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THE GEOGRAPHY OF CRIME IN LISBON: PERCEPTION AND REALITY

Alina ESTEVES

1. CRIME AND WELL BEING IN THE CITY

Urban crime in its different forms assumes a growing importance in the daily lives of citizens and is a huge concern for politicians and city governors.

The increasing number of deeds that can be considered criminal in the eyes of the Law and general violence, have been causing not only insecurity and fear in cities, but also the spending of higher sums of money in preventive and repressive measures. The "effects of crime" do not only reach the victims, but also affect the population in general and are reflected in global features of well being in the city. The image projected by a city around the world is strongly conditioned by its security or insecurity environment. Criminality is thus, and simultaneously to environment, traffic, housing and other issues, one of the greatest urban problems that needs to be urgently fought and solved.

As Hernado Gomez Buendía states "the typical high incidence of ordinary crime in urban environments not only challenges the very foundations of the social order, but carries with it a heavy toll of human suffering, economic waste, the despair of concerned citizens, and general deterioration in the quality of life" (1989, p. IX).

In principle, it would be expected that areas with more crimes, or at least with the most violent cases, were the most feared areas by general population due to the negative

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image associated. On the contrary, the places where less crimes are committed would be considered less unsafe due to the lowest probability of victimisation.

However, there are differences on the frequency, type and place where crimes are committed and the image people have of criminality. This means that crime reality is different from people's perception. The mental images of security or insecurity of a certain area may not correspond to real crime happenings.

A certain geographical area can have a high number of crimes and still transmit a certain sense of security to its inhabitants and population walking around. On the contrary, an area may hold a very small number of crimes and be feared by the population that even avoids to walk there. These apparent contradictions are possible because, although the formation of mental images is an extremely personal process, it also depends from factors common to all human beings such as sex, age, social and economic group, job, schooling, means of transport used, access to media, etc.

Thus, and according to a large number of research studies already developed in foreign countries on the perception of space, fear and insecurity feelings, the women opposing to men, tend to be more fearsome, just like ageing people comparatively to younger ones. In both cases, the fear felt is due to their higher physical fragility and less ability to defend themselves if attacked. Schooling, determines the access to information broadcasted by mass-media not only in terms of quality, but also in quantity and detail, and thus is another factor to take into account when studying mental images. More educated citizens have greater and better access to information and therefore, can make a more accurate appreciation of reality. The frequency, duration and length of travels may influence the achievement of information about the surrounding space. The ones who travel less and to shorter distances have lower chances to obtain information and to know the environment. The mental image will then be less detailed than the one from a person making more and longer travels.

Besides these human nature factors, the landscape and architectonic features of places are equally important in modelling mental images because pleasant architectonic areas give positive and security inspiring images, whereas from unpleasant environments we keep negative images, associated sometimes to insecurity feelings. For example, in the research developed by Jonathan Bannister in the Scottish city of Glasgow in 1990 he drew the conclusion that questioned people considered unsafe areas with certain features such as derelict buildings, poor lighting, physically run-down, juveniles loitering, people with suspicious behaviours (Jones, 1993).

Just as an example, a neighbourhood with luxurious detached houses surrounded by private gardens in a place with excellent panoramic view can be considered by population in general as a safe area, because the high quality of the natural and built environments lead to that opinion. However, the presence of valuable goods inside the houses may show this quite neighbourhood attractive to potential delinquents. Something similar may happen with a busy shopping area, considered not very dangerous due to the high number of people and pleasantness of space (attractive shops, well kept public areas, benches for resting, etc.) giving a feeling of security. The huge concentration of people increases the chances of well succeeded thefts.

On the contrary, a shanty town or physically run-down area, lacking basic infrastructures is of common knowledge the living place of delinquents. Drug dealing and consumption made during day light gives feelings of fear and insecurity to the ones that do not know the area. However, besides the crimes connected to drugs, public disorders and selling stolen goods there are probably no other crimes. The cars and houses are not robbed because they are not worth the effort and lack valuable furniture and the inhabitants are not mugged because delinquents do not want to call Police's attention to their own neighbourhood. On the other hand, the neighbourhood does not have attractive features and people who go there are its inhabitants, their friends and relatives paying social visits, or people who want to buy stolen goods.

2. GOALS AND METHODOLOGY

One of the goals of this study is to know the territorial pattern of crime in Lisbon, identifying areas with more and less offences thus, the more and the least dangerous places. We also intend to know the inhabitants' mental map of insecurity or in other words, the areas of Lisbon perceived as more or less insecure.
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The differences or "residues" between the map of crimes reported to the police and the mental map of insecurity will allow us to identify four types of areas in Lisbon:

- areas with little crime reported to the police and not very dangerous in citizen's opinion (the word "safer" is not used because in the questionnaire the question mentioned the place's perceived danger);
- areas with few crimes reported, but where citizens feel unsafe and consider them dangerous;
- areas with high crime figures, but perceived by people as not very dangerous;
- areas with high crime figures and where people feel unsafe, considering them dangerous.

To know the urban, social and cultural features of these areas is another goal of this work because they may contribute to justify the "residues" between reality and image.

The statistical data on crime is basically the reports made by victims to the police of crimes committed between July 1993 and June 1994. In a first approach to Lisbon's criminality, all reports except road accidents were taken into account, whereas in defining the contours of most and least dangerous areas, only violent crime reports were considered. Thefts, assaults with fire weapons or knives, physical aggressions, wounding, muggings are here included. The mental image of Lisbon's insecurity/safety was obtained through questionnaires made to people on the streets between October and December 1994 in six Lisbon neighbourhoods.

3. CRIME IN LISBON

Lisbon municipality has a total area of 83,84 square kilometres (32,36 square miles) and is divided in 53 parishes. However, the statistic data on crimes reported to the police is not drawn together in parishes but in police beats that are gathered in Divisions. The city of Lisbon is divided in four Divisions whose headquarters are respectively Taipas police station (1st Division), Olivais-Sul police station (2nd division), Benfica police station (3rd Division) and Alcântara police station (4th Division). There are also the Airport Division in charge of this complex infrastructure and Lisbon District Command located in the 1st Division with a supra-municipality power in charge of car accidents (Fig. 1).

The crimes committed in Lisbon and reported to the police between July 1993 and June 1994 reach a total of 46,201 deeds. The 3rd Division holds 31.7% of these and the 1st Division 28.0%. The 2nd Division has 18.1% and the 4th Division 14.1%. District Command (DC) has 8.1% of the total, but this figure is not exclusively of crimes committed inside Lisbon. Due to DC supra-municipal authority and seriousness of these crimes they could have been committed in any of the 15 municipalities of Lisbon district and are sent to the DC (Fig. 2).  

2 This figure does not include 6,055 offences reported due to car accidents. The total number of crimes would then be 52,256 with the following spatial division: 28.1% in 3rd Division, 24.7% in 1st Division, 16.0% in 2nd Division, 12.5% in 4th Division and 18.7% in DC.
The more frequent reports are crimes against property (86.3% of total), followed by crimes against people (9.3%), crimes against life in society (4.1%) and finally, crimes against the State (0.3%). In the four Divisions, the most important crimes are thefts of and from cars, pickpocketing, thefts in supermarkets and other shops, dud cheques and frauds, and bodily injuries. Although the four Divisions comprise extremely wide and different areas in territorial occupation, there are differences resulting from functional features worth noticing.

If thefts done by pickpockets or committed in shops have a similar percentage in total crimes in each Division - between 16.8% and 18.9% - this does not happen in thefts in and from vehicles. The figures get closer in the 2nd, 3rd and 4th Divisions (variation between 25.1% and 31.1%) but in the 1st Division this offence represents only 15.1% of total crimes in this Division. This Division comprises the huge shopping and service area of downtown (traditional centre) and the low income housing historic neighbourhoods of Bairro Alto, Mouraria, Alfama and Castelo. In downtown, car parking is done in underground parks watched with security cameras or in open parks too exposed to passers-by. On the other hand, in historic quarters, goods or vehicles are not very inviting to be stolen or robbed due to the low income of their inhabitants and more informal control and surveillance.

It is precisely in the 1st Division that the offences of dud cheques and frauds reported to PSP are more important (48.8% of reports) due to the huge number of shops and services that often receive this kind of cheques and are victims of economic frauds. The 3rd Division also has a considerable percentage of these crimes (32.7%) because of its large shopping and service areas. On the contrary, in the 2nd and 4th Divisions the proportion of these crimes in the total is much lower. In these Divisions one must point out bodily injuries (10.3% and 8.2% of total offences reported respectively, against 5.0% in the 3rd Division and 3.3% in the 1st Division) and drug dealing and consumption (2.9% and 2.1% against 0.8% and 0.7% in the 1st and 3rd Divisions). These crimes are much more important in the 2nd and 4th Divisions because there one can find large neighbourhoods where drugs are sold and consumed such as Casal Vento, Curraleira, Relógio and Picheleira. Knowing this and being pressured by the press and the public opinion, police forces often make searches in these places getting hold of drugs, dealers and addicted people.

The remaining crimes have a similar distribution in the four Divisions, thus not deserving special attention.

4. INSECURITY IN LISBON: THE IMAGE OF INTERVIEWED PEOPLE

In order to know which areas of Lisbon are perceived as more or least dangerous by the population, a questionnaire was made to inhabitants and passers-by in several Lisbon neighbourhoods. Besides including questions about place of residence, place of birth, occupation, schooling and age, the questionnaire also had a matrix that divided Lisbon
in 26 neighbourhoods. With this matrix interviewed people compared each neighbourhood with the others in terms of danger felt (Fig. 3). As in other research studies already made about perception urban space, one is trying "... to define the image of Lisbon urban space following an evaluation perspective ..." (Fonseca, 1995, p. 11). This means one tries to know the areas considered more and less dangerous and of indifference to people.

The six neighbourhoods where the 180 questionnaires were made were diversified in order to know people's opinion belonging to different social and economic groups and living in different geographical areas: Alvalade, Baixa, Campo de Ourique, Chelas and Olivais/Encarnação.

To make the answers comparable, the figures were transformed in a zero % to 100% scale according to the following expression $p_i = \frac{(s_i - \min_b)}{(\max_b - \min_b)} \times 100$.

Therefore, the place perceived as most dangerous in Lisbon holds 100 figure and the least dangerous 0 figure.

If the 180 standardised answers are drawn on a Lisbon map one obtains a map with the places perceived with different degrees of danger in the Portuguese capital (Fig. 4). The area considered most dangerous for the questioned people is the one that stretches from Monsanto Park to Casal Ventoso neighbourhood, decreasing in intensity of danger towards Belém/Restelo neighbourhoods to the south, Lapa and Madragoa to the south-east and Benfica neighbourhood to the north. Another area perceived as unsafe stretches from Charneca/Galinheiras in the northern part of Lisbon, towards south-east till Chelas housing development, including the shanty neighbourhoods of Magueira and Relógio. This insecurity ribbon turns towards west in Pichileira/Olaias including Intendente and the historic quarter of Mouraria. There is still a small area near the river that interviewed population consider dangerous, Cais do Sodré.

Lapa neighbourhood is considered the least dangerous in Lisbon. There are also other areas with whom an idea of little danger is associated, such as Belém/Restelo, Alvalade,
Lumiar/Telheiras and Avenidas Novas. Downtown (Baixa) is also a less dangerous area when compared with Mouraria and Intendente to the north-east and Cais do Sodré to the south-east.

Indeed, Casal Vento is classified as the most dangerous area, not only because of its shanties and poor housing conditions, but mainly to the intense drug dealing and consumption. It is also the place of residence of a large number of dealers and other delinquents. Due to similar reasons Musgueira and Relógio neighbourhoods are also considered dangerous quarters. Both places are council pre-fabricated housing, initially for re-housed population coming from areas in Lisbon expropriated in order to develop public works during Estado Novo dictatorship regime.

Monsanto Park, in the Western side of Lisbon, is another example of the typical fear associated with huge green areas with poor lightning, bad reputation and few policemen on patrol.

Charneca/Galinheiras neighbourhoods, in the Northern boundary of Lisbon municipality, Pichileir/Olais and Chelas neighbourhoods in the Eastern side, are extremely feared by the interviewed population because they are areas of very poor housing conditions (shanties and shack) or with social housing where drugs and stolen goods are dealt and negotiated in broad daylight. To these areas, images of poverty and criminals' place of residence are associated by those who do not live there.

Cais do Sodré, near the river side, and Intendente, knot in the axis of the ancient entrance in Lisbon which was Almirante Reis Avenue, are perceived as dangerous areas, mainly due to prostitution on the streets surrounding the innumerable bars, night clubs and cheap pensions of these places. There are often fights and quarrels with knives and penknives among the clients calling police attention to these areas. One should also note the physically run-down buildings that give people a sense of derelict, misery and social decay.

On the other side of this ranking one can find Lapa, considered the least unsafe neighbourhood of Lisbon, maybe to its tradition of being the place of residence of aristocrats and foreign diplomats. Today, some of the 18th and 19th centuries palaces and mansions are still inhabited by the wealthiest families or by embassies and consulates. The topography of this area allows its inhabitants to benefit from a beautiful sightseeing over the Tejo, riverside and south bank.

Another quite similar area is Belém/Restelo that associates its beautiful and well kept gardens and riverside historic monuments to innumerable diplomatic representations located in luxurious detached houses surrounded by private gardens in intensely police patrolled streets. Just like in Lapa, arrangement of houses along the soft slope hill towards the river makes possible for those living there to enjoy very good views over Tejo's estuary.

The remaining areas of this group - Alvalade, Avenidas Novas, Campo de Ourique, Lumiar/Telheiras and Benfica - are housing areas of high middle class groups, where there are hardly any shanties, visible drug consumption and dealing or disgracing activities like street or night-club prostitution.

Considering Alvalade neighbourhood, area planned by Faria da Costa in 1945, it was built to stop the worsening housing crisis in Lisbon because it included a substantial amount of "economic houses". However, the number of apartments with more than 9, 12 or 15 rooms attracted the bourgeoisie that had a privileged place in Roma and Estados Unidos da América avenues. This neighbourhood intended to be a new centre for Lisbon, or an alternative to the traditional Downtown, and had a range of infrastructures for trade, public and private services, primary and secondary schools, health, sports entertainment and religion facilities. The neighbourhood still has strong trade features and its inhabitants have a high purchase power, mainly the ones living in the previously mentioned avenues and detached houses to the East of São João de Brito Church. These features make it extremely attractive to people living on theft, because the contents of houses and apartments, the cars, residents and passers-by are very profitable targets.

Avenidas Novas is the area formed by 5 de Outubro, da República, Fontes Pereira de Melo, Sidónio Pais, António Augusto de Aguiar and Defensores de Chaves avenues and surrounding streets in the Northern part of Lisbon whose plan dates back from late 19th century (1888) and beginning of 20th century and was made by Ressano Garcia. Putting
into practice the hygienist principles, the streets were wide, with trees along boardwalks, following an orthogonal grid. Due to the quality of buildings and respective price, the rich bourgeoisie families were the ones living here from its very beginning. The installing of underground network in 1959 (in the 1st expansion stage of underground Avenidas Novas area was served up to Entre Campos) had a consequent increase in its accessibility, associated to its recognised social prestige, led to an immediate housing speculation and very profitable transactions. At ground floor level buildings were gradually converted into shops and other services whereas 1st and 2nd floors turned into offices and consulting rooms for doctors and lawyers. During the last 30 years Avenidas Novas area lost a substantial part of its resident population and a huge fluctuation between day and night population is observable. This has obviously a reflex in the kind and amount of crime committed.

It is remarkable the good/positive image that questioned people have of Campo de Ourique neighbourhood. Although it has in its surroundings Casal Ventoso quarters and therefore is a frequent target for drug addicted people looking for anything that can be stolen and sold in exchange for drugs, it still keeps a very favourable reputation among the questioned people.

Campo de Ourique is an orthogonal grid neighbourhood located in the Western side of Lisbon following Ressano Garcia's plan dated from 1906. From its very beginning, Campo de Ourique was a residential area with bourgeoisie features where housing function was widely privileged in detriment of commercial function. Nowadays, this neighbourhood is known by having a rather ageing population among who is noticeable a gentrification process in some renovated blocs. The number and standing of some shops, mainly house textiles, furniture and interior decoration make Campo de Ourique a desired neighbourhood for shopping. Anyway, the area still keeps a medium/high social and economic standard.

Similar situation happens in Lumiar and Telheiras neighbourhoods. In spite of being often "visited" by people of Musgueira and Galinheiras shanties, they are not considered very dangerous. Geographically very close, both neighbourhoods are located in the Northern part of Lisbon municipality. They had however, very different origins.

Until the end of the 19th century and due to the long distance separating Lumiar from the traditional centre, it was an area of leisure rural properties, with palaces, mansions, olive trees and vineyards. From the early years of the 20th century, this area had a noticeable population and urban growth. The tram and other means of transport like the bus, increased its accessibility to Downtown and Avenidas Novas area. There was a huge pressure on rural properties that were sold, allotted and filled with huge residential towers during the 30's and latter during the 60's and 70's, after some stagnation in the 40's and 50's. The quality of buildings and the average size of apartments favoured the arrival of medium and medium/high income families. An image of a certain well being is associated to this neighbourhood. With the recent edification of Parque Europa residential complex, between Campo Grande underground station and Tobis TV studios, there has been a reinforcement in the proportion of enterprise directors, skilled service employees, doctors and lawyers, contributing for the positive image of this area.

Telheiras is a much more recent neighbourhood whose plan dates back from the 70's and following the orientation line of the then recent EJUL (council enterprise to promote new housing developments in Lisbon). Making the plan come true in 4 stages EJUL planners reviewed Telheiras growth strategy reinforcing the number of public, semi-public and private spaces, where green areas were a constant presence. The social differentiation would not be achieved through the size of apartments, but through the interior finishing quality. The plan intended to join in the same neighbourhood very different social and economic groups. In most recent years there has been a percentage reinforcement of people working as teachers, doctors, lawyers, engineers, architects, enterprise directors and managers and other skilled services.

Benfica neighbourhood has a similar situation due to its proximity to the derelict area of Boa Vista, Horta Nova shacks and Damaia poor housing. Benfica is therefore a very accessible target to criminals coming from these places. Quite far from Lisbon traditional centre, Benfica was only one of Lisbon parishes after 1886, after Belém municipality had been extinguished in the previous year. It had a countryside suburban life with palaces and mansions of noble families where Lisbon high society would join together in their leisure moments. In spite of this recreational feature there were some factories whose owners had built quarters for the working classes. There was a certain social heterogeneity still visible in the great variety of architectonic examples of
different social and economic level. With the arrival of the tramway line in 1921 and regular bus travels (1929), Benfica's accessibility was much improved. Its suburban feature was lost and Benfica became a desired area for private housing promoters. The rural properties were sold or expropriated and handed to building enterprises that fulfilled it along Estrada de Benfica with enormous apartment blocs (mainly near General Norton de Matos Avenue) and with 5 or 6 storey terraced houses. The neighbourhood knew different growth stages, but its main expansion occurred during the 60's. The size and quality of housing determined the arrival of the various social groups, but today they are still medium level.

5. VIOLENT CRIME REPORTED TO THE POLICE (PSP)

In order to assess the differences between interviewed people's mental image of danger and crimes committed, an inquiry of crimes reported to the police (PSP) according to areas was made. However, the huge number of offences reported and data availability limited our research to crimes classified by the police as violent. The crimes were committed between July 1993 and June 1994.

The violent offences are carefully regarded by police forces due to their great physical violence upon victims and great emotional impact not only on the victim but also in public opinion. Bodily injuries, aggressions, rapes, muggings, thefts and robberies with guns, knives or syringes are here included. It is interesting to notice the low rate of report of some offences due to difficulties in identifying the aggressor or aggressors and the even greater difficulty in recovering the stolen property.

With the data made available by PSP it was possible to draw an isoline map with standardised values of reported violent offences (Fig. 5) which somehow can be compared with the mental image map of fear perceived (Fig. 4)³.

³The results have been standardised according to the following mathematical expression

\[ P_i = \frac{(S_i - \text{min})}{(\text{max} - \text{min})} \times 100 \]

The areas that can be considered more dangerous, due to their high number of offences, is Benfica neighbourhood with almost 10% of violent offences reported, extremely well regarded by interviewed people, with south-eastern extensions towards Campolide and eastern and north-eastern extensions towards Campo Grande and Lumiar/Telheiras. In Benfica the most frequent crimes are purse snatching and golden jewellery snatching. Most of them are committed in the parking area in front of Fonte Nova Shopping Centre, along the streets leading to Benfica cemetery and in the streets around the municipal market.

Another area, also classified as not very dangerous by questioned people, but holding a high crime figure is Alvalade neighbourhood (9,1% of violent crimes reported) to the eastside of Campo Grande. Here predominate thefts and robberies under the threaten of a supposedly HIV infected syringe and purse snatching. These crimes are mainly committed in the quiet streets of São João de Brito detached houses neighbourhood in the streets leading to the homonym church and in the busy Roma, Igreja and Estados Unidos da América avenues.
Towards south a third nucleus of violent criminal activity formed by the streets around República Avenue, usually called Avenidas Novas (8.2% of violent offences), stretches along Liberdade Avenue with less crime density (5.3%). Whereas in Avenidas Novas one can find a greater proportion of thefts and robberies with syringes and fire weapons, in Liberdade Avenue assaults under threaten of a syringe and jewel snatching are predominant. In Avenidas Novas the more attractive streets for delinquents are Duque de Ávila, Marquês de Tomar, 5 de Outubro, de Berna, João XXI, António Augusto de Aguiar and República avenues. In Liberdade Avenue thefts and robberies with knives and syringes are the most relevant crimes mainly executed near Automatic Teller Machines (ATM) along the avenue and in streets surrounding Eduardo VII Park.

The last neighbourhood to mention in the number of offences committed is Campo de Ourique (6.0%) that according to interviewed people is a quite safe place, although very close to the run-down quarter of Casal Ventoso. Here one can find a high percentage of "other violent crimes" which are essentially shoplifting and house burglaries, besides purse snatching.

In opposition to these areas, the places in Lisbon with less violent crime are some of the most feared neighbourhoods and also considered extremely dangerous by questioned people. For example, Casal Ventoso (1.0% of violent crimes), Charneca/Galinheiras (1.4%), Musgueira (0.4%), Relógio (0.9%), Picheleira/Olaias (1.0%) and Chelas (0.7%), as well as Mouraria (0.9%) in the historic centre.

Thus, in the territorial distribution of crime in Lisbon four important nuclei with high offence figures can be identified - Benfica, Alvalade, Avenidas Novas and Campo de Ourique - surrounded by areas almost without crime. Among these we can point out the ribbon stretching from Musgueira to south-east towards Beato and enclosing the shanty and social housing neighbourhoods of Relógio, Chelas and Picheleira/Olaias and enveloped by a blot including Padre Cruz and Charneca/Galinheiras neighbourhoods in the northern border of Lisbon, and the streets surrounding Almirante Reis Avenue, Intendente, Penha de França and Graça neighbourhoods in the south-eastern part of Lisbon.

Between Benfica and Campolide there is another low crime area called São Domingos de Benfica. An almost complete lack of offences is noticed in the area stretching from Monsanto Park to south-east towards the riverside quarter of Madragoa, including Casal Ventoso and Lapa.

6. EXPLAINING FACTORS

The factors that can be pointed out to justify the differences found between the mental image of insecurity and the violent crime map of Lisbon are of three different kind:

- the features of interviewed people: sex, age, schooling, social and economic level and place of residence;
- urban, architectonic, landscape and social features of Lisbon neighbourhoods;
- features of statistical data made available by police forces and offences reporting rate to police forces.

Some of the least feared quarters, or the safer ones, are those where one can find higher percentages of violent crimes. It is worth mentioning the cases of Benfica, Alvalade, Avenidas Novas and Campo de Ourique, and at some distance Belém/Restelo. On the other hand, the areas seen as most dangerous by interviewed people are those where the volume of violent offences is lower. The cases are Monsanto Park, Casal Ventoso, Charneca/Galinheiras, Musgueira, Relógio, Chelas and Picheleira/Olaias quarters (Fig. 6). This means that people's mental image is often opposed to statistical data reality. This apparent contradiction is possible because people's mental image depends on several factors such as schooling, social and economic level, age, sex, places of work and study that influence the amount, detail and type of information received directly and indirectly.

It must also be added that the places where the 180 questionnaires were made, which means people's place of residence also justify the kind of answers obtained. For example, Olivais/Encarnação inhabitants fear much more the neighbouring quarter of Relógio than people living in Campo de Ourique. The considerable geographical distance and the social differences between this neighbourhood and the shanty quarter.
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near Relógio Roundabout may in a certain way justify the less fear felt. It is here implicit a certain lack of knowledge of some of its features because who lives in Campo de Ourique does not circulate near Relógio neighbourhood in his or her daily travels. This is quite the opposite from the ones who live in Olivais/Encarnação, because to reach town centre they must skirt Relógio pre-fabricated houses.

Fig. 6. Lisbon neighbourhoods

For those living in Baixa (Downtown/traditional centre), Avenida da Liberdade is a less unsafe place than for the other inquired people. The geographical closeness between the two areas may lead to a more detailed knowledge and therefore, to a demystification of fear felt by inhabitants living in other neighbourhoods of Lisbon.

Another situation to notice is Chelas, faced as a relatively less unsafe neighbourhood by its residents when compared with the not very far inhabitants of Olivais/Encarnação. Campo de Ourique is also seen more positively by its residents than by those living in

Olivais/Encarnação, Chelas and Baixa. The geographical distance between Campo de Ourique and the other neighbourhoods, as well as the social differences and proximity to Casal Ventoso may justify these distinct opinions. This kind of conclusion can also be drawn for Benfica that is considered by its residents the 3rd safest neighbourhood among the 26 suggested.

Regarding the second factor, neighbourhoods like Casal Ventoso, Galinheiras, Musgueira, Relógio or Picheleira with their shanties or extremely derelict housing, often lacking basic facilities (sewage, water supply and electricity) where there is an intense drug dealing and consumption, stolen goods are traded and delinquents and ex-convicted people live, are associated to images of marginality, danger and insecurity by those who do not live there and feel threatened by the presence of these areas in Lisbon.

On the contrary, quarters like Alvalade, Benfica, Lumiar or Telheiras in spite of their high crime figure are undoubtedly associated with well-being and security feelings. The buildings are quite recent or at least well kept, basic infrastructures are there from the very beginning. They are well provided in means of transport and green areas, modern shops can be found and these neighbourhoods are the residence place of middle and upper-middle social groups.

A situation that is different from the previous described is that of Lapa quarter because it has the most favourable mental image among the 26 Lisbon neighbourhoods (considered the least dangerous) but holds a very small percentage of violent offences reported to the PSP in a year. Therefore, it is the only area in Lisbon whose image of security corresponds to few violent crimes reported to the police.

The third factor to take into consideration because it influences the contours of crime map is the features of statistical data used. The figures made available by PSP were only of violent offences reported by victims in police stations (muggings, physical aggressions, rapes, assault with violence) thus, not including a all series of crimes connected to drug consumption and dealing, trading stolen goods that occur in broad daylight in quarters such as Casal Ventoso, Bairro da Boavista, Galinheiras, Musgueira, Relógio and Chelas, which are not reported to the police.
In drug consumption and dealing this lack of report is related to the absence of a victim because who buys and consumes does not consider to be victimised by the seller. The denounce to PSP could be made by citizens living in these quarters not connected to this illegal activity. However, neighbourhood relationships and fear of retaliations leads them to silence and pacific pact with criminals. There is a similar situation in trading stolen goods because who buys this kind of objects knowing their origin is aware that is committing an illegal act, but does not consider himself at any time a victim. The seller, may or may not have committed the theft and also knows that an offence is being committed.

Therefore, quarters where there is a general knowledge that a high number of crimes are not denounced to PSP come up in the map as low violent crime areas and logically not to be feared. There is a clear under-evaluation of real crime figures. Even if there was a denouncement to PSP, this statistical information would not be made available with the same detail as violent offences.

One has still to consider a third factor which is the different reporting rates of crimes. The denounce presented to police forces depends on several elements among which the seriousness of the crime to the victim in terms of physical and material damages must be pointed out. The willingness of police forces to accept the victim’s report and the existence of an insure covering the damages must also be taken into account.

It is in a certain way understandable that crimes assessed by the victim as not very important or negligible because little material or physical damages were suffered are not reported to the police. They are not worth the effort of going to the police station and all the afterward bothering.

The willingness of police forces to accept the victim’s complaint is another important factor that influences the number of crimes. Very often this civil force does not want to register the offences because they fear that a rising number of crimes may be seen as a symptom of its inefficiency.

Besides these factors, one must remember that reporting the offence to the police is absolutely essential to receive the insurance premium in case the property was covered by an insurance. Generally, people insure valuable goods such as the house and car. Thus, it is foreseeable that reports of crimes committed on this kind of property are quite close to the real figure. Oppositely, there are deeds that seldom come up in PSP denunces, not because they are scarce, but because the victims feel inhibited of doing so. They are usually sexual crimes and bodily injuries connected to domestic violence.

The interviewed citizens associate the feeling of more or less insecurity in Lisbon quarters to factors like the kind of housing - derelict or new, social or private - the social and economic groups living there - of high income, middle class and low income - and the general environment - with or without attractive surroundings, leisure, transportation and playing facilities, youths causing annoyance or not.

Making a similar cartographic handling of the data but separating the answers according to sex, schooling and age the results obtained are slightly different. In a general way, women tend to be more fearful or feel more insecure than men, just like elderly when compared with young people, or like less educated citizens with more educated ones. There is not much difference in the general pattern of insecurity between elements of feminine and masculine sex, or between ageing and young people, or even between more educated and less educated individuals. However, differences in the intensity of fear felt are noticeable.

7. POSSIBLE SOLUTIONS

Police forces are finding it difficult to solve the increasing amount of crime in Lisbon, not only because they lack human resources, but also due to lack of material means. Lisbon’s municipal agencies are trying to solve this serious problem through two strategies: environmental rehabilitation of derelict neighbourhoods and social rehabilitation of poor ones.

Several research studies already developed in different countries and regions were able to show that there is a relationship between features of urban landscape and the incidence of fear of crime. These features can be either physical cues or social ones. As
examples of physical attributes one can point out not enough lighting, physically run-down, streets dirty with litter and rubbish, broken, damaged or vandalized street furniture like bus-stops, telephone-boxes and waste paper baskets. Social cues are: lack of police and guards surveying the area, youngsters loitering, drug abusing and dealing, it is common knowledge that the place is bad and dangerous, and that there have been recent news of crimes committed there.

It has already been pointed out that the neighbourhoods most feared were shanty-town areas, old historic physically run-down areas with poor living conditions and derelict social housing quarters. Municipal agencies are making efforts to improve the environmental features of these places. For example, small gardens and trees are being planted in the social neighbourhoods of Chelas and Bairro da Boavista; fences, roads and pavements are being repaired in Chelas, Musgueira and Charneca-Galinhais. In the historic but run-down neighbourhood of Mouraria several buildings are being repaired and painted; in the night club and bar areas of Intendente and Cais do Sodré more police surveillance is being made; in Monsanto Park more lighting and horse ridden policemen are being placed.

Casal Ventoso and Bairro do Relógio are being demolished and green areas will be developed there. People are being given a home in social housing quarters in the eastern area of Lisbon (the land is cheaper than in the more prestigious western side).

Upgrading the environmental features of neighbourhoods is not enough to reduce people's fear of being victimized in certain areas perceived as dangerous and insecure. It is also important to improve the quarters from the social point of view because delinquents and their families are usually social excluded people. For example, small infrastructures for children are being built such as swing parks and playgrounds in Chelas, subsidized kindergartens for low-income families in Mouraria, housing subsidies and pensions are being given to larger and poorer families in Charneca-Galinhais and rents are being kept low in social housing flats of Bairro da Boavista.

This strategy of giving subsidies and pensions to people in need can easily be criticized because it is well known that is not through giving money like this that the problem of poverty and social exclusion is going to be solved. Providing better education and studying conditions to the children living in these places, so that they will be able to find better paid jobs and break this cycle of poverty, seems to be a wiser solution. However, it takes longer to show results and in the meantime something must be done.

The mentioned measures take quite a long time to present positive and good results and it is extremely difficult to attract high-income families to these traditionally poor neighbourhoods. Well-off families prefer the new private residential buildings surrounded by high fences and walls where several facilities can be found - gardens, swimming-pool, gymnasium, tennis-courts. These areas tend to become a new kind of ghetto because they are restricted and forbidden spaces to the ones not living or visiting someone there. At the same time, it would be terribly expensive to subsidize poorer families in well-off neighbourhoods due to exorbitant rent prices in areas like Belém-Restelo, Lapa, Alvalade, Avenidas Novas or Benfica.

With EXPO98 (Universal Exhibition that will take place in Lisbon in 1998), Lisbon's municipal agencies are hoping to attract high-income families to the eastern area of the city, usually regarded as poor, full of heavy and polluting industry (it has already been removed and demolished), dirty and ugly. According to the development project the housing areas are designed to provide accommodation for upper-income families as well for low-income ones in order to obtain a socially mixed neighbourhood and solve serious problems of social exclusion. The result is still a doubt, but the so desired social mix is extremely difficult to achieve and often is not even desired by the better-off people.

8. CONCLUSIONS

Population in general tend to consider more dangerous the quarters with derelict appearance - shanty and slum neighbourhoods - where ex-convicted and criminals live, drugs can be bought, sold and consumed, stolen goods are traded and socially disadvantaged people live.

On the contrary, the neighbourhoods where the well-off and rich people live are
considered less dangerous because interviewed people believe that in such areas the surrounding environment is so safe and pleasant that nothing wrong could happen.

Huge green areas are also considered unsafe by questioned people. They are lonesome during the day, lack police patrolling, are poorly lighted at night and are often prostitution areas. For questioned people, and mainly for women, parks and gardens are places where they feel extremely unsafe at night. During the day this fear is not so strong and a difference between sexes is observable.

If the municipality of Lisbon is taken into account, one can say that the east side is perceived as more dangerous in comparison to the west side which only has two unsafe "spots": Monsanto Park and Casal Ventoso.

The areas considered unsafe are identical for all age and schooling groups. However, the older citizens who are also the least educated, feel the danger more acutely when compared to the younger people because they feel more vulnerable with less physical ability to defend themselves if attacked.

There is also a relationship between the places where questionnaires were made and the insecurity felt in some neighbourhoods. Interviewed people perceive more positively the places where questionnaires were made because they often corresponded to their places of residence, work or study and therefore, have a knowledge based in realities lived day after day. They fear distant neighbourhoods because their knowledge comes from mass-media and conversations with friends and relatives.

REFERENCES


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