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gendered urban violence among brazilians

painful truths from rio de janeiro and london

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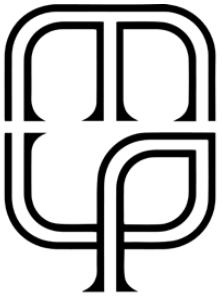

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Gendered urban violence among Brazilians

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Cathy McIlwaine, Yara Evans,
Paul Heritage, Miriam Krenzinger,
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Abbreviations

ACGs	armed criminal groups
CASA	CASA Latin American Theatre Festival
CEDAW	Convention for the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women
EEC	European Economic Community
EU	European Union
EVAW	End Violence against Women Coalition
FLAWA	Festival of Latin American Women in Arts
GBV	gender-based violence
GLA	Greater London Assembly
HO	Home Office
IOM	International Organization for Migration
LAB	Latin America Bureau
LAWA	Latin American Women's Aid
LAWRS	Latin American Women's Rights Service
LGBTQI+	lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, queer, intersex and others
MinA	Migrants in Action
NGOs	non-governmental organisations
NRPF	No Recourse to Public Funds
OLAs	onward Latin Americans
PPP	People's Palace Projects
RAMM	*Rede de Apoio às Mulheres da Maré* (Support Network for Women in Maré)
SUMW	Step Up Migrant Women
UFRJ	*Universidade Federal do Rio de Janeiro* (Federal University of Rio de Janeiro)
VAW	violence against women

VAWG	violence against women and girls
VEM	Visual and Embodied Methodologies network (King's College London)
WHO	World Health Organization
WOW	Women of the World
WRC	Women's Rights Centre
WRV	Women Resisting Violence

Introduction: Revealing and resisting the 'painful truths' of gendered urban violence

Setting the scene

The report *We Can't Fight in the Dark* by McIlwaine and Evans (2018) drew on Brazilian migrant women in London's experiences of gendered violence and formed part of the research on which this book is based. The title derives directly from the testimony of a woman named Valentina. Valentina was in her forties and had arrived in London in 2007 from Minas Gerais in Brazil, where she experienced multiple forms of gendered violence. She also experienced gendered violence in the United Kingdom (UK), both inside the home and in the public sphere, including various and complex forms of physical, sexual and emotional abuse from her husband and strangers.[1]

> So, when this reaches the public, when there is greater awareness, to say: 'Look, this happens, there's no use overlooking it, there's no use closing your eyes, this is the reality of many homes,' then we can talk about the subject. Then we'll be revealing the painful truth. Then everybody who's going through this pain will feel like, 'I have the right to say what's happening to me, I'm not alone, I'm not the only victim'. Then that will encourage other women to speak up, to identify the problem, so we can fight it. Because if we can't identify it, we can't fight it. You can't fight in the dark if you don't know who the enemy is, or what the enemy is.
>
> (McIlwaine and Evans, 2018: 48)[2]

The title and content of this book are inspired by what Valentina refers to as 'revealing the painful truth' (McIlwaine and Evans, 2018: 48) of endemic, normalised and insidious gendered violence, which is identified and experienced by so many women across the world today, especially in cities.[3]

The book draws on research we have carried out with women in the favelas of Maré in Rio de Janeiro and among Brazilian women in London between 2016 and 2023. Yet, as we elaborate below, this is not a traditional urban comparison. The cities of Rio de Janeiro and London are incredibly different in terms of their geographies, histories and urban imaginations. There are huge variations in access to resources and life experiences for women living in Maré and as migrants in London. In the former, endemic violence makes living there akin to being in a war zone, created and exacerbated by structural racialised inequalities. Yet, social struggles have led to a sense of collective identity and agency. In London, while Brazilians face multiple discriminations and exclusions, there are some protections and support, although their dispersal throughout the city undermines developing solidarity. The book therefore reveals continuities and dislocations in women's experiences of violence in the two cities.

Our research in Maré uncovered women's stories that were harrowing and diverse, yet just as invisible as the experiences of Brazilian women in London. In both contexts, women struggled with naming and designating violence in their own narratives and memories, and the way they negotiated support and resisted violence. Many Brazilian women in London had to navigate the violence of a racialised state and judicial system hostile to migrants, becoming minoritised in the process. Women in Rio de Janeiro had to deal with an intimidating state that was actively and passively violent towards poor, racialised and marginalised people from favela territories, as well as with armed gangs who have developed parallel and violent governance structures. Women were bound together by their narratives of intersectional gendered urban violence that had been muted because of fear of speaking out or a disregard or active silencing by wider society and the state.

Both groups have also been marginalised empirically, conceptually and ontologically in terms of the prevalence of epistemic violence that privileges Anglo-centric knowledge production (hooks, 1994; Smith, 1999; Zaragocín and Caretta, 2021) as well as through their experiences of racialised state violence that is especially acute against Black Brazilian women (Carneiro, 2003; Nascimento, 2021; Perry, 2013; Smith, 2016). While acknowledging that giving voice does not lead to transformation (Coddington, 2017) and

that visibilising is an issue fraught with ethical challenges (Dickens and Butcher, 2016), this book provides a conduit for some women to speak out. Adriana from Maré's words resonate with those of Valentina in the importance of challenging the underlying intersectional gendered hierarchies that underpin violence against women and the continual blaming of women in these narratives:[4]

> We need to break with these things that are so ingrained in us, this ideology of the woman's place. That will be a big step. To remove women from the space they occupy today. She needs to leave this place of being responsible, of being to blame.

This book therefore aims to reveal, to delineate and to understand the nature of these 'painful truths' and to try to understand them from the perspective of women themselves, recognising the unequal power structures within which they are situated. Furthermore, the book tries to challenge culturally essentialist interpretations of gendered violence against women as something that only happens to women in Brazil, especially in the urban peripheries, or only to Brazilian migrant women. Instead, it highlights how these 'painful truths' are situated within what Hill Collins (1990) calls an intersectional and structural matrix of power. In Brazil and the UK, as elsewhere, women's experiences of gendered violence are underpinned by wider violent socio-spatial, cultural, economic, political and colonial systems (Elias and Rai, 2019). This indicates a move beyond an individualised approach to gendered violence focusing on victims and perpetrators to one which examines how it is underpinned by social norms leading to structural and intersectional oppressions (Piedalue *et al.*, 2020).

The 'painful truths' of gendered violence are therefore multidimensional and experienced differently by women according to their intersecting identities. Gendered violence is revealed on bodies, in communities and in cities transnationally through a multiscalar perspective that aims to move beyond understanding violence as an individualised act. The arguments in the book are therefore firmly located within wider feminist and especially geographical debates around the need to acknowledge how violence plays out through interrelated, multisited spatialities of power beyond the individual body (Brickell and Maddrell, 2016; Christian *et al.*, 2015; Fluri and Piedalue, 2017; Pain and Staeheli, 2014). These arguments

bring together the multiple scales of the 'global intimate' (Pratt and Rosner, 2012). Crucially, the book draws on Latin American feminist research, while also being careful to avoid the pitfalls of 'epistemic expropriation' (Halvorsen, 2018) or 'epistemic extractivism' (Grosfoguel, 2016). These revolve around pioneering arguments in relation to the need to foreground structural hierarchies of oppression in order to understand gendered violence against women (de Souza and Rodrigues Selis, 2022). For scholars such as Rita Segato (2003, 2014, 2016), acts of gendered violence perform continuous power inequalities between women and men through a 'war on women's bodies'. This war is bolstered by the relationships between heteropatriarchy, a colonial state and neoliberal capitalism, which violate women's bodies and reflect extreme cruelty (Gago, 2020; Segato and Monque, 2021). These processes intersect with deep-seated forms of racism. This has been clearly articulated by Brazilian feminists such as Sueli Carneiro (2003), who speaks of the 'invisible violence' perpetrated against Afro-descendant and Indigenous women (also Caldwell, 2007; Cardoso, 2014; Smith, 2018). Much of this research has been prompted by the brutal prevalence of femicide and feminicide in the region (Fregoso and Bejarano, 2010).

Yet, painful stories should not focus solely on suffering on the margins but should also emphasise hope and resistance in these spaces (Cahill and Pain, 2019; hooks, 1990; Lopes Heimer, 2021. Narratives of pain alone ignore the multiple forms of resistance – formal and informal, individual and collective – that are inherent in women's experiences. Latin American feminists have been leading the way in building transversal and translocational alliances through questioning these power structures (Alvarez *et al.*, 2014; Women Resisting Violence Collective, 2022a) (see Chapter 1). Verónica Gago (2020) places 'feminist *potencia*', or feminist power, at the core of her thinking on resistance, exemplified in the feminist strikes by #NiUnaMenos (Not One More) and the Chilean Collective Las Tesis (Gago and Malo, 2020; Gago and Mason-Deese, 2019; also Segato, 2016; de Souza and Rodrigues Selis, 2022). Brazilian feminists have been centre stage in building feminist resistance over several decades. Since the late 1980s, Black women's activism has been especially strong, as shown by the emergence of various organisations and fora such as the Fórum de Mulheres Negras (Black Women's Forum). In 2015, the Marcha das Mulheres Negras contra o Racismo, a Violência e pelo Bem

Viver (Black Women's March against Racism, Violence and for Well Living) brought together 30,000 people in Brasília (Alvarez and Caldwell, 2016; Perry, 2016). Since then, and especially since the murder of Marielle Franco in 2018, feminist activism has intensified considerably (Pereira and Aguilar, 2021).

The book also engages with artistic epistemological approaches to understand gendered violence and considers the politics of responding and resisting. With the work of Paulo Freire and Augusto Boal providing inspirational foundations for how alternative forms of popular education, theatre and poetry can engender social transformation (Boal, 1979; Heritage, 1994; Santos, 2019), this baton has been taken forward by feminist scholars and activists across Latin America and beyond. Creative resistance has challenged and visibilised gendered violence through multiple art forms that include poetry, mural-making, painting and commemoration across the continent (Boesten and Scanlon, 2021; Castañeda Salgado, 2016), and produced both on the peripheries and by elites (Moura and Cerdeira, 2021; Shymko *et al.*, 2022).

In revealing and resisting 'painful truths', the book maps the nature of gendered urban violence, marking the full spectrum of direct and indirect violence experienced by Brazilian women across borders. Yet, it goes beyond purely mapping and develops a process of weaving together artistic engagements and forms of resistance. In order to uncover the visceral, embodied aspects of such violence, the book engages with artists who creatively translate the multiple realities of gendered urban violence in both the British and Brazilian contexts. It explores the nature of collaborative knowledge production and creative engagements for understanding and resisting gendered urban violence and considers the implications for scholarship, the arts, activism and practice. This is part of a translocational feminist approach entailing moving across actual, symbolic, linguistic and epistemological borders making connections between two global cities.

Empirical realities of gendered urban violence in London and Rio de Janeiro

Having set the scene for our approach to exploring gendered violence in Rio de Janeiro and among Brazilians in London, it is important to briefly outline the 'painful truths' of such violence in

terms of incidence and nature in both contexts. In Brazil, according to the *Atlas da Violência*, thirteen women were killed every day in 2017 with an increase of 31 per cent between 2007 and 2017, and where an incident of domestic violence was reported every two minutes (IPEA, 2019: 35). While 3,737 women were murdered in 2019, this was a decline of 17 per cent from 2018 (IPEA, 2021: 36). Importantly, however, the mortality of Black women has worsened; in 2009, the rate was 48.5 per cent higher, yet by 2019, it had reached 66 per cent (IPEA, 2021: 38). In this context, it is perhaps not surprising that scholars and activists speak of an 'anti-Black genocide' in Brazil (Nascimento, 1978; Smith, 2018). Also important are extremely high rates of homophobic and transphobic violence, with estimates suggesting that one LGBTQI+ person dies every nineteen hours in Brazil, more than any other country (Félix de Souza and Rodrigues Selis, 2022: 6). While the *Atlas de Violência* in 2021 noted the importance of gathering information on violence against LGBTQI+ people, the only available information was a helpline for denouncing human rights abuses (Dial 100). This shows 1,666 annual reports of such violence (IPEA, 2021: 59). Rates of lesbocide have also increased dramatically over recent years with an increase of 237 per cent between 2016 and 2017 (Davidson, 2020). While these figures relate to murders, non-fatal forms of violence are endemic; in Rio de Janeiro in 2020, a woman was the victim of violence every five minutes (ISP, 2021).

While Brazilian women are greeted with ostensibly lower rates of gender-based violence on their arrival in the UK, it is often the case that the violence shifts in nature. Indeed, between 2009 and 2018, 1,337 women were killed according to the 2018 *Femicide Census*, of which 16 per cent were foreign-born, with another 9 per cent unknown (Long and Harvey, 2020: 10–13). Where 14 per cent of the UK population is foreign-born, this could suggest that women from migrant and ethnic minority backgrounds may experience domestic homicide at higher rates than White British-born women (Siddiqui, 2018). However, this is not always the case for migrant women; in the UK in 2020, women born in the UK experienced higher levels of domestic abuse than those not born there.[5] With limited research on gendered violence among Latin Americans in the UK, qualitative work has suggested that one in four experience

it (McIlwaine and Carlisle, 2011). More specifically, a recent study among Brazilians in the UK has noted that 28 per cent suffered violence, of which 65 per cent were women (Evans, 2020: 33). However, care must be taken to avoid damaging and essentialist perspectives that assume that the cultures of home countries are the primary causes of gendered violence. For migrant women, and women everywhere, a discriminatory and racialised state is a major perpetrator of violence that facilitates further violence by individual men (McIlwaine and Evans, 2023; Sokoloff, 2008).

Since the inception of this book, we have traversed the COVID-19 pandemic. The increase in incidence of gendered violence, especially domestic intimate partner violence, has been widely reported around the world as lockdowns have imprisoned people. Referred to as the 'shadow pandemic' by UN Women and others (UN Women, 2021), domestic and other forms of gendered violence compounded by other intersectional inequalities have increased at an alarming rate. In Brazil, during the early stages of the pandemic in 2020, a 17 per cent increase in reporting domestic violence was initially noted, with a 50 per cent rise in domestic violence cases reported in the first weekend following lockdown in Rio de Janeiro (Marques *et al.*, 2020). In the UK, there was a 25 per cent increase in calls to domestic violence helplines and online requests for help. While estimates for migrant women, especially those with insecure immigration status, are much more difficult to ascertain, it has been widely assumed that the combination of lockdowns, precarity, structural violence and institutional racism has led to even higher increases of violence against them (McIlwaine, 2020a). This book reflects on both pre-COVID and 'living with COVID' times. We discuss the challenges faced by women but also think about the new collectives emerging in response to the crisis, which we have called 'emotional-political communities' (McIlwaine *et al.*, 2023a).

As we emerge from the pandemic, the book explores the specific experiences of women living in Maré in Rio de Janeiro and of Brazilian women who have migrated to London (predominantly from urban areas) across different scales: from the body to the community, city, country and transnationally. We refer to 'gendered urban violence' to include direct and indirect forms of violence and to capture its specifically urban dimensions (McIlwaine *et al.*, 2021; McIlwaine and Rizzini Ansari, 2022). In Rio de Janeiro, we

draw on our research in Maré, which is one of the largest groupings of favelas in the north of the city and has a vibrant and entrepreneurial population (Fernandes *et al.*, 2019). However, it is also overwhelmed by high levels of racialised poverty, inequality and public insecurity, exacerbated by the domination of the area by three of Rio de Janeiro's armed criminal groups (ACGs), which has also resulted in frequent violent incursions by the state's security forces (Sousa Silva, 2017) (see Figure 0.1).[6]

The book also examines the lives of Brazilian women living in London. The Brazilian population is the largest nationality group of the growing Latin American community in the city, which as a whole comprised 145,000 people distributed throughout the city in 2013 (and a quarter of a million in the UK as a whole) including second-generation and irregular migrants (McIlwaine and Bunge, 2016; McIlwaine and Evans, 2018) (see Figure 0.2).[7] Based on the 2021 census alone, this has increased to 150,654 Latin Americans in London.[8] While the Brazilians who arrive in London are rarely those who have been raised in favelas and instead tend to be well educated and from middle- or lower-middle-class backgrounds, many end up working in low-paid manual jobs under exploitative conditions exacerbated by poor language skills and insecure immigration status (Evans *et al.*, 2011; Martins Junior, 2020).

In both locations, we draw on primary research conducted through three core social science projects between 2017 and 2023, entailing surveys with over 1,200 women together with in-depth interviews with over eighty women survivors of violence as well as eighteen focus groups (including two groups with men), four body-mapping workshops, ten applied drama workshops, thirty-five interviews with service providers and participatory geographic information system (GIS) mapping (Krenzinger *et al.*, 2018a; Lopes Heimer *et al.*, 2022; McIlwaine and Evans, 2018; McIlwaine *et al.*, 2022a, 2022c, 2022d; McIlwaine *et al.*, 2023b; see Appendix 1). In addition, we have developed a range of artistic engagements including verbatim theatre performance, multimedia video installations, photography, film, poetry, social memory technology, animation, digital storytelling, a sound installation, Photovoice, a podcast and a storymap, with many aspects of these brought together in an exhibition in May 2022 (McIlwaine *et al.*, 2022b) (see Chapter 3).

As noted above, while the research into the 'painful truths' reveals many distressing experiences that reflect deep-seated racialised

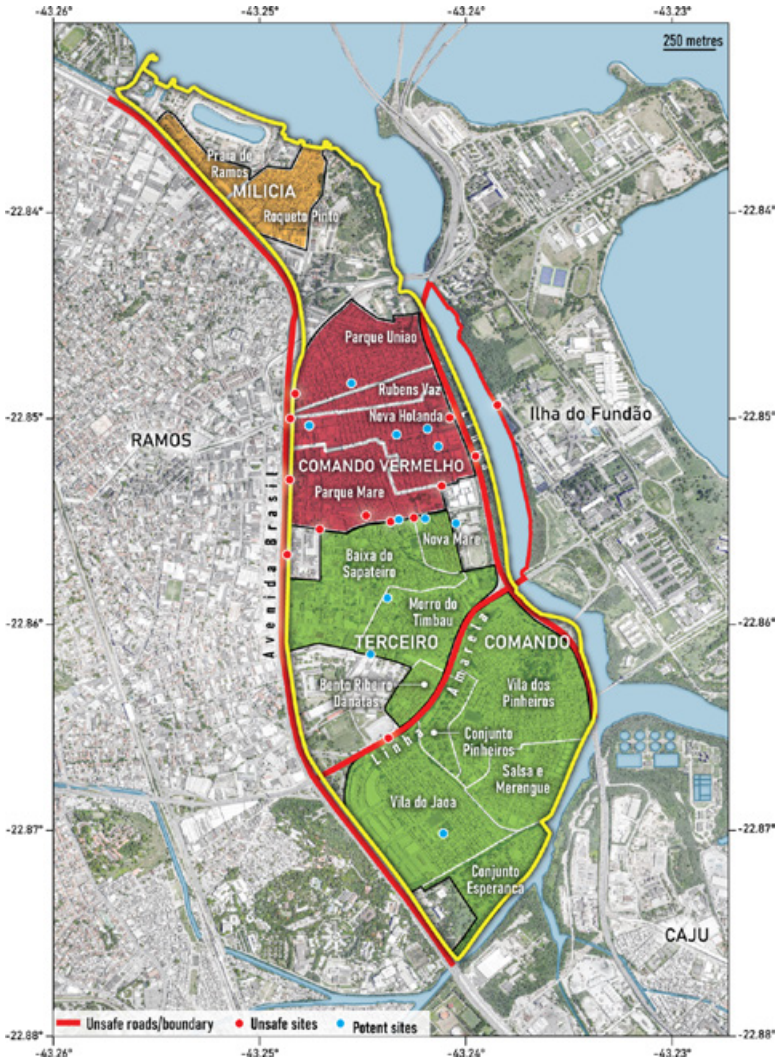

Figure 0.1 Map of the favelas of Maré, Rio de Janeiro, Brazil, showing safe and unsafe areas and those of 'power' (cartography by Steven Bernard; adapted from McIlwaine *et al.*, 2023b)

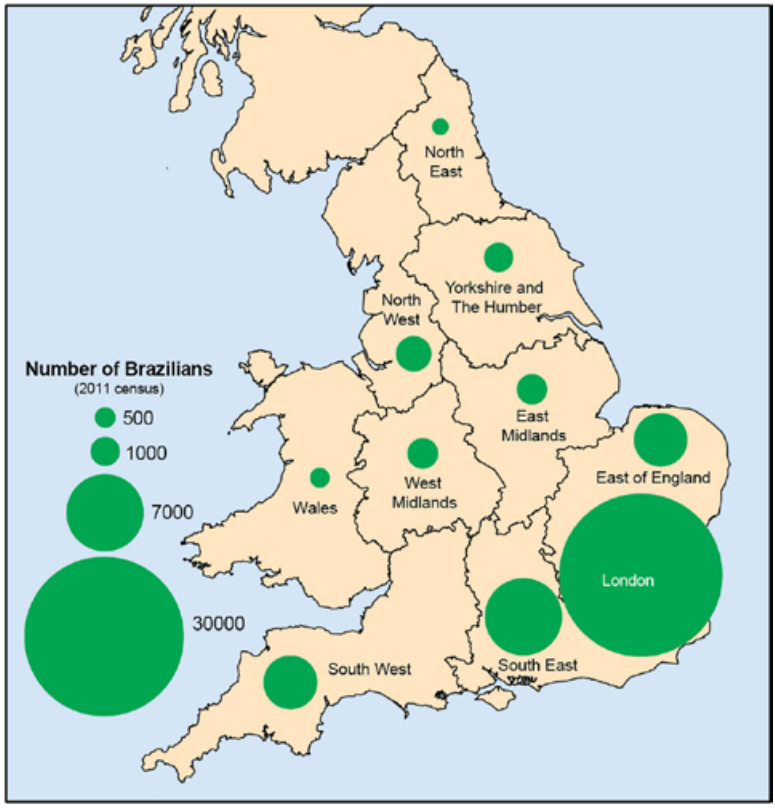

Figure 0.2a Distribution of Brazilians in London, 2011 (credit: ONS Census 2011, Office for National Statistics © Crown Copyright 2013; credit: Ed Oliver; adapted from McIlwaine and Evans, 2018)

misogyny where women are marginalised due to social identities that intersect with other structural inequalities, women not only develop resistance practices but they emerge as the mainstays of their communities. In Maré, women have invariably been the community leaders and community builders, those who have fought for their households, families and neighbourhoods. One such woman is Eliana Sousa Silva (a co-author), who is the Director of Redes da Maré, our partner organisation in Rio de Janeiro. In 2017, Eliana established a sister organisation, Casa das Mulheres da Maré (Women's House of Maré), in order to prioritise and support women's needs

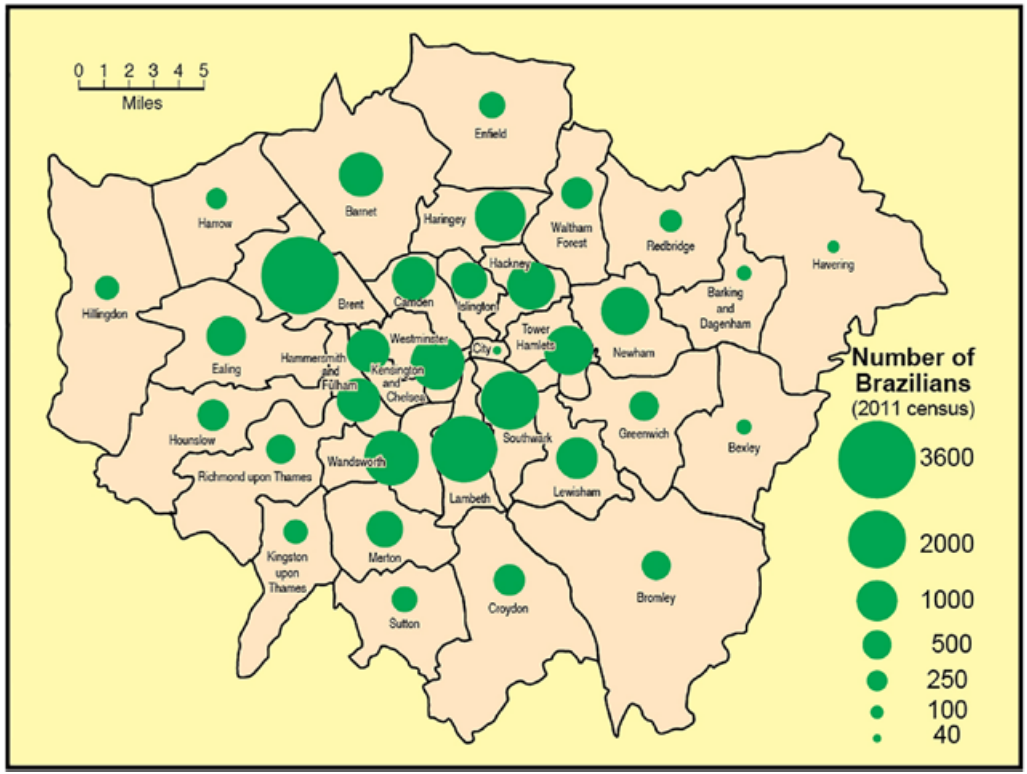

Figure 0.2b Distribution of Brazilians in the UK, 2011 (credit: ONS Census 2011, Office for National Statistics © Crown Copyright 2013; credit: Ed Oliver; adapted from McIlwaine and Evans, 2018)

(Krenzinger *et al.*, 2018a; also Rivera, 2018). The Casa das Mulheres da Maré was at the core of the fieldwork in Maré and continues to work on gender-based violence projects and has long-term collaborations with People's Palace Projects (PPP) (with co-author Paul Heritage) and the Federal University of Rio de Janeiro (UFRJ) (with co-author Miriam Krenzinger). We also worked with another partner, the Museu da Pessoa (Museum of the Person), with whom we developed a participatory digital storytelling exhibition using 'social memory technology' that shares collective biographical narratives through digital storytelling. These were compiled to produce community histories focusing on how women artists from Maré have developed resistance to gendered urban violence (Worcman and Garde-Hansen, 2016).

In London, Brazilian women migrants, and Latin American women migrants more generally, have been at the forefront of efforts to campaign for the visibilisation of the Latin American/Latinx community in the city and the UK more widely, led by one of our other partners, the Latin American Women's Rights Service (LAWRS) (McIlwaine and Bunge, 2016; McIlwaine *et al.*, 2011). The LAWRS has also been leading the way in highlighting the plight of migrant women who have experienced gender-based violence through a range of initiatives including the Step Up Migrant Women (SUMW) campaign led by the LAWRS and linked with the research discussed in this book. This lobbies for the rights of migrant women survivors of violence to access the support they need regardless of their immigration status (McIlwaine *et al.*, 2019). In addition, other community-based organisations, such as Migrants in Action (MinA), another key partner in our research, have also worked closely with Brazilian migrant survivors to develop understanding, solidarity and resistance through community theatre and the arts. We have also developed a transnational exchange between Redes da Maré/Casa das Mulheres and the LAWRS in 2023 as part of our translocational knowledge production and sharing approach, and worked with the King's Visual and Embodied Methodologies (VEM) network.

Core contributions of the book

The book contributes to three sets of debates around understanding and resisting gendered urban violence in two major cities spanning the Global North and Global South within contexts of gendered

exploitation, resistance and agency faced by Brazilian women in London and those residing in Maré in Rio de Janeiro.

The first debate focuses on the importance of recognising the multidimensional, intersectional, multiscalar and translocational nature of gender-based violence. The multidimensionality of such violence has long been recognised thanks to Liz Kelly's classic work (1988) on the continuum of sexual violence (Boesten, 2017; Smee, 2013), as has its intersectional nature (Crenshaw, 1991; Muñoz Cabrera, 2010). Yet, we argue for greater cognisance of the multiscalar nature of gender-based violence from a translocal and translocational perspective that situates it within wider structural relations of global capitalist colonial inequalities. This draws on existing feminist, and especially Latin American feminist, debates on how interconnected forms of gendered violence stretch across multiple geographies – from the intimate scale of the body in cities to the global and transnational – in ways that entrench and disrupt gender hierarchies across histories (Dominguez and Menjívar, 2014; Gago, 2020; Segato, 2016). However, our arguments focus more explicitly on the complex relationship between international migration and cities, recognising the unique position of each location within global networks of power and their uneven connection to other locations, regions and nation states (Çağlar and Glick Schiller, 2015). This leads us to suggest the need to move beyond multiscalarity as a lens for capturing gendered power relations and gendered urban violence towards a more translocal and translocational perspective that has yet to be explored in the context of gendered violence. We are inspired by the ideas of Sonia Alvarez *et al.* (2014) around translocalities/*translocalidades*, which refer to the multidirectional crossings inherent in geographies, epistemologies and politics of location and struggle in and beyond the Americas and which are mediated by structural modes of domination. Yet we also acknowledge the earlier critique of hybridities and 'old ethnicities' by Anthias (2001) who developed the concept of 'translocational postionality' to capture the complex locations and dislocations beyond just culture and identity in relation to identity boundaries and hierarchies that are deeply politicised (634). Building on calls for translocational interdisciplinary collaboration between academia and cultural agents and activists (Alvarez, 2009), we also argue that gendered violence is produced by ingrained and translocalised inequalities and that it can only be understood through engaging with grassroots organisations such as Redes da Maré, the LAWRS and MinA.

The second debate the book contributes to is based on burgeoning research on the relationships between everyday urban violence and gendered violence (McIlwaine, 2021a; Moser and McIlwaine, 2004, 2014) and especially how urban violence in its multiple forms is inherently gendered (Goldstein, 2013; Hume, 2009; Wilding, 2012), something not always recognised (Pavoni and Tulumello, 2020). As noted above, our use of the term 'gendered urban violence' captures both direct and indirect forms of violence. Yet, understanding such violence must acknowledge translocational processes, highlighting continuities and discontinuities among those residing in marginalised urban territories in the Global South and minoritised groups such as migrants who face complex forms of exploitation in cities of the Global North (Dominguez and Menjívar, 2014). This also relates to how gendered urban violence intersects with and is embedded within other forms of structural, symbolic and infrastructural violence (Bourgois, 2001; McIlwaine and Evans, 2023; Rodgers and O'Neill, 2012) in deeply gendered and intersectional ways (Menjívar, 2011). Feeding into debates around challenging gendered violence against women not as individualised but rather as structurally embedded violence (Menjívar and Walsh, 2017; Pain and Cahill, 2022), we focus on the specifically urban dimensions. We highlight how gendered violence is embedded within urban violence and urban living rather than treating it as a separate or invisible phenomena.

Third, the book contributes to growing research on the importance of interdisciplinary engagements between the social sciences and the arts. We focus on creative, visual and embodied responses to the intractable issue of gendered violence. With the incidence of gendered violence increasing and with interventions to reduce and/or eradicate it continuing to fall short, alternative forms of understanding and action are essential (Corcoran and Lane, 2018; Kinna and Whiteley, 2020). Taking the lead from Latin American artists and activists as well as ongoing work by social scientists who have engaged with creativity and especially the visual (Hawkins, 2014, 2017; Pink, 2013; Rose, 2016), we explore how arts-based engagements are more than a way to disseminate research (Kara, 2015). In addition, developing creative encounters is central to interpreting, representing and understanding issues of vulnerability among marginalised groups (Coemans and Hannes, 2017). We consider how moving beyond text towards the embodied, performative, sensory and visual dimensions can provide new insights into gendered violence (Leavy, 2017). The artistic

engagements we outline here contribute to ongoing work that uses performance to understand the experiences of migrant women (Jeffery *et al.*, 2019; Johnston and Pratt, 2020; Lenette, 2019; O'Neill *et al.*, 2019; Pratt and Johnston, 2015) and especially how this links with exploring place, space and identities through 'creative geographies' (Hawkins, 2014) that demand new imaginaries around complex issues (Rogers, 2012). Therefore, the arts can reach audiences that would not normally engage with academic research and can also communicate the 'painful truths' of gendered violence among the marginalised in embodied ways, especially from a feminist and translocational perspective (see Keifer-Boyd, 2019; Vachelli, 2018a, b).

We suggest that artistic engagements can potentially challenge and resist dominant discourses and that they have, at the very least, made it possible to deepen understandings of the 'painful truths' of gendered urban violence as well as raise awareness of an issue that is too often invisibilised or fetishised. We demonstrate this through engaging with artists who have curated, interpreted and translated our research across a wide spectrum of artistic media outputs. Many of these artists are from the territories where we are working or are closely associated with them. In Rio de Janeiro, Brazilian artist Bia Lessa created a multimedia installation entitled *SCAR* based primarily on the testimonies of twenty women interviewed. This was produced by PPP and showcased at the Southbank Centre's Women of the World (WOW) Festival in 2018. It took the form of a large physical structure in the shape of a box that housed newspapers and the videos of women speaking, as well as a bed of nails outside the box representing the wider favela. Audience reactions to the installation were captured using qualitative evaluation with audience members (Heritage, 2018b; Tiller, 2018) (see Figure 0.3).

In London, Brazilian writer and performer Gaël Le Cornec created a verbatim theatre play, *Efêmera*, also drawing mainly on the in-depth interviews with women survivors of violence, but also inspired by the survey, focus groups and service-mapping material. The play premiered at the Southwark Playhouse in London as part of the CASA Latin American Theatre Festival (another partner) in 2017, followed by two performances in Rio de Janeiro and three more at the Brighton Fringe Festival in 2018. In 2019, Gaël Le Cornec also turned *Efêmera* into a short film called *Ana* that has been shown at a range of international feminist film festivals throughout 2019 and 2020 (see Figure 0.4).

Figure 0.3 The 'city of nails' as part of *SCAR* at the WOW Festival, 2018 (credit: André Camara)

Our engagements with Bia Lessa and Gaël Le Cornec were very much focused on artists curating our research findings. This is encompassed in an evaluation of *SCAR* conducted by Chrissie Tiller (2018: 6), who noted:

> The question being asked is clear. Can an artist respond to and interpret research, and the data collected through academic research, in ways that make it more comprehensible, more immediate and reach wider audiences than if it had remained as a printed text? This is not to negate or question the value of the written report to those who need to grasp the assumptions it has made, examine its findings, understand the challenges and act on the policy recommendations. But rather to investigate the role of the artist as interpreter and translator of data and more formal knowledge – intervening in our experience, holding up a mirror to our world, enabling us to see things differently and creating space for reflection.

More recently, we have worked with artists in different ways, placing women at the centre of the curation through a process of co-production. In London, our collaboration with MinA, a community theatre group established by Carolina Cal Angrisani, developed a series of applied theatre workshops between 2021 and 2022. In these,

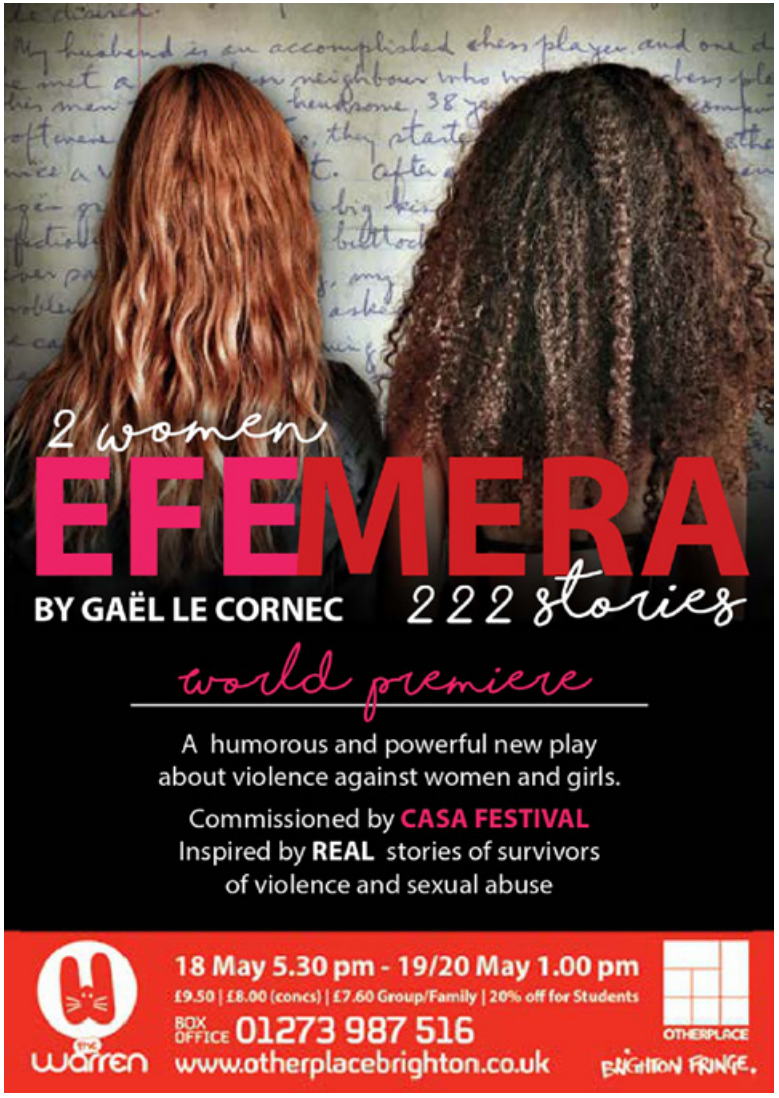

Figure 0.4 Flyer for *Efêmera* at Brighton Fringe Festival, 2018 (credit: Eloise Carles)

fourteen Brazilian migrant women survivors of violence interpreted our report *We Can't Fight in the Dark* (McIlwaine and Evans, 2018). This was again supported by PPP (with Renata Peppl as producer) and the LAWRS, and was facilitated by Carolina Cal, Nina Franco (visual artist), Alba Cabral (musician) and Louise Carpenedo (videographer). The workshops included poetry, music, art, storytelling and filmmaking to create a multimedia audiovisual installation with an

Figure 0.5 Making the multimedia video installation *We Still Fight in the Dark* by MinA, 2021, and artist Nina Franco (credit: Renata Peppl)

accompanying performance based on Boal's Theatre of the Oppressed methodology (Figure 0.5; McIlwaine *et al.*, 2022d).

In Rio de Janeiro, we combined curation with co-production through our work with the Museu da Pessoa which explored how ten women from Maré resisted gendered urban violence in different ways ranging from slam poetry to playing the violin to creating a clothing brand. Using social memory technology, which is a form of participatory digital storytelling, we contributed to an online exhibition, *Vidas Femininas* (Female Lives), launched in March 2022 by the museum.[9] This showed how women artists from Maré interpreted their realities through their art, capturing their efforts to resist the gendered violence they experienced through living there (McIlwaine *et al.*, 2022a).

In addition, a podcast project, Women Resisting Violence (WRV) (in collaboration with the Latin America Bureau (LAB), another partner; Figure 0.6), is also discussed at various points in the book

Figure 0.6 Women Resisting Violence podcast with LAB (credit: Lilophilia/Liliana A. Romero)

given that two of the three episodes focus on our research: the first documents the experiences of women at the Casa das Mulheres da Maré in Rio de Janeiro, and the second details the SUMW work led by the LAWRS and that of MinA in London (Women Resisting Violence Collective, 2022b). Here, the aim was for the public to listen to grassroots resistance to violence and to engender wider social transformation (see Chapter 2).[10]

Our multiple social science and artistic engagements aimed at understanding gendered urban violence to encompass several approaches. These have ranged from mapping and revealing the 'painful truths' of gendered urban violence and resistance to curating interpretations of it through different art forms and collaborating with survivors and residents to develop a creative analysis of the everyday experiences of violence from their perspective. Therefore, the book is not about one objective truth about gendered urban violence in one place with one cause. Rather, it acknowledges multiple personal and intersubjective truths that play out on the body individually, structurally and translocationally in embodied ways that are also inherently challenged from a range of perspectives.

Revealing gendered urban violence transnationally and translocationally

The exact relationship between gender-based violence and urbanisation remains complex and contradictory, yet there is a broad consensus that women experience heightened levels of insecurity and conflict in cities (McIlwaine, 2021a; Moser and McIlwaine, 2014). Indeed, UN-Habitat (2007) estimated that women are twice as likely to experience violence in cities, especially in the Global South. Furthermore, within cities, gendered urban violence tends to be concentrated among those living in poorer communities and in the most marginalised situations in the Global South (Chant, 2013; Chant and McIlwaine, 2016) and in the Global North (Dominguez and Menjívar, 2014). Given that cities are part of global urban systems, it is also increasingly important to investigate the interconnections between cities in the Global South and Global North (Peake, 2016).

Urban systems and networks are bolstered by international migration, especially in terms of flows between cities of the Global

South and Global North. Indeed, it is now acknowledged that international migration is highly urbanised through connections between cities across (and within) borders generated by such movements (IOM, 2015: 2). As noted above, there is also increasing recognition that, while not exactly commensurate, there are continuities between the experiences of those living in marginalised situations in cities of the Global South and those of low-income and/or ethnic minorities in the Global North, including multiple exclusions and 'devaluation of personhood' (Dominguez and Menjívar, 2014: 193). While these claims focus on connections within the Americas (Auyero and de Lara, 2012; Dominguez and Menjívar, 2014), there is scope to extend these across other borders, not least as processes and patterns of migration from Latin America have shifted towards Europe in recent years (McIlwaine and Ryburn, 2019).

Not only are there interesting empirical insights to be garnered through such a perspective but there are theoretical possibilities that can shed light on the 'processes and mechanisms that lie at the centre of the reproduction (and in some cases, extension) of urban relegation' (Auyero, 2011: 432). This is also relevant across multiple contexts of gendered vulnerability. Such thinking across borders allows for 'transnational theorising', where theory is developed across places in ways that challenge comparative hierarchies and prioritise understanding the lives of people in different contexts, using tools that are relevant for these places and which reflect transnational dialogue (Browne *et al.*, 2021). This is not 'big boy' (Hall, 2019) or 'major' theory (Katz, 1996) but rather an approach which interlinks theories and practices of everyday life that are firmly situated within their local context. This also resonates with Parnell and Pieterse's (2016: 236) 'translational urban research praxis' which is 'deeply political and locationally embedded', incorporating combinations of applied and co-produced research through the journey of the work from conception to reflection. While Parnell and Pieterse (2016) argue from the perspective of African cities, we are centring our work from Latin American cities and feminist perspectives.

This is why we draw on the translocalities/*translocalidades* lens developed by Alvarez *et al.* (2014) as well as the work of Anthias (2001) on 'translocational positionality' which we adapt for understanding gendered urban violence, not least because this allows us to challenge ideas that certain types of violence against

women only occur in far-off places where patriarchal norms are somehow different and which can lead to a fetishisation of violence (Boesten and Henry, 2018; de Souza and Rodrigues Selis, 2022). Indeed, it is essential to acknowledge that patriarchal norms in Brazil are the product of sexist and racist colonial legacies that interrelate with neoliberal capitalist development in Latin America more widely (Carneiro, 2003; Ribeiro, 2016; Segato, 2016, 2018). These issues are addressed through examining the continuities and endurances in experiences of gendered violence among different women in varied yet directly related contexts, especially through the development of our conceptualisation of the 'translocational gendered urban violence framework' (see Chapter 1).

Reiterating the point made at the beginning of this introduction, the research on which the book is based does not therefore entail a standard comparative study. Instead, our research empirically and conceptually maps the lives of women whose experiences are intertwined translocationally in embedded and embodied ways. They have been born in the same country, been socialised and exposed to similar cultures, exclusions and inclusions and have all experienced systemic intersectional gender inequalities and violence. We are interested in how gendered urban violence perpetrated by men against cis and trans women and girls is manifested in different places and how territory, place, scale and space relate with and are interpolated within state and structural violence, racism and xenophobia and wider forms of endemic urban violence, all underpinned by insidious colonial legacies. We show that gendered urban violence is hugely diverse among residents of Maré, Rio de Janeiro, and among Brazilians in London, intersecting with many other forms of direct and indirect forms of violence, yet also resisted.

Translocational knowledge production across academic, civil society and creative partnerships

Reframing understandings of and visibilising violence in cities, empirically and conceptually and in translocational ways, lies at the core of this book. Just as Browne *et al.* (2017) note the 'transnational as methodology', our focus is on the 'translocational as methodology' (see Chapter 2). This incorporates ideas around the

need to query comparative methodologies in order to emphasise divergences and also to acknowledge the importance of North–South collaborations, especially in terms of partnerships among academics and activists. These are especially important in understanding and challenging gendered violence (Piedalue, 2022). Yet here, we also include artistic collaborations across borders, disciplines and scales to produce knowledge and enhance understanding of gendered violence. Indeed, our translocational methodology involves engaging across disciplinary boundaries between the social sciences and the arts in order to explore the meanings of gendered urban violence, for example, through creating artistic performances, drawing especially on the experiences of one co-author, Paul Heritage, and the associated work of PPP (Heritage, 2005; Heritage and Stewart, 2011; Heritage and Ramos, 2015a, b).

The book therefore draws on academic, civil society and creative/artistic partnerships with a range of people and groups through which we produced knowledge in London and Rio de Janeiro in an ethical and participatory way which became increasingly co-produced (Mitlin and Bartlett, 2018). In addition to the academic aims of the research, it also addressed the needs of our key civil society partners in London and Rio de Janeiro. Redes da Maré (and Casa das Mulheres da Maré) and the LAWRS, while having worked with their constituencies for several decades, both lacked sufficiently robust information on women's experiences of gendered violence for multiple reasons including lack of resources and time in the face of other often more immediate challenges. The research on which this book draws goes some way to addressing these gaps in knowledge.

An important aspect of the co-production was working closely with a wide range of field researchers. While all the authors of this book conducted various aspects of the data collection, the research would not have been possible without them, most of whom were associated with our partner organisations. Since the first project where the Brazilian team included the field researchers in some of their publications (Krenzinger *et al.*, 2018a) but the London team did not (although see McIlwaine *et al.*, 2019), we have moved towards more inclusive writing processes over time. For example, Brazilian researchers have been co-authors in all the reports from the second stage (Lopes Heimer *et al.*, 2022; McIlwaine *et al.*, 2022a,

2022c, 2022d) and several journal papers to date (McIlwaine *et al*., 2023a, b). All the key reports from stages one and two have also been published in English and Portuguese (Krenzinger *et al*. 2018b; McIlwaine and Evans, 2018; McIlwaine *et al*., 2022c).

The nature of co-production therefore varied in the two contexts. While we began with an eagerness to learn about Brazilian women's experiences, our 'translocational methodology' became more collaborative. In our initial mapping of women's experiences of gendered violence, we aimed to ensure that women survivors' voices were heard. We also ensured this through the subsequent artistic engagements, especially with Bia Lessa, Gaël Le Cornec and MinA. Yet, with our second and third projects, we were more active in acknowledging the accumulated knowledge of our partners in Maré and in London, valuing them as indispensable subjects of information. We sought not merely to talk about women, but with them. In our second and third projects, research participants and field researchers in Maré and London were seen as protagonists in knowledge generation. This reflected a feminist decolonial stance (Zaragocín and Caretta, 2021) in our co-creation that did not emerge in a ready-made manner, despite being an original aspiration. It resulted from a long process of exchanges within the transnational, cross-institutional and translocational partnerships. We do not suggest that we got it completely right, but we have certainly learned over the process of the research that continues today.

The co-production of the research has extended to the writing of the book. While not everyone who was involved in the research and artistic activities discussed here are co-authors, the writing team comprises the core researchers (principal and co-investigators and postdoctoral researchers) from the two main projects in the UK and Brazil. We are a mixed British–Brazilian team who have all contributed in various ways to the process. Taking a 'multimode writing' approach (Lingard, 2021), this has entailed several authors writing on behalf of the team, with revisions and comments being included in the text. Individual contributions varied, but all participants aimed to exchange our experiences across the '*fronteiras da diferença*' (boundaries of difference) (Caldwell, 2000; also Feltran, 2020) and the boundaries of commonality that we developed through our work.

Structure of the book

While this introduction has delineated the core themes and contributions of the book, Chapter 1 outlines the conceptual framing in relation to the 'translocational gendered urban violence framework'. This is preceded by a discussion of defining and categorising gender-based and gendered urban violence, and an outline of the incidence of such violence in cities and among international migrants. We also delineate the transnational continuum of gendered urban violence which underpins the framework.

The second chapter outlines the epistemological and methodological approaches used to conduct the empirical research in Rio de Janeiro and London including the arts-based methods and creative translations. We discuss our approach as 'translocational feminist tracing'. This incorporates flows of ideas and people through transnational dialogue based on a feminist epistemological approach, speaking across disciplines and beyond the academy to generate transnational mutual learning across borders. Chapter 2 outlines the two main stages of the social science research and the methods developed in each, highlighting a shift from mapping gendered urban violence through traditional social science tools and engaging with artists through curation of the research to a more co-produced and participatory approach using innovative methods and creative engagements.

Chapter 3 situates the empirical context for the book by providing an overview of the women included in the research in Rio de Janeiro and London: the nature of their lives, education, occupational backgrounds and so on. This chapter also briefly outlines the prevalence and nature of the violence in London and in Maré, drawing on the primary research. It highlights the diversity and multidimensionality of violence against women and illustrates how it is a complex geometry of different types bolstered by indirect violence rooted in deep-seated gendered hierarchies. It also outlines how gender-based violence has been addressed from legislative and policy perspectives before concluding with reflections from service providers in Rio de Janeiro and London.

The translocational gendered urban violence framework outlined in Chapter 1 provides the conceptual structure for Chapters 4–7, breaking down the component parts of the framework. While

Chapters 4 and 5 focus on the private and public domains with the transnational included across both, Chapter 6 concentrates on infrastructural violence, while Chapter 7 addresses resistance. Structural and symbolic violence are cross-cutting issues from the framework, as are embodiment and creative engagements and practices. The duality between the private and public domains reflected in the chapters' organisation is an analytical strategy to arrange the most diverse, multidimensional and transnational experiences of violence that the research detected. In terms of women's everyday lived experiences, these seemingly opposed spheres are indeed permeable and mutually interrelated. Bearing this in mind, Chapter 4 explores gendered urban violence in the private sphere in London and Maré. Although the discussion revolves primarily around intimate partner violence, it also considers non-intimate partner violence that can also occur in the home by male relatives, friends and strangers. It shows that women experience diverse and overlapping types of violence that are not one-off events. The chapter considers the causes of intra-family violence as they intersect with other types of indirect structural, symbolic and infrastructural violence and how these vary according to a range of different intersectionalities including immigration status, nationality, class, race, ethnicity and sexuality. In the case of London, we highlight how immigration status is mobilised as a tool of manipulation and control by intimate partners. In Maré, we foreground how gender-based violence in the private sphere is bolstered by wider public insecurity on the part of the police and armed groups. Throughout the chapters, we reflect on how contestations around the meaning of gendered violence have been understood, embodied and communicated through the multiple artistic works in London and Maré.

Chapter 5 examines gendered urban violence in the public sphere; while some intimate partner violence occurred in spaces beyond the home, much of this was perpetrated by non-partners and mainly those already known to women. The chapter focuses on violence in work-related spaces in London, and especially on the role of immigration status and how this links with workplace exploitation, triggering symbolic violence through discrimination bolstered by racism and sexism. In Maré, it addresses the close linkages between gender-based violence and other forms of urban violence and armed conflict. The territorial dimensions of gendered

urban violence are explored in terms of how the intersections between gendered and wider urban violence affect women's mobility around the city. In both cases, racialisation plays a significant role in underplaying the brutal intersections of structural, symbolic and infrastructural gendered violence. As in Chapter 4, the nature of gendered violence is assessed through engagements with the artistic material to deepen the understanding of gendered violence in public spheres in cities.

Chapter 6 considers the gendered infrastructural violence faced by women in London and Maré in terms of the barriers they face in accessing support when they experience gender-based violence, and as a form of structural violence. In London, the chapter outlines the challenges faced by women when trying to report violence to formal services, especially when they have insecure immigration status. It details their experiences of fear and stigma, coupled with English language difficulties and underpinned by institutional racism. In Maré, the chapter discusses difficulties women face when it comes to formally reporting violence and how some have no choice but to turn to the armed gangs to mete out 'justice'. Barriers to support for women are thus analysed as a form of gendered infrastructural violence that can also lead to the intensification of further forms of direct gender-based violence. Again, several aspects of the creative encounters highlight how women experience exclusion and re-traumatisation in an embodied and visceral way.

Chapter 7 outlines how women in London and Maré negotiate and resist gendered urban violence. This entails everyday short- and longer-term coping and resistance practices to deal with discrimination and stigma as well as private and public violence. In Maré, the practices are especially powerful, where resilience has built up over time, transforming into multiple forms of resistance from the grassroots up. In London, where the Brazilian community is more disparate in terms of territorial distribution, the focus is on coping mechanisms and the role of civil society organisations in engendering resistance. The chapter engages closely with the work of MinA and their multimedia video installation and the collaboration with the Museum of the Person, reflecting on how various artistic practices can enable women to challenge gendered urban violence in innovative ways.

The conclusion to the book reiterates the core contributions outlined in the introduction but also identifies additional emergent themes as well as drawing some lessons learned. We assess the value of the 'translocational gendered urban violence framework' and our 'translocational feminist tracing methodological framework' as approaches to understanding and reframing gendered urban violence in other contexts and across literal and figurative borders and boundaries. The chapter shows how women survivors' experiences are at the core of the book along with the complex, innovative and inspiring ways that they deal with and resist violence, all with a view to engendering wider empathetic transformations to address it. We argue for the importance of creative encounters in enhancing understanding of gendered urban violence as well as raising awareness and engendering change. The conclusion also reflects on similarities and differences in working with Brazilian women in Maré and London together with how their experiences echo those of other women living in marginalised urban territories and migrating from and to other countries.

Before turning to Chapter 1, we would like to warn that while the book is replete with cases of resistance and protagonism among Brazilian women, their stories are harrowing. The gendered urban violence women experience is extreme. Not only are their lives dominated by state repression and symbolic intersectional oppressions, but they experience direct forms of gender-based violence perpetrated by men as fathers, stepfathers, uncles, husbands, partners, neighbours, employers, work colleagues and strangers on public transport and the streets of the city. Their narratives are traumatic and difficult to read about. However, they also reflect a deep empathy and transformative potential, to which we return in the conclusion.

Notes

1 Gender-based violence can entail violence against men, boys, transgender, other sexual minorities and those with gender-nonconforming identities. Violence against women and girls is therefore a form of gender-based violence (see Chapter 1).

2 These words are also spoken in a short film produced as part of the project: https://youtu.be/LPDNxtWB9e0 (accessed 17 January 2024).

3 The book and underlying research refer mainly to cisgender women and men but also acknowledge that gender identities exist across a spectrum and include 'non-binary', 'other' and transgender. Several trans women were included in the research in Brazil and the UK.

4 All the quotations in the book come directly from the research unless otherwise stated or when the quotations have appeared in other publications.

5 See www.ons.gov.uk/peoplepopulationandcommunity/crimeandjustice/datasets/domesticabuseprevalenceandvictimcharacteristicsappendixtables (accessed 28 March 2022).

6 The use of the term 'favela' in this book aligns with an important process of resignification by articulating the term's political-historical heritage and asserting its potency for social struggles. Residents in favelas often use the term 'community' to refer to these areas. However, refuting the use of 'community' by those outside as a euphemism and reclaiming the term 'favela' as a potent form of collective self-affirmation has been reactivated by activist voices (Valladares, 2005). At times, we refer to 'favela community' when referring to the specific ways in which favelas evoke a community-based sociability, identity, normativity and territoriality.

7 In relation to migration, we use the term Latin American, which refers to those who have migrated from a Spanish or Portuguese-speaking country in the continent of Latin America and the Caribbean. Other terms are also relevant and contested. The most common are 'Latinos(as)' or, increasingly, 'Latinx' (singular) and Latinxs (plural). These aim to ensure gender neutrality and allow those identifying outside a gender binary to be included. It is also important to note that many Brazilians (as migrants and at home) do not consider themselves to be Latin American but Brazilian (McIlwaine *et al.*, 2011; also Martins Junior, 2020).

8 Data analysed from the Office for National Statistics (ONS). See www.ons.gov.uk/datasets/TS004/editions/2021/versions/3 (accessed 6 September 2023).

9 See https://vidasfemininas.museudapessoa.org/en/themes/?filter=art-resistence (accessed 22 January 2023).

10 See https://lab.org.uk/wrv/podcast/ (accessed 22 February 2023).

1

Translocational gendered urban violence conceptual framework

This chapter outlines how researching and understanding the 'painful truths' of gendered urban violence can be usefully analysed through a 'translocational gendered urban violence framework', which forms the conceptual foundation for the book. We delineate the transnational continuum of gendered urban violence which underpins the framework, and outline the key categorisations and definitions of violence against women and girls which are themselves diverse and intersectional across the overlapping private, public and transnational spheres. We also briefly outline the incidence of such violence in cities and among transnational migrants. The 'translocational gendered urban violence framework' is then presented as a heuristic tool for understanding the dynamics of gendered urban violence, with a focus on how direct violence against migrant women and women living in peripheral territories is fundamentally rooted in deep-seated gendered inequalities of power which intersect with other forms of indirect structural, symbolic and infrastructural violence. This framework seeks to emphasise how gendered urban violence is not an individual phenomenon but one deeply embedded and embodied within intersectional and translocational power structures. Women's protagonism is incorporated within the framework through pinpointing embodied creative and everyday resistance practices. In highlighting how gendered urban violence is embedded within wider circuits of power and control across scales, this approach can capture a feminist politics of translation and insist on a transformational perspective.

Delineating and categorising gender-based and gendered urban violence

Having identified in the introduction the key debates and contributions underpinning the book, it is important to explore what is meant by gender-based violence, violence against women and girls and gendered urban violence, not least because definitions have evolved, broadened and been contested over time. The majority of definitions of gendered violence, violence against women (VAW), violence against women and girls (VAWG) and gender-based violence (GBV) date back to the 1990s and draw on the declarations associated with the UN Convention for the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women (CEDAW) and, specifically, on the 1993 UN Declaration of the Elimination of Violence against Women in Article 1. Here, violence against women is defined as: 'Any act of gender-based violence that results in, or is likely to result in, physical, sexual or psychological harm or suffering to women, including threats of such acts, coercion or arbitrary deprivations of liberty, whether occurring in public or in private life'. This is expanded in Article 2 to note that it may occur in the family or community and be perpetrated or condoned by the state. Specifically, it identifies violence against women as:

> (a) Physical, sexual and psychological violence occurring in the family, including battering, sexual abuse of female children in the household, dowry-related violence, marital rape, female genital mutilation and other traditional practices harmful to women, non-spousal violence and violence related to exploitation; (b) Physical, sexual and psychological violence occurring within the general community, including rape, sexual abuse, sexual harassment and intimidation at work, in educational institutions and elsewhere, trafficking in women and forced prostitution; (c) Physical, sexual and psychological violence perpetrated or condoned by the State, wherever it occurs.[1]

Similar definitions were incorporated into the 1994 Belém do Pará Convention of the Organisation of American States (also known as the Inter-American Convention on the Prevention, Punishment, and Eradication of Violence against Women), which is the primary reference point for Latin American countries. These have also been

broadened further in the Beijing Platform for Action, with an explicit link to human rights and recognition that 'refugee women, women migrants, including women migrant workers … destitute women, women in institutions … are particularly vulnerable to violence'.[2] In turn, UN Women identifies 'Ending Violence against Women and Girls' as one of its nine priority areas,[3] and since 2015, it has included forced pregnancy and abortion, 'honour crimes', stalking, sorcery/witchcraft-related violence and child, early and forced marriage as forms of violence against women (UN Women, 2015: 13). The word 'girls' is used in the terms to ensure that certain types of violence are included such as child, early and forced marriage and female genital mutilation and cutting (FGM/C) in recognition that such violence affects women throughout their lives from childhood into older age. Also important is that gender identity is non-binary and fluid with ramifications for the types of violence that women experience in intersectional ways (Doan, 2010). In 2011, the UN Human Rights Council adopted the first UN resolution on sexual orientation and gender identity that acknowledged that LGBTQI+ people experienced disproportionately high levels of discrimination, with subsequent amendments acknowledging their experiences of gender-based violence (Hughes *et al.*, 2016), some of which are specifically linked with their sexual identities, such as 'corrective rape'.[4]

These definitions have been the result of complex negotiations among feminist movements, academics and with international organisations (Kelly, 2005). At their root, they reflect how, although all violence is inherently gendered, gendered violence occurs where the motive for the violence is gender-based and where the victim/survivor is directly targeted because of their gender among those who identify as women and/or girls and trans women and where the perpetrator is a man. Gender-based violence can also be perpetrated against men, against sexual minorities and/or those with gender-nonconforming identities, although men are the main perpetrators. In turn, female-on-male violence is also perpetrated, albeit in lower proportions than male-on-female (Scott-Storey *et al.*, 2023). From a feminist perspective, it has been argued that the term 'gender-based violence' can depoliticise the violence, deflecting attention from the fact that women and girls disproportionately experience such violence at the hands of men. The term gender-based violence illustrates how women can harm other women, also allowing

for avoidance of binary and heteronormative categorisations and emphasising the importance of gendered and deeply asymmetric patriarchal power dynamics (Piedalue *et al.*, 2020). In general, the acronyms VAW (violence against women), VAWG (violence against women and girls) and GBV (gender-based violence) are not used in the book. This is to ensure that such violence is not sanitised and that in writing the terms out in full, the brutal realities of the harm underpinning the terms are not forgotten. We therefore use gender-based violence, gendered violence and violence against women and girls, acknowledging that these terms are contested and based on the assumption that the perpetrators are invariably men.

Central to contemporary definitions of gender-based violence is that they extend across private and public domains. On one hand, there has been a concerted effort to foreground violence that occurs within the home and family (intimate partner and non-intimate partner violence) in order to challenge the notion that it is private and therefore immune to being recognised as violence or as a crime, especially by the state (Borges, 2017; Kelly, 2005). On the other hand, a huge diversity of types of violence against women have now been recognised entailing physical, sexual and psychological violence in a wide range of contexts. The acknowledgement of psychological and emotional violence has been especially important, although it is the form least likely to be identified as violence by women themselves and by states and therefore has the least available data (UN Women, 2015) and is the least likely to be prosecuted (Boesten, 2012). Indeed, violence within the home, and specifically intimate partner violence, has often been invisibilised when it comes to seeking legal redress, with women commonly held culpable and impunity being the order of the day (Brickell, 2015, 2020).

As part of the recognition that gender-based violence is multidimensional, and drawing on Crenshaw's (1991) seminal work on African American women's experiences of domestic violence, it is essential to conceptualise this violence as deeply intersectional, with certain women more or less likely to experience it than others or in different ways according to their varying and interrelating identities. Those most likely to experience disproportionate levels of gendered violence include women from certain ethnic or racial groups, those with disabilities, lesbian, bisexual or transgender women, sex workers (UN Women, 2015) and especially migrant women

(Bastia, 2014; Bastia *et al*., 2023). Different types of violence intersect in causal ways, something that has been incorporated into ideas around the continuum of violence against women (Kelly, 1988; Kelly 2013; see below). At the core of these ideas is that minoritised women are situated within a complex interlocking matrix of power (Hill Collins, 1990). To understand the gender-based violence they experience, it is not enough to focus on their individual experiences and social norms around them but rather to also acknowledge wider structural processes of colonialism, state power and global migration dynamics (Sokoloff, 2008). This process requires extreme caution in using culturally essentialist interpretations when exploring gender-based violence among minoritised and migrant women (Sokoloff and Dupont, 2005). While it may be true that migrant women and/or minoritised women experience disproportionate levels of gendered violence, this is not because of their culture (Fluri and Piedalue, 2017). Rather, it is more likely to be linked with women's location within various structural systems of intersectional oppressions.

As noted in the introduction, and drawing from the work of Latin American feminists who have developed the concept of intersectionality (Carneiro, 2003; Lugones, 2007, 2010; Nascimento, 2021) and others, it is important to note Afro-descendant and/or Indigenous women may face disproportionate levels of gender-based violence based on their race and class position (Caldwell, 2000; dos Santos, 2017; Perry, 2016), as may lesbians, trans women and those from gender-nonconforming identities (Bastian Duarte, 2012), migrant women and women trying to exercise their reproductive rights (Women Resisting Violence Collective, 2022a). Gendered violence in the continent is thus rooted in a patriarchal, colonial and slave society which materialises in racist, socially excluding, sexist, homophobic and transphobic practices, all of which are especially marked in Brazil (Carneiro, 2003; Ribeiro, 2016; Segato, 2016). The violence of coloniality linked with what Lugones (2007) has denoted as the 'coloniality of gender' is at the core of much discussion of indirect and structural forms of gendered violence in Latin America. Decolonial feminists often refer to the region as Abya Yala to resist the racism, sexism and heteronormativity which is implicated within the colonial project and has since promoted various forms of violence against Indigenous, Black, lesbian and trans women. It is important to talk about gendered violence in the plural to ensure that this

encompasses its multidimensionality and intersectionality as well as its direct and indirect forms.

This thinking also feeds into debates around 'femicide' and 'feminicide' which also have conceptual roots in Latin American feminist debates and the murder of women in Ciudad Juárez in particular (Fregoso and Bejarano, 2010; Wright, 2001, 2011). In its simplest terms, femicide refers to the intentional murder of women because they are women (Radford and Russell, 1992). Yet, Marcela Lagarde y de los Ríos (2010) developed the term 'feminicide' as a specifically Latin American translation of femicide/*femicidio* – which was deemed to be North American in nature. As noted by Fregoso and Bejarano (2010: 5): 'Our translation of *feminicidio* into feminicide rather than femicide is designed to reverse the hierarchies of knowledge and challenge claims about unidirectional (North-to-South) flows of traveling theory', reflecting a translocational perspective (see below). Lagarde y de los Ríos's terminology was also based on the recognition that murders of women are rooted in gendered power structures where the state and society are culpable in the perpetration of gendered violence and in ensuring impunity. Feminicide can occur in both private and public spheres by individual and state perpetrators directly and indirectly in systematic and everyday ways, and it is bolstered by misogyny, racism and economic injustices (Fregoso and Bejarano, 2010; Menjívar and Walsh, 2017). For decolonial feminists such as Rita Segato (2014), the destructive nature of colonialism perpetuates the war against women's bodies as part of a wider corporeal decimation through *femi(geno)cidio* (femicide-genocide).

Throughout Latin America, femicide and feminicide have been criminialised by states, supported by the legally binding Belém do Pará Convention overseen by the Inter-American Court of Human Rights. More specifically, the Inter-American Court of Human Rights Gonzalez v. Mexico ('Cotton Field') case enshrined the commitment of all states to protect the rights of women to live free from violence. In 2023, all countries from the Central and South Americas – with the exception of Belize and the Guianas – had legislation criminalising femicide (Pasinato and de Ávila, 2023). In Brazil, femicide was identified as a specific crime in the Brazilian Penal Code in 2015 as a sub-category of murder where women are killed as a result of their 'female sex', whether directly or due to discrimination (de Ávila, 2018). This is in addition to the 2006 Maria da Penha Law which defines domestic and family violence against women

(see Chapter 2). Other forms of femicide have been noted in Brazil on the basis of gender identities and sexualities including lesbocide, travesticide and transfemicide (Davidson, 2020). These definitions in part came about due to the very high levels of these types of killings in the country (Féliz de Souza and Rodrigues Selis, 2022). The extensive legislation on femicide and feminicide has not led to a reduction in their incidence, as is explored below (Pasinato and de Ávila, 2023).

It is important to re-emphasise that we use the term 'gendered urban violence' in order to capture both direct and indirect gender-based violence, driven by wider urbanisation processes that recognise how cities are embedded within intersectional, multiscalar and translocal power circuits (McIlwaine and Rizzini Ansari, 2022).

Incidence of gender-based violence in cities and among international migrants

Accurate information on the incidence of gendered violence among women living in cities and among international migrants is difficult to ascertain. Focusing on direct forms of gender-based violence, one of the clearest methodological challenges is under-reporting, with Palermo *et al*. (2014) stating that only 7 per cent of women worldwide report to a formal source such as the police and/or some other judicial entity. The World Health Organization (WHO) and UN Women have recently recognised these data limitations and, as a result, launched a five-year global programme (2018–2022) in an attempt to strengthen methodologies and improve data collection (although this programme focuses on lifetime physical and sexual intimate partner violence).[5] This has revealed that lifetime physical and/or sexual intimate partner violence ranges hugely: from 58.5 per cent in Bolivia (2016) to 17 per cent in Brazil (2018) (see also Thomson and Muñoz Cabrera, 2022: xxi). In the UK, this rate was measured at 29 per cent.[6] This data gathering drew on the WHO (2013) global review that showed that 35 per cent of women worldwide have experienced either physical and/or sexual intimate partner violence or non-partner sexual violence.

In terms of variations in cities, as noted in the introduction, it has been estimated that women are twice as likely to experience gendered violence compared to their male counterparts (UN-Habitat,

2007). However, recent accurate data is difficult to access. Although young men are often most likely to experience fatal urban violence, especially that associated with gangs, this is rarely the result of gender-based violence (Jutersonke *et al*., 2009; Wilding, 2012). This said, women can experience severe trauma as a result of dealing with violence and especially the killing of partners, sons and other male relatives. In Brazil, this is often anti-Black state violence against men but where Black women suffer from a 'slow death' of depression, anxiety and pain (Perry, 2013). Smith (2016) defines this as 'sequalae' or 'lingering trauma', referring to the physical and emotional effects of widespread state-sanctioned violence. Returning to incidence of interpersonal violence, recent analyses have shown that, while not always the case, intimate partner violence is less prevalent in cities than the countryside, while violence by a non-partner is higher in urban areas. For example, in Brazil, 37 per cent of women in rural areas and 29 per cent of those in urban areas had experienced physical or sexual intimate partner violence; in contrast, 23 per cent of rural women had experienced non-intimate partner violence compared to 40 per cent in cities (McIlwaine, 2013: 67).

While not reflecting prevalence as such, but rather tolerance levels and reporting, data shows that women in cities are less likely than those living in rural areas to condone intimate partner violence, linking directly to debates around urban dwellings being potentially emancipatory (Bradshaw, 2013; Chant, 2013; see below). However, there are variations within cities. Rates of gender-based violence are usually higher in poorer neighbourhoods where security can be compromised through living in makeshift dwellings, inadequate urban infrastructure provision such as street lighting and limited access to sanitation facilities (Chant and McIlwaine, 2016). In addition, in such territories, women often end up working in occupations that expose them to gendered violence (McIlwaine, 2016). Residing in poor urban communities thus exposes women to multiple forms of indirect and direct gendered violence – as they negotiate a range of structural inequalities exacerbated by the urban violence perpetrated by gangs and state security forces (Beebeejaun, 2017).

Turning to international migrants' experiences of gender-based violence, most quantitative research on prevalence focuses on ethnicity over migrant status (Loya, 2014). When migrant status is analysed, there is much debate over whether such violence is more prevalent

among migrant women compared to non-migrants, with analyses undermined by a lack of reliable data and by prejudice (Menjívar and Salcido, 2002). Again, the focus tends to be on intimate partner violence, with much under-reporting and wide variations. For example, a systematic review of twenty-four studies published between 2003 and 2013 on intimate partner violence victimisation rates among immigrant women in the United States (US) and Europe found huge variations. Proportions of those reported to have experienced intimate partner violence ranged from 17 to 70.5 per cent (Gonçalves and Matos, 2016). Of relevance here is a study among Brazilian, African and Eastern European women in Lisbon, Portugal, which found that 11 per cent had experienced emotional abuse, 7 per cent had experienced physical violence and 2 per cent had experienced sexual abuse in their lives in Lisbon. Women identified the home as the most common place where the violence occurred (54 per cent) with the intimate partner the most frequent perpetrator, although 10.5 per cent also occurred in the workplace (Dias *et al.*, 2013).

In the face of inadequate data comparing migrants and non-migrants, it is important not to 'hyper-fixate on gendered violence as representative of these [migrant] communities' (Fluri and Piedalue, 2017: 541). As mentioned above, the reasons why migrant women may experience heightened levels of gendered violence lie in a wide range of factors including the pressures caused by wider forms of structural socio-economic exclusion in relation to labour markets, language competencies, immigration status, institutional racism, xenophobia, lack of welfare support and fear of reporting, among others (Cassidy, 2019; Lopes Heimer, 2023; O'Neal and Beckman, 2016). Furthermore, there is also evidence to show that minority and migrant women take longer to seek help, remaining in abusive relationships for longer (Siddiqui, 2018). In turn, the severity and multiplicity of violence may be more marked among migrant women (Sokoloff, 2008), especially when migrants are Black women (Malheiros and Padilla, 2015).

Transnational continuum of gendered urban violence

This section outlines the 'transnational continuum of gendered urban violence', which was developed and adapted in relation to this research (McIlwaine and Evans, 2018, 2020) and underpins

the translocational gendered urban violence framework. The argument is based on and develops Kelly's (1988) classic continuum of sexual violence theory, which encapsulates a much wider set of gendered violence that occurs across multiple scales (also Moser, 2001). The thinking behind this continuum is part of wider feminist geographical and geopolitical debates around how gendered violence must be viewed across a series of linkages from the intimate to the structural, systemic and institutional (Brickell, 2020; Brickell and Maddrell, 2016; Pain, 2014, 2015; Pain and Staeheli, 2014). In part, we are responding to such calls as identified by Fluri and Piedalue (2017: 536), who state that 'there is a critical need to examine the intersecting relationship between gendered corporeality and geographies of violence'. This links to a wider need to shift the gaze from the suffering body to structural and symbolic violences and to show how women resist gendered urban violence in innovative ways (Pain and Cahill, 2022).

Continuum thinking has a relatively long history in research on violence against women and girls based on Kelly's (1988) continuum of sexual violence against women. Kelly's main argument is that different types of sexual violence are interrelated and mutually reinforcing such that rape and sexual assault are underpinned by threat, intimidation and coercion – all of which are equally important. As such, sexual violence identified as criminal, such as rape, is causally related with other forms of harassment themselves founded in patriarchal relations and misogyny (Kelly, 2013). Kelly was careful not to identify one type of sexual violence as more important than another and to highlight how gender-based violence against women is often so naturalised and routinised that it becomes invisible (Borges, 2017). Gendered continuum thinking has since been broadened beyond sexual violence to include multiple forms of political and institutional violence, especially that experienced during armed conflict (for example, Boesten, 2017; Moser, 2001), and to explore links between intimate and other forms of social, economic and political violence, especially in cities (Datta, 2016; also Hume, 2009; Scheper-Hughes and Bourgois, 2004; Wilding, 2012).

Importantly, as noted in the introduction and above, Latin American feminists have been at the forefront of many of these debates. In particular, Rita Segato (2016) has argued that gendered violence is a war against women's bodies produced by interconnections

between the colonial state, neoliberal capitalism and racialised patriarchy. Rape culture, she argues, is perpetrated individually but is fundamentally bolstered by the state. These debates have prompted many public forms of resistance to gendered violence, such as the artistic work of Las Tesis in Chile (Serafini, 2020). Verónica Gago (2020) also builds on Segato to argue that gender violence is multidimensional and such recognition allows for a questioning of the structures of such violence generating resistance (Segato and Monque, 2021; also Félix de Souza and Rodrigues Selis, 2022). It has also been argued that a continuum of male violence against women is embedded within the history of the continent, being reproduced in different ways over time (Scheper-Hughes and Bourgois, 2004). Conquest, colonisation and neocolonialism have been structured by and dependent on intersectional gendered violence (Lugones, 2007; Viveros Vigoya, 2016). Colonialism, racism and misogyny also have transnational dimensions that are experienced acutely by migrant women survivors of violence. Institutional and state violence and intersectional discrimination are endemic throughout the world but are arguably most insidiously experienced among migrants and ethnically minoritised groups. It has been shown that migrant women survivors of gendered violence experienced multiple forms across the entire spectrum of violences, often reinforced by the culture of impunity, particularly among judicial actors (Rivera, 2009, on Latinos in the US; also McIlwaine *et al.*, 2019).

The 'transnational continuum of gendered urban violence' thus acknowledges how gender-based violence occurs across multiple scales in overlapping ways. While there have been efforts to link the body and intimate scales with geopolitics through notions such as 'intimate wars' (Pain, 2015) and 'everyday terrorisms' (Pain, 2014), there is scope to focus more specifically on the links between the local, transnational and translocational through the prism of the city. The transnational continuum therefore identifies the diversity of different types of violence (within the broad denotation of sexual, physical and psychological) at different levels (interpersonal and collective) and scales (individual/body, family, community/city, state and transnational) that are mutually reinforcing (Figure 1.1). Thus, the continuum encompasses the diversity of overlapping types of gendered violence in a specific city and country, but also the transnational links between them, particularly those associated

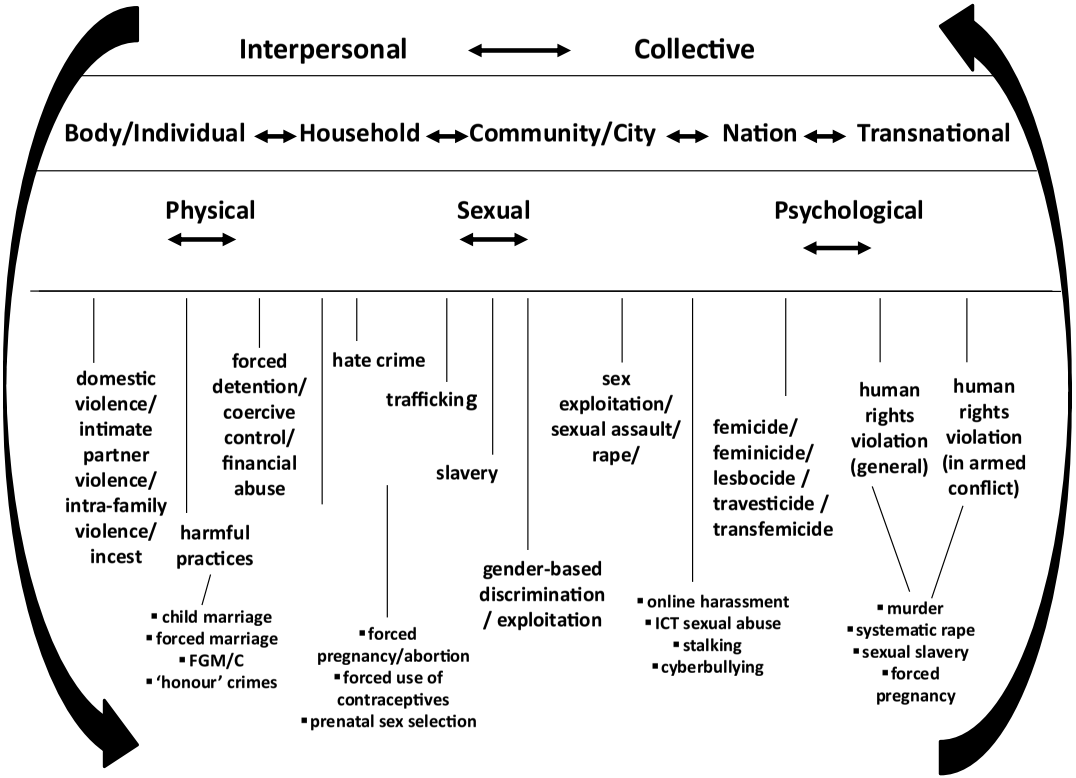

Figure 1.1 The transnational gendered urban violence continuum

with international migration between cities of the Global South and Global North (see McIlwaine and Evans, 2020).

The continuum is largely descriptive and primarily useful in acknowledging that there is a spatial continuum of gendered urban violence among women in city peripheries and among women migrants across multiple domains (Menjívar and Walsh, 2017; Ryburn, 2021). Yet, there are shortcomings of such a descriptive tool in that it assumes a linearity which does not exist in reality, in that the multiple types of violence reinforce one another to perpetuate violence. Also, it fails to fully acknowledge how power relations operate across the different scales and levels – especially in relation to structural and symbolic forms of violence (Piedalue *et al.*, 2020) – and how they are deeply intersectional in nature (Hill Collins, 2017). These dimensions are more fully captured within the translocational gendered urban violence framework.

Translocational gendered urban violence framework

The translocational gendered urban violence framework provides the conceptual foundations for the book. It aims to help understand gendered urban violence across borders and boundaries, moving beyond focusing on multiscalar processes alone across the private, public and transnational spheres to incorporate multiple forms of boundary-crossing and the interplay between direct and indirect violence.

Translocational theorising

As outlined in the introduction, we develop a translocal and translocational perspective that has yet to be explored in the context of gendered violence and, specifically, gendered urban violence among women residing in peripheral territories and among migrant women from the same country living abroad. Reflecting the importance of rooting our conceptualisations in the work of Latin American feminists as a challenge to the epistemic violence of imposing hegemonic Western feminism (Alvarez, 2009; Fregoso and Bejarano, 2010), especially from a decolonial perspective (Lopes Heimer, 2021, 2022; Zaragocín, 2019; Zaragocín and

Caretta, 2021), we have been inspired by the ideas of Sonia Alvarez *et al.* (2014) around translocalities/*translocalidades* while also acknowledging the synergies with earlier work by Floya Anthias (2001) on 'translocational positionality' (also Anthias, 2013, on her 'translocational frame'). Here, we outline the overall approach that underpins the framework before going through the constituent parts identified in Figure 1.2.

Latin American translocalities/*translocalidades* thinking denotes the feminist geographies and politics of location, translation and struggle within which are embedded multiple identities and modes of domination within and beyond the globalised Americas (Alvarez, 2014). While the transnational is important in acknowledging movements between nation states, given our focus on migrant women who navigate state and other forms of institutional violence inherent in immigration regimes, we are more interested in the complex, multidirectional translocal transfers across specific locales that entail diverse translations, both across and within cities. While 'translocal' and 'translocality' refer mainly to physical

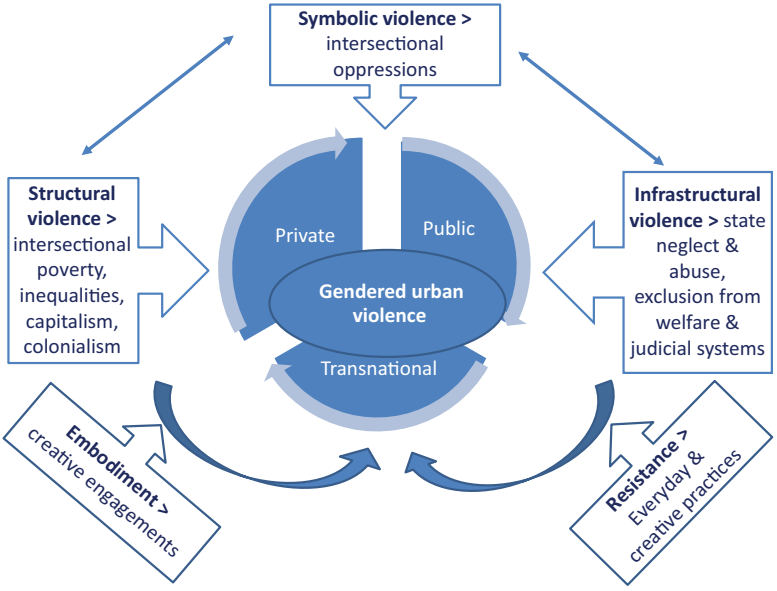

Figure 1.2 The translocational gendered urban violence framework

and symbolic space (Brickell and Datta, 2011), we are specifically interested in 'translocation' from an explicitly feminist standpoint. Indeed, translocational thinking has much earlier roots in Floya Anthias's (2001) concept of 'translocational positionality' that she suggests is more effective than hybridity in encompassing non-essentialised belonging among diasporic groups. Her translocational approach foregrounds diverse and hierarchical social ordering and fluid categorisations of social identities positioned within historical, political and geographical contexts. Power and struggle are key within the intersectional processes of location, dislocation and relocation that underpin translocational positionality (also Anthias, 2013; 2021). There are important synergies with the subsequent thinking of Alvarez *et al.* (2014) around multidirectional crossings and translations that challenge the ontological violence of Northern thought. Ideas, bodies and epistemes are renegotiated from the starting point of Latin America, or Abya Yala, through multiple circuits, displacements and repositionings (Rivera Berruz, 2021).

A specifically translocational feminist politics of translation is therefore useful for understanding gendered urban violence across boundaries and borders. Yet, it requires understanding of how Latin American (and other) feminist discourse and praxis travels through places and how it is translated through forms of discursive and actual migration – at different scales, between countries and between and within cities. These translations may be linguistic, epistemological, conceptual and embodied, but also political and transformational (Thayer, 2014). While translocational feminist translation also refers to disciplinary boundary-crossing within and beyond the academy, with a focus on alliance-building, it is also essential to think about translating across the social sciences and the arts through creative engagements. Indeed, alternative forms of knowledge production, some of which are explicitly artistic, are central to translocational feminist translation, and to our framework and research more broadly, in terms of both understanding gendered urban violence but also resignifying it (see below).

The translocational approach also captures multiple identity positions (Lao-Montes and Buggs, 2014: 391) that are crucial for understanding gendered violence across scales (Brickell and Maddrell, 2016; Crenshaw, 1991; Pain and Staeheli, 2014; Segato, 2014). In this vein, Patricia Hill Collins (2017: 1464) speaks of

'violence as a navigational tool' that 'constitutes a saturated site of intersectionality where intersecting power relations are especially visible'. In its discursive and material forms, an intersectional approach is important in understanding gendered violence in the Americas where the violence of colonisation is reproduced across different scales (Hinojosa Hernández and De Los Santos Upton, 2018). Again, Latin American feminists such as Brazilian Lélia Gonzalez (1988) have pioneered theorising around intersectionality and violence in relation to sexism, racism and colonialism (also Cardoso, 2014; Gago and Gutiérrez Aguilar, 2018; Segato, 2014, 2016; Veillette, 2021). A decolonial perspective is particularly powerful in emphasising how heteropatriarchal colonialist power structures should be the starting point for theorising violence against women (Lugones, 2007). Both intersectionality and a decolonial lens are central to understanding the experiences of migrants who are situated within complex matrixes of oppressions (Lopes Heimer, 2022; Sokoloff, 2008).

The translocational lens also allows for exploration of the relationships between migration and cities to show how localities are embedded within global power relations that play out at different scales around a fulcrum that is the city (Anthias, 2021; Çağlar and Glick Schiller, 2015; Davis, 2020). Indeed, cities themselves and urbanisation processes are embedded within interlocking structural systems across the Global South and Global North even if analyses tend to be gender-blind (Peake, 2016, 2017). Transnational migration is part of these urbanisation processes, as women migrants from the Global South constitute international divisions of reproductive labour as domestic and care workers in cities of the Global North. In turn, urban economic inequalities are often borne by women, who develop complex reproductive and productive survival mechanisms, in situ and through mobility. These may be through generating household livelihood practices or sending remittances back home which then support urban economies. These, however, can themselves generate violence. Therefore, those residing in cities, whether migrants or not, are part of wider networks involving complex intersectional exclusions that bolster gendered urban violence. Yet, it is essential to recognise that women and men experience both urban living and urban violence differently (Chant and McIlwaine, 2016). Men, and especially young,

Black and marginalised men, disproportionately experience urban violence and especially murder, often associated with gang violence (McIlwaine, 2021a). While this violence is brutal, we must look beyond the spectacular to the mundane forms of gendered violence women face that are endemic in cities, not to mention the trauma women face when men in their communities are killed and maimed (Smith, 2016).

Women's bodies are the axes around which different gendered urban violence interconnections are forged through the private, public and transnational spheres. These form the basis of the translocational approach (see Figure 1.2). Women's bodies are regularly violated, occupied and commodified in cities everywhere (McIlwaine and Rizzini, 2022). This prevents them from moving freely and exercising their rights, within and beyond borders, ultimately compromising their wellbeing (Datta, 2016; McIlwaine *et al.*, 2020). Yet, women also derive their resistance through their bodies in everyday and creative practices (Félix de Souza, 2019; also below). While urban violence is integrated into the very functioning of cities transnationally (Moser and McIlwaine, 2014), so too is gendered urban violence, which is further reinforced by fear (Falú, 2010).

This brings us to transnational theorising (Browne *et al.*, 2021), or what we call here 'translocational theorising' within the framework. Our interpretation of translocational feminist translation (Alvarez *et al.*, 2014; also Anthias, 2001) in relation to gendered urban violence aims to develop a dialogue across borders and boundaries, with women survivors' experiences at the centre. We aim to foreground the continuities (and discontinuities) among minoritised people who identify as women in Northern cities and those residing in peripheral territories of the South where multiple exclusions underpin gendered urban violence (Dominguez and Menjívar, 2014). Epistemologically, we have aimed to be as inclusive as possible in our knowledge production, although, inevitably, there have been aspects which have been more successful than others. Echoing Parnell and Pieterse's (2016: 236) 'translational urban research praxis' rooted in the African experience, our approach, based in Latin American feminism, is deeply political and intensely gendered in intersectional ways. Our framework shares a commitment to co-production with partners in other universities, with civil society organisations, with field

researchers and with research participants (Bell and Pahl, 2018). Yet, we emphasise feminist empirical, conceptual and epistemological engagements in creative translations with artists across borders and boundaries. We also place transversal feminist dialogue at the heart of the framework with a view to being inclusive, intersectional, diverse and based on building bridges and coalitions (Kennedy, 2005). This underscores the importance of theorising from southern cities (Parnell and Robinson, 2013) and from an intersectional southern feminist perspective (Byrne and Imma, 2019). We argue that feminist transversality is crucial in women's resistance to gendered urban violence where local political processes are part of wider translocational dialogues and movements (Gago and Malo, 2020).

Deconstructing the framework: intersecting types of violence

Having outlined the translocational theorising underpinning the framework, we turn to the specific components as outlined in Figure 1.2. There are three key sets of processes at play that are themselves interconnected.

The first are the multiple forms of gendered violence against women which comprise direct and indirect forms of physical, sexual and psychological violence that operate across interconnecting private, public and transnational spheres (at the centre of Figure 1.2). These types of violence are inherently multidimensional and intersectional and refer to mutually reinforcing and recurring acts of violence rather than one-off individual acts. These connections are especially acute in cities (Hume, 2009; McIlwaine *et al.*, 2020). Structural violence relates to socio-economic, political and historical inequalities that causally influence the ways that gendered violence is experienced and explained. The understanding of structural violence used here draws on the seminal work of Johan Galtung (1969, 1996), encapsulating material deprivation, symbolic disadvantage in relation to racism and sexism, and psychological hurt which intersects with other forms of violence. These structures of economic and political inequalities of power can produce different forms of violence which vary depending on people's social identities and access to resources allowing them

to exercise agency in the face of other types of violence from the state and armed groups. Structural violence is enacted indirectly as a form of oppression, which is especially relevant in relation to gendered violence. Also of importance is that structural violence is globally resonant, as noted by Farmer (2004: 317): 'Structural violence is the natural expression of a political and economic order that seems as old as slavery. This social web of exploitation, in its many differing historical forms, has long been global, or almost so, in its reach'.

Feminists also emphasise that structural violence is reinforced by heteropatriarchal colonial systems (Lugones, 2007, 2010; Segato and Monque, 2021). Decolonial feminists also include 'imperial, white supremacist [and] ableist' power formations as feeding into structural violence (Montiel Valle and Martin, 2021: 1). This underlies political, state and institutional violence in relation to deeply intersectional gendered and racialised public security and immigration policies (Carneiro, 2003; Cassidy, 2019). Racialised and gendered police violence are especially significant in peripheral territories and against minorities (Caldeira, 2000; Garmany, 2011, 2014; Veillette, 2021; Wilding, 2012). Structural violence also manifests through impunity within judicial systems, which is especially marked in terms of gendered violence and femicides/feminicides in particular (Boesten, 2012; Menjívar and Walsh, 2017) and in the media (Montiel Valle and Martin, 2021).

The framework also includes symbolic violence as a key component, defined by Bourgois (2001: 8), drawing on Bourdieu (1997), as 'the internalised humiliations and legitimations of inequality and hierarchy ranging from sexism and racism to intimate expressions of class power' and inscribed on the body (see below). The fusing of different kinds of violence becomes normalised in daily life and manifests in fear and neglect (Menjívar, 2011). Of interest here is the utilisation of the 'multisided violence framework' not only in other contexts with high levels of gender-based violence, such as Honduras (Menjívar and Walsh, 2017), but also among low-income minority women in the US (Dominguez and Menjívar, 2014). Again, this reflects an effort to move away from individual determinants of violence and to incorporate symbolic (and structural) violence within feminist understandings of gendered urban violence. The intersectional oppressions discussed above are key to

understanding symbolic violence as it connects with various forms of structural violence as part of wider colonial, neoliberal, White, heteropatriarchal capitalist systems (Fahlberg *et al.*, 2023; Viveros Vigoya, 2016). These are just as relevant among migrant women as they are among *faveladas* (residents of peripheral territories) (Grosfoguel *et al.*, 2015; Nunes and Veillette, 2022).

The final indirect type of violence identified within this set of processes is gendered infrastructural violence. This refers to how lack of access to infrastructure becomes a form of violence through what Rodgers and O'Neill (2012: 401) note as the 'processes of marginalisation, abjection and disconnection [that] often become operational and sustainable in contemporary cities through infrastructure'. While Rodgers and O'Neill (2012) do not mention gender or other intersectional oppressions, they are crucial in understanding how women access support as survivors of direct gender-based violence (Chaplin and Kalita, 2017; Datta and Ahmed, 2020). Lack of access to certain types of urban infrastructure, such as street lighting or compromised access to sanitation facilities, can generate more gender-based violence (Chant and McIlwaine, 2016). Gendered infrastructural violence can be passive or active and is normally conceptualised as a form of 'slow violence' where endemic, exploitative and discriminatory processes ensure that gendered, racialised, othered migrants and/or residents of peripheral communities experience long-term trauma (Mayblin *et al.*, 2020; Sawas *et al.*, 2020). Such trauma is generated by anti-Black and anti-migrant state violence that can also create 'slow death' (Caldwell, 2007; Perry 2013; Rocha, 2012). Judicial, education, health and public security systems all function to exclude those deemed unworthy of assistance, which is marked when migrant women have insecure immigration status (McIlwaine *et al.*, 2019) and when the state actively ostracises certain territories in cities from public policies (Wilding, 2012). Recent work within feminist geography has also conceptualised the body as infrastructure in relation to how women's bodies maintain cities through their material and social contributions. Yet, these are invariably invisible and potentially harmful through processes identified as gendered 'slow infrastructural violence' (Truelove and Ruszczyk, 2022) and 'intimate infrastructures' (Datta and Ahmed, 2020).

Deconstructing the framework: embodiment and creative engagements

Embodiment has long been central to feminist epistemologies. While the body has also been subject to multiple philosophical and theoretical interpretations, the focus here is on bodies as sites of meaning, experiences and agency (Grosz, 1994). Bodies can be understood as material entities where meanings and subjectivities are inscribed through norms and values (Vachelli, 2018a). According to Judith Butler (1997: 404), the body is a 'continual and incessant materialising of possibilities. One is not simply a body, but, in some very key sense, one does one's body'. In turn, Foucault (1977) has argued that the body is integral within efforts and mechanisms to impose social order. People's relations to the world and their positionalities therefore have embodied and material realities. As noted by Grosz (1994: x–xi), 'Bodies are not inert; they function interactively and productively. They act and react'.

From a feminist perspective, the body has long been a key site of women's oppression, especially in relation to gendered violence. Women's bodies (and minds) are actively targeted directly and indirectly by violence (Segato, 2014). Gendered intersectional violence becomes inscribed in women's bodies at the apex of public and private spaces in cities (Sweet and Ortiz Escalante, 2015). Gendered urban violence is thus calibrated in the body and buried in the bones, in the mind and in memories. It is a constitutive element of what Bourdieu described as the bodily hexis: where the body is the site of incorporated history, the affective relationship between body, history and habitus. As Braidotti (2011: 4) notes, embodiment incorporates 'the idea of a transgenerational, non-linear memory of one's belonging to one's species and community'.

Yet, while this refers to how understandings of gendered urban violence are experienced, created and evidenced, feminist scholars have also developed embodied methodologies to reveal such violence (and other phenomena) (Ellingson, 2017). While these are hugely varied, many revolve around arts-based approaches which in the case of gendered violence have included body-map storytelling (Sweet and Ortiz Escalante, 2015), body-territory mapping (Lopes Heimer, 2021; Zaragocín and Caretta, 2021), verbatim theatre (Inchley, 2015), animation (Ryburn, forthcoming), mural-painting

(Castañeda Salgado, 2016) and many more (Thomas *et al.*, 2022). Such creative methodologies are invaluable for understanding how the body performs, feels and senses gendered violence. They can also potentially assist in understanding how the intersections of intimate and structural violence through state violence, patriarchal capitalism and colonialism are displayed and understood through the body (Chattopadhyay, 2018). Embodiment therefore allows us to explore gendered urban violence in ways that reflect visceral corporeal engagements. It facilitates a view across boundaries – as bodies move over the private, public and transnational spheres, allowing the structural and systemic to be taken into account more clearly.

Embodiment and creative engagements are an integral element of the translocational framework. We advocate for interdisciplinary and epistemological crossings through embodiment and the arts as a way to understand gendered urban violence more fully through alternative forms of knowledge production, as well as to engender transformation. We include a wide range of creative encounters in the framework, such as working with artists to curate existing research data on gendered urban violence or co-producing new data and creative responses with artists through participatory collaborations in 'creative translation pathways' (McIlwaine, 2024; see Chapter 2).

Deconstructing the framework: resistance

It is important to note that while the body is a site of oppression, it is also one of resistance (Féliz da Souza, 2019). This is key to the final set of processes in the translocational framework. Foucault (1978) has claimed that power, violence and resistance have always been inextricably linked (cited in Saunders and Al-Om, 2022: 545). This is especially true in feminist and anti-racist accounts of gendered violence. Furthermore, forms of feminist resistance in general are acknowledged to operate over multiple scales through 'countertopographies' (Katz, 2004) – where local specificities of intersectional oppressions interrelate with global processes, which in cities and elsewhere can generate insurgent feminist change. Katz (2004) has also usefully identified forms of resistance, resilience and reworking as underpinning different types of feminist political

transformation that link the local and the global, all of which are relevant here (see also MacLeavy *et al.*, 2021).

Developing resistance to gendered violence takes multiple forms including individual and collective, passive and active (Osborn and Rajah, 2022). These forms can address perpetrators of intimate partner violence as well as identify wider structural conditions, or both (Faria, 2017; Fluri and Piedalue, 2017). Some resistance practices have been developed in the context of endemic urban violence in Latin America (Hume and Wilding, 2020; Jokela-Pansini, 2020; Zulver, 2016) while others involve initiatives among diasporic communities, or both (Piedalue, 2017, 2022). As well as practices, resistance can include setting up observatories and mapping gendered violence, as well as activism and campaigns (Thomson and Muñoz Cabrera, 2022). They can also include 'quiet politics' (Hughes, 2022; Pain, 2014) as well as activism and protest, especially in Brazil (Pereira and Aguilar, 2021).

Our framework focuses on everyday practices of resistance to gendered urban violence that include individual and collective, formal and informal, short-term and medium-/long-term and reactive and transformative practices (McIlwaine *et al.*, 2022c). We also include creative and embodied encounters as forms of resistance that allow women to resignify and reclaim their rights in a range of ways (McIlwaine, 2022; McIlwaine and Rizzini Ansari, 2022; also McIlwaine *et al.*, 2022a, 2022d). Resistance to gendered urban violence has been especially important in pandemic and post-pandemic reconstruction times. Here, we have developed the notion of 'emotional-political communities', building on the work of Jimeno (2010) which describes how when emotional bonds are created, they may then be reconfigured into political action. We focus on developing mutual support, (self-)care and activism to deal with crisis through building 'emotional-political communities' to address gendered urban and broader structural violence (McIlwaine *et al.*, 2023a).

To conclude, the translocational gendered urban violence framework aims to capture the painful, multiple, overlapping and intersectional violence perpetrated against those identifying as women in different contexts and across borders – ranging from the body to the private, public and transnational spheres. It provides a way of identifying the interplay among different types of direct

and indirect forms of gendered urban violence which causes and perpetuates oppression in multidimensional ways beyond the individual–perpetrator relationship. The focus is not on spectacular but rather on mundane, endemic forms of gendered urban violence that are deeply embodied. The feminist translocational approach entails multiple figurative and actual border crossings through migratory, epistemological and disciplinary movements. It argues for the importance of using arts-based and creative approaches to understand and challenge gendered urban violence as well as to generate hope and resistance to the 'painful truths' of this violence. The book now turns to outlining the translocational feminist tracing methodological framework developed to conduct the research in the UK and Brazil.

Notes

1 United Nations (1993) 48/104: Declaration on the Elimination of Violence against Women (A/RES/48/104). See www.un.org/documents/ga/res/48/a48r104.htm (accessed 18 October 2022).
2 UN Women Beijing Platform for Action. See www.un.org/womenwatch/daw/beijing/platform/ (accessed 18 May 2022).
3 See www.unwomen.org/en/what-we-do (accessed 18 October 2022).
4 See www.un.org/en/ga/search/view_doc.asp?symbol=A/HRC/RES/32/2 (accessed 19 October 2022).
5 See www.endvawnow.org/en/initiatives/view/9-research-and-data.html (accessed 25 October 2022).
6 See https://evaw-global-database.unwomen.org/en (accessed 25 April 2023).

2

Translocational feminist tracing methodological framework

Favela, ô favela, I still remember the time when I was in the favela.
Favela, ô favela, I still remember the time when I lived in the favela.
Sambistas were born there, singers and composers were born there.
To show that in the favela there are valuable people.
They say that there are only bad people there, but I had friends yes,
I had friends.
And it was in the favela that I discovered myself.
Today I'm someone else and not that person anymore.

(Song composed by Iraci Rosa de Lima,
resident of Maré, Rio de Janeiro)

I belong nowhere.
I am not welcome.
I don't belong here nor there.
I don't fit in.
Even though I try.
Fear.
I fear losing my children.
I fear revenge.
I fear deportation.
In between four walls, I shrink.
They have the power.

(Poem written collectively by Brazilian
migrant women in London)

This chapter begins with compositions from the Brazilian women who are at the core of this book. Iraci de Rosa is a popular singer and songwriter who is registered with the Order of Musicians of Brazil. She writes about love, God and the Rio favela. Through her music, she describes her life in the favela and challenges the

prevailing images that the word 'favela' conjures: scenes of endemic urban violence that incorrectly stereotype those who live there. Iraci participated in our digital storytelling project with the Museu da Pessoa in São Paulo. The poem above was written collectively by Brazilian migrant women, all of whom are survivors of gendered urban violence, as part of the *We Still Fight in the Dark* creative project with MinA. Their poem outlines the difficulties migrant women face as they develop a sense of belonging in a society that perpetrates structural and symbolic violence against them. This song and poem communicate many of the key aspects of the locations where the *favelada* and migrant Brazilian women included in the book speak from. While this research gives them voice through surveys, interviews and focus groups, we argue that it is the art forms which succinctly convey the realities of their lives. The aim of this chapter is to outline the epistemological and methodological approaches of the empirical research on which the book draws.

From mapping to resistance: translocational feminist tracing methodological framework

The empirical research has evolved between 2016 and 2023 across six projects as we have explored the experiences of gendered urban violence among Brazilian women in London and in Maré in Rio de Janeiro. All the projects have been collaborations between universities (King's College London, Queen Mary University of London and the Federal University of Rio de Janeiro (UFRJ)), civil society partners (the Latin American Women's Rights Service (LAWRS), Redes da Maré, Migrants in Action (MinA) and the Latin America Bureau (LAB)), arts organisations (People's Palace Projects (PPP), the CASA Latin American Theatre Festival and the Museu da Pessoa) and individual artists (Bia Lessa and Gaël Le Cornec). Since 2016, the research has become a body of collaborative and interdisciplinary work rather than a one-off research project. The projects have included questionnaire surveys, interviews and focus group discussions with more than 1,200 women, together with a range of creative outputs (Table 2.1; also Appendix 1). The majority of these women were cisgender, although in London, one transgender woman was interviewed and in Rio de Janeiro, five. In addition, three transgender women were included in the body-mapping

Table 2.1 Translocational feminist tracing methodological framework

Location, stage and project	Method	Artistic outputs
STAGE 1 (2016–19) (A) Rio de Janeiro – transnational VAWG 1	Survey Interviews Focus groups Service provider mapping	*SCAR* by Bia Lessa and PPP (multimedia installation) Viral video 'Raising Awareness of VAWG against Brazilian women in London' (by PPP)
STAGE 1 (B) London – transnational VAWG 1	Survey In-depth interviews Focus groups Service provider mapping	*Efêmera* by Gaël Le Cornec (theatre with CASA Latin American Theatre Festival) *Ana* by Gaël Le Cornec (film)
STAGE 1 (C) London – SUMW	Survey and in-depth interviews	*Believe* by Gaël Le Cornec (sound installation – VEM network)
STAGE 2 (2019–23) (D) Rio de Janeiro – Dignity and Resistance	In-depth interviews Focus groups Interviews with women working with local campaigns Body-mapping workshops Museu da Pessoa digital storytelling interviews/films	Museu da Pessoa (digital storytelling and films and online exhibition 'Female Lives') Observational drawing of focus groups (artist – Mila de Choch) Women Resisting Violence (Rio's Trailblazing Women's House podcast – LAB) Participatory territory-mapping GIS storymap Dignity and Resistance exhibition

Table 2.1 (Cont.)

Location, stage and project	Method	Artistic outputs
STAGE 2 (E) London – *We Still Fight in the Dark*	Applied drama workshops and evaluation survey	MinA – *We Still Fight in the Dark* (film, installation, performances) Women Resisting Violence (Step Up Migrant Women podcast – LAB)
STAGE 2 (2022–23) (F) London and Rio – tackling gendered violence transnationally	Interviews with researchers, participants and stakeholders on memory and impact Transnational knowledge exchange between Redes da Maré and the LAWRS	Photovoice workshops in London and Rio Photovoice exhibitions in London (Who's Behind Your Order?) and Rio de Janeiro (Brick by Brick)

Source: Authors' research projects

workshops. Questions on gender identity or sexual orientation were not included in the surveys in either city.

All of the projects addressed gendered urban violence against women, but with different emphases. The original research project entailed a transnational analysis of the nature and causes of gender-based violence among Brazilian migrants in London and favela residents in Maré, Rio de Janeiro, and aimed to map reporting and support for survivors (Projects A and B, Table 2.1). The Step Up Migrant Women (SUMW) project with the LAWRS included migrant women from twenty-two different countries, five of whom were Brazilian, and represented a shift towards capturing women's responses to gender-based violence through campaigning (Project C, Table 2.1). This move towards identifying women as agents resisting gendered violence was the focus of subsequent projects in Rio de Janeiro and in London (Projects D and E, Table 2.1). The most

recent iteration of the research has brought the various strands of the work together to reflect on what has been learned, in part through developing a transnational exchange programme between the LAWRS and Redes da Maré (through Casa das Mulheres) involving visits and identification of key areas of mutual learning together with two Photovoice projects (Project F, Table 2.1; see also Appendix 1).

A translocational feminist theoretical approach influenced the methodological and epistemological perspectives of the research. The starting point was that gendered urban violence is always localised and embodied and so must be situated and understood within the spaces and places where it occurs. Yet, the research acknowledged that gendered urban violence is also part of wider translocational processes and that to truly comprehend the realities of violence, these global urban relations need to be studied from their grounding within the local. We were able to capture these processes given that we were working in two cities linked through transnational migration and 'translocal fields of power' (Ong, 1999). Without engaging in ongoing debates around comparative urbanism and the role of comparison in thinking about cities (Robinson, 2011), we draw on and adapt some recent conceptualisations around the notion of 'tracing' as a process for comparing and connecting cities (Wood, 2020, 2022). Here, 'tracing' refers to 'pathways through which ideas, innovations and impressions flow' (Wood, 2022: 1751) that are attentive to the specificities and subjectivities of the urban. In thinking across two cities as interlinked, we have developed a 'translocational feminist tracing' methodological approach based on transnational dialogue around the tools that make sense for each urban context and the research as a whole. Rooted in a feminist epistemological approach and drawing from decolonial feminist thinking (Alvarez *et al*., 2014; Smith, 1999), these tracings have also spoken across disciplines through combining social science and creative and arts-based methods, as well as generating transnational mutual learning across borders and beyond the academy. Our approach also incorporates methods that are relevant to policy and are co-produced and collaborative, following Parnell and Pieterse's (2016: 236) 'translational urban research praxis'.

We have developed our 'translocational feminist tracing' approach through transnational praxis that has strengthened gradually as we

have learned from what works and what does not (Jenkins *et al.*, 2020). Indeed, many aspects of our failures revolve around co-production, itself developed through more than two decades of participatory research approaches (Moser and McIlwaine, 1999). In essence, co-production refers to the collective production of research aims and objectives, addressing issues most relevant to non-academic co-producers with a view to developing more equitable relationships within the research process from design through to dissemination (Bell and Pahl, 2018). Establishing co-inquiry is challenging and ultimately 'utopian' in nature given that overcoming inherent power relations among researchers is extremely difficult (Zielke *et al.*, 2023). When researching gendered urban violence and the associated pains that this entails, it is useful to engender empathetic, transformative approaches to understand and resist such violence (Bondi, 2003). In turn, challenging extractive approaches and foregrounding women's voices through an ethics of care are also key (Askins, 2018). This is especially important when researching the lives of those actively marginalised (hooks, 1990), like migrants and those residing in favelas. Indeed, in relation to Rio de Janeiro, Scott (2021) challenges academic extractivism by foreign researchers in the favelas and argues for developing and acknowledging the capacity of those from these territories who are often university-educated. He suggests a 'paradigmatic shift from studying a *favela na universidade* (studying the favela in the university) to building a *universidade na favela* (the university in the favela)' as a way to disrupt legacies of academic authority and be more collaborative (Scott, 2021: 490). Central to this is working beyond the social sciences with artistic methods and through a range of translations: literally (between English and Portuguese) and epistemologically, through a more co-produced approach.

Creative translation pathways: engaging arts-based methods

As also noted in the introduction and Chapter 1, a key element of our translocational approach has been to work with creative methods and encounters, developed through 'creative translation pathways' (McIlwaine, 2024). These pathways reflected a

range of interpretative framings around how engagements with artists and artistic methods have different epistemological logics. While overlapping, there were two main types of pathways. The first focuses on a curatorial perspective where the artist(s) interpret research through their eyes and communicate this to wide and diverse audiences, thus depending on their own and the audience's understanding of gendered urban violence. *SCAR*, *Efêmera* and *Ana* fall within this pathway. The second is more co-produced and participatory. Here, research participants develop artistic outputs with artists for a range of audiences, creating reflective spaces aiming to enhance wellbeing. MinA's work on *We Still Fight in the Dark* reflects this pathway. The Museu da Pessoa's digital storytelling is a combination of these pathways, given the focus on women artists from the territory whose narratives were curated (see Table 2.1; Appendix 1).

Underlying these creative translation pathways are debates around the value of using arts-based methods in addressing social science challenges and specifically gendered violence. These focus on the benefits of creative work including the visceral, sensory and provocative powers of communicating in embodied ways, as well as the ethical advantages of participatory approaches (Leavy, 2017), especially when working with those in vulnerable situations (Keifer-Boyd, 2011). Indeed, arts-based approaches are often regarded as having transformative potential, offering a way for participants to address social injustices. They are also understood to have wider impact through influencing policy and/or audiences (Coemans and Hannes, 2017). Yet, there are also drawbacks, including the challenges of bringing about significant structural change and the possibility of artists creating problematic representations from a curatorial perspective. These might arise from lack of alignment and/or collaboration among researchers, artists and research participants, especially where the narrative and dramatic effect may be deemed more important than the honesty to the research (Jeffery *et al.*, 2019). This can result in 'uneasy translations' (Johnstone and Pratt, 2020) relating to concerns including over- or under-emphasising certain issues; in the case of gendered violence, these may entail reinforcing damaging representations of pain and suffering and a colonial gaze that reproduces violence (Tuck, 2009). Yet, such approaches may do the opposite in allowing women's

voices to be heard without re-traumatising them (Pain and Cahill, 2022). Ultimately, the effects of creative translations depend on the type of artistic work developed in terms of visual arts, embodied performance, literary engagements, music, sound, movement and so on (Rose, 2016).

We as authors have taken a dramaturgical role at various points in the research. We have been what Bleeker (2003: 163) notes as 'external eye, the first audience, the observer at a distance, or even the critic', while also collaborating through 'both closeness and distance, both similarity and difference'. In considering a dramaturgical lens for understanding the relationships between the social science research and the artistic engagements, we draw on Barba's (1985) notion of 'weaving'. This relates to analysis beyond the performance to include the overall framing, the context and background (the research) and dialogues with audiences, here recalling Boal's forum theatre approach (Boal, 1979). It also reflects recent moves to adapt dramaturgy in different contexts such as workshops as part of the performance of international development (Shutt *et al*., 2023) and in classroom teaching (Bakke and Lindstøl, 2021).

Specifically in Latin America, artistic expression as a political tool has a long history. In Brazil, Paulo Freire and Augusto Boal have pioneered ways to develop alternative forms of education and the arts to build social transformation (Boal, 1979; Heritage, 1994). The work of PPP has been integral to raising awareness of Freire and Boal with a global audience (Heritage and Steffen, 2022). They have also long argued for recognising the potential of artistic engagements to support residents of peripheral territories, as Heritage (2018a: 31) notes in regard to Maré:

> Art can enable [young people] to begin to express their fears, which are always subjective … We need moments that are about what we are feeling. It is another way of dealing with this context. We have to construct places and time for art here in these communities, because sometimes the rational becomes too hard, too complex and leads to a place where there seem to be no solutions.

There is increasing acknowledgement that creating art in the peripheries challenges perceptions of what art is and who produces it. It also ensures visibility for residents of marginalised spaces, allowing them to exercise their agency (Moura and Cerdeira, 2021).

Mapping gendered urban violence in Maré and London

The first project in stage one focused on mapping gender-based violence in London and Rio de Janeiro through collaborations with different universities and civil society organisations. It was collaborative in that we worked with our civil society partner organisations, Redes da Maré in Rio de Janeiro and the LAWRS in London, to identify the issues around gender-based violence that were of most importance to them as service providers. We collaboratively developed a series of tools: a questionnaire survey and a series of interview and focus group questions, with the aim of addressing the same broad questions in each locality. The survey was adapted from the EU Agency for Fundamental Rights (2014) questionnaire on gender-based violence addressing the types, frequency and spaces where gender-based violence occurred, identification of the perpetrators and the nature of reporting. While the survey was translated into Portuguese and adapted for both the UK and Brazilian contexts, the use of an EU survey is arguably not appropriate. While the logic was to think about comparing the findings in other contexts, with hindsight, adapting a European survey could be problematic given its ethnocentric perspective. In Maré, the survey was conducted by five field researchers working for Redes da Maré, in person, with a total of 801 participants and was overseen by Sousa Silva and Krenzinger. In London, it was undertaken online by a total of 175 participants and run by Evans. This produced different types of outcomes: notably, the UK survey overestimated participants' access to the internet and, as a result, online participants tended to be more educated and work in formal occupations compared to those interviewed in person (Krenzinger *et al.*, 2018a; McIlwaine *et al.*, 2020; McIlwaine and Evans, 2018, 2023).

In both contexts, the interviews and focus groups were conducted by a combination of fieldworkers from the organisations and academic researchers. In Maré, five fieldworkers conducted the twenty interviews with a range of women, including two transgender women, together with seven focus groups with a total of fifty-nine people (fifty-two women and seven men) within themed groups, including older women, female members of local religious organisations, LGBTQI+ people, drug users and

community activists, with inputs from Krenzinger, Sousa Silva, Heritage and others from the UFRJ team. In London, Evans and one fieldworker conducted twenty-five interviews with women (twenty who had used the services of the LAWRS and five who had not), with Evans carrying out five focus groups with six men and nine women with inputs from McIlwaine. Each team then analysed and wrote up reports that outlined the main findings (translated into Portuguese and English) (Krenzinger *et al.*, 2018b; McIlwaine and Evans, 2018). These were complemented by a series of interviews – with twelve service providers in London and fourteen organisations in Rio de Janeiro – that explored the ways in which state and non-state organisations supported women survivors of violence (Evans and McIlwaine, 2017; Morgado *et al.*, 2018).

The aim of the first project was to centre women's voices and experiences of gender-based violence through various forms of mapping. However, as noted in the introduction, there are dangers in 'giving voice' to those on the so-called margins and emphasising narratives of pain without acknowledging agency and resistance. It was always our intention to visibilise women's experiences through telling their 'painful truths' as a feminist and political act, especially those whose voices have been muted. However, we also reflected on the implications of this, prompted through the creative engagements and artistic encounters.

In Maré, our key collaborators, Redes da Maré, had a history of ongoing work with Heritage and PPP. Therefore, relations of trust were already established, which is crucial when working in peripheral territories where conducting fieldwork must be carefully negotiated given high levels of urban violence. In turn, Sousa Silva (Redes da Maré) already worked closely with Krenzinger and her team from the UFRJ, who had developed an initiative with her social work students in Redes da Maré to provide weekly legal support services. Our research on gendered violence fortuitously coincided with the creation of Casa das Mulheres da Maré in 2016, a space created by Redes da Maré to encourage women in the territory to become protagonists and to address and improve their living conditions. The core aim of the Casa das Mulheres da Maré was to recognise the historical role of women in the emergence of social movements and struggles for infrastructure in Maré since the

1980s. According to Casa das Mulheres, the research provided an essential foundation for understanding women's lives in the territory in general and in relation to gendered urban violence. Indeed, one of the reasons for conducting a survey with 801 women based on random sampling in fifteen of the sixteen favelas that make up Maré was to build up a picture of their lives. This also helped Casa das Mulheres to develop as an organisation. One of the field researchers, herself a Maré resident, noted:

> Many times, I heard that all women wanted was to have a space where they could be heard and ask questions … still in its initial phase, I realised that many women came here not knowing what it was, but they liked the fact that it was a place focused on developing things just for women.

As an organisation, Casa das Mulheres noted the importance of the research: 'carrying out the research and systematising it is the first public step we are taking to develop strategies for tackling the many problems that our work has mapped out, and to signal that solutions are urgently needed' (Casa das Mulheres, 2019: 4). Working in collaboration with Casa das Mulheres (and Redes da Maré), who were trusted in the territory, facilitated the research process, especially given the sensitive issues being discussed. Indeed, while the survey was conducted on a house-to-house basis, the interviews were conducted on the premises of Casa das Mulheres where counsellors were available to support if necessary.

Similar processes occurred in London where our partners the LAWRS noted the importance of mapping the situation of Brazilian migrant women experiencing gender-based violence. This work drew on a long history of co-production and collaboration between McIlwaine and the LAWRS with the aim of raising awareness of the Latin American/Latinx community in the city and the UK more broadly (McIlwaine and Bunge, 2016; McIlwaine *et al.*, 2011). The prior research and sustained engagement with this group helped establish trust, which was crucial in facilitating the subsequent work on gender-based violence (Jiménez-Yáñez and McIlwaine, 2021). This relationship meant that research participants could speak about intimate aspects of their experiences of violence, which was especially significant when women had insecure immigration status. As in Maré, the majority of the interviews were conducted on

LAWRS premises alongside a researcher trusted by the women and with a trained counsellor on hand in case women required support.

The work with Brazilian migrant women also influenced and overlapped with the SUMW campaign established by the LAWRS in 2018 and developed in collaboration with over sixty organisations from the women and migrant sectors. McIlwaine worked with SUMW to provide an evidence base on migrant women's experiences of gender-based violence when they had insecure immigration status. This was linked with SUMW's wider lobbying of Parliament regarding the Domestic Abuse Bill (now the Domestic Abuse Act 2021) around the rights of migrant women as well as their ongoing campaigning for the police and other state bodies to prevent data on immigration status being shared with border agencies. The research entailed a questionnaire survey with fifty migrant women (two of whom were Brazilian) and interviews with ten migrant women (three of whom were Brazilian), all of which are included here (McIlwaine *et al.*, 2019; see below). This mapping was published as a report titled *The Right to Be Believed* and used in raising awareness of migrant women's lives. The research has been cited in numerous submissions to Parliament (Joint Submission to the Domestic Abuse Bill Committee 2020; Submission on Amendment 140 – Victims of Domestic Abuse: Data-Sharing for Immigration Purposes to the Nationality and Borders Bill 2022)[1] and by international organisations such as Human Rights Watch 2022.[2]

While not inherently participatory, these projects have given Brazilian migrants and those from the urban peripheries some voice, recalling Valentina's words around the need to uncover the 'painful truths' which opened this book. The Director of the LAWRS has repeatedly noted that both research projects are the only available data providing information about the lives of these women. Similarly, the coordinator of the Casa das Mulheres da Maré has commented on how the research was central to the establishment of the organisation, especially the various projects they run such as their cooperative cooking project, Maré de Sabores (Flavours of Maré). The mapping in both places has provided the foundations for subsequent research that has focused on resistance and co-production. Before turning to discuss this, we outline how the research in London and Rio de Janeiro was interpreted through creative translations.

Curating gendered urban violence research through creative translations in Maré and London

The mapping of women's experiences of gendered urban violence was explored artistically through several forms of critical curatorial processes and practices. As noted above, this entailed creating *SCAR* by Bia Lessa with PPP, based on the Maré research, and *Efêmera* and *Ana* by Gaël Le Cornec in London, the former with CASA Latin American Theatre Festival. The aim was to develop artwork that could communicate these experiences to wide audiences in the form of a creative product rather than a participatory and/or therapeutic piece with research participants.

Addressing *SCAR* first, Bia Lessa was commissioned by PPP and Redes da Maré to respond creatively to the research from Maré with inputs from Paul Heritage, Eliana Sousa Silva and Miriam Krenzinger. This resulted in a multimedia installation staged at the Women of the World (WOW) Festival at London's Southbank Centre over three days in March 2018. The aim was to create a piece of art which centred the twenty testimonies from the interviews as well as acknowledged the survey and focus groups. Initially, the proposal was to develop a theatrical performance based on verbatim theatre techniques using the exact words, speech patterns and 'raw' personal perspectives of those interviewed. However, once Bia Lessa read the women's testimonies, she was very keen to reduce the barriers between the women and the audience – which would emerge if their words were spoken by actors. She then turned to the video files initially made to facilitate the interview transcription process. In conversations with Paul and Miriam, Bia noted that the research was written on the faces of the women, in their gestures, in their voices. She thus proposed to use the videos to create a multimedia installation rather than a theatrical performance as a way to create an innovative narrative that would allow the women to tell their own stories. The participants were contacted for permission to use the videos. Miriam commented that 'We did not want to cut them but wanted to include them in their entirety' (Heritage, 2018b: 154). Bia was also keen to understand how the audience would hear these narratives, and so we hired a British writer, Chrissie Tiller, to act in the space between the public and the installation. She assessed the impact on the audience from within the installation, saying: 'I am here in this space as audience and evaluator … living

and responding to the work personally, while seeking to capture the experience of others in relation to the work' (Tiller, 2018: 4).

The installation, a box-like structure that appears to be made from newspapers, was constructed within London's Southbank Centre. The structure aimed to evoke living in the favelas of Maré, reflecting the precarity of its buildings and of the favela more widely. It also aimed to highlight constant media reports about the interpersonal and state violence of living there. There was a bed or 'city of nails' outside the structure with the word 'survival' written into the nails, suggesting that there is both optimism and resignation in the favelas. Inside the box, there were piles of newspapers for people to sit and watch the videos of women retelling their stories to an invisible interviewer. Their words were translated and projected on to the walls and the text, images and voices overlapped, although the women spoke in Portuguese without subtitles (Figure 2.1). As Tiller (2018: 4–5) notes:

> The stories and testimonies of the twenty women themselves are plastered across the … walls of the temporary structure. … on top of the sheets of newspaper they suggest the contradiction of the many 'stories that are not told within them' and the 'invisible narratives', 'unrecorded and unseen' of these women's lives. Pages and pages of testimony cover and line the walls, the English summaries picked out in yellow.

Figure 2.1 Inside *SCAR* at the WOW Festival (credit: André Camara)

Entry to the box was through a black curtain via a vestibule. Objects chosen by the women as important were hung on the vestibule walls including a china cup, a plate, a set of baby clothes and a handbag. There was also an image of *Christ as Sacred Heart*, signifying suffering and hope (Figure 2.2). Two of the women who participated in the research visited London from Maré and attended the event. They spoke about the objects they had contributed; one brought a handbag which 'symbolised a division of the waters for me' in her life as a trans woman. The other noted: 'I chose the first clothes I bought for my daughter when, after a whole period of abuse, I separated from my husband'. According to Miriam, these objects are 'a symbol or story of a moment of empowerment – not of the abuse' (Tiller, 2018: 10).

A core idea of the installation was to reveal the 'painful truths' of the violence that women live through in Maré. It aimed to provide an opportunity for the women to speak about their lives and to be believed. Chrissie recounted the first conversation she had as she left the *SCAR* space with a young Black woman:

> 'At times when I saw these women speaking out', she tells me, 'I wondered, "did they make it up?" then I realised this is what happens. It even happens in their families. They are not believed. And that's why it's so important we hear their voices. Because they are saying, 'whatever has happened to me, I am still worth something'.
>
> (Tiller, 2018: 5)

Raising awareness was an essential element of the installation, as one audience member noted:

> I'm happy because the installation is raising public awareness. I've read about it in academic research, but these stories need to be shared and exposed in a different way in the eyes of the public … The messages and stories of women are impressive and powerful. In this way, they can have a real impact instead of just being stuck on a shelf: a report that nobody reads.
>
> (Tiller, 2018: 7)

SCAR was designed to influence audiences and to develop a dialogue. Not only was Chrissie Tiller speaking to people and recording their views but the audience was also encouraged to

Figure 2.2 Entry vestibule to *SCAR* at the WOW Festival (credit: André Camara)

leave messages on Post-it notes near the structure. As Paul Heritage (2018b: 154) notes:

> The words coming from the viewers then begin to build an extra layer for the work and research, while the audience stops not only to leave their reflections, but also to read the messages written by people before them. A dialogue then emerges between the artist and the audience, between the women of Maré and those who came to hear her stories in London.

The responses to *SCAR* reflect the power of the installation in bringing women's voices about gendered violence, both direct and indirect, to London. A conversation between the women in the artwork and the audience emerged as a transnational, translocational feminist connection. The particularities of the women's experiences were key to the work, as noted by one audience member: 'This [installation] is strong and has opened my eyes, giving us a perspective on the dangerous conditions women in Brazil still experience'. Yet, it also spoke more widely around shared pain, with many reacting to the work as a piece 'about the suffering experienced by women all over the world'. Bia Lessa was able to curate and translate, figuratively and creatively, the power of the voices and faces of women from Maré through *SCAR*, as one viewer commented: 'the artist brought visibility to the women, to the stories'. According to Paul:

> For Bia Lessa, there are infinite ways of creating a work and her creative processes reveal, so to speak, the dimension of this infinity. The public's reaction to SCAR was an essential part of a movement towards completeness that never comes, and is an essential part of all her works.
>
> (Heritage, 2018b: 155)

On a final note in relation to consent, the film that is integral to the installation was shown in Maré prior to the WOW Festival in 2018 and included the women interviewed in the audience. At this stage, they were happy and indeed proud with the result. Later in 2018, the video from the installation was shown at the UFRJ at an event with some of the research participants present. After this, the women began to feel uncomfortable and subsequently withdrew their consent. As a result, the installation has not been staged again.

A curatorial, verbatim creative translation was also developed by Gaël Le Cornec: in the theatre play *Efêmera*, based on the London research, and the short film *Ana*, which draws on the play. Gaël, a Brazilian writer, director and actor, was commissioned by CASA Latin American Theatre Festival (another partner in the first research project) to develop a play in 2017. Together with her creative team (actor Rosie MacPherson and assistant director Angie Peña Arenas), Gaël created the text through reading interview transcripts and a draft report of our key findings. In relation to process, Gaël has reflected on how she 'wanted the idea to come from the source material … I guess I wanted to be faithful to the material and trust I'd find the shape of the artistic outcome during rehearsals'. The story evolved into an interview between a Brazilian woman survivor (Ana) and a British documentary filmmaker (Joanne), with Ana becoming what Gaël called 'a symbolic figure and a vector for all these stories'. She also spoke of her vision for the play: 'To push the boundaries of what a verbatim play could be, I wanted to see if I could somehow shift between the real and fictional realms … as long as you respect those real words, then you can push the boundaries' (Le Cornec in Stevens, 2021: 188).

Again, the idea was to foreground the 'painful truths' of Brazilian migrant women whose voices have been silenced and to tell a wider audience about the challenges they face in London. However, Gaël decided to use another metatheatrical layer. She and Rosie performed as themselves, discussing their own experiences of gender-based violence with a view to highlight how women everywhere suffered such abuse. The play therefore became only loosely verbatim. On one hand, it used many passages from the interview transcripts, spoken by Ana (in Portuguese and English). For example, one scene where Ana describes what happens when she arrives at the airport in London is almost verbatim: 'After three hours of interviewing, they let me go to get my luggage. An English immigration officer accompanied me. Inside the elevator, he looked at me up and down then said: "wow you've got cute breasts, can I touch them?"'. Yet on the other hand, the introduction of new characters in the form of Gaël and Rosie led to an 'uneasy translation' (Johnstone and Pratt, 2020) because it diverted the focus from the testimonies of the women in the research towards the artists. Having said this, the play shielded the original research participants

from scrutiny and also depicted verbal and physical violence on stage through what Gaël noted as 'a surreal choreography between me and Rosie' (Figure 2.3). This was especially effective at communicating the embodied brutality of gender-based violence.

Efêmera was performed in both the UK and Brazil in 2017 and 2018 – at the Southwark Playhouse in London, at the Maré Casa de Bellas Artes, at a theatre festival at Sede das Cias in Rio de Janeiro and at the Brighton Fringe Festival, where they played eight shows in total. In London, the play was mainly staged in English, with some Portuguese, while in Rio de Janeiro, it was performed in Portuguese with simultaneous translation into English. Unlike *SCAR*, the aim of *Efêmera* was not audience engagement and dialogue. However, post-show discussions and feedback cards elicited important responses to the performance and Gaël noted that people approached her after all the shows to share their own 'painful truths' of violence. The reactions to *Efêmera* revolved around the power of the play to evoke emotion, as noted by one audience member in Brighton: 'This needs to be seen, to be heard, to be felt. Because, in a way, everyone needs to know this hurt, to feel this pain, until nobody does'. Many also made links between the

Figure 2.3 On-stage violence in *Efêmera* by Gaël Le Cornec (credit: Luciana Whitaker Aikins)

UK and Brazil: 'Love how it connected Brazil and England – made the issue of abuse and violence toward women more of a global problem' (see also McIlwaine *et al.*, 2021b McIlwaine, 2022).

The end of the play depicts a resolution of sorts for Gaël and Rosie and for Ana and Joanne; Gaël agrees to be interviewed by Rosie as herself and not as Ana. The final words of the play reflect the importance of revealing the 'painful truths' of gender-based violence:

> No-one knows apart from me, him, you and this room. This room full of strangers that now are so close to me. And I hope I'll walk off this stage, out of this theatre and no one will gaze upon me differently for having shared this.

There is a sense of hope and urgency to bring about transformation which Gaël views as part of her activism: 'For me as an artist, my work is always about creating awareness. Art can pressure to make change happen and support the change' (Le Cornec in Stevens, 2021: 191–92).

This sentiment was at the root of the creation of two films of *Efêmera*. The first was a viral video, *Raising Awareness of Violence against Brazilian Women in London*, commissioned by PPP. This used filmed excerpts from the play interspersed with key findings and recommendations from the research and animation. The second was a short film, *Ana*, created by Gaël and Rosie focusing only on the characters of Ana and Joanne. *Ana* found a wider audience at several international film festivals: the Davis Feminist Film Festival and the NYC Directed by Women Festival (US), the Vox Feminae Festival (Croatia), the WOW Festival (Jordan, Morocco, Tunisia) and the Kautik Festival (India), where it won several awards (Figure 2.4).[3] Gaël also created a sound piece for McIlwaine's work with the LAWRS based on the report *The Right to Be Believed* (see above). Based on an artist's residency funded and supported by the King's Visual and Embodied Methodologies (VEM) network, and also made from a curatorial perspective, *Believe* told the stories of three migrant women included in the research who were unable to secure support when they experienced violence because of their insecure status. Their stories were voiced by actors to protect the women. Importantly, this sound piece has been used by the LAWRS and SUMW in training about the realities faced by these women in the UK.[4]

Figure 2.4 Film poster for *Ana* by Gaël Le Cornec (credit: Eloise Carles)

The ideas around women's protagonism, resilience and resistance to gendered urban violence emerged more forcefully in the creative work than in the surveys and interviews in the cases of both *SCAR* and *Efêmera* and *Ana*. This explicitly led to a subsequent phase of the research that focused on this more closely.

Resisting gendered urban violence through co-production in Maré

In its second stage, the research shifted from mapping gendered urban violence towards exploring how it could be resisted. In Maré, this entailed examining how resistance and dignity could be built through community history-making, again with Redes da Maré (Casa das Mulheres) and the UFRJ, and with new partners, Museu da Pessoa (Table 2.1). While the subject matter shifted towards exploring resistance practices, the methodological and epistemological approaches became more co-produced. There is real value in both contexts in developing long-term sustainable engagements that evolve over time rather than using an extractive model. While the first stage of the research was collaborative and actively valued the local partners, field researchers and views of research participants, there was a sense of discomfort at times in that we could have been more democratic in how we organised the work between partners. In part, this was initially because we felt we needed to be very careful in researching gender-based violence given the sensitivities involved and thought that distance might be better. However, in the second stage, we realised that this was not the case.

In Maré, our research sought to analyse practices of resistance created by women throughout their lives, reflecting a collective memory of struggle. Our stance from the beginning was that all participants and field researchers were protagonists of the knowledge they shared. Yet, we were also careful not to objectify favelas, nor to romanticise the way women coped with gendered urban violence. While we fully acknowledged that the funding for the research came from the UK and that this created hierarchical power relations in the process, we designed the work together through an effective transnational partnership that

remains ongoing (dependent on funding). We sought collective decision-making, consensus-building and acknowledgement of each partner as a co-author of the knowledge production process. We developed our translocational feminist epistemological approach, valuing collective processes, spaces of care and affects from an intersectional and anti-racist perspective.

The field research started in 2020 and was organised transnationally between the Brazil-based team at Casa das Mulheres da Maré and the UK-based team at PPP and King's College London. Miriam from the UFRJ and Eliana from Redes da Maré provided strategic advice throughout. The fieldwork consisted of five phases: in-depth interviews with thirty-two women and five focus groups with women from Maré (McIlwaine *et al*., 2022c); filmed oral history biographic interviews with ten artists from Maré, working with the Museu da Pessoa's methodology of social memory technology (McIlwaine *et al*., 2022a); five body-mapping workshops with ten women (Lopes Heimer *et al*., 2022); participatory geographic information system (GIS) mapping through storymapping (McIlwaine *et al*., 2023b);[5] and nine interviews with women working on two initiatives organised after the start of the COVID-19 pandemic: the Women's Support Network of Maré (RAMM) and the Maré Says No to Coronavirus campaign (McIlwaine *et al*., 2022c). The latter informed the participatory territory-mapping and GIS storymap (see Table 2.1; Appendix 1).

This research was not simply outsourced to those on the frontline in Maré while the foreign and academic institutions remained distant. Instead, a space for collective reflection was established among the early-career researchers in both teams led by Moniza Rizzini Ansari. On a weekly basis, they held online debrief meetings where they shared difficult stories and interpretations of the interviews to collectively explore nuances and subtleties. Gradually, the weekly debrief space that began without much planning became ever more important as a space of power, where decisions were taken and narratives about the research produced. This routine of reflections produced collective knowledge that later served as the basis for a theoretical production. This process of co-production resulted not only in the valorisation of the field team but also defined new research paths that made sense to the

Maré women. It was more centred on their power and agency, and the autonomy of the Maré team was ensured at all times (Rizzini Ansari *et al*., 2023).

The empathetic and co-produced approach among the teams extended to individual and group interactions among participants, which spontaneously developed therapeutic dimensions. One interviewee, Angela, a twenty-five-year-old mother of two who was mixed race/*parda*, spoke of the importance of crying and protecting her children from the abuse she suffered:

> I'm going to cry because until now, I've been trying not to cry, because there's Flor, there's Eva [my children], so I have to try not to cry in front of them and I haven't had a cry very recently; I haven't had time to cry. But I don't know how to explain it. I try not to pass what happened to me on to them, but I know they know, and I know they understand.

Participants in focus groups shared their testimonials with trusted facilitators and other members of their group, and often reflected on how empowering the experience was in producing feelings of trust and building affective networks of mutual support, as reported by one woman:

> It's during this kind of conversation here, where we are, reporting such deep pains, that we recognise each other and say, 'Gee, it wasn't just me who was going through this'. So, you already feel stronger from talking, and you know mechanisms that you can draw on to help … Because we need a support network, because the difficulties feel bigger when you are alone.

Many women, during and after the activities, expressed appreciation and a desire to repeat the meeting on a regular basis (see Figure 2.5). Given the role of Casa das Mulheres in the community, this became possible for many who have continued to engage in various ways, either through accessing services or participating in projects. Being heard and refusing to be silenced emerged as an important therapeutic factor, as another woman from a focus group stated: 'I think it helps a lot, just the fact that we are here today, that someone listens to what the other has to say, already makes everything lighter, makes you want to face the world, gives you the feeling that you will be able to face the world'.

The two main field researchers, Julia Leal and Fernanda Vieira, kept field diaries, and in 2020, Fernanda identified this issue of silence in her reflections as being linked to the wider conditions of exclusion and endemic urban violence in Maré:

> Facing death at such an early age brings concerns, responsibilities and silencing, because from an early age, as one interviewee reported, her mother taught her not to point, not to speak or mention the police. I believe that silencing, in the lives of these women, starts from territorial conditions and can extend to other parts of their lives.

While the COVID-19 pandemic caused a halt in the research process for several months in 2020, we continued our transnational online meetings throughout, not least because the staff at Casa das Mulheres did not stop working there. Indeed, the majority of the interviews and all of the focus groups took place in person at Casa das Mulheres, with free COVID-19 testing available on site. The pandemic also strengthened the autonomy of the Brazil team in positive ways. Not only did they control and decide on levels of risk, but they also decided to include women's responses to the pandemic within the research process. This was done through interviews with participants involved with the Redes da Maré campaign, Maré Says No to Coronovirus, which involved territorial actions such as delivery of food baskets to families in situations of social vulnerability and sewing face masks. In addition, interviews were conducted with the RAMM that began in May 2020 following an initiative by Fight for Peace, a local civil society organisation. The RAMM is a collaborative network developed among women's support services due to concern about a potential increase in domestic violence related to social isolation (McIlwaine *et al*., 2022c, 2023a).

Resisting gendered urban violence through arts-based methods in Maré

The second phase of the research in Maré entailed using arts-based methods with research participants. This was distinctive from the curatorial approach identified above and focused mainly on co-produced engagements with research participants to produce knowledge revolving around visual and embodied methodologies.

Here, we discuss observational drawings/sketching body-territory mapping and GIS counter-mapping and digital storytelling using social memory technology.

Starting with observational drawings, this approach was the least participatory of all the methods we developed. Reflecting wider shifts towards using drawing methods as part of a visual methods repertoire, this is often developed with participants (Antona, 2019). However, more recently, collaborations with artists have become popular (Heath *et al.*, 2018). We decided to use in situ observational drawing as part of the focus groups, working with artist Mila de Choch. She sat in on four of the five focus groups to capture the nuance of the discussions, incorporating participants' oral and body language in her drawings (see Figure 2.5). These were shared with the women after the event and became a key part of our Dignity and Resistance exhibition in London and are being permanently exhibited at Casa das Mulheres da Maré (McIlwaine *et al.*, 2022b).

Another key creative method that we used was 'body-territory mapping', which was inherently visual, embodied and participatory. This was part of a wider effort within the research to develop

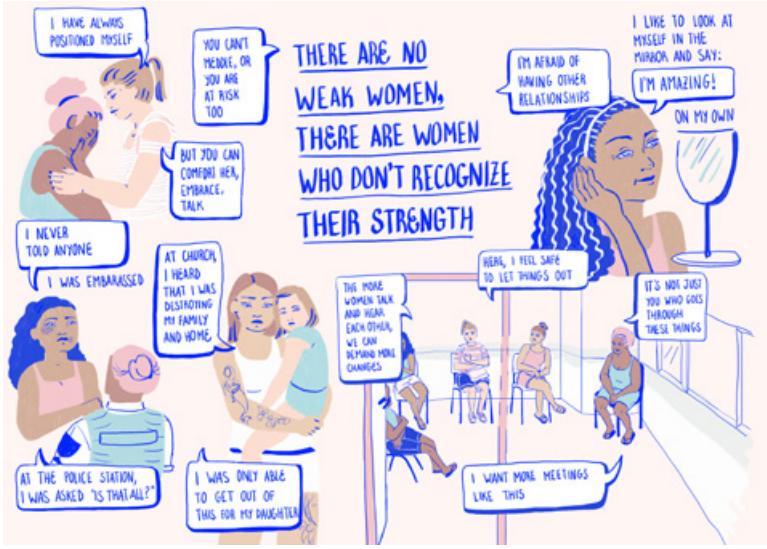

Figure 2.5 Observational drawing from a focus group with six women (credit: Mila de Choch; adapted from McIlwaine *et al.*, 2022c)

counter-mapping initiatives. This approach draws on research and debates that aim to develop counter-hegemonic narratives about the history and territorial distribution of a community based on knowledge produced by residents (McIlwaine *et al.*, 2023b). In Maré, we developed body-territory mapping led by Rosa Heimer, who had previously used this method in the context of Latin American migrants in the UK (Lopes Heimer, 2021, 2022, 2023). In brief, this methodology draws on communitarian Latin American feminist ideas around *Territorio Cuerpo-Tierra* (Body-Earth Territory) or *Cuerpo-Territorio* (Body-Territory) emerging from Maya-Xinka Indigenous women in Guatemala and is central to the political project of community feminists as well as territorial feminisms in Latin America (Cabnal, 2010). This approach has been further developed by various Latin American feminist collectives, who highlight its transformative and decolonial potential in emphasising processes of embodiment (Lopes Heimer, 2021, 2022; Zaragocín and Caretta, 2021). As in other stages of the research in Maré, the design and facilitation of the body-territory mapping involved a transnational online collaboration (the method was introduced through a video made by London-based Rosa Heimer and facilitated by the Brazil team – Andreza Dionísio, Fernanda Vieira and Natalia Trindade, overseen by Julia Leal).[6] In the body-territory mapping sessions, two women per group traced an outline around the other's body (true to size) and then each woman annotated her own map to reflect how gendered violence and resistance was inscribed on her body and was embodied by her. The women also drew territorial maps on paper and were asked to identify places that they considered to be associated with violence, risk and/or fear, as well as potency or power (see Figure 2.6). The base map for this activity was an outline drawing of Maré that the workshop facilitator had tattooed on her arm. Lopes Heimer *et al.* (2022: 9) described how 'she herself carries this territory in her body, as a form of community self-affirmation'.

Again, these activities emerged as spaces for the research participants to reflect collectively. For example, Neide, a *parda* trans woman, noted: 'We don't realise how many things have happened and today, here we were realising, looking at how much we suffered, how much we fought and struggled … and we are still resisting today'. Lívia, whose body map is shown in Figure 2.6,

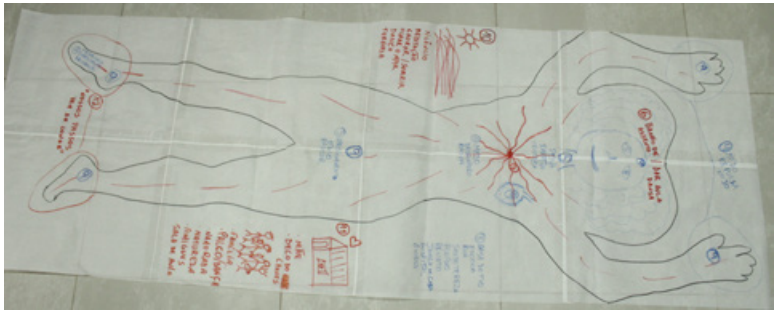

Figure 2.6 Body-territory map by Lívia (cis, *preta*, lesbian woman living in Morro do Timbau, thirty-six years old) (adapted from Lopes Heimer *et al.*, 2022)

spoke of the therapeutic nature of the process, asking to keep her map afterwards as she felt it was a source of self-knowledge:

> It seems that to be able to do this, a new window unfolded, opened in my body, because it in fact materialises everything bad … the moments that marked me most are described here, you know? … It's beautiful, and I think that somewhere it's given me a certain strength … it gives me relief.

The counter-mapping was further developed through a participatory territory-mapping exercise, subsequently adding this to an existing GIS base map (Elwood, 2006). A series of stakeholders working for non-governmental organisations (NGOs) in Maré were consulted about where they thought the most potent sites for women were located within Maré, in terms of where they felt liberated and where they felt was most dangerous for them (see Figure 0.1). They also developed a map of where the strongest networks of support for women survivors were located in Maré. The aim here was to highlight the importance of mapping in marginalised urban spaces, especially of situating gender-based violence, which is notoriously difficult to measure and estimate. It also reflects the need to register women's resistance to such violence through preventative measures like support networks, which are often overlooked in traditional mapping efforts (McIlwaine *et al.*, 2023b).

Another major initiative as part of the second stage of the research was digital storytelling using social memory technology

developed by the Museu da Pessoa (Worcman and Garde-Hansen, 2016).[7] This collaboration entailed methodological transference, capacity-building and co-creation of research design. The creative outcome was a digital archive of summary videos of oral histories with ten women artists from Maré, displayed in the Museu da Pessoa's virtual exhibition focusing on women's lives.[8] The aim of the project was to evidence how women artists have become protagonists in many of the territory's historical struggles for better living conditions and how their engagements with the arts have effectively combatted long-standing dynamics of gendered urban violence. It included design and facilitation of four initial training workshops with ten female researchers. These researchers then co-designed and participated in the entire curatorial process. Ten female artists were then interviewed in July and August 2021 during ten recording sessions. These women were variously involved in sewing, samba, rhyme and slam poetry and diverse styles of dance, theatre and music. The interviews focused on women's life histories in relation to their art and the dynamics of resistance to gendered urban violence. We then reviewed transcripts and edited the final videos as part of a collaborative curatorial process between the researchers and the women artists (who approved the final versions of their videos prior to the launch in February 2022). The women artists were also featured in the Dignity and Resistance exhibition in London in May 2022 (McIlwaine *et al.*, 2022b; see Figure 2.7) and as part of the permanent exhibition at Casa das Mulheres. Following this launch, an additional short film was made by PPP to highlight some key issues discussed by the women.[9]

The researchers reflected on their experiences in a dedicated evaluation workshop. These were largely positive although with hindsight, it was suggested it would have been enriching for the women artists to have been more involved in the editing. The researchers were keen to use and adapt the methodology in their other projects, as Fernanda Vieira stated: 'What is most powerful about this is that we value these stories which seem common, which seem ordinary, but the extraordinary can be found in the centre of them all. … We will be able to replicate them, but in our own way, based on our learning'. The women artists were invited

Figure 2.7 Priscila Monteiro de Andrade, actress and psychologist, speaking about her life in Maré as part of the Female Lives Exhibition by the Museum of the Person (credit: Paula Santos; adapted from McIlwaine *et al.*, 2022b)

to provide an evaluation of the process based on a short interview which the women answered in writing, through WhatsApp audios and in person. This elicited a range of responses, many revolving around the importance of constructing memories and ensuring that their and their ancestor's histories were told. For them it was important to be able to narrate their stories themselves in their own words rather than someone else interpreting them, connecting what is often not talked about. Priscila Monteiro, featured in Figure 2.7, recalled the idea of [painful] 'truths' that permeates many aspects of this book, reflecting on the catharsis of the process that engendered self-knowledge: 'When we revisited places of memory … I realised what my truths are and which truths somehow ended up impregnating me … To speak from my place … of someone who has lived through everything that constitutes me … to have a better perception of myself' (McIlwaine *et al.*, 2022a for further details).

Resisting gendered urban violence through co-produced arts-based methods in London

The second stage of the research in London did not gather more data on resistance practices using social science methodologies. Instead, it focused on reinterpreting the original research through a new collaboration with MinA and PPP and adapting the title of the original report *We Can't Fight in the Dark* to *We Still Fight in the Dark*. This co-produced work explored resistance, community-healing and increasing the visibility of violence experienced by Brazilian migrant women survivors between 2021 and 2023. We worked with fourteen Brazilian migrant women survivors, together with Cathy McIlwaine and Niall Sreenan from King's College London, Renata Peppl from PPP and Isabela Miranda Gomes from the LAWRS. The project entailed ten applied theatre workshops that included poetry, storytelling, music, body-percussion, drawing and film, working with a range of artists (visual artist Nina Franco, musician Alba Cabral and filmmaker Louise Carpenedo). These workshops culminated in the creation of an audiovisual installation with an accompanying performance (McIlwaine *et al.*, 2022d).

The creative workshops were participatory and co-produced with a therapeutic aim in terms of improving the participants' well-being, drawing on Audre Lorde's ideas of self-care (Lorde, 1988) and Augusto Boal's (1979) Theatre of the Oppressed methods. The idea of claiming rights was central, especially as many of the migrant women had to negotiate their immigration status (see also Erel *et al.*, 2018; Kaptani *et al.*, 2021). The workshops were recorded through observation notes, photography, poetry and scriptwriting, together with pre- and post-evaluations with the women participants. These all fed into the final (bilingual, subtitled) film, which was scripted collectively by the women and included data from the research, spoken in English and Portuguese.[10] The installation was created by Nina Franco and used tangled red thread to symbolise the complications of emotional experiences (see Figure 2.8). Indeed, a participant reflected on the red thread: 'The red yarn and what it represents made me reflect, look back and realise all I went through. But it also helped me to recognise where I am today and to feel proud of it'.

The workshops, and indeed the entire process, became an opportunity for collective reflection and healing as well as a collective effort

Figure 2.8 Making *We Still Fight in the Dark* with MinA, London, with artwork by Nina Franco (credit: Renata Peppl)

to raise awareness of Brazilians in London and to challenge stereotypes about them (O'Neill *et al.*, 2019). As one woman stated: 'I don't feel like telling my own personal story but our [collective] stories, and because of that I feel safe. This is powerful because

by telling our stories, as a group, it feels like we are shouting and making our struggles louder and visible'.

However, the discussions were also conflictive in relation to race. The women argued that race had not been given enough emphasis in the original report, such that Black Brazilian women felt invisible. While ultimately resolved, the discussion was useful for thinking through unconscious bias and representation. Disagreement also emerged in relation to showing the film. The film was screened initially in twelve (and ongoing) dissemination events around the UK and in Rio de Janeiro (including the Festival of Latin American Women in Arts (FLAWA) in London, the Migration Matters Festival in Sheffield, at academic conferences in Reading, Leicester and Oxford and at the Casa Rio Arts Centre and the Casa das Mulheres da Maré, both in Rio de Janeiro). At first, the film was shown as an installation, with discussions of it usually accompanied by a Q&A session with the respective audiences. However, it soon emerged that the women from MinA needed to be more actively involved. As a result, the team developed a short performance to accompany the screenings. One participant reported:

> When we watched the video with the audience and went straight to the Q&A, I felt like a subject of study, a guinea pig. But when we added the live performance, the acting, I felt much more comfortable. It felt that we were representing a collective, that the story wasn't mine, it was everyone's.

As with many of the arts-based methods, the participants noticed benefits from being involved, including enhancing their self-esteem, developing inner strength and reclaiming their histories, as one woman noted:

> I expressed myself, participated and spoke without fear; it was something that made me release my fears. I had never done theatre before, I was a bit shy, but every meeting was different: dancing, singing, writing poems, being able to express our emotions was something that helped me a lot and the other women too. In every meeting there was an emotion. I cried, I rejoiced, I felt special.

Several spoke of feeling exposed and uncomfortable at the beginning of the process but then gradually felt stronger. One stated: 'From being subjects of study, we were then "humanised" and then I felt

at the same level as the audience – from strangeness to recognition'. This was also felt by the audience, as reflected in their responses to the film installation at the Dignity and Resistance exhibition: 'So interesting, so powerful, to see the world as others see it, to remember others' strength and suffering'.

Listening to women resisting gendered urban violence in Maré and London

One of our final creative engagements was the Women Resisting Violence (WRV) podcast series which included a combination of curatorial, participatory and co-produced creative approaches. This was a collaboration between King's College London and the UK-based LAB, broadly self-defining as the Women Resisting Violence Collective (2022a), together with narrator Renata Peppl, dubbing artists, editors, sound engineers, translators and other contributors.[11] The podcast was developed collaboratively among researchers, interviewees, engineers and producer Louise Morris. Three episodes were released, dubbed by Latin American migrant women in the UK and narrated by Renata Peppl in English, Spanish and Portuguese (for the two episodes produced without one of the languages, a transcript was provided in that language). Two episodes focus on the research included in this book: 'Rio's Trailblazing Women's House' with Casa das Mulheres da Maré and 'Step Up Migrant Women' with the LAWRS, SUMW and MinA. The podcast aimed to reveal how Latin American grassroots and advocacy women's organisations develop initiatives to address gendered violence through a focus on women's everyday realities of violence. It aimed to reveal 'painful truths' through using the podcast series as 'a tool of resistance as it amplifies women's political and social agency'. It is used as lobbying material, as a campaigning and communications tool and as a teaching resource for community groups, NGOs and students (Women Resisting Violence Collective, 2022b: 3). In addition to the spoken word, music was included from Guatemalan feminist hip-hop artist Rebeca Lane and WARA, a London-based band creating music about being a Latin American migrant, as well as musicians from Maré.

The series was launched in November 2021 over the international 16 Days of Activism against GBV. By early 2024, there were 2,780

downloads in sixty-five countries, and the podcast was shortlisted for Best Documentary in the Amnesty International Media Awards 2022. We also developed a bonus episode based on an online roundtable on the power of podcasting for social transformation (Figure 2.9). This showed that podcasts can be a tool for developing empathy through 'the intimacy of listening' (Women Resisting Violence Collective, 2022b: 6). As with many of the methods already discussed, the podcast can give voice to those affected by violence, providing a way to denounce it and also constructing a collective memory for the future. Its translocational nature was key to its success, given that it speaks through three languages. Indeed, one of the dubbing artists, Ana Rojas, noted: 'This podcast internationalises the fight of women'. Gilmara from SUMW stated that contributing to the podcast marked 'a breakthrough from being a survivor to being a voice for the community'. The podcast also provided the foundation for a subsequent book (Women Resisting Violence Collective, 2022a). Like many of the outputs discussed

Figure 2.9 Producing the multilingual Women Resisting Violence podcast with the LAB (credit: Louise Morris)

in the book, the podcast has longevity and sustainability into the future as a digital memory. It has served to encourage healing among survivors, to enhance their wellbeing, to raise awareness, to be a source of activism and to influence policymakers.

The creative work outlined in this chapter is constantly evolving, as evidenced by the most recent work using Photovoice in London and Rio de Janeiro (see Table 2.1).[12]

Notes

1 See https://lawrs.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/2022/02/Amendment-140_-LAWRSWRW_Committee-Stage.docx-2–1.pdf (accessed 12 February 2023).
2 UK: Tackling Violence against Some Women, but Not All. See www.hrw.org/news/2022/07/22/uk-tackling-violence-against-some-women-not-all (accessed 12 February 2023).
3 See *Raising Awareness of Violence against Brazilian Women in London* here: https://youtu.be/LPDNxtWB9e0, and *Ana* here: www.imdb.com/title/tt10503906/?ref_=nm_ov_bio_lk1 (accessed 12 February 2023).
4 Listen to *Believe* here: www.footprintproductions.co.uk/site-specific (accessed 12 February 2023).
5 See here for the storymap: https://storymaps.arcgis.com/stories/90e8fa21fe9b4e4cb477fabe9a38d28e#_msocom_1 (accessed 3 May 2023).
6 See video here: https://youtu.be/CinKbJSQcMU (accessed 1 September 2023).
7 The Museu da Pessoa is a virtual museum that has documented around 20,000 life stories with photographs, documents and videos. Visit the museum at https://acervo.museudapessoa.org/ (accessed 12 February 2023).
8 Visit the digital exhibition at https://vidasfemininas.museudapessoa.org/ (accessed 12 February 2023).
9 The film can be viewed here: www.youtube.com/watch?v=UiTs7-n9PhA (accessed 12 February 2023).
10 The film can be viewed here: https://youtu.be/tDsvgA8pUlg (accessed 12 February 2023).
11 Jelke Boesten, Andrea Espinoza, Cathy McIlwaine, Louise Morris, Patricia Muñoz Cabrera, Marilyn Thomson, Moniza Rizzini Ansari and Rebecca Wilson, among others.
12 https://lab.org.uk/brazilian-women-in-londons-delivery-sector/ (accessed 24 February 2024).

3

Situating gendered urban violence in Rio de Janeiro and London

> When you live in favelas, you don't just fight with the police, you fight everything. You close your eyes, and you wake up, you may be in the middle of an incursion, you may be in a turf war. It's very complicated indeed … you live in this eternal fear of something happening.
>
> (Ludmila, Maré)

> I think that when we're outside Brazil, we're more vulnerable … when I was in Brazil, I had my family, my friends, but here I don't have anyone … here you're on your own. That is what I noticed with my husband; he took advantage of that because he knew I had nowhere to go.
>
> (Marcia, London)

This chapter situates gendered urban violence in the specific contexts of Maré in Rio de Janeiro and in London. In both these settings, we outline some key aspects of the population in general and give an overview of their experiences of direct forms of gender-based violence, drawing on the surveys in the respective places. In addition to highlighting the endemic nature of such violence, the discussion illustrates its multidimensionality and simultaneity. Reflecting the core components of the translocational gendered urban violence framework discussed in Chapter 1, this chapter sets the scene for how these direct forms interrelate with indirect structural, symbolic and infrastructural violence.

The discussion also outlines legislative and policy initiatives that aim to address gendered urban violence. Although violence against women was largely ignored by states globally in terms of laws and action until the 1990s, since then, and with considerable pressure from local, national and transnational feminist movements, allies

within the human rights movement and some politicians, many governments around the world, including Brazil and the UK, have begun to reform their legislation and institute policy change to combat it (Htun and Jensenius, 2022). From a translocational perspective, the UK has a lot to learn from feminists in Latin America who have been at the forefront of lobbying for legislation criminalising feminicide, with eighteen Latin American countries having specific laws against it (Wilson *et al*., 2021). Yet, many have argued that impunity remains rife and that the existence of legal frameworks does not guarantee prevention of violence against women. This is partly because radical and effective reform needs to address intersectional systems of power that reproduce patriarchal violence. Indeed, legal and judicial initiatives only address one of the three dimensions identified in the Belém do Pará Convention: the need to punish, ignoring the need to expose and the need to prevent (Thomson and Muñoz Cabrera, 2022). More recently, however, there has been guarded optimism in the Latin American context. In Mexico, Htun and Jensenius (2022) argue that even weakly enforced laws, together with feminist activism and media coverage, can reduce gender-based and especially intimate partner abuse (Ellsberg *et al*., 2022 on Nicaragua).

Gendered urban violence in Maré

As noted briefly in the introduction, Maré is located in the North Zone of Rio de Janeiro and comprises a group of sixteen favelas that began to be occupied in the 1940s. Women make up 51 per cent of the population and many residents have low (albeit increasing) levels of education, with many working in informal or self-employment as street vendors or domestic workers within a thriving entrepreneurial culture. Over half of the population self-identify as being *parda* (of mixed heritage, or 'Brown'), one-third as White and less than one in ten as Black (Sousa Silva, 2017).[1]

Nevertheless, high levels of inequality, poverty and public insecurity affect the lives of Maré residents, as does the lack of public safety and security. Daily life is marked by ever-increasing levels of violence perpetrated by the police and by armed militias and drug gangs, although this violence plays out differently in distinct

communities inside the territory. Maré is dominated by three of Rio de Janeiro's armed criminal groups (ACGs): *Comando Vermelho* (Red Command), *Terceiro Comando* (Third Command) and the *Milícia*, made up of current and former public security agents (Silva Sousa, 2017). In past decades, Maré has become the arena of constant raids by the police and the military police (called 'operations' or 'interventions') which aim to curb the power of the armed groups and detain individual suspects of criminal activities. In practice, these lead to the serious injury and killing of civilians along with the suspension of normal daily activities. In 2016, for instance, thirty-three raids took place, resulting in seventeen dead and the closure of public agencies for twenty days. This death count was eight times more than for the whole of Brazil and three times higher than for the state of Rio de Janeiro in 2015 (Krenzinger *et al.*, 2018b). Between 2017 and 2021, there were 132 police operations and 114 confrontations among armed groups. These resulted in 157 deaths, ninety-four days of closure of health centres and seventy days of closure of schools in Maré (Redes da Maré, 2021). In 2022 alone, there were twenty-seven police operations, resulting in thirty-nine deaths, fifteen days of school closures and nineteen days of health centre closures (Redes da Maré, 2022b). Paradoxically, this violence becomes self-reinforcing and perpetuates stereotypes about favelas as inherently violent spaces of the city. Also important is that during the COVID-19 pandemic, the Brazilian Supreme Court ordered the police forces to cease raiding favelas from July 2020. While the order was never entirely complied with, there was a marked reduction in numbers of police incursions in the second semester of 2020, resulting in a decrease in deaths in Maré by 61 per cent from 2019 figures. However, during the first half of 2021, there were more deaths caused by the police (eight) than in the entire year of 2020, despite having only seven incursions. An estimated 800 COVID vaccines were not offered to the local population due to disruptions caused in health centres during the 2021 incursions (Redes da Maré, 2021).

As the state has largely abdicated its obligations regarding the provision of public services and guaranteeing citizen rights, armed militias have come to fill the vacuum. They have taken control over the governance of the territories of Maré which the police have attempted to wrestle from them in a violent manner

(Krenzinger *et al.*, 2018a; Silva Sousa, 2017). This combined institutional violence and action by armed groups disproportionately affects women. Between 2021 and 2022, Redes da Maré noted that women survivors of gender-based violence was the largest group they have supported (41 per cent of the total) followed by Black men (22 per cent). In terms of the perpetrators, 29 per cent of violence was by family members and neighbours, but 27 per cent was by public security forces and 22 per cent by armed groups (Redes da Maré, 2022a: 2). At the same time, historically, women have been the protagonists in the territory by leading many of the crucial struggles that have achieved so much, including mobilisations to obtain running water and to ensure the right to crèches in the 1980s. This emerged in our research, as Rita, a nineteen-year-old *preta* woman, noted:

> I started to research the history of Maré and I noticed that it all began with a group of women. Ms Helena told me the story of her and her friends fighting for water and electricity … The women are here while the men go out to work. We stay here, on the frontline. When there's a police operation, it's the women who go and defend [the community] … Women have a key role in making the favela.

Who are women in Maré? Our survey revealed that two out of three were aged forty-four or younger, one-fifth were aged forty-five–fifty-nine and women aged sixty or older made up 14 per cent of the sample. Three out of five were born in Rio de Janeiro, two-fifths of whom were born in Maré. Nearly two-fifths were born outside of the state of Rio de Janeiro, with four-fifths of those migrating to Maré, predominantly from the northeast of Brazil. In terms of education, the overall picture was of low-level schooling. About two-fifths of women had not completed primary school, and only three out of ten had gone to secondary school. Nearly half self-identified as *parda*, three out of ten self-identified as *branca* and one in five as *preta*. In terms of religious affiliation, two-fifths were Catholics, three out of ten were evangelical and nearly one in ten had no religion. Most women were married or in a stable relationship (over two-fifths), over one-third were single, one out of ten were separated or divorced and nearly one out of ten were widows. Just over one-fifth of the women were employed, another fifth worked on their own account, usually running a small business, and another fifth were out of work. Those not in paid work were

homemakers (one-fifth), had retired (one in ten) or were students (2 per cent) (Krenzinger *et al.*, 2018a).

In terms of direct forms of gender-based violence, awareness emerged as limited. Although 76 per cent said that gender-based violence occurred in Maré, only 29 per cent openly declared that they suffered it. However, when asked about twelve specific forms of violence, this number rose to 57 per cent of those surveyed, indicating that they had suffered one or more forms of gender-based violence (34 per cent physical, 30 per cent sexual and 45 per cent psychological). While psychological violence was the most commonly identified, numbers are likely to be underestimated. A community leader from a focus group commented: 'When violence is psychological, the woman takes much longer to understand that it is violence. Words also hurt'. Similarly, a service provider noted: 'Many women do not realise that they experience situations of violence, so through group activities, they become aware of their situation'.

Threats of physical violence (27 per cent) as well as sexual comments (26 per cent) were the most common specific types of violence, in addition to physical violence (24 per cent). As for perpetrators, intimate partners committed almost half of the violence (47 per cent) and strangers 15 per cent. The remainder was committed by work colleagues and friends and family. Within Maré, women in the *Milícia*-controlled area and with the fewest non-governmental organisations (NGOs) reported lower levels of gendered violence, suggesting that they were potentially afraid to discuss the issue or were less aware of it, although this varied according to the specific favela (McIlwaine *et al.*, 2023b; see Figure 3.1). Reporting also varied according to whether violence occurred in the public (53 per cent) or private (47 per cent) spheres.

The group most likely to experience gender-based violence were young people between eighteen and twenty-nine years old (almost 35 per cent) and women between thirty and forty-four years old (34 per cent). Those who identified as *preta* were the most likely to experience it (69 per cent), compared with 55 per cent of those who were *parda* and 50 per cent of *branca* women. Especially important to emphasise is that reports of gender-based violence were hugely diverse in nature, and different types were experienced simultaneously. According to the survey, among those who experienced violence, 38 per cent suffered one to three types, while 33 per cent suffered four or more, suggesting a tendency of re-victimisation.

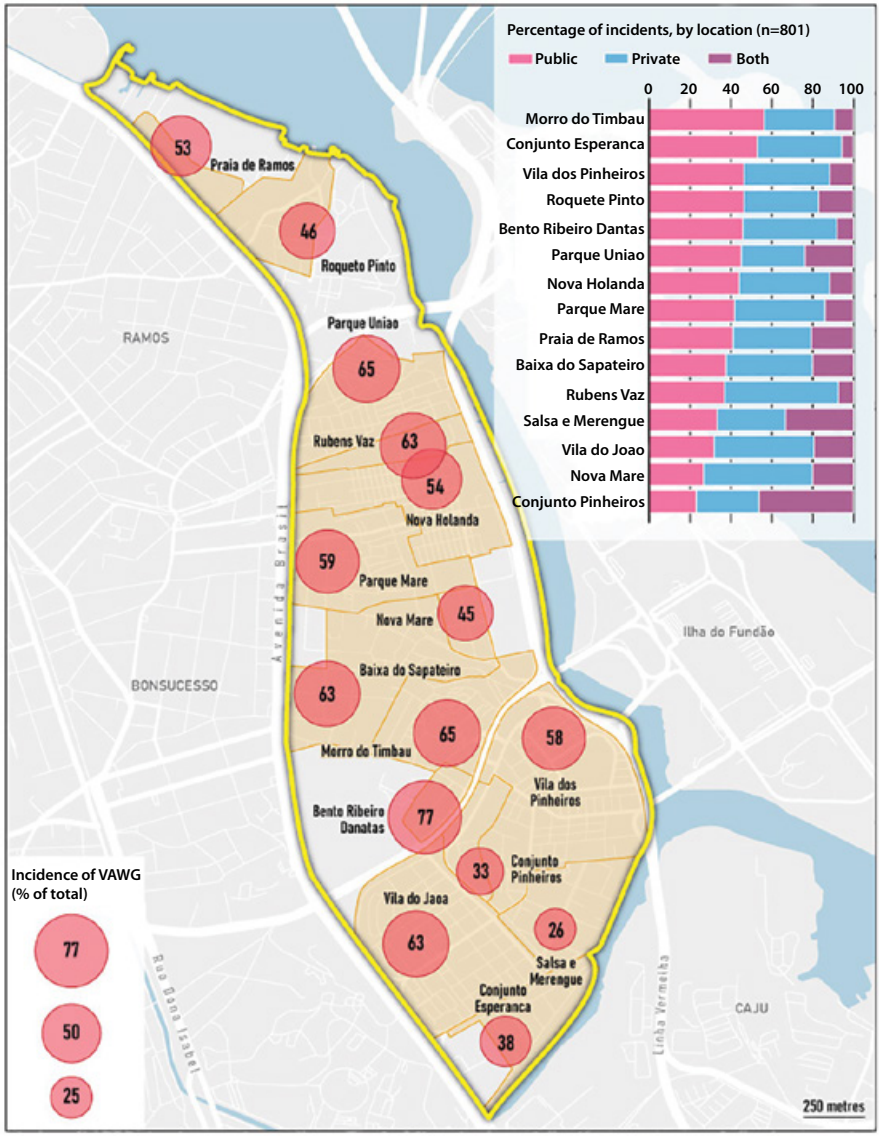

Figure 3.1 Incidence of gender-based violence by favela and public/private sphere in Maré (per cent) (credit: cartography by Steven Bernard; adapted from McIlwaine *et al.*, 2023b)

For example, twenty-nine-year-old Melissa, who was *preta*, had been sexually and physically abused by her stepfather as well as beaten by her second partner who broke two of her fingers and toes with a wooden stick. This partner also mocked and humiliated her on a regular basis. Melissa had a stepbrother who had been killed at fifteen by a stray bullet in an armed fight in the favela. Melissa reported constant sexual harassment in the street. Indeed, several women interviewed spoke of relatives being shot and/or killed in the violence that was commonplace in Maré. For example, fifty-two-year-old Lúcia, who was *preta* and had lived in Maré from the age of three, spoke of how her first partner and father of her twins was murdered by the police when they were only one year old. Subsequently, one of her twin sons was shot by military police who entered the favela as part of the UPP (Pacifying Police Unit) (Sousa Silva, 2017). The police claimed that they shot him because the car in which he was travelling did not stop at a checkpoint (denied by her son). Lúcia said that it was an 'execution' that left her son in hospital for ninety-eight days, paraplegic and with one leg amputated. The trauma of such violence on women has emerged as a major issue in favelas (Rocha, 2012; Smith, 2016).

The complexity and multidimensionality of gender-based violence can also be seen in a sequence from *SCAR* where different layers of video showing multiple women's testimonies are projected on to the walls of the installation (Heritage, 2018b).

Sequence 1 (four women speak and are seen)

25

Every night I dream the same thing.

26

Meanwhile I was

physically abused

27

by my uncle.

28

At the time,

He was thirty years old out there,

29

and I was 15.

30

10 to 12.

31

It went on for ten years until …

32

Until I was 16

Because I lived with my aunt.

33

I loved her

and I didn't tell her.

34

My stepfather abused me.

35

But I didn't know,

I thought I was dreaming.

36

My husband's godmother

37

He started abusing me.

38

He'd put his hand

In my mouth.

39

He started abusing me.

40

He made me do things,

41

put my mouth …

42

He tried, but I didn't want

43

He could be arrested

for paedophilia

44

It was disturbing

45

He grabbed me.

He stuck the knife in here

46

I have the scar.

Gendered urban violence among Brazilian migrant women in London

Brazilians in London, as already noted, are not only the largest nationality group among Latin Americans in the UK but are estimated to be the largest of all Brazilian communities in Europe. In the last three decades or so, migration to the UK has increased markedly following the implementation of neoliberal macroeconomic policies throughout Latin America that have fuelled inequality, prompting movement in search of better economic and educational opportunities. According to one of the largest surveys with Brazilians in the UK, 92 per cent resided in England and Wales, and among those in England, more than half lived in London (Evans, 2020). This survey also verified a high educational level, bearing in mind that many Brazilians go to England for university and postgraduate studies, with 75 per cent having a university degree. This is reflected in the fact that 28 per cent were employed as professionals, with a further 16 per cent freelancers

and business owners. Despite this, and linked with immigration status and English language proficiency, 41 per cent worked in so-called low-skilled jobs: in cleaning, food and beverage services and delivery services. In terms of immigration status, the majority (63 per cent) had a European passport, with 14 per cent having no documents (Evans, 2020: 15). The majority of Brazilians (57 per cent) came from the southeast region of Brazil, specifically, São Paulo. Acknowledging the contested nature of ethnic/racial identities, three-quarters self-reported as *branca* and 19 per cent as *parda* (Evans, 2020: 9). Racial identification among Brazilian migrants in London is especially complex, with those identifying as *branca* often finding it easier to migrate yet becoming 'othered' in intersectional and colonial representations of race, class and gender after they arrive. This can be especially difficult for Brazilian women given widespread racialised exoticisation and hyper-sexualisation (Martins Junior, 2020).

The lives of Brazilian migrants must also be situated within a wider context of a 'hostile immigration environment' in the UK. Since 2010, migrants' rights have been systematically eroded with the aim of discouraging migration and settlement. Since 2012, punitive powers have been strengthened through the 2014 and 2016 Immigration Acts that have extended immigration controls to banks, the healthcare system, schools, private landlords and others. This has fundamentally undermined migrants' access to work, education, accommodation and healthcare, especially for migrant women with insecure immigration status, and for survivors of gender-based violence (McIlwaine *et al*., 2019). For those with insecure immigration status, this relates specifically to the No Recourse to Public Funds (NRPF) restriction linked to many temporary visas, which means they are unable to apply for state benefits or assistance. Although there are some concessions, NRPF conditions have generally been made more stringent over time (McIlwaine and Evans, 2023).

Therefore, Brazilian migrant women face a wide range of societal, economic and legal challenges in the UK, as reflected in the poem written collectively by the women from Migrants in Action (MinA):

> I am a Brazilian woman …
> because they always ask me to dance samba

because they think I am exotic
because my body is sexualised.
I am a Brazilian woman
because they say that I came to Europe to find a husband and his money.
I am a Brazilian woman because they say I am lazy
clean, clean, fast, fast.
I am a Brazilian woman because they think I am not capable, smart or an intellectual
because they say I am 'too much', too loud
because they say I am not qualified
because they think I am stupid just because I am learning English.
I am a Brazilian woman and they say I can't dream.

Yet, who are Brazilian women in London? According to our survey, most were young (74 per cent were under fifty) and well educated (72 per cent had university education). Almost three out of four identified themselves as *branca*, and one out of five self-identified as *parda*. Only a very small proportion identified as being Asian, Black or Indigenous (4 per cent or below in all cases). Almost half moved from São Paulo state (42 per cent), with 10 per cent from Rio de Janeiro. Most had migrated directly from Brazil (two-thirds), but one-third had lived outside Brazil prior to moving to London, especially in Italy, the US and Portugal. Brazilian women's immigration status varied, with about two-thirds entering with temporary visas and the rest entering with European passports. The largest group comprised those who had entered the UK holding a European passport obtained through ancestry rights. Only a very small proportion of women (3 per cent) reported becoming undocumented, although this likely represents an underestimate. Importantly, 80 per cent had regularised their status by the time of the survey (primarily through obtaining EU passports). However, two-thirds had some experience of insecure immigration status. Around three out of ten of the women had moved to the UK to study, and nearly one in four had migrated in search of adventure or new cultural experiences. Nearly one-fifth had moved in search of work and one out of ten to accompany their partner.

As for household and family, the majority (70 per cent) were married/in relationships, with just over half having children. Most were engaged in paid work (over two-thirds), with a majority

employed formally (nearly half), although some were self-employed or working informally (25 per cent). One in ten were students or homemakers and only a minority were out of work (seven per cent). Nearly half were working in 'professional' or 'semi-professional occupations' (i.e. requiring advanced training and education), and nearly one out of ten were managers or directors. One in five were working in caring and other services, with 14 per cent employed as cleaners. Yet, although many Brazilian women worked in professional or skilled occupations, mean and median salaries were lower than those for the UK more broadly (Evans and McIlwaine, 2017).

In relation to direct forms of gender-based violence, many women spoke of not recognising such abuse. Marcia, who was forty-two and identified as *preta*, noted:

> I picked up a leaflet that explained what it was. All these years, twenty-two years, I didn't think I was suffering domestic violence, except for the time when he punched me. But when I read the information on the leaflet, I was shocked to find that I had spent half my life suffering psychological, emotional abuse, without realising it. I didn't understand what I was living with.

While some women were unaware, others were unwilling to acknowledge that they were experiencing violence, usually due to manipulation by their partners. Others spoke of how they had been brought up in Brazil thinking that violence was normal. For example, Valentina, who was in her forties and *branca*, stated: 'I didn't even realise that it was violence as I was used to hearing the stories from my grandmother, from my mother, my cousins and my sisters who went through this; for me, that wasn't even abuse, it was normal; for me, it was part of every marriage'.

Bearing this in mind, an alarmingly high 82 per cent of Brazilian women reported experiences of abuse in their lifetime. Psychological violence emerged as most commonly experienced (48 per cent), followed by physical (38 per cent) and sexual (14 per cent). Unwelcome physical contact was the most frequent specific form (42 per cent), as well as physical assault (36 per cent) and being humiliated or suffering discrimination (33 per cent). The majority of perpetrators were known to women (66 per cent); although one-third of violence was committed by strangers, almost a quarter (23 per cent) was by an intimate partner, with bosses and

colleagues in workplaces responsible for 26 per cent and friends and family for 10 per cent. In terms of where the violence took place, 23 per cent occurred in the private sphere (22 per cent in the victim's home and 8 per cent in someone else's) with 78 per cent in the public domain. Those with mixed heritage/*parda* were more likely to suffer (66 per cent) than White/*branca* women (58 per cent) (remembering that only 2 per cent of the survey sample were Black/*preta*). Furthermore, the survey revealed that gender-based violence was higher among those with insecure and temporary immigration status (60 per cent) compared with those with permanent status (mainly an EU passport) (54 per cent) (McIlwaine and Evans, 2018, 2023).

Just as in Maré, Brazilian women in London experienced a wider variety of forms of direct violence both simultaneously and over their lifetimes. According to the survey, 29 per cent of women experienced one form of violence, while 26 per cent experienced two, and 24 per cent suffered three types. One woman, Cristina, who was thirty-seven, White and worked as a cleaner, had experienced twenty-one different types of direct forms of gender-based violence, including being kicked, slapped, coercively controlled, throttled, defamed, stalked and threatened with a knife and scissors, all at the hands of her partner.

Reflecting the discrimination facing Brazilian women in British society, this was particularly intense when women had insecure immigration status. For example, Isabela (included in the Step Up Migrant Women (SUMW) research) spoke of how her British ex-husband and his family abused her because she was undocumented:

> I came to the UK in 2015 from Brazil. I was convinced by my British ex-husband that I had a spousal visa, but he had refused to apply for one as soon as I arrived in the UK. I continued to undergo domestic violence from my then husband who threatened me repeatedly with deportation. He hid my passport and documents from me. He reported me to social services and told them I was being the abusive one towards our children. I was undocumented and feared being reported to the police. He and his mother hid my passport from me, and he told me I would never be believed and that he would take our children away from me. I was refused support from the police and was made homeless and destitute. I was also told I had no custody over my child because I was undocumented.

Brazilian migrant women also experienced gender-based violence across a transnational continuum (McIlwaine and Evans, 2020). Indeed, 77 per cent had experienced it in Brazil prior to migrating, with 52 per cent having suffered back home experiencing it again in London. There was therefore continuity across borders, with 43 per cent suffering in both locations (McIlwaine and Evans, 2018). Yet, there is nothing innate in Brazilian culture that means that such violence travels with women. Instead, the nature of gender-based violence is reconfigured as women negotiate life in London as migrants. The chapter now turns to situate these profiles within the legislative and policy contexts in both countries.

Addressing gender-based violence in Brazil through legislation and policy

The last four decades have been pivotal in bringing about policy changes to address gender-based violence against women and girls in Brazil. Since the 1980s, Brazil has ratified fourteen treaties and conventions enforceable at the international, national or local levels that mandate the promotion of gender equality, the protection of women's rights, the protection of victims of violence and the punishment of perpetrators (Gattegno *et al.*, 2016). The feminist and women's rights movements in Brazil have played a crucial role in this, demanding policies and measures from the government and society since the 1970s (Morgado *et al.*, 2018). The social and political changes that took place in the late 1970s and early 1980s in the period of military dictatorship and in the subsequent return to democratic government were also linked to feminist activism. Their mobilisation throughout the 1980s aimed at giving visibility to violence against women and demanding social, juridical and health policies, along with preventative measures. As these movements strengthened, they fought for the criminalisation of domestic violence to shift it from its historical confinement to the private sphere of the home into the public sphere (Morgado *et al.*, 2018).

Their demands were translated into legal, judicial and institutional changes to address gender-based violence (Kiss *et al.*, 2012). Major outcomes included Brazil ratifying the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women (CEDAW) in 1984.

This set out the national legal and regulatory structures for promoting gender equality and addressing violence against women. Women's mobilisation also led to the creation of the National Council for Women's Rights in 1985, responsible for formulating policies at all levels of public administration with a view to eliminating discrimination against women. This was followed by the establishment of local and regional participatory councils for women's rights across the public administration (Macaulay, 2010, 2021).

Another important milestone in the 1980s was the establishment of the first ever Women's Police Station in the city of São Paulo in 1985 to prevent, investigate and punish violence against women, following years of feminist group lobbying. These are specialised police units staffed predominantly with women police officers aiming to avoid problems of, for example, re-victimisation associated with ordinary police stations (Machado *et al.*, 2018). By 2018, they comprised around 370 units established in 447 cities around the country, the highest number among Latin American countries (Córdova and Kras, 2020). Nevertheless, these are not without their criticisms, including their insufficient distribution across Brazilian cities, understaffing and existing staff rarely receiving gender-sensitising training (Perova and Reynolds, 2017).

Further legal-institutional milestones included Brazil's ratification of the 1994 Inter-American Convention for the Prevention, Punishment and Eradication of Violence against Women (the Belém do Pará Convention) (Thomson and Muñoz Cabrera, 2022). This was significant in incorporating definitions of violence against women as well as criminalising it, particularly sexual violence (Martins, 2018). Another landmark was the creation of the national Secretariat for Policies for Women in 2003, which was successful in securing state funding of services for addressing violence against women (Perova and Reynolds, 2017). That same year, a new national law came into force making it mandatory for public and private health services to record and make publicly available all cases of gender-based violence among the women they assist, making violence a public health issue (Martins, 2018). Many of these gains were consolidated in the first National Plan for Women's Policies (PNPM) created in 2004.

The Maria da Penha Law (2006) was a milestone in the development of legal measures to combat violence against women in

Brazil, increasing its visibility and encouraging women to report violence. Reflecting concerted lobbying by feminist groups, the law is named after a prominent campaigner and a survivor of domestic violence who brought a landmark case against the Brazilian state at the Inter-American Commission on Human Rights in 2001. This legislation effected changes in national criminal and penal codes, creating mechanisms for the punishment of perpetrators and the establishment of dedicated courts. It also mandated the creation of shelters for women at risk of domestic violence and led to the creation of a helpline service (Service Centre for Women – *Ligue 180*) and the National Pact for Combatting Violence against Women in 2007 (Morgado *et al.*, 2018). Although the implementation of the Maria da Penha Law has played an integral role in increasing awareness of violence against women, its effectiveness has been compromised by a lack of state resources, making it difficult to fully implement (Gattegno *et al.*, 2016; Lima *et al.*, 2016).

Further violence against women policies and programmes were developed during the 2010s, including the Network for Ending Violence against Women in 2011 aiming to develop strategies to prevent violence against women and girls. Another important initiative was the Women Living Without Violence programme which, in turn, created the Brazilian Women's House project in 2013 (Lima *et al.*, 2016). Within the decade, another milestone in the fight against violence against women was set by the Feminicide Law implemented in 2015. This made gender-based murder of women an aggravated form of homicide which was added to the list of heinous crimes, thereby increasing its visibility and enabling the punishment of perpetrators with prison sentences from twelve to thirty years. The new law has increased the visibility of feminicide and helped bolster the implementation of the Maria da Penha Law (Lima *et al.*, 2016). A further development in criminal law was the 2018 Sexual Importunation Law which makes committing a libidinous act against someone's will and without their consent in public space a crime, attracting prison sentences between one and five years (Faria Filho, 2019). However, despite expanding the national response to gender-based violence, the landmark legal frameworks primarily focus on punitive strategies rather than preventative measures.

In a short period of time, Brazil established key institutional architectures to address women's rights in an integrated and participatory way. However, in 2018, in the context of President Bolsonaro's political reorientation of the country away from its previous progressive advancements, the National Secretary for Women was transferred to a newly instituted Ministry of Women, Family and Human Rights. This was assumed to be an upgrade for the women's rights agenda but, in fact, feminist movements revealed it as a throwback, particularly considering the appointment of an anti-feminist, Neo-Pentecostal leader with a strong opposition to so-called 'gender ideology' as Minister. With the inauguration of President Lula da Silva in January 2023, women's equality has moved centre stage. He appointed the largest number of female ministers in the history of Brazil (sixteen out of thirty-seven). On International Women's Day on 8 March 2023, he announced a host of policies to address wage inequalities, fight gender-based violence and guarantee reproductive health rights. Among other initiatives, he relaunched the Live Without Violence programme, aimed to build forty 'Brazilian Women's Houses' which would provide specialised support for women survivors of violence and established 'Marielle Franco Day' (on 14 March, the anniversary of the municipal councillor of Rio de Janeiro's murder in 2018) with the aim of preventing intersectional political violence. It remains to be seen how these initiatives will play out, but they are a clear departure from the racialised and classed misogyny of Bolsonaro and his administration.[2]

Addressing gender-based violence in the UK through legislation and policy

As was the case in Brazil, over the last few decades, the UK has signed up to major treaties and conventions on gender-based violence against women and girls, enforceable at the international and regional levels. It has also created a host of national policies to protect and support women survivors, sanction perpetrators and prevent violence. However, there is no single comprehensive British legislation that addresses all forms of violence against women and girls, so laws and policies address specific forms, with domestic violence being the most commonly addressed.

Since the late 1960s, women's movements in the UK have mobilised for women's rights, pioneering attempts to place domestic violence on the policy agenda and pressurising the government to address violence against women (Hearn *et al.*, 2016). Their efforts were bolstered by the formalisation of gender equality rights that followed the UK joining the European Economic Community (EEC) in 1973. Women's movements in the UK helped inform important legislation, such as the landmark 1976 Domestic Violence and Matrimonial Proceedings Act, the first legislation that enabled women to secure protection from violence, and subsequent legislation containing relevant provisions for violence against women, such as the 1996 Family Law Act and the 1997 Protection from Harassment Act. They also helped create key initiatives like the national domestic violence helpline in 1987. From the 1990s onwards, central government has provided funding for an array of initiatives including appointing a Minister for Women with a supporting Women's Unit, improving guidance for the police's handling of domestic violence reporting and establishing guidelines for multi-agency cooperation to facilitate an integrated approach (Corradi and Stöckl, 2014).

In the 2000s, various pieces of legislation were passed containing provisions to advance women's rights, to protect victims of diverse forms of violence against women, prevent such violence and punish its perpetrators. These include the 2003 Sexual Offences Act, the 2003 Female Genital Mutilation Act, the 2004 Gender Recognition Act, the 2006 Equality Act and the 2007 Forced Marriage (Civil Protection) Act. Marking a significant step forward, in 2004, the UK adopted the Domestic Violence, Crime and Victims Act, which was informed by a consultation with the Women's National Commission (an umbrella body for UK-based women's groups to advise the government). While it was extremely significant at the time of its enactment, this Act fails to address the need for more comprehensive integrated initiatives to tackle social, health, housing, advocacy and employment issues related to domestic violence. Rather, it treats domestic violence primarily as a criminal matter focused on punishment (Hearn *et al.*, 2016). Nonetheless, it has established some valuable initiatives, such as specialist domestic violence police units to support victims, a domestic violence courts system and accreditation of independent trained specialists to provide support to high-risk victims (Corradi and Stöckl, 2014).

In the 2010s, there was a notable acceleration in law creation, policy development and the design of mechanisms to regulate actions against gender-based violence. The 2010 Equality Act and the 2010 Crime and Security Act, together with the Call to End Violence against Women and Girls Strategy 2010, provided an overarching framework to address violence against women and girls. The latter strategy addresses crimes committed primarily by men against women including domestic abuse, rape, sexual offences, stalking, harassment, forced marriage, female genital mutilation, child abuse and human trafficking, with additional focus on sexual exploitation, prostitution, pornography and obscenity. An amendment of the Domestic Violence, Crime and Victims Act followed in 2012 to cover for acts causing or allowing serious physical harm or death of a child or vulnerable adult, while the Protection of Freedoms Act 2012 created the specific offence of stalking. The following year, the cross-government definition of violence against women and girls was amended to take account of young people, cover coercive behaviour and include physical, sexual, financial and emotional abuse (Corradi and Stöckl, 2014).

In 2014, the Istanbul Convention (the Council of Europe Convention on Preventing and Combating Violence against Women and Domestic Violence) came into force, comprising eighty-one articles to address prevention, protection of victims, prosecution of perpetrators and integrated policies (HO, 2019). The UK signed up to the convention in 2012 but only ratified it in November 2022. Even then, it reserved Articles 44 and 59, which provide protection for migrant women. Article 44 relates to the prosecution of British citizens or residents for crimes committed outside the UK; Article 59 relates to protecting migrant victims of violence who have insecure immigration status, and have NRPF. SUMW has been central to lobbying around this, drawing on *The Right to Be Believed* research (McIlwaine *et al*., 2019; see Chapter 2). Underlying the ratification was the Domestic Abuse Bill 2019, which became an Act in 2021, which was required for compliance with the Istanbul Convention. This sets out a comprehensive package of actions meant to 'transform' the UK's response to domestic violence to ensure that victims feel safe reporting and trust the state to support them and their children, as well as bringing perpetrators to justice (HO, 2020).

Alongside SUMW, advocacy groups have campaigned for years to have the issue of migrant women's rights addressed by the government, arguing that this is a human rights and justice issue. As noted above by Isabela, research shows that women's inability to obtain state support means they are trapped in enduring intimate partner violence (EVAW, 2020). Advocacy groups have warned that the Domestic Abuse Act fails to offer migrant women the protection they need, demanding that they be allowed to report violence free from the threat of incarceration and deportation through the creation of a 'firewall' between public services and immigration controls, and that such women be given leave to remain in the UK independently until their situation can be resolved (McIlwaine *et al.*, 2019).

In London, efforts to address violence against women and girls gained impetus from the late 2000s, involving participation of local authorities, government agencies and voluntary and statutory organisations in the design and implementation of strategies led by the Mayor of London. *The Way Forward* (GLA, 2010) was launched early in the decade, comprising the first strategy and policy action to acknowledge violence against women and girls as both 'a cause and consequence of gender inequality' and 'one of the most serious inequalities facing women and girls in London' (GLA, 2010: 13). The strategy has been updated three times since, with the latest launched in 2022 covering 2022–25 and setting out four key priority areas: preventing and reducing violence against women and girls, holding perpetrators to account, supporting all victims and survivors and building trust and confidence in the police and criminal justice system (GLA, 2022).

Overlapping with SUMW is the London Violence against Women and Girls (VAWG) Consortium, a feminist and anti-racist coalition of twenty-eight specialist violence against women and girls support providers working across all thirty-two London boroughs. Set up in the early 2010s, it provides comprehensive specialist and generic services. A key initiative developed by the London VAWG Consortium in 2013 is Ascent. This offers frontline services to victims of domestic and sexual violence and supports voluntary and statutory organisations. However, while Ascent identifies immigration as a key focus area and works with Black and Minority Ethnic communities helping them to access support, migrant women with insecure immigration status often fall through the gaps of their support mechanisms (Evans and McIlwaine, 2017).

Addressing gender-based violence in Rio de Janeiro and London through service provision

While the legislative and policy context in both countries is integral to understanding general attitudes towards combatting gender-based violence, it is also important to explore how service providers on the ground support women survivors and the challenges in doing so. While this is examined more fully in Chapter 6, here we provide a brief overview of the organisational assistance available. This is essential in showing that well-developed legislative and policy frameworks do not always lead to funding and support for organisations and therefore improvements in the lives of women.

In Rio de Janeiro, there has been widespread criticism of existing state services for women survivors of gendered violence, with the situation in favelas being even more calamitous due to the historical and endemic state neglect in these territories (Fernandes *et al.*, 2019). To start with, the locations and outreach of most public institutions that could support women facing violence are distant from Maré, often located in the city centre and often disengaged with the local challenges that these women face. The closest Women's Police Station, for example, is located 11 km away from Maré. One service provider noted that this also involves time and money for transportation that many women cannot afford (Morgado *et al.*, 2018). Drawing on a participatory map co-created by stakeholders from a women's support organisation in Maré, it emerged that the state-led services on offer are limited to healthcare facilities which deal only with the effects of gender-based violence. Figure 3.2 shows their locations in and around Maré, with only one dedicated to women – the *Centro de Referência de Mulheres da Maré Carminha Rosa/UFRJ* (Carminha Rosa Women's Reference Centre of Maré/UFRJ). In terms of the quality of services provided, several state-led organisations complained that they did not receive enough resources to employ staff, with one saying they could not afford a receptionist or cleaner and another reporting no internet access. In addition, many state-run services are not run by people from Maré and so they do not understand the internal dynamics of living there, as noted by a social worker: 'Those who work in public services in Maré are people who don't live in Maré, so, even though we try to tackle it, there is always going to be an uneven power dynamic between those who don't live in Maré and those who do'.

Figure 3.2 Participatory mapping of service provision for women in Maré (adapted from McIlwaine *et al.*, 2023b)

In contrast to scarce public institutions, Maré houses many NGOs and community organisations which fill the gap in providing various kinds of support encompassing psychosocial care, legal advice, education and professional training. These have been established in the face of state neglect and are not distributed evenly across the favelas of Maré (see Figure 3.2). One service provider noted: 'We organise projects that tackle the absence of public policy and state services in the favelas [which] leads to the presence of armed groups and police incursions'. This, somewhat paradoxically, puts further pressure on the NGO sector to pick up the pieces from these armed urban conflicts that have serious implications for women's wellbeing, both directly and indirectly.

In the participatory mapping, seventeen NGOs were identified, including nine community-based organisations, eight women-led initiatives (Figure 3.2) and an additional nine online groups. While some of the women-led initiatives were formally organised, many were informal collective groupings offering support for women experiencing gender-based violence. In 2020, in the context of COVID-19, the Support Network for Women in Maré (RAMM – *Rede de Apoio às Mulheres da Maré*) was initiated, identifying the need for networking and joint strategies among individuals and organisations to help women experiencing gender-based violence (McIlwaine *et al.*, 2022a, 2022c, 2023a).

In London, there are a range of generalist and specialist providers of support for women survivors. Generalist providers offer a range of services to clients who may include survivors, while specialists offer services following specific criteria related to survivors' nationality, ethnicity and language. These organisations are sometimes funded by the state and also support women in accessing statutory services (such as welfare benefits, health, education and housing services) as well as specific immigration, legal and counselling assistance. According to our service mapping, there are two relatively large organisations in London who support Latin American women specifically – our partners the LAWRS and Latin American Women's Aid (LAWA), both of whom provide support for women victims and survivors of violence, with LAWA running the only refuge for Latin American women in the city. There is also one smaller organisation that works specifically with Brazilian women and includes support for survivors within their wider provision,

another that employs specialist violence against women services for Brazilian women and a final organisation that works with the Brazilian community and offers some general support for survivors. Besides these five, we also identified a further seven with experience of supporting women within the migrant and/or women's sector. In addition, the Brazilian General Consulate in London offers an important dial-in service for women who are victims of domestic violence, sexual labour exploitation and international trafficking. Known as Dial 180 International, this is listed on the Consulate's web page and refers survivors to support services in the UK (Evans and McIlwaine, 2017).

Since their creation, many of these and other organisations have reported an increase in demand for support over time from Brazilian women. For instance, one service provider noted: 'the number went on increasing … In the beginning, I used to see about two or three per week, then it went on increasing, increasing, and now, I've had days when I see five women per day'. One provider working with Brazilian women reported supporting 162 Brazilian women between late 2013 and early 2017, with an increase of 35 per cent between 2015 and 2016 (Evans and McIlwaine, 2017).

Certain types of expertise were developed by organisations given that they were working with international migrants potentially vulnerable to exploitation. While most of the organisations spoke of offering support for women in cases of domestic abuse, six of them discussed international sex trafficking as an issue where they had to intervene. One such case involved a Brazilian woman in her early twenties who sought help having moved to London to purportedly work as a model. While the 'agency' paid for her papers and travel expenses, on arriving, she was forced into sex work for an Eastern European gang. Despite initially escaping, she was later kidnapped by the gang and imprisoned at a secret address where she was forced to work as a sex slave so the gang could recoup their 'investment'. She eventually escaped after four years and received support from a specialist organisation, including after one of the gang members tracked her family down in Brazil. This service provider noted that 'this is happening commonly', and, as a result, she ran a programme of talks in Brazil as a form of prevention. There were also cases of less formalised sex trafficking such as a Brazilian woman whose Portuguese husband forced her into sex work after

arriving in London, hiding her passport, detaining her and making her work in the sex trade from their home. Even after receiving support, the police refused to define this as a case of trafficking and instead insisted it was domestic violence. Labour exploitation was also widespread; one provider spoke of a wealthy Brazilian woman who employed another Brazilian woman who was undocumented to do domestic work at her house. The worker lived at the family home but was lodged in an unheated shed outside, for which she had to pay rent that was ostensibly deducted from wages that she was never actually paid (Evans and McIlwaine, 2017).

Immigration status is key to the support that organisations are able to provide for Brazilian migrant women. Although providers generally did not make their support contingent on immigration status, being undocumented or with insecure status meant that women were, for the most part, ineligible to use statutory services. Their status as having NRPF also imposes restrictions on referral options, as explained by a service provider: 'So sometimes I will ask them about their legal status, and say it is not important for me because we see everybody, but obviously, I can't refer out to other services'. Several service providers raised the issue of refuges, as one noted:

> The refuge will only take on people who have access to benefits, because it is the benefits that will pay for it, because refuges are generally very expensive, and if the person doesn't have access to, can't apply for housing benefit to be able to pay for the refuge, the refuge won't take them in.

In Maré and London, service providers face multiple structural and systemic obstacles in supporting women survivors, with gendered infrastructural violence being widespread (Chapter 6).

Before moving on to Chapters 4 and 5, it is appropriate to finish with the words of Julia Leal, the Coordinator of Casa das Mulheres da Maré and one of our researchers, on the challenges of legislative change and the need to include the voices of the excluded and especially Black women:

> I understand that women, particularly Black women, are the cogs that keep Brazilian society going. I think they are the people who work most to begin with … If Black women in Brazil are the ones who suffer the most from gender-based violence, it is these women

> that have to be there drawing up public policy, instead of the way it is currently being done, which is half a dozen White men in a room producing country laws.

This statement can be heard from Julia herself in our Women Resisting Violence podcast.[3]

Notes

1 The ethnic-racial classification in Brazil is based on self-declaration established by the Institute of Geography and Statistics (IBGE). The IBGE's census uses five categories: White (*branca*), Brown (*parda*), Black (*preta*), Indigenous (*indígena*) and Asian (*amarela*). This categorisation has been contested but remains the most frequently used typology in Brazil. The use of the term 'Black women' (*mulheres negras*) refers to the amalgamation of the IBGE's Black and Brown categories. When combined with 'Indigenous' and 'yellow', the term 'non-White' tends to be used, although this is also problematic (Krenzinger *et al*., 2021; McIlwaine and Evans, 2023).

2 See https://brazilreports.com/lula-announces-final-cabinet-members-highest-number-of-female-ministers-in-brazils-history/3509/ and www.telesurenglish.net/news/Policies-in-Favor-of-Women-Return-to-Brazil-Lula-20230308–0007.html (accessed 20 March 2023).

3 See https://lab.org.uk/wrv/podcast/ (accessed 22 February 2023).

4

Revealing the painful truths of gendered violence in the private sphere in Rio de Janeiro and London

> He would come to me and start hitting me; sometimes I was already in bed sleeping. He'd pull my hair, he'd pinch me. It got to the point where he'd urinate on my legs. It got to the point where he'd throw all my things on the street, my clothes. He'd lock me up at home during carnival, so he could go out.
>
> (Mónica, Maré)

> He landed with his knee on my back, grabbed my leg and bent it backwards behind my back, twisting my knee … Crack! I'll never forget that noise, not ever. I thought, 'He's finished me. My life is over'. … Well, when he twisted my knee, he twisted the main artery and there was blood going into my lungs! The doctor told me I'd been very lucky, that if it had been in the heart, I would have died instantly.
>
> (Bianca, London)

Mónica and Bianca's experiences are just two of the painful incidences of intimate partner violence that occur within the home in Maré and London. Until recently, gender-based violence in the private domain in cities has tended to be normalised, routinised and largely invisible. However, urban households are primary sites of violence and the most likely arena where intimate partner violence occurs, as well as other forms of intra-family abuse. To a lesser extent, non-family violence also takes place in the private domain, especially state and police violence (McIlwaine, 2023). Women's intimate lives in the household cannot be divorced from their public and transnational experiences. Furthermore, as we have noted elsewhere in the book, violence in the private sphere is not an individualised occurrence but is bolstered by indirect

structural, symbolic and infrastructural violence, as shown in the translocational gendered urban violence framework. Yet, here we suggest that it is heuristically useful to consider the private sphere of the household as an important site for understanding some key dimensions of gendered urban violence. This chapter therefore explores the nature of gendered urban violence in the private domain in relation to its prevalence, diversity and the core drivers underlying its incidence. It explores, in greater depth than outlined in Chapter 3, how women experience multiple and overlapping types of violence in the home that are embedded within wider gendered and intersectional power relations. Again reflecting the components of the framework, the chapter considers structural drivers of violence in this sphere, showing how the violence of the city, wider society and the state percolates destructively into this domain. In Maré, we foreground the ways in which private sphere violence is reinforced by state neglect and public insecurity on the part of the police and armed gangs. In London, we highlight the role of immigration status, racialised state control and how this is mobilised as a tool for manipulation and control by intimate partners and others.

Drawing from many of the methodologies and creative engagements that are also dimensions of the translocational gendered urban violence framework, this chapter highlights how gendered urban violence is embodied through direct forms of violence in the home, often but not exclusively at the hands of intimate partners and reinforced through the indirect structural and symbolic violence of racialised states. Violent structural insecurity underpins violence in the private space, enabling it to emerge translocationally both figuratively and literally across borders. As captured in the creative encounters in particular, women's experiences are also inspirational in their resilience, bravery and dignity in the face of such cruelty, insecurity and neglect.

Prevalence of gendered urban violence in the private sphere

Gendered violence in the private sphere does not equate directly to domestic violence. Instead, it refers to different types of intimate partner and non-intimate partner violence across the whole range

of psychological, sexual, physical, financial and technology-facilitated abuses that are bolstered by structural, symbolic and infrastructural violence. This reflects wider critiques of how the term domestic violence has been used to denote intimate partner violence between individuals on an interpersonal basis within the home, rather than acknowledging broader structural power relations (Lopes Heimer, 2022). This is especially important when analysing excluded groups on the urban margins given a damaging tendency to blame individual behaviour and pathologies as a reason for violence perpetration. Often, these tropes are erroneously used to explain potentially high levels of gender-based violence among certain ethnic, racial and/or migrant groups, thus making incorrect assumptions about certain cultures being more inherently violent (Dominguez and Menjívar, 2014; Erez *et al*., 2009). While we still refer to domestic violence, we tend to avoid it in order to capture the full spectrum and complex drivers of abuses that are perpetrated in the private domain.

Until recently, there has been limited research on the experiences of gender-based violence in the private sphere among marginalised women in cities. For favela residents, much work focused on the structural violence exercised by the state and especially on police violence (Garmany, 2014; Garmany and Richmond, 2020; Nunes and Veillette, 2022), while work on migrants has tended to focus on domestic abuse in general without reference to the urban context (Anitha, 2008; Cassidy, 2019). Yet, the importance of researching the urban setting for understanding gender-based violence in the home has been increasingly recognised as part of wider efforts to challenge dichotomies of the public–private reflecting danger–safety (McIlwaine, 2013; Piedalue, 2022). Gender-based violence is not just situated within urban areas with cities as 'containers' (Pavoni and Tulumello, 2020) but is an intrinsic part of urban fabric (McIlwaine, 2021a). Living in cities can allow women greater freedom to act as they wish (Bradshaw, 2013) as well as opportunities to develop forms of resistance to gender inequalities and gendered urban violence. In turn, violence against women in the private sphere can be more productively seen to traverse into the city, beyond the confines of the home (Datta, 2016; Datta and Ahmed, 2020), and is a key element in understanding women's

wider rights to the city (Fenster, 2005; McIlwaine *et al.*, 2021). In London and Rio de Janeiro, we have identified domestic violence, intimate partner violence, intrafamilial abuse, sexual abuse and rape, emotional abuse, financial subjugation, verbal aggression and coercion as the main types.

Multidimensionality of gender-based violence in the private sphere in Maré

In Maré, urban conflict acts as both backdrop and driver of gendered urban violence that manifests in the home. As noted in Chapter 3, our survey revealed that 47 per cent of all gender-based violence perpetrated was in the private sphere. More specifically, physical violence was especially dominant in the private domain, which is where two-thirds of all incidents took place. Within this, physical aggression was the type of violence most commonly experienced (78 per cent of the total across both spheres). The private sphere was the setting for the vast majority of all violent control (80 per cent), almost all strangulation and stabbing (90 per cent respectively) and five of the six cases of burning. While only 27 per cent of all sexual violence occurred in the private sphere, 69 per cent of all unwanted sexual acts were perpetrated there and 65 per cent of all rapes (thirty-two cases out of a total of fifty-nine). In turn, 41 per cent of all psychological violence was perpetrated in the household, including 56 per cent of all threats of physical aggression and 37 per cent of all verbal abuse. In terms of perpetrators across all spheres, most were intimate partners (47 per cent) acting within the home (Krenzinger *et al.*, 2018a).

While this provides the broad context, the interviews and focus groups revealed a complex and disturbing portrait of intersecting and regular forms of violence. A clear theme that emerged was how violence in the home had occurred throughout their lives at the hands of parents, stepparents and other relatives. Six of the twenty women interviewed in stage one of the research spoke of being sexually abused by stepfathers or uncles in the home. For example, Dora, who was in her fifties, spoke of being sexually and physically abused by her stepfather for six years (between the ages of seven

and thirteen), including rape and stabbing. He convinced her that all fathers did this to their children and so she must tell no one about it. Dora eventually spoke to her cousin who told her grandmother. However, her grandmother persuaded her not to report it to the police, saying: 'Look, I have fourteen children. I won't tell her to go to the police station because otherwise who is going to provide for your siblings?' In a similar manner, Juliana, who was thirty-two and a trans woman, spoke of being sexually abused by her uncle from the age of ten. Although she told her mother when she was thirty, her mother would not listen and refused to believe that her brother was the perpetrator. Juliana felt that her transgender status meant that her abuse was taken less seriously. This also emerged in discussions in the focus group with LGBTQI+ people, where all of them spoke of violence perpetrated by members of their own families.

Physical abuse on the part of parents was not uncommon. Leila, twenty-eight, spoke of how both her parents drank excessively, which contributed to her father beating her and her brother on a regular basis, even hitting her once when she was showering. This abuse led her to flee home at fourteen and move in with a forty-three-year-old man who was her 'boyfriend' and her escape route. Luciana, who was forty, discussed how her mother would physically hit her, even when she was seven months pregnant with her first child. Luciana's mother also abused her emotionally; her mother would stamp on clean clothes that were not dry enough and make her wash them all over again. Siblings were also violent. Inês, fifty-one, was physically beaten by both parents for being naughty, while her sister placed a hot iron on her bottom, burning her to stop her bothering her with 'nonsense talk'. Two women spoke of being put into an orphanage and convent by their mothers who could no longer care for them. While not family households, these were violent places, as reported by Lúcia, fifty-two, who spoke of how the nuns beat them with palm canes and refused to give them food. Daniela, thirty-four, was also beaten and starved at an orphanage where she learned to smoke at the age of nine.

Although these are stories of parental neglect and violence, these were not universal. In the digital storytelling, many of the women artists interviewed had extremely fond memories of their

mothers and fathers. Rafaela, forty-one, a clothes-designer, freelance artisan and producer of sustainable fashion for the brands By Rafa and Made in Maré, spoke of how her mother, a seamstress, had inspired her. While initially her mother dissuaded her from moving into the same profession because it was a 'very exhausting and painful job', she supported her to set up her own business, commenting that her embroidery skills were in her blood, inherited from Ceará where she had been born. Her mother also supported her pregnancy at sixteen: 'My mother gave me what I needed. I did not ask him [the child's father] for anything … But as I was raised by a woman who didn't ask for anything from anyone, my mother also hoped that I wouldn't ask either; she would provide it herself'. Rafaela's story can be watched in the Museu da Pessoa online exhibition Female Lives (see also Figure 4.1).[1]

For many women, however, the trauma of their early years continued as they established their own independent households. Women spoke of how intimate partners did not appear to be violent at first but that emotional abuse began incrementally, often

Figure 4.1 Rafael Feistosa speaking about her life in Maré as part of the Female Lives Exhibition by the Museum of the Person (credit: Paula Santos; adapted from McIlwaine *et al.*, 2022b)

leading to physical and sexual violence. Speaking about her violent ex-husband, Odete stated that after five good years, 'I saw the transformation of this man, who had been a wonderful person, a great companion, turning into a monster'. She commented on how he drank excessively, used drugs and gambled, which led initially to economic abuse as he no longer contributed financially to the household. He then began to insult her, calling her fat and 'an icebox' when she refused to have sex with him, but these became death threats: 'I am going to set you alight; I'll douse you in alcohol and set you on fire … to watch you die slowly'. He was also physically abusive towards her, throwing things at her; once, he threw a melon at her head which knocked her out.

The majority of women interviewed reported having suffered some form of psychological violence at the hands of intimate partners. As well as verbal abuse, women spoke of partners preventing them from going out, working or studying. For example, Marina, fifty-one, discussed how her ex-husband, whom she had married under pressure from her parents after she got pregnant at fifteen, did not want her to study or work. Yet, Marina studied without his knowledge, faking his signature to get back into school. She pretended to be out delivering Avon products when she was actually working as a cleaner at a private home and going to school. When he found out, he threatened to beat her but eventually agreed to her continuing. This type of emotional violence created severe health problems for some women; forty-year-old Mariana ended up with severe migraines as a result of continual psychological abuse perpetrated by her ex-partner. He did not want her to study for the university entrance exam and on the first day of her course, he turned up and made a scene, threatening to break things in the classroom if she did not leave with him; when she left the classroom, he told her: 'You choose: either me or the course'. She chose the course, and he acquiesced, but he kept harassing her and would not let her study in peace. He undermined her self-esteem through saying things like: 'You will not achieve anything in life; if you leave, nobody will want you because you have four daughters; what man will want to be with you with four daughters?' (see also McIlwaine *et al*., 2020).

Sexual violence was also frequently discussed. Teresa, a twenty-year-old student, spoke of how the first time she had sex with a

controlling former boyfriend, she was forced to do so. Women often discussed how male partners felt it was their right to have sexual relations with them regardless of whether they wanted to. Silvia, fifty-six, for example, stated that her husband constantly harassed her for sex, demanding it as 'her duty'. Similarly, Odete discussed how her ex-husband would demand sex and if she refused, he would become aggressive and push her, break doors and throw things.

Much of the violence experienced by women in Maré was exceptionally severe, with many women having near-death experiences due to physical abuse. Adriana, thirty-nine, spoke of the violence she suffered at the hands of her ex-husband. After being together for ten years, he developed an alcohol addiction and started to abuse her. One night, he got home drunk and punched her in the face. She grabbed a knife to defend herself, but he took it off her and beat her, threatening to kill her. Vanessa, thirty-one, told of the horrific abuse she experienced from her former partner. He constantly insulted her, telling her: 'You are worth nothing'. One time, he punched her and beat her after she fell over. He also tried to break her arm on the edge of the door and to break her leg, punching her in the stomach, all in front of their six-year-old son who began to cry. Vanessa said that he would probably have killed her if her neighbour had not intervened to stop him strangling her.

Several of the transgender women included in both stages of the research spoke of intimate partner violence. For instance, Ileana, thirty-two, who had suffered a lot of trauma in her life including working as a sex worker and being addicted to crack cocaine for ten years, spoke of how her husband of twenty years, who had initially stood by her, became violent towards her after becoming addicted to drugs. She felt she could not leave him because he 'protected her from the streets'. Celine, thirty-five, another transgender woman included in the second stage of the research, spoke of physical and psychological violence she suffered from her partner, who tried to hang her: 'he hung me until I lost my breath and left me lying there, in a situation where I was trying to get my breath back'. She said that he blamed her gender identity for his violence towards her, saying: 'I'm doing this because you're wrong; you have to get better or I'm going to kill you'.

While all this brutal intimate partner violence occurred in the private sphere of the household, former intimate partners were also perpetrators. Often, men could not cope with the rejection of a break-up, especially if this was instigated by their female partner, and so continued to harass them. One particularly severe case was of Cátia, twenty-nine, who spoke about how the father of her daughter, who had previously tried to kill her, continued to follow her when she went out. Once, when he picked up his daughter from her house, he raped her. When Cátia's current husband found out about the rape, he left her. Just as Mariana suffered from migraines, the effects of such violent relationships took their toll on women's mental health. Silvia, fifty-six, had been married for forty years to a jealous and controlling man. Following the separation, he continued to follow her, making her permanently afraid and causing her to suffer from panic attacks:

> Even after we split up, I got panic syndrome because he wouldn't accept it and he was following me. I didn't leave the house because I was scared. I was afraid of having someone else, of him seeing, and I didn't know what he was going to do. It got to one point when … I thought he was going to kill me. I was having panic attacks.

While most violence in the home space was perpetrated by intimate partners and other family members, the state, through the police, also (illegally) entered homes in Maré and committed violent acts against women. As noted in Chapter 3, violent police incursions are a regular occurrence in Maré, with severe ramifications for women residents in terms of their experiences of violence, fear and mental health (Sousa Silva and Heritage, 2021). Police incursions were repeatedly discussed in interviews and the body-territory mapping workshops, with several women speaking about having their houses invaded. Elsa, forty-seven, for example, had her house raided by the police twice, making her feel powerless, angry and oppressed by the state authorities. In her body map, she discussed how the fear she felt affected her stomach. Women spoke of the police presence as a literal invasion of their territory and of their bodies. For example, Katia, twenty-five, said: 'I feel violated, really, I feel it in my body, I feel my body shaking, you know? When there are operations, when I see the police'. Women also spoke of how they felt that the police targeted women in their homes.

For example, fifty-year-old Priscila, who identified as *preta*, stated that the police targeted women living alone, suspecting them of hiding drug traffickers in their home. She felt further targeted by her racial identity:

> I'm still scared. They came into my house, looking like they were high, talking loudly. 'Can I come in?' I said, 'You're already in' … You feel abused, like a punch in the face … Then they went to my room, they looked. 'Do you live alone?' 'Yes, sir.' 'Do you work?' I said, 'Yes, sir. I was just getting up to open my shop; I have a salon down here'.

Although these violent invasions of homes are a recurring problem in Maré, the house can also be a sphere of safety where people flee incursions. Many women spoke of staying at home when incursions began, often hiding in kitchens, under beds and in bathrooms. Silvia, fifty-six, stated: 'When there's an operation … I'll stay indoors. I lock the gate. Preferably, I don't even go near the window, because once I was by the window, a bullet came in and almost hit me' (see also Chapter 7).

Another form of non-family violence within the space of the home is the exploitation and harassment of women working as domestic servants. Roberta, forty-seven, commented on how she was abused by her former male boss when she worked as a housekeeper in the apartment of a wealthy family. She said that he would remove his shirt and ask for massages and would try to get into her room at night (which she had to keep locked). The concierge of the building would let her know when the male boss was arriving from work, allowing her to avoid him by taking the baby and the dog out for a walk. Roberta told her boss's wife, but she refused to do anything about it.

Gender-based violence in the home was therefore multidimensional and extremely severe. While most of it was committed by current and former intimate partners and other family members, strangers – mainly in the form of the police – were also perpetrators. Focusing on partners and relatives, the diversity, severity and overlapping nature of much violence experienced in the private sphere of the home was portrayed in the multimedia installation *SCAR* (see Chapter 2). The multiple layers of the *SCAR* video editing conveyed the endemic, interrelated nature of the violence that was

experienced by all the women, as shown in the following sequence that ends with 'I came home' (see Heritage, 2018b).

Sequence 2 (several women are seen talking, gradually overlapping until the overlapping makes the faces merge into something inseparable)

154

I never gave him any reason to

hit me.

155

I could stand.

156

Once I asked for help from

my mother.

157

He threw my son's

bike at me.

158

My mother fell.

159

He beats her

because she likes it.

160

Beating me.

161

A man hitting a woman.

162

He'd hit me

163

with a stick.

164

He beat me

165

Beat me

166

He kept knocking

167

Hit me with everything

168

He hit me and my brother

169

I came home.

SCAR was exceptionally powerful in portraying stories of domestic violence that were, according to audience members, 'unbearable and unfathomable'. However, its success was being able to also communicate survivors' resilience and power, as noted by another audience member: 'This sense of resilience that comes from seeing all their stories … is what made it finally life-affirming' (Tiller, 2018: 5).

Multidimensionality of gender-based violence in the private sphere in London

Turning to consider gender-based violence in the private sphere among Brazilian migrant women in London, according to our survey, 22 per cent occurred in the private domain (see Chapter 3). While this was mainly in the survivor's home in London (22 per cent of all violence experienced), 8 per cent occurred in someone else's house, although this was mainly perpetrated by intimate partners (74 per cent of all such abuse in the home). While most physical violence was perpetrated in public spaces, the most dangerous forms of violence were typically committed by intimate partners within the home. This included physical aggression, which constituted slightly over half of all instances, as well as cases

involving burning, strangling and cutting. Most psychological violence also occurred in the home, especially threats (67 per cent of all threats) and controlling behaviour (82 per cent). As for sexual violence, most was perpetrated by intimate partners (81 per cent) and happened in the home (53 per cent). Just as in Maré, these were not isolated acts; women who were surveyed had experienced between one and fifteen different forms of violence over their lifetime, with the majority (61 per cent) experiencing three or more different forms. This emerged in many of the interviews; Cristina, thirty-seven, originally from São Paulo and who arrived in London in 2009, spoke of how she had experienced twenty-one different types, including being kicked, slapped, throttled, controlled, defamed, stalked and threatened with a knife and scissors, all by her former partner (McIlwaine and Evans, 2018; also, McIlwaine and Evans, 2020).

While the focus here is on women's experiences of gender-based violence in the private sphere in London, 77 per cent of women surveyed had experienced violence prior to leaving Brazil (see Chapter 3). As noted in Chapter 1, there is a transnational continuum of gendered violence that highlights how abuse occurs not only over women's life courses but also spatially as they move from one place to another. Therefore, women in London also reflected on the violence they had suffered in Brazil. Overall, the survey showed that physical violence was the most common type experienced in Brazil (42 per cent), with 36 per cent experiencing emotional abuse and 22 per cent sexual violence (contrasting with their experiences in London where almost half was psychological violence). Acknowledging that some women had moved to London when they were younger and/or prior to setting up their own households, the survey revealed that the most frequently identified space where violence was experienced was the workplace, particularly in relation to unwelcome physical contact and physical and sexual assault. In the home, non-intimate partner violence was more common than that perpetrated by partners. However, this often involved family members abusing women, with a quarter of women identifying male relatives as perpetrators, especially fathers, stepfathers, uncles and cousins. Among the twenty-five women interviewed in stage one of the research, eight discussed being subjected to incestuous sexual abuse. For example, Paula, thirty-six, from Curitiba, Paraná,

and who arrived in London in 2015, remembered how her uncle abused her as a child:

> I was very young, I think I must have been about four or five, an uncle came to live with us … I remember that he used to ask me to touch him. He'd put my hand on his genitals and ask me to hold it. And you're a child, you're very scared, you don't tell anyone … And even now, I've not told anyone, because so much time has gone by. The only thing is, you never forget it, you just grow up and remember it.

Paula had subsequently had two violent relationships, one lasting twelve years and involving near-death experiences on the part of her former partner. While it is very important not to assume that gender-based violence only occurs in Brazil or that it is culturally specific, women like Paula carry their trauma with them when they migrate.

Gaël Le Cornec included sexual abuse by an uncle as a key scene in *Efêmera* (2018a: 15–16), giving prominence to the issue and highlighting how the memories of trauma linger for many women. The character Ana speaks about her uncle going to their family home to sell them clothes. When her mother encouraged them to try them on in front of him, Ana said: 'But behind her back, while we'd be getting changed, he would be staring at us and licking his lips. And my mother let him'. She went on:

Ana: He'd play a game with me: He'd place his hand on my knee, slide it on my thigh all the way up to my knickers, place his fingers inside, say 'I'm looking for something'. Then it was my turn to play. He put my hand on his knee, slide it on his thigh all the way up and touch him.

Jo: Did you ever tell anyone?

Ana: In that family staying silent felt like the safest option. I left home quickly because I just couldn't stand the fact that my own mother did nothing to stop him. She chose her brother over her daughter. I don't speak to her anymore.

This was a key dramatic moment in the play which resulted in almost complete silence in the audience, made especially shocking by the attitude of Ana's mother – something that emerged in interviews in London and Maré. It also highlights the importance of memories in influencing women's experiences throughout their lives (McIlwaine, 2021b). Together with physical abuse that Ana experienced at the

hands of her mother, this was a key reason why she wanted to leave Brazil. Gender-based violence was a common reason why Brazilian women decided to migrate more generally (McIlwaine, 2023), a pattern commonly identified elsewhere in Latin America (Menjívar and Walsh, 2017). However, according to the survey, more women thought that gendered violence occurred just as frequently in London as in Brazil (44 per cent), although the difference was minimal (43 per cent thought that it was perpetrated less frequently).

Violence in the private sphere of the home in London was therefore just as complex as in Maré, entailing overlapping forms of trauma, abuse and fear. Focusing on the violence of intimate partners, emotional abuse was widespread and often acted as the foundation for other forms of violence. Ana Clara, thirty-six, from São Paulo, who arrived in 2010 on her husband's work visa and who had worked as a teacher in Brazil, discussed how he controlled everything that she did. He prevented her from going out without him and once threatened to lock her out of their house and take her children from her if she went out alone. He once got into their car and sped at her, trying to run her over (ending up causing an accident and fleeing the scene).

Another increasingly common form of psychological violence was online violence, also called technology-facilitated gender-based violence. This also emerged in the Step Up Migrant Women (SUMW) research, where several women spoke of how perpetrators had inserted spyware into women's phones without their knowledge in order to keep track of their movements (McIlwaine *et al.*, 2019). Abuse on social media was also discussed by several women. For example, thirty-six-year-old Laura spoke of how her ex-husband posted on Facebook that she was responsible for him breaking his foot after he had tried to break down her door when she would not let him see their child:

> He tagged over one hundred people whom I didn't know as well as friends who knew us and they all took his side. They were all calling me a bitch, a cow, a shit … And that's when I took him to court, because he tried to kick the door in; one more kick and the door would have broken.

Psychological violence also intersects closely with other economic and financial abuse. This often manifests through male partners

refusing to give money to their wives and children for food and rent, controlling and/or refusing access to bank accounts or welfare benefits as well as taking out loans in women's names without their knowledge (McIlwaine *et al*., 2019). Valentina, who was in her mid-fifties and from Minas Gerais, recalled how her husband worked and received some state benefits, yet he refused to share this with her and their daughter, leading to severe financial hardship:

> Lots of times I didn't have money to buy bread … I'd say [to my daughter], 'let's see if we can find some coins. Let's pretend that we're looking at the price tags on the shelf, but you look on the floor and if you see a coin, get it and if Mummy finds one, I'll get it too'. And we used to go round the supermarket aisles to see if we could find money to buy bread.

Several women spoke about how partners would steal from them. Miriam, forty-six, who migrated from Mina Gerais in 2002, commented on how her husband had never worked and instead was always asking her to earn the money for the family through her job as a cleaner. Unfortunately, she kept her money in his bank account and when their daughter was born and she was in hospital, he withdrew fifteen thousand pounds and kept it: 'And to this day, I haven't seen a penny of this money!'

Reflecting Bianca's experiences at the start of the chapter, physical violence in the home was often extremely severe, with life-threatening consequences. While this mainly involved conjugal partners, children were often physically abused. For example, Carolina, fifty-three, from Paraná, spoke about how her former husband had attacked their daughter:

> He broke her nose and she ended up in the police station. She told him to go ahead and punch her and he did! It was such a strong punch that it sent her flying over the sofa. I panicked and started screaming. My daughter called the police, and they arrested him.

In turn, Laura recalled how her former Portuguese boyfriend (who was high on drugs at the time) assaulted her with a knife: 'He pushed me against the kitchen wall with the knife at my neck'. Fortunately, the neighbours called the police, who arrived and arrested him.

This case was also included in *Efêmera* by Gaël Le Cornec (2018a: 19). She describes ten incidences of violence at the hands

of a violent husband, two of which relate to Laura's experiences, as shown in the script (see also Figure 4.2 which depicts this scene):

> **Ana:** The sixth and seventh time. I was pushed against the kitchen wall; he was waving a screwdriver up on my face.
> **Ana:** The eighth time was because I was speaking to our neighbour. As soon as I shut the door, he pulled my hair and threw me on the corridor floor.

Sexual violence was a key dimension of intimate partner violence in the home, although some women did not identify this as abuse because it was within a conjugal relationship, as in Maré. Indeed, many service providers noted that some only accepted this as violence after they had disclosed other forms. Paula told of how her partner, who drank excessively, had raped her several times:

> He would be verbally aggressive and then he would want to have sex and I'd say no. I would put the baby on the bed with me to prevent him from coming, but he'd pick up the baby and put her on the sofa, because she didn't have a cot, she slept on the sofa. Then he'd come over, he'd rip my clothes off and want to have anal sex with me.

Figure 4.2 Embodying intimate partner violence on stage in *Efêmera* by Gaël Le Cornec (credit: Luciana Whitaker Aikins)

This scene is portrayed in the video *Raising Awareness of Violence against Brazilian Women in London*.[2] The animation of Paula's partner shouting conveys the brutality of the verbal violence prior to the sexual assault (see Figure 4.3).

Intimate partner violence against women tended to be especially serious when Brazilian women were in relationships with men from a different nationality or racial background to them (where 'serious' is defined as 'an incident that had the biggest impact on you, either physically or psychologically' – EU Agency for Fundamental Rights, 2014: 14). Indeed, the perpetrator of the violence against Bianca described in the introduction was her Portuguese ex-partner, who called her racist names (she identified as *preta*) and often complained that she was inferior because she was from Brazil and not from Portugal (Lopes Heimer, 2022; McIlwaine *et al*., 2019). This reflected

Figure 4.3 Animation from *Raising Awareness of Violence against Brazilian Women in London* video (animation by Francesca de Bassa, directed by Aida Baneres) (credit: People's Palace Projects/YouTube)

damaging racialised, class and colonial discrimination where women from countries of the Global South, in this case Brazil, were treated with contempt by partners (Grosfoguel *et al*., 2015; McIlwaine and Evans, 2023). Intersectional racism was not uncommon among Brazilians; Bianca's first husband, who was Brazilian, regularly insulted her skin colour: 'On the honeymoon, when I was lying down on the sofa with him … he said, "Look how Black you are! Look at how White I am; you're too Black!" and I would just cry and cry'.

Former partners often continued to harass and coerce women after separating. Although separated, Cristina, thirty-seven, from São Paulo, was stalked by her former husband Roberto. He would send her text messages and call her continuously, asking for her to go back to him at the same time as threatening her if she did not. He initially stated that he would never give her a divorce, although he then initiated proceedings in a bid to frustrate her efforts to obtain Italian citizenship. As Cristina observed, 'my life was hell. I left him in 2011 but I only had peace in 2014 … when you are in the hands of the aggressor, you're between life and death'.

As in Maré, in London, non-intimate partner violence also occurred in the private domain in the context of work relations. Bearing in mind the transnational continuum of gender-based violence, in London, some cases were also linked to human trafficking and modern slavery (see Chapter 3). One notable case was of Sabrina, forty-five, from Fortaleza, who worked as a nanny, cleaner and courier for a family in London. Although they recruited her in Brazil and organised her ticket, on arrival in their home, they confiscated her passport and then made her work an extra four hours per day than she had anticipated. Sabrina also entered the UK with a tourist visa which did not give her the right to work, and that she soon overstayed. At this point, her male boss began to sexually harass her, threatening her with a kitchen knife and resulting in Sabrina having to lock herself in her bedroom. She felt unable to report him because she feared deportation and was unable to speak much English: 'I'm sure he … did this knowing that I wouldn't go to the police, because I was an illegal [sic], as my visa had already expired. And he was right; I didn't have the courage to go to the police'. Fortunately, she managed to escape and secure help to regularise her status and get another job.

Multiple forms of violence in the home were bolstered when intimate partners had secure immigration status, which they used as a tool of control and manipulation against women with insecure status (see below). This usually occurred where intimate partners were British or had EU citizenship and was further exacerbated when the women did not speak English. However, it also happened among those with Brazilian nationality. Drawing on several cases from the interviews, in the short film *Ana*, Gaël Le Cornec focused specifically on Ana's experiences of being unable to report the violence she experienced because of her insecure immigration status and her belief that no one would believe what she had been through because her partner was British:

Ana: Who would believe me. He made friends with all my friends and now they are *his* best friends.
…
Jo: Did you go to the police?
Ana: I can't.
Jo: I know it's hard.
Ana: You have no idea.
Jo: I know that the only way you'll get out of this situation is by reporting him.
Ana: I don't trust the police. They'd be on his side.
…
Jo: You are the victim, not him. He has to pay for what he's done.
Ana: He is from here, I'm not.
Jo: Doesn't matter, he is the one committing a crime.
Ana: You can't understand.
Jo: Actually, I can. I've seen cases …
Ana: I'm illegal.
Jo: No human being is illegal. You are undocumented, that's all.
Ana: Time to go. You have your story now.

(Le Cornec, 2018b: 7)

Women with insecure status were therefore extremely vulnerable in abusive relationships where their status depended on abusive partners in what is also sometimes referred to as 'status VAWG' (Violence against Women and Girls) (McIlwaine *et al*., 2019; see also Chapter 6). Immigration status also affected 'marriage-related migration' and 'spousal migration', denoting contexts where

marriage plays a significant role in migration (McIlwaine, 2023). An issue that emerged through the service providers was that some women were developing relationships with British or European men in London via the internet which often led to abuse. One provider stated that the Brazilian Consulate had alerted them to this: 'A great majority of [these relationships] were turning into domestic violence … they were coming over here with Prince Charming, who go over there and meet the family … and would then bring her over to live here, they'd marry, and then … disaster strikes!' Miriam (see above) reflected on the dangers of marrying for documents. After living in London for five years with insecure status, she then met a Portuguese man whom she subsequently married and had a daughter with. She began to regret her decisions when the violence began: 'So, if you think for whatever reason you will marry someone who has documents. You need to be aware, because at the beginning it's a fairy tale, and after a while, they start to crush you'.

Revealing the 'painful truths' of abuse in the private sphere showed how multidimensional and complex the violence was, just as in Maré. Yet, women were also keen to resignify this violence. In the research with Migrants in Action (MinA), a workshop observer, Isabela Miranda Gomes, noted:

> During the recording, the participants looked like professional actresses, listening to the guidance of the artistic director and really giving all they had in that performance. They were keen to listen and keen to perform. Some of them were cold or uncomfortable being barefoot, some of them needed assistance due to being ill, but they really made all the effort to be there, be present and to perform. They wanted to be in that video, they wanted to be seen, to tell their story and, by doing that, to tell the story of a community of women.

In a similar way, responses to *Efêmera* after the show in Brighton in 2018 reflected how audience members responded to the displays of violence as inspirational, as one person noted: 'As a Mexican-American who has been sexually abused as a child and later on helped others deal with the same issues … I'm continually inspired by those who choose to speak out'.

Theorising translocational gendered urban violence in the private sphere in Maré and London

Returning to the translocational gendered urban violence framing, this chapter has shown how such violence is driven by individual and structural processes that stem from intersectional patriarchal hierarchies of oppression and intersect with a racialised state apparatus in both countries. These processes manifest themselves through both symbolic and structural violence. To understand how this violence affects women in Brazil and the UK, their experiences must be considered as part of unequal global systems underpinned by colonialism. Processes of urbanisation and migration are arguably inherently violent across a local, city-wide and transnational continuum of violence. The micro-drivers of direct forms of interpersonal gender-based violence, where certain factors can exacerbate abuse, are underpinned by wider structural drivers of gendered urban violence. These operate together to subjugate women into erroneous self-blame for causing the violence. For example, in Maré, forty-year-old Luciana noted that a woman she knows who suffers from intimate partner violence says:

> I am to blame because I know he is strong; if I have a row with him, I know he'll hurt me physically … if I don't say anything … it is best to keep quiet, not to say anything so he won't hit me, and besides, well, I have a home, food, clothes, make-up.

Brazilian women in London made similar points, such as Sofia, forty, who moved to London in 1995: 'I felt as if it was my fault, that I had provoked him, and in truth I did provoke him, because I put his things in the bin'. Many women also blamed their abusers' upbringing and especially mentioned male perpetrators having experienced abuse in the home or having witnessed violence between their parents. In Maré, twenty-nine-year-old Elizabete, speaking about her brother, noted:

> You see, what happened in your childhood will influence your youth, your adult life and old age. For life! He was threatened and now he threatens; that is his defence mechanism … I'll do to others what was done to me. And that is what he's done his whole life: hurt people, father, mother, brother, sister.

This was also noted by several LGBTQI+ people who spoke about homophobic and transphobic mistreatment by family members. In Maré, Juliana, who had been sexually abused by her uncle, recalled how she interiorised violence as normal because of the treatment by her family. In London, a trans woman, Nina, spoke about intense discrimination on the part of her parents and siblings because of her sexuality and identity, leading to her leaving Brazil and moving to the UK.

Alcohol and drug abuse among fathers, mothers and intimate partners was widespread in Maré and in London and was commonly cited as a reason for violence in the home. Odete from Maré spoke about how her husband's alcohol and drug addiction would lead to violent arguments. While at first he would be emotionally abusive when he was under the influence of alcohol and drugs, he began to throw things and become more physically violent. In London, Paula's husband got extremely violent when drunk. She recalled one incident when he picked up a heavy typewriter and hit Paula repeatedly on the head with it, smashing her face and breaking her jawbone. Of course, alcohol and drugs are only triggers for violence and not underlying causes (McIlwaine, 2013).

Other so-called 'triggers' for male violence include women's pregnancy, which appears to threaten men. In London, Juliana, thirty-six, discussed how her second husband became progressively violent after she got pregnant. Initially, he shouted and kicked and punched walls, then he began to threaten to hit her, chasing her around the house brandishing a knife and not allowing her to go out alone. His abusive behaviour worsened after the baby was born, culminating in him throttling her. In Maré, Odete also mentioned her pregnancy as a tipping point after which her husband began to stay out all night then come home and abuse her.

All these factors, while extremely important, occur at the individual level and relate to interpersonal relations. Yet, gendered violence cannot be isolated from the wider context of active exclusion and marginalisation. Women in Maré and London live in situations of often extreme insecurity where their bodies are exposed to institutional, structural and interpersonal violence – within the wider matrix of power that reinforces racist heterosexist gendered urban violence as inherently entrenched within colonial legacies (Carneiro, 2003; Lopes Heimer, 2022; Segato, 2016). In Maré,

Black women suffer disproportionately from the 'slow violence' and 'slow death', as individuals within a community, as mothers of sons and as partners of men who are targeted and killed by the state through police incursions (also Rocha, 2012; Smith, 2016). This is especially marked for trans women who suffer what Rodríguez Madera (2022) calls 'necropraxis' – where trans people experience everyday social interactions that entail gradual doses of death. These processes centre on the private sphere of the home as a permeable space where wider direct and indirect violence and stigma influence women's experiences of violence and safety. This all occurs within the broader context of historical neglect.

The transnationality and translocationality of gendered urban violence are reflected in the experiences of Brazilian migrant women, highlighting the importance of thinking across borders. The types of violence experienced by women prior to migration often act as a key factor in their decision-making about leaving. This might be symbolic violence related to gender discrimination or might be linked with divorce, gender identity and/or orientation, as well as exploitative labour processes (McIlwaine, 2023). Direct forms of intimate partner violence also emerged as reasons why women decided to move, fleeing abuse. For example, Juliana (see above) left Brazil in 2007 to get away from her alcohol-using and violent first husband.

Migrant women's memories of trauma subsequently influence their experiences after arrival and can lead to an intensification of intimate partner and intra-family violence – whether or not they have migrated with partners. This intersects with the structural violence they encounter, which is part of global systems of intersectional colonial inequity and uneven development, which undergird migration processes in the first place (McIlwaine and Evans, 2023). Migrant women face hostile borders everywhere they turn (Cassidy, 2019; Lopes Heimer, 2023). These structural factors are combined with changing gender norms; hegemonic masculinities are undermined for migrant men, leading to emasculation which can sometimes lead to them perpetrating violence (McIlwaine, 2010).

Intersectional inequalities have also been exacerbated by the pandemic, which has not caused gendered urban violence but has certainly led to a marked intensification (McIlwaine *et al.*, 2022c). In Maré and London, violence in the home has intensified due to

the COVID-19 pandemic and associated lockdown measures. In Maré, Michele Gandra, who works at Buffet Maré de Sabores and who was interviewed for the Women Resisting Violence (WRV) podcast, noted:

> We know that cases of violence against women have surged during the COVID pandemic. Routines have changed. Husbands are at home. Many of them have lost their jobs. The children are also at home. We don't have much physical space in Maré. The houses are very small. Families are big. So, to maintain social distancing in Maré was a huge challenge. For all these reasons, we have a lot of women coming to us.

There is therefore nothing inherent at the individual level that makes favela residents or migrant women more likely to experience higher levels of violence in the home. But rather, the intersectional and embodied insecurities and fear of living on the margins of cities mean that they deal with structural, symbolic and infrastructural violence. This creates processes of domination that provide fertile ground for violence in the private sphere. It also highlights the necessity of exploring the private and public (and transnational) domains of gendered urban violence in the city together. Again linked with the framework, these processes emerged as profoundly embodied with violence indelibly written on their bodies but revealed through the artistic engagements that allowed for more in-depth understanding of what gendered urban violence in the private sphere means for women. The following chapter turns to explore violence in the public sphere.

Notes

1 View Rafaela's story here: https://vidasfemininas.museudapessoa.org/en/themes/?filter=art-resistence and here: https://youtu.be/16aqo8ETN70 (accessed 4 March 2023).
2 The video can be viewed here: www.youtube.com/watch?v=LPDNxtWB9e0 (accessed 7 March 2023). Paula speaks between 1:22 and 1:40 minutes.

5

Revealing the painful truths of gendered violence in the public sphere in Rio de Janeiro and London

> I feel safer here [in Maré] than out there … Outside [of Maré] we can be robbed … To circulate in the city centre at night or at dawn. I'm not going to do that. I could run the risk of being raped, of being killed, of being robbed.
>
> (Patricia, Maré)

> I'm afraid of violence on the part of trafficking; I'm afraid of violence at the hands of police. We never know when there will be shooting. I get scared to death when my kids are on the street … we are always on alert, I do not relax … I feel oppressed; living in a favela feels oppressive because you don't have freedom to talk, to complain, so I prefer to be silent.
>
> (Ingrid, Maré)

> I keep walking,
> Don't tear my clothes,
> Don't hurt my flesh,
> Keep your lust away,
> Vile and pernicious monster,
> I root for you to burn.
>
> (Poem by Brazilian migrant woman in London)

Patricia's and Ingrid's experiences and the poem written by the Brazilian migrant woman reflect how gender-based violence in the public sphere limits women's free movement around city spaces and show how it generates anger, fear and anxiety for women and their families. Patricia and Ingrid also highlight the territorial dimensions of violence 'within' the favela and 'outside' in city spaces. Favelas are integral parts of the city despite being actively invisibilised, criminalised and targeted by the state (Rizzini Ansari, 2022). However, for many

women, favela territories are spaces apart from the city. The city 'outside' is a site of exclusion, danger and disrespect where they are afraid of being assaulted or raped (McIlwaine *et al*., 2022c).

This chapter focuses on gendered urban violence in the multiple spaces beyond the home, again recognising the false dichotomy between the private and public as identified in our translocational gendered urban violence framework. Taking a lead from recent feminist research on the city, it challenges the notion that violence against women only takes place behind the walls of the home and shows how urban violence and the processes of urbanisation that underpin it are deeply gendered in intersectional ways. It also addresses recent calls to recognise how gendered urban violence should be conceptualised as embedded within the being of cities rather than as exceptional. Situating gendered urban violence within a wider frame of the urbanisation of violence reveals the intersecting forms of direct and indirect violence, especially the structural and symbolic underpinnings of inequality, poverty and intersectional discrimination. Again, it is essential to note that gendered urban violence in the public sphere should be contextualised within transnational and translocational circuits of power, given that cities are part of global urban systems, as part of our wider conceptual framing (Chapter 1; McIlwaine and Rizzini Ansari, 2022).

The discussion examines the nature of gendered urban violence in the public spheres of the city in terms of its prevalence, diversity and drivers. It emphasises the multidimensionality of this violence across a range of city spaces and involving different perpetrators including intimate partners, strangers and acquaintances. It shows how violence in public urban spaces emerged as the most prevalent form experienced by women in Maré and London. In Maré, the focus is on the community sphere, exploring the close linkages between violence against women and other forms of urban violence, especially in the context of urban armed conflicts. In London, it focuses on violence in work-related, transport and retail spaces, considering how insecure immigration statuses and workplace exploitation trigger symbolic violence through intersectional discrimination. In both contexts, the intersections between women's racialisation and territoriality emerged strongly in terms of how interpersonal and wider urban violence affect women's mobility around city spaces, which undermines their right to the city. The issues of fear, trauma and belonging are also addressed.

Prevalence of gendered urban violence in the public sphere

Gendered urban violence is endemic throughout public spaces in cities everywhere. Research and policy interventions on 'safe cities' focusing on the public sphere date back to the 'Reclaim the Night/ Take Back the Night' initiatives of the 1970s and 1980s as well as women's safety audits associated with UN-Habitat's 'Safer Cities' (Whitzman *et al.*, 2014) and UN Women's (2018) 'Safe Cities and Safe Public Spaces' initiatives. While these have been invaluable in raising awareness of women's experiences of violence in the city, the focus is on women's victimhood. Furthermore, there has been a tendency to assume that women need to change their behaviour when traversing cities rather than addressing fundamental structural and systemic intersectional sexism and misogyny in wider society. Only recently has feminist research highlighted women's agency in tackling violence in this sphere (Chakraborty *et al.*, 2017) and recognised the interrelations across private and public domains (Datta, 2016).

As noted in Chapter 1, there also remains a propensity to work on gender and safe cities separately from research on urban violence which concentrates on the masculinised spectacular violence of armed actors such as state security forces, gangs and militias, where the victims are also predominantly young (and often Black) men. Yet, feminist research continues to try to redress this neglect, especially in relation to women's coping practices in public spaces and transport (Dunkel Graglia, 2016; see Chapter 7) and on the indirect effects of dealing with armed urban conflict (Hume and Wilding, 2020; McIlwaine and Rizzini Ansari, 2022). In relation to the latter, women disproportionately experience fear and anxiety – even when they do not experience direct harm – as mothers, wives, sisters and partners of men targeted by armed actors in cities. In Brazil, this has been through 'slow violence', 'slow death' or 'lingering trauma' relating to pain, anxiety and depression among mothers of children killed or injured due to endemic levels of violence against those living on the urban margins, often perpetrated by the state (Perry, 2013; Smith, 2016, 2018). This is often anti-Black, rooted in racism, sexism and class-based discrimination within a wider context of 'necropolitics' (Smith, 2016, 2018; also Ferreira da Silva, 2009).[1] This is bolstered by racialised violence that

limits women's rights to positive representations and privilege (Carneiro, 2003).

Gendered urban violence therefore constrains women's freedom to traverse the city (Beebeejaun, 2017; Falú, 2010). This must be situated within debates among feminist urbanists who challenge traditional Lefebvrian interpretations of the right to the city that ignore women (and other minoritised groups). A key element of this work is to acknowledge women's right to freedom from gender-based violence in all its forms, especially in the public sphere (Fenster, 2005; Peake, 2017). In the transnational urban landscape explored in this book, the breadth, severity and ubiquity of gender-based violence among women in London and Maré highlight how these experiences dominate women's lives. Women's bodies are disproportionately violated, occupied and commodified in public spaces of cities everywhere.

In the current context, we identify gendered urban violence in the public sphere as denoting the following, based on the situation in Maré but adapted for the London case: gendered violence in public spaces of the streets, transport and public places, including verbal and sexual harassment, rape and uninvited touching; armed violence/urban conflict including gang and police violence; racial violence referring to racism, bigotry, religious and immigration intolerance; area stigma including discrimination, criminalisation and state violence; and labour market exploitation and discrimination (McIlwaine *et al*., 2022c; McIlwaine and Evans, 2023). All of these create harmful outcomes and obstacles to a fulfilled and equitable urban life.

Multidimensionality of gendered urban violence in the public sphere in Maré

The 'painful truths' of gender-based violence in Maré are extensive in public spaces 'inside' and 'outside' and are underpinned by the wider armed urban conflict that dominates the area. The survey in Maré showed that 53 per cent of all gender-based violence occurred in the public sphere (see Chapter 3). More specifically, 68 per cent of all unwanted physical contact was perpetrated in the public domain, together with 92 per cent of sexual comments. In addition,

59 per cent of all incidences of psychological violence occurred in the public sphere, especially negative comments and verbal abuse (72 per cent and 63 per cent respectively). Local public spaces (18 per cent) and streets (10 per cent) were the most commonly identified places where violence was perpetrated, with only five per cent of cases occurring in the workplace and one per cent on public transport. The reasons for low levels in workplaces and on transport might be attributed to the high proportion of women running their own businesses or working from home, as well as relatively low levels of use of official public transport within the favelas. However, the qualitative research showed that gender-based violence in workplaces and on public transport was widespread (see below; also Sousa Silva and Heritage, 2021). In terms of who perpetrated unwanted physical contact, this was mostly strangers or friends but also intimate partners or ex-intimate partners. Similarly, sexual comments were primarily made by strangers (67 per cent) with 69 per cent of negative comments made by strangers, friends or neighbours (Krenzinger *et al*., 2018a; McIlwaine and Evans, 2018).

While this data is useful, it fails to capture the complexity of gendered urban violence in Maré, especially in relation to the omnipresent armed conflict. The latter forms a backdrop for all gendered urban violence, ranging from interpersonal abuse that spills on to the streets to the gun battles that result from police incursions, as well as discrimination that occurs in the urban spaces beyond the favelas. Although Maré must be viewed as part of the city of Rio de Janeiro, it is helpful to consider gendered urban violence 'inside' and 'outside', not least because women such as Patricia speak in these terms.

Gendered urban violence 'inside' Maré

Women discussed feeling more secure 'inside' Maré, as reflected in Patricia's experiences in the introduction of this chapter. This was echoed by Amanda, twenty-one and *preta*:

> I always feel so safe in here, safer than out there. I feel comfortable taking my phone out of my pocket, moving, sitting at the door, drinking coffee at the door, playing at the door. Will I feel that same security when I go out? I don't feel it … Here I have always received a lot of territorial love.

While Amanda's sentiments are important in challenging the pervasive territorial stigma against residents of Maré which is gendered, racialised and classed, violence still occurs within the favelas. Indeed, current or former intimate partner violence in the public sphere was frequently discussed by women residents. Vanesa, thirty-nine, discussed how her ex-husband would harass her and her children after they had separated. Once when Vanesa was at work, her daughter rang in desperation saying that her father was trying to break into their home, threatening to beat her up. Although he did not get in, he continued harassing them, spreading lies in public about Vanesa sleeping with other men and regularly drinking at a bar opposite their house. Other family members also perpetrated violence in the street. Elizabete, twenty-eight, recalled how her older brother became a very aggressive adult; he joined the army at eighteen but later left as he got involved in drug dealing. Once on the street in Maré, he hit her on the head with the handle of his rifle before pointing it at his father, although she stopped him.

Although the survey data revealed the prevalence of sexual comments in public spaces, seventeen women also stated that they had been raped in the public sphere. Inês, fifty-one, discussed how she had been raped by a stranger as a child: 'At twelve, I was raped. I was going to school. Close to home. A guy came, took me by the arm and there I was raped'. As a result, Inês suffered trauma for the rest of her life. While she did not make a direct link, she ended up in sex work, had been to jail twice and was addicted to cocaine. Another woman, Daniela, thirty-four, who had been homeless, spoke of how her precarious circumstances made her more vulnerable to sexual assault, not helped by police aggression: 'I've been raped … In the old days, it was easier to live on the street. Not today. I'm afraid. In the old days, the cops were bad … They beat you up, but they didn't kill like they do today'.

Juliana, a transgender woman, spoke in spatial terms about her violent experiences as a member of the lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, queer, intersex and others (LGBTQI+) community in the public sphere:

> The relationship I have with this space [Maré] has been aggressive and violent for much of my life. I'm a transgender woman. So, as a boy, I walked in this community and suffered physical and verbal

> aggressions in various spaces … But as a woman, the more feminine you are, the more visible it is that you are trans, and this generates more violence.

Discussions in the body-territory mapping workshops highlighted how lesbian, bisexual and trans women in Maré had their mobility restricted due to transphobic and/or homophobic violence. As a bisexual woman, Bianca, twenty-six, *branca*, said that she was afraid of violent retributions if she held her girlfriend's hand in the street. She also spoke of the discursive violence of the loud preaching from the evangelical church in her street which directly incited hatred against women, bisexuals and practitioners of Candomblé. Similarly, trans women felt that their romantic and sexual lives were subject to public surveillance, as noted by Luisa, thirty-eight, *parda* and a trans woman: 'Even in affective relationships, they [the gangs] want to oppress us … if they find out that someone has had a relationship with us, they are beaten'. Neide, thirty-two, *parda* and a trans woman, recalled how she had empty cans, fruit and boxes thrown at her in the street in the early days of her transition. This type of abuse was also identified by Fatima, thirty-six and a trans woman, who discussed anxiety and fear, especially felt in her head and shoulder (see Figure 5.1). She also drew weapons such as knives, wooden sticks and stones in the centre of her stomach on her body-territory map to show the physical abuse she has been subjected to. She noted: 'Anguish, because of that doubt that remains in us when we get up, when we leave, when we wake up – can I go there in the

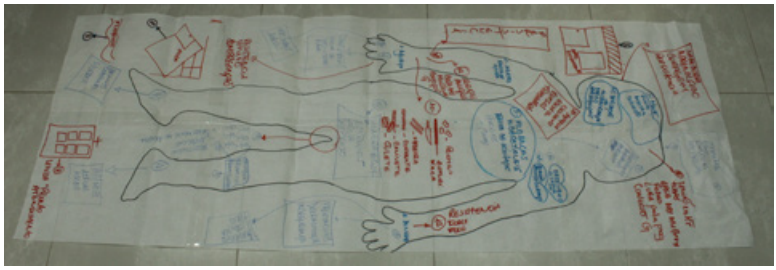

Figure 5.1 Body-territory map by Fatima (*preta* trans woman living in Morro do Timbau, thirty-six years old) (adapted from Lopes-Heimer *et al.*, 2022)

street? If I go out, will I suffer prejudice? … You don't have that free will to come and go like others'.

Another major form of violence in public spaces of Maré, as noted elsewhere, is that on the part of the police, as reflected in Ingrid's comment in the introduction to this chapter about feeling 'scared to death' when her kids go out on the street. As discussed in Chapter 4, the police regularly invade Maré and forcibly enter residents' homes, often targeting women living alone (also Chapter 3). However, most of this violence is perpetrated in the streets, generating extremely high levels of fear and anxiety. Many women had traumatic childhood memories of police violence. Lia, thirty-five, recalled that as a child, she found herself in the middle of a police operation when she was outside playing. When the shooting started, she had to take refuge in a woman's house, hiding under the bed with other children, until the exchange ceased after nightfall. Amanda also remembered how she saw a skull in the street belonging to someone who had been shot after an operation. After that, she felt afraid all the time: 'I'm paralysed. I've always been afraid of the police … I didn't feel safe, I didn't like to go out, I was afraid, I am afraid'.

Sometimes, women were caught in the crossfire. Leila, twenty-eight, was hit on the foot by a stray bullet when there was an exchange of fire between the police and local drug traffickers while she was working washing cars in Maré. The family moved away for four years due to safety concerns, but after returning, Leila's daughter began to get involved with drug dealers, which is a common fear of mothers in the territory. The effect of this violence was deep emotional trauma. Odete, thirty-two, spoke of arriving home late from work and walking into a confrontation between the police and drug traffickers: 'I simply closed my eyes and managed to get home … I had to walk right in the middle of it. I thought "God, let me get home alive!" I did, but the house was badly hit … twenty-five bullet holes'.

It was therefore the associated trauma of this type of violence that was exceptionally severe for women. Marina, a fifty-one-year-old domestic worker, spoke of the panic she felt when the police started shooting drug traffickers while she was collecting her son from school, noting: 'It only hits people who have nothing to do with it. The bullets only hit residents and workers, not the people who are

actually involved. We are so scared!' Many women expressed concern about leaving sons, boyfriends, partners and husbands alone at home during police incursions given that they were more likely to be targeted. Alessandra, twenty-nine, spoke of how she worried about her husband. Once, during an operation at night when he failed to arrive home from work, she was so afraid: 'Because when a man comes in at nine o'clock at night, with a backpack on his back, and he doesn't know what's going on, imagine, he would be shot'. He managed to get home safely by her guiding him over the phone via routes where the police were not stationed. Women therefore have to assume strategic roles by placing themselves as the point of contact between a household and the police.

In the body-territory mapping, as noted in Chapter 4, women identified police presence as an invasion of their bodies and territory. Janaina, also twenty-five and who identified as bisexual and Indigenous, located mental stress caused by the police's dehumanising treatment in her stomach:

> Fear and insecurity … of being invaded, of having the space invaded and not even being able to move around the territory; this makes me feel very sick, it is a feeling of panic that I always feel here [in the stomach]; I feel weak, I feel like vomiting, maybe words, maybe vomit.

Several women in these workshops spoke about the racial and class dimensions of armed state agents entering Maré. Rosana, twenty, *preta* and bisexual, said that she felt her stomach trembling with fear and insecurity when she was near the police. She said, 'the state was made to kill favela people'. Lívia, thirty-six, *preta* and lesbian, observed that the police had historically controlled the Black population:

> They were not made to serve and care and protect; for me it's about killing, and annihilating any possibility of a person who is a friend of justice. Look, for me this is what the state security forces are for. It is only to kill us, not to make us secure. I [placed the emotions] in my hands because I feel completely without control, unable to do anything. And I put fear, repulsion and disgust.

According to some of the trans women in the body-territory workshops, the police sexually harassed them during the invasions,

as noted by Fatima: 'On realising that I was trans, they [the police] started … fondling me … I was afraid they would do something more with me, and then someone would see'. However, this fear was not uniform, with Juliana, also a trans woman, noting that she felt tranquil during operations because 'justice was being done' to armed groups who had harassed her.

These stories of police repression also emerged in *SCAR*. While we noted in Chapter 2 that there was a 'city of nails' outside the box structure across which 'survival' was written, there were also toy soldiers placed within these nails. These soldiers represent the ubiquitous violence and continual violent oppression of the state through the public security services. The nails and the soldiers were situated outside the box within which the film of women's testimonies was screened, reflecting how security forces encircle women's lives and permeate their other experiences of gender-based violence (see Figure 5.2). The 'city of nails' was commented on by an audience member, who stated: 'It's like the city of favelas, isn't it? Survival is there but you have to look for it' (Tiller, 2018: 15). Yet, survival is undermined by the soldiers who make everyone's lives more insecure, especially women.

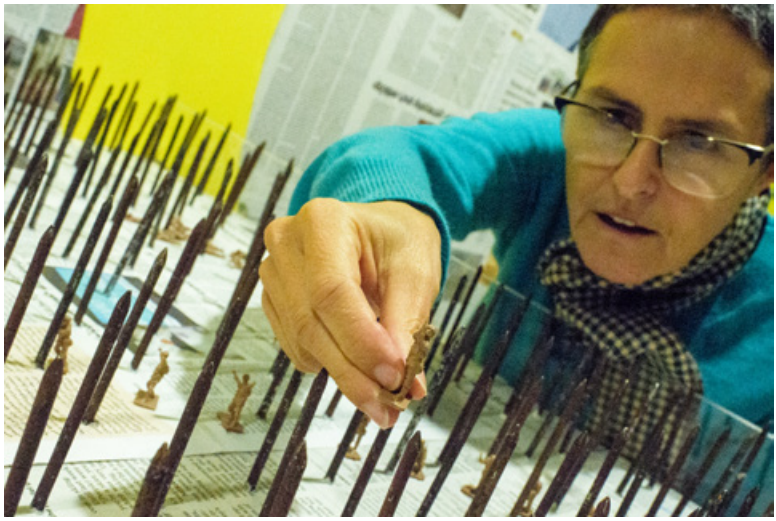

Figure 5.2 Bia Lessa with the toy soldiers that form part of the *SCAR* installation, 2018 (credit: André Camara)

The armed groups who dominate Maré, and especially the drug trafficking gangs (often referred to as 'the boys') and the *Milícias*, also contributed to the gendered urban violence experienced by women in public spaces. These have multiple direct and indirect implications. For example, Amanda said that she was unable to move freely around Maré because the individual favelas were controlled by specific gang factions (see Figure 0.1) who imposed restrictions on women's mobility, enforced by fear: 'We often face issues of: "I can't cross there because I'm afraid of *Comando Vermelho* [gang]. I don't cross there … because I'm afraid", or because some of my family members are involved and I'm afraid to go there, to the other side'.

Women's attitudes towards the drug gangs tended to be more ambivalent than they were towards the *Milícias*, mainly because of the involvement of family and friends. In the body-territory mapping, Lívia felt pity, empathy and sadness in her throat regarding drug traffickers, partly because she had cousins who were members but also because she felt they joined because they had no alternative. Bianca recalled that some of her friends entered drug trafficking to 'pay the bills' despite fearing for their lives. Although she also associated fear, anxiety and pain with trafficking, she also noted: 'For me it's a bunch of kids that are going to die one day'. Although Katia felt sorry for gang members and blamed state violence, she also suffered: 'It is an imprisonment for these boys, but it is also for us, because we have to abide by their rules … we have to live according to this; I also feel dominated'. This ambivalence played out through parallel law enforcement and mediation of conflicts given the absence of the state (also Chapter 6).

Gendered urban violence 'outside' Maré

The false division between 'inside' and 'outside' Maré is underpinned by intersectional gendered urban violence. This could be direct forms of gender-based violence in the public sphere such as rape, robbery or murder but also structural and symbolic violence, especially racialised discrimination and stigma. One of the most frequently identified spaces of violence beyond Maré was public transport, a sphere routinely associated with violence in Rio de Janeiro and elsewhere. Ingrid, who opened the chapter, discussed how she

had been repeatedly sexually harassed on the bus with men groping her. She avoided going out at night as she felt so afraid and oppressed by the harassment. Rosa, twenty-five, commented that she had been robbed on a bus by a young man. He had been watching her and when she stood up to alight, he grabbed her handbag, took out her phone and wallet, got off the bus and disappeared. Verbal abuse underpinned by class and racial prejudice against favela residents also manifested on public transport. Priscila, fifty and identifying as *preta*, recalled how a man from the wealthy south of the city complained about some street children trying to get on to the bus. He said in a loud voice: 'That's why these people have to die, these people who live in the favela, because they don't pay electricity, they don't pay water'.

Other public spaces such as shops and museums were also sites of violence for women, mainly in terms of discrimination. One participant in a focus group noted that security guards in shopping malls always followed her because she was from a favela, highlighting again urban territorial divisions: 'The security guard looks at you when you walk into a store, they prowl after you and it bothers me … They make us feel very bad … out there we feel worse than inside the favela … and out there it is ugly'. Young women, who tended to circulate more in the city due to their jobs, education and leisure activities, were especially vulnerable to a stigmatising and racist gaze constantly framing them as 'favela residents'. Laís, a nineteen-year-old woman, remembered a visit to the Musuem of Modern Art of Rio de Janeiro (MAR) on a Tuesday because there was a discount: 'But I felt really bad when I got there, because everyone kept looking at me because I'm from the favela'.

Women had similar discriminatory and violent experiences in workplaces beyond Maré. Some recalled sexual harassment in the workplace such as Roberta's abuse by her male boss when she was employed as a domestic worker (see Chapter 4). Priscila said that she was discriminated against on grounds of her religious views (she practised Candomblé) in her job as a manicurist in a beauty salon. She said that a client refused to have her nails done because of a thread around her neck that she wore for religious reasons. The client accused her of being a *macumbeira* (a witch), to which Priscila said: 'You are very uninformed; I am a spiritist, macumba is a musical instrument'. Several women spoke of area stigma when

they tried to secure a job outside Maré because everyone thought they were 'bandits' (see also Moser and McIlwaine, 2004). There was also a prevailing perception that they would be unreliable employees because they would be unable to get to work due to police operations. Women spoke of difficulties in explaining how dangerous it was, as noted by Laura: 'How can you explain at work that you cannot leave the house when you have a police operation or at other times when it is very dangerous?' This also affected women in schools and universities, such as Laís who studied outside of Maré and said that she was required to provide evidence when she could not attend:

> I've been through embarrassing situations of me saying, 'teacher, I couldn't get there because I was in a shooting, there was a police operation' … I've had to prove that I lived in a violent place, I had to take printed reports … Once, I saw a dead body on my way to school, and I had to prove that there was an operation.

These situations reflect a lack of understanding, area stigma and racism. Yet, many women also spoke of feeling pride coming from the favela. Priscila Monteiro, the co-founder of the theatre company *Cia Marginal* based on the idea of representing a positive image of the people from Maré as part of the city,[2] noted:

> It came from the desire to also take it outside. To be able to say, 'Oh, we exist, we are also a city, we also occupy the city, we are part of the city, we are Rio de Janeiro, we are Brazil; all this here makes up this place, and we also want to be seen, to be spoken about and to be heard … Our work reflects this.

This will be explored in more depth below and in Chapter 7, but first, we outline gendered urban violence in the public sphere in London.

Multidimensionality of gendered urban violence in the public sphere in London

In London, Brazilian migrant women's experiences of the 'painful truths' of gendered violence in public spaces of the city are also pervasive and diverse. Drawing on the survey, gender-based violence in the public domain comprised more than three-quarters of all violence (78 per cent) and was perpetrated by non-intimate partners.

More specifically, almost a quarter of all violence took place in the workplace (23 per cent), followed by cafés and bars (16 per cent), transport (10 per cent) and public areas such as streets and parks (10 per cent). More than half (58 per cent) of all unwanted physical contact was carried out by an unknown perpetrator and took place in public spaces (55 per cent) and comprised mainly unwelcome touching, hugging and kissing. Verbal abuse was most likely to occur in workplaces (34 per cent) and perpetrated by bosses (23 per cent). Sexual comments were also widely experienced repeatedly, with more than half of this violence occurring in the public sphere.

As in Maré, the complexity of gendered violence in this sphere emerged through the qualitative and arts-based research. While most gender-based violence in public sites was perpetrated in the workplace and by strangers, intimate partners also committed violence beyond the home. For example, Giovanna, thirty-nine, from Rio Grande do Sul, discussed how her coercive husband once attacked her in the street by getting into his car and speeding towards her, trying to run her over but instead causing an accident and fleeing the scene. Violence in the street was also common among ex-partners. Miriam, forty-six, from Minas Gerais and who worked as a cleaner, spoke of how her ex-husband followed her everywhere after they separated and continually harassed her on the street near her home, even once throwing a brick into her apartment window. Gabriela, forty-one, from Minas Gerais and who arrived in London in 2012 after living in Spain for several years, discussed how she had secured a non-molestation order against her violent ex-husband. However, he continually broke it, harassing her in the street outside their house or outside their daughter's school.

Harassment of Brazilian migrant women in the streets of London was not uncommon, as identified in the poem from the Migrants in Action (MinA) workshops (see above). Jessica, forty-one, *branca*, from Minas Gerais, discussed how she was afraid of walking in the streets or in other public places. In part, her fear was related to memories of trauma of her repeated rape back home between the ages of six and thirteen by her cousin, yet also by her experiences in London. Soon after she had arrived in London, Jessica left home early on a Sunday morning:

> A man went by in a car, and he was masturbating … and it scared me because I had been told this kind of thing didn't happen here. But he just

> went by … But I don't go to parks on my own, not even during the day; I don't go into dead ends or deserted streets, I don't feel comfortable.

Another space where Camila and other Brazilian women were sexually harassed was in London shops. She recalled how in the supermarket, 'Guys walk behind me and whisper things to my ear, while I'm shopping … once, a guy went past me several times trying to touch my bottom'. Some women identified forms of intersectional racism. According to a woman who identified as *preta* in a focus group, 'Once, I went into a shop in Oxford Street … I noticed that my shoes were dirty, the saleswoman kept looking at me … because we are Black, we suffer more still … yes, there is much more discrimination than against White Brazilian women'.

Trans women were especially susceptible to intersectional abuse and discrimination. Nina, who was twenty-eight and had been working in the sex trade, spoke about how certain areas of the city were more unsafe or tolerant than others. She did not like walking around in the east of London as she had been abused in the street there. Instead, she preferred to circulate in areas she identified as more respectful in the north of the city, which she associated with greater acceptance of her gender.

The workplace was a frequently identified site of gender-based violence, especially among those working in elementary jobs such as cleaning, waitressing and chambermaiding. This is corroborated by other research with Latin Americans in the city, with 40 per cent experiencing problems in the workplace and women more likely to be exploited than men (McIlwaine *et al.*, 2011). Women were more likely to identify verbal abuse and sexual harassment, especially when they had insecure status, because they were unable to make complaints when they had no labour rights. These patterns were borne out in research with onward Latin Americans (OLAs) who had migrated to London via other countries and who were also concentrated in elementary sectors. Almost half of these women (48 per cent) experienced abuse and harassment (compared to 41 per cent of men) (McIlwaine, 2020b).

Brazilian migrant women recalled gender-based violence across several labour market sectors. Abuse in cleaning was especially prevalent, ranging from sexual harassment to withholding of wages. Gabriela, for example, who worked as a cleaner and carer, discussed how one of her older male clients was 'a bit of a pervert'

who started to touch and hug her. Eduarda, forty-six and included in the Step Up Migrant Women (SUMW) research, spoke about working as a cleaner in offices in central London. She had irregular immigration status and was working under someone else's name. She had twice worked without pay and supervisors threatened to report her to the immigration authorities. However, one supervisor also harassed her: 'One day, he came inside the bathroom, pushed me against the wall and told me: "If you do not stay with me [sexually], I won't pay you and you will be jobless"'. One of the service providers corroborated this, stating that if women with insecure status were working for cash, they would get paid less than the National Minimum Wage and were vulnerable to domestic exploitation, sexual slavery and domestic servitude.

Hotels and hospitality work were major sites of gender-based violence. Gisleine, thirty-nine, *branca*, from Santa Catarina, spoke of her experiences while working at a bar in London: 'A man pushed me against the bar and tried to grope me, and that frightened me a lot'. She also reported how, at a work party, a man asked where she was from and when she told him, he said that he had heard that all Brazilian women there were 'easy'. Mafalda, who was forty-three and was interviewed for the SUMW project, spoke about working in a café with insecure status. Although she was pregnant at the time, her boss would not allow her to have statutory twenty-minute breaks and made her work in the smoking areas. She said she could not complain because: 'If I were to lose that job, how was I going to go and find another job without status?' Eduarda also experienced several distressing physical and sexual attacks when she worked as a chambermaid in a hotel. She said that her male co-workers would hit the chambermaids if they thought they were not working fast enough, and one man undressed in front of her and propositioned her. On another occasion, she was working alongside her male co-worker cleaning rooms when he ran into her room and grabbed her around the waist:

> I told him to stop but he pulled me tighter. I told him, 'Let me go' but he wouldn't stop. His eyes were staring at me, and he was breathing heavily. I tried moving my legs and he held my arms down. I was in pain and he kept pulling my legs against his. He pushed me on the bed and … tried to bite me. He held my neck. I told him to stop, I couldn't move. He lay on top of me, held my legs up in the air. Everything hurt.

Fortunately, Eduarda kicked him in the stomach and he ran out of the room and returned to his work mumbling that she did not respect him. She did not report him because she did not have secure immigration status and was working for cash.

Another occupation especially associated with gender-based violence was sex work. Nina described various incidents where her clients became aggressive and did not respect her work limits: 'Once, one of them pulled my head until my mouth started bleeding because he wanted to kiss me but I didn't want to'. Due to severe trauma, Nina expressed a desire to resume her studies and find work in another field: 'I don't want to work in that anymore because the clients don't respect me and are violent'. Yet, she also faced another challenge as she was deaf; she was learning British Sign Language (BSL) (which is different from Brazilian Sign Language), but this was taking some time (McIlwaine, 2022).

Women working in skilled and professional jobs also faced abuse and exploitation. Camila worked as a freelance computer technician. She visited clients' houses and was repeatedly harassed: 'They would try to have sex with me when I was working. They'd offer to pay me more, they'd ask me out to lunch, to dinner, and I was there for work'. Fernanda, twenty-seven, from São Paulo, spoke about sexualised verbal abuse she experienced as a teacher in London. She recalled an exchange with a fourth-grade teacher at a schools' conference: 'He came up to me and said, "With those skirts you could make two hundred bucks!" I told him to disappear, and I carried on with my day, but that stuck in my throat; you can't say that to someone'.

The workshops run by MinA also addressed workplace abuse. The women created a statement of protest about violence at work:

> To power holders:
>
> Require employers to provide safety
>
> measures for lone workers going home
>
> at late or early hours.
>
> Create more accessible environments in
>
> spaces of safety and law by providing
>
> translators on site.

Beyond workspaces, violence perpetrated by landlords also emerged as an issue. Bianca, who was seventy, *preta* and from Minas Gerais, had arrived in London in 1989 and had irregular status, having let her tourist visa expire. When she returned to her flat after her ex-husband had beaten her so badly that she was in hospital for a month, her landlord began to harass her verbally. He served her notice to vacate the flat, knocking on her door every day swearing at her. She called the police, but they told her to move out and that she had no rights. In the SUMW research, this was also a problem, with a service provider discussing a former client who had been physically abused by her landlord but she was too afraid to report him, again because he knew she had no papers: 'She has been terrified to call the police; her landlord said, "If you call the police, I am going tell them this and this and this, that you don't have papers, so good luck!"'

As in Maré and elsewhere, women experienced violence on public transport, especially during anti-social hours. Gisleine spoke of her fear when travelling around London, citing one particularly frightening incident on an Underground train and on a bus late at night after work. A man touched her on the leg while she was reading a newspaper and then followed her off the train. She ran to the bus while he continued to follow her: 'I didn't look back, and after I got off five stops later, well, I don't think I'd ever ran so much … it was nearly one in the morning. As I got inside the flat, I was nearly transparent with fear'. Airports were also arenas of violence for migrants arriving from countries like Brazil. Not only did women have to negotiate border controls and the multiple forms of institutional violence that this entails but they also experienced harassment by border officials including sexual abuse. As noted in Chapter 2, this was recounted in Gaël Le Cornec's *Efêmera* and later included in the video *Raising Awareness of Violence against Brazilian Women in London* (see Figure 5.3).

Brazilian migrant women were not passive in the face of violence in the public domain. Eduarda fought back against her assailant in the hotel and Gisleine ran away from her abuser on the Underground train (see also Chapter 7). Reflecting this defiance and transformation, one of the participants in the MinA workshop stated in relation to the beginning of the video installation:

Figure 5.3 Animation from *Raising Awareness of Violence against Brazilian Women in London* video (animation by Francesca de Bassa, directed by Aida Baneres) (credit: People's Palace Projects/YouTube)

> That phrase, 'Oh, Brazilian' … has triggered me so much, brought so many bad memories. Especially in the part where we mention fear of losing my children, that really hit me hard. But I now understand that I had to go through this process [MinA] to heal and feel stronger.

Theorising translocational gendered urban violence in the public sphere in Maré and London

The drivers of gendered urban violence in public spaces of the city are the same or similar as those underpinning abuse in the home, in terms of structural and symbolic violence and reflecting the framework outlined in Chapter 1. In this context, urbanisation and migration dynamics are especially important as engines of inequality that are buttressed by uneven global and urban development and coloniality. The functioning of cities such as Rio de

Janeiro and London is rooted in maintaining territorial, social and economic divisions. In Rio de Janeiro, this is based on false separations between 'the city' and 'the favelas' based on racialised and classed marginalisation (Goldstein, 2013; Iachan *et al.*, 2023; Rizzini Ansari, 2022), while in London, there is a marked transnational 'migrant division of labour' that ensures an endless supply of cheap and exploitable labour (Wills *et al.*, 2010) including Latin Americans (McIlwaine, 2020b; McIlwaine and Bunge, 2019). Yet, as noted in the introduction, what is less acknowledged is that women, as the majority of urban citizens everywhere (Chant and McIlwaine, 2016), are crucial in sustaining urbanisation and migration processes. In turn, women are fundamentally affected and implicated in the incidence of gendered urban violence in public spaces of the city, in workplaces and on public transport. They also have to deal with the violent and discriminatory actions of the state through police operations in Maré and active exclusion of Brazilian migrants with insecure immigration status in London.

As was the case with regards to the private spaces of the household, gendered violence in the public sphere of the city may ostensibly appear to be individualised. In telling their 'painful truths', women in Maré and London tended to speak about their own responsibility for keeping safe and their embodied insecurities when they are unable to. In both contexts, women spoke of how violence, anxiety and fear restricted their freedom of movement, limiting their mobility and making it imperative to create strategies to cope, such as changing routes and movement times and choosing their clothes carefully (Moser and McIlwaine, 2004; see Chapter 7). In London, on reflecting on her experiences of street harassment, Camila noted that she was surprised because she had deliberately worn 'just normal clothes: jeans, trainers, nothing sexy that could attract attention', implying self-blame. In Maré, Elsa, who was fifty and identified as White, experienced an attempted sexual assault on the Avenida Brasil (the main road linking the wealthy southern areas with the north of the city where Maré is located – see Figure 0.1) when she was younger. Elsa had internalised the trauma of this and was unable to walk freely anywhere: 'I can't walk in deserted places, I can't, I get anxious, it gives me an anguish, something like lack of air, suffocation. If I walk in a deserted place, I walk very fast'. Such forced immobility fundamentally undermined women's right to experience

the city (McIlwaine *et al.*, 2020). Yet, while these strategies appeared at first glance to be the choices of women facing gendered violence in city spaces, the underlying systemic drivers must be acknowledged.

The structural, symbolic and infrastructural violences faced by women in both places were succinctly identified as 'the subtleties of normalised oppressions in everyday life' by Focus Group 3 in Maré. Their discussion and the artist's interpretation of it (Figure 5.4) reflect direct forms of violence, such as harassment by a neighbour that has left a scar inside one participant to being threatened by men walking by in the wealthy south of the city. Yet, their narratives also illustrate the subtle forms of violence, including women thinking they did not have a voice, believing they did not deserve even the bare minimum and feeling suffocated as a result. Furthermore, they noted that women who do not meet heteronormative 'standards', such as trans women, lesbians and more masculine women, were more open to abuse.

In London, these oppressions often revolved around the hypersexualisation of Brazilian migrant women. This was noted by

Figure 5.4 Observational drawing of a focus group in Maré on 'the subtleties of normalised oppression in everyday life' (credit: Mila de Choch; adapted from McIlwaine *et al.*, 2022c)

Jessica, who stated: 'There is a subtlety in the form of oppression. I feel the weight of … the stigma of the hyper-sexualisation of Brazilian women in the eyes of foreign men'. This was further corroborated by Miriam, forty-six, *parda*, from Minas Gerais, who spoke about Portuguese men as especially discriminatory against Brazilian women: 'For the Portuguese, everyone is a bitch … They think that all Brazilian women are prostitutes. And lots of people think this. All countries have good and bad people'. Reflecting the importance of creative translations to convey and understand how violence is embodied as outlined in our framework, this was also identified in *Efêmera* by Gaël Le Cornec (2018a: 25):

> **Ana:** Men here just look at me … with this look. The look that I am Brazilian so I must be exaggerating or lying because we are passionate, over the top, emotional. Or they look at me assuming I want to have sex with them, maybe they think I'm a prostitute, because 'Brazilians like sex'. I don't know where that came from. And I'm not talking only about British men, it's all *gringos* [foreign men].

This has been noted elsewhere in both the UK and Spain (Beserra, 2005; Malheiros and Padilla, 2014; Martins Junior, 2020; McIlwaine, 2020b). It was also identified in the MinA workshops and is reflected in one of their collectively written poems that is also included in the script for the video installation *We Still Fight in the Dark*. Here, the poem notes that as Brazilian women, they are always asked to dance samba because they are 'exotic', and their bodies are sexualised (see Chapter 3). Underlying this poem was the lack of belonging felt by Brazilian migrant women, as further noted by one of the participants: 'I'm in a limbo where I don't know where I belong, when my skin and my flesh do not translate what I am … I do not belong there or here'. This also emerged in Maré where a participant in a focus group stated that it was common for residents not to feel part of the 'whole city', identifying this as a form of violence.

Structural racism against migrants and against favela residents was widespread, as described by Jaqueline Andrade, a member of *Cia Marginal* theatre company included in the Museu da Pessoa project. Jaqueline spoke about 'living racism', class discrimination and lesbophobia in Rio:

> When I arrive at the door of the building where I live [in a wealthy neighbourhood of Rio], the concierge doesn't say good morning to

> me, they say, 'good job', because they think I'm going to work in that house, and I'm not. I also suffer from lesbophobia … these things are in my flesh.

In addition, the intersectional and structural violence of the state in Maré and London was insidious. In Maré, this was overt and brutal through the police operations, acting as a symbol for the state in Rio and Maré. In the body-territory mapping workshop, Bianca identified the tank outside her house and the helicopter flying above her house as being a form of violence and oppression. Yet, while she felt deeply afraid, she also felt angry:

> Six o'clock in the morning, the helicopter is above my window. This is one of the things that makes me most indignant. Six o'clock in the morning, the helicopter is already there, the window shaking. This makes me really angry, because this is enormous violence. This affects a person's mental health. It's horrible. It is a feeling of fear.

Intersectional power structures therefore provide damaging drivers for the perpetration of ubiquitous indirect and direct gendered violence against women in public domains of the city. They also generate widespread and often debilitating fear among women and their family members across transnational city spaces. With the ever-present gendered urban violence in private, public and transnational sites in the cities of Rio de Janeiro and London explored in this chapter and in Chapter 4, the book now turns to examine gendered infrastructural violence as another key component of our framework.

Notes

1 Necropolitics was conceptualised by Achille Mbembe and refers to how states decide which lives are more valuable than others (Brickell, 2020).

2 *Cia Marginal* (literally Company of the Margins) is a theatre company created through the partnership between Redes da Maré and a group of young residents of Maré which takes favela art to the rest of the city, the country and internationally. See http://ciamarginalmare.blogspot.com/ (accessed 22 January 2024).

6

Gendered infrastructural violence and barriers to support in Rio de Janeiro and London

> My ex-husband tried to kill me, and he choked me several times. I only reported it because I did not understand much, I just reported and waited. They gave me no support, no help, nothing. After he hit me … I went to the police station. I made a complaint to see if they'd arrest him, or do something with him to stop him, but it was no use. They didn't come back to me until eight years later.
>
> (Cátia, Maré)

> I stayed on the street to get help, went to the police and tried to explain everything in English, which is very difficult … My experience was of real hostility, the police saying they weren't a hotel, and I should seek help in my embassy or … return to my country, although at that point I had fled from this man who, as a perpetrator, remained with the custody of our child. I thought I'd be listened to and given shelter, but I was not.
>
> (Gilmara, London)

Cátia and Gilmara's experiences were not unusual. Supporting women survivors of gender-based violence was not a priority for the Brazilian or British states, especially when they were residents of favelas or migrants. This was the case whether the violence was perpetrated inside or outside their homes. However, not only was there a passive neglect on the part of the state, but women and girls often entered a web of active institutional and symbolic violence when seeking help. This included sexist, racist, classist, homophobic, transphobic and xenophobic discrimination, stigmatisation and blaming, combined with facing severe barriers to accessing mechanisms of support, safety and justice. Gilmara's experience illustrates how being a migrant in London with insecure immigration status and/or facing socio-linguistic challenges

often leads to re-victimisation. Cátia's situation was worsened by the fact that she lived in a favela with high levels of direct and indirect state violence, a proliferation of armed groups and severe marginalisation of favela residents.

In this chapter, recalling the translocational gendered urban violence framework outlined in Chapter 1, we focus on infrastructural violence and specifically its gendered dimensions and how it intersects with structural and symbolic violence across the overlapping private, public and transnational sites where multiple abuses are experienced by women. Echoing arguments in Chapters 4 and 5, we explore the nature of gendered infrastructural violence within broader feminist contestations against individualised narratives around direct gender-based violence (McIlwaine and Evans, 2023). In acknowledging how gendered infrastructural violence is underpinned by systemic intersectional oppressions, the discussion shows how such violence functions in invisible passive and active ways (Datta and Ahmed, 2020; Truelove and Ruszczyk, 2022). Empirically, it reveals how barriers to assistance and support among survivors, mainly on the part of the state, are a form of infrastructural violence which may result in the intensification of women's suffering of direct gender-based violence. As with violence experienced in the private and public spheres and across borders, infrastructural violence is also deeply embodied, as is clearly communicated through the creative encounters. Yet, gendered infrastructural violence is often countered by invaluable forms of support infrastructure that can mitigate against the generation of ever more structural and direct gendered violence against women. We briefly address the role of civil society organisations in assisting women through highlighting the views of service providers, who often provide a lifeline in the face of wider exclusion and who operate in transnational and translocational ways to mitigate and prevent gendered urban violence. However, the role of these organisations is explored more fully in Chapter 7 on negotiating and resisting gender-based violence.

Gendered infrastructural violence and women's urban lives

As outlined in Chapter 1, gendered infrastructural violence is perpetrated through the exclusion of women survivors of gender-based violence from support services in cities, especially those

provided by the state. Reflecting wider debates around the role of urban infrastructure in mediating and reproducing power relationships in cities (McFarlane and Silver, 2017), infrastructural violence is now accepted as a term to denote lack of access to judicial, education, health and public security systems (Rodgers and O'Neill, 2012). More recently, the gendered dimensions of this form of structural and 'slow' violence have been illuminated (Chaplin and Kalita, 2017; Datta and Ahmed, 2020). Gendered infrastructural violence constitutes part of the wider matrix of harms and exploitation that women in peripheral communities and/or living in marginalised circumstances face disproportionately on an intersectional basis. This violence can passively exclude city dwellers, and especially women, from basic urban services and other resources such as housing (Pain, 2019). Infrastructural violence may also more actively control, discriminate against and marginalise certain populations, such as women migrants and/or favela dwellers (Sawas *et al.*, 2020). As shown in Chapter 5, inadequate urban services, such as safe transport facilities and functioning public security, can directly compromise women's right to the city in terms of mobility, livelihood security and freedom from violence (Beebeejaun, 2017).

This chapter focuses on how gendered infrastructural violence, perpetrated primarily by the racist state, underlies the exercise of multiple barriers against women seeking to disclose and report gender-based violence (McIlwaine and Evans, 2023; McIlwaine *et al.*, 2021). As we have seen in Chapters 4 and 5, when women reside on the margins of cities, as migrants and *faveladas*, they are more likely to face risky situations within and beyond households that can facilitate the perpetration of gender-based violence. These risks are underlain by structural, symbolic and infrastructural violence. The latter is especially insidious in two main ways. First, lack of access to certain types of infrastructure such as street lighting and safe public transport can generate gender-based violence (Chant and McIlwaine, 2016; McIlwaine, 2013). Second, when survivors seeking support are excluded from (mainly) statutory services – due to fear, lack of information, lack of confidence in the ability of providers to help – this can lead them to remain in situations of violence and/or to be re-traumatised by interactions with those from whom they seek help (O'Neal and Beckman, 2016). They may also

face direct perpetration of violence on the part of the state through verbal abuse, threats or direct armed violence.

For Brazilian migrants in London, gendered infrastructural violence refers primarily to the passive exercise of violence through 'limitations and omissions' (Rodgers and O'Neill, 2012: 406–7). This was manifested through the barriers survivors faced when trying to access state services, especially in terms of reporting to the police and welfare services when they had insecure immigration status. Yet, women also experienced direct abuse when interacting with public officials. Women from Maré faced passive gendered infrastructural violence through endemic state neglect represented through restricted access to urban sanitation services, transportation and lighting as well as inadequate provision of assistance for survivors. Yet, active infrastructural violence was endemic through a state policy designed in an intentionally violent way to 'control social norms' and 'actively marginalise certain groups' (Rodgers and O'Neill, 2012: 406–7). As we saw in Chapters 3, 4 and 5, this entailed not only abuse by state officials when seeking help but continuous police incursions resulting in deaths, injuries, trauma and the closure of schools and health centres. Even where violence is attributed to the ruling armed groups, the state's 'war on drugs' agenda remains directly responsible for sustaining and reproducing the militarisation of life in favelas. The armed state presence in Maré is thus motivated by the 'war on drugs' context, and as a result criminalises residents and violates their rights (Sousa Silva, 2017). In such a context, the protection of rights is sidelined to other political priorities – which has led many to consider this a state of exception (de Souza and Serra, 2020).

Gendered infrastructural violence and accessing support in Maré

Bearing in mind the discussion of organisational support in Chapter 3, this section briefly mentions residents' attitudes towards the state before moving on to assess disclosure and reporting of gender-based violence. Perhaps not surprisingly, perceptions of the state were almost uniformly negative. Reflecting wider discourses on the part of Afro-Brazilian feminists around a 'genocidal state'

with reference to the '*genocídio do povo negro*' (genocide of Black people) (do Nascimento, 1978; Rocha, 2012), one woman, Marina, spoke of 'genocidal and murderous rulers' who take everything away, even favela residents' right to come and go. The state operated through a range of activities in addition to the police operations. They were involved in removals and evictions and a level of lenience towards armed groups and often overt abetment towards the *Milícias* who act within the state apparatus to control and limit access to water, gas, sanitation or other basic services in their areas of control (also Borde and Hernández-Álvarez, 2022; Garmany and Richmond, 2020). With ever-increasing investments in the militarised structures in the public security agenda, this critical situation only escalates, said Ludmila, twenty-six, *branca* and a resident of the favela of Morro do Timbau:

> In the past there were no helicopters, there were no armoured tanks. So, their entry [the police] was much more cautious, because they also had to be careful with their own lives … Nowadays, they are totally protected, so they just raid recklessly with their armoured vehicles, helicopters, guns.

As a result of the lack of a positive and supportive state presence, Eliana Sousa Silva noted in the Women Resisting Violence (WRV) podcast that there was 'a very strong [environment of] violence against women, with no space to tackle it. Justice is not served, nor is it served through these illegal, criminal systems'.

Recalling that the nearest Women's Police Station is 12 km from Maré, the only public services available to support women identified within Maré were health clinics (see Chapter 3; Figure 3.2). Despite the efforts of the staff working in these units, the quality of support was low. One of the participants in a focus group with working women said that she had been waiting for a gynaecologist appointment for two years as she needed a hysterectomy; she ended up resorting to private surgery. Poor quality care, itself a form of infrastructural violence, was echoed by many other women. For example, a focus group participant noted that there were long waiting lists and that when attended, this was by nurses rather than specialists:

> It's very bad. And it's not about the pandemic, is it? Because before the pandemic, it was bad enough. I'll tell you this about the small

> health unit. If you depend on it … I've been waiting for three years for a heart test. … How can you go to a gynaecologist or a cardiologist and it's a nurse who sees you?

Women felt that they were treated with disrespect in the public health clinics, and they perceived this as violence. Another participant remembered a situation where a girl had a sexually transmitted disease and the doctor called the staff of the clinic to have a look at her: 'How embarrassing for that girl when she left that room … It was a violent thing … that to me was gender-based violence'. Limited access to and poor quality of support services are predominantly related to the precarity of public policies and institutions and a perceived ineptness of some professional workers. It was also remarkable that many women were unable to identify any support services, especially as survivors of gender-based violence (McIlwaine *et al.*, 2023b).

Disclosure and reporting of gender-based violence

The rates of disclosure and reporting of incidents of direct gender-based violence by women residents of Maré was generally low, and especially low to formal sources. According to the survey, of the 457 women who experienced at least one form of violence, only 52 per cent told someone about it. Disclosing to family and friends was typically much more common than reporting to the police and judicial system. Almost three-quarters disclosed to a family member and half to friends. In contrast, only 8 per cent reported to the Women's Police Station and 2.5 per cent to the general police. Overall, 83 per cent only sought informal support, with 2.5 per cent only seeking formal support and 14 per cent seeking both formal and informal. More specifically, women disclosed to thirteen sources of support, differentiated into informal support (family, friends, intimate partners, neighbours) and formal support (the Women's Police, police, psychologists, lawyers, bosses, the police station, the school headmaster, private security agents and criminals). One-fifth of women had accessed at least one service, with 6 per cent accessing two or more. Although the numbers were small, the most accessed formal service was the Women's Police (33 women), followed by the police (24), the church (19) and criminals (18) (Krenzinger *et al.*, 2018b).

This also varied according to the favelas within Maré, with reporting more common in those with several organisations, where wider urban conflict was more intense, and with variations depending on the local codes imposed by armed groups (see Figure 6.1). For instance, different armed groups were more or less likely to intervene in cases of domestic abuse; drug gangs often provided protection for women survivors of intimate partner violence (see below), whereas the *Milícias* were known to punish people who discussed problems in their territories. These dynamics were reflected in the experiences of a focus group participant who recalled how the chief of police said:

> Unfortunately, where you live, it's a 'risk area', we can't get in, so the most I'll be able to do for you is to take care of you out here: if you go to work and he goes after you, if he hurts you out here. Unfortunately, there's nothing I can do there [in the favela].

It took women more than one experience of violence before they sought help, with women who experienced more than two different forms of violence being increasingly more likely to access a service. For example, 7.5 per cent of women who had suffered one form of violence sought help, compared with 43 per cent of those who suffered seven forms of violence. The type of violence experienced also played a significant part in women's decisions to seek help, with those suffering physical violence being more likely to report (28 per cent), compared with 23 per cent of those who suffered psychological violence and 22 per cent who experienced sexual violence.

Some women were more likely than others to report their experiences of gender-based violence. This included women aged between eighteen and twenty-nine (57.5 per cent), those working in fixed employment (58 per cent) or unemployed (55 per cent), educated to secondary level or above (53 per cent) and married (54 per cent). Those living alone or separated from their partners were also more likely to report (74 and 54 per cent respectively).

This general situation of silence over reporting to state institutions was confirmed by the coordinator of the Centro de Referência de Mulheres da Maré, whose service statistics showed that more than 60 per cent of women who sought help from them did not report to the police. She also noted the importance of providing specific help for women: 'each one will have different ways of breaking

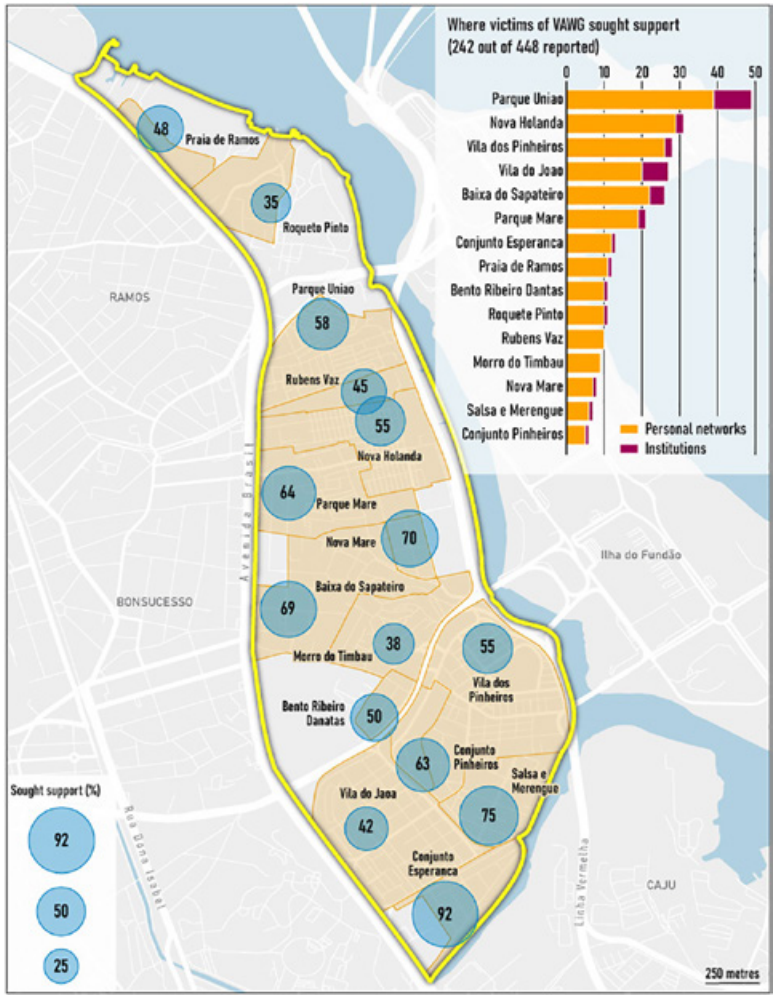

Figure 6.1 Formal and informal reporting of gender-based violence in Maré by favela (credit: cartography by Steven Bernard; adapted from McIlwaine *et al.*, 2023b)

the cycle of violence', stating that they need to do more than just dial the national helpline (180), which is what the media tends to advise. This situation was exacerbated by the COVID-19 pandemic. Not only did cases of intimate partner violence increase but

women spoke of being less likely to report. For example, Renata, twenty-four, *branca*, said that because many women had lost jobs due to the pandemic, they ended up depending on partners financially: 'I'm not going to report him because I'm out of a job and I need him there now. … And the men can do what they want, but how is the person going to get out of this relationship?'

Barriers to reporting and securing support

There are therefore multiple and intersectional barriers faced by women in Maré in their search for support when they experience gender-based violence (Krenzinger *et al.*, 2021). Those who do manage to negotiate a hostile and violent institutional culture often find themselves re-victimised by action, delay or failure to act on the part of institutions, particularly in the security and justice system (Muniz and Proença Júnior, 2016; Santiago *et al.*, 2019).

In terms of not reporting in the first place, one of the most commonly identified reasons was that women blamed themselves for the violence, especially intimate partner abuse, and this was reinforced by responses from family and friends when they did disclose (see also Chapter 4). In the second stage of the research, participants in several focus groups noted the types of reactions they heard: 'but if you stayed in the relationship, it would have been OK'; 'if you really wanted to, you would have left him a long time ago'; 'what were you thinking going to such places at night?'; and 'why were you dressed in that way?' Figure 6.2 shows some of these testimonies from women who identified people in the church and the police as reacting negatively. This meant that women stayed silent as they were either embarrassed, too scared to speak up or they felt that nothing would be done. Ingrid, forty-nine and of Asian origin, spoke about silence in relation to wider structural oppression: 'A woman, I think, experiences everything, but unfortunately fear and oppression sometimes makes us shut up. I still don't feel safe to demand respect and demand my legal rights as a woman, as a person in society, as an individual. I don't feel safe'.

Also frequently mentioned by women survivors was that they felt that they would not be believed or taken seriously by those supposed to help them. Infrastructural violence was actively perpetrated by health centres and hospitals, as well as by the

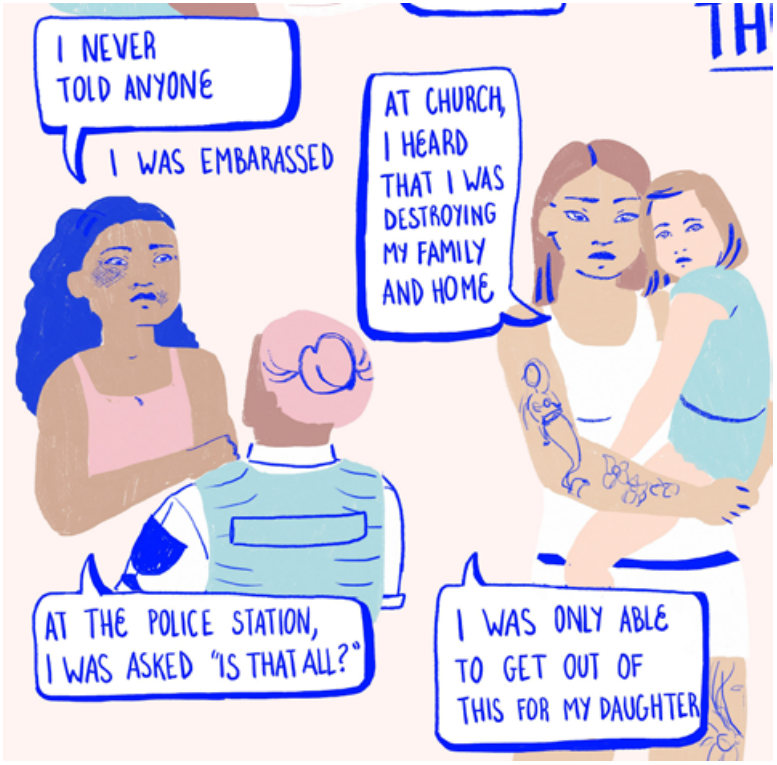

Figure 6.2 Comments on not reporting gender-based violence from one of the focus groups (credit: Mila de Choch; adapted from McIlwaine *et al.*, 2022c)

police and judicial system. Women were treated with contempt and often re-traumatised as a result. In the context of women seeking help from health centres for their injuries, a participant recalled how she had gone to the Legal Medical Institute after her partner beat her up, and the doctor said: '"You're here [at the Legal Medical Institute], you got beat up, but then what? Then you're going to go back to the guy … you're interrupting my job and a lot of people who are here for a real emergency, really in need, who are feeling sick'. A similar situation was discussed by a participant in another focus group, who commented on her experience at the Emergency Care Unit. She said she felt violated

because the woman at the reception asked her what her symptoms were (following abuse). After she told her and was ordered to wait while 'trembling in pain and crying', it transpired that her name was not put into the system and she was completely ignored: 'These are other forms of violence too; there is nothing formal protecting us'.

Negative treatment by the police was commonly discussed by women as a factor dissuading them from seeking help and was a major form of infrastructural violence (see Figure 6.2). Elisa, fifty-one, recounted her experience of reporting her ex-husband at a police station. She told the police investigator how her husband had threatened to kill her with a butcher's knife, but all the officer did was ask her, 'where's the blood?' Part of the problem that women faced was the police requirement for proof, which was very difficult to provide, as Mónica, twenty-six, noted when she tried to report her violent husband: 'They said that I had to have concrete proof against him and at the time I didn't have much … People in the community here won't testify for you because they are scared of being involved with the justice system … so there's nowhere to turn'.

This issue extended to dealing with the judicial system. Despite the important institutional advancements regarding the protection of women and girls experiencing violence, particularly the Maria da Penha Law (see Chapter 3), the enforcement of protective laws in Maré is limited. While many women mentioned the Maria da Penha Law – which ostensibly provides additional support for women survivors of domestic abuse through the Women's Police Stations, refuges and increased punishment for offenders – it was rarely seen in a favourable light. Célia, twenty-nine, *parda*, stated explicitly: 'The Maria da Penha Law does not work within Maré'. Others, such as Patricia, thirty-one, *parda*, talked about their first-hand experiences of going to the police station after suffering violence. After reporting the father of her daughter who abused her during her pregnancy, the only advice she received was to stay away from her aggressor (as her responsibility). Patricia referred to the Maria da Penha Law as the 'Maria Coffin Law', because only when a woman was murdered would her case be addressed. One focus group participant did have a positive experience with the Women's Police Patrol who contacted her every month to check whether her violent ex-partner was complying with the injunction order: 'Every

month, they send me a message to talk to me … And I was even surprised – I'd never received this service before'.

Considering the generalised lack of support for women survivors in Maré, many felt compelled to seek help directly from the armed groups because they had no alternative. Odete, thirty-two, spoke about the drug traffickers as 'the parallel power' who provide support for women survivors, stating that they 'find a way' to deal with perpetrators: 'and their way is to kill or otherwise threaten, saying, "You either go away never to return, or if you do, and we find you here, we'll kill you!"'. Some women found ways of being protected by both the police outside Maré and the armed actors inside, again showing how alternative extra-judicial authority and protection functions in the territory. Angela, twenty-five, *parda*, described how she obtained a restraining order against her ex-partner in order to be protected outside of Maré, as well as informing the drug trafficking leaders inside. But she was aware of the need to be very transparent with the latter: 'I said, "Look, I'm doing this because here you are the law, but outside there is a law and he is threatening to go to my workplace" … one of the leaders said, "No, it's OK, no problem, if you're sure that's what you want"'. Involvement with the drug trafficking leaders was often complicated. Elisa, who was divorced, discussed how she involved the traffickers in her separation but explained that this led to her re-victimisation, pushing her into an unfair division of assets leaving her with almost nothing and giving no parental responsibilities to her ex-husband for their daughter. The 'mediator' made her withdraw the case she had filed in court and insisted that it would influence her ex-husband's decision to pay child support for their daughter (which he agreed to do): 'The armed groups said, "If he doesn't want to give you anything, he won't give you anything … you will accept whatever he wants"'.

Alternative mediation of conflicts was not seen as ideal, and many women would much rather see a change in state support than turning to armed groups. The idea of having access to justice was closely associated with their sense of dignity. When access to services and policies was effective, women felt respected. In the context of the COVID-19 pandemic, a member of the campaign Maré Says No to Coronavirus spoke of women creating their own dignity in the face of state neglect (see also Chapter 7): 'It is precisely from

this gap, from this non-presence, from the non-effectiveness of these services, that women become absurdly inventive. It is from this that creativity arises, ways of existing, resisting in various possible ways'.

Indeed, some women take things into their own hands, such as Roseni Lima de Oliveira, who was a carnival designer and author but also a community health agent. Community health workers are the links between communities and specialist healthcare providers. In effect working for the state, they have been widespread in Brazil since the 1970s (Krieger *et al.*, 2020). Roseni spoke of how she had suffered domestic abuse and how after leaving her partner, she began to support the founding of a residents' association as well as becoming a community health agent to reclaim her dignity and rights to her territory (see also Figure 6.3):

> At that time, there was also an opening to work here as a community health agent and I applied for this position and got accepted. So, before this, I had already started to integrate, to take ownership of the margins, of my place. I saw the possibility of a connection through culture.

Figure 6.3 Roseni Oliveira speaking about her life in Maré as part of the Female Lives Exhibition by the Museum of the Person (credit: Paula Santos; adapted from McIlwaine *et al.*, 2022b)

Gendered infrastructural violence and accessing support in London

Migrant women survivors of gender-based violence are especially affected by gendered infrastructural violence across multiple scales as they navigate support systems within a hostile immigration environment created and executed by the British state. Here, following McIlwaine and Evans (2023), we suggest that statutory and non-statutory services constitute a form of 'migrant infrastructure'. We focus specifically on 'statutory migrant infrastructure', which comprises services of the police and wider judiciary, as well as state social and health services. 'Non-statutory migrant infrastructure' refers to civil society organisations supporting migrant women (Xiang and Lindquist, 2014). There are also some overlaps where organisations and initiatives providing specialist support for women constitute 'women's equality infrastructure' (Brodie, 2008). The focus in this chapter is on the infrastructural violence of the state, although we mention the non-statutory service providers who support migrant women when the state excludes them (acknowledging the links between them).

Evidence around the world shows that migrant women face multiple barriers when seeking help as survivors (Menjívar and Salcido, 2002; O'Neal and Beckman, 2016; Reina *et al*., 2014). While this work tends to focus on individual challenges faced by migrant women, such as isolation, lack of information, immigration status, language competencies and institutional factors (Erez *et al*., 2009; Vidales, 2010), increasingly, these barriers are being viewed as structural oppressions. This standpoint is important in moving beyond analyses of women's individual failure to report or seek help, which can amount to 'victim-blaming', and instead unpicking how accessing organisational support, or migrant infrastructure, is shaped by structural and symbolic violence – in relation to poverty, discrimination and marginalisation (McIlwaine and Evans, 2023). Migrant women's exclusion from and/or poor treatment within support services is therefore a form of infrastructural violence.

As noted in Chapter 3, Brazilian migrants face a hostile state and immigration regime which has made migration and settlement in the UK extremely difficult since around 2010. These 'managed migration' policies have eroded migrants' rights to work and access to

social security and support (Hodkinson *et al.*, 2021). For survivors of gender-based violence who have insecure immigration status, it is exceptionally difficult to secure assistance, not least because of the No Recourse to Public Funds (NRPF). They also face infrastructural or 'border' violence in banks, schools, hospitals and when trying to find accommodation (Lopes Heimer, 2023; Yuval-Davis *et al.*, 2019). This entraps migrant women, with deleterious consequences for their wellbeing as survivors of gender-based violence (Cassidy, 2019). Although women with insecure immigration status can sometimes secure statutory services such as social and health services, state benefits, housing and subsidised refuges, in reality, it is very difficult. For those who are undocumented, it is effectively impossible to access any service, while those with insecure status face multiple restrictions in referral options due to the NRPF. As explained by a non-statutory service provider: 'It doesn't matter what their legal status is to me … but if they are here "illegally", then … I can't refer out to other services'.

In the Step Up Migrant Women (SUMW) project, service providers repeatedly stated that insecure immigration status makes migrant women vulnerable. This invariably involves the state actively criminalising them when they try to access help as survivors. Criminalisation is compounded by institutional racism, as noted by a service provider:

> It is not just about your 'undocumentation', it is also about prejudices, discrimination against those women and not believing them. And often that goes hand in hand with racism … and the women are now beginning to say that racism is quite open, in public, because the state allows it, the state allows you to be racist openly in the way in which the media and the state play a role in talking about how these 'illegals' are coming and taking over their hospitals, and taking over the jobs and housing.

This has clear effects for migrant women seeking help as survivors, as noted by a service provider in the SUMW project: 'What I'm finding … is that women are very frightened to approach statutory services, partly because of the fact that the hostile environment we are in right now deters them from seeking help and reporting violence and abuse'. What was also noted by service providers was that the hostile state was increasingly finding it too

costly to deport women and instead was withdrawing support for them: 'They go underground! They disappear … It is utterly terrifying!' These processes underlie migrant women's experiences of disclosure and reporting.

Disclosure and reporting of gender-based violence

Rates of disclosure and reporting of direct gender-based violence against Brazilian women were generally low. Indeed, according to the survey, 56 per cent of women who had experienced violence did not disclose or report. Informal disclosure was more frequent than formal reporting; for instance, 31 per cent of women disclosed to friends, with 20 per cent telling their family. Only a quarter (24 per cent) reported formally to the police, with 7 per cent turning to a solicitor or specialist organisation or trade union (4 per cent) (McIlwaine and Evans, 2018). This pattern is reflected in Figure 6.4 where three women identified the key sources of support as survivors. What is notable is that they identified friends, the church, the justice system and social media as both positive and negative, in relation to providing support but also blame, and that their feelings towards the police were completely negative.

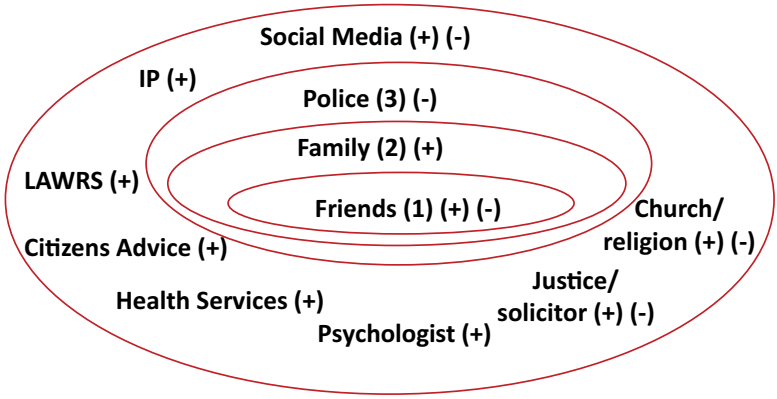

Figure 6.4 Institutional mapping of disclosure and reporting of gender-based violence; designed by three Brazilian women aged thirty-two–seventy-two from Rio de Janeiro and Minas Gerais (adapted from McIlwaine and Evans, 2018)

There were also variations in the identities of women who were more likely to report. Women with primary or secondary schooling rather than higher education, for example, were more likely to report. This is perhaps because of the stigma facing those from higher-class backgrounds. For example, Carolina, fifty-three, who worked as a radiologist, noted: 'The shame of it! I felt so bad, so humiliated! … here I thought, "I'm nothing, I'm no one. They won't help me at all"'. Racial identities also played a role, with White/*branca* women being more likely to report (63 per cent) than those identifying as mixed/*parda* and Black/*preta* (37 per cent). Those with permanent immigration status were more likely to report (more than half), compared with less than half of those with insecure status (46 per cent).

Rates of disclosure and reporting were also associated with women's perception of the severity of the incident. Indeed, when women viewed an episode of violence as 'serious' (acknowledging that all types of gendered violence across the continuum are serious – Kelly, 1988), more than three-quarters (77 per cent) disclosed or reported (also Chapter 3). It was also the case that women experienced multiple incidents before they sought help. For example, one provider suggested that Latin American women without immigration documentation were assaulted sixty times before they reached out for formal help, compared to thirty-five incidents among women in general (McIlwaine and Evans, 2023). This was reflected in the views of Valentina, in her mid-fifties, who commented: 'When they open their mouth, it's because they've reached the limit; they've already gone through everything they could bear'.

There were also some transnational continuities with reporting back home in Brazil. Only 26 per cent of those who had experienced violence prior to migrating to London recalled having formally reported it. It emerged that many women downplayed their experiences of gender-based violence in London and delayed reporting because they had suffered even more violent experiences back home or had been subjected to some form of violent forced migration and/or trafficking that made them reluctant to acknowledge incidents in London. One service provider noted that it was often difficult to persuade Brazilian women to report intimate partner violence because of wider experiences of trauma both

in London and back home: 'They say … "He is really violent to me, and maybe he beats me and sometimes he is drunk, or he's taken drugs … but you know, I've been shot … I've seen people murdered"'.

Another aspect of this dynamic is that some Brazilian women did not acknowledge that the abuse they experienced was violence (see also Chapter 3). Recognition often only occurred when they sought help for other problems, as noted by a service provider in the SUMW project:

> When they start talking about one issue and we tell them what we do, we give them a leaflet. Straight away they say, 'Oh! I have this problem, I have that problem! I don't know what to do!' Most of the time, we'd end up with multiple issues … and we always end up with domestic violence.

Barriers to reporting and securing support

More specifically, there were a wide range of barriers that prevented women from formally reporting gender-based violence. These all related to passive and active infrastructural violence that revolved around how migrant women are exploited and discriminated against within wider British society as well as by intersectional patriarchal oppressions. The survey revealed that a quarter (25 per cent) of Brazilian women did not report because they felt that nothing would be done. This was linked with the view that women would not be believed by the police or social services, an issue affecting migrant women more broadly in London. In the SUMW research, a service provider identified the 'Four Ds' faced by women in reporting gender-based violence. Hand in hand with detention, destitution and deportation was disbelief. This provider noted that women reported not being believed when disclosing the reasons why they migrated in the first place, nor when recounting their experiences of gender-based violence (see also below).

Another 15 per cent of women surveyed did not have the information to know how to report. Brazilian women accessed service providers through a variety of routes but most commonly via referrals through word of mouth by previous or existing service users. Self-referral through use of the internet was also found to be quite common. In the case of civil society organisations, a further

route of access was through referrals of Brazilian women by statutory services, such as social services, health services and the police. Some women also accessed services via the Brazilian General Consulate in London, which offers a dial-in service for women who are victims of domestic violence, sexual labour exploitation and international trafficking (see Chapter 3; Evans and McIlwaine, 2017).

Community opprobrium and shame were also identified as reasons why women did not report in the survey (10 per cent and 9 per cent respectively). Combined with 'victim-shaming', these create silencing among women survivors (also Rahmanipour *et al.*, 2019). As noted by Carolina above, there is also a stigma attached to being a survivor of violence which can operate to prevent or delay approaching agencies for support. Paula, thirty-six, who had experienced several sexual assaults on the part of her former husband, said that she was too ashamed to report it: 'I always considered it rape, because I could see that I was hurt and I was very unwell, but I was ashamed to tell'. This shame also has transnational dimensions of pre-existing trauma and lack of confidence in the system, which are further compounded in London. This was identified by a service provider: 'I find they [Brazilian women] minimise quite a lot, they may hide the abuse, almost. I don't know what the law is in Brazil; I don't know if maybe they are not aware that it is against the law here [in the UK]'. Valentina summarised the intersections between silence and shame: 'Usually you stay silent for many years, always full of shame, ashamed of your family, your friends knowing that you're going through this, afraid of your aggressor, of what might come after you've decided to speak up'.

This also reflects women's relationships with the perpetrators of violence as barriers, especially intimate partners. Indeed, 8 per cent of women stated that they did not report because of their emotional attachments to the perpetrators, while 5 per cent feared them or were financially dependent on them. However, these types of circumstances entrapped women within abusive relationships, with intimate partners often acting with impunity as a result. Márcia, forty-two, *preta*, also spoke about feeling alone and isolated and her violent husband taking advantage of this: 'I think the abusive man takes advantage of the fact that we're far away from family and friends'. In Gaël Le Cornec's *Efêmera* (2018a: 23–24), Ana speaks about not reporting due to her husband's manipulation and

the difficulty of having proof of the abuse together with having insecure immigration status:

Jo: Ana … How can I say this. It's important to report … any instance of violence … to have a trail of evidence.
Ana: It's easy to say that when it's not happening to you.
Jo: Without reporting, you have no proof that it happened.
Ana: I have proof.
Jo: Do you have any marks?
Ana: No.
Jo: They usually don't leave marks.
Ana: Carolina [her daughter]. She's seen it.
Jo: She is too young to be a witness. And I'd highly recommend leaving your child out of it.
Ana: She is the only person I trust.
Jo: She is a child.
Ana: My child is my best friend.
Jo: Have you tried to tell anyone else?
Ana: Only you.
Jo: No-one else?
Ana: Who would believe me? Everybody likes him. He made friends with all my friends now they are his best friends. They'd all say I'm lying because I'm angry at him. I can't tell anyone.
Jo: That's why you need to report it.
Ana: I can't.
Jo: All you need to do is materialise the evidence.
Ana: I just can't, ok.
Jo: If you don't …
Ana: I'm illegal.
Jo: Human beings aren't illegal. You just don't have paperwork. You are undocumented.
Ana: It doesn't change my situation.

These negative dynamics are therefore amplified for migrant women with insecure immigration status who were afraid to seek assistance because they thought they would be deported – another one of the 'Four Ds' noted above. Intimate partners and other perpetrators used this fear as a tool of manipulation to be weaponised against women, as discussed elsewhere (Reina *et al.*, 2014). In the SUMW project, more than 60 per cent of those surveyed said the perpetrator had threatened deportation if they reported the violence. One service provider noted: 'if the woman is

in this country "illegally", and the husband is "legal", he will do whatever he wants with her, because she is at his mercy'. Another service provider in the SUMW project stated that to intimidate women, perpetrators often take their passports away and say they have applied for Leave to Remain without doing it, as well as failing to include women's names on official documents such as tenancy agreements or utility bills. Gilmara, who opened the chapter (and who speaks about this in the WRV podcast), said that despite promising, her British partner never made the application to settle her status, and after six months on a tourist visa, she became undocumented. She felt trapped and threatened by her partner but also discouraged by the police and the Home Office. She had NRPF to access safe accommodation and was left homeless and sleeping rough with her child.

Insecure immigration status intersected with English language competencies to exacerbate manipulation by perpetrators and further dissuade women from reporting. Valentina noted that she felt isolated because of not being able to speak English despite being educated: 'We are far from our country, don't speak the language, don't have the professions that we would have in our country, we don't belong to society, we're very much on the margins'. Her partner ensured that Valentina did not learn English as he was aware that this would give her more power in their relationship: 'I tried to learn English several times and always had to give up because he always created difficulties for me to learn the language. Today, I can see that it was on purpose – "If she learns the language, she'll be able to take care of herself"'.

This was also identified by Elizabeth Jiménez-Yáñez, Policy and Communications Coordinator at the Latin American Women's Rights Service (LAWRS) and coordinator of the SUMW campaign. Speaking on the WRV podcast, she further commented on cutbacks in translation services for women seeking help from state services since the beginning of the pandemic. This has prevented women from accessing justice because of the lack of translators: 'Police will ask you to bring your son as a translator. So obviously there is a system lacking in ethics and a danger of re-victimisation'. Elizabeth also explains that this exacerbates women's isolation and lack of support: 'Isolation becomes part of the abuse … Many of these women migrate alone, or exclusively with their partners, and do

not have support in a country like England where the language barrier can play a principal role'.

Both insecure immigration status and language competencies generated further infrastructural violence when women interacted with the police and other judicial and social services. Although it is often assumed that women migrants do not report to the police, the survey showed they were the most frequently consulted organisation (41 per cent of women). However, it was not uncommon for women to have negative interactions with them (Smee, 2013; see also Figure 6.4). In the SUMW research, more than two-thirds of women reported gender-based violence to the police, with a quarter saying they had been badly treated. Maria, thirty-two, from Rio de Janeiro, who participated in a focus group, discussed her experience with the police. While she was pregnant with twins, her former partner attacked her with a knife. He then called the police who arrived at their home and arrested Maria and took her to the police station. Her partner identified Maria as the perpetrator, and because she could not speak English, she could not defend herself. She spent three hours in a cell before a translator arrived and she was subsequently released: 'I thought the world had ended, you know? Why was I being arrested; why was I inside a cell if I hadn't done anything wrong?' This was not a one-off occurrence, as Valentina experienced a similar situation; she was arrested for slapping her husband in self-defence: 'So, from victim, I went to being the aggressor. And from that point onwards, my life became hell'. These cases also reflect the discretionary powers of the police that were often used to dismiss women's claims or to report them to immigration services (Menjívar and Salcido, 2002).

Brazilian women's dealings with the British judicial system were equally challenging. Some service providers claimed that the system fails to obtain justice for Brazilian women through a range of institutionally racist and sexist practices that trivialise women's needs and rights in favour of men's rights. The case of Gabriela, thirty-eight, highlights this. When she took her husband to court for sustained domestic violence against her and her daughter, the judge dismissed the charges because he did not believe her: 'At no point did they … respect what I was going through … They didn't believe me, they didn't believe my pastor, they didn't believe my case worker, they didn't believe the psychologist'. Not surprisingly,

women rarely prosecuted perpetrators, especially when their immigration status was insecure, or they dropped prosecutions once they realised that they could be detained or deported or they might lose custody of their children. This was exacerbated by the demands for detailed evidence that is required for a case to proceed. Navigating the judicial system was often deeply traumatising for women, as noted by a service provider: 'the abuse by the system often is worse, in [migrant women's] view, than the abuse they suffered at the hands of the perpetrator'. However, there were also cases where women were supported by the police and judiciary. One woman from a focus group recalled how 'The police went to my place twice … Yes, they were like angels that God sent me to help me'.

Interactions with social services were often fraught and inherently violent. Again, this was especially acute for those with insecure immigration status who were subject to the NRPF restriction. Despite concessions when women are destitute and/or there are safeguarding issues around children, most women found it difficult to access support and especially access to refuges. Many women felt disempowered by the lack of assistance from local government bodies, as noted by Cristina who had NRPF: 'If I'd had documents, Brent Council would have removed him from the house and given me some support, but as I didn't … I felt like my hands and feet were tied; I had no way out'. Cristina's case was portrayed in the video *Raising Awareness of Violence against Brazilian Women in London*, through an animation (see Figure 6.5). Difficulties with authorities were noted by audience members in some of the Brighton performances of *Efêmera*. For example, one person noted: 'As someone who works with women living with domestic abuse, I found it representative of the cycles of abuse and manipulation and how all agencies seem set against them. It's amazing to be able to give them a voice'. Another audience member commented on 'All the suffering in silence and the bureaucratic incompetence and resistance'.

Social care and healthcare providers were often overtly discriminatory towards migrant women. One service provider remembered how one of her clients who had experienced intimate partner violence had been abused by a social worker who said: 'You are strong. I don't see any marks on your body. Why don't you go and do some work?' This attitude reflects the view that migrants

Figure 6.5 Animation from *Raising Awareness of Violence against Brazilian Women in London* video (animation by Francesca de Bassa, video directed by Aida Baneres) (credit: People's Palace Projects/YouTube)

are 'undeserving' of state assistance, linked with wider institutional racism which underpins infrastructural violence (see also Erez *et al*., 2009). Just as in Gilmara's case, this invariably left women with nowhere to turn. This was explored in Gaël Le Cornec's sound installation *Believe*, drawing on the SUMW project. Inspired by the women's experiences and based on their own words, *Believe* included the following audio:

> Don't ask me where I am from, ask me if I am safe.
> I have the right to be respected, to be supported.
> I have the right to be believed.[1]

These words and sentiments have been integrated into the SUMW campaigns and the various ways that they have lobbied the British state in challenging their approach to migrant women survivors. Indeed, it is inspiring that Gilmara has become an activist within their campaigning. In 2020, she spoke in Parliament as a witness in a Public Bill Committee on the Domestic Abuse Bill about her experiences of infrastructural violence at the hands of the state. This has given her a sense of purpose: 'I work with women today. I explain to them that they each have their own story, but they are not alone, that I have already been through the same thing' (McIlwaine, 2022: 87).

Like Gilmara and the SUMW campaign, women survivors and organisations in Maré and London challenge gendered infrastructural violence and other forms of direct gendered violence through various forms of negotiation, coping and resistance – to which we now turn in Chapter 7.

Note

1 Listen to *Believe* here: www.footprintproductions.co.uk/site-specific (accessed 13 March 2023).

7

Resisting and negotiating gendered urban violence in Rio de Janeiro and London

> The word 'resistance' is what sums us [survivors] up … resistance and survival.
>
> (Luisa, Maré)

> We're the ones who make everything happen. If you look around, in most places it's the woman who's working; it's the woman who is leading everything … If you look, the majority of Maré's population is female. Women who raise women … they create the whole world.
>
> (Patricia, Maré)

> Where does your pain hurt?
> Where is your deepest scar?
> Give me your hand, hold my hand,
> And together, in sisterhood
> We will walk side by side,
> To heal. To be.
>
> (Poem written collectively by Brazilian migrant women in London)

> [I paused] to remind myself how much London has made me mature and this strong warrior woman. After seven years … I still can't believe that after everything I've been through here … I'm still here and amazingly I'm loving this place more and more, which today I call my home. I always say that London is a Ferris wheel; one day we are down and over the years we are moving up, but we will always return, even if it is only for a short time, to remember and value the path that led us here.
>
> (Dayana, London)

Patricia's comment about the strength of women in Maré is partly echoed by the Brazilian women in London who find solidarity through working together. While Luisa emphasises the need to

survive as a form of resistance and the need to resist as a form of survival, Dayana acknowledges the need to be a 'warrior' to cope with living in London, yet she is always hopeful, demonstrated in how she visualises the city as a Ferris wheel. All these processes allow women to face the multiple forms of gendered urban violence they encounter on a daily basis. Yet, there are also differences between the two locations in that the dynamics within the bordered territory of Maré facilitate and encourage resilience and resistance in powerful ways (Sousa Silva and Heritage, 2021). Engendering such resistance is more difficult among the dispersed population of Brazilian women in London. These differences reinforce the importance of a translocational approach that allows for foregrounding the local experiences of gendered urban violence and resistance while also capturing the resonances across borders and boundaries.

This chapter addresses the nature of resistance as another key dimension of the translocational gendered urban violence framework outlined in Chapter 1. Throughout the book, we have highlighted how women in Maré and London have developed agency in the face of their 'painful' experiences of violence. Their stories have not just been focused on suffering but also on hope and resistance, reflecting wider Latin American translocational feminist alliances that have questioned the power structures that underlie gendered violence (Alvarez *et al.*, 2014; Félix de Souza and Rodrigues Selis, 2022; Gago, 2020). This chapter specifically explores the coping, negotiation and resistance practices they have devised. We show how, just as gendered urban violence is multidimensional and multiscalar, so too is resistance. Resistance spans across borders transnationally through bodies and through cities. Its practices can be individual and collective, reactive and active, can range from 'small acts' of defiance to activism and protest and address the immediate effects of violence and its structural underpinnings (McIlwaine *et al.*, 2022c). Resistance can also be constructed through the arts in creative ways (McIlwaine *et al.*, 2022a, 2022d).

Acknowledging the multiple and innovative forms of resistance developed by women, we show that they are integral to our translocational approach, forming the foundations for the feminist politics of translation that can contribute to the transformation of women's lives in the face of adversity. While it is vital to recognise these resistance practices as potentially transformative in women's

lives, it is important not to romanticise them, as hinted at by Luisa above, who emphasises the survival imperative. It is also crucial to acknowledge that women are not responsible for preventing male violence and other forms of structural, symbolic and infrastructural violence. Nevertheless, women are key protagonists in addressing it and in developing innovative practices.

Resistance practices are therefore central to how women negotiate the violence across private and public spheres as they claim their rights to the city locally as well as transnationally. With specific reference to resistance in Maré, this chapter also discusses how 'emotional-political communities' have been built during the COVID-19 crisis, emphasising mutual support and activism (McIlwaine *et al.*, 2023a). Due to the nature of the underlying research where the second project focused specifically on resistance in Maré as well as the dynamics of the territory itself, this chapter places more emphasis on this case than London (see Chapter 2).

Resistance practices for challenging gendered urban violence

Here, we examine these 'pluralities of resistance' (Foucault, 1978: 95) based on 'actions taken to counter or reduce violence' which may include specific acts, moments or interventions (Pain, 2014: 136). As suggested above, resistance practices are multiple in relation to their degree of formality, whether they are covert or hidden, organised or disorganised, and are often viewed along a continuum (de Heredia, 2017). An everyday perspective emphasises the unconscious nature of resistance and how intersectional power relations are deeply embedded within how practices are created (hooks, 1990; Johansson and Vinthagen, 2016; Scott, 1985). Nonetheless, resistance practices are spatially and temporally heterogenous acts that challenge power and domination on an individual or collective basis through multiple 'repertoires of everyday resistance'. We use the term 'practices' here rather than strategies to emphasise the actions of the subjugated that may be reactive rather than organised, but which have the potential to transform people's lives (see also Datta *et al.*, 2007; Gill *et al.*, 2014). In Brazil, resistance to intersectional sexism and racism has been enacted and analysed for decades by Black feminist scholars such as Beatriz Nascimento (2021), although this is only now beginning to be recognised on a larger anglophone stage (Smith *et al.*, 2021).

While the work of these scholars has focused on addressing various types of epistemic violence, there is also a large body of work on resistance to gender-based violence. Rajah and Osborn (2022) identify two aspects of this work in relation to intimate partner violence: first, the acceptance and validity of domination are never complete and can be confronted, and second, there is bountiful scholarship on individual and collective resistance (also Osborn and Rajah, 2022). It is also important to note that identifying individual resistance can be difficult and that a 'coherent' political subject may not be possible (Hughes, 2022). Yet, this should not underplay the significance of 'small acts' (Pain, 2014) of resistance or 'quiet politics' (Askins, 2018), which can entail a range of practices that might not appear to be agentic, such as leaving an abusive partner, compared with other resistance practices which address structural conditions.

In the context of endemic urban violence, poverty and fear, a range of conceptualisations have been developed to capture how women deal with direct and indirect gendered violence. Many of these draw on the commonly evoked distinction made by Cindi Katz (2004), who identifies three ways in which women respond to such violence: resistance, referring to a direct challenge to hegemonic power structures; reworking, involving reorganising practices of power or addressing structural inequalities; and resilience, involving surviving within existing constructions of domination. Specific examples include Hume and Wilding (2020), who develop a 'situated politics of women's agency' addressing their management of threats and their forging of formal and informal safe spaces in Brazil and El Salvador, and Jokela-Pansini (2020) who discusses strategies of 'self-care' among feminist activists in Honduras through solidarity, movement building and wellbeing (McIlwaine *et al.*, 2022c for a summary). These conceptualisations draw in various ways on Latin American/ist scholars who have been at the forefront of thinking, activism and protest which challenge the racialised state violence that has plagued Brazil and other Latin American countries (Félix de Souza and Rodrigues-Selis, 2022; McIlwaine and Rizzini Ansari, 2022; also the introduction and Chapter 1).

Research with migrants has shown how they resist violence, which is often perpetrated by the state and/or as a form of 'border violence'

(Lopes Heimer, 2023). Again, a range of conceptualisations aim to capture how migrants resist state violence, such as Brambilla and Jones's (2020) notion of borders as 'sites of generative struggles', Conlon's (2013) 'counter conduct' with regards to hunger strikes among asylum seekers and Saunders and Al-Om's (2022) concept of 'slow resistance' to the UK asylum system, among others (Pain and Cahill, 2022). Some specifically address gender, such as Piedalue's (2022) 'slow non-violence' in relation to migrants in the US and India (also Piedalue, 2017) and Ryburn's (2021) discussion of '*aguantar*' (to endure) among migrants in Chile.

Aiming to raise awareness and generate resistance is also vital to our 'creative translation pathways' that include curatorial or co-produced and participatory approaches to working with survivors and artists (Chapter 2). These creative encounters are underpinned by resistance to hegemonic discourses around women survivors as passive, stigmatised and victimised and often entail the encouragement of women to claim their rights and to build dignity following Boal's Theatre of the Oppressed methods aiming to engender social transformation. Validating the art created by those living on the margins has been a crucial form of creative resistance (Heritage, 2018a; Kaptani *et al.*, 2021; McIlwaine *et al.*, 2022a, 2022d).

In this chapter, we adapt the typology developed in relation to Maré which stretches across a spectrum – from coping practices responding to the immediate effects of gendered urban violence to those which enable structural gendered transformations in women's urban and transnational lives (McIlwaine *et al.*, 2022c). We differentiate between everyday reactive practices in the short term and transformative structuring resistance actions in the medium and long term, all of which can be individual and collective, formal and informal. The practices are non-linear and reflect responses to different types of gendered urban violence at different moments and structural contexts, as well as incorporating resistance through creativity. They are interwoven and produce threshold zones, or liminal zones of indeterminacy, which reflect blurring between types of practices (McIlwaine *et al.*, 2022a, 2022c, 2022d; McIlwaine *et al.*, 2023b). At the core of many practices are collective memory-making and transgenerational and transnational community knowledge production among women, key to the construction of dignity.

Short-term resistance practices to address gendered urban violence in Maré

At the outset, it is important to note that women have been at the locus of articulated social struggles in Maré throughout its history. Women had prominent roles in neighbourhood associations (particularly in the favela of Nova Holanda) and in lobbying for improvements around housing tenure, basic services and public security (Sousa Silva, 2015; Sousa Silva and Heritage, 2021). They have also been on the frontlines of resistance to state violence and neglect and in coping with the COVID-19 pandemic (McIlwaine *et al.*, 2023a). As Luisa notes in the introduction to this chapter, resistance, together with survival, is fundamental to women's lives in Maré. As Chapters 3, 4 and 5 have shown, women face multiple forms of gendered urban violence that they deal with in various ways (McIlwaine *et al.*, 2022c, Table 3). Chapter 6 highlighted the ineffectiveness of reporting gender-based violence to formal sources, often leading to the intensification of violence in which women had no other option but to deal with it themselves. In the words of Maria, forty-six and *parda*: 'We're not resisting because we want to, we resist because we need to … No one chooses to live this violence'. This reflects the long-term resilience developed among residents of Maré over time, creating a powerful bedrock from which to create resistance practices. Many aspects of these processes in the short and longer term are incorporated into our geographic information system (GIS) storymap.[1]

Focusing on short-term mechanisms, women frequently discussed how to respond to violence in the public sphere inside and outside Maré. Inside Maré, women developed territorial and shared knowledge about unofficial borders and internal divisions, as well as sites known to be avoided and those which are protective of women. Unsafe places were directly related to how urban violence and armed conflicts were distributed in the territory, with unofficial borders (concrete or symbolic) reflecting the territorial domains of rival armed groups (see Figure 0.1; the introduction). Women's accounts prominently featured experiences of violence at the 'borders' which delimited a transition between 'inside' and 'outside' of Maré. These 'borders' included roads surrounding Maré which were considered hostile to pedestrians and cyclists, especially

at night. The Military Police Battalion and the Military Police Station based in Maré were also identified as unsafe. Other borders delimited the areas occupied by armed groups, where residents' free movement was inhibited and where there was a high risk of episodes of conflict taking place. Known as '*divisas*' (border areas), these may be demarcated by barricades and checkpoints or through shared knowledge (see also Chapter 5; McIlwaine *et al.*, 2023b).

When discussing resistance to violence with participants in Maré, police operations and conflicts between armed groups were the most frequent forms of violence addressed. Women recounted how they mobilised relationships, transgenerational knowledge founded in territorial experience and local cultural codes learned throughout their lives. Women were spatially aware that walking alone made them more vulnerable, and so they would walk with others, ask someone to pick them up or let someone know where they were going and when they had arrived at their destination. Fatima, a thirty-six-year-old *preta* transgender woman, noted that she avoided places where members of armed groups hung out in the streets: 'If I know that there is that little group there, I avoid going by. And if I do [pass that way], I don't even look, just to avoid problems'.

Staying at home and seeking more protected spaces within their homes during police operations were perhaps the most common set of reactive practices. Silvia, fifty-six, reflected on this: 'When there's an operation, I don't leave the house. I'll stay indoors. I lock the gate. Preferably, I don't even go near the window, because once when I was by the window, a shot came in and almost hit me'. Reflecting transgenerational knowledge transfer, parents taught their children how to identify danger. Joseane, nineteen and of Indigenous origin, remembered how as a child she used to think that gunshots were fireworks until her father explained that they were part of the war in Maré. Women often stayed on the frontline of coping with armed and especially police violence through protecting male relatives and friends who were disproportionately targeted (see Chapter 5). Paloma, forty-seven and *preta*, spoke about worrying about her son, telling him to always take his ID when he goes out: 'Because when you least expect it, the cops are already beating you up. They don't respect the favela resident. [I'm] tense for all the time until he gets home'. Another common individual practice was using

mobile phone apps and especially social networks (Facebook and WhatsApp) to obtain information about police operations.

To protect themselves, some women adopted coping mechanisms that allowed them to turn their focus inward, such as listening to music and pretending nothing was happening, to avoid feeling emotionally paralysed by police operations. Lia, thirty-five, spoke about having a 'protective cover' in her head which she called her 'kinsphere': 'That's the dance term. As far as my hand can reach, there is an energetic field, and my energy field is very strong'. Similarly, Vivian, twenty, said she always sensed a police operation before it happened and she tried to act calmly, listen to music and pray to God. Carrying on as normal was a common tactic, as noted by one of the field researchers, Fernanda Vieira, who reflected on a focus group which was interrupted by gunshots. While initially Fernanda felt that their dignity was being stolen, she changed her mind when she realised that the women did not stop talking when the gunshots began and that, in fact, they had built up forms of resistance to it:

> I realised the experience they have gained over the years, of knowing when to worry or not when they hear gunshots, and this demonstrated the resistance and resilience they have built to be able to live in such an environment … Not to be shaken by something as scary as gunshots speaks of how to endure and resignify the violence that permeates the daily life of the favela in various ways.

This experience reflects wider collective experiences developed among women who have developed support networks to cope with home invasions, assaults and harassment perpetrated by police. Women would go to the homes of other friends and relatives to avoid being alone and more vulnerable to police violence. Patricia, thirty-one, explained: 'When the operation hits, we hear gunshots, we immediately go to my mother's house'. This collective protection was felt by many women, with many speaking of feeling safe inside Maré (see Chapter 5). Indeed, Joseane stated that it was like a *quilombo* (see also Nascimento, 2021, who makes similar arguments):[2] 'Because I know that inside [Maré] there is my family, inside there are friends, inside there are welcoming spaces, whereas outside … it's as if here was a *quilombo*. If anything happens to me here, I have a network to protect me'.

What lay outside of Maré was clearly different, and women used a range of individual and collective reactive tactics to deal with potential assaults and harassment in public spaces and on public transport outside of Maré. Tactics included carrying sharp instruments such as knives, scissors, nail files or pepper spray. Even if not used, they provided women with a sense of security. One woman in a focus group discussed this (as represented in Figure 7.1):

> I carry pepper spray in my bag, usually when I go out at night. … I got it from a friend, a comb that is [also] a knife … And I did a few years of *muay thai*, so I know some basic moves that are at least [enough] for me to be able to run. And I walk around with keys between my fingers; it was something I learned and it's very useful.

The use of objects as weapons and resisting through protective practices was especially common among transgender women who had faced transphobic physical attacks. Some carried objects with them all the time such as knives, scalpels, razor blades or chains, while others looked for weapons such as pieces of wood and stones

Figure 7.1 Observational drawing of a focus group in Maré on 'the pyramid of oppression' (credit: Mila de Choch; adapted from McIlwaine *et al*., 2022c)

when an attack was imminent. In the body-territory mapping, all the transgender women drew weapons in their hands (see Figure 7.2). For Neide, her job as a sex worker also meant that she needed to have these weapons to protect her from potentially violent clients. Luisa, a thirty-eight-year-old trans woman, explained what she drew on her map: 'Knife, stiletto … when we don't have [a weapon], we take a stick, a stone, a bottle, and leave it in a little corner [for protection]'.

Short-term spatialised resistance practices were extremely important in both individual and collective ways as women circulated through the city. These included seeking proximity with other women and sometimes preferring the company of men they knew as a form of greater protection (see Figure 7.1). Tamires, sixteen years old and *preta*, stated that she would take a full bus as long as there were other women on it as she felt they would protect each other. Other women spoke of avoiding men on public transport and actively choosing not to sit beside them. At night, women preferred to use private transport such as taxis and Ubers, although these could also be dangerous. This meant that women habitually shared their location with someone they knew so that that person could follow their movements.

Some tactics were deeply embodied; some women altered their appearance or behaviour when circulating beyond Maré. Nineteen-year-old Rita, who was *preta*, explained how she made 'an ugly face' in order to 'drive away people who could do something' to her,

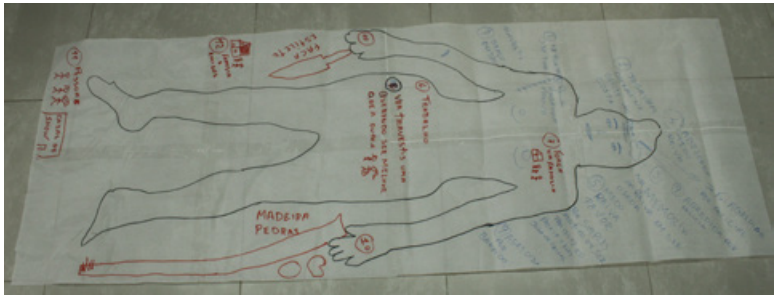

Figure 7.2 Body-territory map by Neide (*parda* transgender woman living in Nova Holanda, thirty-two years old) (adapted from Lopes-Heimer *et al.*, 2022)

while Celine, thirty-five and also *preta*, said that she 'dressed well' in order to avoid harassment. Other women used silence as a tactic in an attempt to make themselves more 'invisible', as noted by a woman in a focus group: 'If I'm afraid, I just shut myself up because I know if I talk it will create problems. This protects me; I know it's bad, that we can't reduce ourselves like that, but it's a resource'.

Many women identified the need to assert their identity as racialised favela residents as a form of resistance. While this was usually a long-term collective tactic, it could also be short term and individual in that women spoke of using it in response to racial stigma incidents. Joseane explained that when she goes to another territory, she always states: 'I am *favelada* from Maré … implying: "Oh, I know who I am, so don't mess with me because I'm sure of where I came from'. Similarly, Iolanda, twenty-seven and *preta*, said: 'I've never hidden my origin of being Black, poor, from a favela. Wherever I go, I say I live in Maré. And that's it; we have to own it' (see also below).

Medium- and long-term resistance practices to address gendered urban violence in Maré

The divisions between short-, medium- and long-term practices of coping with and resisting gendered urban violence are blurred; what might begin as a short-term mechanism may evolve into a medium- or long-term form of resistance to private and public violence. This was certainly the case in relation to the development of support networks among family, friends and neighbours and creating collective and organisational spaces through civil society or the church, as well as using the body as resistance. Many aspects of these practices were also oriented towards prevention and creative practices.

While not addressing the fundamental causes of gendered violence, one key set of mechanisms that women spoke about entailed returning to education and establishing financial autonomy. Most women identified financial dependence as the major reason for remaining in abusive relationships, linked with the social expectation for them to care for their family, including that they would interrupt their studies or work after marriage and/or divorce and

separation. Cátia, twenty-nine, said that she had been working since she was thirteen and most recently as a manicurist with her own business, because she saw her father being physically abusive to her mother and did not want to end up in the same situation. Many women such as Cátia established their own businesses because of the challenges of gendered, racialised and area-based discrimination in trying to enter the labour market beyond Maré. The route to financial autonomy was often through education, with several women returning to their studies. Thabata, twenty-nine, spoke about her struggles as a young mother when she was sixteen, leading her to drop out of school. She completed her studies in an adult education programme in 2017 and entered university in 2018: 'It's an achievement, a dream, to be able to look at my daughter and say, "You can do it, go and study, because [if] I succeeded, why wouldn't you?" And to be able to give her dignity' (see Figure 7.3).

Women produced practices to resist violence through their relationships with their bodies. For some, this meant specifically

Figure 7.3 Observational drawing of a focus group in Maré on 'we have the right to take care of ourselves; we already take care of everyone else' (credit: Mila de Choch; adapted from McIlwaine *et al.*, 2022c)

using their bodies as a form of self-defence and taking classes to learn how to protect themselves. Bianca, twenty-seven, practised jiu-jitsu as a self-defence practice: 'My strategy is to fight … That's my bodily strategy … It's with the hands and with the feet'. In the body-mapping, many women identified inner power embodied in their hearts, chests and minds. For example, Neide placed her family in her heart as her source of resilience, explaining how their love gave her strength in the face of violence, especially in her sex work (Figure 7.2). Lívia, thirty-six, *preta* and lesbian, marked the solar plexus in the centre of her chest as where her strength was located:

> The plexus is a very important point, a gland called the thymus, which is the place where we speak the I, I am … it is here, this point for me is a place [of] potency of the self, which is where my energy comes from … so it is a place of exchange, of energy.

Many women developed forms of self-care as resistance (following Lorde, 1988) such as practising sports and maintaining healthy bodies (through walking, cycling, dance and yoga classes) and skin, nails and hair care (see Figure 7.3). Lívia, thirty-six and *preta*, spoke of caring for her body through taking a regular sitz bath with *barbatimão* (a native Brazilian tree traditionally used for medicinal purposes) to improve her gynaecological health as well as the daily stress that she felt in her vagina: 'The sitz bath has been a place to look at myself … at my people, have the feeling of warmth, of welcome and this gives … relief, kind of takes away, relaxes a little, the violence'. She saw this as both individual and collective because it was a traditional practice that connected her with her ancestors and with nature (see below). Lívia also spoke of how exercise and teaching dance were important for her as they signified the transmission of knowledge. She identified this as a collective practice which she located in her hair, a part of her body she felt was expressive of her personality and her identity as a Black woman.

Self-care and healing had long-term benefits for women and often entailed body–nature practices, suggesting a continuum between body and nature. In the body-territory mapping, many women spoke of needing to connect with nature, a source of strength from them and a means to heal their bodies. For example, Lívia drew the sun and the sea in the area just outside of her body 'because

they are two maximum powers of strength for me. And where I can get energy from … silence, meditation, crying and smiling, looking at the sea, dancing and doing therapy; I think these strategies are fundamental for me'. Similarly, Katia located the sea within her heart, noting it as her 'first refuge' and that going to the beach was a healing practice. She also spoke of seeing her body and nature as one and that this was therapeutic, reflecting the notion of body–territory within Indigenous cosmologies of community feminism (Cabnal, 2010).

These practices fed into collective support networks that women develop as part of wider processes of transgenerational knowledge co-production. Angela, twenty-five and *parda*, noted that her extended family grounded her: 'I have five mothers: my grandmother, my godmother, my mother, my stepmother, because she does everything for me, and the great-grandmother of the father of my daughters who helps me in everything'. Similarly, Lia, thirty-five and *preta*, reflected on how all her sources of support were women: 'My aunt, my other aunt, my grandmother, then my cousin here, my cousin upstairs, who's a single mother with four kids. My Aunt Denise, too, who's a single mum … This place protects us or attempts to protect us'. Through these networks, women protect others in situations of domestic violence, care for each other's children and form a collective with which to share past experiences of violence, documenting knowledge in creating family histories.

A key aspect of collective support was the power of ancestry as resistance, which emerged as especially strong for women who identified as *preta* in Maré. Younger women spoke of how valuing ancestry and historical belonging in Maré helped them to construct new meanings for life, new community histories and the development of resistance. For example, a group of young researchers organised by Redes da Maré and linked to the Women of the World (WOW) Festival built an independent collective called Maré de Nós (Maré in Us). This group conducted research on their ancestry, with each member developing their own initiatives. Joseane, who is part of Maré de Nós with five others, spoke about her project called By Her Eyes: 'This project talks about the trajectory of a favela girl, the experience of an Indigenous girl in a favela territory, about ancestry, about race, class and gender, as a [way of] sharing experiences'. For

her project, Tamires developed a salon business styling curly Black hair, which she felt linked her with her ancestors: 'I decided to tell the story of hairstyles, which is based on ethnic-racial groups from the past … sometimes my grandmother used to make me *coquinhos* [buns]. Somehow, she was taking care of my hair and also taking care of me'.

In the body-territory workshops, Lívia wrote on her feet the phrase '*nossos passos vem de longe*' ('our steps come from far away') in reference to Black feminism in Brazil (see Werneck, 2010). The aim was to show how she embodied power and strength that was rooted in collective and ancestral resistance of women like her:

> I think that knowing that I'm not alone, that there is someone behind [me] in my family, and other people … Black people, Black women and Black lesbians and artists, and people linked with my education, beyond my family; to know that I am not alone, [that we are] walking together, knowing that this step comes from very far away gives me the reason and the desire not to give up … this gives me more strength, [more] courage.

This leads on to how participation in collective spaces can be a basis for resistance and solidarity. Organisations such as Redes da Maré and Casa das Mulheres run a range of projects to address gender-based violence in the absence of public service provision. In our Women Resisting Violence (WRV) podcast, Casa das Milheres' coordinator Julia Leal speaks about the importance of the organisation's integrated approach, which includes an obligatory group course on Gender Studies addressing gender, sexuality, race, body and territory:

> The idea is that a woman who arrives at the Casa das Mulheres has access to a whole range of options to tap into. Therefore, a woman might arrive here spontaneously asking to speak with a lawyer and be sent to take a course, because we recognise that she is being subjected to violence and understand that the experience of being with other women and hearing their stories could be strengthening for this woman.

Organisations in Maré therefore encourage women to understand and confront gendered urban violence and deep-seated racism as well as developing collective self-care (see Figure 7.3). Ingrid, forty-nine, spoke of how Casa das Mulheres changed her perspective: 'It

opened my eyes to a lot of things, things that I didn't know, [like] what harassment really was … And also racism … [it] helped me in my growth'. At Casa das Mulheres, women can access professional training, legal advice, adult education, entrepreneurship and support groups. Speaking on our WRV podcast, Michele Gandra, a beneficiary of the cooperative cooking project Maré de Sabores, commented:

> It was there that I recognised myself as a woman who was going through things that other women were going through too … It was there that we found a refuge with one another … And it was then that I started to see, to notice violence … And now, the transformation … Because I'm not the only one who's transformed. I transform myself. I transform my partner. I transform my children. I transform and I'm transformed the whole time. My in-laws, my relationship with the neighbourhood.

Therefore, informal collectives of women emerge within formal organisations, as also noted by a member of the campaign Maré Says No to Coronavirus when talking about the women in Maré de Sabores: 'The dynamics of the kitchen means that women support each other, and they tell their life stories there … a network is formed … This collective experience … makes them stronger'. Casa das Mulheres aims to address the entire spectrum of women's intersectional experiences and needs. They've expanded their work with trans women, with Black women and renovated their building to make it accessible for disabled women. Two trans women in the body-territory mapping, Fatima and Luisa, drew organisations such as Redes de Maré, Casa das Mulheres and Conexão G (which promotes lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, queer, intersex and others (LGBTQI+) affirmation actions in favelas) on their maps. Religious spaces also provided support for some women to deal with vulnerability and violence through the provision of support, refuge and food baskets. Laura, twenty-eight, found strength in the church: 'I like to call it a community of faith … it has been a fortress, it is people who are with me in joy, in sadness, at a funeral'. Yet, the church was also ambivalent, especially the evangelical church, with some women – including several lesbian women and *parda* women – noting that it could be exclusionary (see Chapter 5).

Creative resistance through the arts in Maré

Women from Maré have developed a major set of long-term practices involving creative resistance through the arts and memory-making. This theme was explored through the digital storytelling project with the Museu da Pessoa using social memory technology (Worcman and Garde-Hansen, 2016; see also Chapter 2). As part of this process, the group viewed art as a means of aesthetically appropriating the world and developing creative strategies to address gendered urban violence both individually and collectively. Practices included composing and singing songs, creating samba processions, dancing, playing instruments, acting and producing plays, designing and creating clothing, doing hair and make-up and creating poetry.

Art was viewed as resistance by the women in the Female Lives project as part of their struggles for social transformation. It allowed them to develop new paths of existence, new forms of work, subsistence and financial autonomy, to break abusive relationships and form new networks and collectives. Their artistic expressions made it possible for them to deal with painful experiences, to mourn, to confront prejudice experienced both structurally and in specific situations (McIlwaine *et al.*, 2022a). Lenice Silva Viegas, who was a dancer and founder of the Balle Transforma project as well as a student of dance at the Federal University of Rio de Janeiro, spoke of learning classical ballet as a child. She noted that 'It was through pain that ballet came into my life'. With her mother's divorce and subsequent depression, Lenice's sister enrolled her in a ballet class. Lenice won several scholarships but also suffered considerable racial and class discrimination in dance schools outside Maré (see also Luana's similar experiences in McIlwaine *et al.*, 2022a: 28). She began to work as a teacher and recalled how, while working at Ballet Manguinhos (a community-led and charitably funded dance school in neighbouring favela complex Manguinhos), they had their dance space invaded by the police and had to take refuge in the bathroom during shoot-outs. In 2017, she set up her own project, Balle Transforma, and started her dance degree. She noted: 'Today we have already helped more than 150 students from Maré. In the beginning of the project, I learned and met a new Lenice, a braver woman and a woman who could go beyond' (see Figure 7.4).

Figure 7.4 Lenice Silva Viegas speaking about her life in Maré as part of the Female Lives Exhibition by the Museum of the Person (credit: Paula Santos; adapted from McIlwaine *et al*., 2022b)

Women in the Female Lives project spoke about the power of art as a tool for confronting the historical oblivion which Black people are subjected to, together with the erasure of their memories and those of their families. Their artistic work builds bridges with their ancestry, allowing them to reformulate their stories and the stories of the community where they live (see also above). For example, Juliana Oliveira Junqueira de Aguiar is a violinist and teaches music at the Maré do Amanhã Orchestra project and in public schools in Maré. Juliana spoke about her journey to becoming a violinist and teacher and linked it with her search for her origins, her ancestry:

> I need to know who I am; I need to go back to my origins … Who was my grandmother? She liked classical music … she is very similar to me. Recently, I have been searching for my own family history, to be able to understand myself, because it is very difficult. I had many barriers to get here and be able to talk about ancestry.

Many of the women in the project spoke of their desire to reclaim their ancestry and their identity as favela residents. Beatriz Virgínia

Gomes Belmiro, a slam singer and poet, a member of the collective Buzina de Artistas Periféricos (Horns from the Peripheries) and a teacher at CEASM, was keen to use her art to reclaim her history and her identity.[3] Beatriz said that slam allowed her to rewrite her and her grandmother's story:

> [Slam allows me] to tell a narrative of mine … it allows me to talk about my grandmother, to talk about my mother, to talk about the stories of pain, the joys, the achievements … I say that it gives me this voice [with which to] to rewrite my story … Even when we speak of love and victory, it's still resistance, so it's always connected to this question. And the favela inspires me in various ways.

Within the stories collected in this project, social initiatives offered by non-governmental organisations (NGOs) in Maré emerged as critically important for inspiring women's interest, their creative seeds and their political engagement. Indeed, Beatriz recalled that it was on entering CEASM that she learned to use art as a power, realising her place as a woman from the favela with northeastern heritage: 'I learnt what the favela is, why I don't have to be ashamed to speak the word favela, why I have to reclaim the history of the favela'. These women's art therefore speaks of the potencies of Maré, producing powerful new perceptions of the community. For example, Jaqueline Souza de Andrade, who was a member of the community theatre project *Cia Marginal* and a social worker at the Centre for the Promotion of LGBTQI+ Citizenship in Maré, spoke about their first show, which was a homage to one of Maré's favelas, Nova Holanda: 'So how does this territory speak to us? This is a place completely isolated to people beyond Maré … Here, there are a lot of people; here, there is a lot of life; Maré has a lot of life'.

The digital storytelling experience therefore revealed a direct relationship between artistic engagements and dealing with difficult and violent situations. One woman composed a song after a difficult separation; another got involved with a samba school in Maré after the rupture of a relationship marked by domestic violence; another searched for arts-based social projects to help deal with the absence of parents at home; another turned to music in school to avoid bullying and racism; and another dealt with financial vulnerability through artistic labour (McIlwaine *et al.*, 2022a).

While this work was deeply embedded within the territory of Maré, *SCAR* by Bia Lessa, on the other hand, entailed bringing a dynamic curation of the stories of women survivors in Maré to London audiences. Encounters within this project were both local and transnational in nature and reflected an emergent translocational feminist sensibility that developed across borders. This was reflected in the audience's responses. One Brazilian audience member found it extraordinary that she had to come to London to hear these stories. Many dimensions of *SCAR* resisted violence through raising awareness of the situation of women in Maré. One Brazilian audience member reflected on racialised structural violence back home: 'I am from the middle class but when I go back, my dad's family, they have a maid … Well, in many ways there is still slavery in Brazil, maids are Black and often treated like slaves' (Tiller, 2018: 12–13). While the audiences in London reacted with shock and sadness to the painful stories of violence, they expressed gratitude at the opportunity to engage with them: 'it's so important to give these women a voice, support and belief where they have had none before' (Tiller, 2018: 12). Resistance through empathy and solidarity emerged strongly in the audience responses: 'Dear women, how you've planted love, strength, hope and pride in all our hearts. We are one and will grow together. A London girl'. Another man who visited the installation spoke of the 'forcefulness of bringing the stories together' making the piece finally 'uplifting' (Tiller, 2018: 13). This was echoed by Chrissie Tiller, who reflected (2018: 9): 'For many, the power of the piece and its ultimate hopefulness and optimism lay in the way in which the images and the words worked together and the way the artist immersed us in these stories'. One of the Brazilian women included in the piece and who visited London to see it spoke of resistance through representation: 'It speaks about the beauty and community that has given us strength. The human spirit that deserves to be seen' (Tiller, 2018: 14). Overall, *SCAR* was able to communicate painful stories replete with power, dignity and the ability to resist the violence of women's lives. It was a transnational creative engagement that engendered resistance across borders and was ultimately transformational.

Similarly, when Gaël Le Cornec performed *Efêmera* in Rio de Janeiro, there was an element of transnational feminist solidarity among women, with many seeking Gaël out after the play to

share their experiences of class-based gender-based violence. She noted: 'in Brazil, women would come and speak to me directly and their experiences as survivors were unbelievable. A lot of working-class women saying they had been abused by their boss or middle-class men'. Transforming *Efêmera* into the short film *Ana* and the video *Raising Awareness* was an explicit effort to extend this transnational and translocational feminist solidarity. This was facilitated by *Ana* being shown in five international film festivals; one audience member from the US screening noted: 'Really powerful. Felt so intimately connected to the actresses. I really appreciated how it showed how domestic violence affects migrants, especially those who are undocumented'.

Resistance and coping practices to address gendered urban violence in London

While the focus of the research in London was not specifically on resistance, a range of different practices to address gendered urban violence was identified by Brazilian migrant women, including individual and collective and short- and longer-term approaches, as well as those related with civil society organisations. The Step Up Migrant Women (SUMW) campaign was focused on challenging gendered infrastructural violence, and the work with Migrants in Action (MinA) was focused on reclaiming and visibilising the experiences of Brazilian women, forms of active resistance. Overall, it is important to note that, in contrast to Maré where resistance is localised, the Brazilian population in London is dispersed through the city. This means that their resistance is channelled through these organisations, with arguably fewer practices on the ground.

The coping mechanisms identified by women in London to deal with violence in both the private and public spheres often revolved around individual women changing their behaviour, suggesting an element of victim-blaming. This theme was also prevalent in the focus group discussion with six men, mainly from São Paulo and Goiás, who lived in London. They suggested that women should defend themselves by carrying a gun, knife or pepper spray (carrying the two former weapons are criminal offences in the UK). One male participant stated that it was important 'to encourage

women to defend themselves … to encourage them to say no to violence'. However, they did identify longer-term measures such as greater awareness-raising in society and educating children and parents, male and female (see also below). Women also produced victim-blaming narratives, as shown in Figure 7.5 where a focus group suggested that women should not wear suggestive clothing and should silence their mobile phones to prevent violence in public places, among other practices.

The importance of psychological support emerged as the most important short-term way of dealing with gender-based violence, identified by more than a third (35 per cent) of women in the survey (McIlwaine and Evans, 2018). As noted by a woman in one of the focus groups, such assistance has to start early – 'because many women are so marked [by violence] that they are in no position to climb out of the pothole' – and it has to be provided for free (as is the case in many of the organisations – see below). Ana Clara, thirty-six and originally from São Paulo, spoke about feeling as if she had been driven to madness by the abuse suffered from her husband, having already contemplated suicide, commenting that therapy was a lifesaver for her: 'Gradually, I discovered the truth … I know that the help I get here is what is making me strong enough to keep

Figure 7.5 Participatory flow diagram on how to address gender-based violence; designed by three Brazilian women from São Paulo and Rio de Janeiro aged thirty-two–thirty-eight (adapted from McIlwaine and Evans, 2018)

going. If I hadn't come here, I would have given up, I would have gone back and given up all my rights'. This type of psychological help was identified as important for survivors and for perpetrators, as suggested by Alana, thirty, originally from São Paulo:

> I think we need to involve the men more in this conversation; they can't be left out; we can't have this division of 'us' and 'them'; they must be included and made to become aware of it, to think about what happens to women, because if they are not together in the battle to change this view, it won't change.

Indeed, 44 per cent of women in the survey noted that men should be involved in longer-term measures, too, through education, the most important longer-term response. This included school-based and informal education on information and rights. Jessica, forty-one and from Minas Gerais, noted: 'Children should be taught about different kinds of abuse, to tell them it isn't normal for an uncle to touch you, or a grandfather to put a child on his lap … the school has to play an active role'. The importance of teaching boys was seen as integral, especially parents teaching their sons that violence is wrong, as suggested by Natalia, thirty-eight, from Goiás: 'There are lots of people who still teach their sons that the woman is like a slave, so we need to change the way we teach our children. Not just mothers … fathers too'. In addition, 18 per cent of women in the survey suggested information could be shared through prevention campaigns, as explained by Marcia, forty-two, from Espírito Santo: 'Like, for example, that leaflet, such a simple thing, it landed in my hands at the right time, and it made me realise the harm that was happening to me'. *SCAR* encouraged UK audiences to consider educational measures, with one man in the audience noting that 'Every man needs to see this all over the world. Let's face it' (Tiller, 2018: 13). While individual and collective resistance is vital, wider structural change must not be forgotten (see Chapter 8).

Just as in Maré, civil society organisations in London were crucial in providing support and solidarity among Brazilian migrant women in both the short and longer term. Indeed, non-statutory migrant and women's organisations provided safe havens for survivors (Chapter 6). These organisations provided tailored and non-judgemental support for women in their own language and in culturally sensitive ways, becoming like an alternative family for

many. Speaking about the Latin American Women's Rights Service (LAWRS), Miriam, forty-six, noted:

> They gave me guidance and supported me from the beginning to the end, through two and a half years of court hearings … I won my case, thankfully, with the support of LAWRS … as I don't speak English very well, I had the help of a lot of volunteer interpreters.

Organisations also cultivated collective engagements among women such as mutual support groups. The LAWRS, for example, created Sin Fronteras (No Limits), a group working with young Latin American women (aged fourteen to twenty-one) on violence prevention. Using participatory activities, they focused on self-esteem, rights, education and empowerment (McIlwaine, 2022). The project coordinator, Melissa Munz, discussed how while many of the young women witnessed violence against their mothers at home, as well as violence in the street and racial discrimination, she said they were defiant through their solidarity:

> They are resilient and stand together for the rights of all women and girls. For them, sorority, each other's support and dialogue are forms of resistance to those different types of violence. They are creative and they are activists. They believe that activism takes shape in many forms, and that small acts that promote equality in our daily lives are a way to contribute to social change.

Developing advocacy and campaigning is a crucial long-term initiative in resisting violence, as developed through the SUMW project. As part of their lobbying around the UK's Domestic Abuse Bill, which became an Act in 2021, they were successful in securing two amendments around using victims' personal data for immigration purposes (when reporting to immigration authorities, for example). However, many other propositions were denied. In our WRV podcast, Elizabeth Jiménez-Yáñez discussed their collaborative work in trying to influence the legislative process:

> We collected information, collected case studies and came with this wealth of information provided by the organisations and shared it with decision-makers … showing collectively that barriers that migrant women face are not isolated but structural … our position is that, sadly – despite some concessions made in terms of safe reporting and a pilot project to offer accommodation to migrant women – the law does not respond to the need and urgency of protecting migrant women.

Creative resistance through the arts in London

A key aspect of the various artistic engagements undertaken in London was awareness-raising as a form of resistance. The curation of the research by Gaël Le Cornec into *Efêmera* and *Ana* was focused on this in terms of ensuring that a wide and non-academic audience was exposed to the 'painful truths' of Brazilian migrant women's lives in London. These interpretations of the research revealed often invisible realities through different emotional registers. As noted in Chapter 2, Gaël sees her art as generating awareness and becoming a tool to pressurise for change. The audience responses to *Efêmera* after the Brighton performances reflected this, with one person noting: 'This is such important research that needs to be shared and publicised. The performance made me feel hopeful that the arts can be a platform for the voices of the victims of social violence – since they are so often failed by the media and the justice system'.

Although there was some evidence of resistance through persuasion where audiences were asked to become activists (McIlwaine, 2021b, 2022; also Inchley, 2015), *Efêmera* focused mainly on resistance through catharsis and empathy, as with *SCAR* (see above). After the Brighton performance, a woman who identified as a survivor raised the issue of coping with memories of violence through confronting them: 'It is our duty to expose, protect, heal and promote awareness. Thank you, Gaël, for doing your part'. After the London shows, women felt compelled to speak to Gaël. She recalled in an interview how 'there were people in tears outside the theatre that I had to hug and calm down' (see Chapter 2).[4]

Gaël's creative variations of *Efêmera* (including the internationally screened short film *Ana* and the online video *Raising Awareness*) spoke to women across borders about intimate partner and structural and state violence and planted important seeds of resistance through awareness-raising. However, they did not involve survivors. In contrast, *We Still Fight in the Dark* with MinA explicitly worked with survivors in a co-produced way, engendering individual and collective therapeutic and resistance outcomes through engaging with a range of art forms. At the individual level, one of the participants poignantly noted her expectations of the project that she felt had been fulfilled:

> Take away from me the hurt from two whole years, using the arts, my own body expression; take away from my body everything that

> does not belong to me. Everything that comes from others and that I have been carrying like a heavy suitcase full of clothes that no longer fit me.

The women also worked as a collective in a safe space to share the challenges they faced as migrant women in London, as shown in the poem in the introduction and stated by another participant: 'I was hoping to bond with other women, listen to their stories, their pains and victories and celebrate that this not an easy life as an immigrant alongside Brazilian women so diverse and at the same time very similar in their challenges and struggles'.

Yet, the survivors were keen to move beyond the therapeutic towards awareness-raising, translating the data, usually only accessible within the academic sphere, for communication with public audiences through what one woman called 'a bridge' (see also Figure 7.6). She explained: 'sometimes, not many people who have access to it [the data] can understand it, can actually translate it … But we took the data and are showing it to a different audience'. The participants took control over their histories and experiences and turned them into activism and art through their video installation that they then shared with the general public. One participant noted: 'I've learnt how to use my image to call people to action and transform them. To see myself on the screen was very empowering; it made me proud … I've learnt to accept myself'. This demonstrates the transformative effect that this creative process had on their lives. Carolina Cal, the artistic director of MinA, noted that the creative process must start with 'the women's inner healing, individually and collectively, and only after that focus on fighting the system'. She goes on to comment on the political power of performance, showing its transformative power on a collective and political level, beyond individual healing: 'When we perform to the wider public and show the reality that these women face, we start making the social change that is needed … by shedding light on untold stories, MinA can positively influence social campaigns, impacting the creation of laws that could benefit these women'.

On a final note on creative resistance practices, Figure 7.6 shows a series of responses from those visiting the Dignity and Resistance exhibition in London in May 2022, showing the work in London and Maré (McIlwaine *et al.*, 2022b). The comments are overlain on

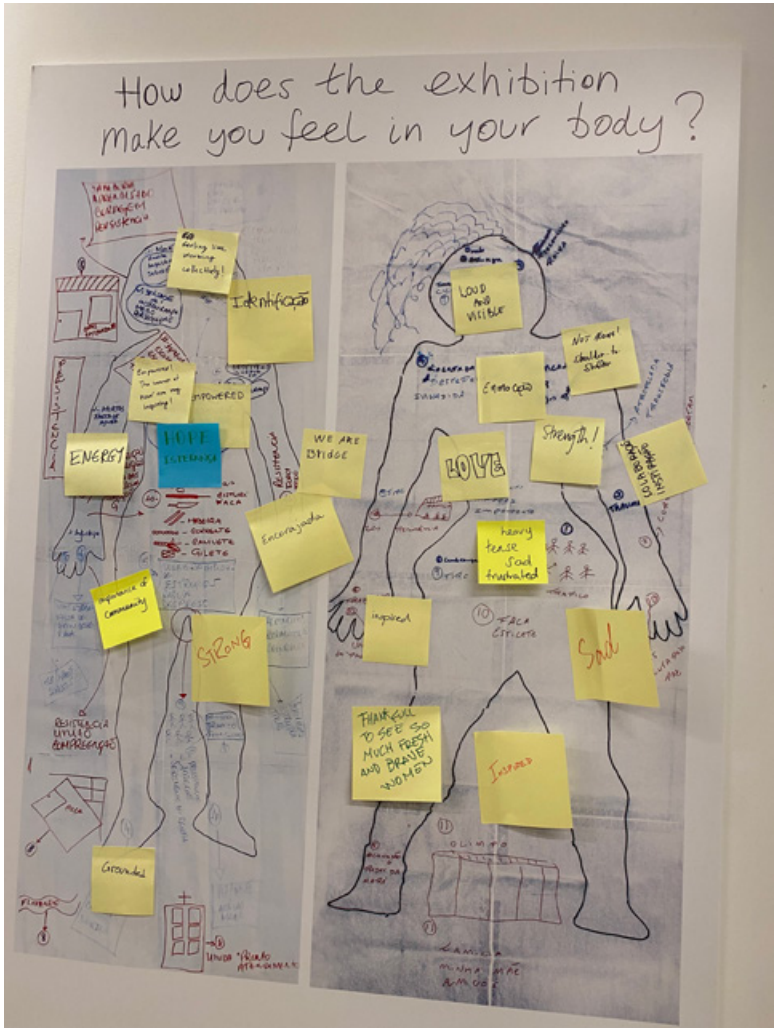

Figure 7.6 Visitors' reactions to the Dignity and Resistance exhibition, London, May 2022

two body-territory maps from the work in Maré and show a range of reactions illustrating how the exhibition communicated women's resistance. One person stated that they felt 'inspired', while another felt 'loud and visible' and another felt 'love' and 'strength'.

Building resistance during the pandemic

As we have discussed at various points in the book, some of the research was conducted during the COVID-19 pandemic which had devastating consequences for women in terms of the incidence of intimate partner and other forms of intra-family violence, not to mention for their basic needs. However, Brazilian women in Maré and London (and everywhere) responded by developing networks of mutual support (see McIlwaine and Rizzini Ansari, 2022, for examples). In Maré, our partners Redes da Maré mobilised around the campaign Maré Says No to Coronavirus and the women-led initiative Support Network for Women in Maré (see Chapter 2). Through our interviews with participants in both these initiatives, it emerged that these collective emergency responses have led to an awakening among some women survivors. Therefore, as part of developing resistance practices to deal with the pandemic and gendered urban violence, women developed what we have termed 'emotional-political communities' (McIlwaine *et al.*, 2023a). This concept draws on the work of Colombian anthropologist Myriam Jimeno, who argued that sharing personal testimonies among survivors has the potential to generate emotional bonds that have political possibilities (Jimeno, 2010). In Maré, organising around the pandemic led to the creation of reactive and transformative 'emotional-political communities'. The former addressed immediate crises through providing sustenance, shelter, basic information and expert advice, while the latter involved income-generating opportunities and organising around rights and justice.

Underlying this is the fact that women develop their own survival mechanisms in the face of state neglect, as noted by Luisa in the introduction to the chapter and reiterated by a coordinator at Casa das Mulheres: 'Women in Maré create their own forms of informal resistance and resilience … precisely from this shortfall, this absence, this ineffectiveness. Women are incredibly inventive'. Over time, women spoke of developing greater autonomy, which equipped them with the tools to deal better with direct and indirect gendered violence, especially among Black women (see above). Michele Gandra from the cooperative cooking project in Casa das Mulheres discussed her journey of gendered consciousness: 'We don't change from outside in; we change from inside out. The

seed I plant here in my home, I hope that it multiplies, among my neighbours, among my community. This is how we try to change. Change for the better'.

Artistic engagements also helped women cope during the COVID-19 pandemic, enabling them to deal with the harmful effects of social isolation. In the digital storytelling, for example, Lenice spoke of establishing a make-up business through recording videos. She trained ninety women in the first year of the pandemic in putting on make-up, specialising in make-up for Black skin. Luana da Silva Bezerra, who was a dancer and dance teacher, created a video show *Sobre-Viventes* (Survivors) for the WOW Festival in 2020 during the pandemic: 'It is a personal project, it is an initiative, it is my creation, it was from this place of the impossibility of existence itself, of how to manage to have the desire to move'.

In London, it was widely acknowledged that migrant women survivors were severely affected by the intensification of gender-based violence as well as even higher barriers to reporting (see Chapter 6). The pandemic also impoverished migrant women as they lost jobs and migrant organisations cut back on their services (McIlwaine, 2020a). In the MinA work carried out during the pandemic, several of the women spoke of being able to build an online community to deal with the isolation of lockdown. In turn, the in-person workshops were made even more inspiring because the women felt free. According to the observer notes for one of the sessions, 'At the end, the group got together to eat some snacks and to take a photo. Then some of us walked towards Trafalgar Square to see the moon, which was beautiful that night. It was a very inspiring session'.

In concluding this chapter, the discussion clearly illustrates that Brazilian women in Maré and London are not passive victims of the 'painful truths' of gendered urban violence. Reflecting on the transnational gendered urban violence framework, women address direct and indirect violence through resistance practices across borders and through different temporalities. They develop individual and collective short-, medium- and long-term mechanisms to cope with, negotiate and resist such violence. Some of these practices address the intricacies of women's lives while others challenge the underlying structures embedded within structural, symbolic and infrastructural violence. Integral to many of the practices is the development of

networks where women can confront stigma, racism and misogyny and promote healing. Women embrace their own communities, symbolic and actual, as noted by Katia from Maré: 'Maré is my nest; everyone's here … my grandmother's house … it is where I grew up. Maré is everything'. Women survivors assert their autonomy and resignify others' narratives about them in order to bring about change, often through powerful creative activities, as noted by Carolina Cal in relation to Brazilian women in London: 'Together and in the long term we can make some real transformation … We are not the object of research. We have a voice … Come talk to us and we'll tell you our story. Don't treat us like a lab mouse … As victims, we become agents of our own transformation'.

Notes

1 For resisting violence, creating dignity storymap, see: https://storymaps.arcgis.com/stories/90e8fa21fe9b4e4cb477fabe9a38d28e#_msocom_1 (accessed 10 April 2023).
2 A *quilombo* is a self-built, self-governing community usually founded by runaway enslaved people.
3 *Centro de Estudos e Ações Solidárias da Maré* – Maré Centre for Solidarity Studies and Actions. See https://institutophi.org.br/en/centro-de-estudos-e-acoes-solidarias-da-mare-ceasm-2/ (accessed 12 April 2023).
4 We distributed leaflets with details of support services for anyone triggered by the play and requiring assistance.

Conclusions: Reframing gendered urban violence from a translocational feminist perspective

> *Que poderosas* [What powerful women]! Thanks for giving us tools to name oppressions and to build resistance.
>
> (Brazilian audience member at the Dignity and Resistance exhibition in London in 2022, showing the whole range of work in Maré and London)

This comment sums up the significance of the translocational feminist perspective that we have developed in this book in relation to gendered urban violence. We began with reflections from Brazilian women in London and Maré who argued for the need to reveal and resist the 'painful truths' of gendered urban violence. Valentina's words on revealing the 'painful truths', which provide a central narrative, are echoed by the Brazilian audience member above in calling for the naming of oppressions as well as for fighting and resisting the enemy: violence. In this sense, we have come full circle.

This concluding chapter reflects on the core contributions of the book and the wider research in which it is based, reiterating those outlined in the introduction but also moving beyond them to draw out some of the lessons learned through the journey of the research and of the writing of this text. The previous chapters have attempted to provide conceptual, empirical, epistemological and methodological insights into understanding the configurations of gendered urban violence among Brazilian women in Maré and London, as well as their responses to it. We hope that the insights outlined will be useful for exploring male violence against women in cities in other parts of the world and that others will draw on our 'translocational gendered urban violence framework' and our 'translocational feminist tracing methodological framework'.

We hope, too, that our emergent translocational ontological perspective on constructing knowledge through collaboration, and especially in using Brazilian and wider Latin American/Latinx feminist theoretical canons, proves helpful for those researching gendered urban violence elsewhere. Key to these concepts was the development of different 'creative translation pathways' through collaborating with artists and using arts-based methods across actual and figurative borders.

Above all, throughout this research, we have aimed to develop tools to reframe understandings of the 'painful truths' of gendered urban violence – through listening to women survivors' experiences and foregrounding the complex, innovative and inspiring ways that they deal with and resist violence, all with a view to engendering wider and preferably structural transformations. Without essentialising the intersectional challenges faced by Brazilian women in Maré and London, we insist that their views form the basis of efforts to transform their situations. We have communicated their voices both within and beyond academic texts through a wide range of artistic and creative engagements. These have led to some concrete changes in views of and attitudes towards survivors among the general public who might not normally encounter such research material, as well as with policymakers.

This conclusion also reflects on similarities and differences in working with Brazilian women in Maré and London and how their experiences of violence resonate across borders with other women living in marginalised urban territories and migrating from and to other countries. In the process of mapping the 'painful truths' of gendered urban violence and recording how survivors have resisted it across literal, symbolic and disciplinary boundaries and borders, two key issues have emerged which are key to a translocational feminist understanding of gendered urban violence: empathy and transformation.

Core and emergent contributions

In the introduction, we outlined how the book revolved around three main contributions. The first, the importance of highlighting the multidimensionality of gendered violence across multiple scales

and spheres in the city and how these stretch across borders from a translocational perspective. The second, the need to examine the relationships between everyday urban violence and gendered violence. The third, the value of working across the social sciences and the arts through creative, visual and embodied engagements to understand and respond to gendered urban violence. Yet, several additional contributions emerged within and beyond these in conceptual, empirical and methodological terms.

Conceptually, the book developed a 'translocational gendered urban violence framework' that aimed to guide the research and the structuring of the chapters of the book, as well as provide an approach for other researchers to use in exploring violence against women in cities. The framework is rooted in existing work by sociologists of race, migration and gender on translocational positionality (Anthias, 2001, 2013, 2021) and Latin American feminist scholars working on translocalties/*translocalidades* and the importance of translation to capture how people in Latin America increasingly move between localities, crossing multiple borders in historically and culturally situated ways among porous places (Alvarez, 2009; Alvarez *et al*., 2014). These flows are multidirectional and encompass complex identity formations among and between nations and places in ways that challenge epistemic violence and encourage solidarity (de Lima Costa, 2020). We have shown that a translocational feminist perspective is useful in examining the multiscalarity of gendered urban violence across global cities where circuits of power and intersectional oppressions are the key engines underlying its perpetration. It also allows for identifying the specifics of gendered urban violence but also the resonances across borders and boundaries. The multidimensionality of different forms of direct and indirect gendered violence, also incorporated within the transnational continuum, provides the foundation for the different domains where violence occurs within and across cities, identified in the 'translocational gendered urban violence framework'. Heuristically, these domains are divided into private, public and transnational spheres, which are not mutually exclusive, as the main sites where gendered urban violence are perpetrated. The core drivers underpinning violence within and across these domains are structural, symbolic and infrastructural violence, highlighting the importance of the causal and systemic processes that drive inequalities, misogyny, racism, homophobia,

transphobia and other dimensions of oppressions rooted in a colonial matrix of domination.

Inherent within the translocational gendered urban violence framework is how the urbanisation of gendered violence undergirds city formations and functioning across a range of territories. In our research, everyday experiences of urban violence emerged as deeply gendered in intersectional ways, something frequently overlooked in research in this field which tends to focus on the spectacular, masculinised violence of gangs and other armed actors (McIlwaine, 2021b; McIlwaine and Moser, 2014; McIlwaine and Rizzini Ansari, 2022; Wilding, 2010). Reflecting wider work in the Americas (Ferreira da Silva, 2009; Ribeiro, 2016; Segato, 2016), our research in Maré has highlighted women's experiences of trauma in dealing with the aftermath of endemic armed violence, while in London, we have shown how women encounter state, institutional and infrastructural violence (Cassidy, 2019; Gill, 2016; Lopes Heimer, 2023; Mayblin *et al.*, 2020). Our research has therefore shown how urbanisation exacerbates intersectional gendered violence as spaces of exclusion creating complex barriers for women, undermining their right to the city. In turn, these barriers reproduce and intensify gendered urban violence.

Gendered urban violence emerged as deeply embodied in intersectional ways; Black, transgender, working-class, queer, poor, minoritised women are especially affected by gendered urban violence, which is underpinned by wider oppressions. While embodiment is key to understanding gendered urban violence in general (Fluri and Piedalue, 2017), creative approaches allow for corporeal engagements that reveal how acutely such brutal violence is experienced through the body. The translocational gendered urban violence framework marries the embodied and the creative in fruitful ways. We contribute to wider debates around the importance of social scientists working with the arts in relation to gendered violence (Jeffery *et al.*, 2019; Keifer-Boyd, 2011) and especially with body-territory mapping (Lopes Heimer, 2022; Zaragocín and Caretta, 2021), also building on the work of Black Brazilian feminists (Carneiro, 2003; Smith *et al.*, 2021). Yet, we also provide more specific insights, for example, in our 'creative translation pathways' – developed originally by McIlwaine (2024) in relation to migrants and also cultivated throughout the book – which

provide a useful approach to capture different forms of artistic engagements. These ranged from a curatorial perspective where the artist's gaze was central towards a collaborative, co-produced approach where the research participants and local artists shaped the artistic encounters for aesthetic and therapeutic purposes, and as a form of resistance.

Resistance is the final element within the translocational gendered urban violence framework. Mapping the nature and drivers of gendered urban violence across multiple spheres intersecting with structural, symbolic and infrastructural violence must be accompanied by revealing everyday and creative forms of resistance. This approach is again influenced by Latin American and Latina/x (Gago, 2020; Pitts *et al.*, 2020) and Brazilian feminist thought (Gonzalez, 1988; Perry, 2016; Smith *et al.*, 2021), where resistance is at the heart of surviving violence. This reflects Mexican feminist Elena Flores Ruíz's (2020: 205) idea of resistance as a 'structural feature of our existence' where 'we gather the slaughter and steward our pain towards survival' in response to wider structural inequalities (also hooks, 1990). We have explored how resistance to gendered urban violence through everyday coping practices and longer-term collective mechanisms of transformation are also embedded within urban formations and ways of navigating the city. We have demonstrated how some resistance practices are embodied and others spatialised, with many creative in nature. Self-care as resistance and a foundation for transformation was particularly important for the women survivors of Maré, echoing Lorde (1988).

Beyond conceptual insights provided by the framework, we also make epistemological and methodological contributions through our 'translocational feminist tracing' approach. Indeed, the framework itself reflects the politics of translation integral to the translocational discourses of Alvarez *et al.* (2014) and others (Johnstone and Pratt, 2020), especially Anthias's (2001) early work on 'translocational positionality'. Focusing on the 'translocational as methodology' rather than the transnational (Browne *et al.*, 2017) to highlight territorialities within, beyond and across cities, our translocational feminist tracing approach incorporates knowledge production across the social sciences and arts, the ethics of conducting research across borders and territories and the tools developed to gather and reflect on empirical data. This is all rooted

in feminist and decolonial thinking (Smith, 1999) and urban, policy-relevant, collaborative 'translational urban research praxis' (Parnell and Pieterse, 2016). Such an approach therefore acknowledges that gendered urban violence is localised, spatialised and embodied but also part of wider translocational dynamics between Brazil, the UK and beyond. 'Tracing' captures connections between cities (Wood, 2022), which we have adapted to include intersectional and gendered circuits of power, inequalities and oppressions. Our 'translocational feminist tracing' methodology is also based on a transnational and translocal praxis that has developed over time to become more collaborative and co-produced. While the research was always focused on women's voices and the needs of partner organisations, we developed increasingly empathetic approaches to working with researchers and women survivors revolving around an ethics of care and challenging extractive methods (also Askins, 2018).

We have not shied away from reporting our mistakes in the book. Indeed, creating a body of research with the same partners over a long period of time allows for the development of trust; rapport makes it easier to identify problems and processes that do not work. This is essential when researching gendered violence given the sensitivities and ethical challenges involved. As noted in Chapter 2, with hindsight, we acknowledged that the mapping phase of the research was less participatory than we would have liked. This issue emerged in the survey that was conducted in Maré and London which itself, while producing robust data, was based on a European model. With hindsight, we would have been more careful to explore surveys created by Brazilian researchers. We also learned lessons around the importance of including the field researchers in Maré and London in the early phase of the research. We did not include them sufficiently in the analysis of the data or as authors on reports. We have since learned that if they play a major role as core producers of knowledge, then they must be acknowledged in outputs, as evidenced in our multi-author approach to research reports following the first phase of the research. We also asked for their views on the process. For example, in the Museu da Pessoa project, the researchers reflected on what they had learned. Elivanda Canuto noted: 'I was impressed by many things. How that person needed to tell that story. I found it incredible for her; I kept looking at her

and seeing how happy she was to tell her story'. Similarly, Fernanda Vieira commented on the methodology: 'As much as I have a background in interviewing, it was another perspective, another possibility of deepening on how to work the story of a person, this memory'. Reflection was also important in the creative work, and the artistic process allowed for more in-depth understandings of gendered violence beyond merely disseminating the research. In London, Carolina Cal, who ran the Migrants in Action (MinA) work, commented:

> We began to understand the complexity of violence, because there are many levels, there are many factors … which make us vulnerable. The systemic process of getting out of violence is also very harsh … So, from MinA's involvement in this project, I came to understand systemic violence as well, not only interpersonal [violence].

This was echoed by another researcher in Maré in relation to the need to reframe violence beyond the individual, a key theme running through the book. Andreza Dionísio from the Casa das Mulheres stated:

> Violence isn't just about someone punching you in the face. Violence goes far beyond that. I think every woman who goes through this process … should think about violence beyond what appears. Other types of violence … we have to understand that several things are violence. We have to understand the breadth of it, really, to understand this so that women can use their autonomy. I think that when you reframe what violence is, it is much more important, impactful.

Over time, we also realised that capturing the views of the interviewees themselves after the research was completed was extremely important. This emerged in Maré, for example, through the Museu da Pessoa project, where we asked the ten women artists who had been interviewed what participating in the project meant to them. Iraci Oliveira noted: 'From that day to now, I felt that people [started to take] an interest in me, in my work, that they were seeing me'. In London, Eliete, who participated in the MinA project, stated after the process had concluded:

> For us to open our mouths, for us to go out, to get out of our bubble, our closed world and to be able to meet other women, to be able to be the voice of other Brazilian women … I'm like, 'I'm there being a

> part of it, telling my story and also rescuing other women with the video' … we're there to give voice to the research, I mean, it's for several generations. This will impact multiple generations.

From victims to protagonists: solidarity to empathetic transformation

Our research, through our conceptual, epistemological and methodological frameworks and approaches, has therefore affected researchers, survivors, audiences and policymakers alike in raising awareness, enhancing wellbeing and self-esteem and engendering empathetic and political transformation. As noted above, the translocational feminist politics inherent in the research and the creative encounters have reflected a shift from mapping gendered urban violence towards developing resistance to it. This has also entailed perceiving survivors as protagonists with dignity rather than as victims. While this has been addressed across all the chapters, it was most keenly emphasised in Chapter 7. Here, we showed how embodied and spatialised coping and resistance practices have been developed in Maré and London among survivors, both individually and collectively. Yet, what we would also like to highlight is the collective solidarity among survivors, researchers and audiences rooted in an ethics of care.

The engendering of resistance, building on existing forms of resilience, is exceptionally strong in the territory of Maré (also Sousa Silva and Heritage, 2021). We have seen how women survivors develop networks of solidarity with friends, neighbours and family members in order to deal with gendered violence. In Maré, Joseane spoke about Maré being a *quilombo*, while Katia called it her 'nest'. These networks were fortified during the pandemic through the leadership of Redes da Maré and their campaign that led to the creation of 'emotional-political communities' (McIlwaine *et al.*, 2023a). The Casa das Mulheres has also been integral for generating networks among women through their various projects such as the cooperative cooking project and their meeting groups for trans women. Fatima, thirty-six, *preta* and a trans woman, spoke about the space created for them by the Casa das Mulheres:

> Today, we have this space. We can meet, interact. We play, laugh, miss each other. Before class ends, we want the next class to start so we can see each other. So, what gives me good memories these days

> is this: … knowing that my life has not stopped in the face of the tribulations that we have outside and in here. And to be this, this body that we are. Because together we are stronger.

In London, where the Brazilian community is dispersed, resistance is more likely to be built among grassroots civil society organisations, who are crucial in supporting women survivors and establishing mutual support groups. These include the Latin American Women's Rights Service (LAWRS) as well as Step Up Migrant Women (SUMW) and Sin Fronteras (No Limits), both established by the LAWRS, together with MinA (Chapter 7). In the Women Resisting Violence (WRV) podcast, Gilmara stated: 'LAWRS, an organisation that was really my saviour, they rescued me from a very difficult time'.

The creative engagements were especially important in generating solidarity among survivors. The Museu da Pessoa project was particularly powerful in highlighting the advantages of working together through art and demonstrating how art enables especially Indigenous and Afro-descendant women to reclaim their history and their ancestry. Building resistance through art often began with an individual act of resistance which then became collective over time. Lenice Silva Viegas, for example, established her Balle Transforma (Dance Transforms) project in Maré at the age of twenty-two with 'courage, with much fear and much trepidation'. The project went on to support 150 children and women from the favela. In London, Carolina Cal spoke on the WRV podcast about how Brazilian women survivors 'were not being heard or seen; that is why MinA uses theatre to bring all these women together, to see themselves in each other and to find strength through all the shared experiences'. The Brazilian migrant women survivors made a collective statement as part of their project: 'Uniting voices through art can construct a powerful tool for enforcing change and collective acknowledgement. EXPOSURE'.

Yet, it is important that solidarity and collective engagement become transformative, that people's lives change and that gendered urban violence can be addressed and ultimately prevented. For researchers, this was a personal and collective journey. One of the field researchers in Maré, Clara, spoke about this:

> Participating in the research allowed me to rethink my trajectory. From Clara the person to Clara the professional, resident of Maré, daughter … I found a lot of wisdom in the interviews I conducted.

> A lot of empathy. Not only with women who have accomplished material achievements, such as building a home, furnishing a home, raising children, getting professional qualifications and doing it alone. But also those who could not escape violent situations.

Part of this transformation is about ensuring that women survivors are involved in the knowledge production and training researchers from their communities so that they can examine their own realities (see Scott, 2021). Julia Leal, the coordinator of the Casa das Mulheres, commented on how important it was to encourage 'women from Maré to be in this place of production, and not only in the place of being researched'. Indeed, Julia and colleagues are currently raising funds to establish a space dedicated to training women in knowledge production. Fernanda Veira reflected on the transformative potential of the research: 'It's time for us to talk about our knowledge, our stories. And I think the research has this legacy … for the territory, of us being residents, workers, students and researchers of this place'.

The artists and audiences of the creative work are also transformed, especially through empathy, as noted by Clara above. Bia Lessa's *SCAR* was especially powerful in developing a translocatonal feminist sensibility across territories through bringing Maré women's experiences to a London audience. The reactions to *SCAR* reflected a raised awareness and the emergence of resistance through empathy. The communication of these women's stories evoked outrage but also the power of the human spirit and a sense of political engagement across borders through what we call 'empathetic transformation'. Indeed, Chrissie Tiller's (2018) evaluation of *SCAR* captured how Bia Lessa was the intermediary to reveal what may have been hidden. She commented that the interface between art, activism and academia is where transformation can begin to happen. A translocatonal feminist sensibilty also emerged from Gaël Le Cornec's *Efêmera* and *Ana*, speaking across boundaries. Audience members again spoke of empathy with the main protagonist as well as a 'duty to expose, protect, heal and promote awareness', reflecting how these artistic pieces are effectively asking the audience to become activists (Inchley, 2015). Audience reactions to the *We Still Fight in the Dark* video and accompanying performance by MinA also entailed elements of empathetic transformation. It was not uncommon for audience members to cry or to get angry. In one performance in the UK, a

woman wept as she spoke about the challenges her mother faced as a Peruvian migrant lawyer trying to get a job in London, while another Afro-Colombian woman said she felt physical pain inside her at the line in the video: 'Where does your pain hurt? I exist. Black woman'.

Transformation through policymaking has emerged from the body of work in different ways. In Maré, the research has influenced the work of partner organisations, with new projects being created. According to Eliana, the research was important politically in raising the profile of gender-based violence as being a violation of citizens' rights, and so this issue became incorporated into their ongoing work on the Maré Rights Programme together with various projects for women created via the Casa das Mulheres: 'Many of our projects at the Casa das Mulheres … I think have a lot to do with the gendered violence that we noticed in the research that we did'. Julia also spoke about presenting the research and conducting training in the Secretariat of Policy for Women in the Municipality of Rio de Janeiro:

> I think that was a glorious moment of the research, because it's not often that we get a space like that. And I think that has a lot to do, too, with the scale that the research launches have taken. We got an item on Rio de Janeiro TV [Globo.com], an article was published in *O Globo* newspaper and there was a report on Radio Band [BandNews FM]. Together with the partnership that we have already had for two years with the Secretariat of Policy for Women … We were able to use this space of political advocacy.[1]

The research also showed that the Maria da Penha Law was not working in favelas, as noted by Andreza Dionísio from Casa das Mulheres, who spoke of sharing our research with the police officer in charge of the patrols for the law: 'We were able to show her that none of the women used the police … We know, everyone knows that, including her, but it's important to bring them data. "Look, your work is incredible, but none of these women are reached by it"'.

In London, the SUMW research has been very influential in campaigning for the rights of migrant women survivors with insecure immigration status. Drawing on the the *Right to Be Believed* report, Elizabeth Jiménez-Yáñez, the coordinator of SUMW, spoke about the power of the research in lobbying for change:

> The report, I would say, is a pioneer in this specific area; it is very important, because every time we are campaigning on public policies

> and advocacy, we talk about the report … When I write reports to influence decision-makers, the report is always cited, the report was cited by different actors working to defend the rights of migrant women … It was used by other actors, such as [the UK] Domestic Abuse Commissioner and the London Victims Commissioner. The report has been very valuable for the Campaign.

Carolina from MinA spoke about the issue of prevention and information-sharing. Although they have not come up with concrete solutions, taking their video and performance to different places like universities and festivals allows them to present what they have lived through in spaces where these narratives would not normally be present. For Carolina, this is transformation – the survivors creating art out of their struggle and the audiences witnessing and experiencing it.

As noted by many survivors interviewed across the body of this research in Maré and London, education is key: among young people, women, men, trans and non-binary people alike, it is essential for change. Our Museu da Pessoa work has pioneered an approach that might be an interesting example to use in other contexts. As part of the Female Lives online exhibition, a didactic toolkit for teachers was created for use in the classroom at primary or secondary level.[2] According to Paula Ribeiro from the museum, this document was edited by them and distributed to schools with advice on how to use the women's words to raise awareness of the experiences of people who rarely have a platform to speak from.

While not all aspects of the translocational feminist transformation are empathetic, empathy is key for raising awareness and instigating change, whether in the eyes of the general public, civil society organisations or policymakers.

Translocational gendered urban violence: linking London and Maré and beyond

As noted in the introduction to this chapter, the translocational gendered urban violence framework developed in the book aims to provide some tools for understanding this violence across borders and boundaries within and beyond cities and also beyond the specifics of Maré and London. We did not set out to create comparative

research but rather to use the 'translocational as methodology' and to explore gendered urban violence from a translocational feminist perspective. This has allowed us to view gendered urban violence as part of a multiterritorial system of oppressions that stretch from the body to the global, connecting cities through a series of translocational linkages and tracings. While there is much important work on the need for multiscalar interpretations of gendered violence within and beyond feminist geography (Brickell, 2020; Pain and Staeheli, 2014), most focuses empirically on only one specific location (although see Piedalue, 2022). The translocational gendered urban violence framework and associated 'tracing' provides a way of assessing the complexities of the 'painful truths' of gendered violence across multiple territories, locations, spaces, scales and disciplinary boundaries between places that are geographically linked through migration.

However, it is worth briefly reflecting on the similarities and differences in experiences of gendered urban violence between women in Maré and Brazilian migrants in London. Gendered urban violence was ubiquitous and multidimensional in both contexts. There were some differences in the incidence and proportions of different types of violence across the two locations based on the survey. For instance, rates of gender-based violence across women's lifetimes were higher in London (82 per cent) compared to Maré (57 per cent), while violence in the public sphere was more prevalent than in the private domain in London (77 per cent) than in Maré (53 per cent). In terms of the specific types, sexual violence was identified as more prevalent in Maré (30 per cent) than in London (14 per cent) while the proportions of physical and psychological violence were more similar. Related to this, intimate partners were more likely to be perpetrators in Maré (47 per cent) than in London (24 per cent) (see Chapter 3).

These figures belie a more complex situation, especially when structural and symbolic forms of violence are taken into account. In terms of infrastructural violence, women in Maré were more likely to disclose their experiences of gender-based violence than in London but with much lower levels of formal reporting (see Chapter 6). However, in both contexts, institutional violence – underlain by misogyny, racism, homophobia and transphobia, xenophobia, disablism and classist attitudes – was widespread. State violence in London

was primarily related to immigration status and racism and revolved around exclusion and infrastructural violence, entailing the re-traumatisation of women survivors who tried to report gender-based violence. In contrast, in Maré, the state not only neglected residents through lack of access to basic infrastructure but also actively entered the favelas through police invasions, killing residents on purpose or because they got caught in the crossfire. In turn, women face fear and trauma through dealing with the fallout of these operations. Therefore, there are translocational resonances across borders in that the state is a major perpetrator of direct and indirect gendered violence in both contexts, leading to multiple forms of deep-seated trauma.

Women's freedom to navigate the city is also compromised in Maré and London, although in the former, there is a distinction between 'inside' and 'outside' the favela. This is partly because of the forms of resistance that have grown among residents in the face of state violence, racism and active marginalisation, entailing a resignification of women's histories and ancestry as they build dignity. In London, traversing the city can be challenging for Brazilian migrant women who are either hyper-sexualised and essentialised or ignored and invisibilised. These women have also reclaimed their histories and spaces through campaigning with migrant organisations and engaging in collective cultural activities that have allowed them to enter new visible spaces and mobilise resources (see above). While the state and society in both places ignore, belittle or denigrate survivors, women have become protagonists in their own histories and their own futures through individual and collective resistance-building.

We have also developed some mutual translocational learning and sharing across borders in the most recent iteration of the research. In addition to the various academic and creative research-sharing engagements between London and Rio de Janeiro, this project has actively aimed to foster translocational learning between the LAWRS and Redes da Maré and the Casa das Mulheres through a set of coordinated visits. Elizabeth from the LAWRS commented: 'We can share information on fighting gendered violence … We can learn from the good practices of other organisations at the transnational level. So, I think it's very exciting to see how this progresses'.

In terms of similarities and differences in the experiences of women in Maré and in London, in the latter, the SUMW project was based on research from women from twenty-two different countries.

Although some specific differences emerged among some nationalities of being more vulnerable to cases of 'transnational marriage abandonment' and 'honour-based violence', the experiences of all participants were very similar. Elizabeth from the LAWRS reflects on this: 'What we realised, talking to other initiatives, was that this problem was not unique to the Latin American community or to Latin American survivors of gender-based violence. This was actually happening in other communities, because this is something that affects migrant women in general'.

This has been further corroborated by other research on the challenges faced by migrant women survivors from different backgrounds in the UK and beyond as they face various types of border and infrastructural violence (Cassidy, 2019; Lopes Heimer, 2023; Mayblin *et al*., 2020). In Maré, research elsewhere in Latin America shows similar experiences of gendered urban violence as well as responses to it, especially in El Salvador (Hume and Wilding, 2020; Zulver, 2016), Honduras (Jokela-Pansini, 2020) and Colombia (Zulver, 2022; also Moser and McIlwaine, 2004) (see also McIlwaine *et al*., 2022c, for a summary). Beyond Latin America, experiences of gendered infrastructural violence in India in particular chime with those in Brazil (Datta and Ahmed, 2020; Truelove and Ruszczyk, 2022), as do those across sub-Saharan Africa (Muluneh *et al*., 2020). Of course, there are clear differences, but there are also many correspondences in the diversity, multidimensionality and territorial nature of gendered urban violence in other contexts. There are parallels with the need to broaden understandings of individual and interpersonal violence to acknowledge structural, symbolic and infrastructural violence as key drivers of gender-based violence.

Yet, it is important to finish the book noting the ties between resistance, empathy and transformation as we think about life in a post-pandemic, twenty-first-century city. Indeed, it is telling that Marvin *et al*. (2023: 17) have recently ruminated on the potential for creating spaces for dialogue and learning among marginalised groups in post-pandemic cities despite the challenges of rebuilding. Crucial from our perspective is the centrality of care when reimagining cities, which is at the core of our notion of empathetic transformation in the face of gendered urban violence. Here, it is useful to think about the writing of the renowned Chicana

poet and scholar Gloria Anzaldúa (1999), who correlates transformation with gaining knowledge (or *conocimiento*), which she delineates as self-knowledge. For us, transformation and the production of knowledge can be about research leading to community self-knowledge and the power of mapping, revealing, resisting and transforming women's lives as they experience and address gendered urban violence in translocational ways across and beyond literal, symbolic, disciplinary borders and territories. We give the final words to the visitors to the Dignity and Resistance exhibition which combined the research in both Maré and London. They said they felt 'Not alone, shoulder to shoulder', 'emotional' and 'inspired' to 'work collectively'.

Notes

1 See the newspaper article here: https://oglobo.globo.com/rio/noticia/2022/07/pesquisa-aponta-como-mulheres-da-mare-criam-meios-proprios-para-resistir-a-violencia.ghtml. See the TV here: https://g1.globo.com/rj/rio-de-janeiro/rj1/video/pesquisa-identifica-formas-de-enfretamento-da-violencia-de-genero-na-mare-10761645.ghtml (accessed 28 April 2023).

2 See https://museudapessoa.org/wp-content/uploads/2022/03/2022–03–31_vidas-femininas-roteiros-pedagogicos_ebook.pdf (accessed 28 April 2023).

Appendix: Methodological framework

Location and project	Method	No.	People interviewed	Artistic outputs
(A) Rio de Janeiro Transnational VAWG 1 (Redes da Maré and UFRJ) (2016–18) (ESRC)	Survey	801	Women residents Maré	*SCAR* by Bia Lessa (multimedia installation with PPP)
	In-depth interviews	20	Women residents Maré	
	Focus groups x7 (52 women and 7 men)	59	Majority women residents Maré (with older women, female members of local religious organisations, LGBTQI+ people, drug users, community activists (male and female))	
	Service provider mapping	14	Women representatives from organisations	
(B) London Transnational VAWG 1 (PPP, LAWRS, CASA Latin American Theatre Festival) (2016–18) (ESRC)	Survey	175	Brazilian migrant women	*Efêmera* by Gaël Le Cornec (verbatim theatre with CASA Latin American Theatre Festival)
	In-depth interviews	25	Brazilian migrant women	
	Focus groups x5 (9 women and 6 men)	16	4 groups with Brazilian migrant women and 1 with Brazilian migrant men in London	*Ana* by Gaël Le Cornec (short film with Footprint Productions)

(*continued*)

Location and project	Method	No.	People interviewed	Artistic outputs
	Service provider mapping	12	22 women representatives from 12 organisations	Viral video *Raising Awareness of Violence against Brazilian Women in London* (with PPP)
	Participatory GIS mapping	4	4 stakeholder interviews with women from organisations in Maré	
(C) London SUMW (LAWRS) (2018–19) (Lloyd's Bank Foundation)	Survey and in-depth interviews (5 Brazilian women included)	5	Brazilian migrant women (part of larger project of 50 questionnaires and 10 interviews)	*Believe* by Gaël Le Cornec (sound installation with Footprint Productions and VEM network)
(D) Rio de Janeiro Dignity and Resistance (PPP, Redes da Maré/Casa das Mulheres, Museu da Pessoa, UFRJ) (2019–23) (British Academy)	In-depth interviews	32	Women residents in Maré	Museu da Pessoa (digital storytelling and films) and online exhibition (Female Lives)
	Focus groups x5	27	Women residents in Maré	Observational drawing of focus groups (artist – Mila de Choch)
	Interviews with women working with local campaigns	9	Women residents/ workers in Maré	Body-territory mapping workshops
	Body-territory mapping workshops x5	10	Women residents Maré	Women Resisting Violence (Rio's Trailblazing Women's House podcast with LAB)
	Museu da Pessoa oral histories/ digital storytelling interviews/ films	10	Women artists Maré	Participatory territory mapping GIS Storymap Dignity and Resistance exhibition

Location and project	Method	No.	People interviewed	Artistic outputs
(E) London *We Still Fight in the Dark* (MinA) (2020–23) (ESRC-IAA, KCL Faculty Research Fund)	10 applied drama workshops and evaluation survey	14	Brazilian migrant women	*We Still Fight in the Dark* (film, installation and performances) WRV (SUMW podcast with LAB)
(F) London and Rio Tackling gendered violence transnationally (PPP, Redes da Maré, LAWRS, MinA) (2022–23) (EPSRC)	Photovoice workshops in London (5 women) and Rio (11 women) Transnational knowledge exchange and impact interviews (10)	26	Brazilian migrant women, residents of Maré, researchers and artists involved in the projects	Who's behind Your Order? exhibition, London Brick by Brick exhibition, Rio de Janeiro

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