

Understanding the Development of Private Policing in South Africa

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Abstract

Private policing has been spreading across South Africa. This paper interrogates the context of the development of private policing in the country. Drawing on insights from global security research, governmentality studies, and critical sociological and criminological theory, particularly postcolonial perspective, it addresses these questions: How do we make sense of the growth of private policing in South Africa, and what are the broader security policy implications of the proliferation of private policing in the post-apartheid state? It proposes that the development of private policing reflects a paradigm shift from the collective human security to the individualistic sense of security in contrast to the collective welfare that characterized pre-colonial indigenous social relations. Private policing is intended to contribute to addressing the resultant security challenges. It concludes that crime control mechanisms must transcend aggressive policing to address structural underpinnings of crime problems, including poverty, to ensure a collective human security, as part of the broader security policies in South Africa. This paper makes a contribution to the theoretical debate regarding the role of imperialist powers, the transnational capital, and the state, in promoting the development of private policing.

Keywords: crime control; neoliberal globalization; private policing; imperialism; social organization; security; South Africa

Introduction

In the recent years, there has been an increased involvement of paid non-state actors in addressing social and crime control challenges. This commoditization of security is exemplified in private policing (Aas, 2013; Johnson & Shearing, 2003; Jones, 2012; Zedner, 2006). This private policing refers to the organized forms of for-profit personnel service focusing on controlling crime, protecting life and property, and maintaining order (Jones & Newburn, 1998). Private policing routinely patrols areas, such as shopping malls, transport terminals, airports, office buildings and leisure facilities, which constitute important domains of public social life (Kempa & Singh, 2008; Samara, 2009; Wood & Shearing, 2007).

This shift towards pluralism in the governance of crime control has been linked to the growth of mass wealth and mass poverty, and the need to address the attendant security threats from the have-nots (Wood & Shearing, 2007). Another factor is the growing security risks, such as terrorism (Aas, 2013). In addition,

Understanding Private Policing in South Africa by Asomah

this security governance is linked to global neo-liberal governance in which the state encourages an active involvement of individuals, institutions and local communities in managing crime problems and risks (Aas, 2013; Garland, 1996, 2001; Jones, 2011). This development has been described as “responsibilization” strategy within contemporary social control (Garland, 1996, 2001). Responsibilization generally reflects a particular way of thinking in which government actively secures the participation of private citizens, non-state actors and agencies in controlling crime problems and other unwanted social phenomena (Aas, 2013; Garland, 1996, 2001). Therefore, the governance of crime control no longer lies with only the state and governmental institutions, but also voluntary and private actors stepping in when states become unwilling or unable to deal with crime challenges.

While this development offers possibilities for addressing inequalities in security provision, and for effectively dealing with crime problems through coordination and networking (Burriss, Drahos, & Shearing, 2005), two main concerns are associated with this trend. The first is the possibility that security will be unevenly attainable based on the ability to pay (Zedner, 2000). The second is a potential lack of accountability due to weak regulatory framework (Berg & Gabi, 2011).

Amidst these concerns, private policing is gaining momentum in the global South. The growth of surveillance technologies and private policing is gradually becoming more common in Africa (Abrahamsen & Williams, 2005, 2009; Samara, 2009). In South Africa, for instance, the private security personnel now outnumber public police (CNN, 2013; Cohen, 2014). The country has the largest private security sector in the world based on the percentage of gross domestic product (Abrahamsen & Williams, 2010).

Although the existing literature enhances our understanding of private policing in South Africa, there is limited in-depth study focusing on the context of South Africa. This paper seeks to contribute to filling this vacuum to help extend our current understanding of the development of private policing in South Africa. Drawing on insights from governmentality studies and postcolonial perspective, it addresses these questions: How do we make sense of the development of private policing in South Africa, and what are the broader security policy implications of the proliferation of private policing in the post-apartheid state?

This paper consist of twelve sections. The second discusses the theoretical framework. The third analyzes the growth of private policing, while the fourth presents marketing strategies of private policing firms. The fifth discusses regulation of private policing in South Africa. The sixth provides an historical context while the seventh discusses security implications of violent imperialism. Security implications of military restructuring are presented in the eighth section. The ninth explores security implications of poverty. The tenth analyses governance and state security machinery. The eleventh reflects on the implications of private policing. The twelfth presents the conclusion.

Theoretical Framework

Governmentality fundamentally implies that the exercise of governing authority is no longer the sole monopoly of the state and its institutions, but rather dispersed throughout society among a web of individuals, voluntary and private organizations, broadly constituting non-state actors (Foucault, 2004). It suggests a subtle and virtually invisible form of state governance “at distance” that involves self-regulation along the lines of freedom to make choices. These choices are invariably aligned with the overall governing objectives of the sovereign nation state (Braithwaite, 2000). Governmentality is linked to global neoliberal reforms, characterized by an increasing campaign of individualization, and responsabilization of social life (Bourdieu, 2005; Garland, 1996; Shaviro, 2010). This development suggests that the state plays a leading role in legitimizing the commoditization of security, for instance, through outsourcing, as well as public-private security partnership arrangements, and regulating the private security sector, as theorized by White (2012).

While this theoretical stance is useful for analyzing the developments in contemporary security governance, it lacks a critical lens for disentangling and deconstructing the structural and the imperialist context of crime and crime control. According to Kohn (2014, p. 1.), “the term imperialism draws attention to the way that one country exercises power over another, whether through settlement, sovereignty, or indirect mechanisms of control”. Imperialism suggests foreign influences in the running of a country. Insights from postcolonial perspectives will add an invaluable critical analytic framework for this research.

The postcolonial perspective starts from “a critical and reflexive framework that questions the centrality of Western understanding of crime and control” (Cunneen, 2011, p. 253). It argues that the conceptions of crime and crime control models in modern Africa can be conceptualized and situated in the broader context of historical and contemporary forms of Western imperialism and domination. As Cunneen (2011, p. 258) argues, “Both definitions of crime and institutional definitions of criminality can no longer be seen as separate from, or independent of, the broader claims of Western discourses of dominance”. A postcolonial perspective therefore casts doubt on Western criminal justice systems and definitions of crime and crime control models, which often mask injustices against marginalized people, and the excesses of the nation states (Agozino, 2003; Oriola, 2006). This theory views mainstream positivist criminology as an instrument of imperialism for failing to foreground important issues for criminological research, including as human rights abuses, and state violence (Agozino, 2003, 2004; Shearing & Marks, 2011).

A postcolonial perspective also suggests that the continued pursuit of Western imperialist interests impacts on security situations in countries of the global South. As Cohen (1988, p. 186) argues, “Clearly, the thesis of high crime rates as

Understanding Private Policing in South Africa by Asomah

an inevitable by-product of industrialization would be replaced by a thesis locating crime as an intrinsic product of the patterns of dependency, exploitation, marginalization and capitalist-intensive industrialization.” This insight sheds light on the broader context of crime and the implications for crime control in postcolonial countries. It also suggests that most crime problems in these countries have historical roots in colonialism and continued forms of Western imperialism, such as global neoliberal transformations.

The concept of individualism and private property was minimal in the pre-colonial traditional African societies. Before contact with Europeans, “Africanness” was virtually synonymous with communal interest, collective welfare and wellbeing, where the security of each person was invariably bound up with the security of fellow members of the community (Gykye, 1997, 2010). This principle of collectivism was essentially one of the powerful mechanisms of African traditional social control (Cohen, 1988; Gykye, 1997, 2010). The dominant communitarian principle that characterized African societies helped obviate greed, corruption and selfishness that are inimical to the wellbeing of the community (Gyekye, 2010; Ochieni & Nwankwo, 2012). Although the traditional African society was not classless in terms of power and wealth, collective welfare trumped private gain (Gyekye, 2010). Thus, individualism linked to capitalism did not take precedence over collective wellbeing in the African context prior to colonization.

Whilst a postcolonial perspective is critical of Western forms of imperialism and positivist criminology, it also is implicitly critical of African peoples, particularly those at the helm of affairs for wholesale importation of Western-originated policy prescriptions. These prescriptions policies are often not in the best interest of Africa in view of its unique context. In this regard, Agozino (2003) argues that criminology is underdeveloped in Africa, given that mainstream positivist criminology was never and is still not in Africa’s interest in large measure. He argues that Western criminology was developed at the heart of colonialism to serve imperialist interests—to facilitate the exploitation of the colonized. As a result, “criminological crisis” continues to confront the post colonized, both at home and in the Diaspora. Agozino, (2003, p. 35) therefore proposes “counter-colonial” criminology that uses comparative methodology for “anti-imperialist scholarship”. A postcolonial perspective suggests that the universalization of Western imperialist crime control models is problematic, given that the foundation of crime is mostly context specific (Cohen, 1988). Postcolonial writers, such as Cohen (1988), Agozino (2003), Oriola (2006), and Cunneen (2011), suggest that those doing criminology in Africa need to break away from imperialist crime control models that often do not reflect African peculiarities.

In addition, contact with the imperialist powers since colonialism to date is suggestive of clash of cultural values, and beliefs, with the dominant European culture almost irreparably shaking the prior African social organisation to its core. The existence of checks and balances through strong shared moral ethic, the fear of banishment, public shame and the fear of punishment by the gods, and the

ancestors for crimes committed, immensely prevented corruption and corrupt practices. The imposition of Western political structures and culture through violent colonialism virtually eroded these checks and balances embodied in pre-colonial African cultures. This situation had largely laid the foundation for corrupt practices in contemporary Africa (Alemika, 1993; Ezeanya, 2012a; Oluwaniyi, 2011; Okereke, 1995; Onyeozili 2005; Osoba, 1996;).

Colonialism was rationalized as a ‘civilizing’ mission intended to uplift the Africans from their primitive state—the condition of backwardness. This civilizing mission suggests that ‘a temporary period of political dependence or tutelage was necessary in order for “uncivilized” societies to advance to the point where they were capable of sustaining liberal institutions and self-government’ (Kohn, 2014, p. 1). The evidence, however, points to the contrary, given that colonialism was fundamental for the underdevelopment of Africa through loss of control over conditions of life (Rodney, 1972, as cited in Agozino, 2003). This fundamental social change significantly prepared the ground, and continues to do so, for the increasing sense of helplessness, suffering, despair, and human insecurity being witnessed across the entire continent. A few elites continue to amass wealth, whilst the majority seems to languish in poverty. The resort to private policing to protect potential security threats from the “have-nots” appears momentarily to be one of the indispensable solutions.

The use of a postcolonial perspective is therefore helpful for imagining new possibilities for real social change, as it draws attention to the need to consider indigenous social and crime control mechanisms that work best, and reflect their distinctive circumstances, to promote social justice. Additionally, a postcolonial perspective brings to the fore a critical issue of identity in criminology. Social exclusion based on inability to consume (Bauman, 1997) is one of the distinctive marks of social identity reconstruction in the neoliberal social order (Kempa & Singh, 2008; Samara, 2009).

This research places the rise of private policing in this broader context. It proposes that the rise of private policing in Africa can be conceptualized as an outgrowth of histories of colonialism and apartheid rule, and the contemporary forms of Western imperialism including global neoliberal transformations. This new form of imperialism includes imported forms of imperialist technical knowledge and expertise, or “technicist” variants as noted by Cohen (1988). Using insights from these theories, I argue that imperialist powers in particular, and more lately, successive South African governments have contributed to the creation of volatile security situations. This development, in turn, has significantly influenced the uptake of private policing to deal with the attendant security and crime challenges in the country.

Understanding Private Policing in South Africa by Asomah

Growth of Private Policing in South Africa

South Africa has the largest private security sector in the world based on the percentage of gross domestic product (Abrahamsen & Williams, 2010). There are 8,692 registered active security firms, while registered security officers are 488,666 (Private Security Regulatory Industry Authority, 2016, p. 14). This private security sector has been expanding. For example, between 2001 and 2010, registered active security officers increased from 194,525 to 389,273 representing 99.09 per cent increase. In addition, the number of registered active private security businesses increased from 5,491 to 7,459, representing 35.84 per cent from 2001 to 2010, while registered active armed response businesses was 2,083 in 2009, and 2,701 in 2010, accounting for 29.67 per cent, (Private Security Industry Regulatory Authority, 2010).

The major global security firms operating in the country include Group4Securicor (G4S), Switzerland-based Tyco's ADT, Stockholm-based Securitas, Chubb, and Erinys International. Group4Securicor (G4S) originating in Crawley in England is the largest foreign-based employer, with 14,302 employees, followed by Schaffhausen, Switzerland-based Tyco's ADT unit with 10,516, and Stockholm-based Securitas with 3,110 (Cohen, 2014).

The history of G4S in South Africa dates back to 1957. This security firm has expanded across the country with approximately 15,000 employees serving many companies spanning the service and extractive sectors. For example, it now serves 38 mining companies. It has security responsibility over seven airports in South Africa. G4S has benefitted from public-private partnership arrangements in South Africa, as reflected in the signing of a 25-year contract to operate Mangaung Correctional Centre (MCC) in 2000. MCC houses 3,000 inmates considered violent and dangerous in South Africa. This public-private partnership (PPP) was the first of its kind in South Africa, and G4S was responsible for designing, constructing, and financing, of the MCC project, which is the largest private prison in South Africa, and the second in the world (G4S South Africa, 2014). MCC is a typical example of a public-private partnership, and G4S has managed this prison facility since its opening in 2000. This company has been expanding as reflected in the acquisition of other firms, such as Deposita in 2012.

In addition, most South African security firms have expanded their operations significantly across the country. The most prominent security local security firms include Fidelity Security Services, Protea Coin Group and TSU Protection Services. Fidelity Security Services is the largest security firm with 26,551 workers in South Africa (Cohen, 2014). Fidelity was established in 1957 with the introduction of Cash Solutions services, followed by the guarding services in 1968; and the company was later merged with Khulani Springbok Patrols (Pty) Ltd in 1999. The Group has been evolving with buy-ins and buy-outs, and with acquisitions adding up to the portfolio of services (Fidelity Security Group, n. d.).

Pretoria-based Bidvest Protea Coin, which is the second largest security firm in South Africa, has 17,500 employees. This company is the product of merger agreement. First, Protea Security (established in 1982) and Coin Security Group (formed in 1979) merged in July 2007 to become Protean Coin Group. This Protea Coin Group then merged with Bidvest Magnum to become Bidvest Protea Coin in 2013 (Bidvest Protea Coin, 2017). On the other hand, TSU Protection Services formed in 1999 to address a security gap in South Africa, has now grown into an international company with a heavy presence in Namibia, Botswana, Zimbabwe, Mozambique, Kenya, Tanzania, Uganda, the DRC, Angola, Zambia, Nigeria, and Ghana (TSU Protection Services, 2017).

Marketing Strategies of the Private Security Firms

The marketing strategies of the private security sector primarily pit the rich against the poor, citing the potential threats of the latter as a result of their low-consumption capacity. This is typical of a global neoliberal regime that emphasizes “us-and-them” categorizations, and a subsequent get-tougher-on-crime stance that targets those perceived as not capable of meeting the expectations of the culture of consumerism and the marketized economy (Abrahamsen and Williams, 2009, 2010; Bearpark & Schulz, 2007; Kempa & Singh, 2008). Global neoliberal political-economic governance provides the right ambience within which private policing gets promoted, accepted among those who can afford, and legitimized by normalizing the commoditization of social and crime control. The weak state thesis, inadequate public police personnel, the commoditization of security, and the presence of global security market account for the rise in private policing in Africa (Abrahamsen & Williams, 2010)

Research evidence shows that the private policing industry create fear and insecurity among the rich to protect to get them patronize private policing services (Bremner, 2004, p. 460; Kempa & Singh, 2008, p. 345). The fear that is fomented is premised on “outsiders” or “dangerous others” who are portrayed as posing an imminent threat to the safety and security of the well-do in society. In view of the fact that these “dangerous others” cannot participate in the culture of consumption, they are considered as “inferior... as ‘invaders’ who are laying siege to private experiences of a good life” (Bremner, 2004, p. 460). For example, an advertisement for Maxidoor burglar proofing portrays the criminal as black, minacious shadow, while the victim “white, young, blue eyed and female, caught in alarm at her front door” (Homemakers Fair Magazine, 2002, p. 96, as cited in Bremner, 2004, p. 462). This advertisement suggests that the poor black person represents the dangerous “other” who must be restrained by Maxidoor’ burglar proof to prevent an attack on the white person who has a property to protect. The advertisement for private policing and security products typically revolves around, and thrives on, the creation of anxiety, fear and terror among the rich to ensure patronage of private policing services.

Understanding Private Policing in South Africa by Asomah

Regulation of Private Policing in South Africa

The regulation of private policing started in 1987 with the enactment of the Security Officers Act that resulted in the creation of the Security Officers Board, which sought to regulate, and engage the security industry in the provision, and governance of security in the apartheid state. Subsequently, the National Key Points Act authorized private security personnel to strategically guard important national installations, including fuel plants and military bases. Under this Act, the security officers were largely accorded the powers of search, arrest, and seizure (Berg & Nouveau, 2011).

The 1987 Act was primarily intended for professionalizing the industry via state-led self-regulation that largely catered to private interests. On the other hand, the *Security Officers Amendment Acts of 1992, 1996, 1997, and Private Security Industry Regulation Act of 2001* sought to protect public interests in terms of preventing abuse, and ensuring public safety (Berg & Nouveau, 2011). The Private Security Industry Regulatory Authority (PSIRA) was established based on the Private Security Industry Regulation Act of 2001. This regulatory body takes care of matters concerning applications for registration, suspension or withdrawal of registrations, and prevention of exploitation. It also takes care of training, service quality, and complaints regarding the private security industry (Private Security Regulatory Authority, 2013). It also conducts an inspection of security businesses to ascertain compliance with or deviations from the Act, while providing an avenue for the general public to lodge complaints relative to private policing for redress.

The PSIA of 2001 spells out the specific requirements for prospective security service providers to screen out potential criminally minded people, and prevent their infiltration into the security industry. For instance, a prospective security service provider (1) must be a citizen or permanent resident in South Africa, (2) must have no criminal conviction in the past ten years, and (3) must not have been found guilty in the last five years. A potential security service provider must also meet the prescribed infrastructural facilities requirements. Similarly, private policing personnel are also required to meet some eligibility criteria similar to those outlined above, such as not having criminal conviction in the last five years. In general, private police officers have powers to stop and search a suspect, seize any suspected stolen item, arrest, and use lethal force should the potential suspect appear to violently resist to arrest (Berg, 2007; Berg & Nouveau, 2011).

Although the regulatory body seems to be doing well in ensuring compliance with the minimum standards required of the industry, there are crucial challenges that need to be addressed. These include infiltration of criminal syndicates into the industry, unregistered security officers, lack of monitoring of firearms, involvement of foreigners in the industry and general non-compliance with legislation. Also, there are traces of corruption among the employees of the Authority, as one employee was dismissed and written warnings were issued to

three others following internal investigations into wrongful conduct (Private Security Industry Regulatory Authority, 2013).

Historical Contexts

South Africa is located at the southernmost end of the African continent. It occupies a land area of about 1.2 million square kilometers, and has a total population of 56 million. It has an unemployment rate of 26.5 per cent (Statistics South Africa, 2017). Life expectancy at birth for males was 56 years, and females 62 as in 2012 (World Health Organization, 2014a). The majority of the population in South Africa is Christian, while the remainder is Muslim, Hindu and traditionalist. As a country with an ethnically diverse population, South Africa has eleven official languages, namely Afrikaans, English, Ndebele, Pedi, Sotho, Swazi, Tsonga, Tswana, Venda, Xhosa and Zulu (Minnaar, 2013).

The colonial history of South Africa began with the arrival of the Dutch Administrator, Jan van Riebeeck, on April 16, 1652. He established a Dutch colony at the southernmost tip, where the city of Cape Town is now located. Other European settlers arrived, and moved into the interior in the early 1700s. For many centuries, the territory now called South Africa was a battle ground between European settlers and the African indigenes over territorial control. In view of their unique fighting capabilities and weaponry, by the late 1800s, however, the Europeans had gained control over the all the territories that were previously owned and controlled by African peoples (Keegan, 1996; The State University, n. d.; Minnaar, 2013).

Following a peace agreement between the British and the Boers (the Dutch and French Huguenot population) in 1909, all the territories were merged to form one nation that culminated in the creation of South Africa in 1910 (Encyclopedia, 2007; The State University, n. d.). The Boers formed the National Party in 1933 following a persistent yet uneasy union with the British. This National Party gained political power in 1948 on a ticket of Apartheid, a policy that established a systematic racial divide between Europeans and non-Europeans, through anti-African legislation. The Apartheid system established "Homelands". The goal was to relegate particular ethnic groupings to separate parts of the country, and set up a pass system to maintain official racial segregation (Keegan, 1996; Rothberg, 2002; The State University, n. d.).

A racially-based education system that started during colonial rule was further entrenched through apartheid system. Black South Africans did not have access to the quality education system established for the White South Africans, who were expected to assume leadership or superior positions in the commercial and administrative sectors. Non-whites were prepared mainly for subordinate roles (The State University, n. d.). The apartheid system was abolished in 1994 with Nelson Mandela as the first black president after long years of political pressure

Understanding Private Policing in South Africa by Asomah

from within and without South Africa (Keegan, 1996; Robinson, 1996; Rotberg, 2002).

Colonialism and the apartheid regime shattered the indigenous social organization, including social and crime control models rooted in the sense of community. In adapting to the imperialist culture, the traditional values were weakened if not eroded. This development adversely affected the indigenous law enforcement institutions. The existing imperialist law-enforcement structures appear not to be robust enough to address South Africa's unique security-related issues, including widespread poverty. This situation has contributed to the creation of the security vacuum that has activated the demand for private policing. Bearpark & Schulz (2007, p. 54) thus maintain that private policing is primarily "the product of long-term historical development rather than a phenomenon of relatively a recent origin". The weak state capacity stems from colonial "projects of territorial statehood" based on the Weberian conception of modern nation-state, which has not served African security interests (Clapham, 1999, p. 27). The traditional ways of delivering security at the sub-state level were consciously eroded and replaced with repressive and coercive police to secure the interests of the colonial powers.

The modification of the traditional existing economic arrangements robbed indigenous Black South Africans of their control over the conditions of their own lives. In some African countries, including South Africa, and Zimbabwe, the expropriation of arable land by Europeans markedly shifted communal land ownership to private ownership in favour of the Whites (Khapoya, 2012; Ochieni & Nwankwo, 2012). The new economic arrangements linked to the creation of the nation-state allows the state to take ownership of the natural resources, previously owned by communities, under the pretext of the so-called "public interests".

In addition, a high sense of individualism, which was introduced during colonialism based on capitalism, often tends to give rise to corruption (Gyekye, 1997). On the other hand, communitarian African social arrangement designed to ensure collective welfare served as a formidable institutionalized measure to stave off corruption. The contact with the colonial powers has erased this social arrangement. The increased sense of individualism has shattered the institutional foundations on which the knowledge and preservation of the indigenous law enforcement were anchored (Seidu-Akrofi, 1989, p. 591).

For most black men in the post-apartheid South Africa, private security that is poorly remunerated is the major employment opportunity other than recourse to crime. Bremner (2004, p. 466) argues that this private security employment for the black men is a new form of colonization. While the structures of colonialism and apartheid have been demolished officially, the economic, cultural, and social arrangements purposely engineered to disadvantage the South African indigenes continue to live on in large measure.

The feeling of insecurity and social exclusion have long been linked to crime and security challenges (Currie, 1998; Davis, 2006), although caution should be taken from simple generalizations from poverty and economic deprivations to crime (Aas, 2013). The expansion of market societies spurs crime through various pathways by deepening social inequality and economic deprivation, and by weakening the capacities of local communities. It also takes away public services from those most in need, and promotes the culture of “Darwinian competition” (Currie, 1998). These circumstances might have contributed to violence and crime challenges confronting the people of South Africa. Against this backdrop, private policing is regarded as one of the viable alternatives to crime control although new approach to addressing the problem is urgently needed (Institute for Security Studies, n.d.).

Security Implications of Violent Imperialism

The colonial representations of the native as “brutal, “irrational”, and “uncivilized” reflected the colonialist imaginary of South Africa as part of the broader processes of “othering” (Mbembe, 2001; Robinson, 1996; Rotberg, 2002). The colonialist relations with the native took the form of violence, forced removals and domination (Bremner, 2004; Cock, 2005).

To counter colonial violence and repression, the colonized subjects responded with violence to ensure decolonization (Fannon, 1964). Fannon (1964) argues that this revolutionary violence intended to overthrow colonial regime does not evaporate when decolonization is finally achieved. Instead, it becomes engrained on the psyche of the colonized subjects to free their mind from the fear and inferiority complex that violent colonialism institutionalized. Violence then becomes a cleansing force, and a part of cultural heritage, which may be transmitted through socialization (Fannon, 1964).

These processes of violence have contributed to the nihilistic attitude to violence and crime among the indigenous law breakers (Bremner, 2004). A killer may view killing a fellow human being as normal (Mbembe, 2001, p. 200), “enlivening”, or as a form of “inner reparation” (Bremner, 2004, p. 464). This normalization of violence is likely to feed into the prevailing forms of lawlessness and violence in South Africa. This violence adds to the perceived need for private policing services to maintain security (Abrahamsen & Williams, 2007).

The violent colonial oppression also inhibited the capacity of the colonized indigenous South Africans to develop a true self-identity and self-consciousness following independence (Fannon, 2008). They have, in contrast, developed a pseudo-white identity and supremacy. This pseudo identity includes the tendency to act violently in much the same way as their former colonial masters treated them (Matsinhe, 2011).

Understanding Private Policing in South Africa by Asomah

Surprisingly, however, former colonized subjects also tend to violently direct their frustration and anger at others who even look like them (Matsinhe, 2011). I believe that this thesis elucidates the Black South Africans' fatal and horrific [xenophobic] attack against legally innocent foreign African nationals living in South Africa (Pillay, 2013).

In addition, gun ownership was an exclusive preserve of the European populations. Following independence, the indigenous peoples consider gun ownership as an indicator of citizenship in the post-apartheid state (Cock, 2005). Conceptualizing gun ownership as a marker of freedom and a symbol of belongingness in South Africa presupposes that more indigenous people would buy guns. This prevalence of guns may contribute to violence and criminality at the least provocation.

Aside from gun possession as an indicator of citizenship, the abolishment of apartheid system sparked intense fear and anxiety among South African populations of European origin. This sense of apprehensiveness and uneasiness (Dikeni, 2002, p. 71) has prompted the need to mobilize defensive mechanisms to counteract this imminent danger (Hoggett, 1992). Private policing is one such defensive response to deal with the anxiety, fear and insecurity activated by high levels of violent crime engulfing South Africa (Travis & Williams, 2012).

Security Implications of Military Restructuring

The military restructuring and downsizing contributed to the presence of ex-combatants who did not have any means of livelihood other than crime. As part of the 1990-1994 transitional processes, seven armed formations were integrated to form the Southern African National Army (SANDF) in the post-apartheid state with the view to avoiding a situation where ex-combatants would resort to criminal acts to survive (Bachelor & Willett, 1998; Cawthra, n. d.; Cock, 2004, 2005). On the contrary, however, military restructuring and downsizing that followed later led to a situation where the total population of the army (SANDF) was cut down from 110,000 in 1994 to 59,000 in 2003. About 30,000 soldiers were discharged from the SANDF. This military demobilization affected most of the guerillas, such as those who were part of the military wing of African National Congress during the struggle for independence (Bachelor & Willett, 1998; Cawthra, n. d.).

The presence of ex-combatants without effective social integration, and the relevant employable and entrepreneurial skills, as has been the case throughout the southern African region, has been tied to a propensity to engage in acts of criminality as a means of livelihood (Cock, 2004, 2005). In turn, this situation contributed to the high crime levels, which have created the perceived need for strengthened security measures, such as private policing in South Africa.

Security Implications of Widespread Poverty

The structural inequalities and gross disparities in wealth are linked to increased crime, which drives the demand for private policing by those who can afford it. The phenomenon of “white wealth and black poverty” continues to exist since the end of the apartheid (Taylor & Vale, 2000, p. 413). The South Africans of European origin control about 80 per cent of the nation’s wealth (Leigh, 2005, para. 27). They also own 87 percent of the land in South Africa, although they represent 13 percent of the South African population (Comaroff, 2006). This land was taken violently from the indigenous peoples (Khapoya, 2012). Given that the land was a major means of livelihood to the indigenous people, they have lost control over conditions of life through this land grabbing (Ochieni & Nwankwo, 2012).

The socio-economic inequality that colonial and apartheid rule institutionalized continues to exist. The people affected by this inequality may feel alienated from the state, and this alienation may be channeled through violence and crime (Bremner, 2004). Naylor (1995, as cited in Cock, 2005, p. 801) suggests that if people do not have a credible and legitimate means of meeting their basic needs, including food, water, and decent housing, some might resort to illegitimate and potentially violent means to survive. While mobilization of the necessary security apparatuses, including private policing, to tackle the problem is justifiable, long-term solutions might involve an aggressive redistribution of resources to address economic disparities in the country.

Governance, Justice System and State Security Machinery

The state’s penchant for pursuing neoliberal policies that primarily serve capital interests promotes private policing. For instance, the shift towards central city improvement district, otherwise known as the “business district” (Berg, 2010; Samara, 2009). The business-district project is intended to ensure social redevelopment and revitalization in urban centres, particularly where business activities are reported to be in decline, to help generate investment and employment opportunities. As typical of all neo-liberal-oriented projects, the business district development strategy uses patent market mechanisms, such as cost recovery. Private corporations play a cardinal role in its governance and management. Private-policing firms are generally contracted to police business districts. This situation is the case in South Africa (Berg, 2010; Samara, 2009). The state, therefore, is actively involved in creating and legitimizing the market for the growth of private policing services by setting examples in awarding contracts to private policing firms.

Aside from the state’s promotion of private policing, there is a lack of strong political will to decisively tackle corruption in the state institutions, including criminal justice system. This problem of corruption reduces confidence in the police in particular. Tamukamoyo (2013) suggests that the National Prosecuting

Understanding Private Policing in South Africa by Asomah

Authority (NPA) and the Special Investigating Unit (SIU) have not been robust enough to spearhead investigations into a wave of corruption dogging South Africa. The high prevalence of crime in South Africa suggests deficiencies in the criminal justice system, including inability to rehabilitate offenders (as cited in South African News Agency, 2009, para. 15).

The post-apartheid public police are not only incapable of maintaining law and order, but also contribute to criminal violence, for instance, through promoting sale of illegal firearms. In 1997, the police institution reported 1802 guns lost by the police personnel, and this resulted in the charging of only 143 officers (Newham & Faull, 2011, p. 798). This situation has partly eroded the trust of the citizenry in the public police in combating crime. This development might have served as a catalyst for the growing private security sector as more trusted, or preferred alternative by those who can afford. One of the recommendations of the National Development Plan adopted by Cabinet in 2012 calls for a professionalization of the South Africa Police Service to bolster public confidence in the police service (Institute for Security Studies, 2014).

Implications of Private Policing

Paasche, Yarwood and Sidaway (2013, p. 1) observe that private policing has “become one of the displacement, especially of so-called ‘undersirables’ from public space associated with private enclaves of consumption”. The essence of keeping “the unwelcome others” on the move is to prevent them from settling down to prevent them from getting an opportunity to commit crime. These authors argue that there is a gradual development towards limiting the access of the poor to places designated for business purposes, as exemplified in central city improvement districts (CCID). Private policing is a form of disciplinary mechanism of governance that spurs social division between sections of the population.

The targets of this disciplinary security are perceived to be mostly young black men who are not neatly dressed, and often walk in a group (Bremner, 2004; Cock, 2005; Kempa & Singh, 2008; Samara, 2009). This constant surveillance of the poor can lead to polarization by pitting the rich against the poor, and the black against the white.

The private police officers tasked to enforce by-law regulations governing the Cape Town central city improvement district are more likely to be involved in abusive behaviour against the vulnerable and marginalized black peoples. Private policing officers tend to forcefully remove street children, and abuse others verbally and physically (Breytenbach, 2005). Shopkeepers acting as security guards brutally attack an elderly woman in Limpopo province. This incidence caught the attention of En Mthethwa, the Minister of Police in South Africa, who condemned this form of attack against poor and vulnerable citizens (as cited in Private Security Regulatory Authority, 2013, p. 11). This incidence demonstrates

that private policing can potentially be abusive, brutal, and unfriendly to the poor if it is not properly kept in check.

Any recourse to private policing as a market commodity, and a means of securing protection in the post-apartheid state would mean that a large number of poor people will be priced out. Burton, du Plessis, Leggett, Louw, Mistry and van Vuuren (2004) observe that White and Indian South Africans are more likely to patronize private policing services than their black counterparts. This observation might point to inability on the part of the majority of blacks to access private policing services.

Private policing is both a product, and a function of neoliberal expansionism, spatial regulation, and governance that tends to be racialized, exclusionary, repressive, and punitive. Samara (2009) notes that private policing has become an effective instrument of a racial project of exclusion under the conditions of democratic dispensation in South Africa.

Conclusion

This paper explored the context of the proliferation of private policing in South Africa. It argued that private policing is a product of long-term historical undercurrents of imperialism, and the role of the state in promoting private policing to help address crime challenges. The colonial and apartheid rule established a social structure that continues to undermine the indigenous people's human security and dignity. This situation has contributed to shaping criminogenic conditions, as manifested in high crime rate in South Africa. The development of private policing is a function of a paradigm shift from the collective human security to the individualistic sense of security in contrast to the collective welfare that characterized pre-colonial indigenous social relations.

This paper suggests the need for a combination of more effective crime control and prevention measures on one hand, and more effective solutions to social inequality, poverty, and racism, on the other. This paper also indicates that private policing is generally classist, racist, exclusionary, exploitative, and punitive. Private security regulatory mechanisms need to be strengthened vigorously to deal with the excesses of private security firms.

The security apparatuses of the state need to be transparent, proactive, trustworthy, efficient, and human rights-minded to restore the trust of the people in the state security machinery and the entire justice system. This finding calls for a new philosophy in regard to the governance of the state that is more responsive to the needs of the ordinary citizens, and more committed to tackling corruption and bad governance. Poverty and racism need to be seriously tackled, as they constitute a major threat to security. This paper therefore advocates a social movement towards building and sustaining an inclusive society whereby

Understanding Private Policing in South Africa by Asomah

everyone has a sense of belongingness, and a fair share of the national cake, regardless of their backgrounds.

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