

# **Characterization of a local-based concept of public insecurity.**

Master's Thesis in Sustainable Urban Transitions

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Helsinki, Finland. 2019.

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**Title of thesis** Characterization of a local-based concept of public insecurity.

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**Department** Architecture

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**Degree programme** Sustainable Urban Transitions

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**Year** 2019

**Number of pages** 108

**Language** English

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### Abstract

This study addresses the crisis of insecurity in Latin America by attempting to build a local based concept of public insecurity. Using the case study of the Cerro de La Estrella National park in Iztapalapa, a neighbourhood famous for its insecurity in Mexico City. The study explores the definition of insecurity and its relation with use and access of public space in marginalized areas of urban Latin America.

Based on the theories on public insecurity developed in the field of fear of crime, this study attempts to fill in recognized gaps in conceptual development and contextuality. It questions the contemporary relevance and applicability of the concept.

The research question it aims to answer is *Which factors affect the perception of insecurity in the Cerro de La Estrella National Park in Iztapalapa, Ciudad de México? And How do these factors affect the perception of insecurity?*

The study consists in a quantitative exploration of the topics of victimization, vulnerability and environmental measures on the site, identified as the key components of insecurity in the literature. In addition, it presents a qualitative exploration on the factors that affect site-specific insecurity along with its socio-spatial consequences. For this, it relies on surveys and semi-structured interviews gathered over two fieldwork seasons.

The major findings from this research indicate that insecurity is influenced by many factors, their presence and interrelations being highly context-dependent. Understanding the factors which affect insecurity in its local variety is key for the development of effective policies. Finally, this study finds that securitization measures reliant on privatization of public space in the Cerro de La Estrella have led to increased insecurity.

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**Keywords** crime, insecurity, urban, public

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## **Acknowledgements.**

I would like to thank my teachers from NTNU and Aalto for their guidance culminating in this thesis. I'm especially thankful to Marcin Sliwa, who's support was crucial for the development of my project.

I would also like to thank my respondents and interviewees for their time and trust. Thanks to Beatriz Ramirez and Rafael Lambarén for their uninterested help. Their insightful contributions were a cornerstone for this thesis. Thanks also to Alberto Ponce for being my eyes and ears on the field. Without your help this project wouldn't had been possible.

Special thanks to my family, my mom, my dad, my sister Di and to Lauri Marjamäki for your continuous support, guidance and encouragement. Thank you for being there.

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## **Introduction.**

The possibility to feel secure in one's own environment is one of the most fundamental aspects of wellbeing. Access to security has been recognized as a basic human right (UN 1948), and to provide security is one of the basic priorities of any state. In today's heavily urbanized world to be able to provide security in urban environments has become increasingly important. Basic structures of inequality, however, have prevented large sectors of the population access to urban security, particularly in the so-called "global south" (Shirlow and Pain 2003; Dammert and Malone 2003; Goldstein 2010).

In Latin America, historic inequalities, growing urbanization, a dramatic increase in violence levels, economic crisis and the weakening of an already inefficient state have combined in the last decades to create an authentic crisis of urban insecurity (Loïc Wacquant 2003, 2014; Glebbeek and Koonings 2016; Arriagada and Godoy 2000).

The effects of insecurity in society extend far beyond individual anxieties. Insecurity affects people's everyday lives by conditioning their behaviour and habits (England and Simon 2010), it shapes the urban environment (Caldeira 2000; Pain 2000) and it can be a powerful drive for political change (Pedro Cerruti 2016). In the urban sphere, insecurity is the main deterrent for access to public space, which is important not only from the right to the city but as an asset for social development (Brenner, Marcuse, and Mayer 2009; Sreetheran and van den Bosch 2014).

This project is about the impact insecurity has in shaping urban landscapes, and about what it means to live in an urban landscape shaped by insecurity.

In Latin America, and particularly in Mexico several authors have researched the nature and composition of public insecurity (Briceño-León and Zubillaga 2002; Jasso López 2013; Morquecho Güitrón and Vizcarra Guerrero 2008; Caamal, n.d.). Most of them rely on the theoretical foundations developed under the field of fear of crime but lack a conceptualized framework to unravel the complexities of the local context.

Therefore, this thesis proposes to focus on developing a local character for the concept of public insecurity, under the assumption that the particularities of the case study differ sufficiently from the mainstream theory as to make its applicability questionable.



This project proposes the analysis of grounded data as a base to understand the particularities of the local context. To achieve this, it proposes to develop a case study. The site chosen for this study is the Cerro de La Estrella National park situated in Iztapalapa in eastern Mexico City, considering its property of being a public space located in the midst of a neighbourhood famous for its insecurity provides a rich dataset that integrates most of the variables present in Mexico's insecurity crisis.

The research was implemented through two fieldwork sessions carried out between 2016 and 2018 in which key informants and respondents were asked about their experiences and perceptions of insecurity regarding the site of the case study. The research was designed to integrate as wide a sample as possible, which is why several different groups were targeted divided by place and occupation.

The results were divided in two sections: the first aimed to explore the topics present in literature to attempt to characterize the presence of public insecurity on a framework derived from the literature. The second part consisted on a free exploration of what insecurity means for the local inhabitants in their own words. Both are exploratory and complement each other with a holistic approach, regarding as equally relevant an exploration based on the theoretical development of the concept as well as the on-ground reality emanating from the field.

### **Research questions.**

The purpose of this study is to understand how local conditions influence the perception of insecurity in a place. To do so I have proposed to consider the case of Cerro de La Estrella as a case study, based on which I structure the study on the following research question:

*Which factors affect the perception of insecurity in the Cerro de La Estrella National Park in Iztapalapa, Ciudad de México?*

This question, while being exploratory in nature also remains descriptive, which is why it demands to be followed by a complementary question of explanatory nature:

*How do these factors affect the perception of insecurity?*

In being able to answer both research questions, this study aims to shed a light on the complexity of characterizing public insecurity.

## **Outline.**

This study is structured in six chapters. The first and current chapter serves as an introduction to the project, exposing the relevance of the chosen topic and justifying its contribution towards the field of study. This chapter also states the research questions which the project is designed to answer.

The second chapter serves as the theoretical foundation of the project. The first part presents a critical review of the literature produced on the field of fear of crime, discussing its conceptual and methodological limitations as well as their implications for practice. The second part of this chapter extracts and analyses the three main frameworks developed to explain public insecurity in the literature and builds a theoretical framework which proposes their integration in a comprehensive theory which deems them as components of insecurity.

The third chapter presents the methods developed for carrying out the study. It begins by stating the epistemological nature of the research. It continues by describing the data collection process touching on the development of the topics present on the study. In addition, it describes the methods and framework used to analyse the data and develop the main results. The chapter concludes with a summary of the limitations and ethical implications present in the research.

The fourth chapter discusses the context in which the study is set as well as the particular conditions of the site for the case study. It is further divided in two sections. The first section addresses the phenomenon of new violence in Latin America touching on its root causes as well as its social consequences. It also presents a brief panorama of the actual crisis of insecurity in Mexico comparing historical trends with present-day data. The second section is focused on the production of the built environment in the context of the insecurity crisis. It first describes the process of spatial segregation currently underway in major Latin American cities highlighting the role of insecurity. It continues by presenting a brief historic overview of the urbanization of Mexico City and Iztapalapa emphasizing the influence of deregulation policies in the last three decades. It also discusses compared crime rates in the same timeframe. The section and the chapter conclude by presenting the case study of the Cerro de La Estrella: it first gives a brief historic account of its formation to its present-day state, followed by a description of its spatial qualities. It concludes by presenting an overview of the identified values of the site.

The fifth chapter consists the main contribution to this study. It consists of an analytical review of the data gathered in the fieldwork structured in two main parts. The first part explores the topics identified as components of insecurity as proposed in the theoretical framework in relation to the case study. The second part explores concepts which arise from free-form interviews which are used to build a local based concept of insecurity. In addition, it presents a map of the spatial implications of insecurity present from the interviews.

A sixth and final chapter resumes and summarizes the findings obtained in the results chapter and concludes by discussing theoretical and practical implications emanating from them.

## Theory.

Since the decade of 1960s, especially in developed countries there has been a growing interest to understand what causes people to feel insecure in the streets, and what measures can be taken to counter the issue. Hale (1996) identifies this interest in the topic with a corresponding growing awareness of the seriousness of its consequences, which range from the social, political and economic. Other authors like Gough (2002) or Marcuse (2004) have proposed different alternatives for the increasing interest in security from the state as a means for social disciplinarization.

What is not contested is that studies on insecurity have become a prolific field of research in the past decades, grouped under the umbrella concept of “fear of crime”. In his review of 1996, which has become canon in the field, Hale notes already as many as 200 articles written on the topic, making it at the time “the fastest growing research area within criminology” (Ditton and Farrall 2000). This number has continued to grow in the last years<sup>1</sup>, reflecting the relevance of the topic in academic fields to this day.

And while fear of crime already constitutes a robust body of research, its relevance far extends from the academic sphere, given how research in fear of crime has been closely tied to the politic sphere since its inception. This intertwining with politics has resulted in the design and implementation of security policies backed with the data derived from bodies of research based on the concept of fear of crime.

By today’s standards, fear of crime has become the term used *de facto* to name the effect public insecurity has on people’s perception, though not without contest. To understand why precisely *fear* and why *of crime*, it is necessary to look back at the origin of the concept.

The whole idea of studying the effects of public violence emerged from the field of criminology. It was from an initiative of the *President’s Commission on Law Enforcement and the Administration of Justice* of the United States that three pioneering studies in the field were published in 1967 (see (Biderman 1967), (Ennis 1967) and (Reiss and Black 1967)), becoming a cornerstone for subsequent studies, and establishing a conceptual framework that

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<sup>1</sup> As an example, I performed a rapid search on the SCOPUS database which showed around 1,500 articles including the term “fear of crime” in the title, abstract or keywords at the time of writing.

would define the field for the following decade. These studies equated public insecurity with criminal activity but given the existence of a large number of unreported crimes, they set their task to discover actual crime occurrence (also called victimization) by asking people on the street about their experience with crime, instead of relying on official reports. This is the origin of victimization surveys which are standard practice today in several countries (including Mexico). The 1972 National Criminal Victimization Survey in the United States and the 1983 British Crime Survey are early examples of Victimization Surveys, which were produced under direct governmental sponsorship. This is also the origin of the focus on crime as the source of insecurity.

The concept of fear arose later, when failure to establish a conclusive link between victimization and public insecurity made it necessary to make a difference between objective and subjective insecurity. The subjective component of insecurity -the way people perceive crime, which might or might not correspond with actual occurrence- was identified as fear. Since the late 1970s it has been general consensus that measuring criminal occurrence and its effects are two separate things, with victimization surveys following suit and introducing indicators to measure fear as well as victimization. By that same time, fear of crime became the main topic to be explored in public insecurity.

However, despite fear of crime as a field has experienced an explosive expansion, most of the research produced is qualitative research which relies and builds on concepts established by the time fear of crime was developed as a term. Already by the turn of the millennium Ditton et al. warned that in the field of fear of crime “...empirical knowledge has grown at the expense of conceptual development” (1999, 83), noting that while much has been done in attempting to establish links between statistic variables by reviewing survey data, the basic foundations of the concepts have remained largely unchanged.

This of course comes at a cost of risking the meaningfulness of the empirical data, as mis-conceptualization puts the data at risk of becoming irrelevant or unintelligible. This is not a minor problem, given how heavily public policy relies on empirical data. In the following section, I propose three aspects of the concept and its development which may be subject to review for its application, especially in the context of present-day Latin America:

*Why fear?*

Identifying the subjective component of insecurity with fear was a theoretical postulate from the early days of studies on insecurity. Its adoption in empirical studies meant a

methodological challenge, since surveys and studies don't always ask directly for fear but rather use an array of terms as proxies, which might be misleading. This avoidance perhaps stems from a reluctance from respondents to identify fear as the emotion insecurity causes on them, or from the objective difficulty of differentiating fear from other emotions.

Indeed, the first and most long-running controversy over fear of crime stems from a failure to differentiate fear from awareness, caution or risk assessment. Questions included in some surveys such as "How likely is it to be assaulted in this neighbourhood?" reveal a general awareness on the degree of insecurity without referring to actual fear. On this respect, Fattah and Sacco (2012) insist on the importance of this distinction on the grounds that fear is debilitating, while awareness might translate into capacity to cope with insecurity, pointing out the importance of characterizing correctly the emotions reflected by respondents. On the same note, Ferraro and LaGrange coincide that "a person who says he or she would not feel very safe may not be afraid at all, but simply aware of the relative risk. Thus such a person may avoid walking alone in their neighbourhood at night and not really manifest any fear of crime." (1987, 76)

Quite accordingly, the notion that fear is the subjective component of crime has been challenged by other authors such as Bannister and Fyfe, who argue that "...emotions such as terror, panic, unease and annoyance may all be subsumed under the banner of fear" (2001, 808), and notably Ditton et al. (1999) who found surprisingly that it was anger, rather than fear, what their interviewees reported to experience over the prospect of criminal victimization.<sup>2</sup> This doesn't mean that fear isn't present in the perception of insecurity, but rather signals the presence of a wider spectrum of emotions that carry different attitudes towards insecurity, which carry the risk to be muffled under the label of fear alone.

#### *Why of crime?*

The focus on crime as the source of insecurity is inherited from the field of criminology, as above mentioned. In this context it is understandable to equate criminality with violence, since the standpoint of criminology works under a legal framework.

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<sup>2</sup> In their study, the researchers clarify they introduced *anger* as a variable only after the term appeared spontaneously in preparatory interviews and didn't expect it to outperform *fear* as the ruling emotion associated with victimization.

The first challenge this assumption poses comes quite logically when considering its applicability in contexts other than the one which generates it: crime is defined locally, and attitudes towards what is considered crime vary greatly amongst societies and populations.

Secondly, violence which produces insecurity is not necessarily criminal or illegal. In their study on violence in Latin America, Briceño-Leon and Zubillaga consider it relevant to exclude criminality from their methodology by arguing that “What is most striking about the growth of violence in Latin America is not that of crime as such, but of the violence with which it is committed; not attacks on property, but aggressions against people. Crime is an important factor, but the statistics do not unequivocally support the idea that violence is merely a result of crime; homicides and personal injuries have increased at a much faster pace than the number of crimes committed” (2002, 25). Therefore, “We do not classify violence according to whether it is criminal or legal: i.e. if a man dies of a gunshot wound, we treat his death as a homicide regardless of whether the weapon was fired as part of a crime, an act of self-defence, or law enforcement action by a police officer. What we do consider it important to classify is the motivation for violence” (2002, 21). In fact, political or repressive use of lawful institutions is not uncommon in many places, as has been theorized by Comaroff under the concept of Lawfare (2001). The presence of police might even constitute a source of fear itself in certain contexts, particularly amongst the urban poor. Finally, informality is illegal, but it might bring security.

And how is it measured?

As mentioned previously, most of the research done in the field of fear of crime are quantitative studies which use statistic data to find relations between variables and thus confirm or reject theories or propose new previously unseen relations. As is the case with quantitative studies, clarity on the definition of the variables are extremely important, as the whole validity of the study relies on metric accuracy.

In the case of fear of crime, the definition of the concept itself has proven to be elusive if not bluntly controversial as no consensus has been reached in how to define fear or how it should be measured. Over time fear of crime has developed into an umbrella term, under which a wide array of different methodologies and positions would gather, to a degree of heterogeneity to which some researchers consider its utility as declining or even negligible.

A first source of misconception derives from a large part of the literature using so-called “global” measures to quantify fear, for example by asking “Are you afraid of walking alone by

night?" To answer affirmatively to this question would imply the presence of fear without clarifying if what causes fear is crime or a completely different matter. This is the case of the American National Crime Survey and the British Crime Survey of 1994, in which Garofalo (1979) identifies varying degrees of confusion. Another shortcoming of using "global" measures is that they aren't specific for a particular crime or place, which can lead to misconceptions, as demonstrated by LaGrange and Ferraro (1989) on their studies on fear of crime and the elderly, who found that "...the age effect is weak or non-existent when questions relating to fear of specific crimes are used instead of some global measure." (Hale 1996, 92)

A second source of misconception derives from studies resorting to hypothetical situations as a method of data gathering, for example by asking "How safe would you feel walking alone in the city centre after dark?" The answer to this question comes in the form of a self-assessment of fear instead of the report of a life experience. By presenting this line of questioning, researchers expect to isolate fear from some variables which might distort the results thus presenting a situation closer to the "ideal". The problem involved is that it might be difficult for someone to assess their degree of fear from an imaginary situation, especially if it isn't part of their daily life. A second problem involved is that these answers don't report the actual fear, but rather an anticipation of it. Indeed, "... the person walking alone in a high crime area at night is experiencing something quite different than the suburbanite who is telling an interviewer that he or she would be fearful in such an area at night." (Garofalo 1981, 841) For these reasons, hypothetical questions are unreliable sources for measuring fear.

As presented above, failure to establish a reliable way to define and quantify fear of crime constitutes a major methodological problem since most of the studies done in the area rely on quantitative explanatory approaches. Increasing confusion derived from the lack of a solid conceptual development has led some researchers to doubt the relevance of the term, as is the case of Ditton et al. who warn that "whilst the empirical grasp (...) of the minutiae of the phenomena grows continually, conceptual development has, relatively speaking, stagnated" (1999, 84), or Ferraro and LaGrange who go as far as to claim that "... even a casual review of the literature indicates that the phrase fear of crime has acquired so many divergent meanings that its current utility is negligible" (1987, 71).

I would be hard not to coincide at least partially with these authors that "reported incidence of the fear of crime is partly dependent upon the nature of the measurement instrument rather than a true reflection of 'social reality'" (Farrall et al. 1997, 659), although perhaps the confusion does not stem from instrument's inaccuracy, but from the pretension to identify



one thing with the other. Indeed, some quantitative studies which refute others' measures of fear have proven to be most insightful and revealing when stripping variables of their use as proxies for fear and taking them by their own worth, as is exemplified in previous mentioned studies by Hale et al., Ferraro and Lagrange and Garofalo amongst many others.

In the case of public insecurity, quantitative studies can contribute powerfully to the development of the field by finding relations amongst subjects which hypothesize explanations to these relations. It should not be overlooked, however, the importance of carrying qualitative studies (Hale 1996) which can confirm these hypotheses with on-ground data.

In the case of fear of crime, I propose to overlook the problematic relationship established by the concept, by using and exploring the much broader concept of insecurity, which is directly understood and relatable to interviewees. Nonetheless, it must be recognized that most work in public insecurity has been under the banner of fear of crime and so many concepts utilized in this project derive from fear of crime studies.

#### **Framework.**

Over the development of studies on public insecurity, there are three aspects that have been recognized to contribute over fear of crime. While it's methodologically impossible to demonstrate their exact relations -a fact rather demonstrated by the continuous contradiction of data which plagues the literature and which might suggest that these relations might vary by context or from person to person-, it has been shown that these aspects are present to a lesser or greater degree in all studies, when considered. It would be safe, then to call them components of insecurity.

They consist of victimization, which involves the experience of crime, vulnerability, which involves the degree of risk towards victimization and environmental measures, which involves the influence of physical and social surroundings. In the following section I will describe in larger detail what pertains to these components of insecurity.

#### **Victimization.**

The initial victimization surveys, as their name imply, were interested in understanding how often people are victimized, and especially in uncovering the so-called "black cipher", the

amount of criminal occurrence which isn't officially reported<sup>3</sup>. The initial assumption being that victimization corresponds with the amount of insecurity, thus meaning there is a direct correlation between objective crime (the actual occurrence, reported and unreported, of criminal activity) and subjective crime (the perceived sense of security based on criminal activity). Under this assumption, to reveal the actual occurrence of crime was crucial in order to map accurately victimization rates, which would theoretically equate mapping insecurity.

As argued, the victimization perspective "...is based on the principle that fear of crime within a community is caused by the level of criminal activity or by what people hear (...) either from conversations with others or from the mass media." (Bennett 1990, 14 in Hale ,1996) These three levels compose the experience of victimization which can be direct, either personal (the person in question has been victim of a crime) or vicarious (the person in question learns from a second person about being victim of a crime), or indirect (the person in question receives information about victimization from a third person -rumours- or from mass media).

Some studies have attempted to link victimization with a degree of fear using a proxy that in theory allows for a measurement of the social perception of crime. In terms of personal victimization, the research trying to link it directly with public insecurity (or *fear*, as is stated in the literature) has been far from conclusive, with researchers on one side providing results which prove a strong relation, while other not least numerous group present results suggesting a weak relation at best or none at all.<sup>4</sup>

Agnew (1985) explored some explanations for such divisive results, suggesting in first place the possibility that invalid measurements of fear influence the results. Given the fact most victimization-based research is quantitative, defining accurate variables is crucial for a consistent result. While Agnew easily dismisses invalid measurements as a reason behind findings inconsistency, Hale argues that Agnew's example studies provide only "global indicators of fear which do not mention crime explicitly" (Hale 1996), and provides examples in which differentiated indicators for specific types of crime alter results significantly.<sup>5</sup>

Secondly, Agnew considered other methodological omissions such as the failure to consider the number of victimizations, or to control confounding variables, only to dismiss these results as inconclusive. He follows on to theorize that it is *neutralization* which explains why

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<sup>3</sup> See for example the 1972 National Criminal Victimization Survey in the United States of America or the 1983 British Crime Survey in the United Kingdom of Great Britain, both landmark exercises which would set the standard for victimization surveys worldwide including the Mexican ENVIPE.

<sup>4</sup> For a further scope into this controversy, see the studies suggested by Hale on p. 104 of his review of the literature.

<sup>5</sup> Indeed, variations in methods for measuring fear are considered by Hale as a major shortcoming in the literature produced by the time he wrote his review, as will be presented later in this chapter.

direct victims of crime don't necessarily develop fear. In his view, Victims might justify their own victimization by denial of injury or vulnerability, acceptance of responsibility, amongst others. Finally, Agnew suggests victimization is but one in many factors which determine fear. As these factors affect simultaneously the victimized and non-victimized population, they tend to dilute the relation between victimization and fear. While he dismisses this suggestion, by arguing a relationship with victimization should still be expected, this proposition becomes relevant when considering environmental aspects of fear, as will be presented later in this chapter.

Vicarious victimization differs from personal victimization in the sense it is more widespread and common. While experiencing personally a crime is relatively rare, the speed and scale to which rumours spread makes it much more probable to learn about crime occurrence by second-hand stories. At the same time, learning about others' victimization might heighten one's sense of insecurity by comparison. Vicarious victimization has also been the subject of studies trying to link it directly with public insecurity, although, as is the case with personal victimization, with mixed results.

In several comparative studies such as carried out by Tyler (1980) and Box (1988), it was found that variation in the context influenced results: differences between using multi-city or local data, or using crime-specific instead of global crime indicators would alter the influence of vicarious victimization over fear. Similarly, it was found that relations between victimization and fear varied greatly amongst groups.

Indirect victimization follows suit on the trend of providing mixed context-dependent results for studies attempting to link crime reports on mass media to public insecurity. Given the large influence of mass media in society, it could be expected for it to have some impact in the perception of insecurity, in a similar manner than vicarious victimization but at a broader scale. While mouth-to-mouth stories of victimization impact because of their proximity, mass communications such as television and newspapers have a wider coverage and can carry stories of vicarious victimization far beyond the reach of local rumours, amplifying their effects.

As is the case with vicarious victimization, however, results provided by studies in indirect victimization suggest external variables play a critical role on their ability to predict fear. Some authors found different variations such as format of the news, grisliness or location of the crime or prominence of criminal news in the source. The study done by Winkel and Vrij (1990), for example, suggests that locality is determinant for news to affect fear, however, they

contextualize this finding under a broader scope that they call *stimulus similarity*, in which fear relates not only to the locality of news, but rather “...to the degree to which the reader identifies with the described victim, to the degree to which one’s neighbourhood is seen to bear resemblance to the described locale, and to the extent to which the described form of crime is similar to the form of crime one fears.” (Winkel and Vrij 1990, 264)

Studies attempting to link directly victimization with fear were met with mixed results which varied greatly depending on the variables measured, or the controls introduced. As presented, several theories were developed to explain such results, but a constant does appear consistently over these studies: in all cases perception of insecurity was greater than occurrence of crime. In other words, research found “Survey after survey (...) many more people afraid than are victimized” (Hale 1996, 106). Because these studies were done based on victimization surveys, which had the task to reveal the black number in the first place, it becomes apparent that victimization alone cannot explain completely fear or the perception of insecurity. Indeed, “Whilst the thesis that actual crime rates are a basic cause of fear cannot be rejected out of hand, there is also clear evidence that fear of crime is not always directly related to the objective crime rate, or the probability of an individual being victimized” (Hale 1996, 106).

This does not mean to discard the importance of victimization: there is no fear without crime occurrence. What this suggests instead is that there are other factors in play which amplify the effects of victimization. Finding these other factors has become the leading field of research within public insecurity.

Vulnerability and Environment.

Victimization studies failed to establish a straightforward relation between crime experiences and fear, but as studies in the field evolved, empirical evidence appeared consistently signalling the prevalence of fear in certain demographic groups, making apparent that the context played a much larger role than expected: victimization rates can give a measure of insecurity in general terms, but the reality might vary greatly between genders, income groups, age groups... Not all people have the same risk of being victimized nor do they have the same possibilities to cope with a victimization event.

Suddenly, it became apparent that being a woman, an elderly or living in a poor neighbourhood was far more relevant for the perception of insecurity than having been victimized. This discovery prompted the appearance of two complementary, if separate

positions which aimed to explain the appearance of fear where victimization couldn't. One focuses on personal aspects such as gender or age group, while the other considers the influence of the context over the individual.

Theories that focus on the personal attributes group under the concept of vulnerability. As mentioned, these theories emerged from the empirical finding that fear seemed to concentrate in certain demographics. Hale (1996), in his review of the literature identifies three broad groups on which studies over vulnerability have focused: women, the elderly and the poor.

#### *Gender.*

Over studies, gender has been consistently a better predictor for fear than other groups. Coincidentally, it is also the group that has accumulated the largest amount of literature, perhaps due to the relevance of feminist theory in the last decades. In any case, the realization that women consistently presented higher levels of fear than men, despite their relative lower victimization rates sparked the interest of exploring vulnerability as a component of fear.

Two explanations have been produced to explain this apparent paradox, correcting the initial supposition about its *irrationality*. The first explanation lies within the field of victimization, and proposes to analyse victimization rates under the light cast by feminist theory: it sustains that violence directed explicitly and exclusively towards women is often ignored or minimized in victimization surveys, or goes largely unreported, and when these variables are taken into account, victimization rates are disproportionately higher for women (as is the case of rape or sexual abuse). Additionally, it considers environmental factors, such as "...a fear of ubiquitous sexual danger..." (Hale 1996, 97) and the presence of women-targeted incivilities such as sexual harassment.

The second explanation considers the role of vulnerability by suggesting women tend to consider the consequences of victimization more seriously than men, therefore are much more sensitive to the possibility of being victimized, and this anticipation is the cause of fear. It underlines the importance not only of differences of physical strengths amongst genders but also of the socialization of gender roles, in which passive and risk-avoiding attitudes are encouraged amongst women, while men are encouraged the opposite, thus provoking a differential in vulnerabilities. This approach would also explain the reverse paradox in which young men (the demographic group with highest risk of victimization) presents lower levels of fear.

### *Age.*

A general consensus is that as people grow older their levels of fear increase, an assumption that has motivated many studies on the topic. As is the case with studies on women's victimization, this assumption finds some correspondence over some empirical data which finds higher fear rates over proportionally lower victimization. For Warr (1984), this can be explained by arguing that the elderly associate low-risk offences with more serious victimization, for example that begging can be the prelude of assault. This in itself would mean an increased sensitivity towards crime, thus constitutes a degree of vulnerability. Other researchers such as Fattah and Sacco (2012) argue that inconsistency on measuring methods such as using global or irrelevant indicators make results unreliable when targeting specific groups. As an example, they cite the incongruity of using the proxy "walking alone after dark" as an indicator of fear, an activity, they sustain, the elderly seldom realizes.

Over this point, LaGrange and Ferraro coincide, further arguing that "...measurement procedures greatly shape fear of crime findings..." and that indeed, "...research utilizing specific indicators or factor constructs from them demonstrate that older persons are not highly fearful (...) older adults are probably less fearful of most types of crime than younger adults." (1989, 715 cited in Hale). A final argument is made in the sense that the elderly's fear is considered a greater problem amongst the young than amongst the elderly themselves.

### *Poverty.*

Vulnerability refers to the potential inability to prevent or overcome violence at a personal level, and as such is related to the risk of victimization. Indeed, for the appearance of fear, Killias (1990) proposes the presence of three key factors: "exposure to non-negligible risk", a "...lack of effective defence, protective measures and/or possibilities of escape", and "anticipation of serious consequences". (see Hale 1996, 95) While for Warr (1987), fear depends on the interaction between the existence of risk, and people's sensitivity towards it.

Amongst environmental studies, which focus on the influence of the context over the individual, I propose we can find four broad categories: studies which focus on the social environment, studies focusing on the physical environment, studies which combine social and physical environment aspects, and studies which see the "bigger picture", meaning they focus on systemic rather than immediate environment. Environmental studies, especially the ones which combine social and physical aspects have had a profound impact in policy making in the last decades, thus will be explained more thoroughly.

### *Social environment.*

Social environmental studies propose to understand fear as the consequence of people's relations within a community. Within the topic, some studies have focused on the personal scale, theorizing that the presence of friends in the vicinity, getting along with neighbours, living accompanied or being attached to a locality influence someone's levels of fear. Box (1988), for example, proposes to use help amongst neighbours as a measure for community cohesiveness, finding a negative relation between this indicator and fear.

At a larger scale, the concept of social integration, proposed by Hunter and Baumer (1982) theorizes that engagement and participation within a community reduces fear levels. In their study they measure social integration and fear referred to an increase in traffic flow on a street. What they find is that more street traffic translates into an increase of fear for non-socially integrated participants but has no effect over socially integrated ones. As Hale describes, this theory "...has been a major consideration behind the development of neighbourhood watch schemes." (1996, 115)

### *Socio-physical environment.*

A large and prominent body of research is found at the intersection of social and physical environmental studies and their relationship with fear. According to Hale, the term "incivilities" is the most widely used when discussing the topic, although several other have been proposed like "social disorder", "early signs of danger" or "signs of crime" amongst others. The "broken windows" theory which spawned the now infamous "zero-tolerance" policy belongs to this category.

Studies on incivilities began in the late 1970s following the observation that areas with high levels of fear seemed to correspond with what was interpreted as signs of urban decay or disorder, for example noisy neighbours, graffiti, loitering, public alcohol consumption, litter, beggars, abandoned buildings and broken windows amongst many others. Hunter (1978), who according to Hale is "generally credited with explicitly tying the concept to fear of crime" (1996, 115) sustains that such signs are overall indicators of "...disorder' and specifically the loss of a civil society." (1978, 7) Hunter argues that crime and incivilities are "correlated manifestations" of social disorder, which interact with each other and which affect separately fear of victimization, from both of which incivilities has a stronger influence over fear.

This argument is picked up and expanded by Wilson and Kelling in their piece *Broken Windows* (1982), which acquired landmark status after being cited as the theoretical grounding of zero-tolerance policies, credited and contested as the cause for dramatic crime

reduction in New York City in the 1990s and later exported globally as a preferred method of crime fighting for hardliners.

In *Broken Windows*, Wilson and Kelling follow Hunter's argument over the dual composition of fear by giving the example of a small community in United States, where police patrolling on foot managed to reduce fear, even without actually lowering crime rates. According to the authors, the involvement of police within the community was key to enforce informal rules agreed tacitly as behavioural code. In doing so, public order was restored and consequently the feeling of security increased. But the authors expand the argument, by giving another example (now celebre) about two certain cars left abandoned: one in a dangerous neighbourhood, another in a safe one. Expectedly, the car from the dangerous neighbourhood was vandalized shortly, while the other one remained safe. The researcher proceeded then to break a window of the car in the safe neighbourhood, after which it was soon vandalized as well.

Using the analogy, Wilson and Kelling argue that the lack of order leaves a void of opportunity which is easily taken over by crime. They theorize that the presence of an unattended broken window signals carelessness and/or disownment, which leads to assume crime may be committed with impunity. The logical following being that procuring public order by targeting incivilities is crucial not only to reduce fear of crime, but crime itself.

Indeed, the authors insist the "fear of being bothered by disorderly people" is often overlooked, but "The citizen who fears the ill smelling drunk, the rowdy teenager, or the importuning beggar is not merely expressing his distaste for unseemly behaviour; he is also giving voice to a bit of folk wisdom that happens to be a correct generalization--namely, that serious street crime flourishes in areas in which disorderly behaviour goes unchecked." (1982, 8) Indeed, "...public drunkenness, street prostitution, and pornographic displays can destroy a community more quickly than any team of professional burglars" (1982, 17)

As a solution, they propose police assume the task of keeping public order by inhibiting and repressing such "disorderly people" and their "disreputable behaviour". The problem raised by the undefinition in these concepts (clearly, there are more ways than one to define what "public order" means or what might constitute "disreputable behaviour") is solved by arguing community discretionality, and since the police are part of this community, their judgement will represent legitimately the interests of the community. For Wilson and Kelling, public order means the police's order.



This said, arguing for what at first glance might seem communities' self-determination (but seems more like subservience to police's criteria) doesn't mean Wilson and Kelling make a case for derogating crimes or thinning the law. Quite the opposite. They argue that criminalizing social incivilities such as vagrancy, prostitution or public drinking empowers policemen to perform their order-keeping task, "a function that every neighbourhood desperately wants them to perform." (1982, 11) Questions raised over unfairness or discrimination are dismissed pragmatically: "Arresting a single drunk or a single vagrant who has harmed no identifiable person seems unjust, and in a sense it is. But failing to do anything about a score of drunks or a hundred vagrants may destroy an entire community." (1982, 12) And the only guarantee police don't exceed their duties and become agents of bigotry or injustice is a "...hope that by their selection, training, and supervision, the police will be inculcated with a clear sense of the outer limit of their discretionary authority." (1982, 11)

Other researchers have proposed that environmental factors which affect fear happen at a broader, systemic scale, implying that fear is the reflection of greater anxieties expressed in everyday life. Dammert and Malone (2003), for example, go as far as to suggest that what they call "structural insecurities" like poverty or political disenfranchisement are greater predictors of fear than victimization or vulnerability indicators.

This is also the case of Lewis and Salem (2017), who find a link between a community's "political power" and the perception of fear of its inhabitants. According to these authors, fear is magnified as political and social resources decline, which is perceived as a loss of control over the community's life and environment.

In this sense, incivilities are fearful not because they attract criminal activity, as socio-physical theories suggest, but because they act as a reminder and indicator of the inability of a community to cope with crime. This vision differs from the socio-physical approach because it shifts the focus from crime to coping capacity: the problem of fear arises not so much because crime occurs, but because people are powerless to overcome it.

Consequences.

Finally, it has been proposed that studying the consequences of crime would reveal a measure of fear. Fattah and Sacco (2012) in their taxonomy that groups empirical measures in the categories of cognitive, affective and behavioural measures, propose that behavioural measures correspond with the way people modify their behaviour according to their

assessment of insecurity, assuming that behaviour is a more reliable indicator than self-assessment.

While this might be the case, behavioural measures reveal the consequences and not the presence of fear itself. As argued previously, it is possible to change one's behaviour out of caution instead of fear. Even more, it could be argued that changing one's behaviour might constitute a coping mechanism adopted precisely to avoid fear and thus signal capacity rather than vulnerability. Not to be overlooked, however, is the fact that while behavioural measures might fail in measuring crime, they do reveal actual realities which might be even more relevant for policy making.

Furthermore, stretching a bit the concept, it could be argued that the design of securitization policies constitute an institutional behavioural measure, and influence themselves the behaviour of people as result of their assessment of insecurity.

## **Methods.**

The research questions this study aims to answer is *Which factors affect the perception of insecurity in the Cerro de La Estrella National Park in Iztapalapa, Ciudad de México? And How do these factors affect the perception of insecurity?*

In order to answer them, the study relies theoretically on the assumptions of social constructionism, which considers that reality is multiple and socially determined (Robson and McCartan 2016). Social constructionism highlights the importance of contextuality and variability in epistemology, which allows the foundation of the initial hypothesis of this study, that public insecurity is composed by a series of interdependent variables which's relations change from place to place.

It is also based in abductive reasoning, which is based in reflexivity. The aim of this project is not to provide a general conclusion, but to showcase the complexities of a particular reality and by doing so to cast a light over the possibility of establishing analogies with other cases.

### **Research design.**

The following section addresses the process by which the research was carried out from its initial inception to the production of results. It is composed by two parts, the first dedicated to describing the method of gathering data both primary and secondary as well as the limitations and shortcomings present in the initial stage of the study.

The second section consists of an account of how the data gathered on site was processed and analysed in order to provide comprehensible results. It contains a brief account of the method of quantification for the quantitative section of data, as well as how the qualitative data was treated and grouped.

#### **Data gathering.**

Data acquisition for the project was done in three stages, as the understanding of the site grew in complexity through the study. The first and second stages consisted in a preparatory stage, defined by the acquisition of secondary data, while the third stage consisted in the acquisition of primary data on which the main body of research is based.

The first stage of the research consisted in a literature review over the topics of fear, violence, public insecurity and public space which contributed to structure the theoretical background for the study. In this initial stage it became apparent some shortcomings on the concept of fear of crime.

The second stage of data acquisition became the first season of fieldwork and was performed in august 2016 when the study was incipient with the aim to uncover the most pressing issues of the site. In this season, two semi-structured interviews were conducted with key informants with a deep relationship and understanding of the site. Additionally, eight rapid appraisal interviews were conducted on-site.

Altogether this first season constituted an exploratory approach to the topics regarding the site and prefigured the structure of the study revolving around the relation between insecurity, informality and public space.

The first key informant was Beatriz Ramirez Gonzalez, the former *chronist*<sup>6</sup> of Iztapalapa until 2016. During this interview, Beatriz provided me a comprehensive array of information not only oral but also bibliographical and from the news; and proved to be a pivotal moment in the definition of the topic, highlighting the relevance of insecurity as a defining element of the study.

Beatriz functioned as an appointed officer by the municipality of Iztapalapa to document the historical events of the municipality, which gave her a privileged access to information rarely know to the public. Her involvement with the site as a documenter complemented her interest as an active participant in the site's activities, bestowing upon her a double role as an insider and an outsider simultaneously.

The second key informant was Rafael Lambarén Galeana, current head of the Fuego Nuevo Museum. His insight as a community leader and an insider provided valuable information about the daily occupancy and activities performed in the site and helped to triangulate my findings.

The eight rapid appraisal interviews were all conducted on the same place: in the *passion field*, the site where the world-famous Holy week representation on the crucifixion takes place.

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<sup>6</sup> A chronist is a person -usually, although not necessarily, a historian- that holds a high consideration and bears a close relation to the site and oversees recording the relevant events that take place in it. It is the person in charge of writing the history of the place. Such chronists are usually appointed by the authorities and bear official recognition of their charge in most cases.

These interviews were conducted with a questionnaire consisting of five open questions that had the intention to explore the problems of the site.

The main shortcoming of this first season of fieldwork proved to be the wideness of the scope, which proved to be definitory for narrowing the topic but lacked depth particularly in the case of the rapid interviews. From this point it was clear that relying on local sources was crucial, as well as to profile them according to their role within the site.

From the subsequent literature review, it was clear the necessity to establish a theoretical framework that would consider the locality of the context. This was evident by twofold: Firstly, the literature on fear of crime -as noted in the theory chapter- is a concept conceived in the English-speaking academy and developed mostly in the context of developed western countries; where transpositions in Latin American contexts are rare and ridden with asynchronies. Secondly, the socio-political and economic transformations of the last two decades in Latin America requires an updated understanding of the consequent changes in the urban paradigms. The literature review revealed that it was crucial to rely on local sources to fill in these gaps in knowledge, as to answer what are the specific conditions regarding public insecurity in eastern Mexico City, and to find correlations or discrepancies with published studies in different contexts.

A second method of secondary data collection was the physical survey performed both on-site in the first fieldwork season and digitally by online satellite imagery. The objective of this physical survey was to describe the properties of the site and try to explore how -if at all- perceived insecurity is linked to them. This could confirm some theories already established in the literature but could also open new possibilities for further exploration and understanding of the topic.

The third stage of data acquisition was performed during a second fieldwork season, conducted between June and July of 2018; and consisted of structured interviews based on targeted questionnaires. These interviews were conducted by Alberto Ponce Aguilar, whom acted as my surrogate on the site.

Building up on the insights gained from the first fieldwork season, I designed a questionnaire that would become the main source of data for the second part of this study. One of the key findings from the first exploratory season (and as such confirmed by the literature) was the importance of focusing on two aspects proper to a segregated space: the view from outside and the view from within. With this target in mind, aiming to gain a broad scope of

understanding between different ranges of people related to the site, I decided to profile the second season in two large groups, corresponding to insiders (active users of the site), and outsiders (people with some connection to the site, though outside of its immediate sphere of action).

From this first division, I divided the insider's category by frequency of use in permanent, recurrent and sporadic; and then profiled each group into identified stakeholder groups based on the activities they perform within the site. The outsider's category was divided based on their proximity to the site into distant and close, further profiling them geographically (see Table 1).

focus group	subgroup	profile	locality	sample	total
insiders	permanent	informal settlers	CUFAS (zone 5)	5	7
		farmers	<i>ejidos</i> Culhuacan, farmland next to cemetery (zone 6)	2	
	recurrent	runners	random point on site	5	13
		"tradition" groups	random point on site	3	
		bypassers	pathways on site	5	
	sporadic	tourists	random point on site	5	5
outsiders	distant	metro commuters	M Cerro de La Estrella	3	6
			M Lomas Estrella	3	
		distant neighbors	Iztapalapa centre	3	9
			Culhuacan centre	3	
			col. San Juan Xalpa (zone 1)	3	
	cemetery visitors	Civil Cemetery ( <i>Panteón Civil</i> )	3	3	
	close	close neighbors	San Juan Cerro, Lomas El Manto (zone 2)	3	9
			Ampl. El Santuario, Estrella del Sur (zone 3)	3	
			Valle de Luces 1a. Sección (zone 4)	3	

Table 1. Focus groups for second fieldwork season.  
Source: author.

The questionnaire (see annex A) was designed to contain a core section common to all profiles about the perception of insecurity in the Cerro de La Estrella with the objective to establish a broad scope of the topic across the different actors involved, and to be able to make comparisons between profiled groups. Several different profile-dependent sections were added as well, attempting to uncover broader aspects which could influence the perception of insecurity, based on the literature.

#### Treatment of data.

Given the exploratory and explanatory nature of the research questions, the study is reliant on an analytical framework as well as an open exploration. In order to make a comparison with empirical quantitative data derived from the literature, quantitative data was collected and

processed, however, the greater contribution to this study relies on the qualitative data for its both sections.

The first part of the results relies on an analytical framework derived from the theoretical framework proposed in the theory chapter. This framework proposed to analyse the contribution towards insecurity of three main components, namely victimization, vulnerability and environmental measures.

In order to determine the contribution of these components, numerical values were given to an assessment of insecurity present in the interview. Respondents were asked if they considered the site to be secure or not, and they were assigned a value of 1 to 3 depending whether they answered affirmatively, negatively or their answer depended on certain aspects which would become clarified in an explanatory following question. These values consisted on the base for comparisons against the assessment of insecurity.

To compare against victimization, numerical values were also assigned to answers whether respondents reported experiences of victimization or not and how close they were to the site and to themselves. These values were compared in a simple correlation equation to establish some correspondence, the results were then graphed as presented in the results chapter.

Similarly, the components of vulnerability: age, gender and victimization, as well as the environmental measures: frequency of use, neighbourhood insecurity and police trust were assigned numerical values and calculated their correlations. Notably, all these responses are composed as well by a qualitative part, since the surveys were applied in the manner of semi-structured interviews leaving open room for deeper exploration of the topics. Many of the key findings emerged from the deepening of quantitative measures.

The second part of the results consisted of a qualitative exploration of what is the local definition of insecurity, for which the questions *is the site secure? Why?* Consist of the main data collection. Treatment of this data consisted in grouping and theorizing over the topics emerging from the responses in the attempt to contribute to a wider understanding of the local processes of the composition insecurity perception.

The findings consist in the juxtaposition of both datasets, considering equally contributing towards the characterization of a local defined concept of insecurity.

### **Limitations and ethical considerations.**

The first obvious limitation for this study lies in its representativity. Although the sample of respondents was designed to cover a group as wide as possible, the vast size of the site limited the data collection to 3 to 5 people from each group. This is a tiny sample in comparison to the amount of people involved and thus lacks statistical representativity. I am conscious of this fact, however, although the empirical quantitative data cannot be used to negate the validity of any result, I consider it valuable for the amount of information it can contribute. Given the exploratory nature of this study this limitation becomes salvable. In any case, the quantitative studies can serve as an example of how to integrate empirical measures to the theoretical framework.

A second limitation consists in the elements or variables which have escaped my attention. I have tried as much as possible to keep my eyes open for detecting new topics, however, my subjectivity in my role as researcher might have led to bypassing important implications for the study. Whether this consists of a shortcoming or not is matter for further research.

Finally, I have taken care of concealing the names and identities of my interviewees given the delicate nature of the topics explored. I recognize that revealing the realities of a disenfranchised society might pose an increased risk of misuse of this information, which is why I have tried as much as possible to preserve anonymity.

I declare as well to have a partial interest in the site, as I grew up in its vicinity and the reality I am trying to capture and describe is very much my own. As much as I have tried to remain critical towards the answers and results gathered, any shortcoming derived from my involvement and attachment to the site is my sole responsibility.



## **Context.**

Latin America lives a crisis of insecurity that translates into people living in constant fear in their homes, at their workplaces, in the streets... a recent survey from Latinobarómetro found that delinquency was regarded by Latin Americans as the most important problem in 2018 and that 4 in 10 people reported feeling in perpetual fear (2018). In Mexico the National Survey on Victimization and Perception of Public Security (ENVIPE) shows that 64% of the population consider insecurity as the most important problem, while 76% consider their state unsafe<sup>7</sup> (INEGI 2018).

The deep structural changes countries in the region have experienced in the last three decades have formed a perfect storm where high victimization reflected in extremely high crime and homicide rates, increased vulnerability derived from impunity, political disenfranchisement and economic stagnation, and an environment of inequality and exclusion, all converge in a state of generalized fear.

That this state of fear has had profound transformative implications in the highly urbanized Latin American societies is far from surprising. The consequences of living with fear are written in people's habits, the built environment and in the design and implementation of policies and strategies of securitization with dubious implications.

### **New violence in Latin America.**

"...fear does not differ significantly as between the cities with high and low homicide rates." (Briceño-León and Zubillaga 2002, 31)

Latin America is bleeding. Such is the conclusion that can be made by looking at the official statistic numbers used to measure violence: a steady average since 1995 of 24 homicides for each 100,000 people<sup>8</sup>, surpassing by far the rate at which the World Health Organization (WHO) qualifies the problem as "endemic", and almost hitting the rate of "conflict"<sup>9</sup>. This reality becomes even starker when considering the case of countries like Venezuela or

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<sup>7</sup> This measure is used by the National Institute of Geography and Statistics as the general fear rate.

<sup>8</sup> Source: World Bank, based on UNODC data.

<sup>9</sup> The WHO considers two degrees of seriousness for homicide rates: 10 homicides per each 100,000 people is considered "endemic", while 30 homicides per 100,000 people is considered as "conflict". Source: World Health Organization.

Honduras where the homicide rate can double or triple this number, effectively making their everyday reality as deadly as the Vietnam War or the Spanish Civil War<sup>10</sup>, respectively. It is estimated that between 2000 and 2012, 1'500,000 people have died victim to a homicide in Latin America, a number that "...more than double(s) the casualties of the Iraq war..." (Chioda 2017, 83).

The emergence of widespread violence in Latin America and the Caribbean (LA) is part of a series of changes that coincide with a restructuring in policies following the Latin American debt crisis of the 1980s, which collapsed the previous economic model based on state intervention. New policies were based on resuscitating<sup>11</sup> the idea of a free-market as means for development and so promoted deregulation by limiting the state's role in the economy. As a consequence, social welfare institutions and public services were dissolved or privatized, and social rights declined.

Along with the implementation of the new policies, economy in Latin America grew during the 1990s, even though this growth didn't translate into social welfare: inequality and poverty rates remained similar to the levels of the "lost decade" of the 1980's (meaning a larger absolute number of people living in poverty, considering population growth), while unemployment grew along with informality, and acquisitive power reduced<sup>12</sup>.

These transformations insert themselves into long-running trends of violence in Latin America including structural violence, characterized by poverty and political exclusion, symbolic violence, defined by social exclusion and discrimination, and psychological violence. It's under these conditions that Briceño-Leon and Zubillaga (2002) find the emergence of what they call *new violence*, a period of public security in Latin America determined by "the social phenomenon of growing interpersonal violence and physical violence in face-to-face interactions" (2002, 21), and which they propose to understand on the basis of five interrelated processes:

- i. Changes in the drug economy, which has taken forms akin to the global liberalized economy by outsourcing distribution and segmenting links in the production chain, with the consequence of smaller criminal enterprises competing for a piece of the market.

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<sup>10</sup> Source: Roser (2016) with data from the Uppsala Conflict Data Program and the Peace Research Institute Oslo.

<sup>11</sup> Because these new policies are grounded in the postulates of economic liberalism of the XIX century, they have gained the name of *neo-liberal* policies.

<sup>12</sup> Source: CEPAL (2000)

- ii. The proliferation of firearms, linked to drug trafficking and overproduction in the global market, which increase significantly the mortality of violent injuries<sup>13</sup>. Gun ownership is also seen as a means for respect in a marginalized environment.
- iii. Cultural patterns of violence, personified in the “young man from a marginal neighbourhood” whom represents the male-dominated and poverty-driven face of urban violence in which high consumption standards pair with low possibilities to fulfil them legitimately, deriving in frustration, resentment, and criminal violence, feedbacked by a hostile environment.
- iv. Support for extra-legal action of police or other instances, including paramilitary private security in upper classes and mob lynching amongst the urban poor, caused by extremely high levels of impunity.
- v. Generalized fear, that has spread throughout the region’s urban areas despite unequal victimization rates, affecting the use of public space and transforming the urban landscape with security measures often leading to segregation.

#### Violence in Mexico.

If homicide rate would be a certain indicator of the level of violence in a country, it would be safe to say that violence runs deep in Mexican history. A brief review of historic homicide rates by indicted perpetrators since the mid-1920s would show, for example, how the homicide rate peaked in 1938, with 40 homicides for each 100,00 people, and has been in decline ever since. The same review would show that until 1952 homicide rates were consistently higher than that of 2017, which with 26.1 homicides for each 100,000 people was considered the most violent year in recent history (see Figure 1).

It would appear then, that the country has been constantly pacified and that not even the recent escalate of violence, which began in 2008 in the context of the proclaimed “war on drugs” policy implemented by Felipe Calderón, has managed to reach the revert the tendency began in the 1950s. Even accounting for the last ten years, Mexican society seems to have been living its most peaceful age in a century.

The reality is that 8 in 10 Mexicans report feeling unsafe in their living places, as revealed by the last victimization survey (INEGI 2018) carried by the National Institute of Geography and Statistics (INEGI). How is it possible then, that relatively lower victimization rates carry such

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<sup>13</sup> Trujillo (2000) estimates that 80% of homicides in Latin America are carried out by firearms, against a world average of 63%.

high regard for insecurity? Is today's vision skewed by historical perspective? or has our threshold for what degree of insecurity is tolerable diminished since the mid-century? I propose four aspects which escape the measure of homicide rates that could help to understand this apparent paradox.



Figure 1. Homicide rates in Mexico 1926-2017.  
Source: author with data from Piccato (n.d.) & INEGI (n.d.).

In the first case is the relation homicide takes amongst other violent crimes: it is obvious that homicide consists the ultimate threat and it is used as a reliable indicator since all homicides are reported, but there are other crimes buried under the *black number* which might contribute much more to the sense of insecurity. Armed robberies, for example, composed 28% of criminal occurrence in Mexico in 2017. Comparing the rate of 11,081 armed robberies against 26.1 homicides per 100,000 people seems ludicrous but gives a scale to the real dimension of criminal incidence, which in Mexico is estimated to go unreported and unprosecuted in 90% of the cases.

In Mexico, the extremely inefficient justice system means effectively that victims have to cope with crime with their own resources. Official reports estimate that only ten in a hundred crimes are ever reported, of which only one ever gets sentenced. The main reasons for not denouncing are attributable to the authorities, where most people consider it is rather useless or a waste of time, but fear of perpetrators was also present as a cause (INEGI 2018).

A second aspect is the pervasiveness of crime in society. In 2017, it was estimated that 12.4 million (35% of the total) homes were affected by at least one crime. Criminal incidence of 39,369 crimes per each 100,000 people means that statistically almost 40% of the population over 18 years old was victim of a crime in 2017 alone, and while 2017 had higher criminal incidence than previous years, this rate has remained relatively stable at least since 2012. Pervasiveness of crime has been calculated to cost annually the equivalent of 1.65% of the Gross Domestic Product (GDP).

Thirdly, the so-called “war on drugs”, which fits in the larger context of changes in the drug economy, has changed radically the face of violence and criminality in Mexico. Since 2008 homicides augmented not only in number but in gruesomeness and in cruelty. The strategy of the federal government was to dismantle drug cartels by targeting their leaders. What followed was that without a unifying hierarchy, cartels metastasized engaging in a widespread battle for power (de Hoyos and Vargas 2016), where extreme violence was a technique of intimidation. Slowly it became increasingly common to hear from executions carried out with torture signs, dismembered bodies, decapitation, bodies dissolved in acid or incinerated, disappeared... This violence reached the general society as well, when the drug trade became saturated or too risky, and organized crime diversified their operations to kidnapping and extortion. Spreading terror became a method to increase the profitability of cartels and soon was imitated by smaller criminal groups, avid to reap on widespread fear (Rivas Rodríguez 2015). It is not only the number of homicides, but the brutality on how they are carried out which has increased in the last decade. There is another side to it, which is the amount of forced disappearances which don't sum to the homicide rate because there is no body to report. According to the federal government's database, there are 37,437 disappeared people in Mexico until April 2018 (RNPED 2018). In average, they represent 3.2 forced disappearances for each 100,000 people in the last decade, a bit less than half the homicide rate in 2007, before the “war on drugs” was declared.

Finally, a dramatic increase in the availability of firearms has rendered encounters with crime much more probable to involve a fatal outcome. The magnitude of this gun proliferation is reflected in a report published in the United States which finds that as much as 213,000 weapons are introduced illegally from United States to Mexico every year (Parsons and Vargas 2018). The consequences are clearly felt: in 1997, 1,259 homicides (15% of the total) were carried out with firearms, but by 2017 this number had grown to 21,172<sup>14</sup> (66% of the total)

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<sup>14</sup> The absolute number of homicides was calculated by the author extrapolating with information from INEGI database.

(Linares 2018). Similarly, the number of robberies committed with firearms in Mexico grew to 68% in the same year (Ibid.).

### **The Latin American city.**

Accompanying these structural changes, cities in predominantly urban Latin America have transformed themselves to accommodate a new urban paradigm. While some authors ask to see in them trends of post-modern urbanism referring to authors from the Los Angeles School like Davis (2006) or Dear, it is their particularities which gives matter for a separate analysis predominantly under the context of deregulatory policies and rise of violence. To understand where these processes are situated in the historical context, in the following section I will present a brief overview of the particularities described as the new Latin American urban paradigm followed by the description of the specific context of the case study: Mexico City, the borough of Iztapalapa and the presentation of the site.

The urbanization process in Latin America started with a colonial paradigm based on segregation: the colonial order rested upon strict social hierarchies which reflected in the urban landscape generating urban sectors (Borsdorf, Bähr, and Janoschka 2002). In this order, the rich belong with the rich and the poor with the poor. While industrialization brought some changes with the addition of suburbanization, this logic of sectorization remain relatively unchanged until recent times.

In the 1990s, enclaves of wealth began to appear in popular areas, following the models of gated communities. Apparently mirroring the liberalizing of the economy in which private enterprises take over growing parts of the public sector, in the city structure previously social-class sectorial areas also seemed to be liberalized and given way to more and more private enclaves<sup>15</sup>.

What at first glance could seem as an increasing integration or social mix between classes, in close inspection revealed a more acute sectorization reliant on spatial segregation by physical means. In mild cases, these neighbourhoods make controlled access areas reliant on private security which allow transit across them with some restrictions. In more extreme cases, they constitute walled enclaves isolated physically from their surroundings (Borsdorf and Hidalgo 2010), in many cases providing private services and amenities to their inhabitants making

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<sup>15</sup> In this aspect, the word private carries two meanings: to be restricted of use and transit to a closed community of members, and to be owned and managed by agencies foreign to the state (alas public). In all cases gated communities refer to the former, and in many cases to both.

them virtually autonomous. It should be noted that while this trend originated in the upper classes with their gated communities and country clubs, lately middle and lower classes have adopted the model of closed neighbourhoods, either in new developments or by installing transit barriers in previously public roads.

With the rising popularity of such places it is relevant to inquire about the reason behind their success. Gough proposes to understand it under the light of the “encouragement of possessive individualism” (2002, 411), fostered by the neoliberal logic of dismantling socialization in urban space. At the same time, Borsdorf attributes said success to a way for the elites to occupy highly contested space free of risk (2003). Massey (1999), drawing on Sennet (1992) claims that enclosing suburban residential areas is motivated by the seeking of homogenous life surroundings. Bähr and Mertins (1995) propose to see in them a way to fill in the gap left by the abandonment of public infrastructure by public authorities, while Janoschka (2002), who studied the gated communities of northern Buenos Aires, found that aspirational lifestyles<sup>16</sup> played an important role in moving to a gated community.

Without abandoning these considerations, it is also important to consider the way such places are marketed and sold, convincingly portrayed as secure places safe from crime and violence. In fact, for the context of Latin America this might be a powerful argument that, although not necessarily true, portrays gated communities as safe havens from the violence that has come to characterize the region. It is important to note, as Janoschka (2002) points out, that while criminality and fear of violence itself might not be a sufficient reason to explain the appearance of gated communities, it is a key factor for people accepting and choosing to live in such areas. This seeking of security, however, creates a paradox in which criminality isn't diminished, but where “...differences between territories controlled by fear become more acute, left out from public institutions of control; (thus) public spaces are abandoned and trust networks amongst neighbours erode” (Dammert 2001).

Finally, it shouldn't be overlooked that in many cases gated communities might be the most convenient or the only option in the housing market, especially in those involving low-income, social housing or state loans, for example in the case of dormitory cities built for working classes in many major cities' outskirts under the model of gated communities, as a market-led solution for social housing. In these cases, the model of ready-made segregated urbanization for the urban poor might increase vulnerability to violence or criminality by

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<sup>16</sup> In Janoschka's study it was the longing for open green “natural” areas the decisive factor for several of his subjects, however, the aspiration to belong to a more “americanized” way of life is also a weighing factor in terms of lifestyle.

inhibiting the emergence of social assets present in traditional or informal neighbourhoods and by creating pockets of unlawful territory, as Madero (2017) demonstrates in her study on the effects of violence over formal and informal housing communities in Ciudad Juárez.

Mexico City, the monster.

Mexico City was founded in 1325 and served as the capital of the Mexica until 1521, when it was conquered, destroyed and rebuilt as a capital for the newly established Viceroyalty of New Spain. From then, and save by brief intervals, Mexico City has served as the capital city for all the political entities which have ruled over the territory of what today is known as the Mexican United States.

By the turn of the 20th century, CDMX had a population of 354 thousand inhabitants (Unikel 1972) mostly limited to the central urban core. The transformation of Mexico City (CDMX) into a megacity of 20 million people followed a process similar to other Latin American capitals, as described in the previous section: from a relatively stable colonial capital, it developed into a segmented city following a relatively modest industrialization during the late 19<sup>th</sup> century. It also followed a growth pattern described as megacephalic proper to Latin American former colonial states where the concentration of political and administrative power produces a disproportionate growth of the capital city in spite of a relatively undeveloped countryside.

The first big transformation took place from the 1900s to 1930s, propelled by a migratory wave proceeding from the devastated countryside caused by the 1910 Mexican Revolution. Growing industrialization and political stability following the conflict allowed the population to grow at a steady annual rate of 3.8%, reaching the mark of one million inhabitants by 1930 (Ibidem).

The following decades were characterized by the implementation of the Import Substitution Industrialization policies, which have been considered as the driving force behind the “Mexican miracle”, the period between 1940 and 1970 where economy grew at a sustained annual rate of 4%. In Mexico City, the same period saw an explosive expansion both in extension and in population, driven by a booming industrialization and massive waves of migration from the countryside, in search for better opportunities.

By 1940, CDMX had a population of 1.9 million inhabitants, which had turned to 3.3 million by 1950, in the highest growth rate the country has seen. It is during the decade of 1950s that a double process of *decentralization* and *invasion* occurred in CDMX, expanding the urban area



to its still mostly rural peripheries and spilling over its administrative boundaries to encompass close municipalities in the neighbouring Estado de México and thus constituting the Metropolitan Area of Mexico Valley (ZMVM). Starting from this decade, population growth rates would remain higher for peripheric municipalities than for central CDMX.

In 1960, population in ZMVM had grown to 5.5 million people, of which only half million people were living in neighbouring municipalities. By 1970, already a third of ZMVM's 9 million inhabitants were living outside CDMX. The 1970s were the last decade of the "Mexican miracle" and the last decade of population growth for CDMX: by 1980 CDMX still accounted for two thirds of the 12.9 million inhabitants of ZMVM, but its population increase was of 30%, while the neighbouring municipalities' almost doubled. Starting from the 1980s, CDMX's population would remain stagnant at around 8.5 million, with the neighbouring municipalities absorbing all ZMVZ's expansion. As of 2010, ZMVM had 20.1 million inhabitants of which 8.8 lived in CDMX, while 11.2 in neighbouring municipalities.

Before moving on to describe the impact deregulatory policies have had over the production of built space in Mexico City, it is necessary to open a parenthesis on the characteristics of city growth previous to the 1990s. As has already been described, population in ZMVM multiplied by a factor of 67 during the 20<sup>th</sup> century. The weak institutions emanated from the revolutionary process, however, were incapable of providing a solution for the massive need of housing of the time. This gave way to what Madero (2017) calls a parallel process in the production of housing: on one hand formal housing was provided by private developers, making up for much of the urbanized central city. In this way many neighbourhoods (known locally as *colonias*) sprung in mostly central localities, such as the boroughs of Cuauhtémoc, Miguel Hidalgo, Azcapotzalco and mainly Benito Juárez and its massive colonia Del Valle with fully organized urban services, and planned roads and public places.

On the other hand, informal urbanization was a much more widespread phenomenon, since many of the recent urban immigrants belonged to the urban poor and thus were excluded from the private market. The newly arrived would settle in *camps* occupying unclaimed land and would initiate a process of continuous upgrading which would result in the consolidation of a formal city, after many years. Since these processes were insurgent and greatly dependent of spatial and political context, their results are far from homogenous, leading in many cases to spatial saturation given the pressure over unoccupied land.

The boroughs that constitute eastern Mexico City are outstanding examples of this method of urbanization. Places like Ciudad Nezahualcóyotl (which with a population of 2 million

inhabitants was considered in the 1980s the largest slum on earth), Chimalhuacan and notably Iztapalapa consist almost exclusively of ancient towns engulfed by a sprawl of informally-built urbanization. Eastern Mexico City (see Figure 2) is on both accounts the densest area in ZMVZ and also includes the most marginalized neighbourhoods, an inheritance of its origins and also an ongoing process, with many of its neighbourhoods lingering over the frontier between formality and informality.



Figure 2. Panorama of eastern Mexico City as seen from the Cerro de La Estrella.  
Photo: author.

This method of urbanizing has also important political implications, as the struggle for land tenure and the lack of urban services leaves gaps to be filled with political clientelism: it is a common trope of informal settlements to promise legal recognition or provision of services like drainage, pipe water, electricity, amongst others in exchange for political support. Not few political careers have been built over the needs of informal settlers, which corresponds with a reported unwillingness to definitely regularize the status of many settlements across the city.

A third alternative for the production of housing was offered with the establishment of social housing institutes Workers Housing Fund National Institute (INFONAVIT) and the Housing Fund of State Worker's Social Security and Services Institute (FOVISSSTE) in 1972, which aimed to provide working class families with access to formal housing at a low price and with government backed credits. Their housing model relied on common housing units built in popular areas in several cases amidst or substituting previous informal settlements. In early stages these units would consist of model housing schemes for workers following the ideal of

“towers in the park”, however, over time the design of these housing units would succumb to insecurity and middle-class standards of segregated neighbourhoods surrounded by walls and with controlled gate accesses. Even earlier units designed for publicness were transformed into secluded strongholds over time. With this, the parenthesis might close.

The decade of 1980s is referred informally as “the lost decade” in Mexico because of the economic turmoil characterized by staggering inflation, devaluation of local currency and a generalized recession which brought to ordinary people’s life what has been colloquially named “the crisis”: a period of hardship following the boom of previous decades. It was precisely this crisis what propitiated the adoption of structural changes that would impact directly in all sectors of public life, non the least the urban environment.

One of the most visible consequences of liberalization policies at the urban scale is the sprawl that has characterized ZMVM’s growth in the last three decades. As mentioned above, population in CDMX reached a saturation point by the 1980s, but neighbouring municipalities kept increasing constantly their population. In 1991 a reform was introduced to liberate the holders of communal rural land, allowing them to sell previously inalienable property. The result was the immediate availability of enormous plots of land surrounding the metropolitan area which resulted in turn in massive purchases by developing companies.

Similarly, reforms were introduced in social housing policies that transformed previously state-owned social housing institutes (the previously mentioned FOVISSSTE and INFONAVIT) from builders to financiers, allocating *de facto* the provision of state-provided social housing to private developers in a process of what some authors call *hypercommodification* (Brenner, Marcuse, & Mayer, 2009). What resulted was the proliferation of mass-scale social housing projects modelled after *gated community* models dotting the suburban fields around CDMX, often disconnected from public transport networks and with lacklustre public services. Many of these projects would end up partially or totally abandoned given their unviability for habitation with the consequent loss for thousands of working-class families.

Large scale private developers weren’t the only stakeholders taking advantage of the liberalization of rural land: small scale owners and single families benefited as well, taking advantage of a model which allowed them to form an estate and be legally recognized<sup>17</sup>. The

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<sup>17</sup> As previously mentioned, invasions in Mexico City aren’t a new phenomenon. Large areas of the City were historically formed by informal invasions which were used as political capital by social leaders and local politicians, promising recognition or legalization for votes or mobilization. The rural land reform effectively opened the door for formal recognition of these former invasions, legalizing many informal settlements and slums.

last standing rural areas historically allocated to ancient towns were quickly urbanized as the ejido was banished from CDMX.

Therefore, ZMVM's expansion has been mostly territorial beginning from the decade of 1980s: by 1980, the population of ZMVM was 12.9 million, occupying an area of 61 thousand hectares. By 2010, the population had increased 62% to 20.8 million, while the area had grown to 221 thousand hectares: a 362% increase (Pradilla Cobos 2016). This decreased average density in 2010 to less than half what it was in 1980. This is the vast urban expansion that has been named *the monster* by its residents, a name that reflects the complicated relationship they have with their homeland.

A second consequence of liberalization occurred in the manufacturing sector which constituted the backbone of CDMX's growth since the 1930s. Free trade agreements allowed for the import of manufactured goods in unfavourable conditions for local industry, disrupting productive chains and outsourcing suppliers with the result of a *premature relative deindustrialization* of the country (Salama 2012). This integration with the global market led as well to a redistribution in manufacturing industries: with the productive sector no longer tied to local consumption or the internal market, companies specialized in producing exportable goods appeared as poles for development in other parts of the country, taking advantage of logistic position and lower salaries.

So, while in 1970 the participation of CDMX's manufacturing industry in the national total was 32.2%, by 2009 that amount had fallen to 10.9%. The central region's average fell from more than half to little more than a third in the same period. At the same time, wages for the occupied personnel shrank at an average annual rate of -2.6% between 1981 and 2012, given the policy of incrementing wages below inflation rates. Adjusted for inflation, salaries in 2012 had lost 69.8% of their real value compared to 1981 (Pradilla Cobos 2016).

A sector that did grow since 1980 is the service sector, leading to a tertiarization of the economy in the capital region. Between 1980 and 2008, the formal service sector grew at a 5.01% rate in the metropolitan area (Ibidem), with much of this growth directed to establishing subcentres and service corridors in the peripheries. Despite this growth, jobs in the formal service industry haven't managed to fill the gap left by deindustrialization, leading to unemployment but more notably the rise of an enormous informal tertiary sector: by 2012 it was calculated almost half of the occupied population were working in informality (Ibid.).

As is the case with the provision of housing, informality serves a key role for commerce in deregulated markets by a double account: on one hand, it allows the unemployed to work, serving as an escape vent for social pressure over the government to provide employment, and as such is tolerated if not fostered by authorities, but even more it provides an alternative channel for the distribution of merchandise produced in the formal sector, allowing produce to reach sectors excluded from the formal market. On the other hand, it allows the establishment of a skilled reserve army, ready to substitute formal workers in their workplaces, thus supporting the erosion of workers' rights by creating an environment of working force oversupply.

For understanding the dimension of power in informality, the work of Cross (1998b) is crucial, since his research is precisely aimed to uncover said relation in the context of political struggle of Mexican street vendors. While he does not state a direct definition of informality, he insists in the active bargaining capacity of informal actors as opposed to a passive view he identifies in other literature. Furthermore, he highlights that the rise of neoliberalism as the hegemonic global power and ideology with its consequent precarization of formal employment constitute the main factor that fuel the informal economic activities. Complementary to this shift in labour, imbalances in power structures arise as informality is in many cases identified with illegality, although as previously mentioned might be tolerated by the state as a scape valve for social pressure towards the state to provide employment (Cross 1998a). Informality thus is also largely defined by its ability to influence power structures to fulfil its actors' interests.

With the reorganization of urban space towards privatization new architectural typologies have emerged as well in the last decades. The rise and prominence of shopping malls is paradigmatic of this time, as they increasingly become identified as a safe place for socialization. An account of this phenomenon is reflected in the number of shopping malls built in the last 30 years: by 1981 there were 17 shopping malls occupying an area of 375 thousand square meters. By 2012, there were 262 shopping malls in ZMVM occupying 6.3 million square meters, of which 215 were built in the last twenty years (Pradilla Cobos 2016).

While shopping malls were initially reserved for middle and high classes, in later years they have proliferated in proletarian areas such as northern and eastern ZMVM, seeking to expand their market to the working classes. In doing so, they have contributed as well to the establishment of new centralities (Duhau and Giglia 2007), but more importantly shopping malls are replacing former gathering places which have suffered abandonment or privatization due to insecurity. Inside their privately controlled and heavily securitized atmospheres,

residents of ZMVM spend increasingly more time, which is reflected not only in the growth of retail area, but also in the diversification of services and activities provided: in the later years it has become common to expect government offices located conveniently inside shopping malls such as tax offices, transit authorities or municipal services. Following contemporary trends public transport services are also being integrated into shopping centres in the Modal Transference Centres (CETRAM), and even attraction parks are being built attached to shopping areas, as is the case of *Las Antenas* Shopping centre, placed in a working-class neighbourhood in southern Iztapalapa.

#### *Iztapalapa.*

Iztapalapa is a borough that forms part of the eastern Mexico City region. Home to almost 2 million people, it is the most populous municipality in CDMX: close to one in four residents of CDMX live in Iztapalapa. It is also heavily urbanized: it is estimated that almost 90% of its territory is occupied built environment. Iztapalapa has also a large reputation of being a place of insecurity.

But the origins of Iztapalapa run far deeper in history: the ancient village of Culhuacan, on the western hillside of the Cerro de La Estrella is known to be one of the earliest settlements in the Mexico basin, predating by half a millennium the establishment of the Mexica empire. Though nowhere as ancient, the Village of Iztapalapa has also a long history, being founded by Mexica people around the 12<sup>th</sup> century although the area, north of the hill is known to have been the site of an important ceremonial site as early as the 4<sup>th</sup> century.

In the times of the Viceroyalty of New Spain, Iztapalapa was designated a major municipality with administrative power over what is today eastern CDMX. During this time Iztapalapa acquired prominence in the region as the municipal head remaining an independent municipality until 1927, when it was incorporated into the Federal District (DF), precursor of today's CDMX. Even with this acquisition, Iztapalapa would retain its small-town character unaltered until the mid-20<sup>th</sup> century, when sprawling urbanization from Mexico City would reach and finally engulf Iztapalapa in the metropolitan region (see Figure 3).

Next page:  
Figure 3. Location map of Iztapalapa in CDMX.  
Source: author with data from Google maps.



Iztapalapa



Cerro de La Estrella

Around the 1950s, Iztapalapa began to take place in the growing urbanization which was already heavily underway in CDMX. Given its distance from the still detached capital city, Iztapalapa had managed to remain mostly rural until that time, depending on its vast fields and its prolific *chinampas*, so characteristic of the Mexico basin since times immemorial. But by the mid-century, industrial zones began to establish in the periphery of the village and soon some new settlements were established. The Flores Magón neighbourhood, over the lands of the Cerro de La Estrella, was the first recognized new settlement in 1954.

Following the pattern already described in the previous section of this chapter (see above), and due to its distance from Mexico City, formal housing projects in Iztapalapa were scarce if present at all. Consequently, the urban development model in Iztapalapa consisted almost exclusively on informal settlements built detached from one another, later joined when their own growth reached the limits of the following one. This logic that resembles patchwork can be read in the aerial view of many neighbourhoods, with roads that meet dead ends, mismatching grids and discontinuous avenues, telling the story of a city built by hand.

That people who settled and built Iztapalapa outside from the ancient towns and villages were impoverished immigrant from the inner country built a reputation of the borough to be an insecure city of slums, synonym of poverty and crime. To this day Iztapalapa has the reputation of being a rocky place, with spectacular operatives such as the shut down and expropriation of the *La Ford* market (*Proceso* 2007), a city-wide informal market known for being specialized in commercializing stolen car parts (and which gave way to violent riots), or the infamous episode of the dog murders, that caused a city-wide commotion when several people appeared dead within the Cerro de La Estrella with dog bite marks all over their bodies.

The case was quickly dismissed by authorities as the doing of a pack of stray dogs that had become feral and thus began attacking people (Quintero and Gómez 2013), which further caused spectacular dog raids in the premises, but for many the case went unsolved, sparking theories and rumours such as the existence of a satanic cult sacrificing people or the presence of organized crime in the area. Clearly, these rumours were never confirmed, and the case soon fizzled out, however, the episode of the dog murders would remain branded in the minds of the neighbours of Cerro de La Estrella as a staple of insecurity, as demonstrated by the appearance of dog-related insecurity events and reminiscences of this episode repeatedly during my interviews. This is also a demonstration of how the effects of a panic wave ripple through time, its consequences being felt many years after its occurrence.



It surely doesn't help to the reputation of Iztapalapa that one of the most dangerous neighbourhoods in CDMX, reputed to be a stronghold of security houses for kidnappers is within its premises, but if the homicide rates can give us any measure of the level of violence present on the streets<sup>18</sup>, comparing the national rate with the rate in CDMX and in Iztapalapa would be quite telling (see Figure 4).

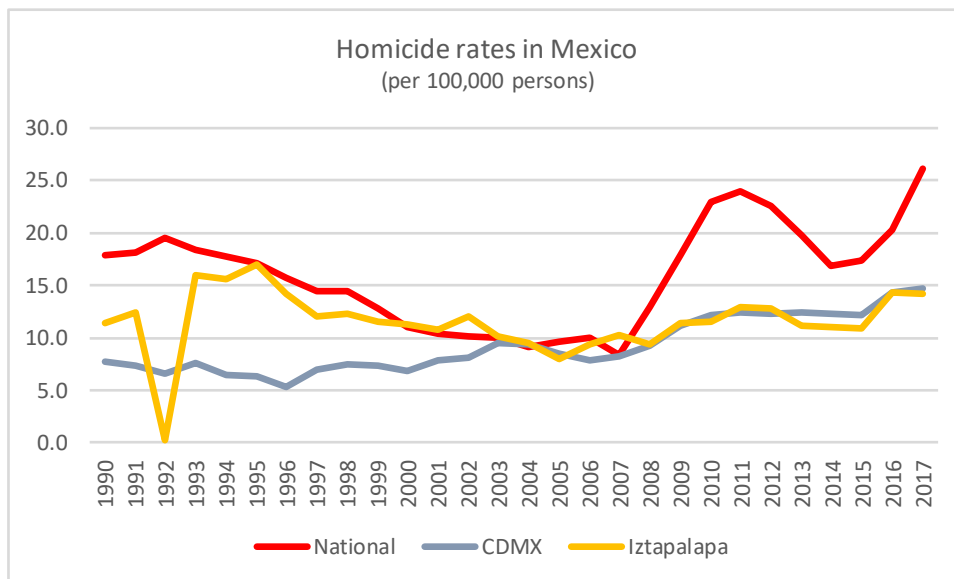


Figure 4. Homicide rates in Mexico, CDMX and Iztapalapa.  
Source: author with data from INEGI (n.d.).

Until 2003, Iztapalapa had a higher homicide rate than CDMX (the anomaly in 1992 is most certainly due to an error in data collection), but starting in 2004, the rates in Iztapalapa and CDMX are mostly the same. And while CDMX's rate has remained consistently with lower homicide rates than the national average, sadly it has tripled to this day from its historic low in 1996 (the current rate of ca. 15 murders per 100,000 inhabitants is still outrageously high by any standard). So, in a process began in 1990, homicides in Iztapalapa started to diminish, while homicides in CDMX grew until they reached the same rate around 2003. From then they have followed a parallel increase, with Iztapalapa having a slightly lower rate than CDMX in the past 5 years.

<sup>18</sup> The implications of using homicide rates as violence indicators has already been discussed in the beginning of this chapter, when addressing the environment of violence in Latin America. In this case, however, as the context is similar between the three elements compared (similar timeframe, similar survey methods and the same social conditions), I take the liberty to utilize this data as an indicator.

If this data could serve as an indicator, I would assure that the assumption Iztapalapa is a haven for insecurity is nothing but a myth, and that in fact, Iztapalapa in the past 5 years has become a safe place for CDMX's standards. But I couldn't be further from the truth. As is the main purpose of this study and has been shown repeatedly, many factors converge in the assessment of insecurity, being as it is a matter of perception rather than a quantifiable single fact. This is why it is unsurprising that the Benito Juárez municipality, which forms part of the central city and is characterized by middle- and upper-class neighbourhoods is generally regarded as safer than Iztapalapa, despite being -together with Cuauhtémoc- where most violent crimes are committed in Mexico City.

Perhaps part of this perception has to do with the provision of public spaces: As municipalities from the central city, both Cuauhtémoc and Benito Juárez underwent a mostly formal urbanization process which provided them with parks, squares, tree-lined avenues and such amenities which form part of their built environment. By contrast, the informal urbanization process of Iztapalapa produced a saturated space with scarce public or recreational spaces. Of these, the Cerro de La Estrella is by far the most prominent in the whole eastern CDMX region.

#### Cerro de La Estrella

The Cerro de La Estrella (Spanish for Hill of The Star) is a volcanic hill bordered by the ancient towns of Iztapalapa on the north, and Culhuacan and Tomatlan on the west. It forms part of what in ancient times constituted the peninsula of Iztapalapa, which disappeared following the draining of the five lakes which made up the Mexico basin ecosystem.

Since ancient times the hill's territory was shared between the three towns by a system called "territorial intertwining" meaning that parcels of land were not adjudicated to a municipality (*altepetl* in the ancient system), but rather were allocated to the farmers who worked them, the farmers being the constituents of territory.

With the constituency of the Viceroyalty, territories from the hill were privately allocated although there is little knowledge of this change of property regime. What is known is from a map of 1776 claiming that the agricultural lands are rented to "the indians", other lands are purposeful for mining and that the hilltop is part of the Rancho de La Estrella (Spanish for Ranch of the Star), which is from where the hill receives its Spanish name. According to Rafael Lambarén, director of the Fuego Nuevo Museum (interviewed for this study), in ancient times

the hill was referred to as Huizachtécatl (Nahuatl for Lord of the Huizaches, a native tree) and treated as a personified entity.

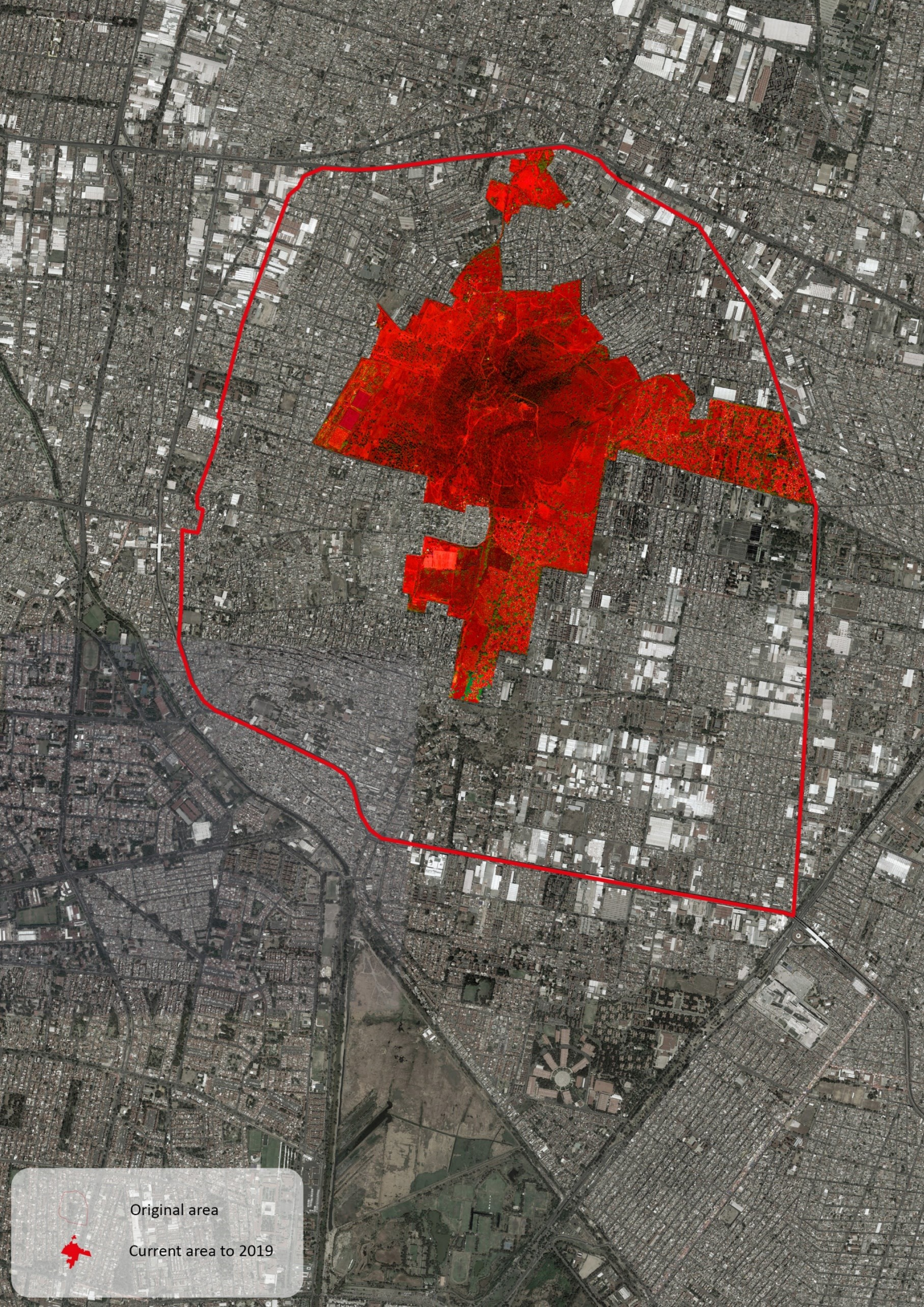
Land plots in the hill seem to have changed hands continuously over time in a regime of private ownership except for the ejidos of Culhuacan, established following the agrarian reform in 1920, which contemplated communal possession. It is under this double regime when the reserve is created: In 1938, then president Lázaro Cárdenas issued an expropriation decree by which the Cerro de la Estrella was declared a National Park. The original decree contemplated an extension of 1,100 has encompassing mostly agricultural lands but included a tip of the Culhuacan township. According to Beatriz Ramírez, former chronist of Iztapalapa (interviewed for this study), the original decree didn't specify if the original owners were to be compensated: it merely stated the use these lands were to have in the future and that the original owners would remain in possession of them. As we will see, this legal lagoon would have serious implications for the following decades.

As mentioned, the explosive urbanization of Mexico City reached Iztapalapa by the 1950s, with the forming of the colonia Flores Magón established at the hillside in 1954. That same decade several other neighbourhoods were built on the premises, including the colonia Lomas Estrella over the former lands of the Rancho de La Estrella. Expansive urbanization put pressure over the land which was rapidly becoming a valuable asset. Several former owners were selling plots and the ones remaining were increasingly seeing the profitability or (in the case of already occupied plots) inevitability of dealing with them. So in 1962, arguing compensations for the terrains were never paid by the 1938 decree, original owners reclaimed the use over their lands, which was granted by the authorities with the immediate consequence that the site was reduced to half its original size (Ramírez González 2014).

This cycle of invasion and formalization has become customary, with subsequent *partial programs* (the name given in Mexico City for localized development plans) trimming the area declared as National Park. The last recognized area of Natural Reserve was in 2005, occupying an area of 121 has, far from the original 1,100 (see Figure 5).

Next page:

Figure 5. Cerro de La Estrella original and current area.  
Source: author with data from Google maps and Beatriz Ramírez (2014).



Original area

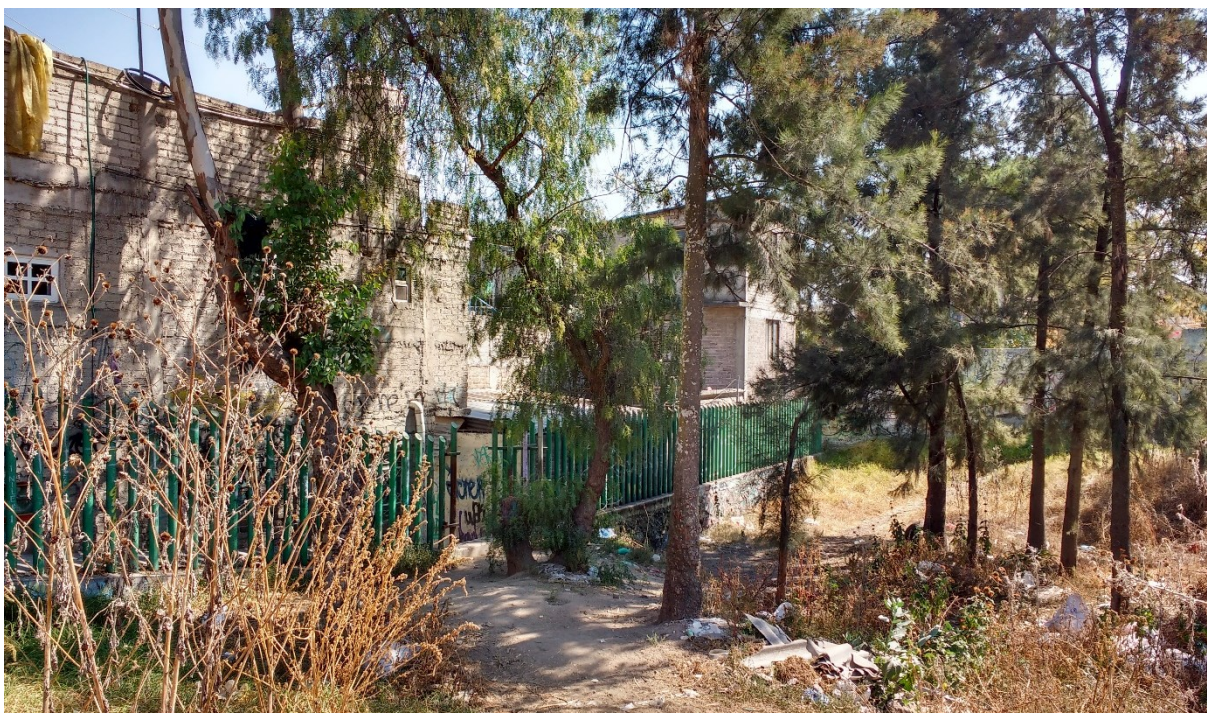
Current area to 2019

*Physical structure.*

These subsequent cycles of invasion and formalization have configured the site to its current shape: it consists of a large mass surrounded by settlements only connected to a main road, Ermita Iztapalapa avenue to the north. This route from Ermita Iztapalapa towards the hilltop consists of the traditional connection between the ancient town of Iztapalapa and the ceremonial site (the pyramid) which exists on top of the site and also constitutes the main road of access towards the park.

A very notable element stands out, which is the wall which surrounds the park and blocks it off in many places from its surroundings (see Figure 8). I didn't find a date or an official justification for the presence of this wall, however, satellite imagery confirms it has been present for at least the last decade. Given the proliferation of informal settlements, I assume that halting the establishment of new settlements is a driving force behind the presence of the wall, although securitization measures were argued by key informants and interviews.

Although the site is considered a whole entity in the original plan, the establishment of several different elements have effectively detached the site from its surroundings: on the northeast side, a wall circumscribes the entirety of the site with some small accesses which serve as passageways to and from the neighbouring neighbourhoods (see Figure 6). In terms of connectivity, these are the most accessible neighbourhoods since informal settlements are absent from the area and there are connections towards the site which, though limited, allow traffic flow.



Previous page:  
Figure 6. View of wall and access to site.  
Photo: author.

On the eastern side of the site, the establishment of the Civil Cemetery in the 1970s effectively detached the site from the whole eastern neighbourhoods (see Figure 8), preventing entirely their access to the park. This blockage has prevented common people from accessing the park, however, given its seclusion it has also gained fame of attracting criminal groups who have created informal accesses in the cemetery wall to go in and out from the park (see Figure 7) . It isn't all black and white though: during the interviews, some respondents reported as well of using these entrances as passageways to use the park as a shortcut. As will be presented in the results chapter, these informal entrances have constituted a major problem regarding insecurity.



Figure 7. Informal access towards the Civil Cemetery.  
Photo: author.

The southern part is unprotected as far as physical barriers go, but consists of an informal settlement which is continuously growing over the site. The tensions arisen from contested land tenure has created an ambient of hostility as reported by an interviewee who claims to be distrustful of “these people” and would like them to leave. Such tensions are patent in the appearance of gates which demarcate the limits of the “formalized” and the “invaders” settlement.

Next page:  
Figure 8. Physical aspects of the site and accessibility.  
Source: author with data from Google maps.

Ermita Iztapalapa

Metro Station

Passion field

Museum

Deposit

Cave

Pyramid

Civil Cemetery

Walls and fences

Informal settlements

Farming Lands

Gates to neighbourhoods

Informal entrances

Site proper

Also on the south and towards the southeast corner there is the remnants of the ejidos of Culhuacan, which still are used as farming lands by the last urban farmers in the site. Although there are accesses on the site, the farming plots are clearly demarcated leaving narrow entrances which lead to narrow roads across the fields. This area is only frequented by the farmers themselves, with any stranger being met with suspicion. In the corner, the presence of the municipal deposit further detaches the western neighbourhoods from accessing the site.

The north western side is made up with contested territory as well, with informal settlements sprawling over previous farmlands and currently undergoing a process of urbanization. There are some walls which limit the access, but contrasting with the eastern side, the wall isn't continuous so there are accesses where it interrupts. This is the area which is mentioned in the results section as conflicting by the presence of aggressive dogs which act as agents of privatization.

The panorama presented by the bigger picture describes a site partially detached from its surroundings and in the process of being privatized. As will be presented further, this privatization has a lot to do with the perception of insecurity, but in terms of accessibility the image which results is that the site is only fully accessible to the northern neighbours. As deeper south as one goes, it becomes clear that the site is not only more isolated but increasingly insecure.

#### *Symbolic value.*

Since ancient times the Cerro has been a religious centre of the highest importance for many nations which inhabited the region: Colhuas, Teotihuacans and Mexicas revered subsequently the site and built religious structures over time. The most famous of them, the *pirámide del fuego nuevo* (Spanish for pyramid of the new fire) sits on top of the hill (see Figure 9) and was the site of a religious ceremony of cardinal importance for the Mexica society: every 52 years (a Mexica era) a fire was lit on this site, symbolizing the resurgence of a new era and the continuity of life on earth.

With the arrival of catholic faith this ritual disappeared, but another ritual of national significance takes place on the hill (indeed, right on top of a Teotihuacan temple as recent archaeological findings (Hernández, n.d.) have shown). The representation of the Passion of Christ is represented each year in an event that disrupts the whole urban village each Easter and drives multitudes of visitors from all over the country.





Figure 9. View of the Cerro de La Estrella from the Museum.  
Photo: author.

This double ritual significance makes the hill a holy site for a great number of people both from the catholic faith and from the so-called “tradition groups” which base their beliefs in the ancient pre-christian religion. Aside from the Easter week, over the year several groups of different affiliations come to worship the site and perform ceremonies and rituals as one of the sacred sites of the ancient religion.

## **Results and findings.**

The theoretical framework in which this study is based proposes to adopt the aspects identified in the literature as components of insecurity, as described in the theory chapter. The method I proposed is to introduce them as controls to test their explanatory power in the context of my case study. This is the theme of the first part of this results chapter. As such, it is composed by three sections, coinciding with the three components: victimization, vulnerability and environmental measures.

The second part deals with the characterization of insecurity which emerges from respondent's own perception and attempts to construct a local-based concept of insecurity. The answers have been grouped and organized in three main aspects: what presents risk leading to insecurity, what are the factors which affect insecurity and finally, what consequences derive from insecurity in conduct and leading to a transformation of the built landscape.

### **Introduction, a little quantitative measure.**

The first question in the questionnaire is an assessment on insecurity. In order to have a base to which test and compare the qualitative results, respondents were asked to answer whether they considered Cerro de La Estrella to be a secure place, and to justify their answer. The reasons will be dealt in the second part of this chapter, in the attempt to build a local concept of insecurity, but for now this section refers only to the number of people who answered if the site was secure or not.

It is important to note that this question was directed exclusively to find out an assessment of insecurity within the site (site-specific insecurity), and not the general sense of insecurity of the respondent (overall insecurity). As such, some answers proved challenging given a degree of difficulty in separating the hill with its immediate surroundings. A further level of complexity appeared when the assessment was not a straight yes or now, revealing that the level of insecurity might depend greatly on factors such location within the site and time of day or season of the year (see Table 2). Indeed, differentiated answers were crucial for mapping place-related insecurity within the site, as will be presented in the second part in this chapter.

Is Cerro de La Estrella a secure place?					
yes		depends		no	
site is secure	15	somewhat secure	13	site is not secure	20
		differs on location *	18		
		differs on daytime *	10		
		differs on year time *	3		

\* don't sum up, might belong to more than one aspect

Table 2. Insecurity assessment.  
Source: author.

For purposes of quantification, to the question Is Cerro de La Estrella a secure place? three levels of security assessment were assigned to the answers where 1 correspond with “yes”, 2 with “depends” and 3 with “no”.

The very first result apparent is that there is no consensus over an assessment of insecurity on the site: while a large group of people categorically respond the site is secure, an even larger group answers equally categorically the opposite. Furthermore, the respondents who answered something in the middle range is by no means a small group either.

By themselves, these results already show an overview of the assessment of site-specific insecurity for the people interviewed, and as such provide a ground from which to develop the components that construct the perception of insecurity. The following sections attempt to characterize insecurity for this specific site, and to dissect what factors influence such assessment of insecurity.

### **Part 1. Components of insecurity.**

Victimization: occurrence of crime.

Victimization is the first of the components of insecurity that was characterized in the literature of fear of crime and as such consists of the first control for this study. To understand what relation did experiences of victimization have with the feeling of insecurity, I asked to respondents if they themselves or somebody they knew had been victims of a crime within the site.

In order to do so, I introduced a topic in the interviews to explore the actual occurrence of crime in the site by asking respondents if they had been victims of a crime or were aware of crimes happening on the site.

The diversity of positive answers made it possible to further categorize them in two aspects: by place of occurrence and by how close the victim is to the respondent (see Table 3).

Have you or someone you know been victimized?					
no		yes, where?		yes, whom?	
no victimization	26	on the site	2	myself	3
		in a close neighbourhood	7	somebody I know	9
		on public transport *	2	unspecified (rumours) *	7
		in a distant place *	2	unspecified (media) *	1

\* vicarious victimization

Table 3. Victimization reports.  
Source: author.

Two thirds of the respondents report never having been victimized or have experiences of second-hand victimization. Of the respondents who answered affirmatively, only two reported victimization experiences on the site, both of which were second-handed. In one case, a runner reported having witnessed an *asalto*, while in the other case, a woman living in a neighbourhood bordering the site reported “acquaintances and relatives” having been victimized.

Of the respondents who reported victimization in a close neighbourhood, five are women who live or work in areas adjacent to the site. In all cases, victimization occurred in their direct vicinity. One of the remaining respondents is a male by-passer who reported a friend of his having being victim of *asalto*. The last one refers to a man who heard rumours of the zone of *Puente Titla* (on the fringes of the study area) to be dangerous for kidnappings.

The remaining two aspects (public transport and distant place) don’t contribute to on-site victimization, since they are reported to have occurred in a distant location, however they are still taken into account as a measure of vicarious victimization that might contribute to an increased vulnerability (see theory chapter).

Of the respondents who reported having been personally victimized, two of them were robbed in public transport outside the area of study which, although contributes to an increased

vulnerability as mentioned above, rules them out for the qualitative part of this study. Only one of the respondents reported personal victimization within the study area (although outside of the site proper): a resident of the Xalpa neighbourhood (identified as XAL<sup>19</sup>) whom became a major informant for this study<sup>20</sup>. For what respects to victimization, she claims to have been robbed repeatedly in her neighbourhood, and to be terrified of leaving her house.

Seven of the nine respondents reporting second-hand victimization have already been accounted for, five of them corresponding to the close neighbours and two to the reports of victimizations on-site. The two remaining correspond to a woman reporting victimization in her neighbourhood, Colonia Los Angeles, located roughly a kilometre eastward from the study area, and a man reporting his daughter being victim of an *asalto* on public transport.

The two remaining aspects (hearsay and media) don't account for victimization since they are not fact-checked close experiences, however, they might have relevant implications as affecters. Their influence will be studied further in the next section of this chapter.

These results reveal already the dimension of the discrepancy between perception of insecurity and victimization. As presented in the first section of this chapter (see Table 2), 20 respondents considered the site to be completely insecure, a number that could grow to 33 respondents if accounting for some degree of insecurity present (variable by time or place). Contrasting these numbers with confirmed reports of victimization in the site shows a 15-fold multiplying factor.

It should be taken into account that given the scope of this study and its methodological limitations these numbers are purely indicative of the presence of a phenomenon, far from being reliable statistical data. Nonetheless, its importance resides in that it shows the relation between occurrence of crime and sense of insecurity isn't directly related for this case, which is consistent with the theories of fear of crime and public insecurity.

Vulnerability: an increased risk.

The number of absolute crimes can give a measure of the dimension of the problem of insecurity in general terms, but the reality might vary greatly between countries, cities, neighbourhoods or between genders, income groups, age groups... Not all people have the

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<sup>19</sup> For reasons of anonymity all respondents are given a code number with which they are identified when discussing their story.

<sup>20</sup> A more detailed account of her testimony is discussed in the following section, under the topic of age-related vulnerability.

same risk of being victimized nor do they have the same possibilities to cope with an event of victimization.

### *Victimization as vulnerability*

It has already been presented how victimization can't give a full account for the measure of insecurity, given the number of people prone to consider a site insecure is far larger than the number of people reporting an actual experience of victimization in the site. For the Cerro de La Estrella site I have found this disproportion to be significantly large. This is not to understate the role of victimization, however. On the contrary, literature has shown that victimization indeed plays an important role on the perception of overall insecurity, and so, it could be expected that off-site victimization has an impact on sensitivity to risk (see theory chapter), thus increasing vulnerability.

To describe this relation, I have resorted to a quantitative method. I have assigned a value from 1 to 5 in victimization reports based on how close the violent act to the respondent was, where 1 was victimization happened to the own person, 2 involved second-hand knowledge of victimization, 3 stands for rumours and unconfirmed reports, and 4 stands for no reports of victimization whatsoever<sup>21</sup>. I then compared this result with the answers given to the question regarding insecurity assessment on the site (see Figure 10).

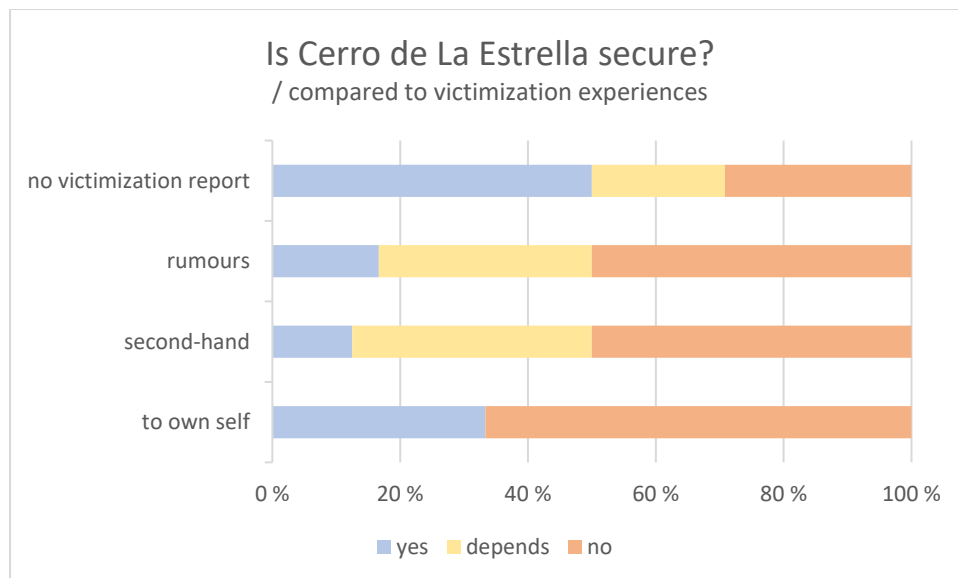


Figure 10. Insecurity by victimization.  
Source: author.

<sup>21</sup> Originally, I intended to include the influence of mass media in this section, but at the default of an express question there was little to no data regarding media reports influencing insecurity assessments.

What these results show is that there exists a correlation, where people who have experienced some degree of victimization (even if experienced second-hand or by rumours) tend to regard the site with some degree of insecurity, whereas people with no experiences of victimization - whom constitute the absolute majority- are spread amongst categories, although they do tend to group towards considering the site mostly secure.

As far as the quantitative results I have produced in this study, this relationship between victimization and assessment of insecurity on-site has produced the strongest correlation I have found, thus suggesting victimization experiences play a strong role on the building of insecurity perception, even when not directly related to the site.

*Age and gender.*

Lastly, age and gender were considered, as these demographic aspects of fear have long been established in the literature as main topics for vulnerability and form part of many studies on the topic.

Regarding age of the respondents, there is an almost perfectly balanced distribution between age groups, with the groups comprehending 20 to 39 years old somewhat underrepresented (see Table 4). Contrasting this data with perception of insecurity, shows a positive correlation. As shown in the graph (see Figure 11), as the age of respondent increases, so does the probability of the respondent to answer the site is insecure or the security depends on time of day or place. In fact, the percentage of people answering the site is safe decreases constantly with the age increase, the group aged 50-59 being the only exception. Quite notable is the total absence of respondents answering site is unequivocally secure in the age group of 60+ years.

what is your age?	
0-19	10
20-29	8
30-39	6
40-49	11
50-59	10
60+	10

Table 4. Age groups.  
Source: author.

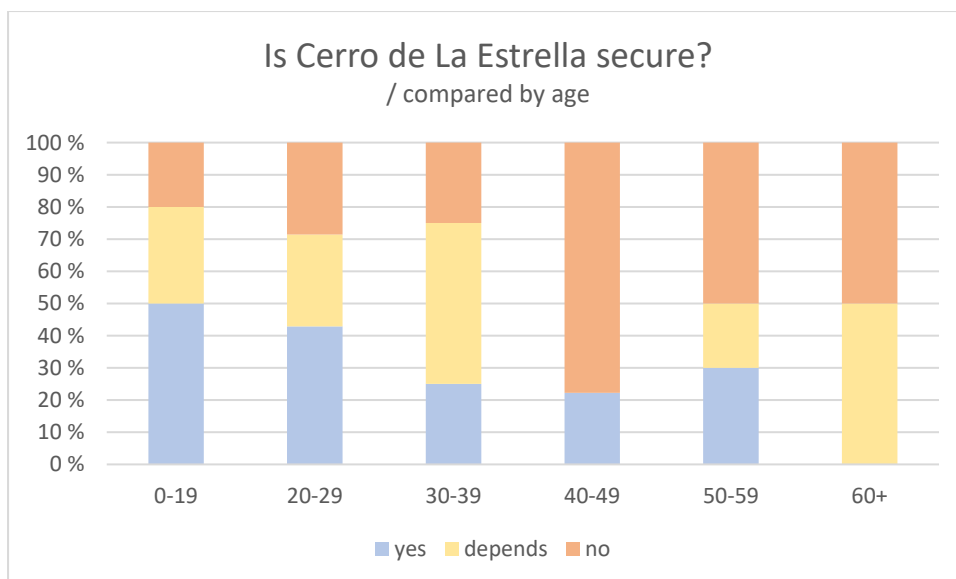


Figure 11. Insecurity by age groups.  
Source: author.

Here is pertinent to elaborate on the case of XAL1, a woman in her seventies who resides in the neighbourhood of Xalpa, next to the site (already presented in the previous section). She is the only respondent who answered having been personally victimized in proximity of the Cerro de La Estrella. In her interview she claims to have been victimized several times in her neighbourhood and literally expresses to have “lots of fear”<sup>22</sup>. Because of this fear, she has found herself forced to avoid leaving her own house, which makes her feel frustrated. She claims she would like to be able to visit the Cerro de La Estrella, of which she is no stranger as she took part in a guided tour and liked the place very much but is too afraid to go out by herself. She also declares to feel isolated because, even though she lives with her close family, they work the whole day, leaving her by herself for the most part of the day.

This interview is relevant not only because of its peculiarity, being the only first-hand victim in the area of study (although outside of the site specifically), but even more because of the dramatic scene it presents of a person recluse in their own home, wanting to enjoy open spaces but paralyzed by fear. It remains an open question how many potential respondents could not be reached by the same reasons. This report is also important in the fact it is the only report which directly addressed the term ‘fear’ to describe the emotion associated with insecurity. It is also consistent with the classical example presented in much of the literature

<sup>22</sup> In Spanish: “...ya me da mucho miedo salir”.



of the elder recluse by fear in their own house, showing that even though it might not be prevalent, in this case this trope has become a reality.

To consider the role gender plays in the assessment of insecurity is critical, especially in the context of Mexico, where gender inequality and gender-based violence is rampant (see context chapter). To do so, I compared the number of male and female respondents with their assessment of insecurity. Quite unexpectedly, I found that the results mirror almost perfectly answers from both genders (see Figure 12), thus failing to reveal a difference in how men and women perceive the security of the open-air site. This oddity increases, given the fact I encountered three respondents referring to gender-specific insecurity on the site, one of them claiming they feared rape as a potential threat, the second one reporting the discovery of a murdered girl's body on the site "a couple years ago", and the third by claiming they don't allow little girls to wander in the park.

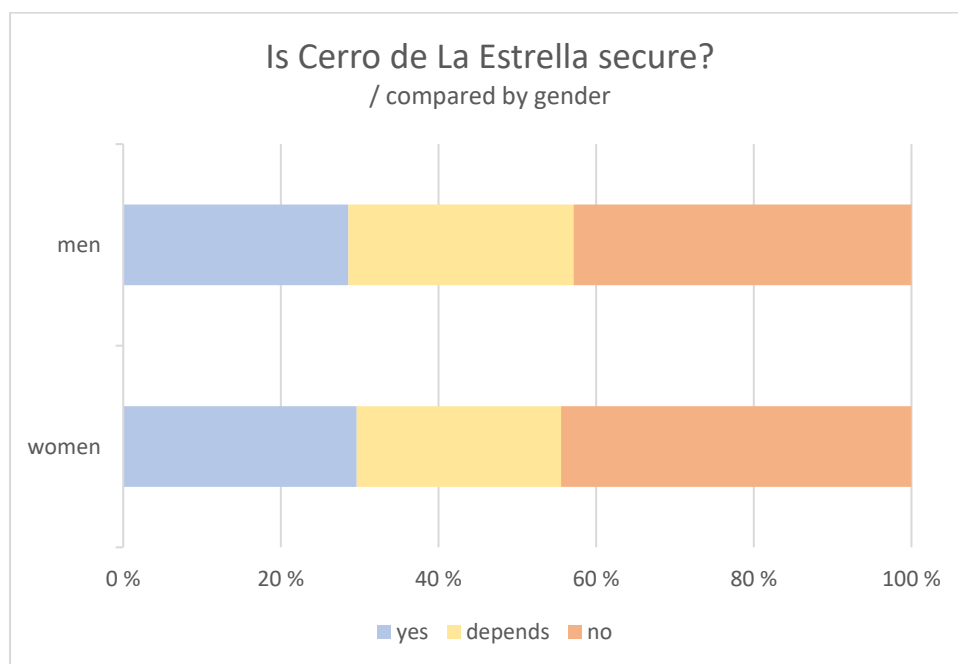


Figure 12. Insecurity by gender.  
Source: author.

What this discovery might indicate is that gender-based violence doesn't take place so prominently in open public spaces. Another explanation could be that some forms of gender-based violence such as harassment, which is prevalent in Mexico City, are normalized to the degree they don't play a relevant role in the assessment of insecurity, or either are absent from open public spaces such as Cerro de La Estrella. While this field leaves important questions

open for further study, it is relevant to note that these results echo Dammert and Malone’s findings that gender is not a “significant predictor of fear of violence or crime” (2003).

Environmental measures: context matters.

### *Frequency of use*

The suggestion that usage frequency had an impact on the perception of insecurity was already presented on the initial steps of this study. From the preliminary interviews, one hypothesis was that there was a significant difference in perception of insecurity based on familiarity and frequency of use of the site.

At first I assumed that it was possible to establish a division between “insiders” and “outsiders” of the site based on their dwelling proximity to the site. In fact, following this idea I established the groups for the targeted interviews. To assess this, a question was introduced in the questionnaire regarding frequency of use of the site.

To all respondents interviewed outside of the site area it was asked if they knew the site and how often they assisted, whereas all visitors interviewed within the site area were asked how frequent their visits were. For respondents targeted as frequent users (runners, ritualists, informal settlers and by-passers) this question was omitted. The answers to these questions allowed me to have a clearer vision of what the actual frequency of use is, and later to compare with other aspects.

how frequently do you use the site?	
regularly	21
sporadically	17
in the past	6
never	6

Table 5. Frequency of use.  
Source: author.

The raw results (see Table 5) show already an interesting finding, that a large proportion of users are occasional or single-visit users, a number almost matching that of frequent users. It is important to keep in mind that these results might be skewed by the initial profiling of interviewees, however, they do reveal that Cerro de La Estrella, contrary to expected, does possess a large degree of accessibility and attractiveness for outsiders. To what extent does

insecurity contribute for this accessibility and attractiveness is a topic to be further explored when comparing frequency of use and insecurity assessment.

Since a part of the study relied on the assumption frequency of use corresponded with dwelling proximity to the site, a comparison between where people live and how frequently they use the site was important. To do so, I introduced to the interviews asking respondents where they lived, and these results were later compared with the frequency of use.

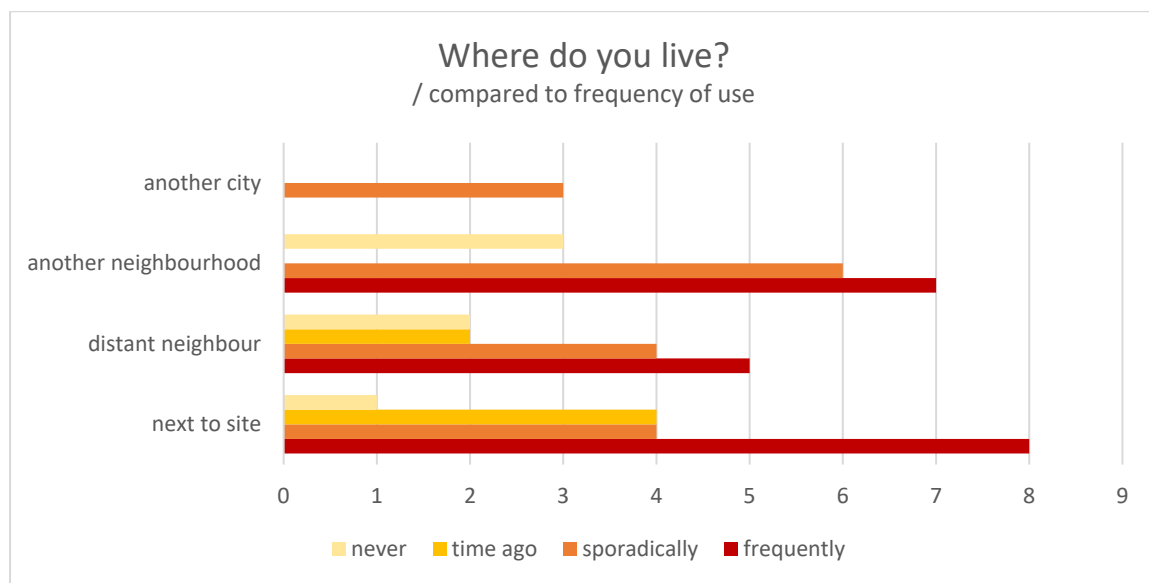


Figure 13. Living proximity by frequency of use.  
Source: author.

The results show a somewhat different reality from the initial assumption: While it is possible to make a difference between users and non-users of the site, this doesn't necessarily correspond with their place of living or transit. As shown, these results vary from the initial hypothesis that familiarity with the site depends on living proximity and rather show a picture where different levels of engagement are present in almost all categories (see Figure 13).

In fact, apart from the respondents who live in other city (and whom expectedly would be sporadic visitors), there are no clear differences amongst categories. In all of them *frequent visitors* is the most numerous group, although the difference with *sporadic visitors* is negligible. It could be argued that the number of non-visitors decreases with proximity, but given the size of the sample, this is hardly an indicator. Perhaps the only result that could have

a realistic implication is that people who live next to the site are more prone to be frequent visitors than sporadic, which hardly comes as a surprise.

There is another, perhaps much more interesting aspect to this question, and it relates to which city areas the site is related. It has already been shown that a no small number of people are attracted from outside the immediate vicinity. In fact, isolating the respondents interviewed within the park shows that an overwhelming majority of respondents come from outside the site's vicinity (see Table 6).

where do you live? *	
another city	3
another neighbourhood	11
distant neighbour	4
next to site	2

\* for people interviewed directly inside the park

Table 6. Living places of site users.  
Source: author.

From the eleven respondents who visit from outside the site's vicinity, ten declared living in eastern Mexico City, and only one declared living in other area. What these results show is that although usage of the site is rather high amongst people living in its immediate vicinity, the majority of site visitors from this sample come from more distant locations, and almost exclusively from the eastern region of Mexico City. The fact there doesn't seem to be any difference between frequent visitors or newcomers amongst this group suggests the site is equally attractive for both groups, suggesting that public insecurity does not play a strong role as deterrent for usage of the site, at least for eastern Mexico City dwellers.

To better understand how insecurity might affect how frequently the site is used, I compared the answers given in frequency of use (see Figure 14) with the initial insecurity assessment reports, finding some important correlations.

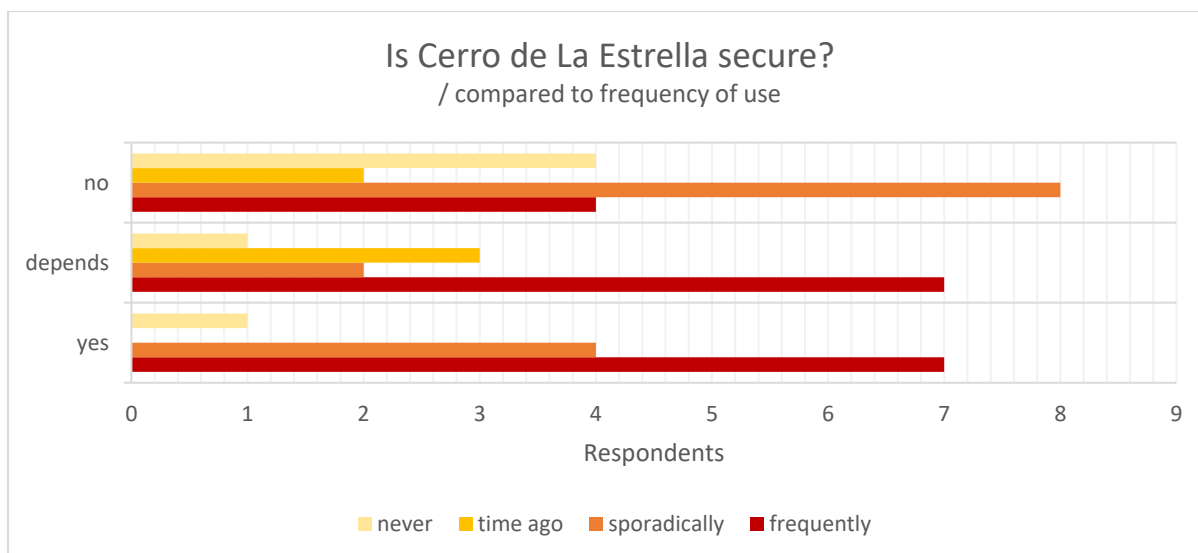


Figure 14. Insecurity by frequency of use.  
Source: author.

Firstly, it is notable that the respondents who visit frequently the site are visibly more inclined to consider the site secure. They are distributed equally amongst the respondents who answered “yes” or “it depends (on time or location)” to the question regarding security in the site. Notably, there are some frequent visitors who considered the site unsafe, which could be grounds for a more in-depth analysis (as to ask, why keep attending regularly to an insecure place?) in a further research. Two of them are sportsmen who run regularly on the track, one is a by-passer who lives next to the site, and the last one is a neighbour from Culhuacan).

Secondly, the number of sporadical users who considered the site unsafe doubles the number who consider it safe. Only two respondents answered it depended on time or location. This could be explained by assuming sporadical users aren’t fully aware of the dynamics of the site given their limited involvement, which makes them more susceptible to generalizations. Notably, people with a lesser degree of familiarity with the site tend to have a more negative perception regarding security; but perhaps more tellingly, the high proportion of sporadical visitors suggests many people are attracted to the site despite considering it insecure, implying insecurity is not necessarily a deterrent for accessibility.

Thirdly, the respondents who answered they were previously involved with the site but don’t use it anymore answered mostly that security of the site depends on time and location, though some of them answered negatively. This could imply they are more knowledgeable of the site; however, the general impression remains more negative than positive.

Lastly, most of the respondents who declared never using the site concentrate vastly in answering negatively to the security assessment. This is consistent with the hypothesis that usage of the site (or “insiderness”, as was firstly presented) is related to a degree of insecurity perception.

All these results suggest there is indeed a positive correlation between frequency of use and perception of insecurity, as frequent users tended to regard the site as more secure and vice versa.

*On Neighbourhood insecurity.*

As discussed, one of the key findings from Dammert and Malone (2003) is that structural insecurities (socio-economic and political insecurities) play a far larger role than other components in building the perception of insecurity, a role larger even than actual occurrence of crime. While a study in this sense far exceeds the scope of my study, I intended to include the socio-economic dimension by asking respondents to assess the security of their neighbourhood, assuming this assessment of neighbourhood insecurity reveals the disenfranchisement associated with social insecurity.

While this comparison proved to be impossible, since the vast majority of respondents answered they consider their neighbourhoods to be insecure (an aspect otherwise unsurprising, given how the vast majority of respondents reported living in eastern Mexico City, an area famous for its insecurity), other aspects surrounding social insecurity proved to be far more revealing. Indeed, of the totality of respondents, only three answered positively when asked if their living places were secure, one of them being an urban farmer established informally on the grounds of the site (SJ-L2). While he regards the Cerro to be insecure and claims never to visit since he is “busy with his trees”, he claims his neighbourhood to be safe given the fact “everyone knows each other” and that he has been living in the area for 40 years. Furthermore, he implies that while the site might be a haven for criminals, the fact there are always neighbours around deters crime from happening, in fact during the interview he issued an explicit lynching threat towards potential criminals that “get into” the area. He considers that there might be criminals, but they always come from other places, never from within.

This interview is surprisingly revealing in how clearly it describes the social assets developed as coping capacity towards insecurity. In describing how the micro-society of this long-established neighbourhood works, he is also describing a process of empowering based on cooperation and self-determination: all the neighbours cooperate to keep the trees, and he is certain all would take part in a potential self-defence lynching event, if it were to take place.

By establishing a difference between the outsiders (distrusted potential criminals) and insiders (potential accomplices in an act of self-justice), his answer also suggests the isolation areas troubled by insecurity develop to protect themselves. This seems to confirm the theory that insecurity is a source for segregation in poverty-ridden and disenfranchised neighbourhoods. Gated communities, in fact, present and very common in the area.

Twenty-one respondents answered their neighbourhood was insecure. Amongst the reported violent acts happening in their neighbourhoods there were: a robber being shot during a robbery, armed robberies to households, a murdered girl's body being found, physical assault on an elderly woman and a policeman, and the presence of "security houses"<sup>23</sup> in the area.

Although in some cases criminality was regarded as particularly threatening to the point of holding hostage a respondent in her own house (as described in the case of XAL<sub>1</sub>), I found there exists also a somewhat tolerant attitude towards criminality if it isn't perceived as a direct risk. An example of this is the case of a respondent living in El Santuario (SAN<sub>1</sub>), who claims to know about the presence of "security houses" of kidnappers in the area<sup>24</sup>, as well as car robberies. Despite this, he declares the major threat is the presence of aggressive stray dogs in an informally encroached neighbouring area, stressing out that fighting crime would be desirable as long as it doesn't involve loss of liberty, textually he wouldn't want it to become a "state of emergency". In his story he describes how people settled in a plot of land which was previously used as a passage towards the site and how they populated the site with aggressive dogs which would attack anyone except the owners, blocking the previous entrance on that side and preventing anyone from entering the site. By doing so, he recounts a process of privatization and dispossession which deepens the tensions amongst neighbours further contributing to the feeling of otherness.

A second aspect asked to the interviewees about social insecurities was to assess the degree of cooperation and cohesion in their neighbourhood (for neighbours of the site) or their activity groups (for runners and tradition worshippers), and what cooperative measures they have developed to increase security.

Regarding neighbourhood cooperation, five responded there was no organization in their neighbourhoods, while eight declared some organization did exist. Of these eight respondents, however, five declared the organization was useless, expressing their frustration

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<sup>23</sup> A "security house" is the place where kidnappers keep their victims while waiting for ransom. Their nature means they could easily turn into murder sites.

<sup>24</sup> Currently, kidnapping is a major security threat in Mexico second only to drug-related crimes CONFIRM. Eastern Mexico City, particularly Iztapalapa is known to be a hotspot for kidnappings in the metropolitan region.

along the lines of it “all staying in words” or being useless since it didn’t stop crime. It appeared as a recurring theme disappointment with neighbourhood organization. Of the three respondents declaring there was organization in their neighbourhoods, none confirmed explicitly this organization was effective or fruitful. Furthermore, two respondents answered that organization in their neighbourhoods arose from contingency, when some event forced them to organize and take action, although the results fizzled out or were ineffective.

Regarding cohesion, on the other hand, eight respondents answered they got along well with neighbours either by being polite or fully cooperative. Only two persons answered there was open distrust amongst neighbours, one of them claiming openly that cooperating with neighbours was “a risk”. For the recurrent visitors, two out of five runners declared belonging to runner groups, and all the tradition worshippers declared to belong to a group as well, confirming the claim from the museum director that these groups are well organized and self-supportive.

Comparing these results with an assessment of security on the site showed a slight correlation in both cases: people with greater degree of cooperation and cohesion were slightly less probable to answer the site was insecure. The small sample and the fact the assessment of insecurity refers specifically to the site, however, make these results hardly conclusive.

Eleven interviewees reported concrete actions taken in their neighbourhoods to increase security, of which four declared meeting having taken place, four declared banners threatening criminals of lynching being hung in their streets, two declared CCTV cameras being put up, and one declared the implementation of a neighbourhood alarm, which proved to no use.

While the existence of meetings doesn’t come as a surprise, it is noteworthy that the answers report meetings alone as an action against crime, with respondents declaring there was no clear outcome from them, or they proved to be ineffective. Lynching banners on the other hand, have proven to be a popular solution, and have become a staple in the landscape of the neighbourhoods surrounding the Cerro de La Estrella, as any visit will show. Whereas the neighbours are willing to take part in an actual lynching event is not certain (there has been no lynching events in the site so far), this does show residents are willing to take part in so-considered criminal acts to secure their safety. It is also consistent with the theory of new violence (see theory chapter), where Briceño-Leon and Zubillaga describe a tendency towards self-action to provide security measures in areas where authorities have proved to be inefficient or complicit with crime. Other actions of communitarian surveillance such as the



CCTV cameras and the neighbourhood alarm did appear, although their effectiveness was questioned by the own residents.

The panorama these results present is of mostly cohesive and somewhat organized neighbourhoods that respond to external pressure by taking self-determined actions, although rarely effective or long-term. While the outcomes might be questionable, and even lead to increased frustration, it is nonetheless clear that cooperation efforts amongst neighbours do exist to assure their own security, and have a positive, though slight influence towards perceiving the site safer.

#### *On police trust*

As discussed in the theory chapter, trust in law enforcement is a main shortcoming in the relevance and applicability of the fear of crime concept in the Mexican context, where the relationship between society and police is problematic at the very least, and where, as previously discussed, criminal activities might be tolerated or even fostered, when they present themselves as a desperate solution towards insecurity.

A question was introduced in the questionnaire regarding trust in police authorities, even though this question was seldom expressly answered. Instead, the main insights to this aspect were gained through the scope of other questions, which in turn allowed me to have a more complete panorama on the topic. The role of police in the assessment of security is prominent, either by its presence or by its absence. The majority of responses when discussing this aspect coincided on this point.

From the people who answered directly the question regarding police trust, five answered negatively and only one person declared unequivocally they trusted police authorities. From the rest of the interviews, 30 people answered police was relevant to improve security, however of these 30 respondents twelve declared police needed improvement to be effective.

The most common assertion was that effective police was needed, given the fact currently police are inefficient, omissive or even accomplice of crime. A respondent reported some security facilities being built although had been abandoned since, whereas several respondents reported police forces used the surveillance booths to sleep or watch TV. Police corruption was answered as well, where two respondents went as far as declaring policemen had agreements with criminals.

Comparing these results with assessment of insecurity, I found no correlation, suggesting police trust does not have an impact in the perception of insecurity for this site (see Figure 15).

What this shows is that even when police are recognized as an element for security, almost one in two respondents consider it is currently not working as it should. While it could be argued the trust in authorities is low, perhaps its sole presence as a deterrent makes it a key factor in providing security.

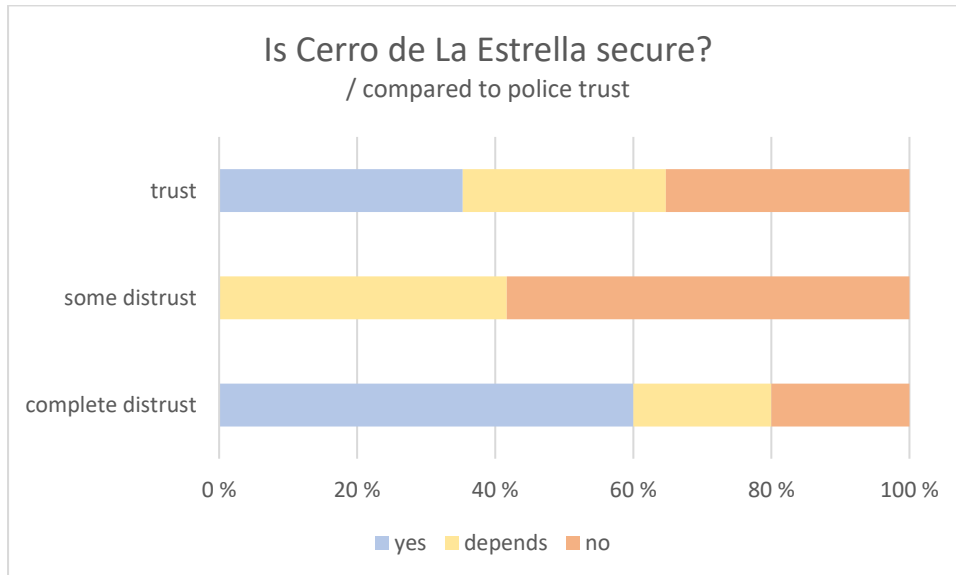


Figure 15. Insecurity by police trust.  
Source: author.

### Part two: insecurity in the site.

It was already presented in the introduction of this chapter a brief account of the assessment of site-specific insecurity by answering the question Is Cerro de La Estrella secure? In this second part, I give a much more detailed account of what insecurity means for the people interviewed as well as its consequences.

To uncover specific elements of site-specific insecurity, the questionnaire was designed to show two data sets hoping they would prove complementary: to the respondents who answered the site was unsafe, it was asked why it was unsafe and what measures could be taken to regain security. Alternatively, to respondents answering the site was indeed safe, it was asked to what they attribute this sense of security. The assumption is that by crossing these facts we it can be understood in a broad sense what does insecurity mean in relation to this site, hence public insecurity can be characterized.

Firstly, the results for respondents who regarded the site as unsafe are presented. As it appears, their answers regarding an assessment of risky elements on the site vary greatly, covering a wide array of topics (see Table 7). The design of the question (Do you think Cerro de La Estrella is safe? Why?) allowed for open answers that help to complexify the concept. To understand them better, I identified to distinct groups of topics, under which I grouped the answers. The first corresponds to concrete elements, identified with elements of risk they are answers given that present a tangible threat: whether realistic or unrealistically, it is what respondents fear might happen to them at Cerro de La Estrella.

The second group corresponds with more abstract elements. They aren't concrete actions that might affect directly, but rather contribute towards insecurity, which is why I have considered them negative elements. Their absence or presence potentially raises the risk of the site, although the threat is not necessarily concrete or clear. I have further divided them in two groups, depending on whether they are elements present or lacking on the site. In some cases they correspond with elements presented in the theory of environmental measures (see theory chapter), while other cases are new elements.

why is Cerro de La Estrella insecure?					
concrete elements		vague by presence		vague by absence	
assault robbery	9	disorderly conduct	6	no patrolling	8
rape	2	risky people	6	no easy access	1
kidnapping	2	drug use(rs)	9	no lighting	2
dog attacks	5	vandalism	2	loneliness	6
physical attack	1	geography	5	unrestricted entry	1
getting lost	1	drug sales	3		
murder	1	informal settlers	2		
		tall vegetation	1		

Table 7. Risk assessment.  
Source: author.

Risk: fear of what?

The first element that stands out is that *asalto* (a term in spanish that loosely describes a violent robbery) is the most mentioned concrete risk, followed by dog attacks. The preponderance of *asaltos* is unsurprising, given its prevalence in everyday speech as the most

common source of insecurity. Indeed, as previously mentioned, armed robberies make one of each three crimes committed in Mexico (see context chapter). While defining precisely what constitutes an *asalto* might be tricky, it is fairly understood that it involves a robbery with some degree of violence applied.

The pre-eminence of dog attacks perhaps presents itself more as a surprise, since it isn't necessarily the first thing that comes to mind when addressing public insecurity. Dog attacks, however, form an important part of the recent history of the site, as discussed in the context chapter, and the fact they appear so prominently in the risk assessment means this history is quite alive. In fact, five respondents answered dog attack as a concrete source of risk, but six other respondents reported dog-related issues when asked to assess problems in the site other than insecurity. Two of them directly cited repercussions of the media outbreak from 2013.

The remaining categories are much rarer, however with exception of "getting lost" they constitute a higher degree of risk, ranging from physical attack, rape, kidnapping and even murder. This shows that, although not that common, the level of fear insecurity causes in the site can reach the highest rank in some cases.

These concrete elements that the respondents have identified are the expression of insecurity. When they mention fear caused by loneliness or by vandalism, it should be kept in mind that these concrete elements are at the end of this fear. There exists a connection between these elements: a lonely place is not insecure by itself, but because it enables or increases the possibility of one or more of these concrete elements to take place, at least in the respondent's perception. Similarly, on the assessment of security, it could be inferred that the aspects contained in the answers to the question "what makes a place safe?" relate to the concrete aspects by decreasing the sense of probability of them happening.

This relation, as has been theorized and presented in the first part of this chapter, is far from linear. While the concrete elements reveal *what* people fear might happen to them in an insecure environment (and to a degree how probable one of these aspects might be in relation to the others), it is impossible to infer from them the *actual probability* of these events happening. In other words, the fact people fear something happening to them does not necessarily mean it is plausible it will happen.

This distinction is what originates the concept of insecurity as a subjectification of potential risk, rather than an objective assessment. To fully understand what constructs insecurity in a site, it is necessary to explore how wide the gap is and what elements influence in it.

Contributors: positive and negative.

The abstract elements are also dominated by a common topic, particularly relevant in the last decade in which drug-related violence has become pervasive in Mexico. It shows that drug-related activities (sales and usage, and the people involved in them) are commonly regarded as potential sources of risk for an environment. This aspect, together with public alcohol consumption holds a negative moral connotation in Mexican society.

Disorderly conduct contains reports of gunshots, fighting or more abstractly “unlawful activities” that while not necessarily constitute a threat in themselves, are pretty much self-explanatory in terms of their inclusion as risk factors. Also bordering in the tautology, “riskful people” is a category somewhat obscure yet self-defined. What can be understood from its inclusion, however, is that there is a degree of prejudice towards others in the assessment of risk. Another category that could be included in this aspect is vandalism, which in the local context has a somewhat indefinite yet negative connotation.

Also highly ranked, the inclusion of “no patrolling / no surveillance / no security” (commonly referred to a lack of police presence or police-led surveillance) might constitute a polarizing aspect that needs broader understanding, especially when contrasted with the results of police trust assessment as discussed in part one of this chapter (see above). Nonetheless, its mere presence as a predominant answer already shows the relevant role policing and surveillance play in the site, but more importantly, reveal a diagnostic lack of security services to a large extent. In the same aspect, “no lighting” and “tall vegetation” are answers related as well with a shortage of public services and/or a design failure.

Loneliness as an aspect of insecurity is also a problematic inclusion, particularly in the context of this site since, as previously shown in addressing the site’s appeal, loneliness was ranked as a value of the Cerro de La Estrella in particular, and of green open areas in general. In fact, many respondents answered that a part of the appeal of the site came from being able to detach from the urban bustle. This contradiction will further be explored when examining the defensive measures in this same chapter, and in the next chapter(s) in the findings and implications, especially when put in contrast with other aspects such as riskful people and distrust. Its inclusion highlights the important role socialization plays in the construction of insecurity.

Highly contextual to this site is the presence of geographical features (caves in this case) that constitute a risk. The presence of caves is common lore for the people who know the site, with

a respondent going as far as to warn from the supernatural powers of the “devil’s cave”. While impossible to disregard, I consider the risk caves present of an entirely different nature. Caves are an integral part of the site, its existence predating any human activity. Important as it is to understand their role in the construction of insecurity, they are the one element unsusceptible to change.

The following three categories were only marginally mentioned, but manifest important aspects to be considered in building the concept of insecurity on the site. The first two are seemingly opposite, when a respondent reported “no easy access” while a second one reported “unrestricted entry” as causes of insecurity. They both pertain to accessibility of the site, an aspect of its built physical qualities. The first aspect pertains to legibility and connectivity at the urban scale, while the second relates to control (or rather lack of control) of access. Together with “no lighting”, “tall vegetation”, “geography” and “informal settlements”, they constitute the physical qualities of the site, susceptible to be transformed by design intervention.

Lastly, the aspect of “informal settlers” was reported by only two respondents however highlights an important topic regarding the configuration of the site. Informal settlements have configured mostly the current shape of the Cerro de La Estrella, configuring its current boundaries and connections. Its inclusion as a source of insecurity recognizes the conflictive role informality has had and continues to have in it.

The previous results arise from the respondents who answered negatively when asked if the site Cerro de La Estrella was secure. There was another group of respondents which answered positively when asked if they felt the site was secure. To these respondents it was asked what they consider has prevented it from becoming an insecure site. The answers to these questions give insight into the aspects of the site that are already present and are regarded as positive elements, contributing to security (see Table 8).

why is Cerro de La Estrella secure?	
crowded	3
commerce	4
police	4
drinking ban	1
car ban	1
access control	1
surveillance	6
good energy	1

Table 8. Security reasons.  
Source: author.

One aspect had significantly more mentions than the others, which corresponds to “surveillance”. This aspect could be grouped with “police” to account to almost half the mentions, nonetheless, it is noteworthy to make a distinction: while surely the police has the task of surveillance amongst their duties, surveillance might also be carried out by people in other instances (for example, through neighbourhood-led initiatives such as neighbours alarms or CCTV, both initiatives which are present in neighbouring areas, as mentioned previously in this chapter). The fact the answers make a distinction between both concepts is revealing and has important implications for the implications of this study, as will be discussed further (see implications chapter).

Another highly mentioned aspect is “commerce”, which refers in the answers given to the open-air stalls located in the busiest spots of the site: outside the museum and at the hilltop. In this sense, it would be easily assumed that they could be grouped with the next aspect “crowded” given their direct link with crowded spots. However, during the physical survey and in the interviews, it appeared commerce is also carried out in less busy spots such as the informal entrances, which is why it deserves a category of its own. It is worth mentioning as well that this commerce is almost exclusively carried out informally, further strengthening the role of informality as a positive contributor to security in the Cerro de La Estrella.

The fourth aspect with more than one mention is “crowded”. In this case it straightforwardly mentions the social aspect of security, an aspect that finds correspondence with some results found when respondents were asked about their defensive strategies, as shown in the last section of this chapter, which deals with consequences of insecurity.

Drinking ban, car ban and access control are all aspects that mirror the results of the question on how to improve insecurity. They form part of the public policies that seek to put order on the site. In this case they were mentioned only once but their appearance allows to triangulate their relevance when compared to the previous section of results.

An aspect that was mentioned by only one respondent as well was “good energy”. This respondent is a 45-year-old woman (T2) that belongs to the group of people who follow religious rituals on the site. She reported to feel entirely safe on the hill, even manifesting that the cause of her visits was to seek peace and calmness. She attributed this peace to the positive energy emanating from the sacred place that turned people to good. This interview is

particularly relevant because it reveals the influence aspects traditionally unrelated to crime or violence, such as religious significance might have over the feeling of security in the site.

Consequences: what difference does it make?

A second question asked to respondents reporting insecurity was regarding which action could be taken to improve security. These answers could be seen as complementary for the previous question, broadening the vague categories of risk assessment. Indeed, the answers overlap in some cases amongst categories (i.e. “no lighting” – “improve lighting”) although new topics do appear.

The main difference which set them apart, however, is that one answer is descriptive, while the other is prescriptive. When respondents answer what they consider makes a site insecure, they are manifesting their understanding of a tangible reality: they are describing how they see their environment. When they answer how security might be improved, they are contributing with a diagnostic of sorts in a hypothetical situation. This does not mean to dismiss the information, far from it, as on-site information from stakeholders is the most valuable asset of participative design. It does set it apart in a separate category, which is why it has been included as part of the consequences of insecurity, with implications for practice which will be further followed upon in the next chapter.

The answers were almost as varied as the answers for risk assessment, although their distribution was quite different. For better understanding I have grouped them under four large groups and an extra group with only one category (see Table 9).

how could security be improved?									
better policing		public policies		physical qualities		structural insecurities		self-defence	
efficient police	5	cultural activities	3	higher walls	3	employment	4	"machetes"	1
more surveillance	16	remove drugs	1	lighting	3	raise income	1		
more "security"	4	clear boundaries	2	maintenance	1				
		control animals	1	infrastructure	3				
		more activity	1						
		tourism	1						
		activities	2						

Table 9. Improvement assessment.  
Source: Author



Dominating the responses by number of mentions is the group containing better policing. It contains the aspects “efficient police”, “more surveillance” and “more security<sup>25</sup>” and combined more than doubles the number of mentions from the next category. This is hardly surprising, considering the role of police force is to provide public security. Even so, the high levels of police distrust in some respondent groups, an aspect further discussed previously in this chapter, renders it necessary to give this topic a deeper insight and more detailed analysis.

The second group by number of responses pertains to the category of public policies. It includes all the answers that suggest some improvement to security by a social change on the local scale. Although by custom it could be assumed that they consist of governmental tasks, this is never specified nor clarified during the interviews. In this group the most mentioned aspect was “cultural activities”, which could further be grouped with “more activity” and “activities” to form the concept of public events. The importance of this aspect further highlights the social component of the concept of security.

The importance of establishing clear boundaries to the site is also recognized in this second group, as well as remove drug sales and control stray dogs. What these three aspects have in common is they recognize the importance of spatial control in improving security. A last aspect in this group is “tourism”, which’s logic is unclear but recognizes the importance of visitors as a contributing factor to security.

The third group by respondents belongs to the physical qualities of the site. They include improvements in the form of spatial elements or urban equipment. Particularly notable as it reverberates with the theory of the divided city is “higher walls”, even so “lighting” and “infrastructure” were mentioned in equal number of times. Perhaps surprisingly given the attention this topic has received in some literature, the importance of good maintenance and upkeep in public areas was mentioned by only one respondent.

The fourth group consists of two aspects which correspond with what has already been described as structural insecurities. Concretely, with the aspect of economic insecurities. In this aspect, respondents recognize the role unemployment and low income have over insecurity perhaps linking them with incidence of crime. Notably, the area of the site (eastern Mexico City) is regarded as a poor area where low incomes and unemployment are common topics (see context chapter).

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<sup>25</sup> In Mexico it is common to use the euphemism “security” to refer to police force.

The last category that stands by its own is “sticks and machetes” or violent self-defence. While in this question only one respondent gave this answer, its sole inclusion would be already a matter of analysis given its serious implications over the whole topic. Over the course of the study, two people mentioned directly their willingness to take part in an act of lynching to confront the occurrence of crime in their neighbourhood. It also appeared several times that a common measure for securitization is the appearance of banners threatening of lynching to criminals in many areas surrounding the site (see above). While to my knowledge no violent incident of lynching has occurred in the Cerro de La Estrella so far, it is worth mentioning that Mexico has a recent history of increase in lynching (see context chapter) in which Mexico City takes a preponderant place. The frequent appearance of this topic reveals the depth of the security crisis in Iztapalapa and the Cerro de La Estrella beyond any other measures.

Basing on the assumption publicness is a multifactorial assessment where people’s perception play a key role (Varna and Tiesdell 2010), respondents were asked to answer whether they considered the Cerro de La Estrella to be a public place, in which case they were asked what characteristic they considered defined this publicness.

As for the first question, all respondents considered the site to be public, which could already be considered a conclusion by itself. In terms of the reasons why the site was public, most people replied that unrestricted accessibility was the key factor which made the site public (see Table 10).

What makes the Cerro de La Estrella public?	
It's a National park	1
Belongs to everyone	1
No restriction to access	6
Presence of commercial activities	2
It is concurred	3
There are activities happening	1

Table 10. Publicness assessment.  
Source: author.

This result stands out in the light of the context of the site, were -as presented in the previous chapter- many physical limitations exist to control and deter access to the site especially in less used areas. The obvious implication is that securitization measures have consequences over preventing accessibility and consequently over publicness on the site. A deeper

implication is that preventing accessibility further promotes insecurity by inhibiting the social component which was found to be a key reason for security (see previous section).

Other reasons leading to publicness include mentioning the site is crowded, supporting the role of accessibility towards publicness. Thirdly, the presence of commercial activities was regarded as well as a factor leading towards publicness, which corresponds with the presence of other activities (cultural or religious) as a measure of how public is the site. Lastly, ownership was addressed in the reasons given that “it belongs to everyone” meaning the property of the site is a public good, a reason that could be deduced from its character as a National park as well.

Lastly, I want to consider how insecurity perception generates responses amongst people which affect their lives and use of urban space. For this aspect, a direct question was asked to interviewees regarding their reactions to insecurity.

The answers given present a wide variety of responses (see Table 11), which can be further gathered in three categories: temporal, spatial and social responses.

How do you react to insecurity?	
Avoiding certain places	8
Avoiding to stand out	10
Being constantly cautious	8
Avoiding being alone	4
Restricting activities to daytime	13
By taking self-defense	5
Seeking crowds	2
Threatning criminals of lynching	3
Avoiding to leave the house	3
Avoiding dark places	1
Avoiding holidays (leaving house alone)	1
Transport by car	1
Keeping to oneself (ignoring others)	2

Table 11. Behavioural responses to insecurity.  
Source: author.

Temporal responses regard behaviour changes which vary depending the time of day of the season in which they take place. The most mentioned answer in the whole survey and in this category is restricting activities by daytime, which mirrors the answer given in regard to insecurity assessment. It is a topic widely covered in the literature that the night presents a higher risk given the limited visibility and the loneliness associated with this time, to an

extent to regard the dominance of this answer as somewhat expected. Avoiding holidays on the other hand presents a previously uncovered topic, that of house burglary which apparently is also present in the surroundings of the site. This topic could be explored more widely in further research.

Spatial responses consist of measures where the respondent's election of place depends on their assessment of insecurity. The most present measure in this category is avoiding certain places. This corresponds with the presence of no-go areas, a phenomenon widely reported in the literature of fear of crime as a consequence of people regarding an area as a risk so high as to consider avoiding it at all costs. The presence of no-go areas has also been theorized as means towards privatization of space and further urban segregation, as discussed in the context chapter. Avoiding leaving the house is another response which further develops the role of insecurity in urban segregation, as the private realm becomes the only source of securitization. As presented in the context chapter, this argument is behind the apparition of gated communities as an urban paradigm.

A map of insecurity.

In the beginning of this section it was mentioned that insecurity might vary by geographical location, when some respondents answered insecurity of the site was relative to where on the site they were. From the beginning it was clear that there are differentiated places within the site that carry a heightened sense of risk compared to others. Accumulating the data gathered through the interviews considering direct and indirect responses to assessments of insecurity, I have found three distinct categories of insecurity localized within the site (see Figure 16).

Firstly, the multiple accounts responding the site was safe varyingly depending on the location coincided unanimously on concentrating in a corridor that parts from what is informally considered the main access (although no area is officially designated as such), passing by the Passion lot and the Museum and leading directly to the hilltop where the Mexica temple stands. Unsurprisingly this is the most touristic publicized route and is also the only paved road within the site. In this corridor, two points stand out: The Passion plot is considered to be a secure place expressly during the celebrations of Easter when there are huge crowds and much activity in the area.

On the southern side of the site, the area occupied by incipient informal settlements was also regarded by interviewees an unsecure area. This amount of insecurity was further confirmed by the interviewer who decided not to perform the interviews given the amount of apparent

risk present at the time. Also on the southern side, The presence of a cave marks a site considered insecure by one respondent, however, since the entrance has been covered making the cave inaccessible, the risk it poses might be diminished.

The western side presents a peculiar characteristic, as the legal land tenure in this side is the most irregular given the presence of the Natural Reserve, agricultural lands as well as informal settlements. This area was also reported as a site of insecurity since the processes on which informal settlers appropriate plots of land often leads to violence and confrontation. In this particular case, the reported incident consists of the use of feral dogs to guard a claimed parcel within the site that was used as a passage by neighbours, effectively preventing their access to the site (see the case of SAN<sub>1</sub>, described above). These sites make up the areas reported unsafe.

The third category is the remnant by exclusion: all the other areas are considered neutral for the purpose of this study as there were no direct reports regarding their security or the opposite.

The panorama these areas present is of a site with a marked frontality: it would seem that the Cerro de La Estrella would act as if there was a front, located at the intersection of Ermita Iztapalapa avenue, and a back facing the walled sections of the site, with a gradient of security banishing from front to back. In this view, the areas that form the front are securitized and accessible but present only one access and one use which can be regarded as safe: you enter from Ermita, you go to the hilltop and you backtrack your steps. This is the safe route.

Next page:  
Figure 16. Insecurity map.  
Source: author.



Ermita Iztapalapa

Metro Station

Passion field




Museum

Deposit

Cave

Pyramid

Civil Cemetery

-  Areas reported safe
-  Areas reported unsafe
-  Informal commerce
-  Informal entrances
-  Site proper

In contrast, accessing the hill from the informal openings or the lateral gates present a greater risk being closer to the unsafe areas. Wandering around at the base would imply to touch on all the areas being reported as a source of risk. Although this is far from being an absolute measurement, this picture sheds a light on the groups that might be disenfranchised when regarding security within the site: close neighbours, especially those separated from the site by the cemetery seem to be affected by the isolation resulting from the physical sectioning of the territory in an increase of insecurity. Sportsmen and by-passers are groups who inherently use the totality of the space, overlapping with risky areas in their transit. Cemetery visitors are also affected with the isolation of the walled area, reporting a frontality in the cemetery as well, were the area next to the gate is considered safe but risk increases as one approaches the wall.

In terms of spatiality, one clear pattern emerges from this insecurity map, which is that insecurity is closely associated with accessibility and thus, publicness in consequence: The most accessible and publicly used route is also regarded as the most secure. Controlled but formal accesses to neighbouring areas have no special reports of insecurity, but the most heavily restricted areas correspond with specific reports of insecurity, explained at least partly by their isolation. What can be concluded from this spatial reading is that in the Cerro de La Estrella accessibility and publicness seem to play a key role in enhancing security in spite of present securitization measures which tend towards the opposite.

## Implications.

*“one point which is clear is that there is no single approach to reducing fear which will work in all communities. If fear of crime is not simply related to victimization then it might be reduced by initiatives other than those that aim to reduce directly that risk” (Hale 1996, 81)*

The initial research question from which this study parted also has a very practical implication: to understand how we can improve insecurity, first we need to know of what insecurity consists. It is therefore relevant to ask what factors affect insecurity and how do they affect it.

In the first stage of my study I aimed to uncover which of the topics identified in the literature emerged from the data I collected on the field with the following findings:

There isn't a dominant view whether the site is insecure or not. An almost perfectly balanced proportion of people responded yes or no in absolute terms. It also appeared that an assessment of insecurity isn't necessarily straightforward, as variations in areas or times of the day might affect how secure a site is regarded. Including inexact measures improved greatly my understanding of the dynamics of insecurity on the site.

I didn't find victimization rates to correspond with the assessment of insecurity: two people reported an episode of victimization on the site, while 33 reported some sense of insecurity, which is a 15-fold multiplier. This proportion is also lower than the national average, suggesting victimization on the Cerro de La Estrella plays a smaller than average role in composing insecurity.

I did find that age affects vulnerability, thus contributing to insecurity since assessments of insecurity tended to be more frequent on higher age groups. Gender differences, on the other hand were minimal which comes as a surprise given known high levels of gender violence in Mexico. It remains open if this is a major finding or a methodology error. Experiences of victimization showed to have the most impact over vulnerability.

Contrary to initially expected, I found that usage of the site isn't influenced by how close people to it, showing that its area of influence far exceeds its immediate surroundings. Insecurity assessments, however, did show to affect usage of the site, where people who regarded the site as insecure were much less frequently regular users.



Insecurity was found to contribute to distrust amongst neighbours by creating a trustful insiderness and a distrustful otherness amongst neighbourhoods. This social polarization was found to justify measures of social segregation such as the erection of barriers and transit controls, further showing how insecurity contributes towards privatization of public space by means of securitization.

It was found that despite some distrust in police authorities, police presence and surveillance was regarded in all cases as the key driver of security. This demonstrates the reliance on institutions even amongst environments forged by informality and self-reliance. It also raises questions regarding fetishization of the law in contexts of insecurity.

A social aspect to the assessment of insecurity was also found to be highly relevant, present in the consideration of crowds and commercial activities as contributors towards security. On the other end of the spectrum, loneliness was regarded as an important contributor towards insecurity. These findings are also consistent with the theorization of classical authors regarding the importance of publicness in security.

The presence of incivilities was also found to be a relevant influence towards insecurity, where sales and usage of drugs was highly regarded as an element of risk. Distrust amongst neighbours and lack of coping capacities seemed to go hand in hand with support for harder law enforcement.

Improving police presence and efficacy was overwhelmingly found to be the most supported measure amongst respondents. In second place were policies aimed to a better use and administration of the site, emphasizing measures targeting order and control. In third place residents supported physical improvements over the site of which lighting has a particular importance given the attention it has received in the literature. Measures targeting structural insecurities were also supported by some respondents.

All respondents asked about publicness regarded the site as being public, which places it unequivocally amongst the few public spaces in eastern CDMX. It was also found that accessibility was regarded as a key factor of publicness. Insecurity was not found to affect accessibility.

Finally, it was found that insecurity elicits behavioural changes which affect the use of public space. The most frequent responses found were restricting activities to daytime, promoting a sense of over-awareness, creating distrust amongst neighbours and towards strangers and restricting free movement by creating no-go areas of high insecurity.

What can be implied from these findings is:

That in the case study the subjective component of insecurity has greater influence over spatial appropriation than the objective component. This means that it is the perception of insecurity what affects people's access and usage of public space, not necessarily violence or the presence of crime.

That lower victimization rates don't necessarily correspond with lower insecurity. Therefore, reducing the perception of insecurity plays a key role in securitization as important as reducing the occurrence of violence.

That insecurity means different things for different people. It is critical to identify the stakeholders and target specific causes which depend and vary by context. Consequently, in order for measures and policies aiming towards securitization to be effective, they need to consider the variability over the concept. Developing policies based on uncontextualized theories will continue to have unwanted if not nefarious consequences for those who should be benefitted by them.

The exploratory nature of this study was designed to shed a light over the importance of considering the complexities of locality when assessing insecurity. In doing so, it aimed to discover new topics and relations which could explain how the perception of insecurity is constructed, emphasizing the public insecurity crisis in Mexico as part of Latin America.

The first limitation of this study which was presented in the results chapter consists of the statistical unrepresentativity of the sample, which might lead to misconceptions. As part of an exploratory study, this analysis was performed exclusively to explore relations amongst variables but does not aim to substitute a statistical analysis. It is, however, a proposed base for further studies which could be carried out on the basis of the proposed framework which considers the components of insecurity and which, as mentioned above, supports the integration of empirical quantitative data.

A second limitation is the scope of the study, which is limited to a specific location. The emphasis put upon locality in the construction of a concept of insecurity necessarily left out more general considerations which could influence the outcomes. As an example, it was shown that victimization occurring outside the site increased vulnerability thus affected the perception of on-site insecurity. While the proposed framework considers the integration of this specific variable, it is unknown if other variables escape the grasp of the local scope.

Investigating the effects of general insecurity over on-site insecurity is another proposed area for further research.

Finally, while this project situates itself in the context of Mexico City as part of Latin America, it does not aim to hold representativity or pretend universality. Some trends might be shared amongst shared contexts, but applicability of the results remain limited to the scope of the study. Comparative studies amongst these results and similar studies carried out under similar frameworks, however, would constitute a fantastic field for further research.

If any generalization might be deduced from the application of this study, it is the need to consider the particularities of each case as a separate field of knowledge.

Studies in public insecurity have contributed to shape today's reality. Theoretical conceptions live in the policies derived from them and supported by them. In today's scientific development empirical data often is given higher attention than theoretical development which may lead to misconceptions or false assumptions.

On the topic of public insecurity, I propose to set the discussion in a highly contextualized environment by integrating as many variables as present. To treat insecurity as a composite can help to clarify its nature. It further allows the integration of empirical data over the base of variability.

Only a clear understanding of the grounded reality within its specific complexity may generate effective measures for improvement, on this tenor the case of the Cerro de La Estrella shows that sometimes the best results are achieved when the aim is to not worsen the scenario.

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## **Annexes.**

### **Annex A. Questionnaire protocols divided by target groups (as applied in Spanish).**

Usuarios del metro:

1.- ¿Por dónde vive usted?

2.- ¿Conoce el Cerro de La Estrella? ¿Ha ido alguna vez?

si responde "no"

3.- ¿Por qué nunca ha ido?

si responde "por la inseguridad"

3.1.- ¿Qué le hace pensar que sea inseguro?

3.2.- ¿Cómo es un lugar inseguro?

3.3.- ¿Qué efectos causa la inseguridad?

3.4.- ¿Cómo se podría disminuir la inseguridad?

3.5.- cual es la mayor causa de la inseguridad?

si responde alguna otra razón

3.1.- Si eso mejorara, ¿piensa que empezaría a ir al cerro?

4.- ¿Cree que el Cerro de La Estrella es un espacio público?

5.- ¿Qué le gusta hacer en su tiempo libre? ¿A dónde le gusta ir?

TERMINAR ENTREVISTA

si responde "si"

3.- ¿Qué ha ido a hacer ahí?

si responde algo diferente a "pasar por ahí"

3.1.- ¿Por qué eligió ir al Cerro de La Estrella?

4.- ¿Qué ruta toma para ir?

5.- ¿Cree que sea fácil llegar?

6.- ¿Cree que el Cerro de La Estrella sea un lugar seguro?

7.- ¿Alguna vez lo han asaltado o le han hecho algo en el cerro o en sus alrededores, o sabe de alguien más que le haya pasado algo?

8.- ¿Qué medidas toma para protegerse de la inseguridad?

9.- ¿Cree que si hay más policía disminuye la inseguridad?

10.- ¿Qué le gusta hacer en su tiempo libre? ¿A dónde le gusta ir?

#### TERMINAR ENTREVISTA

Vecinos lejanos:

1.- ¿Conoce el Cerro de La Estrella? ¿Ha ido alguna vez?

si responde "no"

2.- ¿Por qué nunca ha ido?

3.- Si eso mejorara, ¿piensa que empezaría a ir al cerro?

4.- ¿Cree que el Cerro de La Estrella es un espacio público?

si responde "si"

2.- ¿Qué ha ido a hacer ahí?

si responde algo diferente a "pasar por ahí"

3.- ¿Por qué eligió ir al Cerro de La Estrella?

4.- ¿Qué ruta toma para ir?

5.- ¿Cree que el Cerro de La Estrella sea un lugar seguro?

si responde "si"

6.- ¿Qué hace que no se haya vuelto un lugar inseguro o peligroso?

si responde "no"

6.- ¿Qué lo ha vuelto inseguro?

7.- ¿Cómo se puede disminuir la inseguridad?

8.- ¿Alguna vez lo han asaltado o le han hecho algo en el cerro o en sus alrededores, o sabe de alguien más que le haya pasado algo?

9.- ¿Qué medidas toma para protegerse de la inseguridad?

10.- ¿Qué medidas han tomado en su casa, calle o unidad para protegerse de la inseguridad?

11.- ¿Qué le gusta hacer en su tiempo libre? ¿A dónde le gusta ir?

TERMINAR ENTREVISTA

Visitantes del panteón:

1.- ¿Por dónde vive usted?

2.- ¿Conoce el Cerro de La Estrella? ¿Ha ido alguna vez?

si responde "no"

3.- ¿Por qué nunca ha ido?

4.- Si eso mejorara, ¿piensa que empezaría a ir al cerro?

5.- ¿Cree que el Cerro de La Estrella es un espacio público?

si responde "si"

3.- ¿Qué ha ido a hacer ahí?

si responde algo diferente a "pasar por ahí"

4.- ¿Por qué eligió ir al Cerro de La Estrella?

5.- ¿Qué ruta toma para ir?

6.- ¿Se siente seguro(a) visitando el panteón?

si responde "si"

7.- ¿Qué hace que el panteón no se haya vuelto un lugar inseguro o peligroso?

si responde "no"

7.- ¿Qué lo ha vuelto inseguro?

8.- ¿Cómo se puede disminuir la inseguridad?

9.- ¿Alguna vez lo han asaltado o le han hecho algo en el cerro o en sus alrededores, o sabe de alguien más que le haya pasado algo?

10.- ¿Qué medidas toma para protegerse de la inseguridad?

11.- ¿Qué le gusta hacer en su tiempo libre? ¿A dónde le gusta ir?

TERMINAR ENTREVISTA

Vecinos Inmediatos:

1.- ¿Visita el Cerro de La Estrella o pasa por ahí frecuentemente?

si responde "no"

2.- ¿Por qué nunca ha ido?

3.- Si eso mejorara, ¿piensa que empezaría a ir al cerro?

si responde "si"

2.- ¿Para qué lo visita?

3.- ¿Lo atraviesa para llegar a otros lados? ¿Hacia dónde va?

4.- ¿cuál cree que sea el mayor problema del Cerro de La Estrella?

5.- ¿cree que el cerro de La Estrella es un espacio público?

6.- ¿Cree que el Cerro de La Estrella sea un lugar seguro?

7.- ¿Considera que esta colonia es insegura?

si responde "no"

8.- por qué cree que se mantiene segura?

si responde "si"

8.- ¿Qué la ha vuelto inseguro?

9.- ¿Cómo se puede disminuir la inseguridad?

- 10.- ¿Cómo se llevan los vecinos? ¿Cooperan y se organizan?
- 11.- ¿Alguna vez lo han asaltado o le han hecho algo en el cerro o en sus alrededores, o sabe de alguien más que le haya pasado algo?
- 12.- ¿Qué medidas toma para protegerse de la inseguridad?
- 13.- ¿Qué medidas han tomado en su casa, calle o unidad para protegerse de la inseguridad?
- 14.- ¿Qué le gusta hacer en su tiempo libre? ¿A dónde le gusta ir?

#### TERMINAR ENTREVISTA

#### Asentamientos informales:

- 1.- ¿Qué le agrada del Cerro de La Estrella?
- 2.- ¿Cuál cree que sea el mayor problema en el Cerro de La Estrella?
- 3.- ¿Cree que el cerro de La Estrella es un espacio público?
- 4.- ¿Lo atraviesa para llegar a otros lados? ¿Hacia dónde va?
- 5.- ¿Cree que el Cerro de La Estrella sea un lugar seguro?
- 6.- ¿Considera que esta colonia es insegura?

si responde "no"

- 7.- por qué cree que se mantiene segura?

si responde "si"

- 7.- ¿Qué la ha vuelto inseguro?
- 8.- ¿Cómo se puede disminuir la inseguridad?
- 9.- ¿Cómo se llevan los vecinos? ¿Cooperan y se organizan?
- 10.- ¿Usted se siente "de aquí"?
- 11.- ¿Alguna vez lo han asaltado o le han hecho algo en el cerro o en sus alrededores, o sabe de alguien más que le haya pasado algo?
- 12.- ¿Qué medidas toma para protegerse de la inseguridad?

13.- ¿Qué medidas han tomado en su casa, calle o unidad para protegerse de la inseguridad?

14.- ¿Qué le gusta hacer en su tiempo libre? ¿A dónde le gusta ir?

TERMINAR ENTREVISTA

Ejidatarios:

1.- ¿Dónde vive? ¿Qué tan seguido viene?

2.- ¿Usted se siente "de aquí"?

3.- ¿Qué le agrada del Cerro de La Estrella?

4.- ¿Cuál cree que sea el mayor problema en el Cerro de La Estrella?

5.- ¿Cree que el cerro de La Estrella es un espacio público?

6.- ¿Cree que el Cerro de La Estrella sea un lugar seguro?

si responde "sí"

7.- ¿Qué hace que no se haya vuelto un lugar inseguro o peligroso?

si responde "no"

7.- ¿Qué lo ha vuelto inseguro?

8.- ¿Cómo se puede disminuir la inseguridad?

9.- ¿Los que cultivan el cerro están organizados?

10.- ¿Lo atraviesa para llegar a otros lados? ¿Hacia dónde va?

11.- ¿Alguna vez lo han asaltado o le han hecho algo en el cerro o en sus alrededores, o sabe de alguien más que le haya pasado algo?

12.- ¿Qué medidas toma para protegerse de la inseguridad?

13.- ¿Qué le gusta hacer en su tiempo libre? ¿A dónde le gusta ir?

TERMINAR ENTREVISTA

Corredores:



- 1.- ¿Dónde vive? ¿Qué tan seguido viene?
- 2.- ¿Qué ruta toma para venir?
- 3.- ¿Cree que sea fácil llegar aquí?
- 4.- ¿Qué le agrada del Cerro de La Estrella?
- 5.- ¿Por qué elige venir al Cerro de La Estrella y no a otro lugar?
- 6.- ¿Cuál cree que sea el mayor problema del Cerro de La Estrella?
- 7.- ¿Cree que el Cerro de La Estrella sea un lugar seguro?

si responde "si"

- 8.- ¿Qué hace que no se haya vuelto un lugar inseguro o peligroso?

si responde "no"

- 8.- ¿Qué lo ha vuelto inseguro?
- 9.- ¿Cómo se puede disminuir la inseguridad?
- 10.- ¿Alguna vez lo han asaltado o le han hecho algo en el cerro o en sus alrededores, o sabe de alguien más que le haya pasado algo?
- 11.- ¿Qué medidas toma para protegerse de la inseguridad?
- 12.- ¿Están organizados con otros corredores?
- 13.- ¿Qué le gusta hacer en su tiempo libre? ¿A dónde le gusta ir?

TERMINAR ENTREVISTA

Grupos de tradición:

- 1.- ¿Dónde vive? ¿Qué tan seguido viene?
- 2.- ¿Qué ruta toma para venir?
- 3.- ¿Cree que sea fácil llegar aquí?
- 4.- ¿Qué le agrada del Cerro de La Estrella?
- 5.- ¿Por qué elige venir al Cerro de La Estrella y no a otro lugar?

6.- ¿Cuál cree que sea el mayor problema del Cerro de La Estrella?

7.- ¿Cree que el cerro de La Estrella es un espacio público?

8.- ¿Cree que el Cerro de La Estrella sea un lugar seguro?

si responde "si"

9.- ¿Qué hace que no se haya vuelto un lugar inseguro o peligroso?

si responde "no"

9.- ¿Qué lo ha vuelto inseguro?

10.- ¿Cómo se puede disminuir la inseguridad?

11.- ¿Alguna vez lo han asaltado o le han hecho algo en el cerro o en sus alrededores, o sabe de alguien más que le haya pasado algo?

12.- ¿Qué medidas toma para protegerse de la inseguridad?

13.- ¿Están organizados con otros grupos de tradición?

14.- ¿Qué le gusta hacer en su tiempo libre? ¿A dónde le gusta ir?

TERMINAR ENTREVISTA

Transeúntes:

1.- ¿Dónde vive?

2.- Regularmente cuando atraviesa el Cerro, ¿de dónde viene y a dónde va?

3.- ¿Qué ruta(s) toma y/o conoce?

4.- ¿Hay caminos claros o cree que es fácil perderse?

5.- ¿Cree que el cerro de La Estrella es un espacio público?

6.- ¿Qué le agrada del Cerro de La Estrella?

7.- ¿Cuál cree que sea el mayor problema del Cerro de La Estrella?

8.- ¿Cree que el Cerro de La Estrella sea un lugar seguro?

si responde "si"

9.- ¿Qué hace que no se haya vuelto un lugar inseguro o peligroso?

si responde "no"

9.- ¿Qué lo ha vuelto inseguro?

10.- ¿Cómo se puede disminuir la inseguridad?

11.- ¿Alguna vez lo han asaltado o le han hecho algo en el cerro o en sus alrededores, o sabe de alguien más que le haya pasado algo?

12.- ¿Qué medidas toma para protegerse de la inseguridad?

13.- ¿Qué medidas han tomado en su casa, calle o unidad para protegerse de la inseguridad?

14.- ¿Qué le gusta hacer en su tiempo libre? ¿A dónde le gusta ir?

TERMINAR ENTREVISTA

Turistas:

1.- ¿Dónde vive? ¿Qué tan seguido viene?

2.- ¿Qué ruta toma para venir?

3.- ¿Cree que sea fácil llegar aquí?

4.- ¿Qué le agrada del Cerro de La Estrella?

5.- ¿Por qué elige venir al Cerro de La Estrella y no a otro lugar?

6.- ¿Cuál cree que sea el mayor problema del Cerro de La Estrella?

7.- ¿Cree que el Cerro de La Estrella sea un lugar seguro?

si responde "si"

8.- ¿Qué hace que no se haya vuelto un lugar inseguro o peligroso?

si responde "no"

8.- ¿Qué lo ha vuelto inseguro?

9.- ¿Cómo se puede disminuir la inseguridad?

10.- ¿Alguna vez lo han asaltado o le han hecho algo en el cerro o en sus alrededores, o sabe de alguien más que le haya pasado algo?

11.- ¿Qué medidas toma para protegerse de la inseguridad?

12.- ¿Qué le gusta hacer en su tiempo libre? ¿A dónde le gusta ir?

TERMINAR ENTREVISTA