeval historic period of time. Several times, almost all level of politicians, from various nation-states are used to configure the jargon and conjure up with terrifying images of irrational foreigners coming to destroy American freedoms and whole the Western ones [35]. However, the term is being affiliated with as an ideological background with one of the sectarian trend in Islam with a Salafiyyah religious indoctrination. Namely, it is known that the "Taliban" movement in Afghanistan practices with so-called "Deobandism" trend of the Salafiyyah doctrine and as for the "Islamic Caliphate-DAESH" on Wahhabism trend. However, many jihadist groups with radical political orientation roots, are providing with different interpretation of the term and also another definition associate with Islamic Shariah (the term refers to God's law in its divine and revealed sense. This is related to FIQH, which is the human process of understanding and implementing the law) principles and norms that are very common for the Muslim community. One of the main international political trend linked with asymmetric challenge and threat perception became so-called "Global Jihad" and its associated concrete challenges posing to global stability (including arms and drug smuggling cases).

Having considered above-mentioned, in some cases, the drug smuggling and illegal transit could be labeled as a part of "Global Jihad" strategy against

"Crusaders and Jews" how the Salafiyst oriented terrorist organizations do claim with introduction new forms of asymmetric warfare elements with "biological terrorism" and "cyber-Jihad" tactics aiming to destroy rival society with "non-lethal" weapon capabilities. Therefore, drug smuggling and illegal transit, as the asymmetric challenge, has not only mission to gain much financial revenue flows to successfully attain "Global Jihad" strategic goals, but also implies to reach concrete ideological and political subversive missions with culturally and morally destroyed enemy will. Namely, the strategy are exploited by such Jihadist terrorist groups as are "Taliban" and DAESH.

According to some information sources, DAESH controlled terrorist groups intruded in Afghanistan in those territories that were under the control of "Taliban" in 2010–2015 years. In order to get under their control those territories where cultivated Afghani heroin, mainly in south and south-eastern provinces of the country, both terrorist movements engaged in sever combat clashes. The revenue of drug smuggling and transit accumulated more than roughly $5–8 billion pure net revenues. It is interesting to note that the DAESH terrorist combat units came from Iranian Khorasan Region, consisted mainly the North Caucasian fighters.

As it is known, 'Taliban" intensively used the drug illegal transit routes, crossing by the whole Caucasus area, including the Georgian territory. In 2014 the Ministry of Internal Affairs of Georgia disclosed interesting information leaflets, saying that –" 2.79 tons of liquid heroines was seized from a cargo truck that entered into Georgia from Azerbaijan, the Georgian Interior Ministry said on July 11. The seizure represents the biggest ever drug hauls in Georgia, according to the Interior Ministry. It said that two citizens of Georgia were arrested. The truck, according to the Interior Ministry, was carrying 30-liter 92 plastic barrels filled with illegal substance containing 80% of heroin. Drugs, worth of "hundreds of millions of U.S. dollars", was intended for international transit and was en-route to Turkey, the Georgian Interior Ministry said" [36]. At the same time, the DAESH elaborated a "Caucasian Strategy" for waging Jihad. It was elaborated and coordinated by a jihadist warlord, from North Caucasus, jihadist "Black Ahmad". However, another warlord, named Amir Suphyan, coordinated realization the strategy at regional level. The DAESH leadership allocated approximately $50–70 million for this mission [37].

Figure 2.
Jihadist Terrorist Group members' illegal transfer and arms smuggling routes.

Actually became evident that the Afghani "Taliban" movement used drug transit as part of its' "soft power" and exploited so-called the "northern transit route" (see **Figure 2**) as the most shortest route to ship out original liquid heroine from Afghanistan to European direction in order to get a large amount of money to reinforce its military capability (hire more mercenaries, purchase armaments, etc.). The series of the transaction were done in conjunction with other international Jihadist groups as with Pakistani "Taliban" and Islamic Movement of Uzbekistan (IMU) from 2001 to 2014 period of time. The route probably run the following spaces: Afghanistan-Turkmenistan-Azerbaijan-Georgia-Turkey with last destination spot probable in the Southern European country where it had been manufactured at a special underground laboratory as a final product. The mission concluded probably in 2014.

The so-called "Jihadist Drug" – named another as "Allah's Tears" – was a source of threat emanated with reinforce pressure on the NATO ISAF Forces and gained financial revenue to continue military resistance. The "Taliban" leadership even created special local so-called "narco-cartel" networks (for example, Kandahar or Karachi "drug-mafia" with annual illegal profit of $2–3 billion). The network groups were closely cooperating with the "Taliban" special intelligence service "Mukhabarat" in order to provide safe deliver of the heroine freight from Helmand province to Karachi sea port. The cooperation became very beneficial for the "Taliban" leadership with introduction several types of new technologies, like "Allah's Tears".

The "Allah's Tears" was a "know-how" technology of the leader of so-called "Kandahar's Jihadist Drug Grouping", linked with "Taliban", Mulla Bashir (Jami Bashir Nurzai). From 50 kg is elaborated 1 liter of liquid heroin. It is possible to be smuggled in way of tea and sugar or even liquid soap [38].

It is symptomatic that the "Taliban" and DAESH leadership reached consensus on and made a deal with so-called "Jihad Drug" smuggling transit at the regional level. Therefore, the "Georgian Jihadist Black Transit" case-study clearly indicated, the Jihadist terrorist organizations, on example of the DAESH planned, organized and conducted a sophisticate network not only for promoting "Jihadist Arms and Warrior" but also "Jihadist Drug" transit routes. Exactly, as one of the evident operation affiliated with so-called the "Black Jihadist Transit" was well-known Jihadist warlord Akhmed Chatayev's and his two lieutenants terrorist raid and act planning attempt in Georgia with DAESH command security structures involvement on 22 November 2017. Later on, the Georgian Anti-Terrorist Center Commando units killed the terrorists [39]. The Jihadist terrorist attack in Georgia had direct linkage with arms and Jihadist warrior illegal transit operations. The terrorist group entered Georgia via so-called "Green Corridor" from Turkey and selected their transit deployment place – Pankisi Gorge in Georgia. Moreover, the group consisted of about nine Jihadist terrorist, including the warlord Chatayev, illegally entered the Georgian territory without any armament, had discovered and armed themselves from the arms cachet that was dug and prepared in advance by the previous Jihadist group transited the illegal armaments of various type from Middle East region to Georgia, in Pankisi Gorge territory. Hence, the arms, mainly small ones, that were smuggling from the Middle Eastern area, notably from Syria that by that time was under control of the DAESH, later were exploited fully by the Chatayev's terrorist group to commit terrorist attack in Tbilisi and terrified the whole population of Georgia in November of 2017. Having considered the concrete case-study it should be acknowledged how serious asymmetric military threat could cause terrorism toward the whole Caucasus region – for example, so-called "Ahmed Chataev voyage" on November of 2017 to Georgia with

a massive anti-terrorist operation in the downtown of Tbilisi is a clear illustration of so-called "Black Jihadist Transit" as one of the asymmetric threat case-study [40]. A case of coincidence of transit routes of "Black Arms and Drug Smuggling" are not occasional and accidental but reflect very well organized and coordinated asymmetric military operation planning pursuing concrete geostrategic missions and goals. Here is concrete map that discovers how namely the DAESH leadership coordinated the asymmetric threat planning, including arms and drug smuggling and terrorist warrior illegal transition schemes.

There is a map indicate how the arms and drug smuggling are transformed as new "weaponry elements" in hands of the Jihadist terrorist organizations (**Figure 3**).

These two cases are vividly demonstrating how the Jihadist terrorist groups are used the routes for pursuing their geopolitical missions.

The other case where these two elements, meant terrorism and arms smuggling were getting used as concrete "weaponry elements" is to be considered so-called "Laphankuri/Pankisi Special Operation" Case-study. In 2012 it was conducted so-called "Counter-Terrorist Special Operation" in Lafankuri mountain village, near to city Telavi, Eastern Georgia, in the Lopota Gorge. The area where the combat operations taken place was very close to the state border between Georgia and the Russian Federation. The tragic human events taken place in the Lopota Gorge at the end of August 2012, sparked many questions that are still in needing of being answered. The questions reflect notions as on whether it was an anti-terrorist operation or a stage ambushed planned to clear up loose ends in the alleged support of the government for Chechen fighters. The Georgian human rights organizations and the whole international community have many questions regarding the operation with yet to be responded questions. It is disputable that those information, formally disseminated by then government of Georgia is controversial and confusing and is very unclear. On July 30, 2013 in aegis of the Parliamentary by the then Georgian Public Defender, Ucha Nanuashvili. The Ombudsman delivered a Special Report on the status of Human Right Protection that was linked with proper

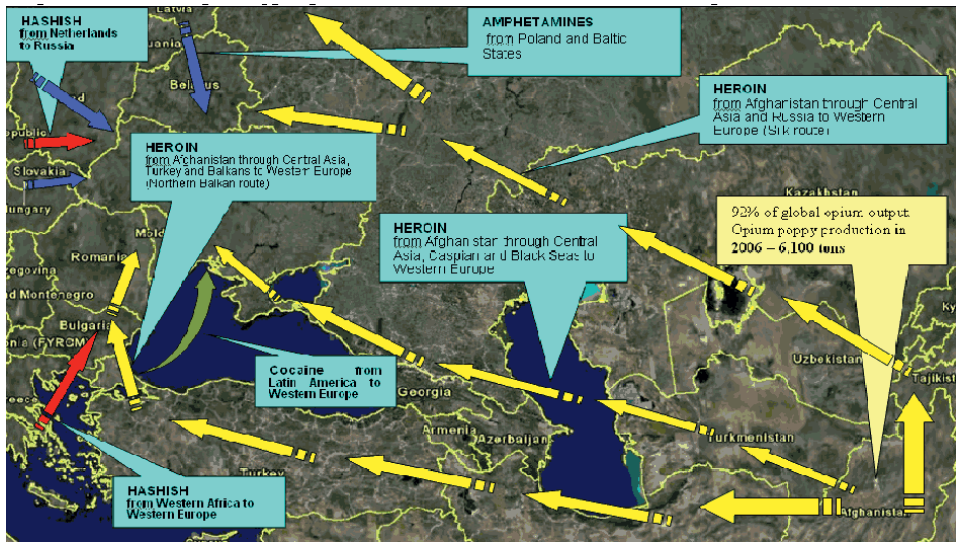

Figure 3.
Jihadist drug smuggling transit route from Central Asia to Europe and Middle East.

conduct the Anti-Terrorist Operation in 2012, providing some reflections on that occasion. A special attention was paid to the Lopota Operation, its implications, and described the unnecessary loss of life. The report has identified that the paramilitary group being illegally deployed at the Georgian territories, and actually having operated as a (terrorist group), especially established, trained, equipped and armed by the then leadership of the Ministry of Internal Affairs of Georgia, under its leadership and direct assistance. This amounts by all standards as state sponsored terrorism and the government having knowingly provided material support to a group considered as terrorist. According to investigation materials, on 28–29 August 2012, the Georgian law enforcement services conducted an operation near the village of Lapankuri located in Lopota Gorge, which, resulted in the loss of lives of seven members of an armed group and three staff members of Georgian law enforcement agencies [41]. Hence, it came out that it was a clear case of Jihadist terrorist armed group presence in Georgia and with assistance of arms illegal transfer transaction taken place in Pankisi Gorge territory, aiming at providing several terrorist attacks in aegis of the South Caucasus Region.

These two "Georgian" case-study examples on Jihadist terrorism groups have very precise military planning strategy and based on the one, the groups could pose very serious asymmetric military threats to the international community. The threats could be considered also Chemical, Biological, Radiological and Nuclear (CBRN) weapon elements and as the new arms smuggling with CBRN elements involvement serve real massive disaster of global origin. Hence, new modality of disarmament and non-proliferation regime are to be endorsed and developed in order to avoid of the CBRN threat emergence. The threat imposition also is possible concluded via small armaments smuggling and illegal transfer transactions. The tendency has more geopolitical scale and dimension that determines future tendencies in world politics via strategic studies perspectives.

Having said above-mentioned it is possible to identify Jihadist Terrorism organization military operation planning process and components of the geostrategic implications. This is to be new dimension of the warfare doctrine congruent with so-called "Fourth Generation War" (FGW provisions. Here is concluded a chart based on concrete Jihadist terrorist group military doctrine implications, on example of "Taliban" movement case-study demonstrate how Jihadist Military Doctrine operates and how it includes arms smuggling and illegal transfers as an operational component to achieve the global and regional missions (**Figure 4**):

Figure 4.
Jihadist Military Doctrine – conceptual framework.

2. Conclusion

The security dilemma regarding asymmetric challenges emergence is very real and undermines the essential provisions of the regional and global security perspectives. The provisions could really subvert basics and principles of the global security and dramatized stability in frame of regional security. A shift transformation takes place in realms of contemporary century warfare doctrinal planning and the transformation has already implicated of identifying new type of warfare strategy – asymmetric war with representation of hybrid warfare that contributing in re-shaping a grand strategy that allows policymakers to steer through the uncertainties of a complex international security environment.

The Fourth Generation War (FGW) concept is congruent in modern geostrategic realities with Jihadist Military Doctrine which one of the main component retains arms smuggling and arms illegal trade cases. Currently new tendency fixed where three main sources of asymmetric challenges – criminal organized groups, terrorist organizations and guerilla para-military formations are getting united and created common network systems impose credible global threat to the international society in 21st century. These convergent interests among these Non-State Violent Actors are main sources of global instability and shatter peace. These actors presence in unstable regional zones, like the Central Asia, could more stimulate creation of so-called "gray areas" and "black hubs of illegal transactions". Having considered dark side of globalization with incorporation of the terrorist groups and criminal arms/drug smuggler networks pose really huge common asymmetric threat in aegis of the trans-national spaces to contemporary world order.

Namely, the globalization sparks new trend in provoking new type of asymmetric challenges not only military but also non-military dimensions. One of the challenges include, small arms illegal transfers that easily could provoke military conflicts from low intensity ones into high intensity ones with identification of so-called "New War" modality. The new conflict with inclusion of the arms illegal transfers and smuggling was reviewed above in case of the "Pankisi/Lapankhuri Operation" in Georgia.

In accordance to the classical military theory formulations, a war is a real chameleon because it changes its nature in every concrete case and notable the phrase is becoming true definition of what is occurring at regional security level. Exactly, regional security cases are real indications how the asymmetric challenges with non-military origin, with inclusion small arms smuggling and arms illegal transfers, create some deconstructive effects undermining stability and causing new trends of geopolitical fragility and misbalanced games. Suffice it to say, regional security complexity with security dilemma remains main implications for formatting security arrangements in the most vulnerable areas of the world politics. One of such regions is Black Sea region.

The Black Sea regional security reflects indeed realpolitik nature. The regional security is possible to review from perspectives of theoretical framework of international relations and security studies. Currently, the Black Sea region has become one of the world's most tragic humanitarian, political and economic zone of disaster. The region became in the 21-st century as main fora for fierce geostrategic competition among the great powers. The instability and fragile security in the region also blocks the development of creation of Wider Black Sea Area, incorporating three main regions: Black Sea-Caspian Basin-Central Asia and creating stable geoeconomic and economic axis. Nevertheless, further development of new type of asymmetric

challenges – organized criminal networks and arms/drug smuggling could convert the small instability cases into low and high intensity conflicts and completely undermine stable security regime in the region. However, the gravest cause of instability in the region in that respect could be transformed from terrorist threat.

Summarize that those implications have been indicated above, clearly demonstrated of direct correlations of various forms of asymmetric challenges such as: terrorism, drug smuggling, arms illegal transfers and transactions, illegal migration, corruption and ethnic cleansing (as part of human right massive violation tendency) with involvement of new types of actors in aegis of the insurgence combat militias, criminal organized crime network. The Jihadist terrorist groupings, etc. encompassed into common identity entity – Non-State Violent Actors that drastically make plausible ongoing international security system and components of world order.

Having considered that is important that international community should organize new forms of resistance to new type of challenges and notable in case of arms smuggling and illegal arms transfers, is necessary to set up new kind of intergovernmental organizations that coordinate disarmament policy, introduce all party agreed Arms Control Treaty provisions for regional security systems and adopt its on stability and peace promotion development. Moreover, sophistication and codification of the international law principles dealing with military conflicts transformation into peaceful coexistence platform with sufficient arms control and non-proliferation regime system provisions.

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Chapter 5

Gun Violence and Personal Security in Uganda

Moses Obete

Abstract

Gun violence involves unlawful acts of aggression by use of firearms. These acts involve causing death, physical or and emotional injuries to the victims. An analysis of the Uganda Police crime reports shows that homicide resulting from gun violence in the last 10 years from 2012 to 2022 averages 206.4 cases per year. Although Uganda is not among the countries with the highest number of murders by shooting, there has been a steady rise in the cases of gun violence. Gun violence never existed in the country until the introduction of firearms in the country in the 1890s through either European hunters or the colonial government. After independence, the country witnessed several internal armed conflicts which resulted in the spread of illegal firearms. In the Northeastern region, the firearms inflow resulted from its proximity to conflict prone neighbouring countries of Ethiopia, Sudan, Somalia, and the Northwestern Kenya. These factors have resulted in rampant gun violence especially in central and Northeastern Uganda. Although most acts of gun violence in Northeastern Uganda are committed by unregistered firearms, gun violence in central Uganda and other parts of the country are committed mostly by registered firearms from public and private security organisations.

Keywords: gun violence, human security, personal security, insecurity, firearm, conflict

1. Introduction

The Amnesty International describes gun violence as violence committed by use of firearms [1]. This includes any unlawful acts of aggression committed by use of firearms which results in the death, or injury (physical or psychological) of the victim. This covers violence directed at self (self-harm or suicide) and those directed at others. It is estimated that more than 600 people die worldwide everyday due to gun violence [1]. In Uganda homicides by shooting in the last 10 years (from 2012 to 2022) according to the Uganda Police reports stand at average of 206.4 cases per year. This puts the number of homicide cases by shooting per 100,000 people at 0.45 cases. Homicide by shooting in the country is committed by illegal firearm users as well as security personnel in varying magnitude. Suicide by firearm example is mainly committed by security personnel. The number of illicit and unregistered firearms in Uganda is estimated to be 309,844 [2]. In recent times, however, there were several reports of homicide committed by registered firearms in the hands of public and private security personnel.

This chapter aims to contribute to the debate on the impact of small arms and light weapon (SALW) on gun violence and personal insecurity by examining the SALW legislation in Uganda, the conflicts and the spread of unregulated firearms usage, the misuse of firearms by security personnel, and their consequences on personal security.

2. Background and history of gun use in Uganda

The history of gun violence in Uganda is quite recent. The Ugandan society never had guns until the British occupation of Uganda in 1894. By the time of the colonialization, what is now called Uganda was being governed by tribal chiefs or kings who had control over their small tribal communities within the current country Uganda. To gain control over the entire territory, the British made agreements with the king of Buganda, one of the tribal kings within the current country Uganda. That agreement allowed Buganda kingdom to access guns for the first time. With the British in control of the bigger part of the territory they introduced guns as a state weapon of colonial protection and repression of resistance to colonial administration. However, in the North-East region where the natives were warriors known as the Karamojong, the guns are believed to have been in circulation as early as 1890. The region started experiencing the inflow of guns for ivory hunting from Abyssinia [3] and later by European hunters. For example, [4] notes that the region had local hunters who had no guns. He further narrates how he trained some locals to use firearms for protection and hunting. He particularly notes,

Finally, after all kinds of vicissitudes I arrived in Africa and heard of a wonderful new and unexplored country called Karamojo. Elephants were reported by the black traders to be very numerous with enormous tusks, and there was no sort of administration to hamper the hunter with restrictions and game laws. Above all there appeared to be no other person hunting elephants in this Eldorado except the natives, and they had no firearms ([4], p. 27).

By 1900 the British had recruited, trained, and armed the locals as military and paramilitary to form a standing army. This practice continued even after Uganda gained independence. Meanwhile, Karamoja region which borders Kenya to the west continued to experience increased illegal acquisition and use of guns for cattle raids and animal protection. This practice is prevalent across Uganda-Kenya boarder communities for cattle raid and protection [5]. The post-independence Uganda worsened the situation through internal armed conflicts and conflict spillovers from the Democratic Republic of Congo, Sudan, Ethiopia, and Somalia. This masterminded the spread of unregulated access and use of the guns throughout the country.

3. Firearms regulations; firearms ownership by private security groups and civilians

Uganda has ratified both international and regional conventions in respect of the arms control. This includes *Protocol against the illicit manufacturing of and trafficking in firearms, their parts and components and ammunition, supplementing the United Nations Convention against transnational organised crime*, and the *Nairobi protocol for the prevention, control and reduction of small arms and light weapons in the Great Lakes Region and the Horn of Africa.* Uganda's National regulations also conform to most of

the provisions of the regional and international agreements on small arms control relating to civilian possession and use of small arms [6]. The firearms Act of 1970 for example restricts the manufacture, sale, and use of firearms [7]. Meanwhile the Uganda Peoples Defence Forces (UPDF) Act bars anyone from illegal possession of ammunition or arms. See for example Section 22(2) of the Act [8]. The UPDF Act provides for a very stringent penalty includes death for illegal possession of defence stores.[1]

Acquiring firearms for personal or other uses are allowed under the firearms Act. The Act requires one to obtain a firearms licence or permit. Despite these provisions very few individuals find it necessary to own firearms under this arrangement. Most of the non-public firearms official users are private security organisations (PSO) which is controlled by the Uganda police under the Control of Private Security Organisations Regulations, 2004 which replaced Control of Private Security Organisation Regulations, 1997. Uganda has over 100 PSO [9], each of which uses firearms in providing security services to their clients. The regulations require that private security companies train their personnel in accordance with guidelines issued by the Inspector General of police [10]. The Uganda police issues training instructions for private security organisations. It also controls the nature and type of arms used by private security companies. For example, private security companies are not allowed to use automatic rifles. However, there seems to be no monitoring mechanism for the recruitment, training, deployment, and remuneration afforded to security guards. These factors have been jointly blamed for gun violence by private security guards. Private security guards have been implicated for the rise in robberies, violence to workmates, and suicide. Following rampant gun violence in the country between 2019 and 2023, the police department in May 2023 suspended 39 private security companies over the misuse of firearms [11]. This was not the first time several private security firms have been suspended. In 2019, the Uganda Police suspended 40 PSOs [12]. While this move provides some stop gap measures, it does not address the underlying factors for gun violence by private security guards. On this issue, I argue that the major reasons for gun violence by private security guards are both the legal framework and implementation of the current legal regime. On the legal framework for example, the law neither provides for any professional codes nor qualifications for the guards. As a result, each security company sets its own codes of conduct and recruitment criteria. Non universal codes and qualifications result in varying levels of training, performance, and behaviour. Worst still, PSO training does not seem to include psychological training to withstand insults and difficult people they interact with in the course of their duty. Their inability to deal with such psychological threats results into immediate discharge of firearms. In recent years for example, many cases of gun violence meted against the public have risen from simple altercation between the victims and private security guards. Unless the PSOs have fully undertaken psychological training and proper recruitment procedures to include mental health evaluation for the candidates, gun violence committed by private security guards is expected to increase given the rising cases of mental illness in the country.

Employees of PSO are registered with the Uganda Private Security Organisations Association (TUPSA) [10]. According to TUPSA twitter account,

[1] Uganda still has death penalty in the constitution. The last execution was done in 2005 however by 2017 more than 250 convicts were said to be on death row according to Parliamentarians for Global Action (PGA).

the association had over 320 members employing over 60,000 guards as of June 2023. Although the association was formed with the aim of fostering collective bargain, standardisation of training and remuneration of the employees of its members, there has been zero adherence to minimum payment and training standards [10, 13]. For example [13], notes that some security companies train their guards for up to 3 months while others train their guards for only 2 weeks. A security guard who trained for only a couple of weeks poses a very serious danger when presented with a firearm. He is not only a danger to others but also a danger to himself. Due to shallow training security guards have been the leading perpetrators of gun violence against fellow security guards and other members of the public. Besides, lack of adherence to the minimum standard wage for the guards allowed most security companies to pay their guards as little as 100,000 Uganda Shillings (equivalent to about $28) per month. Due to poor remuneration, the guards have been frequently involved in robberies which furthers gun violence in the country. Thus, addressing gun violence by private security guards require a holistic approach which includes amendments in the regulations regarding private security organisations, setting and adhering to minimum standard for recruitment, training, remuneration and code of conduct. In addition, the office of the Inspector General of Police (IGP) should consistently exercise her role of monitoring the performance of these private security organisations to avoid being reactive.

Although the law allows civilians to own firearms, very few Ugandan civilians own firearms. Several factors are attributed to this. Firstly, civilian ownership of firearm is not a culture in Uganda. Therefore, even prominent businessmen and politicians rarely own firearms but prefer employing services of either private or public security personnel. Secondly, the procedure for acquisition and ownership of firearms in Uganda is so laborious that the applicant is likely to lose interest in the process. Despite the small number of registered non security personnel firearms, the few private civilian firearms users have been implicated for intimidations by use of firearms, arrogance at police check points and occasionally shooting at others who pick up quarrels with them. See for example the incident involving former labour minister Mwesigwa Rukutana who thoughtlessly fired an AK47 at his opponents' supporters during political party primary elections in September 2020 leading to the injury of 3 people [14], the murder of child rights activist Kenneth Akena by Kanyamunyu when the victim's car scratched on the perpetrator's car in a public place in 2016 [15], among others. These incidents are not quite many perhaps due to the small number of firearms in the hand of civilians.

Holding a firearm requires self-control and self-restraint. These characteristics are built during the training of security personnel. However, civilians who own firearms do not have these conditionings and are therefore very likely to discharge firearms at the slightest pinch. The United States for example has the highest civilian owned firearms and it has one of the highest rates of gun violence world over. However, Brazil tops the log for gun violence generally. This could be because of high number of illegal firearms in Brazil. Thus, while more gun violence is committed by use of illegal firearms in countries such as Brazil, India, and Mexico, in the USA, more gun violence is committed by registered firearms in the hands of civilians. To this end, I argue that the more civilians have access to firearms whether legally or illegally, the more we experience gun violence and personal insecurity owing to lack of self-control which is something normally inculcated in the security personnel through rigorous training.

4. The armed conflicts and the spread of unregulated use of firearms

4.1 The armed conflicts and gun violence

The history of Uganda and indeed the Great Lakes Region is not short of armed conflicts. Internal conflicts have been ongoing in Uganda right from the onslaught of colonial rule [16]. The country has witnessed several armed resistances and four forceful changeovers. For instance, shortly after the country gained independence, an altercation between the executive prime minister Dr. Apollo Milton Obote and the then ceremonial president led to an armed conflict which later became known as the Kabaka crisis of 1966. This resulted in the deposition of the Kabaka, and the prime minister assumed office of the president. The altercation left tens of people dead. Four years later the army overthrew the government and the Army General Iddi Amin took charge for more than 8 years until he was overthrown by the combined forces of Tanzania and the Uganda National Liberation Front (UNLF). This was a joint military force formed by Ugandans in Tanzania to resist the dictatorial regime of Iddi Amin in 1979. In 1980 UNLF now Uganda National Liberation Army (UNLA) organised the first democratic election in over a decade, election in which Uganda People's Congress (UPC) claimed victory. The Uganda Patriotic Movement (UPM) which came last in that election disputed the results and formed a rebel group called the National Resistance Army (NRA) which launched a guerrilla warfare against the government. In 1985, another army commander General Tito Okello Lutwa capitalised on an internal rift in the government and the pressure mounted by the rebels of the NRA and stagged a successful coup. His government however was too shaky since part of the military joined NRA in the bush while others either disserted or joined the fleeing forces loyal to the former president Dr. Apollo Milton Obote. This allowed the NRA guerrilla fighters to easily defeat the UNLA in January 1986 leading to the establishment of the NRA government. The establishment of NRA government led to the rise of more than 10 rebel groups, the most notable being the Holy Spirit Movement (HSM) of Alice Lakwena, the Lord's Resistance Army (LRA) of Joseph Kony, and the Allied Democratic Forces (ADF) which later metamorphosed into a terrorist group. The last two mounted a protracted armed resistance which lasted for over two decades.

The rise of several rebel movements and the coups led to the increase in the number of people militarily trained, many of whom abandoned their military organisations but fled with firearms. Also, the proximity of Uganda to conflict neighbourhood allowed the proliferation of SALW in the country. As the National Focal Point notes,

> Illicit small arms proliferation is attributed to past political instability, civil wars and armed conflicts, poor management and control of weapons, inflows from conflicts in the region, as well as illicit transfers and trafficking from other regions of the world due to inadequate regulation of international arms trade and transfers ([17], p. 4).

These internal conflicts and the conflict neighbourhoods made Uganda to have one of the largest stockpiles in the region [10]. Illegal arms have been blamed for several armed robberies and gun violence involving settling personal or family disputes. They have also been identified as the underlying factor for constant armed rebellions, the recent being the Rwenzururu rebellion of 2016 in which the small kingdom of Rwenzururu attempted to rebel but were brutally suppressed by the national army. That clash is said to have caused the death of over 60 Rwenzururu fighters and 41 police officers [18].

4.2 The Karamoja conflicts and gun violence

While other parts of the country experienced rebel activities, the Northeastern part of the country which is also kwon as the Karamojong region experienced a rather unique form of gun violence. Their proximity to the conflict prone countries such as Ethiopia, Somalia, Sudan, and the poorly governed Northwestern Kenya region of Turkana aided mass entry of small arms and light weapons in the area especially for livestock raid and counter raids. The rampant possession of firearms by the people in Karamoja has not only worsened the personal insecurity situation in Karamoja but the whole of Northern and Eastern region of Uganda. The possession of domestic animals especially cattle for the people within Karamoja or districts neighbouring Karamoja subregion is an invitation for violent raids by these warriors. As a result of rampant cattle raids, the residents live in constant fear of gun violence. Thus, gun violence in Karamoja has not only affected personal security but it has also affected the economic way of life of the people of these regions. The urge for raids and the government's effort to militarily and forcefully disarm these communities resulted into three forms of conflict: the inter-tribal conflicts, the intracommunity conflicts, and the conflict between the state and the Karamoja society [19].

4.2.1 The inter-tribal conflicts in Karamoja

Karamoja subregion of Uganda is inhabited by the Karamoja people. The Karamoja people can be largely categorised into three based on their linguistic dialect and territorial presence. The Jie occupies the central Karamoja, the Dodoth to the North and the Karamojong to the South. The Karamojong are further subdivided into three territorial groups, namely, the Matheniko, the Bokora and the Pian. There are also other smaller groups such as the Tepeth, Ik, and Nyangia. Along the border with Kenya are the ethnic Pokot who inhabit the District of Amudat. The biggest part of this group is found in Western Kenya [20]. Although each of these groups speaks a common language, they do not look at themselves as one. Furthermore, the social, economic, and political order in Karamoja has for long depended on armed raiding. Armed raids are conducted by one tribal community against the other within the region, or against tribes adjacent to the region or across the borders. It is also conducted by the tribes from Kenya especially the Turkana and Pokot against the people of Karamoja. This has resulted in perceived and actual threat to those within and adjacent to the region [20]. The intertribal armed raids have been devastating on either community contributing to the largest scale of gun violence in the region. More than a hundred lives are lost every year due to attacks by these warriors against the neighbouring ethnic communities during cattle raids. In 2021 for example, a total of 160 people were killed by the Karamojong cattle rustlers [21].

4.2.2 The intracommunity conflicts

The intracommunity conflict in the area is generally conflict at individual or family or clan level. The Karamoja people are strongly aligned along clan lines. Their strong clan politics creates another layer of conflict at the community level. These conflicts often include raids and the battles for territorial control. Although intracommunity raids are moderate, intracommunity gun violence in the Karamoja region is common. Guns are used as a weapon of revenge or settling family or personal score with adversaries. However, the use of guns in settling scores is not only common in

Karamoja. It is a common trend in nearly all parts of the country as was witnessed in the spate of gun murders in the country between 2015 and 2023 [22]. This is well beyond the illegal possession of firearms. It can be explained by frustration aggression theory. Groups and individuals frustrated by lack of employment, marginalisation, poverty, and lack of inclusion in the politics have embarked on gun violence to either communicate their message or clear their frustration. I will use Berkowitz's argument "that the blocking of goal-directed activity can create an instigation to aggression" regardless of whether or not further provocation or aggression was experienced by the frustrated group or individuals [23]. The current government has been at the helm for about four decades. This has left the affected communities or individuals frustrated.

Intracommunity gun violence seems to be fueled by socioeconomic conditions such as inequalities, extreme deprivation, distribution of resources, land rights, and population pressure which itself is responsible for land wrangles. Karamoja sub-region has remained with the highest poverty level in the country. See for example Uganda Bureau of Statistics (UBOS) 2022 report [24]. While poverty and other socio-economic hardships are known for fueling conflict, the access to firearms as the tools of violence, and the ineffective government approach for disarmament are the major root causes of intracommunity gun violence in the area. In addition to tackling deprivation, a careful approach should be undertaken to disarm this population by introducing alternatives to survival that disincentivizes the need for firearms bearing in mind their need for survival and security against other warrior communities from the neighbouring states.

4.2.3 The conflict between the Karamoja society and the state

The third nature of conflict is between the Karamoja society and the state. The conflict started in 2002 when the Uganda government decided to forcefully disarm the Karamojong. The government had previously given the warriors 1 month grace period to peacefully hand over the guns after which they would be forcefully disarmed. This followed rampant gun violence against the neighbouring communities of Teso, Lango, Bugisu, and Acholi. This grace period elapsed with less than 20% of the estimated illegal guns recovered. This prompted the government to launch forceful disarmament against the Karamojong warriors [25]. The forceful disarmament exercise involved armed confrontations between the military (UPDF) or paramilitary, Local Defence Units (LDU) and the warriors. The government forced disarmament exercise entailed counter insurgency tactics such as ambushes, cordon and search operations, and instructions to shoot and kill anyone carrying a gun along a road. This exercise led to the recovery of a considerable number of firearms but those who surrendered their firearms quickly became targets of attack by those who managed to retain their firearms [20]. Furthermore, the orders of "shoot to kill" led to the death of hundreds of the Karamoja people [26]. On the other hand, the military, other government officials and members of the civil society organisations became subjects of the attack by the Karamojong warriors. The attacks on the military, civilian communities, other government officials, and the members of the civil society organisations signify a very serious personal and community security issues in the subregion. The attacks on communities and civil society groups in particular makes it hard for humanitarian assistance to be provided in this area.

The gun in Karamoja as well as the communities across the borders is customary. Therefore, sorting the illegal possession of firearms in Karamoja is one of the most

complex undertakings since the neighbouring communities in Kenya, Ethiopia, Somalia, and South Sudan too have guns. Besides, the porous border of Uganda around this subregion makes the entry of firearms into the region very easy. This has made life in the Karamoja subregion so much dependent on firearms that without it there is literally no survival.

To control gun violence in and around Karamoja subregion, there is need for a joint intergovernmental strategy by Ethiopia, Kenya, South Sudan, and Uganda. The strategy should include ensuring the safety of those who have returned their guns and offering an alternative survival means that is more attractive than their customary use of the gun as a mean to livelihood. Without an alternative mean to survival and guarantee to personal security and other elements of human security such as food, environmental, economic, community and health security, not much can be done to eliminate gun violence in Karamoja resulting from cattle rustling.

5. The misuse of firearms by public security personnel

The public security agencies in Uganda are categorised into two groups: the armed forces and the civilian police forces. The armed force of Uganda includes the Uganda Peoples Defence Forces (UPDF) which is the national army, LDU which is the government militia, and the national security organisations, that is, the External Security Organisation (ESO) and the Internal Security Organisations (ISO). The civilian police forces are mainly the Uganda police (the national police), the Uganda prisons service, and the special police constabulary (a local police force partially trained and temporarily contracted to support police work). Members of these security organisations are trained and authorised to use firearms in their day today work. These security personnel are charged with the responsibility of providing state and human security especially security of persons (personal security and community security). Both the military and the police have been instrumental in protecting the population against violent crimes and attacks from insurgents, terrorists, and cattle rustlers. The police and sometimes the military are deployed to guard "very important persons" (high level politicians and cultural leaders).

The military in the immediate aftermath of colonial rule and the period before 1986 were notorious for all forms of violence including gun violence against the population. This somehow changed up to 1990s. However, recent statistics show that some gun violence in Uganda are being perpetrated by the security personnel either individually or collectively in the course of their duty. It is estimated that most of the gun violence committed in other parts of the country outside Karamoja region have been committed using registered guns and to a large extent by the security personnel. See for example [27, 28]. Members of the security services have been implicated for crimes by use of firearms such as murders by shooting, aggravated robbery, and careless shooting (especially during crowd control) [27]. Although there has been increased gun violence, mass shooting has been quite rare. The last known mass shooting occurred in 2013 when a soldier fire at a local bar killing 10 and injuring three others [29]. However, systematic, and sometimes unrelated gun violence has been prevalent throughout the country, the highest being recorded within central Uganda. Guns have been used for settling personal scores, robberies, and at times recklessly by security forces. The victims of gun violence by the security personnel variously include businesspersons, local rivals, colleagues at work, and supporters of opposition politicians. I will categorise this gun violence into two, institutional gun violence and

individual gun violence. Institutionalised gun violence is violence directed to certain categories of people because of who they are. For the example, the government's use of security forces to frustrate opposition politicians. Right from 1966, the government has employed military and police to suppress opposition politicians and their supporters. The very first of this appeared when the government of Apollo Milton Obote used the military to attack the Kabaka's palace in 1966 resulting into the death of several Kingdom guards and the eventual exile of the Kabaka. Between 1971 and 1979 President Iddi Amin widely used the military to eliminate political opposition. The exact number of people killed is not known but it is estimated that about 300,000 people were killed during this time ([30, 31], p. 13). Some sources put the figure at 500,000 victims. See for example [32]. In post Amin era, the police and the military have been used by the ruling party to suppress political opponents. This suppression often involves deliberate shooting into the crowd in the pretext of crowd dispersal which results in death and juries of the victims. See for example ([33], p. 20).

Unlike in 1970s, the current institutional gun violence does not directly target the politicians but their supporters. The goal is to deny the opponent political support, freedom of association, and political space. This is what Wieviorka calls instrumental violence ([34], p. 9). This type of violence involves rational choice in that it is always chosen and perpetrated for gain of some kind, for example material gains, thrills, and retribution or force compliance ([34], p. 10). Instrumental violence is often a rational choice involving deliberate actions for a predefined goal. While this form of institutionalised gun violence has fewer physical effects on the politicians, the acts of shootings into the crowd gathered by these politicians have dire consequences on the personal security of the supporters. The current institutionalised violence may not have resulted into a big death rate but the number of people either physically or psychologically wounded might be higher than those killed during the reign of Iddi Amin.

The individual gun violence by security personnel have also been too prevalent. The security personnel acting individually have been implicated for murders, robberies, land grabbing, and procuring of threats to members of the public using firearms. It is noted that most of these violences are motivated by either settling personal scores or the urge for other material gains. As previously noted, most of the guns involved in firearms related crimes have been found to be from the members of the public security organisations. There are three major explanations for this. Firstly, the security forces are paid poorly as compared to other government employees who may be holding the same qualifications. This breeds ground for robberies. Secondly, the high rate of mental disability in the population is too reflected in the security forces. This affects the moods of the affected individuals resulting into irrational behaviours which includes unnecessary shooting of anyone who antagonises them. Lastly, poor control of the use of firearms and military uniforms breeds ground for these crimes. Some of these crimes would be avoided if the UPDF properly regulated her personnel against wearing uniforms and carrying firearms when not on duty.

6. Conclusion

This chapter has showed that gun violence is prevalent in Uganda albeit on a lesser magnitude if compared to other countries such as the United States, Brazil India, and Mexico. The perpetrators of gun violence in Uganda range from private security personnel, civilians with illegal firearms to public security personnel such as the

police, the military, paramilitary and security services. The illegal guns are the most highly used in cattle rustling especially within and around Karamoja region. However, the rest of the country suffers gun violence mainly from registered guns in the hands of security personnel.

The consequences of gun violence are both physical and psychological. Gun violence is blamed for several deaths, physical, and psychological injuries of the victims. The effects of gun violence have been dire on the human security of persons in general and personal security in particular. In Karamoja and the surrounding areas, gun violence due to cattle rustling has not only resulted to personal insecurity but it has also led to community and economic insecurity. Communities are frequently attacked leading to loss of lives and herds. Additionally, communities live in fear of attacks and cattle raids.

To control gun violence in Uganda, it requires a comprehensive approach that includes revising legislations on the licencing of weapons for civilians and the private security organisations. Additionally, the public security organisations need to restrict their personnel from using service uniforms and or accessing firearms when not on duty. Moreover, the government of Uganda needs to engage the neighbouring countries to have a coordinated disarmament programme which does not leave some communities with firearms which may later be used against the disarmed communities.

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Chapter 6

The Sacralization of Violence in Eastern Democratic Republic of Congo: A Predator's Governance

Serge Balaga Essasi

Abstract

The chapter takes a look at the context in the Democratic Republic of Congo (DRC), and how armed violence impacts on the security of the population. It analyzes the dynamics underlying violence and its use as a mode of governance by state and non-state actors. Through events and institutions analysis, it explains the disintegration of state legitime violence in favor of diversified predators who use armed violence as rhetoric and technic both to gain power and mode of conflict resolution in a context of lack or weakened justice system to mitigate the impact of gun violences on populations. The solution to put an end to armed violence should not only be provided by the international commitment as by the United Nations or by multilateral organizations such as the European Union or African Union security policies, but also by promoting criminal justice against predators who abuse their positions in political competition while manipulating ethnic sensitivities and favoring the strategy of violence in order to gain access to natural resources and stay in power.

Keywords: armed violence, spoilers, governance, state and non-state actors, power, guns, justice

1. Introduction

"There is no justification for studying, and attempting to understand, the causes of human suffering if the purpose of one's study is not, ultimately, to find ways of relieving and preventing that suffering." (Dr David Turton) [1].

Violence, specifically the ones from guns, have been, for about three decades now almost, an endemic issue when someone is talking about the DRC, mainly its eastern part.

The International Federation for Human Rights (FIDH) summarized the situation as follows:

"At the end of 2021, the March 23 Movement (M23) reappeared, resuming fighting with the DRC Armed Forces (FARDC). It is not the only armed group in the east: there are reportedly more than a hundred (…) The region has been the scene of the formation, dissolution and re-emergence of armed groups for more than 30 years, without any military operation having succeeded in calming the situation. The

population, a victim of this tragedy, has a strong desire for peace, with elections looming at the end of the year." Human rights abuses, particularly in North Kivu, have lasted since 1993s in a cycle of violence [2].

This cycle of violence started in the aftermath of the genocide of the Tutsis in Rwanda in 1994 when the perpetrators fled to the DRC, leading to their pursuit by the Rwandan Patriotic Front (RPF) army [3]. Then, the decline of Mobutu's dictatorial regime in Zaire, with the arrival in power of Laurent-Désiré Kabila's Alliance of Democratic Forces for the Liberation of Congo (ADFLC)- Alliance des Forces Démocratiques de Libération du Congo (AFDL) from 1996 onwards, marking the beginning of armed violence. The presence of foreign forces in eastern Congo has led to the emergence of national armed groups. Their rise has grown with poor governance and corruption, entrenching violence and systematizing human rights abuses.

This contribution is based on the issue to understand why is legitimate gun violence, a sovereign attribute of the Congolese state, shared with other actors active in the DRC.

In order to respond to this major concern, our reflection is based on two assumptions.

Firstly, The State collapse: the political and institutional instability at the end of President Mobutu's reign, as well as the privatization of the public force including armed violence which enabled the Mobutu system to stay in power, and the conflicts that this entailed, completed the disintegration of the state's monopoly on the legitimate violence.

Secondly, the Sacralization of violence as a means of conflict resolution: violence has become part of the rhetoric of both political institutions and community leaders, including some members of civil society. It has also become for non-state actors as an alternative to State disintegration. In particular, the constitutional duties of the security and defense forces (Congolese National Police-PNC and DRC Defense Forces-FARDC), which are responsible for public security, the safety of persons and their property, the maintenance and restoration of public order [4], and the defense of the integrity of the national territory and its borders [5].

Furthermore, armed violence seems to have been established as a mode of political and security governance by state and non-state actors [6].

Confronted by the Islamist threat in the North Kivu province, or the resurgence of identity or community concerns, as is the case in Ituri (violent opposition between the Hema and the Lendu communities), and the demands of the Tutsi community formulated in a violent manner by the March 23 rebel movement (M23). The country's military authorities have shown some tolerance toward some violent non-state actors, as it is for young people gathered in a self-defense group known as "Les Wazalendo", which literally means "patriots" in Kiswahili, is the name given to these young people who have been meeting in almost every locality in North Kivu since the resurgence of the M23 rebellion in January 2022 [7]. They are free to hold guns openly in towns and villages.

According to a Human Rights Watch report, Congolese army units backed armed groups implicated in serious abuses in the recent conflict with M23 rebel forces in eastern Democratic Republic of Congo. Between May and August 2022, the Congolese army with a coalition of Congolese militia as well as the Democratic Forces for the Liberation of Rwanda (FDLR) fought against Rwandan-backed M23 rebels in North Kivu province [8].

In the attempt to substantiate the answers to the defined assumptions, we thought it is wise to resort to some analytical materials such as the historical method, which is

used to constitute history to determine the historical facts and then to group them into a scientific system.

In addition, we need to interpret the rules governing the functioning of the Congolese state considering the political history of the country in order to identify the dynamics that have led to the emergence of armed violence, despite efforts made by both national and international actors, particularly in the east of the country.

To this end, the present study will focus, on the one hand, on the Congolese State's failure (Section I) which inevitably led to the sacralization of armed violence as a means to access political power and for resolving conflicts (Section II).

2. The DR Congo state failure

The evolution of the political and administrative history of the D.R. Congo since its independence has been marked by various phases characterized by strong moments of political and institutional instability (Paragraph I) which have had the devastating effect of breaking up the monopoly of legitimate violence (Paragraph II) which was once the preserve of the state. The use of guns, as a means to intimidate opponents, was a strategy during the Mobutu regime period.

2.1 The uncontested collapse of the state

In the aftermath of Congo-Kinshasa's independence, the political situation was marked by jolts linked to the crisis of legitimacy of the political actors who led the country to international sovereignty.

The political instability (A) since General Joseph-Désiré Mobutu took power as the head of the Congo-Zaire was characterized by the use of legitimate arms violence to stop insurgency and civil war in the country, also to impose a dictatorship system. The political instability period will be followed by institutional instability (B) during the Second Republic (1965–1997) until the fall of the Marechal Mobutu in May 1997.

2.1.1 Political instability: The rise of dinosaur's dictatorship

2.1.1.1 The chaos of independence

Few months up to independence, the Congolese elected a President, Joseph Kasavubu, a prime minister, Patrice Lumumba, a senate and assembly, and similar bodies in the Congo's numerous provinces. The Eisenhower administration had high hopes that the Republic of the Congo would form a stable, pro-Western, and central government. But those hopes vanished as the newly independent State descended into chaos and violence [9]. At that time, the Cold War was shaping geostrategic policies around the world.

In fact, disagreements appeared on how to administer this country: Moïse Tshombé and Joseph Kasa-Vubu argued for a federal state that leaves great power to the regions. Patrice Lumumba (unionist) defends a strong central state and, in fact, diminishes the influence of the territories outside the capital. From July 1960 to January 1961, the newly independent state plunged into chaos and violence as Congolese soldiers demanded a pay rise against a backdrop of conflict between the country's leading figures: President Kasa-Vubu and Prime Minister Patrice Lumumba [9].

During the same period, ideological divisions materialized on the ground. Katanga, a rich mining province in the south of the country represented by Moïse Tshombe,

seceded and declared its independence from the Congo, followed by Albert Kalonji, the president of the Movement National Congolais (MNC)-Kalonji, removed from the central government, who proclaims the secession of the State of South Kasai [9]. And Lumumba's death on January 17, 1961, did not put an end to political rivalries. Meanwhile, the U.S. Department of Defense supports the Congolese National Army-Armée Nationale Congolaise (CAN-ANC) through the Central Intelligence Agency (CIA), to oppose Lumumba's supporters (allegedly supported by neighboring African nations, the Soviet bloc and Chinese Communists) insurgency against the central government in Kinshasa threatened national unity by taking Stanleyville (Kisangani), the largest city in eastern Congo on August 4, 1964 [9].

From these events, the Congolese post-independence crisis's causes can be summarized as follows: the inexperience of the political leaders of the time (mismanagement of defeat and success, which continues to this day); Unpreparedness for independence, lack of initiation into the exercise of power, and the management of public affairs; The greed of foreign powers to recover lost ground; Lack of nationalism and jealousy among politicians; Tribalism and the sacrifice of competence.

What's more, the race for power will overshadow the resolution of serious issues such as the inter-ethnic struggles in Kivu, where the nationality of the so-called "Banyarwanda" populations and refugees from Rwanda were already paving the way for future crises.

This situation led to a coup d'état by the military high command on 24 November 1965, which gave power to J.D. Mobutu for five years.

2.1.1.2 President Mobutu's power personalized for the benefit of his clients

When he came to power in 1965, General Mobutu took the reins of power in a country divided by political and even ethnic violent confrontations consecrated by political actors. Mobutu highly centralized the Congolese state in the image of the colonial administration, governing by decree. His absolute power had been ratified by the 24th of June 1967. Constitution which made him the head of three powers: executive, legislative, and judicial [10].

The arrival of General Mobutu at the head of Congo-Zaïre put an end to the post-independence violence. Nonetheless, the use of armed violence by public authorities, and even by the President himself through his security services, has often been recognized as a legitimate means of maintaining order and political power.

In fact, from 1965 onwards, the Congolese population celebrated a period free of war and armed violence. This means that the use of weapons was reserved solely for the security forces and the army, thus formalizing the principle of the legitimacy of violence proper to public authorities [11].

Also, Administrative institutions under Marechal Mobutu, as in the colonial period, were highly centralized. All the central authorities (with the exception of the Governor General) lived in Brussels and ran the Belgian Congo from there. Professor LOHATA TAMBWE asserts that these colonial administrative institutions influenced the administrative structures of the Second Republic, and we add that the effects are still visible today, 22 years after the fall of Marechal Mobutu's regime [12].

In order to consolidate his power, the use of armed violence by the security services has therefore become a tool for intimidating and even eliminating political opponents, despite the authorization to resume political life.

Indeed, the 1967 Constitution determines that no more than two political parties may be created in the Republic [13] (Article 4). In accordance with this constitutional

provision, President Mobutu created the M.P.R. on 20 May 1967 on behalf of the government. He thus declared himself in favor of the creation of an opposition political party but, he said, "the second opposition party must be the movement of those who do not share our way of conceiving things (...), the party of those who have another program opposed to ours" [14].

Furthermore, political power based on violence was reinforced by a clientelist system that willingly used the violence of army and security force structures to perpetuate the holding of power [15].

According to Jean Claude Willame, this clientelist system is organized as a pyramid. "The different levels of this pyramid do not necessarily coincide with institutions based on a shifting, fluid reality. The MPR, the ministerial departments and the administration are merely labels concealing much more subtle hierarchies [16].

At the head of this patrimonial structure, there is a presidential clan made up of leading men who often belong to the same region, Equatorial Province. Attached to this clan are a number of major international "adventurers" who play a more or less permanent role as "advisors" to the president (he cites the American Mr. Tempelsman and the Frenchman de la Tribouille, etc.) [16].

Below them, a host of businessmen, administrators, and courtiers who owe their privileges to their ethnic or regional affiliation, or to "faits du prince." [15].

At the bottom of the power pyramid, there is a sizeable mass of elites who form the power's "recruitment pool" - senior civil servants, intellectuals, state or people's commissioners, etc. - and who can overnight be the subject of a major scandal. - They can be promoted to high office overnight, or just as suddenly dismissed, beaten, tortured, or imprisoned [15].

In the final analysis, the armed violence of the Mobutu era was more a struggle for power than a civil or inter-ethnic war.

"It is within this layer that there are signs of discontent, of a desire to revolt, as witnessed by the case of the thirteen Kasai deputies, representatives of regional groups politically (but not necessarily economically) outnumbered by the dominant ethnic group of the presidential clique" [16]. At the beginning of the 90s, the narrow clientelism, strongly limited to the president's ethnic group and based on plundering, which was really at the heart of the political dynamic, was succeeded by a strategy of resistance on the part of the dictator and his clan to maintain power, despite the wind having changed with the fall of the Berlin Wall.

Indeed, the appearance on the world scene of the policy of "Perestroika-Glasnost" (Perestroika means restructuring, while Glasnost means transparency) [17]. In this new international order, it is problematic that a dictatorship as obscurantist as it is bloodthirsty can remain in the heart of Africa.

The eminent Congolese history professor notes that "in Zaire's past, change has almost always been accompanied by a climate in which state violence, following in the footsteps of popular violence, has often metamorphosed into armed violence" [15, 18].

2.1.2 Institutional instability: The rationality of the dinosaur's resistance (transition period from 1990 to 1997)

Following the rapid pace of change in the international environment, and the extent of the deterioration in the country's social, political, economic, and security situation, on January 22, 1990, the President announced the organization of popular consultations and created the National Office of Popular Consultations, headed by Mr. Mukolo wa Mpombo. This change was enshrined in the President's speech, delivered

on April 24 1990 at the Party headquarters in N'Sele to a large gathering of delegates from the country's various political forces.

Thus began a new page in our country's political history, with the reintroduction of a multiparty political system and, later, with the convening on August 7, 1991, of a National Sovereign Conference (CNS) bringing together all the country's leaders to prepare a new social project and a new Constitution.

The 1991–1992s period recalled the Congo of 1960: "a tragi-comedy played out by actors politically monopolized by the struggle for power, the content of which is simply the method of management. The mobilization of internal and external political energies, undoubtedly justified by the current phase of the struggle for democracy, unfortunately evacuates not only reflection and debate on the crisis, but also on the political, economic and social content of democracy. The transition period towards the Third Republic is a kind of crossroads that raises questions about the direction of transition, both in terms of prospects and alternatives." [19].

Due to the President's Mobutu resistance against democratization, violence, including armed violence occurred and changed the political and security perspective of the country.

2.1.2.1 The resistance and the fall of the dinosaur (1990-1997)

On April 24, 1990, President Mobutu put an end to the single party and the Second Republic with many contradictions:

Contradiction in two 2 presidential speeches which both spoke on a three-party multiparty system and of an integral multiparty system; Firstly, contradiction between the President and the opposition: Hence the creation of the presidential majority;

Secondly, contradiction between the opposition itself Moderate opposition and radical opposition of Etienne Tshisekedi; Contradiction between ethnic and provincial groups: Therefore, during this period, the crisis had deepened in the country: the destruction of key infrastructures, economic meltdown, the forced deportation of civilians in Katanga, ethnic violence in North Kivu and increased tribalism. Violations of human rights also became commonplace across the entire country [20].

Against this backdrop of institutional cacophony, a Christian march was organized by lay Catholics on February 16 and March 1 in the streets of Kinshasa to protest against the stalled work of the CNS. This march was attended by all religious denominations: Catholic, Protestant, Kimbanguist, Muslim, and Orthodox, and shook the whole of Kinshasa. Mobutu's army reacted vigorously and violently by using arms against the demonstrators. Officially, nine people were killed and 50 wounded. Pressured from within and without, President Mobutu gave in on April 06, 1992, and the CNS resumed its work. With the adoption on July 31, 1992, of the global political compromise and that of August 04, 1992, of the Act on constitutional provisions relating to the transition period, one might have thought that the constitutional situation had been definitively settled [21].

As a consequence of political instability, violence has gained ground and reached proportions of serious human rights violations and inter-ethnic conflicts including armed attacks.

Competition for power raised in North-Kiv u province, and had become more intense as the "indigenous" communities had begun to contest the political and land rights of the Banyarwanda more openly. Against the provincial authorities dominated by the Nande and Hunde, some members of the Hutu-Banyarwanda farmers' mutual association, the MAGRIVI, became more radical and set up small armed groups. At the

National Sovereign Conference (CNS), Nande and Hunde delegates pressed for the Banyarwanda not to be allowed to take part in future elections. On the other hand, young indigenous people gathered in tribal self-defense militias (the Ngilima for the Nande and the Mayi-Mayi for the Hunde and Nyanga) tried to counterbalance the militiamen from the MAGRIVI provincial [22].

From 1992 onwards, conflicts relating to land ownership and ethno-political murders by guns became more common and every community started to live in fear of attacks by other communities.

In 1993, Hunde and Nyanga groups in the Walikale territory believed that an attack by the Hutu Banyarwanda was imminent. In March 1993, Governor Jean-Pierre Kalumbo (of Nande origin) called on the FAZ to help the Ngilima and the Nyanga and Hunde militias to "exterminate the Banyarwanda." On 18 March, Vice-Governor Bamwisho, from the Walikale territory, delivered an inflammatory speech against the Banyarwanda in the village of Ntoto [22].

It was against this background of crisis that the so-called war of liberation took place, bringing about Mobutu's downfall and putting an end to the 1st transition.

Preoccupied with their own internal problems, the Zairian political class failed to realize in time that the war that had been raging in Rwanda since 1994 could, at any moment, spill over into the national territory, which had not only served as a retreat for the defeated army of the former Rwandan regime but was also home to numerous Hutu refugee camps protected by France's Operation Turquoise.

These Rwandan Hutu refugees, for security reasons, had fled the theater of war, and the spillover of the Rwandan-Burundian war, which was feared, finally came to fruition in October 1966, soon to become the war of liberation.

There were several reasons for this war, the most prominent of which were:

- The Rwandan government's intention to challenge the borders between Rwanda and Zaire as historically belonging to them. The Rwandan government called for a new Berlin Conference.

- A security problem for Rwanda. The genocidaires who have taken refuge in Zaire and are preparing to destabilize the Rwandan government must be prosecuted [23]. An economic problem behind this lay the United States of America, which was financing the war on the Rwandan side [24].

Thus, the armed opposition replaced the unarmed opposition and changed the political landscape of Zaire. The Rwandans capitalized on the Banyamulenge (Zairean Tutsi) revolt to give this war of foreign invasion a Zairean flavor under the label of the Banyamulenge rebellion which claims still fueling the instability and refugee outflows due to changes on nationality issues.

Indeed, ethnic Tutsis and some others of Rwandan origin have contributed to the continued instability and refugee outflows. Changes in the law and in the application thereof related to eligibility for nationality for Rwandophones who moved from Rwanda to DRC between 1930 and 1954 [25]. Related legislation includes the Congolese constitution of 1 August 1964, the subsequent Decree-Law (décret-loi) of 18 September 1965, the Order (ordonnance-loi) No. 71/020 of 26 March 1971, Law No. 72/002 of 5 January 1972, Law No. 81/002 of 29 June 1981, and Law No. 04/024 of 12 November 2004 on Congolese Nationality. Academic and legal experts have been cited as indicating that application of laws even when they may provide for the grant of nationality may be influenced by political bias [25].

A coalition of four politico-military movements was formed on October 18, 1996, in Lemera (South Kivu) under the name of The Alliance of Democratic Forces for the Liberation of Congo-Zaire (ADFLC)- Alliance des Forces Démocratiques pour la Libération du Congo-Zaïre, or AFDL for short. ADFLC set itself its objectives: to dismantle fascist rule in the Congo; to establish a democratic regime; and to bring the country back from the brink of war [26].

Finally, Kinshasa fell without a fight on May 17, 1997, just hours after President Mobutu fled the country on May 16, 1997. The transition of Kinshasa to the power of L.D. Kabila thus marked the end of the Mobutu regime and of the first transition, which was the prelude to the advent of actors with heterolytic profiles.

3. Sacralization of armed violence as a means to access to the political power and for resolving conflicts

The socio-political and security context in the DRC's eastern provinces, for instance, those of Ex-Kivu (following the territorial division of 1989, this region was subdivided into 3 provinces: North and South Kivu, Maniema) remains a challenge for the institutions of the Democratic Republic of Congo (DRC) as armed violence has become a mean to access to both power and mineral resources.

Indeed, actors in conflicts fall in at least four broad categories on a peace war continuum, as we have already pointed out. At the peace end are the peacemakers; these are mainly victims of the conflict with everything to gain from its resolution. They are actors whose interests are affected negatively by the conflict or who are likely to enjoy a peace dividend. These include civil society, internally displaced people and refugees. They form the backbone of any peace negotiation and should be embraced and encouraged.

At the war end of the continuum are the conflict entrepreneurs. These are actors who deliberately precipitate the formation of conflicts to create situations of chaos upon which they scheme off dividends. They are in the business of instigating and fueling conflicts for personal gain [27].

Arms trafficker Victor Boot was considered one of the major suppliers of weapons used by the various rebellions that sprang up in the DRC, and even in Rwanda during the 1994 genocide [28].

Both before and after the advent of the AFDL, the problems of security and the restoration of State authority in this part of the country are the result of a combination of several factors: the lack of State authority in all or part of Eastern DRC, the presence of armed groups, both national and foreign, identity-based claims, as well as to the legitimate or supposed ambitions of Rwandan and Ugandan neighbors, and even of certain economic interest groups ranging from arms traffickers to multinationals attracted by the natural resources. Furthermore, these factors meet with a favorable context induced by a high level of corruption which gangrene the structures of the State.

However, we should point out that the current situation is nothing new, or at least not the result of recent political maneuvers. It has its origins, we believe, in the historical chronology of events that saw the birth of this country, renamed the Democratic Republic of Congo, with the advent of Laurent-Désiré KABILA as head of state in 1997.

In recent years, the region has been subjected to an unbridled rush of predators of all kinds: mining, forestry, and agricultural resources have all been plundered to the

detriment of a population that is bloodless, undernourished, massacred, and dispossessed of its land by violent and cynical predators, sometimes with Congolese complicity.

3.1 The rise of motley crew

3.1.1 Laurent-Désiré Kabila and his opportunist allies

The disintegration of the political and socio-economic climate in Mobutu's Zaire created favorable conditions for the rebellion led by LD Kabila, while at the same time serving as a pretext for Rwanda, Uganda, and Burundi to advance security concerns linked to the presence of former Rwandan armed forces on Zairean soil.

An armed insurgency arose from the South-Kivu province. In addition to Laurent-Désiré Kabila Peoples' Revolution Party-Parti de la Révolution Populaire (PRP), the ADFLC is composed by the National Council of Resistance for Democracy (CNRD) led by André Kisase Ngandu, the Revolutionary Movement for the Liberation of Congo (MRLZ) led by Anselme Masasu Nindaga, and the Democratic Alliance of the people (ADP) led by Deogratias Bugera [29].

After suspending the constitutional provisions, the constitutional act of the transition, he promulgated the decree-law no. 003 of May 28, 1997, on the organization and exercise of power in DRC. Only the ADFLC, was allowed to operate [29].

From then on, the ADFLC gradually became a political group around which power was organized. A rift soon developed between the party and the government. Competition between the ADFLC and the government disoriented the public, who saw the spectra of the single party re-emerge [30].

The ban on political parties further undermined the credibility of the L.D. Kabila regime. The first weeks of the new regime saw the establishment of a monolithic system. Overwhelmed by a fringe group of fighters and opportunists, President L.D. Kabila turned a blind eye to arbitrary arrests and property confiscations.

To force the new Head of State to democratize his country's institutions, the United States of America and the European Union made their financial aid conditional on the following requirement: "economic assistance is conditional on economic, political and social reforms." [31].

At the same time, President L.D. Kabila adopted a stance that broke with former Zaire's traditional partners, namely the France-Belgium-United States troika [29], and revived the sulfurous friendships of the maquis years. His first trips as Head of State took him to China, Libya, and Cuba. The issue of the massacres of Hutu refugees and the revelations of human rights violations committed during the war of liberation made M'zee Laurent Désiré Kabila unacceptable in the eyes of international opinion [32].

Laurent-Désiré KABILA and his Rwandan and Ugandan allies entered the war under the pretext of pursuing Rwandan Hutu genocidaires who had found refuge with their "Zairean Hutu brothers," who were already engaged in inter-ethnic violence at home in Zaire, and who were to serve as fuel for indiscriminate attacks on civilian populations, under the watchful eye of the international community, led by the UN. The international community's duty was to ensure the maintenance of international peace and security in the region and to protect civilian populations against massive human rights violations. At one point, however, it remained silent in the face of a rather chaotic scene unfolding in Zaire, which became the Democratic Republic of Congo with the second war of 1998, during which more than six states

(Zimbabwe, Angola, Rwanda, Uganda, Burundi, and Chad) were to wage flagrant war [33].

Relations between the new government and the muzzled internal opposition are not much better. The internal opposition, represented by the UDPS, is calling on the new Head of State to stick to the CNS line and form a broad-based government of national unity [34].

For L.D. Kabila, "the CNS never had total freedom to decide on the country's future. Its resolutions were therefore biased and never implemented" [35].

Following the decision to send back home the Rwandans, Burundians, and Ugandans who had taken part in the victorious AFDL campaign, the Rwandans, Burundians, and Ugandans joined forces against Kabila to overthrow his regime. Hence the war of "aggression".

3.1.2 Laurent-Désiré Kabila against his allies

The divorce between LD Kabila and his allies, who brought him to power after the fall of Mobutu in May 1997, is taking place abruptly and with armed violence. Recourse to arms is the only option chosen by the belligerents. In August 1998, Burundi, Rwanda, and Uganda invaded the DRC. Their strategy was to back some rebel groups on one hand, and on another hand, the Congolese government was backed by Zimbabwe, Angola, and Namibia [36].

The Congolese Government and its allies relied on the support of ex-FAR/ Interahamawe (the former Rwandan army and its allied militias that perpetrated the genocide), ADF (the Allied Democratic Front of Uganda), and FDD (Forces for Democracy and Development from Burundi) to slow the advance of its opponents [36].

In the first place, a politico-military movement: the Rally for Congolese Democracy-Rassemblement congolais pour la Démocratie (RCD)- claims responsibility for this rebellion led by the Banyamulenges, who reproach Kabila for turning a deaf ear to their demands [30]. But there are also Rwanda's expansionist ambitions and the covetousness of Congolese soil and subsoil riches by the Western powers under cover of Rwanda and Uganda.

Indeed, some authors have argued that the wars in eastern DRC are more the result of a frantic race for the country's riches than a struggle for democratic change. According to Euloge Boissonnade, in 1996, the Canadian company Barrick Gold (founded in 1981 by Adnan Kashoggi) financed the AFDL offensive, and George BUSH played a major role in this aggression. As a member of the company's Board of Directors, the former US President was awarded a concession covering several thousand square kilometers that year, including the Kilo-moto gold mines in Orientale province [37].

Surprised by this war, Laurent Désiré Kabila's regime almost fell, were it not for the energetic intervention of the Angolan and Zimbabwean armies and the violent resistance of the people of Kinshasa.

At the same time, the rebel coalition is increasingly divided on the tactics to adopt on the ground. A first disagreement arose in November 1998, with the opening of a second rebel front in Equateur province, led by ex-Mobutist Jean Pierre Bemba, head of the Ugandan-backed Mouvement de Libération du Congo (M.L.C.). Uganda's President Yoweri Museveni seems to favor this new faction for one simple reason: its influence over the Goma rebels (RCD) is not as strong as that of the Rwandan army [38].

Thanks to these different rebel factions, the Democratic Republic of Congo will be torn into several pieces, and insecurity will be total.

As a consequence of the two wars (1996–1997 and 1998–2003), the AFDL war gave a new meaning to the violence in the country. Whereas under Mobutu, legitimate violence, including the use of weapons, was the prerogative of the State's security forces, to preserve the power in place and its system, with the advent of the AFDL, inter-ethnic violence would be exacerbated and the use of all forms of weapons, such as sexual violence and child soldiers, would become a technique of warfare.

Under pressure from certain powers, the belligerents and their respective allies put away their weapons, leaving it to diplomacy to find a way out of a war deemed too deadly for the Congolese people.

Thus, summits were held with the allies of both camps under the cover of the United Nations and the Organization of African Unity (O.U.A.) (Pretoria Summit of August 23, 1998), Victoria Falls Summit of September 7 to 08 of the Congolese government, the R.C.D., the MLC and all Congolese political and civil organizations to organize an inclusive national dialog aimed at achieving national reconciliation and the establishment of a new political order in the Democratic Republic of the Congo, the "Lusaka Agreement for a ceasefire in the Democratic Republic of the Congo" was signed on July 10, 1999 in Lusaka, Zambia [36].

The Global and Inclusive Agreement of December 17, 2002, signed between the Congolese belligerents, provided for a two-year transition period during which the country would be under collegial leadership for two years, extendable to three, and which was to be used to draw up the fundamental laws, including the new constitution, and stabilize the country by restoring the authority of the State [6].

North and South Kivu are not exempt from the influence of neighboring countries such as Rwanda, Uganda, and Burundi, given that the capital Kinshasa is located 2000 km away, while the neighboring capitals are around 150 km away in the case of Kigali (Rwanda), and 500 km away in the case of Kampala (Uganda), to which almost all the commercial and financial flows of the two provinces converge.

However, more than twenty years on, this cycle of war has laid the foundations for the insecurity that reigns in the country's eastern provinces. The war also uprooted entire communities and destroyed the economic fabric, not to mention providing many of the weapons and munitions that continue to traumatize civilian populations. Faced with this situation, the United Nations has deployed the largest peacekeeping operation in the world, with 19,815 peacekeepers whose mission is to protect civilians and consolidate peace.

Although the conflicts have eased considerably, allowing, for example, the organization in December 2018 of the third cycle of democratic elections since the 2003 Sun City Agreement, the activities of armed groups, the undermining of gains resulting from political negotiations, the activism of armed groups involved not only in the trafficking of natural resources but also in sexual violence against civilians, and the enshrinement of impunity sometimes as a bonus for peace during negotiations with warlords, remain issues that still seriously threaten the stability of the DRC. To these must be added such pertinent issues as the return of Congolese refugees living in Rwanda, Uganda, and Burundi, against a backdrop of denial of the right to nationality, often fueled by rhetoric as violent as it is irresponsible, not to mention the equally precarious and thorny situation of the repatriation of Rwandan refugees from 1994-1998 still present on DRC territory.

Secondly, without claiming to be a panacea, we'll be suggesting ways out of the conflict.

3.2 The power of spoilers

The power of spoilers manifests itself firstly in the patrimonial conception of power in the Congo, and secondly, in the idea, these spoilers have of democracy.

We can therefore identify the actors involved in this violence, such as the state, the military, and even peacekeeping missions. All of these will serve to manage violence rather than eradicate it.

We borrow from Professor Masako Yonekawa's argument that, if conflicts persist in the DRC, it's because of the existence of the "spoiler" phenomenon.

"Spoilers" are defined as "leaders and parties who believe that peace resulting from negotiations would threaten their power and interests, and resort to violence to undermine attempts to achieve it." [39].

To illustrate this, Mr. Yonekawa points out that as global demand for strategic minerals has grown, so has the exploitation of these minerals, as well as cross-border trade (legal and illegal), and the expansion of looting and the black market. This has opened up new economic opportunities for some of the players involved in the conflicts in the DRC. To secure these economic opportunities, the war effort is now focused on controlling strategic mineral-rich zones. And military operations tend to focus on areas of economic importance, with a significant effect on the geographical location of military deployment [40].

Rebel groups and government forces thus seek to establish permanent strongholds or zones of insecurity and create de facto zones of sovereignty imposed by violence.

3.2.1 The patrimonial conception of power

We're not going back to Methuselah to talk about Eastern DRC, but instability in the Grand Kivu is due to armed violence fueled by small arms trafficking, and from the interethnic-based disputes that characterize it. These disputes are as much historical as they are inevitable, rooted in the very existence of this important part of the DRC, part of the pre-colonial as well as colonial and political history of this country of over 80 million inhabitants. It is also rooted in the problems associated with the exploitation of the DRC's rich natural resources.

The report by the United Nations panel identified Congolese and foreign personalities incriminated in the exploitation of the DRC's natural resources through various organized and unorganized crises. However, it would be dishonest to overlook the repercussions of the Leopold administration and colonization. First, the economic expansion pursued by King Leopold II through the use of terror in the Independent State of Congo - 1884 to 1908 - and then the period of Belgian colonization from 1908 to 1960 [41].

These factors, combined with catastrophic governance over the last 50 years since independence, have revealed the damaging effects of colonial civilization's mission to civilize, which ignored the sociological realities of the indigenous people in their cultural, political, and economic diversity, have impoverished the people of Kivu today, exposing them to the temptation of easy gain, gratuitous violence, the exploitation of the natural resources of the eastern DRC, and the estrangement of any hope of peace for long-awaited development.

The abundant literature on the actions of the administration set up by King Leopold II informs us that his so-called "civilizing" work was carried out with the sole aim of enriching the sovereign in a European economic context dominated by the discovery of rubber as an essential element for the automobile industry, and without

any attention being paid to the socio-cultural and political realities that governed these indigenous peoples [41].

Denis SEMADWINGA pointed out a reality that is mostly concealed by those who deny the right to Congolese nationality to Kinyarwanda-speaking populations living in the provinces of North and South Kivu: "It's true that dismemberment, however justified it may seem by the desire to secure the natural borders formed by the chain of volcanoes, nonetheless denotes the strict ignorance of local realities displayed by Europe's chancellors." [39]. In support of this assertion, which would startle many subjective objectors, he cites the regions of Busanza, Jomba, Bukoma, Bwisha, Bukumu, Kamuronza, Gishari, Mushari, Mokoto, Bwito, etc., as examples. Their incorporation into the Congo does not go back further than the first decade of this century [42].

There's every indication that racial considerations have fueled prejudice against Africans, who are considered subhuman. The fate reserved for the Venus Noire and the tragedy of the severed hands of workers who failed to meet rubber production quotas speak for themselves [42].

Jean Jacques MAQUET declares that the ideology of race guided the governance of the administration under the EIC. "The reduction of African societies to a set of ethnic cleavages has been general in colonial and post-colonial literature; the particularity of the African lake region is the racial turn taken by this type of analysis. The assimilation of the so-called agricultural and pastoral categories to the meeting of two great races, the Bantu and the Hamitic, is a kind of catechism that cannot be ignored in the great mass of publications devoted to the region. It would be impossible to talk about the region's culture and history without putting on the spectacles inherited from 19th-century Gobi ideologies" [43].

This vision has had an adverse effect on inter-ethnic relations in the region, already damaged by years of slavery followed by the chaotic administration of Leopold II.

The scandal generated by the reports and investigations of associations defending the rights of the indigenous peoples of yesteryear, such as the Swedish and American missions, demonstrated that the atrocities suffered by the indigenous populations could be prosecuted as crimes of genocide and crimes against humanity [43].

Dr. Motsoko Pheko's speech on the effects of colonialism on Africa's past and future, in support of the thesis that colonialism has done great harm to Africa, is based on a statement by Edem Kodjo, author of the book entitled "Afrique de demain," describing the situation of the African as having been removed from his history, placed in a universe shaped by the outside world that has suppressed his values, silenced by a cultural invasion that marginalizes him. He ends by saying that the African today is the distorted picture of others [41].

Other authors, notably Anglo-Saxon, have denounced the atrocities committed in the name of "Western Christian Civilization" against the indigenous populations under Leopold II. British philosopher Bertrand Russel wrote: "Each village was ordered by the authorities to harvest and bring in a certain quantity of rubber. If they failed to do so, their women were taken and kept as hostages in the harems of colonial government officials. If this failed, police troops were sent in to spread terror, if necessary killing a few men and ensuring that the right hand of every black man shot dead was taken away as a souvenir" [44].

In a study entitled "Gouvernance post-conflit du développement local au Nord-Kivu et Sud-Kivu en République Démocratique du Congo: entre enjeux locaux et nationaux," Jules Maps BAGALWA Mapatano is more explicit about the situation in Masisi: "*In Masisi, land is the fundamental reason for conflicts between the Bahunde and*

the Banyarwanda, and between the Bahunde themselves. They are having a detrimental effect on the lives of the territory's inhabitants. This situation is not new. It has its roots in Belgian colonization. For economic reasons, the colonizer decreed the immigration of Banyarwanda to the Masisi territory. He favored the newcomers to the detriment of the natives as part of the colonial "divide and conquer" policy. Furthermore, he failed to achieve the cultural integration of the Banyarwanda in Masisi territory. On the contrary, it has reinforced the gulf it has created between the two ethnic groups to the point of animosity. Hence the difficulty of cohabitation and the lack of socio-cultural integration, a source of conflict including land disputes. The departure of the colonizer in 1960 coincided with the transition from latent conflict to open and even armed conflict between the two antagonists. The fire that had smouldered during colonization was given a chance to explode once the fear of colonial authority had passed and disappeared" [45].

Jules M. BAGALWA is not the only one to have attempted to understand the causes of the conflicts between the Bahunde and the Banyarwanda in the Masisi territory.

Olivier MPIANA Kalombo, who has researched the nationality of Rwandophone populations living in the DRC, presents his analysis as follows: "*In Masisi territory, the colonial government created an autonomous chiefdom, Gishari, headed by a Tutsi immigrant, Mr. BUCYANAYANDI Wilfried, who arrived in the Belgian Congo on the wave of the Mission d'Immigration des Banyarwanda (MIB). The Hunde customary authorities protested to the government; they even took steps in Brussels, where they reminded the Belgian authorities that the Rwandans had only been admitted to Congolese lands on condition that they remained under the control of the Hunde customary authorities. Brussels agreed with these authorities, represented by Mwami KALINDA André, and Chief BUCYANAYANDI was deposed and his chieftaincy abolished.*" [46].

It's clear that for the colonizer, the need for economic expansion as a European power dictated the necessary occupation and exploitation of the entire Congo-Belgium territory, and hence of most of the Congo Basin.

Generally speaking, the troubles that engulfed North Kivu in 1993 seem to have had their roots in colonial society, but were exacerbated during the Second Republic by the calculations of certain political leaders who used and fabricated the ethnic fact to gain or maintain power [47].

3.2.2 The Spoiler's democracy

3.2.2.1 The use of violence as a mode of political and security governance

According to Thierry Vercoulon [48], the DRC has been diagnosed as one of the world's most failed States on the planet consequence of three decades of one man in power. The state-building of a country-continent initiated by the international community for the restoration of the state has remained incomplete.

Indeed, in accordance with the Sun City agreement, the restoration of state authority was to lead to convincing results in terms of security (control of borders against foreign infiltration), development (end to the illegal exploitation of natural resources), and the democratic rule of law (an end to massive human rights violations and the participation of the population in the country's political governance) [6].

In addition, peacekeeping and the organization of elections were to be facilitated by the restoration of state coercion (army and police), guided by "good governance." In short, a virtuous circle of state building/security/democratization was to be set in

motion. However, according to Masako Yonekawa, elections in the poorest countries will not necessarily lead to democracy but rather democracy. It would appear that the Presidential and legislative elections held in DRC in November 2011 turned out to be one such case of democracy by spoilers, in the footsteps of the elections in Kenya in 2007 and Cote d'Ivoire in 2010 [49].

The "spoiler" phenomenon in the post-2005 and decades after in the DRC context can also be analyzed on three levels [49]:

Firstly, there are the "spoilers," who need to be identified. Masako Yonekawa notes that state actors and the UN tend to qualify as "spoilers" only those rebel groups and former government forces who took part in the fighting, but who became parties to the peace agreements. Once in power, they continue to use violence and propaganda as a means of political and security governance.

Secondly, "spoilers" use both violent and non-violent tactics. Violent to prolong the conflict and benefit from the war economy.

Non-violent tactics can be strategic and far-reaching, and include recognition, time, legitimacy, military and material advantages, and the avoidance of sanctions. For Masako, a peace process can be "spoiled" either to destroy it or to shape the negotiation process.

Finally, we need to identify the sources of funding for "spoilers." Spoilers may be supported by external actors, including diaspora groups, states, political allies, or multinationals.

3.2.2.2 The rationality of rapacious birds

An overview of the problem of conflict over mineral resources in the DRC corroborates the thesis that the supply of resources by state or non-state actors is in fact financing the recurrent violence observed in this country.

Since 2003, more than ten armed groups have been operating with impunity in eastern DRC, in the absence of the Congolese state. In order to profit from the resources, they exploit in the territories under their control, the armed groups attack the civilians they keep under their control. Serious crimes are committed, including sexual violence and massacres [49].

The UN expert's report [50] noted the continued presence of domestic and foreign armed groups in eastern DRC and the suffering they impose on the civilian population of the country, including international humanitarian law violations and human rights violations and abuses, and contribute to undermining State authority, the continued illegal exploitation and trade of natural resources, which enable these armed groups to operate in eastern DRC.

Despite this situation of insecurity, the Congolese authorities have not stopped signing mining contracts with external partners, sometimes highlighting the corruption that plagues the process of selecting economic partners.

The personal enrichment of political elites and their clients fuels the country's scandals.

That is why T. Vercoulon stated that "a presidential election does not make a democracy, and the discontent of the losers added to the legacy of unresolved political, economic and security problems will make the DRC even more fragile." [51].

Also in the context of clashes between the M23 and FARDC, local auto-defense groups managed to get access to arms to defend themselves and their own communities in the village of Mugogo in order to resist against the armed group's attack, local population [6].

The proliferation and illicit trafficking of light weapons in the Great Lakes region is one of the main consequences of the wars that have plagued three of the region's countries, the Democratic Republic of Congo (DRC), Burundi, and Rwanda, for over a decade. The political agreements for peace signed on both sides, the transition process in which the DRC and Burundi are involved, and the process of integrating the various armed groups that took part in the war in Burundi and Congo-Kinshasa into unified national armies, have not been enough to put an end to the trafficking of light weapons and ammunition, which still continues in the east of the DRC and in Burundi [52].

Access to arms by the population of the eastern DRC has fueled violent tensions for over two decades. The slightest conflict, land dispute, or dispute between neighbors often results in the use of a firearm. The ease with which weapons can be acquired in North Kivu, for example, corruption and the quality of life of soldiers deployed in the area are all factors that encourage the proliferation of weapons among the civilian population. In addition, the ineffectiveness of the judicial system in dealing with gun crimes contributes to the perpetuation of impunity [53].

4. Conclusion

This study tried to demonstrate how Spoiler's violent governance has impacted the historical evolution and politics in the DRC, especially in its eastern part. Clientelism and race for power have occulted issues of economic and social development of the populations.

On the other hand, in the context of Eastern DRC, gun violence is a consequence of non-state actors' activism in the region, as it is a resistance strategy for the population against rebel groups or simply a way to deal with the interpersonal disputes.

Political decision-makers, both national and international, should not ignore this aspect of the country's history in their attempts to understand and resolve the Congolese crisis, which has lasted for over three decades.

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Chapter 7

Impact of Gun Trafficking on the Political Economy of Nigeria

Ishaku Hamidu

Abstract

Nigeria is a country with huge population, large landmass and numerous natural endowments on the African continent. These are not only assets for solid economic growth and development, but a vital stimulant to attract direct foreign investments. Using qualitative research method and exploring some secondary data, it is discovered that gun trafficking is affecting the polity and socioeconomic activities negatively. Gun trafficking due to porous border security and lucrative gun economy has exacerbated ethno-religious conflicts, increase banditry/abductions, herders-farmers clashes, electoral violence, discouraging direct foreign investments, displacement of farmers and other business workers from their places of abode/job, high expenditure on weapons as against other vital socioeconomic needs, and has introduced a new phraseology into Nigerian state: unknown gunmen, bandits, armed men/groups, etc. Consequently, several parts of Nigeria are insecure, socioeconomic activities are partially grounded and the country, highly indebted. Authorities are urged to rise up to these challenges embark on massive enlightenment for all crafts (herders-farmers) to live in peace, liaise with neigbouring countries to check illegal movements and trafficking in guns and other contraband items, equip security operatives for maximum productivity and overcome corruption for the safety of the personnel, the economy and the polity at large.

Keywords: Nigeria, economy, socioeconomic activities, unknown gunmen, traffickers, bandits, ethnic militia, herders, farmers, corruption, violence & gun

1. Introduction

Human beings are special creatures by God with innate abilities and potential for scientific and technological development to better their course. Development in science and technology consequent upon industrial revolution boosted the adventuristic and capitalistic tendencies of man against other creatures. For man to capture territories, explore his environment and to fiercely withstand and overcame any threat to his existence for robust socioeconomic activities, he made weapons of various sharps and sizes. In the same vein, some scientific and technological items like engine boat/ship, aero plane, vehicles assisted the Europeans to come down to Africa for adventure and socioeconomic activities, where they remain until the era of political independence for the continent, especially from the late 1950s upward.

One of the colonial legacies Africans inherited from the Europeans was military institution. Military was meant to defend the state from external aggressions and in modern days to quell internal insurrections. These cannot be done effectively without weapons-arms and ammunitions, among others wares for instance. Sovereign nation-states are allowed under United Nations' and other sub-global conventions to obtain or make weapons without contravening international laws/conventions for their defenses. Advanced countries have been enjoying those privileges and their economy is being boosted from making and selling of weapons like Fighter Jets, Small Arms and Light Weapons, Sub-Marine, etc.

Developing economies like Nigeria on the other hand, patronize the advanced countries for their weapons, especially guns and other military wares. In line with the above background, this chapter examines Nigerian political economy; connotation, types and uses of guns; sources of guns; Nigeria's boundaries and guns' economy; impacts of gun trafficking on Nigerian economy; implications of gun trafficking on the Nigerian state and economy; conclusion and recommendations are outlined.

2. Research design and analysis

Qualitative research method is employed for the study. Data from books, journals, conference materials and articles from media organizations were studied. The study used descriptive analysis to draw inferences for this study.

3. Nigerian political economy

Nigeria is a country in sub-Saharan Africa, along the Gulf of Guinea that got its independence on first October, 1960 from Great Britain. As at 2021, she has the population of about 213.4 million people, occupying a landmass of about 923,768 sq. km. She shares international boundaries with Republic of Chad at the north; Republic of Benin to the west; Republic of Cameroon at the east and Guinea at the Atlantic Ocean from the southern region. Nigeria has thirty – six states with a seven hundred and seventy-four local government areas/councils. Nigeria practice presidential system of government, with bi-cameral legislators. The Senate in Nigeria is similar to the Upper House and House of Representative, similar to the Lower House in other democracies.

Nigeria is endowed with numerous natural resources or mineral deposits like petroleum, gold, uranium, coal, cocoa, hide and skins, and other yet to be tapped deposits in commercial quantities. Her large arable land, forests, valleys and rivers are great sources for food and foreign exchange earnings. Another valuable assets Nigeria have are its large population consisting of able young men and women. Agriculture was the mainstay of the Nigerian economy and a major source of her foreign exchange. After discovering crude oil in Niger/Delta region in the early 1970s, Nigeria's oil was much sought for in the international markets and this economic fortunes made Nigeria a force to reckon with on the continent. This made her to be the sixth major producer in Organization of Petroleum Exporting Countries (OPEC). Nigeria as sovereign nation-state is endowed with great potential to truly be the economic engine of Africa.

Paradoxically however, several issues ranging from traditional/cultural, corruption, political instability, and insecurity have combined to stagnate the nation's

economy. Beside the factors mentioned above, trafficking in guns is another latest but silent factor negatively affecting the polity, human lives, social harmony/relations among people groups and socioeconomic activities generally in Nigeria.

4. Meaning and types of guns in Nigeria

Gun is any machine that is handy, that one can put or it uses bullet before being-shoot. 'Gun is a weapon that shoots bullets or shells; a portable firearm (as rifle or handgun)' [1]. It is a weapon that is normally obtained by states for it security operatives to ensure protection of lives and properties on and around its territories. Besides, in global politics, there is the issue of Small Arms and Light Weapons (SALW). Small arms are said to be fire arms designed to be held in one or both hands while being fired. According to North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO), SALW includes 'all crew portable, direct fire weapon of a caliber less than 50mm and would include a secondary capacity to defeat high armour and helicopters. SALW therefore includes handguns, rifles short guns, assault rifles, machine gun, shoulder-launched rockets and hand delivered explosive guns. According to the United Nations, Small Arms includes: revolvers and self-loading pistols; rifles and carbines; sub-machine guns; assault rifles; light machine guns. Light weapons includes: heavy machine guns; hand-held under barrel and mounted grenade launchers; portable anti-craft gun; portable anti-tank guns; recoilless rifles; portable launchers of anti-missile and rocket system. Others are portable launchers of anti- craft missiles system and mortars of calibers up to 100mm. Ammunitions and explosives includes: cartridges (round) for small arms; shell and missiles for light weapons; mobile containers with missiles or shell for single action, anti- craft and anti-tank system; anti-personnel and anti- tank hand grenade; land mines explosives. Nigeria as a sovereign nation-state and like other countries is not exempted from gun politics and trafficking. Hence, in Nigeria, there are local and foreign made guns being trafficked and used.

Local made guns are the ones that are made locally by blacksmiths, and other non-license operators. Such type of gun are usually made and use for hunting. They are sometimes called "dean gun". Later, they are used for communal or ethnic conflicts. Such guns are also in various sizes and shapes. On the other hand in Nigeria also, there are foreign guns. Foreign guns are more sophisticated and durable guns than the local ones. Such guns are in various categories, and they are more efficient and destructive. Some of the common ones in Nigeria include but not limited to AK47. One of this gun is estimated to cost between #300,000 to #50,000; depending on geographical locations and the quantity needed.

5. Uses of guns in Nigeria

In Nigeria, guns are needed and used for various purposes. The underlisted are however some of the prominent uses:

i. Guns are needed by the country's security operatives for the purposes of maintaining law and order and to defend the polity from any aggression. Owing to several intra ethnic and political conflicts, vis-a-viscross-border criminal activities, Nigeria buy and supply guns to its security operatives to be able to protect lives and properties in and across the country.

ii. Guns are used for hunting in the bush. Nigeria being a large country with numerous forests, valleys and bushes, some people obtains and use guns for hunting in those bushes/forests. With the aid of their guns, hunters are able to catch bush meat and other wildlife animals for consumption and commercial purposes.

iii. Guns are used for Self Defense. In Nigeria, some people own and carry guns for self-defense. Some migrant herders, some transporters of goods and services carry guns and other weapons along for protection against armed robbers and other criminals that could attack to collect/siphon their goods. Some business men and women use armed police men to escort their personnel, goods, etc to prevent attackers and other criminals.

iv. Guns are used for sporting/games events. During sporting events, guns are shot to signal the commencement of the events and there are other registered clubs that use guns for sports/funs in the country.

v. Guns are used for burials. In Nigeria, guns are being shoot during burial of a prominent personalities, especial military personal, brave hunter/warrior, etc. In those events, guns are being shot either technically or sporadically.

vi. Guns are used during ceremonies/festivals. In Nigeria, guns are used during ceremonies like installation/enthronement of major traditional rulers, head of hunters, marriages of a brave hunter/warrior or his families, etc. Also, during religious festivals like Sallah for the Muslims and Christmas for the Christians communities. Guns and other fireworks is shot into the air to awake people and make the ceremonies and festival memorable.

vii. Guns are used for fighting. In Nigeria, guns are used in or during ethnic, communal and political fighting. Ethno-religious conflicts and even political clashes have occurred in several parts of the country which claimed several lives and properties, due the usage of guns. Possessing and deploying of guns has exacerbated conflicts between and among people groups, ethnic, interreligious groups' clashes, etc in the country.

6. Sources of guns

There are many sources or ways through which person or people get guns in Nigeria. Some of such means/medium includes:

1. Locally created/invented guns: In Nigeria, there are many people with locally made guns like double barrel, dean gun, small pistol, etc. They are made and sold locally.

2. Imported guns. In Nigeria, some people get their guns from abroad. Some obtain it conventionally or legally while others through smugglingor trafficking using various illegal means/routes. In line with the above, most of the countries in Africa, especially those in Central Africa, like Chad, Sudan, Democratic Republic of Congo, Mali, Angola, Rwanda, Cote'deIvore, Niger, etc, get weapons smuggled

into their country in the form of patron-client network for either liberation struggle, or insurgent purposes. 'Weaponization' of the African continent led to states collapse in many countries among which include Central Africa Republic; Liberia; Sierra Leone; Rwanda; Democratic Republic of Congo; Mali; Libya, to mention but a few ([2], p. 109). The civil strife experienced by these countries have greatly influenced the successive security irritant across the continent due largely to cross border militia activities armed with SALW trafficked into the country from abroad.

3. Donation from other nations. In Nigeria, some guns and other weapons are gotten through donation/gift to state authoritiesso as to contend criminal elements or during the civil war (Biafran war). Some countries supported both sides with weapons, especially with guns, just like other countries are supporting and donating to Ukraine to protect/defend herself against Russian invasions (2022/2023).

4. Other sources of guns are the migrants, transnational terrorists and other hard drugs syndicates who engage in importing and transporting of weapons, concealing them among their goods and other items. These, the traffickers do easily due to the porosity of the Nigerian borders: land, water and even air borders. Guns and other light weapons are neatly wrapped and hidden under some food stuff, vehicle spare parts, drugs, even in coffins/caskets, etc, by criminal elements and taken to their desired destinations into the country.

5. Breaking of security armouries. In Nigeria, some group of people invade police stations and break the armoury to carry away guns. In some instance, people attack security personnel on the way and carry their weapons for their ill uses. For instance, the Auditor General of Nigeria disclosed that over 178,459 Ak-47 rifles, assorted rifles, pistols, other arms and ammunitions are unaccounted for nationwide in 2021. It is claimed that those guns and other weapons were forcefully collected from the security operatives' custody by criminal elements.[1] This is a great catastrophe in and for Nigeria's security and economy.

6. Hiring of Guns. Some criminals apprehended in some parts of Nigeria with guns claimed that they hire the guns in their possession from some people. Among the people sometimes pointed at include serving and ex-service security operatives, some mercenaries, politicians, etc. As people hire or rent cars to use and return to the owners and pay for the services, some criminal elements hire guns and use them for their mission and return same to the owners with some tokens.

7. Nigeria's boundaries and guns' economy

The afore-mentioned sources of guns notwithstanding, is not unconnected with the nation's poor border security and management. On a general term, the nature of the Nigeria's poor border paradigm and management gives room for excessive in-flow of guns and other contra-band goods. It was earlier argued that porosity of nation's border assist terrorist activities, and the Niger-Delta militants thus:

[1] www.tribuneonline 2/1/2022

> *It was the search for mechanism towards controlling the flow of such weapons that led the resuscitation of the Gulf of Guinea Commission by president Obasanjo in 2003. While efforts were on toward collective security in the Gulf of Guinea, towards tackling the activities of the Niger-Delta militants, insurgent groups of the north also emerged. The sect first inflicts devastation on security installations, military and police formations, market places, schools, mosques and churches. Other activities includes targeted assassinations as well as high way attacks that render high ways leading to Maiduguri, its environs as well as roads linking Nigeria with the neighbouring state danger zones. The militia apart from using the north east as their supply routes also runs to safety in the neighbouring states especially Cameroon, when faced with overwhelming fire power of the Nigeria military ([2], p. 115).*

It is obviously clear that both the Lake Chad and Gulf of Guinea axis which should boost Nigeria's economy is also used as a transit route for arms trafficking or supply, training of terrorists, because it is strategic geopolitical spot for boosting terrorist and militia war economy. This is also affecting national and international security in and beyond the West African sub-region ([3], p. 2). Generally, the need and uses of guns in Nigeria has created and established the gun economy. In Nigeria today, guns and other weapons are sold and bought for various purposes. This creates a functional business between the manufacturers, traders and users of guns who are mostly state or non-state actors. Political economy of guns involves the totality of the symbiotic relationship between state and non-state actors in the weapon businesses. Nigeria's socioeconomic and sociopolitical activities are sometimes affected by gun supply and marketing through the coastal areas, resulting in violent conflicts, political clashes, banditry, kidnappings, losing of lives, etc. The state is handicap of stopping these due to positive political economy of gun trafficking with global networks/linkages and the porosity of its boundary surveillances.

8. Impact of gun trafficking on Nigerian economy

Gun trafficking is the illegal importing and selling of guns from the manufacturer to the seller and sometimes to the final buyer/users. It is a networking of business involving the manufacturer, marketers and users who uses all means to get their money paid and their goods delivered. Like trafficking in persons or smuggling of contraband goods, guns and other weapons are also being trafficked in and across the African continents. However, non-states actors, ethnic militia, politicians are the ones that mostly resort to or get involved in gun trafficking. They use some corrupt public officials or well position uniformed officers and conspired to get those guns cleared or well protected and taken to the desired destinations. In other occasions, they use the porous borders to smuggle or traffic those guns to the place of use/distributions.

The need and uses of guns in Nigeria have lot of effects/impacts on the nation's socioeconomic activities. In other words, trafficking in guns has made guns available in the nook and cranny of the Nigerian state and is now among other things causing or leading to:

1. Ethno-religious conflict. Availability and easier access to guns through any of the means mentioned above, but particularly through trafficking, has aggravated ethno-religious conflicts in Nigeria. Yearly, there are ethno-religious conflicts

which claimed lives and properties in several states in Nigeria. Notable ones include Tiv/Fulani, in Benue and Taraba states; Bachama/Fulani in Adamawa state; Christian/Muslims in Plateau and Kaduna states respectively, as confirmed by other scholars [4].

2. Increase in banditry in various sections of Nigerian society. Access to guns through trafficking has increased the rate and levels of banditry in Nigeria, particularly in places or states like Zamfara, Katsina, Niger, Sokoto, Kaduna, etc. Hardly will a week passed without major bandits attacks on communities, farms and business premises to carry away goods and other animals to unknown destinations. This made United States of America to warn its citizen against visiting some parts of northern Nigeria [5]. Access to modern guns made many young men and women to join banditry as means for livelihood in those restive regions in northwest and north central Nigeria. For instance, gunmen attacked and kidnapped people in Lafiya demanding #3milion naira as well as some persons in Kuje, in Abuja [6] and [7].

3. Electoral violence. Proliferations of guns and other light weapons have aided political conflicts and violence in Nigeria. Some politicians procure and provide weapons, particularly guns to their thugs who carry same along during campaigns and on election days to attack opponents in spite of the presence of the conventional security operatives [8]. There were cases where political thugs of opposing political parties' clashes among themselves and huge numbers of causalities were recorded [9]. Nigeria's politics and electioneering has become so militarized that many innocent citizens are apprehensive of coming out to express their views or cast their vote for candidates of their choice without molestation.

4. Fuelling of Herders'-Farmers' clashes. The herders, who are mostly from Fulani ethnic group, carry weapons on them in the name of protecting their cattle and family members from attackers in the bush or along the ways. Unfortunately however, annually, particularly during harvests period, from October to February, there are always herders-farmer clashes/conflicts in numerous states in northern Nigeria. The herders come with their herds of cattle, goats and sheep and eat up the farmer's produce. The farmers will then team up and go out against the invading Fulani-herders. Consequently, armed conflicts using guns and other dangerous weapons ensued, sometimes with huge human and material loses ([4], pp. 270–271).

5. Cultic practices and other social vices in the universities. In Nigeria, there are cases of cultic groups on the university and polytechnic campuses using or having guns. Students who are supposes to be engaging in researches, some of them join cult groups for among other reasons to be protected from other cult groups/gangs' molestation, to threaten their lecturers, so as to have access to question papers or to pass examinations without much stress, etc. Campus cult groups use guns and other dangerous weapons against themselves, and such armed gangs are also used by politicians to attack their opponents after being paid [10].

6. Facilitates MIC and destroy local industries. The quest for modern and sophisticated weapons in Nigeria has compelled authorities in the country to engage

in Military Industrial Complex (MIC) with western countries. Nigeria has for instance expended several dollars on weapons and guns obtained from abroad to fight against terrorists and other criminal elements sabotaging the nation's economy along the coast and on the land borders. Despite the fact that the Academic Staff of Nigerian Universities (ASUU) were on strike for about eight months and their salaries were not paid, the government took huge amount of money to buy military wares to fight insurgency and terrorism in northeast [11]. For developing nation-states like Nigeria, MIC facilitates underdevelopment and socioeconomic crisis in a number of ways:

7. It is believed that most of the inter-state and intra-state civil wars and other ethno-religious crisis in developing countries are either instigated or facilitated by the super-powers to sell their weapons. For instance, during the Nigerian civil war 1967 to 1970; Russian weapons were sent to support the Biafrans. In the Libyan uprising, Malian crises and even the insurgent's upheaval in Nigeria, the rebels use sophisticated weapons made in and imported from Europe. Through such conflicts, state and non-state actors purchase weapons for security purposes at the detriment of the economy and the welfare of the citizens. Nigeria has spent millions of naira to procure arms and other military gadgets to fight terrorism.

8. Military Industrial Complexes, anchored on manufacturing and selling of arms has established bribery and corruption among the political class in developing countries. The selection of which nation-state, company or industry to buy the weapons from is sometimes determined by vested interest of the persons concerned. In Nigeria for instance, the National Security Adviser (NSA) to former President Goodluck Jonathan, Colonel Sambo Dasuki (Rtd) appointed since the year 2002 to oversee the fight against Boko Haram was said to be involved in some corrupt practices. The adviser's allegations of corrupt practices began to be suspected when in 2014; South Africa seized suitcases packed with millions of dollars of cash in a private jet from Nigeria. The plane with US registration number N808HG at an airport in Johannesburg, claiming it was to be used for purchase of arms. This raised local and international suspicion. After the change of government in 2015, the new administration constituted a panel of inquiry and interim report of the presidential investigation committee on arms procurement under Goodluck Jonathan's administration indicted the former NSA for misappropriating $2billion. The NSA was standing trial for possession of illegal arms and arms deal misappropriation or corrupt practices [12] and [13]. United States' Government charged one Ara Dolarian to court for allegedly brokering the sales of arms and ammunitions to Nigerian government without acquiring compulsory U.S Department Commerce and Investment Licenses [14]. These confirmed that there are corrupt practices in the MIC deal, which often end at the detriment of the developing countries like Nigeria.

9. MIC, which is the vested interest in military wares production and marketing, has brought development for the European states in terms of industrialization and revenue generation; job creation and structural developments. In developing nations like Nigeria however, MIC has created exploitation of the economy, fuelled ethno-religious crisis, insurgency, bribery and corruption and change of government that does not favour their interest. This has perpetuated unequal trade relations and endangered global peace and security.

10. Encourage corruption in the buying and managing the guns. In the process of buying and bringing into the country the obtained military equipment, including arms and ammunitions, some of the staff were caught in bribery and corruption scandal. In Nigeria, in spite the claim of acquiring of new and modern guns, young military officers revolted against their senior officers in Maiduguri. Corrupt practises in the buying and giving out of guns for use in Nigeria is causing tangible setback and fuel intra- or inter military and paramilitary rivalries, with each of the sister agencies claiming superiority than the other. This affects the cohesion and togetherness in the discharge of their duties against enemies of the state.

11. Militarizing of the civil society for self-defense. The availability and easy accessibility to guns have made civil communities like markets, churches, mosques, hospital, or even high-ways in Nigeria to be militarized. That is, one can easily find people carrying guns around, for fear of not being abducted or some gunmen to carry away their belongings. Even in schools, students and some state officials on visit sometimes carry guns. The civil societies are militarized by various groups and communities having guns or carrying guns on broad day light in the name of security or for personal defense.

12. Escalating the culture of violence and counter-violence through revenge. Having access to guns and carrying same almost on daily basis has increased the number and propensity for revenge without impunity. When there is attack on person or community by others with guns, those attacked will hardly report and wait for the state and security operatives to come to their aid, to mediate and punish the offenders. Rather, those injured or attacked first, will immediately take revenge on their attackers. This led to more violent and counter violent attacks in the Nigerian states [15].

13. Creating and instilling fear in the hearts of both the citizens and other nationals. The frequent uses and carrying of weapons by community police or security personnel into and around other human settlements or business premises send fear in the hearts and minds of the people in and around those places. When the military are passing with guns, civilian fear for their security and safety. Other nationals who came to Nigeria also show some kinds of apprehensive outlook towards the Nigerian society, business communities and the state/region in particular, due to frequent seeing of guns with people.

14. Discouraging direct foreign investment. Hearing gun shots, seeing ethno-religious conflicts, activities of armed bandits and kidnappers discourage direct foreign investment in the country. Investors need a peaceful and serene socio-economic environment with safety for their lives and properties. When there is no security, people generally would hardly or would not even invest and to later loses their income or even their lives. Wrong usage of guns in Nigeria has hindered or is discouraging foreigners to come into Nigeria and invest that will ultimately boost the nation's economy. Most of the oil companies in Nigeria like Elf, Texaco, Chevron, etc are not producing maximally due to the incessant attacks on their expatriates, staff members and the companies' pipelines, etc in the restive Niger/Delta region [16]. This is a great challenge to the Nigerian economy in recent times.

15. Encouraging/recruiting youngster to engage in trafficking. Young men and women in Nigeria today hardly engage in agriculture, studies and other vocational training or skill development. Rather, some of them join, support and collaborate with gunmen in the bush to be their 'informers', buyers and suppliers of various items like fuel, drinks, food stuff, etc from the town and carry them to the gangs in the jungle (bush/forest) where they are eating, drinking, and having fun with women, (either those women they captured/abducted or those going to meet them in their hide-outs from the town to be paid later). Some young men and women have left school to join gunmen/women, kidnappers, ethnic militia, and armed robbery gangs. Their guns becomes their sources of wealth, power and to meet other life's' need. This is dangerous to Nigeria's economic future, and human capacity development in any trade/department/ministries.

16. Poor revenue for the state. Gun men and women, kidnappers, and bandits' activities are detrimental to Nigeria's quest for local and foreign income and exchanges. Traffickers of weapons, guns and other items, proved difficult for Nigeria to apprehend those gangs, hence illegal importation and exportation takes places without the state collecting revenue or taxes from both traffickers and buyers. Unknown gunmen had sometimes attack and chased away military and Para-military officers stationed at some land and water borders due to superior weapons with them. By so doing, tax collection is disrupted and the gunmen take charge of the import and export of goods and services or they form their own check points to collect taxes before allowing any trading or commercial activities from being carried out along the borders.

17. Expenditure on gun and military wares. In order to halt and contend the advances of criminal elements using the guns in the country, Nigerian government/authorities are forced to also acquire more weapons to fulfil one of the objectives of the states, to defend its territory and citizens' lives and properties. To resist and overcome the excesses of gunmen and other undesirable elements, the state therefore expend more to acquires modern and sophisticated weapons for the military and other Para-military organizations to be combatant ready. It is argued that in Nigeria, security issues and military needs gulp the nation's finances. For instance, in the 2012 budget, security was allocated the sum of N921.91 billion at the expense of other vital sectors like health, education, agriculture, etc [17]. It is also noted that the Ministry of Defence expended 396.5b (US $2.56bn) in 2012 [18]. In the 2014 budget presented to the National Assembly on 1^{9th} December, 2013, security still retained top most, with the allocation of the sum of one trillion Naira [19]. As if the afore-mentioned were child's play, there is also an elaborate budgetary allocation under Muhammadu Buhari thus: In 2016, security got #1.04 trillion. In 2017, #1.053 trillion was appropriated for defence. In 2018, #1.05 trillion. Still in that same year, $1 billion from the excess crude oil account, where $496 million was used to buy/order for the 12 Tucano fighter jets. In 2019, #1.76 trillion, ministry of interior got #617.9; defence was #589.9 million; police was #366 and office of the National Security Adviser, got #120 billion. In 2020, security got #1.78 trillion. In 2021, it was initially #1.97; but there were order for the implementation of police Trust Fund which got #11 billion in March and another #74 billion in June 2021 [11]. In the 2021 supplementary budget, a total of #802 billion was allocated to security agencies to shore up their revenue. In 2022, #2.41 trillion was on security and defence; that

is, 15% of the budget. In 2023 budget, #2.98 trillion goes to defence sector [20]. These implied that providing security is actually capital intensive for developing economy like Nigeria. The fight against Boko Haram/ISWAP, bandits, gunmen and other ethnic militia constitutes an additional burden on the budgets of the states concerned [21]. Insecurity can be said to compel the respective public authorities to respond by raising budget deficit or by raising taxes which both have negative effects on economic growth of Nigeria.

18. Increase in terrorists and kidnapping activities. Having access to guns has fuelled terrorism in Nigeria. Boko Haram and Islamic States in West African Provinces (ISWAP) have made Nigeria to be recognized as a country where terrorism thrives. Since 2009 to 2023, there are always news of either Boko Haram or ISWAP's attacks on civilians, military officials and even on other nationalities by these groups carrying heavy guns and other dangerous weapons in northeast Nigeria. In the northwest and north-central Nigeria, there are visible cases of kidnappers and bandits' ransacking villages, taking people away and asking for ransom, etc. Bandits and kidnappers are heavily armed gunmen hiding in the villages and targeting their victims both at home, markets, farms or on the high-ways. Terrorism and other criminal activities thrive due to uncontrolled flow of arms and ammunition into Nigeria [22].

19. Increase in cattle rustling. Having access to guns by criminal elements has increased the rate of cattle and other animal rustling in Nigeria. Many cattle owners, cattle breeders, herders and even cattle marketers have had their cattle rustled by unknown gunmen in various rural communities, micro-states and even at transnational levels [4]. Such unfortunate and barbaric behaviours by or from unknown gunmen, ethnic militia, armed bandits, domestic or transnational terrorists operating in states like Benue, Taraba, Zamfara, Katisna, Kaduna, Adamawa, Borno, Niger, among others and sometimes while the cattle were on transit to western and eastern parts of Nigeria, have made many people hitherto rich in cattle and wealthy economically to become highly indebted, some became poor, others structurally unemployed, some are nursing injuries they suffered from their attackers, while others were killed. These generally caused psychological trauma, high blood pressures, phobia and other anxieties, especially for the cattle owners/marketers who are predominantly in or from northern part of Nigeria.

20. Heighten tension in eastern Nigeria. Access to guns through the Gulf of Guinea and other means have boosted the morale of the ethnic militia seeking for independence and creating unpleasant scenarios against the people in several eastern states in Nigeria. The activities of pro-Biafrasecessionist groups like, Indigenous People of Biafra (IPOB), Movement for the Actualization of the Sovereign State of Biafra (MOSOB) and others like Niger-Delta Avengers, etc, are tough on the people, foreigners, oil pipeline, and other government economic interests in eastern Nigeria. These groups have and use sophisticated guns and other dangerous weapons which the nation's security operatives are apprehensive of them [23]. The activities of the afore-mentioned groups terrorize the people and economic activities in the region entirely, creating unnecessary tension for and in the country at large in terms of oil drilling, exploration, transporting and marketing.

21. Closure of other institutions. Activities of gunmen in Nigeria have led to closure of vital institutions like schools in most communities in northeast, north-central and northwest regions of Nigeria. It is a known fact that gunmen believed to be Boko Haram/ISWAP members have attacked and abducted school girls in Bonoand Yobe states. Also, another sets of gunmen/bandits attacked and abducted students in Katsina, Kaduna, Niger states etc, all in northern Nigeria. Such activities of gunmen have affected the educational institutions negatively and forced the closure of same in various states in Nigeria [24].

22. Displacement of citizens. Activities of gunmen, bandits and other criminal elements carrying guns have caused displacement of people from their habitat. Some Nigerians have become internally displaced persons (IDPs). Some have become international refugees in countries like Chad, Niger and Cameroon Republics, because armed gangs are terrorising and ravaging their communities. Apart from the insecurity this constitutes, it also caused structural unemployment by preventing farmers, agriculturalists and other micro-business men and women from settling in their ancestral places to do meaningful businesses in places like Zamfara, Kebbi, Kaduna, Sokoto, Borno, Adamawa, states, among others. In most of the mentioned states, many Nigerians, especially in the rural areas have become beggars and dependents instead of workers and supporters of the Nigerian economy. With more people to feed and less places for productive agriculture, authorities must expend more on food and other basic needs of its citizens.

23. Loses of lives. Above all, gunmen have caused many people to lose their lives in Nigeria. Hardly a day passes without reports that 'gunmen' or 'unknown gunmen' have attacked certain communities, places of worships, markets, etc and recorded causalities. 'Cross-fire' gun shots and stray bullet sometimes when the gunmen are exchanging fire with security operatives also hit and killed innocent people or passer-by person(s). Nigeria is losing both married and singles, workers, students, unemployed, farmers, businessmen/women, security personnel due to gunmen, kidnappers, terrorists, armed political thugs' activities in the nation. Such unfortunate and preventable scenarios are detrimental to the local and international economy, which cannot be recovered or compensated in monetary terms.

9. Implications ofgun trafficking on the Nigerian state and economy

The implications of the above on the nation's economy include but not limited to:

a. Firstly, many villages are today empty and those who stay or remain there must be ready to be paying taxes to the gunmen.

b. Secondly, farming activities are now less or non-existent in most villages under the gunmen. This is because, farmers cannot go some kilometre into the bush to plough their farms and cultivate their crops because the gunmen in the bush will abduct or kidnap them, until they pay ransom money or the levy/tax placed on them by the gunmen/armed gang.

c. Thirdly, Women, especially young ladies are rapped, some are married by force to and by the gunmen.

d. Fourthly, many young men have left some villages/rural communities so that the gunmen will not abduct them by force or use them as their errand boys. Therefore, some villages in the remotes areas are left with only the elderly/aged people who either have no place to go or who felt, 'they better stay and die in their ancestral home'.

e. Fifthly, the above scenario affected the quantity and quality of agriculture in and from our rural communities, because the able young men and women have deserted agriculture. This means, there is going to be food insecurity in most parts of Nigeria, malnutrition and other diseases, and the cost of food items will sky-rocket in most of the affected communities.

f. Sixthly, the people being displaced from their ancestral home by gunmen will also try to get guns to mobilize themselves and engage in war with their perceived enemies or they will join those armed groups for them to stay in their habitat.

g. Seventhly, Nigeria is losing upcoming generations/professionals that are being kidnapped or killed by gunmen and other undesirable criminal elements.

h. Eighthly, Education and other institutions will remain closed or without people patronizing them in greater numbers. This will sooner or later affect manpower development and other aspects of the larger economy.

i. Ninthly, each person, communities and ethnic nationalities would or must thrive to get guns for their personal, community and business protections since their lives and livelihood is at stake. Consequently, the desire for more guns in various sections of the country will increase; and that will be a boost to the traffickers.

j. Tenthly, Nigeria will have to expend more on guns and ammunitions to be able to quell both the domestic and transnational gun users wreaking havoc on it citizens, on other nationalities and particularly on the nation's economy at the detriment of other equally important sectors/aspects of the economy.

k. Eleventh, Nigeria's firearms control Act No.32 of 1959 CAP F.28, law of the federation of Nigeria, (2004) is under serious threat as it is rendered ineffective becauselarge numbers of firearms/guns are in the hands of unregistered or unlicensed people holding and owning guns, as well as numerous others making/repairing gunsin the country [25].

10. Concluding remarks

From the above discourse, it is glaring that trafficking in guns/firearms and other weapons into Nigeria and the use of same by untrained and unlawful people have devastating effects on socioeconomic activities in Nigeria. Banditry, terrorism, kidnapping, ethno-religious conflicts, displacement of people from their farm lands

and other business premises are rampant due to the misuse and mishandling of guns by those who are not supposed to be in possession of it. In Nigeria, civilians including rebel groups and militias hold more than 40 million small arms and light weapons, while government related entities hold not fewer than 11 million [26]. Such amount of firearms/guns in the hands of unregistered/unrecognized actors would definitely cause monumental insecurity in all ramifications and serves as a threat to Nigeria's national security [27]. Nigeria though a giant in Africa, with numerous natural endowments and huge population, is now finding it difficult to produce cash and food crops for local consumption and export due to insecurity attributed to the activities of gunmen (including herdsmen, ethnic militias, bandits, and terrorists at all levels). Rather, Nigeria engages in importing of not only food items to feed its populations, but also fuel and other items which can be produced within the country. Instead of the state to attract direct foreign investments into agriculture and other non-oil sectors of the economy, Nigeria is one of the most indebted nations on African continent with lot of socioeconomic and political anxiety. For instance, Nigeria's public debt rose to #44.06 trillion in third quarter of 2022 [28]. The exploration and marketing of crude oil in the Niger/Delta regions is also negatively affected. Nigerian citizens are now battered and molested either by kidnappers, terrorists, unknown gunmen, ethnic militia, etc to the detriment of socioeconomic growth and development. The aforementioned economic misfortunes, psychological trauma and socioeconomic backwardness can be said to be orchestrated and sustained by insecurities consequent upon large number of guns trafficked in, and they are unfortunately in the hands of private or non-state actors. To say the least, the nation, its citizen and socioeconomic activities are today insecure and uncertain due to proliferations of arms and ammunitions trafficked into the country.

11. Recommendations

As a way forward, the under-listed recommendations are imperatives:

i. Authorities in Nigeria must arise to establish it hegemony and enforce the ban on illegal possession of guns by any unauthorized persons or groups of persons. She must effectively man all its entry and exit routes in and from the country by fighting and terminating corruption in the rank and file of all security operatives.

ii. There should be tougher punitive measures against unlawful or unauthorized persons making, owing/holding guns, traffickers and marketers of same within and around the country.

iii. Government should use 'carrot and stick approach' to collect all illegal guns in peoples' hands. Those who bring back their guns should be given some incentives and those who refused after a year of persuasion, stick approach be applied.

iv. The state should ensure proper security of the lives and properties of it citizens and that of their welfare.

v. Farmers-Herders should be well educated to respect each other and live in peace among themselves for the benefits of all.

vi. Nigeria's security personnel should be well trained to respect citizens' rights, be professional in the discharge of their duties, respect rule of law and be well equipped to track and crackdown on gun traffickers under whatever guises.

vii. Nigerian government should attract investors into the various sectors of the economy by making some concessions for industries and companies to come and establish their plants/factories in the country. This will create employment opportunities, increase sources of foreign exchange, among other benefits.

viii. Lastly, Nigeria should collaborate with its neighbours to ensure the security of their common boundaries and keep maximum vigilance on activities along and across their common boundaries, as well as to re-examine/contextualize the Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS) protocol of free movement.

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People are dying or suffering all over the world from the plague of gun violence, and countries and entire regions are reeling from the damage, instability, and insecurity that gun violence causes. Taking a global perspective on the problem, and identifying correlates such as drug trafficking, gun trafficking, state failure, ethnic and political conflict, terrorism and war, and the consequent rise of personal fear and insecurity leading to more citizens arming themselves or hiring armed security forces, the chapters in this volume look far beyond the United States, which monopolizes public and scholarly attention, to include India, Latin America and the Caribbean, and Africa. The chapters explore and compare histories of, causes of, correlates of, and responses to gun violence across this broad region, predominantly in the Global South, identifying commonalities and differences in the character, incidence, and attempted prevention of gun violence. The volume aims to inform readers about gun violence in these often-overlooked places and to encourage intensified quantitative and qualitative research into the geographical and historical diversity of such violence and the steps taken by various countries to curb it. Only with a cross-cultural and transhistorical perspective can we hope to lower the personal and social cost that gun violence inflicts on populations around the globe.

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