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Crime, Insecurity, and Spatial Organisation in  
Managua, Nicaragua**

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# **Disembedding the City: Crime, Insecurity, and Spatial Organisation in Managua, Nicaragua**

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## **Introduction**

The spatial organisation of cities has long been a central issue of many urban theories, reflecting the fact that the differentiated organisation of space is a fundamental feature of cities around the world. The most paradigmatic example is perhaps the Chicago School of Sociology's famous "concentric zone" model of urban growth (Park *et al.*, 1925), but the importance of differentiated urban space is also evident in other ideas about the development of cities, including the emergence of marginal squatter settlements (Mangin, 1970) or suburbanisation (Jackson, 1985), for example. Space is also a key issue for a growing corpus of research concerned with the emergence of what has been termed a "new urban segregation" (Caldeira, 1999). Studies around the world have noted changing patterns of urban spatial organisation as a result of rising levels of crime and insecurity in cities (cf. Beall, 2002; Blakely and Snyder, 1997; Caldeira, 1996a, 1999 & 2000; Connell, 1999; Davis, 1990 & 1998; Low, 2001 & 2003; Marcuse, 1997a & 1997b; Salcedo and Torres, 2004; and Spinks, 2001). The increasing fear of crime has led to the development of a new form of segregated spatial organisation, in particular through the proliferation of what are termed "fortified enclaves".

Fortified enclaves are "privatized, enclosed, and monitored spaces of residence, consumption, leisure, and work" (Caldeira, 1999: 114), designed to isolate their occupants from criminality and therefore minimize their insecurity. They typically take the form of self-sufficient gated communities and closed condominiums, characterised by high walls, sophisticated surveillance technology, and round-the-clock private security that in addition to making residences secure, also protect on-site amenities such as shops, sports clubs, restaurants, or bars. Fortified enclaves can vary considerably, however. In Buenos Aires (Argentina), for example, the "countries" – from the English term "country club" – are purpose-built on the northern periphery of the city, and spread over very large areas, often including polo grounds and football pitches within their boundaries (Svampa, 2001). By contrast, in Santiago de Chile fortified enclaves tend to be concentrated in the north-east of the city, and involve the piecemeal "closing off" of areas through the privatisation of streets and squares in order to constitute "closed communities" (Fischer *et al.*, 2003; and Sabatini and Arenas, 2000). In both these cases, it is the affluent that are isolating themselves, and this is clearly the most frequent state of affairs, but "residents from all social groups ...build walls" (Caldeira, 2000: 297). Poor KwaZulu/Natal migrant workers in Johannesburg (South Africa) turn their Soweto hostels into exclusive "fortified communities" in order to better protect themselves from the stigmatisation and hostility that they face from wider society, for example (Beall, 2002).

Notwithstanding the variety of forms that fortified enclaves can take, their emergence is widely seen to transform cities from spaces of openness and free circulation to more fractured and fragmented archipelago-like localities. In doing so, they fundamentally change the

character of urban social life. The “right to the city” (Harvey, 2003) becomes conditional on contingent attributes such as wealth, social class, or residency in a particular area, converting cities into spaces of unequal and constrained access, as Caldeira (1999: 130) highlights:

“in a city of walls and enclaves..., public space undergoes a deep transformation. Felt as more dangerous, fractured by the new voids and enclaves, broken in its old alignments, and privatized..., public space ...is increasingly abandoned to those who do not have a chance of living, working, and shopping in the new private, internalised, and fortified enclaves. As ...spaces ...are enclosed and turned inside, the outside space is left for those who cannot afford to go in.”

In other words, the new pattern of segregated spatial organisation erodes the very notion of what constitutes “public space”. Those on the “inside” feel little responsibility to those “outside”, and no longer relate to notions of cohabitation and interaction but rather to an ideal of separateness that assumes that social groups should live in homogeneous enclaves away from those perceived as different.

As a result, the logic of spatial separation that underpins the emergence of fortified enclaves frequently becomes interlinked with a logic of social exclusion. In her seminal study of the phenomenon in São Paulo (Brazil), Caldeira (2000) notes that the withdrawal from public space into enclaves by the upper class is justified through a discourse that emphasizes the need to be isolated from the poor because they are seen to be the primary perpetrators of crime and violence. This discourse creates an association between criminality and poverty that generates stereotypical images of the poor as the dangerous “other”, which not only serves to legitimise their spatial exclusion from the lives of the rich in the name of “security”, but also actively engenders forms of social discrimination. The poor are stigmatised as inherently criminal, and are projected as dangerous, unpredictable, and brutal “animals” that do not merit human rights (cf. also Caldeira, 1996b). As a result, police patrolling in São Paulo increasingly specifically targets poor areas – often in a brutal and arbitrary manner – and there are growing calls for a reduction of the civil rights of the poor.

Placing itself within this burgeoning research tradition interweaving the spatial and the social, this article explores the particular way in which such a new pattern of spatial segregation has emerged in Managua, the capital city of Nicaragua, as result of high levels of crime and insecurity during the past decade and a half. Although many of the classic features of the fortified enclave model are present in Managua, the process of urban segregation has developed along different lines insofar as urban space has been differentiated through a process of “disembedding” rather than through its fragmentation into an archipelago of self-sustaining islands of wealth within a sea of poverty. I begin by providing some background on the urban development of Managua. I follow this with an overview of urban crime and insecurity in contemporary Nicaragua, and then describe in the next two sections the transformations that Managua has undergone during the past decade or so as a result of the high levels of crime and insecurity in the city, linking these to wider social issues. A final section offers some conclusions, including a discussion of the notion of “disembedding”. Much of my evidence was gathered during three periods of fieldwork totalling 15 months carried out in Managua in 1996-97 and 2002.<sup>1</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> The first period of fieldwork, between July 1996 and July 1997, was carried out in the context of a social anthropology Ph.D. at the University of Cambridge (Rodgers, 2000), partly funded by grants from the Royal Anthropological Institute of Great Britain and Northern Ireland and the Trinity College William Wyse

## Managua, the “palimpsest” city

The expression “*Managua es Nicaragua*” – “Managua is Nicaragua” – is one that is commonly heard by visitors to the city, and to a certain extent there is an element of truth to this claim. From a demographic point of view, the city contains almost a quarter of the country’s total population of approximately 5.5 million, which furthermore amounts to over 40 percent of the urban population of a country that is about 60 percent urbanised.<sup>2</sup> Managua moreover dominates the country from both an economic and a political point of view, and is a primary symbolic reference point for all Nicaraguans. At the same time, however, Managua is very different to the rest of Nicaragua, and has its own particular dynamics and characteristics. In many ways, it is an exceptional feature within the country’s social and physical landscape. It is ten times the size of Nicaragua’s second city, Matagalpa, and moreover is the focal point of a number of unique processes and events that have made it, and continue to make it, a very particular setting.

In 1851, Managua – which at the time was a rather sleepy provincial town – was chosen as a compromise capital for Nicaragua, over the then more important cities of León and Granada in order to avoid antagonising the fractious Liberal and Conservative factions vying for power that were respectively based in these urban centres (Wall, 1996: 45). Within a century it rapidly grew into a thriving metropolis of half a million inhabitants that by the 1960s had a reputation as a playground for the wealthy. On 23 December 1972, however, the city suffered a devastating earthquake that killed 20,000 people, destroyed 75 percent of the city’s housing and 90 percent of its commercial capacity – including in particular the bustling city centre – and left 300,000 people homeless (Black, 1981: 57). Although substantial amounts of international aid poured into Nicaragua to help rebuild its shattered capital, most of it was pocketed by the ruling Somoza dictatorship, and very little reconstruction actually took place (Godoy Blanco, 1983). As a result, the shape of the city was changed profoundly, as Wall (1996: 48-49) highlights:

“The destroyed central part of Managua was not rebuilt and ...was virtually abandoned. Only a few buildings survived the earthquake, and the central core took on a post-apocalyptic look. ...The rebuilding effort that did take place following the 1972 earthquake created new residential areas east-south-east of the city centre... This gives the city the appearance of a deformed octopus. The tentacles of the octopus reach out along major transport arteries away from the old centre, but the octopus’s body is riddled with gaping holes.”

Not surprisingly perhaps, since the 1972 earthquake Managua is often referred to as “la ciudad del caos” (“the city of chaos”).<sup>3</sup> The overthrow of the corrupt Somoza dictatorship in 1979 by the *Sandinista* revolution had little impact on the shape of the city, as the revolutionary regime rapidly found itself mired in a civil war against the US-backed *Contras*

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Foundation. The second, in February-March 2002, was conducted as part of the London School of Economics and Political Science Development Research Centre’s Crisis States Programme, which also sponsored a further visit in December 2002.

<sup>2</sup> These statistics are from the *Instituto Nicaragüense de Estadísticas y Censos* (INEC - Nicaraguan Statistics and Census Institute) website: <http://www.inec.gob.ni/estadisticas/proyeccion2003.htm>, accessed 20 July 2004.

<sup>3</sup> Cf. *La Prensa*, 10 May 2004, <http://www.laprensa.com.ni/archivo/2004/mayo/10/nacionales/nacionales-20040510-07.html>, accessed 23 June 2004, for example.

that drained state resources and prevented any large-scale urban reconstruction. A limited number of neighbourhood improvement and squatter settlement upgrading projects were put into effect (Drewe, 1986; MINVAH, 1980; and Rodgers, 2000), but these did little to mitigate the general structurelessness of the city, which has been further compounded over the years by the slow deterioration of urban infrastructure, as well as the anarchic development of numerous marginal squatter settlements, including some in the ruins of the old city centre. As a recent guidebook to Nicaragua put it, Managua is a city with “no centre, no skyline and no logic” (Leonardi, 2001: 57).

At the same time, however, while Managua can certainly be seen as something of a chaotic city, another way of considering the city is as a postmodern metropolis, or in other words “a ‘palimpsest’ of past forms superimposed upon each other, and a ‘collage’ of current uses” (Harvey, 1990: 66). The squatter settlements in the ruins of the old city centre are an obvious exemplification, but the notion also applies more generally. The businesses and services that used to be in the city centre have re-emerged around Managua in a decentralised manner, creating a fragmented metropolis of semi-autonomous districts connected by a somewhat Byzantine transport network, for example. Perhaps most paradigmatically, the population of Managua has adapted to the post-earthquake shape of the city by mapping old reference points onto the new cityscape, with addresses in the city often designated in relation to past features that were destroyed.

New urban forms have also emerged, particularly following the change of regime in 1990, when the *Sandinistas* were beaten at the ballot box. As Whisnant (1995: 447-8) notes, the resulting return of a number of wealthy Nicaraguans who had left Managua for Miami in 1979 led to

“determined efforts by the ‘Miami boys’ (as they are called) ...to recreate their cherished Miami social and cultural ‘scene’ [that] have transformed the Managua night: neon-lit bars and exclusive clubs, designer clothing, Nicaragua’s first surf shop, one-hour photo processing, expensive cars cruising the scene, and pervasive preening, posturing, and dalliance”.

Wider process of globalisation and economic liberalisation have also meant that franchises of Subway, Pizza Hut, the Hard Rock Café, or McDonald’s have been established in Managua. The latter is particularly symbolic, as a McDonald’s restaurant was first opened in 1975, but had its franchise annulled shortly after the revolution, and its return was seen by many as a sign of the ultimate triumph of capitalist modernization. Indeed, the first McDonald’s to be re-established in Managua in 1998 was jointly opened in grand fanfare by Ronald McDonald and the vice-president of Nicaragua, who proclaimed (in a racist and sexist manner) that McDonald’s was helping Nicaragua to “take off its loincloth” (cf. Babb, 2001: 60-1). New and expensive bars, restaurants, and nightclubs, as well as several luxury hotels have developed in Managua over the past seven to eight years, as have exclusive supermarkets and two North American-style shopping malls, the Plaza Inter and Metrocentro malls. The latter, in particular, has over 100 shops selling imported consumer items such as Benetton and Liz Clairborne clothes, Sony electronic goods, or Victorinox Swiss army knives, for example. Both malls also boast multi-screen cinemas, as well as dedicated food courts that cater for an average 800-1,000 customers a day in the Plaza Inter mall and 1,000-1,500 in the Metrocentro mall.<sup>4</sup>

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<sup>4</sup> *La Prensa*, 19 July 2004, <http://www.laprensa.com.ni/archivo/2004/julio/19/economia/economia-20040719-01.html>, accessed 21 July 2004.

The “palimpsest” nature of the urban development of Managua has arguably taken a new turn since the late 1990s, as the city has undergone a more purposeful process of urban intervention. A particular strategy of urban transformation has been pursued and implemented that does not seek merely to superimpose a new urban form over past ones in the manner of a “collage”, but rather to create a new spatial order based on the explicit separation of certain urban spaces from the city as a whole through a process of “disembedding”. Although to a certain extent this process can be explicitly linked to the neo-liberal project being implemented in post-Sandinista Nicaragua (cf. Babb, 2001), the primary catalyst has arguably been the rising levels of urban crime and insecurity in the country.

### **Crime and Insecurity in contemporary Nicaragua**

Despite the end of the civil war in 1990, there has been a veritable explosion of crime in Nicaragua during the past decade and a half, particularly in urban areas. According to Nicaraguan National Police statistics, crime levels have been rising steadily by an average of 10 percent per year since 1990, compared to an average annual increase of just 2 percent during the 1980s (Serbin and Ferreyra, 2000: 185). The absolute number of crimes more than tripled between 1990 and 2003, with crimes against persons – which include violent crimes such as homicides, rapes and assaults – in particular rising by some 460 percent from 7,340 reported crimes in 1990 to 33,691 in 2003 (see table 1). A CID-Gallup survey conducted in April 1997 reported that one in six Nicaraguans claimed to have been the victim of a criminal attack at least once in the previous four months, a proportion that rose to a staggering one in four in Managua,<sup>5</sup> where about 40 percent of all crimes occur (Granera Sacasa and Cuarezma Terán, 1997: 32). Not surprisingly perhaps, respondents in a national survey conducted by the Nicaraguan NGO *Ética y Transparencia* in 1999 singled out crime as the principal problem affecting the country by a margin of over 30 percent (PNUD, 2000: 130).

[Table 1 about here]

At the same time, however, while the overall trend of rising levels of crime is no doubt accurate, official Nicaraguan National Police statistics are in themselves highly problematic. As William Godnick *et al.* (2002: 26) note, “given the anecdotal information on violence as portrayed in the Nicaraguan press and the general perception of violence in Nicaraguan society, these figures are suspiciously low”. In particular, the national homicide rate per 100,000 inhabitants – which is the generally accepted international benchmark for measuring levels of violence – is particularly problematic compared to other countries in the region, standing at a more or less steady average of just 15 deaths per 100,000 persons between 1990 and 2003 compared to almost three times that many annual deaths in Honduras and over six times that in Guatemala and El Salvador (Moser and Winton, 2002: 47). During a year’s fieldwork conducted in the poor Managua *barrio* (neighbourhood) Luis Fanor Hernández in 1996-97, I tallied 9 crime-related deaths, which works out proportionally to a staggering 360 deaths per 100,000 persons. While such a calculation is of course unsystematic and based on a small sample, it is certainly suggestive that statistical underreporting is a serious problem in Nicaragua.

A number of reasons can be invoked to explain this situation. On the one hand, both Presidents Arnoldo Alemán (1997-2001) and Enrique Bolaños (2002- ) made fighting crime a

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<sup>5</sup> *La Tribuna*, 2 May 1997, page 4.

major element of their respective programmes of government and “preferred” positive – i.e. low – crime statistics. On the other hand, probably most important is the inefficiency and weakness of Nicaraguan state institutions. The Pan-American Health Organisation has for example estimated that over 50 percent of all mortalities in Nicaragua in 1995 were not registered, for a variety of reasons ranging from a lack of knowledge concerning where to register deaths to deficient record-keeping by hospitals, among others.<sup>6</sup> In many parts of the country – in particular the North-East and the Caribbean coast – the state is furthermore often altogether absent (Godnick *et al.*, 2002: 33). But perhaps the most dramatic institutional weakness concerns the Nicaraguan National Police itself. Since the regime change in 1990, the Police has undergone a number of radical reforms that have dramatically affected its operational capacity as well as its perceived efficacy. It has undergone a painstakingly slow process of de-politicisation, and has been reduced in both size and budget – partly due to country’s efforts to meet stringent IMF and World Bank-imposed structural adjustment conditions – to the extent that it only has a limited presence and patrolling capacity in urban areas, and is completely absent in 21 percent of the country’s 146 municipalities (Cajina, 2000: 174).

Overall, there were just 118 police personnel per 100,000 inhabitants in Nicaragua in 2000,<sup>7</sup> compared to a Central American regional average of 195, and 285 in the USA or 266 in Spain, for example (Call, 2000: 24-25). In addition, the Nicaraguan National Police has the lowest number of police personnel per 100 crimes in Central America, the lowest budget per crime, the lowest budget per police personnel, and the lowest average salaries.<sup>8</sup> Not only does this obviously make Nicaraguan National Police personnel susceptible to corruption, but it also clearly limits their technical and material capabilities. Training is often limited, particularly for non-ranking personnel, and there is a general lack of equipment. In a media interview in 2001, for example, the Nicaraguan Police Commissioner Franco Montealegre stated that Police personnel were often out-gunned by criminals, especially by the youth gangs that are prevalent throughout urban areas in the country.<sup>9</sup> Perhaps not surprisingly, 43 percent of the respondents in the 1999 *Etica y Transparencia* survey who admitted to having been victims of crime also stated that they had not reported the crime to the Police because “it was no use” (Cajina, 2000: 178).

The unreliability of official Police statistics notwithstanding, the high levels of crime in urban Nicaragua were very visible during the course of my fieldwork in *barrio* Luis Fanor Hernández, both in 1996-97 and 2002. Beyond personally experiencing and witnessing criminal acts, they were clearly reflected in the practices and the discourses of neighbourhood inhabitants. There was a prevalent fear of leaving the perceived safe haven of the home in the *barrio* in 1996, its most obvious manifestation being the passing away of the quintessential Latin American habit of spending one’s evenings sitting on the curb side outside one’s house, chatting to neighbours and watching the world go by. By 2002, this had got worse, as even the shelter of the home now seemed precarious, with houses barricaded up in an almost fort-like manner and occupants emerging as little as possible, and when they did so, restricting themselves to a few fixed routes and destinations. “We are living in a state of siege”, was how an informant called Adilia described the situation in 1997, and in 2002 she told me that

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<sup>6</sup> Cf. <http://www.paho.org/english/HIA1998/Nicaragua.pdf>, accessed 27 June 2003.

<sup>7</sup> Cf. <http://www.policia.gob.ni/numeropolicia03.htm>, accessed 18 June 2004.

<sup>8</sup> Cf. <http://www.policia.gob.ni/diap07pm.htm>, accessed 3 April 2002.

<sup>9</sup> Nicaragua Network News Service, volume 9, number 6, 5-11 February 2001, available online at: [http://www.tulane.edu/~libweb/RESTRICTED/NICANEWS/2001/2001\\_0205.txt](http://www.tulane.edu/~libweb/RESTRICTED/NICANEWS/2001/2001_0205.txt), accessed 16 June 2004.

“things are worse, people are scared to leave their homes, it's too dangerous”. Her mother, *Doña Yolanda*, dramatically echoed this sense of insecurity in an interview:

“There’s so much delinquency, it’s impossible to live... they’ll kill you for a watch... they’ll kill you for a pair of shoes... they’ll kill you for your shirt ... they’re everywhere, you’ve got to watch out... they could be your neighbour, even your friend, you can never be sure... you can’t go out any more, you can’t wear rings, bracelets, nice shoes, anything that makes us look a little better than we really are... how can we live? It’s not possible...”

This chronic insecurity has had dramatic consequences for the social fabric in urban Nicaragua, particularly among the poor. From what I observed in 1996-97, the erosion of the sense of community in poor neighbourhoods in Managua had reached such dramatic proportions that it was no exaggeration to talk of a veritable atomisation of collective life, as traditional units of social solidarity such as the family, the household, and networks of trust and mutual aid had worn away and even disappeared (cf. Rodgers, 2000). In 2002, I saw little in the way of improvement, except for those who had become involved on an individual basis in the crack cocaine trade that was burgeoning in poor urban neighbourhoods, which however had the broader consequence of increasing overall levels of violence and insecurity in these communities (cf. Rodgers, 2003). For the great majority, as *Doña Yolanda* poignantly put it during a conversation on how things had evolved between 1997 and 2002, “nothing has changed, except that we’re now five years on, and the future didn’t get any better...”

From the point of view of the rich, however, the situation evolved rather differently, as two anecdotes serve to illustrate. The first is a conversation that I had with my obviously affluent Nicaraguan neighbour in the plane taking me from Miami to Managua for the first time in July 1996. When I had told him that I was planning to spend a year in Nicaragua, he launched into a long tirade on how Managua was an impossible city to live in, that it was much too dangerous, that there were incredibly high levels of crime and violence, that you got held up one time in two at traffic lights and the roads were so bad that you always ran the risk of breaking down and being attacked, that there was no where to eat, drink or dance safely in the city, and that he had been in Miami to buy a house in order to move there with his family as soon as possible. In 2002, I was once again seated next to an affluent Nicaraguan on my flight to Managua, but the tenor of our conversation was completely different. On hearing that I was going back to Managua for the first time in five years, he gushed enthusiastically about how the city had changed, that Arnaldo Alemán had completely transformed it and that it was now a safe and liveable place, that there were nice restaurants, bars, and hotels, and – in bizarre symmetry to my conversation six years previously – that he was actually in the process of moving back to Managua after eight years in Miami.

### **The spatial transformation of Managua**

As with most social process, there are a variety of factors underpinning the positive transformation of Managua for the affluent, but one of the most important is definitely Arnaldo Alemán, as suggested by my travel companion to Nicaragua in 2002. Alemán was elected mayor of the city in 1990 as part of the anti-*Sandinistas* opposition, but also came to power with a definite project of urban modernization for Managua that was squarely focused on re-claiming the city for the elites, from whose ranks he emerged. What this initially translated into was a series of very ostentatious public works to “beautify” the city. Two of the most visible projects executed in the early 1990s were a large roundabout with a big



fountain that when lit up seemed to spout waters of different colours, and the massive *Catedral Metropolitana de la Purísima Concepción de María*, which was the last cathedral to be built in Latin America during the twentieth century. Other initiatives included the construction of the Plaza Juan Pablo II, which is presently the largest plaza in Central America, and the reconstruction of the “malecón”, or waterfront, alongside Lake Managua, which had fallen into disuse after the 1972 earthquake.

Alemán was elected to the Presidency of Nicaragua in 1996, but nevertheless continued his campaign to “beautify” Managua unabated. With the resources of the entire country to draw upon, as well as a hand-picked yes-man as his successor to the mayoralty (Roberto Cedeño), he oversaw the building new offices in the old city centre for his government at the cost of several million dollars, including in particular a new presidential palace which, “along with a new three-tiered fountain whose jets of water correspond to computerized musical melodies, was inaugurated at the turn of the millennium” (Babb, 2001: 62). Managua’s International Airport was also completely overhauled in 2000-2001, with the passenger terminal in particular converted from a rather ugly, hot and dusty concrete block to an air-conditioned glass and steel construction, at the cost of US\$33.4 million.<sup>10</sup> Finally, the Alemán government furthermore indirectly stimulated construction by providing (illegal) tax breaks to companies such the Pellas Group, which in 1999-2000 spent some US\$20 million to build the highest structure in Managua since the 1972 earthquake, a fourteen-story, ultra-modern and futuristic tower known as the “*Edificio Pellas*”, and for which they obtained a US\$2.5 million tax exoneration.<sup>11</sup>

Alemán’s different “beautification” efforts clearly contributed significantly to changing the Managua cityscape for the affluent, as his endeavours focused principally on locations directly impinging on their lives, such as the government offices where many are employed or the International Airport that many make frequent use of, for example. Considered together with the new bars, restaurants, and malls that opened in response to the demands of returned “Miami boys” and due to the growing effects of globalisation and economic liberalisation, it can be argued that there began to emerge by the mid-1990s a conglomeration of locations and services in Managua that catered explicitly to a small but growing urban elite. As my travel companion on the plane to Managua in 1996 made clear, however, this in itself was not enough to transform the city into an attractive locale for the urban elite, due to the rising crime and insecurity and deficient urban transport infrastructure networks in Managua. The transformation of the city into an agreeable space for the affluent involved a much more vital reorganisation of the urban order than simply erecting a series of modern edifices.

One element of this more profound transformation owes little to any direct measure taken by Alemán. Although he initiated a number of targeted Police campaigns against crime and delinquency in Managua when he acceded to the Presidency in 1997, these tended to be of short duration as he failed to provide the under-funded and under-staffed Nicaraguan National Police with the means to sustain them.<sup>12</sup> Similarly, his government’s campaigns to force street vendors away from road intersections by means of heavy policing in a bid to reduce

<sup>10</sup> *Instituto Nicaragüense de Fomento Municipal* (INIFOM – Nicaraguan Institute for the Promotion of Municipal Affairs), “Ficha Municipal: Managua”, <http://www.inifom.gob.ni/ArchivosPDF/Managua2.pdf>, accessed 21 July 2004.

<sup>11</sup> Cf. *Confidencial*, 5-11 May 2002, <http://www.confidencial.com.ni/2002-288/deportada1-288.html>, accessed 26 July 2004.

<sup>12</sup> One such campaign was an anti-gang campaign in January 1997, when Alemán made special funds available to the Police to buy gasoline and ammunition in order to conduct the campaign. It came to an abrupt end within three weeks when Police supplies ran out and no more funding was forthcoming.

carjacking incidents only worked as long as the policing actually occurred, and when Police attention was inevitably diverted to other concerns after a few weeks, vendors returned to their intersections. Not surprisingly, the general inefficacy of the Nicaraguan National Police led to a proliferation of private security companies in the country, especially in Managua. Overall, while there was just one private security firm registered with the Police in 1990, this rose to 14 in 1996 (Cajina, 2000: 169), and to 56 in 2003.<sup>13</sup> In 1999, there were 6,536 officially registered private security guards, compared to 6,076 Nicaraguan National Police personnel, of which furthermore 34 percent – 2,071 – were administrative staff (Cajina, 2000: 170). By 2003, while the number of Police personnel had increased to 7,664,<sup>14</sup> the number of registered private security guards had risen to 9,017.<sup>15</sup> The real number is in fact likely much higher considering that 29,414 firearm permits were delivered for private security guard service in 2000.<sup>16</sup>

Private security guards are of course hired to ensure the security of specific particular locations. These have traditionally included businesses such as banks in Nicaragua, but since the mid-1990s have increasingly also meant the new bars, restaurants, supermarkets, and malls that have emerged in the city. Private security guards also protect the homes of the affluent in wealthy neighbourhoods such as Las Colinas, Los Robles, or Alto de Santo Domingo, for example. Because contrarily to the Police, private security agencies have no remit to police and protect public space in general,<sup>17</sup> this privatisation of security is increasingly seen as a cause for concern in Nicaragua.<sup>18</sup> At the heart of this anxiety is the sense that it is key factor contributing to the growing social fragmentation of Managua as a space of universal socialisation, as Babb (2001: 67-8) comments:

“The wealthy venture out to urban locations designed for their convenience, then drive home to safe zones at a comfortable distance from sites of obvious misery. They shield themselves as much as possible from crime and other social problems, constructing higher walls and better security systems for their homes and hiring armed guards to patrol their neighborhoods. In doing so, they create segregated enclaves that, in Managua as elsewhere in Latin America, alter the character of public space and public life and enforce rules of inclusion and exclusion..., [with] the streets of Managua ...left to those who cannot afford to retreat to enclaves”.

Babb is both right and wrong in her analysis of the transformation of Managua. There is no doubt that high walls and private guards protect the city's elite residents in their homes and as

<sup>13</sup> Cf. *La Prensa*, 3 March 2003, <http://www.laprensa.com.ni/cronologico/2003/marzo/03/nacionales/nacionales-20030303-18.html>, accessed 18 July 2004.

<sup>14</sup> Cf. <http://www.policia.gob.ni/estadisticas/dosier2003/dosier9.htm>, accessed 18 July 2004.

<sup>15</sup> *La Prensa*, 3 March 2003, <http://www.laprensa.com.ni/cronologico/2003/marzo/03/nacionales/nacionales-20030303-18.html>, accessed 18 July 2004.

<sup>16</sup> *La Prensa*, 14 August 2000, <http://www.laprensa.com.ni/cronologico/2000/agosto/14/nacionales/nacionales-20000814-05.html>, accessed 20 July 2004. Moreover, the Nicaraguan National Police admits to not having a complete registry of private security firms, and it is furthermore accepted that their firearm registry is deficient and that the actual number of firearms in civilian possession in Nicaragua is probably at least 50 percent higher than the number legally registered (Godnick *et al.*, 2002: 4).

<sup>17</sup> This is the theory at least, for the Nicaraguan Human Rights Centre (CENIDH – *Centro Nicaragüense de Derechos Humanos*) “has documented numerous cases of police officers holding down second jobs with private security companies and the existence of ‘contracts’ in which companies hired police officers or paid the local station for special police operations” (Grigsby, 2003).

<sup>18</sup> Cf. *La Prensa*, 4 March 2003, <http://www.laprensa.com.ni/cronologico/2003/marzo/04/nacionales/nacionales-20030304-11.html>, accessed 20 July 2004, for example.

they work, eat, and play in the new government ministries, restaurants, and shopping malls, and that Managua is becoming an increasingly segregated city. The logic of this new urban segregation is arguably rather different compared to the rest of Latin America, however, and does not correspond to the classic fortified enclave model. The walls and guards that Babb highlights in fact tend to occur in relation to individual residences rather than whole neighbourhoods, even in those few neighbourhoods that constitute concentrations of affluence such as Las Colinas, for example. This is to a large extent because – partly for historical reasons, as most of the Nicaraguan affluent class left the country in 1979, with only a trickle returning after 1990 – the urban elite in Managua is extremely small relative to other countries in the region. Very roughly, it can be estimated to encompass approximately 7,000 people.<sup>19</sup> This is too small a group to successfully create self-sustaining “gated communities” such as those described by Caldeira (2000) in São Paulo, for example, where residents often almost never need to actually physically leave these enclosed spaces, having all the social, economic, and cultural services they require within them. The small numbers of the urban elite in Managua means that any eventual enclaves would be very modest in size, and any business that would cater exclusively to the residents of these enclaves would likely find it difficult to be profitable. As it is, the new bars, shops, supermarkets, and malls in Managua need to catch a wider clientele – including tourists, for example – in order to be viable, and this precludes their being hidden away in “gated communities”.

Added to the natural sprawl of the elites in Managua as a result of the “palimpsest” nature of the city, these constraints have meant that instead of the classic fortified enclaves model of spatial (re)organisation, an alternative strategy for the reduction of risk and insecurity for the affluent has evolved in Managua. Rather than being about fragmentation as Babb and Caldeira contend, this has involved connecting the spatially spread out and heavily protected social, economic, and cultural locations of the wealthy in order to create a kind of elite “networked community” that is then separated from the rest of the city, thereby allowing them to live their lives with little exposure to the rest of Managua and its violence. Seen in this way, while the new bars, restaurants, hotels, and offices in Managua are important elements of this new elite social form, as is their private protection, it is very much their constitution into a viable network that allows the small urban elite in Managua to make use of them effectively, their spatial sprawl notwithstanding. The means for the connection of the different locations of the lives of affluent in Managua has been the development during the past half decade of a secure and efficient set of strategic, well-lit, constantly fast-moving transport arteries through the city, or in other words, roads.

### **Roads and Roundabouts**

In a recent article calling for the elaboration of a political economy of roads, Wilson (2004: 529) remarks that

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<sup>19</sup> This “guesstimate” is derived from the average daily number of customers served in the Plaza Inter mall and Metrocentro mall food courts mentioned previously, which I have multiplied by six (the average family size in Nicaragua), presuming that most customers will be buying for more than themselves and are likely to be with their families, and then reduced the resulting sum by 29 percent, assuming that customers are only eating in the food courts five days out of seven. I have then subtracted about 30 percent from this total, on the basis that customers will not only include elites but also tourists and members of Managua’s almost non-existent middle class (cf. Rocha, 2002). The small size of the Nicaraguan elite is further supported by Nicaragua’s extremely high Gini coefficient, which according to World Bank statistics is the fifth most unequal in the world (World Bank, 2001: 70-72, table 2.8).

“instead of envisioning roads as neutral lines ...going from ...point *a* to point *b*, they should be visualized as stretched-out places where intersecting social relations cluster and adhere”.

As my travel companion to Nicaragua in 1996 bemoaned, the bad condition of Managua roads, with their potholes and lack of adequate surfacing, as well as the constant risk of carjacking at traffic lights or busy intersections, made travelling between different locations associated with the urban elites something of a constant gambit. As much as the affluent could privately protect and exclude outsiders from specific locations such as their homes, their offices, or their habitual bars and restaurants, there was little they could do to avoid potentially dangerous encounters with the impoverished and often violent reality of the vast majority of those living in the city when moving between the different spatial points of their lives. Despite the emergence of privileged spaces of isolation for the urban elites in Managua, these continued to be location in the city, which meant that the affluent were forced to engage with the wider metropolis whether they wanted to or not.

From this perspective, it is perhaps not surprising that following his Managua “beautification” programme, Alemán ambitiously set out to transform the city’s transport network. In 1998, the Municipality of Managua began a large-scale programme to fill in potholes, resurface and widen the major arteries of the metropolis, build a bypass road in the south-west of the city, and replace traffic lights with roundabouts, all ostensibly in order to speed up traffic and reduce congestion. However, the proliferation of roundabouts can also be linked to the fact that they clearly reduce the risk of carjacking since cars do not have to stop at intersections any more, while the primary purpose of the bypass seems to have been to allow drivers to avoid a part of Managua that is reputed for its high levels of crime. Moreover, when one considers the road works on a map, there emerges a definite pattern whereby the roads that have been built or rebuilt seem to have been chosen rather selectively. Not only do they predominantly connect locations associated with the lives of the rich – Las Colinas to the Metrocentro mall to the Presidential Palace, for example, or in the case of the bypass, Los Chiles (where Alemán has his family residence) to Las Colinas – but there has simultaneously been an almost complete neglect of roads in parts of the city that are unequivocally *not* associated with the affluent, such as the Oriental Market, for example.<sup>20</sup>

Even after the municipality of Managua changed political hands in 2000, with the *Sandinista* Herty Lewites being voted into office on a platform of more equitable urban development, the tendency has remained for selective improvements to be enacted, partly because of the relatively low amount of financial power vested in municipal authority. In late 2001, for example, Lewites presented his transport programme for the city, which notably called for a less selective improvement of Managua’s 1,157 km of roads.<sup>21</sup> The total budget of the programme was US\$16 million, with US\$6 million destined for road works, for which he appealed unsuccessfully to both the National Parliament and the Presidency.<sup>22</sup> At the same time, however, the national government funded major improvement works on the 45 kilometres of the *Carretera a Masaya* (road to Masaya) to the tune of US\$25.8 million.<sup>23</sup>

<sup>20</sup> *El Nuevo Diario*, 29 January 2000, <http://www-ni.elnuevodiario.com.ni/archivo/2000/enero/29-enero-2000/opinion/opinion6.html>, accessed 23 June 2004.

<sup>21</sup> Cf. <http://www.managua.gob.ni/managua/rv.html>, accessed 26 July 2004.

<sup>22</sup> *La Prensa*, 11 October 2001, <http://www-ni.laprensa.com.ni/archivo/2001/octubre/11/nacionales/nacionales-20011011-07.html>, accessed 18 May 2004.

<sup>23</sup> *La Prensa*, 31 May 2004, <http://www.laprensa.com.ni/archivo/2004/mayo/31/nacionales/nacionales-20040531-02.html>, accessed 1 June 2004.

It is not difficult to see why the national government funded this initiative. As Managua has become more attractive for the affluent as a result of the new network of roads connecting the different locations of their lives within the city, an increasing number of rich families have begun to build homes in the pleasantly bucolic countryside between Managua and Granada, which is reached via the *Carretera a Masaya* (Masaya is a town halfway between Managua and Granada). The ability to be able to drive into and out of Managua – to work and to play – in a fast and safe way is obviously a major concern for these new settlers, and it is perhaps not surprising that the *Carretera a Masaya* road works have especially involved increasing the number of traffic lanes and straightening the road in order to allow faster driving. Similarly, while 13 roundabouts were built in Managua during the past decade, Lewites' plan to add 259 traffic lights to Managua's paltry 78 over the next 18 years met with little support,<sup>24</sup> with the Ministry of Transport and the Nicaraguan National Police both suggesting that a campaign to educate Managua drivers in the proper use of roundabouts be enacted instead.<sup>25</sup>

There can be little doubt that the transport-related developments outlined above favour the affluent, and that Managua is increasingly being remade to satisfy the desires of the urban elite. This involves not only ensuring differential access to specific places – in other words, making areas off-limits to the poor, generally through high walls and private security – but also to the spaces of connection between these places, that is to say the roads and roundabouts themselves. As *Doña Yolanda* made clear in an interview in 2002, it is not just the Managua of the new bars and malls that is alien to the overwhelming mass of the poor that make up the city, but also the Managua of the new roads and roundabouts:

“Everything that Alemán has done, he's done for the rich. It's all big, luxurious, American-style. You go and see the Purísima roundabout, it's huge! The Jean Paul Genie roundabout is massive as well. So is the Güegüense roundabout, and the Metrocentro one. You've also seen how they're improving the *Carretera a Masaya*, no? It now has six traffic lanes, three in each direction. But the thing is that we're not living in the US here, we're living in poor little Nicaragua, where almost everybody is poor. They say that there are thousands of new cars on the roads now, but whose cars are they? Can the poor afford Cherokees and pickups? Of course not! None of these new roads and buildings are for us poor folk, they're only for the rich and their big cars. What have they brought us? Nothing! The buses that the poor use still go on the old, broken roads full of potholes, and all those nice shops and malls are not for the poor, the guards don't let you in if you don't look rich, and everybody there looks down at you... Even the roads are not for the poor. It's impossible to go anywhere now with all those big cars cruising around so fast. Have you tried crossing those roads? It's impossible, especially at those roundabouts where you don't know where the cars might come from! Before the traffic was slower, and there was less of it, but now... You know *Doña Aurelia*, three houses down, no? Her son was killed a few months ago, just trying to cross the road. The car didn't even stop, it just hit him and went right on... It's like they're saying to us

<sup>24</sup> *Instituto Nicaragüense de Fomento Municipal* (INIFOM – Nicaraguan Institute for the Promotion of Municipal Affairs), “Ficha Municipal: Managua”, <http://www.inifom.gob.ni/ArchivosPDF/Managua2.pdf>, accessed 21 July 2004.

<sup>25</sup> For an exemplification, see Flavia Ulloa, “Las rotondas y sus uso y abuso”, *Visión Policial*, December, <http://www.policia.gob.ni/visionocho.htm>, accessed 18 June 2004.

that the roads are not ours but theirs... It's as if they've ripped out the bits of the city they want and we're no longer allowed to use them....”

As *Doña Yolanda* suggests, there has definitely been a sharp rise in the number of vehicles in Managua during the late 1990s. Nationally, there was a 35 percent rise in the number of vehicles in Nicaragua between 1998 and 2001, compared to a 13 percent decline between 1995 and 1998,<sup>26</sup> and over 60 percent of all vehicles in Nicaragua are concentrated in the capital city.<sup>27</sup> The vast majority of new vehicles are manifestly private automobiles, as over 70 percent were cars and pickups in 2001 and 2002.<sup>28</sup> Perhaps not surprisingly, *Doña Yolanda's* intimation that the new roads are leading to a greater number of road deaths also seems true. Although Nicaragua National Police transport statistics must of course be considered with caution for the same reasons outlined above in relation to their crime statistics, in terms of their trend, they do show a sudden rise in traffic deaths in Managua during 1998-2000, or in other words coinciding with the major changes to the city's transport network (see table 2).

[Table 2 about here]

Furthermore, pedestrians are the largest single group of traffic victims, constituting upwards of 40 percent of all deaths,<sup>29</sup> which is not altogether surprising considering that there are just two pedestrian crossings in the whole of Managua,<sup>30</sup> and only a few pedestrian overpasses. Moreover, further confirming *Doña Yolanda's* explanations, roundabouts reportedly constitute particularly risky locations for pedestrians, with two especially, the Güegüense and Metrocentro roundabouts, considered very dangerous.<sup>31</sup> At the same time, however, a recent report on Managua by the Nicaraguan Institute for the Promotion of Municipal Affairs (INIFOM – *Instituto Nicaragüense de Fomento Municipal*) notes that the two of the roads where the greatest number of traffic accidents occur are the Pista Juan Pablo II and the Pista Suburbana (the bypass), both of which are new or renovated transport arteries.<sup>32</sup> One obvious consequence of these new dangers was an increasing circumscribing of the space of the city for the poor, with conceptual notions of Managua by all accounts shrinking as individuals find it more difficult to move about the cityscape.

### “Disembedding” the City: The revolt of the elites?

As Smart (2001: 30) remarks, “all cities attempt to govern their constituent spaces and those who live there, although to variable extents.” The question, though, is how they go about doing so, and for what purpose. With regards to the first of these issues, it is increasingly acknowledged that the governance of cities is becoming more concerned with the

<sup>26</sup> Cf. PNUD (2000: 173), and <http://www.inec.gob.ni/estadisticas/sociodemografico/parqueautomotor.pdf>, accessed 10 July 2004.

<sup>27</sup> *El Nuevo Diario*, 4 June 2000, <http://www-ni.elnuevodiario.com.ni/archivo/2000/junio/04-junio-2000/variedades/variedades1.html>, accessed 23 June 2004.

<sup>28</sup> Cf. <http://www.inec.gob.ni/estadisticas/sociodemografico/parqueautomotor.pdf>, accessed 10 July 2004.

<sup>29</sup> *La Prensa*, 29 January 2004, <http://www-ni.laprensa.com.ni/cronologico/2004/enero/29/sucesos/sucesos-20040129-04.html>, accessed 18 May 2004.

<sup>30</sup> *La Prensa*, 16 April 2004, <http://www-ni.laprensa.com.ni/cronologico/2004/abril/16/sucesos/sucesos-20040416-01.html>, accessed 18 May 2004.

<sup>31</sup> *La Prensa*, 19 October 2000, <http://www-ni.laprensa.com.ni/cronologico/2000/octubre/19/sucesos/sucesos-20001019-01.html>, accessed 18 May 2004.

<sup>32</sup> *Instituto Nicaragüense de Fomento Municipal* (INIFOM – Nicaraguan Institute for the Promotion of Municipal Affairs), “Ficha Municipal: Managua”, <http://www.inifom.gob.ni/ArchivosPDF/Managua2.pdf>, accessed 21 July 2004.

management of space rather than the disciplining of offenders (Robins, 2002). Drawing on Foucauldian thinking, Merry (2001: 16-7) argues in particular that social ordering is increasingly underpinned by new spatial regulatory mechanisms, which she labels forms of “spatial governmentality” in order to distinguish them from prior “disciplinary” modes of urban governance:

“New mechanisms of ...spatial governmentality ...differ substantially from disciplinary forms of regulation in logic and techniques of punishment. Disciplinary regulation focuses on the regulation of persons through incarceration or treatment, while spatial mechanisms concentrate on the regulation of space through excluding offensive behaviour. ...They produce social order by creating zones whose denizens are shielded from witnessing socially undesirable behaviour... The individual offender is not treated or reformed, but a particular public is protected.”

The generally acknowledged classic example of this new “spatial governmentality” are the fortified enclaves that Caldeira (1996a, 1999 & 2000) and others have observed in cities around the world. Offensive behaviour such as crime is excluded from them rather than castigated, and risk and insecurity are managed by anticipating problems and preventing them rather than reacting to them. In many ways, though, it can be argued that the new Managua of exclusive bars, restaurants, malls, and walled residences, all protected by armed private security guards and linked together by a network of high speed roads and roundabouts, presents a much more intriguing example of “spatial governmentality”. Fortified enclaves necessarily entail a very limited form of “governmentality”, one that constitutes a retreat from the space of the city and thereby arguably represents something of an abdication of the very notion of governance. The particularity of Managua, on the other hand, is that a new spatial order was not established through a fragmenting retreat from the city, but rather through the aggressive constitution of an exclusive “networked community” that extends across the metropolis whilst simultaneously being “disembedded” from it.

I borrow the term “disembedding” from Anthony Giddens (1990, 1991 & 1999), who uses it to describe the way in which social relations can become detached from their localized contexts of interaction. Giddens is particularly concerned with the way in which the advent of modernity and the spread of globalisation constitute “disembedding mechanisms” in the social, cultural, and economic spheres. Following Hess (2004: 177), however, the notion of “embeddedness” also has territorial dimensions, in relation to “the extent to which an actor is ‘anchored’ in particular territories or places”. From this perspective, the city can be seen as a primary site of “territorial embeddedness”, shaping the way in which social actors within it live their lives in fundamental ways. The idea of Managua as a “palimpsest” city constitutes a clear exemplification of this process, with new urban forms frequently adopting, reinterpreting, or just simply using elements of past ones, as is the case with evangelical Christian groups taking over old disused cinemas in Managua to use as churches, for example.

What this means in relation to urban spatial governance is that its forms will generally relate to its context, as would normally be shaped by this context. By talking about the “disembedding” of Managua, therefore, I am referring to a process whereby parts of the city have been “lifted out” from the rest of the metropolis in such a way that they are no longer conditioned by being physically part of it. In many ways, the Managua of highways, luxury hotels, bars, and night clubs could be Miami, São Paulo, or Los Angeles. As *Doña Yolanda* underlined above, it is a space that is increasingly alien not only from the rest of the city but

also the rest Nicaragua, which is much better epitomised by the sprawling, chaotic, and impoverished mass of non-“disembedded” Managua. Seen in this way, the new Managua of the wealthy is a city that can be said to have been ripped out of the “palimpsest” city, and is neither superimposed on it nor within it, but completely separate.

At the same time, however, as David Harvey draws attention to in his classic *Social Justice and the City* (1973), the organisation of space in cities necessarily concerns more than just locations, be they specific points or “stretched-out places” (Wilson, 2004: 529), archipelagos of wealthy islands in a sea of poverty or independent “networked communities”. Urban spatial organisation is intimately linked to the make-up of urban social relations, both as a cause – the high crime and insecurity which led to the “disembedding” of the city – and as a consequence – the conceptual shrinking of Managua for the poor. From this perspective, the dynamics of urban spatial organisation are perhaps most meaningfully considered when seen in terms of the way in which they “indicate how social groups relate to each other in the space of the city” (Caldeira, 2000: 213). Such a perspective focuses our attention squarely on the issue of the purpose of urban governance, or in other words, for whom and by whom is it being carried out? The answer to this question is rather unequivocal. Although it can be argued that the fact that the “disembedding” of Managua is a reaction to the high levels of crime and insecurity in the city, and that this can be construed as a form of social interaction between rich and poor leading to some sort of general spatial (re)organisation, it is in fact clear that government action in Managua specifically favours a small elite, with both municipal and state resources being brought to bear in such a way that the metropolis is being remade solely to accommodate their needs and desires, irrespective of the rest of the city.

As Swyngedouw (1996: 1503) remarks in relation to such situations in general, this has “a decidedly undemocratic and ...authoritarian touch”, which is in fact accentuated to a large extent because those benefiting from the transformation of the metropolis are also those effectuating the change. This means that the elite are effectively (re)shaping the urban fabric in their own image, reacting solely to their own feedback and purposes. Seen in this way, it can be argued that the “disembedding” of the city represents an instance of what Lasch (1995) has called “the revolt of the elites”, whereby after a decade of popular revolutionary rule, followed by what can be characterised as an anomic and spontaneous “revolt of the masses” – *à la* Ortega y Gasset (1985[1932])? – in the form of the rampant crime and delinquency, the Nicaraguan urban elites have decided to go their own way, not so much isolating themselves and withdrawing from the city while still remaining within it, as partitioning it and establishing themselves independently in their own, self-determined space. In doing so, however, they actively “betray” – to continue the analogy with Lasch – the social contract of the city that comes by virtue of being “embedded” in a common urban space, and inevitably produce “worlds of inequality, alienation and injustice” (Harvey, 2003: 941), whether they want to or not.

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Table 1: Nicaraguan crime statistics

	1990	1991	1992	1993	1994	1995	1996	1997	1998	1999	2000	2001	2002	2003
<b>All crimes</b>	28005	30896	35924	42394	47173	48737	54983	62682	66040	72908	75741	90145	93497	97500
<b>Yearly increase (total)</b>	1828	2891	5028	6470	4779	1564	6246	7699	3358	6868	2833	14404	3352	4003
<b>Yearly increase (%)</b>	7	10	16	18	11	3	13	14	5	10	4	19	4	4
<b>Crimes against persons</b>	7340	9392	12072	13089	15500	17934	19821	23824	25804	29824	26546	32011	33519	33961
<b>Yearly increase (total)</b>	996	2052	2680	1017	2411	2434	1887	4003	1980	4020	-3278	5465	1508	442
<b>Yearly increase (%)</b>	16	28	29	8	18	16	11	20	8	16	-11	21	5	1
<b>Homicides (total)</b>	672	732	828	762	725	707	662	679	639	561	476	537	591	664
<b>Yearly increase (total)</b>	159	60	96	-66	-37	-18	-45	17	-40	-78	-85	61	54	73
<b>Yearly increase (%)</b>	31	9	13	-8	-5	-2	-6	3	-6	-12	-15	13	10	12
<b>Homicide rate (per 100,000 inhabitants)</b>	18	19	20	18	17	16	15	15	13	11	9	10	11	12

**Sources:** Granera Sacasa and Cuarezma Teran (1997: 37-49) & Serbin and Ferreyra (2000: 185-7) for 1990-2 data; <http://www.policia.gob.ni/estadisticas/dosier2003/dosier4.htm>, [http://www.policia.gob.ni/estadisticas/2002/anuario/indicadores/adniveInacional\\_tipologia\\_anos.htm](http://www.policia.gob.ni/estadisticas/2002/anuario/indicadores/adniveInacional_tipologia_anos.htm) & <http://www.policia.gob.ni/estadisticas/dosier2003/dosier5.htm> (accessed 18 June 2004) for 1993-2003 data. Homicide rate calculated using demographic data from PNUD (2000 & 2002), <http://www.inec.gob.ni/estadisticas/proyeccion2002.htm> & <http://www.inec.gob.ni/estadisticas/proyeccion2003.htm> (accessed 18 June 2004).

**Table 2: Traffic deaths in Managua**

	1993	1994	1995	1996	1997	1998	1999	2000
<b>No. of deaths</b>	150	149	141	128	134	166	165	295
<b>Yearly increase (total)</b>		-1	-8	-13	6	32	-2	130
<b>Yearly increase (%)</b>		-1	-5	-10	4	19	-1	44

Source: PNUD (2000: 159) for 1993-1998 data & INIFOM, "Ficha Municipal: Managua", <http://www.inifom.gob.ni/ArchivosPDF/Managua2.pdf>, accessed 21 July 2004, for 1999-200 data.