Securitisation and the mega-event: an editorial introduction

PETE FUSSEY* AND FRANCISCO KLAUSER†

Department of Sociology, University of Essex, Colchester CO4 3SQ
E-mail: pfussey@essex.ac.uk
†*Institute of Geography, University of Neuchâtel, 2000 Neuchâtel, Switzerland*
E-mail: francisco.klauser@unine.ch
This paper was accepted for publication in May 2014

Introduction

In August 2011 organisers of the London 2012 Olympics staged rehearsals for the Opening Ceremony due to commence exactly one year hence. Meanwhile, other parts of the city were experiencing rioting and looting on a scale not seen for 30 years. Whilst these two events were largely distinct, their simultaneous occurrence underscored an important point. For all the attention to the enclosure, artificial urbanism and contrived spaces that hosting sporting mega events create, they are accommodated in complex and often contested urban settings.

Two years later, the links between the politics of the street and the sporting mega-event spectacle became cemented elsewhere. Echoing protests against Mexico City's profligate Olympic spending at a time of austerity in 1968, June 2013 saw more than a million people take to the streets across 100 Brazilian cities. Although activist causes were manifold they unmistakably coalesced around the social and pecuniary impacts of Brazil's staging of the 2014 FIFA World Cup and 2016 Olympic Games. As mega-event spectacles, replete with promises of 'regeneration' and 'legacy', continue to encroach further into the urban realm, so different levels of action, activism, governance and policy necessarily become drawn together.

For sporting mega-events, it is in the realm of security practice where the heat generated by internationally focused agendas abrading with local practices, processes and priorities is greatest. Here, the promise of stringent security guarantees is a precondition for hosts who operate under a constant risk of catastrophic reputational damage should they not be met. Of course, it is rare that, in such a broad sense, 'security' can ever be guaranteed and, for planners, its pursuit results in dwindling levels of acceptable risk. When applied to the complex, dynamic and unpredictable realm of the global city, the contemporary stage for sporting mega events, such

promises are even harder to keep. The result is uneasy coalitions of international, national, regional and local security practice; a merger of civil, military and criminal justice techniques and technologies of social control; and a proliferation of security priorities. Yet whilst some of these measures may be exceptional for the cities that host them, they often represent very familiar elements of mega-event security programmes.

Situating mega-event security

During the 1970s and 1980s foundations were laid down that would subsequently support the architecture of Olympic and other sport mega-event security programmes. The Summer Games that followed Munich, at Montreal in 1976, saw an unprecedented investment in security infrastructure, with particular emphasis placed on the padded bunkers of fortified Olympic architecture, a highly visible military presence and the isolation of Olympic-related transportation from the everyday movements of the city. Four years later, Moscow's Games were played out amid cold war apprehensiveness and saw an intensification of military intervention, particularly the mass deployment of infantry, alongside blanket zero-tolerance style clampdowns on variously imagined and defined forms of 'disorder'.

The violence at Munich, penury of Montreal and totalitarian pageantry of Moscow led to a nadir in the International Olympic Committee (IOC)'s international standing. In a reversal of the quadrennial spectacle of aspirant cities beseeching the IOC for the right to stage the Games, willing and capable hosts were in short supply. Denver had relinquished their right to hold the 1976 Winter Olympic Games and, after Tehran had pulled out, Los Angeles remained the only candidate for the 1984 Summer Olympics. Thus, the IOC had little choice but to allow managers of the Californian city to shape the Games in their own image. Accelerated corporate sponsorship and

private financing of the Games ensued. 'Celebration capitalism' (Boykoff 2013) was born. This moment set a tone that would reverberate through host cities for decades and permanently alter the political economy of sporting mega-event security. The ascendancy of private security provision henceforth assured – with private security assets augmenting and, in some cases superseding (e.g. Seoul 1988, Athens 2004), extant policing structures – Olympic security became refocused towards supporting the needs of private capital. It became wedded to the protection of sponsor's privileged access to the Olympic marketplace.

In the post-9/11 context of the 'war on terror', sport mega events not only focus on major business and policy opportunities, but also evoke increased local, national and international security concerns. Spiralling budgets and security planning predicated on elevated threat levels has, in recent years, seen the strongest realm of mega-event expansion, in terms of cost and personnel, centring on security and risk management. Indeed, the first post-9/11 sporting mega-event, the XIX Winter Olympic Games in Salt Lake City, saw an intensification of traditional security measures – with rapid escalation of human and financial resources – combined with novel technological initiatives. The latter included a progenitor of the NSA's programme of colossal data harvesting, mining and matching, where the FBI and NSA employed US telecommunications carrier Qwest Communications International to intercept and monitor all email and SMS traffic in the Salt Lake City area during and around the time of the Games (*Wall Street Journal* 2013).

Yet for all the standardisation and international curation of mega-event security motifs, attendant security programmes are not reducible to simple colonial impositions of externally defined practice. Nor, despite initial appearances, do they comfortably sit in simple neo-liberal political-economic models of governance or, conversely, linear neo-Marxist conceptions of power. Deeper analysis reveals transnational governance to be just one of many scales of action exerting agency, institutional practice and operational orthodoxy upon mega-event security practice. Particularly important here are the governance and security practices operating at local and regional levels which serve to accommodate, filter and shape these broader transnational processes. Moreover, for local hosts, the carnival of sporting mega-events enables a temporary suspension of external realities such as recession and unemployment. Exorbitant budgets are lavished on a broad cluster of developments in contemporary security practice and governance, ranging from the increased militarisation of public safety to the criminal prosecution of formerly civil infractions.

At the same time, mega-events have been used as testing grounds for new techniques of social control

and configurations of urban governance, leaving behind legacies of finessed security infrastructure (Fussey *et al.* 2011) and bounded networks of security experts (Klauser 2011). As Massey (2007) observed, despite ageographical appearances, globalisation is also produced locally. In the case of mega-event security, the deployment of innovative surveillance and social control measures at one event may stimulate their broader commercialisation, globalisation and technologisation. In other respects, locally derived security practices become formalised and then transmitted through a process of global policy transfer.

Mega-event security also penetrates multiple local domains previously unconnected to the spectacle. Since the 1950s mega events have catalysed the valorisation of the city, most consistently through improved transport infrastructures and, since the 1990s, with the 'regeneration' of wider host neighbourhoods. The realisation of such regeneration schemes has seen soaring property prices, property speculation and the displacement of incumbent populations. In turn, the arriviste anxieties of more affluent populations have stimulated programmes of urban bunker padding across areas as diverse as gentrified Barcelona, London and Rio. Thus, broader event-related objectives such as the 'regeneration' of wider geographies become increasingly yoked to broader processes of securitisation and a refocusing of urban governance towards this end.

Analysing the mega event

Sport mega events have become global occasions of enormous importance and implication and affect seismic change on the cities and nations that host them. Today, these dynamics give rise to new and profound social questions and preoccupations. Yet, given the scale and controversy of these processes it is perhaps surprising that only recently has significant critical scholarly attention turned towards the security practices accompanying sport mega events. Given the aforementioned importance of – and impact upon – the local sphere, much of this burgeoning literature has correctly adopted both empirical and case study based approaches. Among these, recent studies have empirically examined Olympic Games in Athens (Samatas 2007), Turin (Fonio and Pisapia 2011), Vancouver (Molnar 2011; Haggerty and Boyle 2009) and London (Fussey and Coaffee 2011). Others have provided analyses of international football tournaments, including FIFA World Cups in Germany (Baasch 2011; Eick 2011) and South Africa (McMichael 2013) and the UEFA European Championships in Austria and Switzerland (Klauser 2013). Other studies have emphasised more transnational features of mega-event security, including the modes of professional knowledge transfer among practitioners (Klauser 2011) and the transportation of

coercive techniques across temporal, territorial and ideological borders (Fussey *et al.* 2011).

The global span, multiplicity of actors and unprecedented scale of mega-event security has provided a fecund arena for conceptual analysis. For example, Giulianotti and Klauser draw on Bourdieusian concepts of *the field*, to propose a composite theoretical framework for understanding sporting mega-event securitisation comprising 'the *security field* . . . [denoting] a specific, security-defined social space, which contains objective, game-like relationships that are played out between various [capital possessing] "players" ' (Giulianotti and Klauser 2010, 57 emphasis in original). Others have drawn on the work of Foucault, particularly his circulatory models of 'security' (Klauser 2013; Fussey 2014), which superseded his thinking on 'sovereignty' and 'discipline' and their implicit associations with, and specific understandings of, territorial control. Other research draws on established political-economic approaches to frame the analysis. Examples of these include Samatas' (2007 2011) work on the 2004 Athens Olympics and Eick's (2011) deployment of Jessop's (2002) notion of neo-communitarianism as a means of conceptualising FIFA's activities.

Whilst this all represents a diverse and growing literature, a number of unifying tendencies exist. These include an accent upon the establishment of territorial enclosure, enhanced social control, repurposing and securitisation of urban governance arrangements, issues of spatial justice and the militarisation of civil policing. Not all citizens are willing recipients of such processes. Despite this, studies detailing the resistance and activism that sporting mega events and their attendant security programmes inspire (Lenskyj 2000; Boykoff and Fussey 2013) are less common. Within these broader thematic areas of analysis there has been particular focus on the potential of mega-event security to catalyse and amplify a number of existing urban-centred processes and, similarly, the 'laboratory character' of mega events in terms of generating novel best practices or technological deployments. A further area of concentration has been on the security legacies left behind by large-scale sporting events, such as novel legislation, high-tech surveillance technologies, and new partnerships of security practice.

As extant case study research has revealed, these processes exert themselves unevenly. Deployments of novel technologies permeated security practices at the 1994 FIFA World Cup, 2002 Salt Lake City Winter Olympics and 2004 Athens Olympics, but were less widespread at the London Games. Nor are legacies the same. Whilst remnants of mega-event security often remain – such as private policing arrangements in Tokyo (1964) and Seoul (1988), and over-elaborate surveillance architectures in Athens – there is not always an inexorable drive towards an apotheosis of securitisation. The redeployment of military assets after the London Games, a relief to the dystopian imaginings of many activist groups, is one example. Whilst some networks of security practice remain *in situ* and transfer knowledge to other domains, many other actors and agencies recede back into the murk and fog of the urban governance structures they initially emerged from. Thus, the harvesting of differential urban experiences of mega-event security are vital, not least to avoid overstated synechdocal assumptions of the endurance and generalisability of particular tendencies, trends and practices.

In the coming years, issues of security and surveillance at sport mega events will further increase in importance and popular attention, most notably with Brazil and Russia both holding four consecutive FIFA World Cups and Olympic Games between 2014 and 2018. These spectacles are then set to head east with Olympic Games in Korea and Japan and the 2022 FIFA World Cup to Qatar. However, despite recent pullulation, arguably the analysis of sport and security remains under-developed. This collection seeks to address this gap and further advance understandings of the relationships between ageographical processes and territorial specificities of sporting mega-event security. Each of the papers is founded upon extensive primary research in multiple locations spanning the globe. With five papers analysing events in three separate continents, the collection thus provides multifaceted and truly international insight into the world of sport mega-event security, which we hope will further galvanise this emerging field of research.

Content of the themed section

The papers of this collection touch on a very wide range of themes and issues, relating to at least three broad levels of analysis: the complex spatial imprints and articulations of sport mega-event security; the mediating rationalities, actor networks and driving forces underpinning event security; and the socio-spatial implications and legacies of the security and surveillance apparatus deployed at the events. Together, the three levels add both empirical depth and theoretical nuance to our understanding of how sport mega-event security, in its logics, functioning and implications, interacts with the host cities of the events.

The first paper, written by Jon Coaffee, offers a powerful account of the uneven geographies of security and surveillance that emerge at sport mega events. Drawing upon literatures on urban security and carceral geography, combined with Agamben's work on exceptionality, the paper emphasises in particular the coercive techniques of enclosure, cleansing, incarceration and exclusion that permeate the fabric of the event cities before, during and after the tournament. Security lockdown, urban

fragmentation and punitive approaches to control, the paper argues, today become the 'default' option for hosting cities of sport mega events. Empirically, this argument is based on ethnographic research on the experiences of security preparation for, and post-event legacy of, the London 2012 Olympics. Furthermore, the paper also highlights how lessons from the military-carceral security strategies deployed in London have been transferred to subsequent host cities of Sochi (2014) and Rio de Janeiro (2016).

Pete Fussey also investigates the logics and functioning of event security at London 2012, albeit from a different analytical and conceptual viewpoint. Rather than focusing on the carceral impetus of enclosure and cleansing inherent in sport mega-event security, Fussey foregrounds the logics of control aimed at the flexible and highly differentiated management of differing types of mobilities and flows across and between the event's host cities. Drawing upon Michel Foucault's conceptualisation of 'security', as opposed to 'discipline', the paper is thus concerned not so much with how mega-event security relates to fixity and rigid urban fragmentation, but with how – and to what effects – event-related surveillant assemblages coalesce around people and objects on the move. This analysis also underscores the functional and spatial complexity that characterises sport mega-event security. Relevant measures and actor networks operate at multiple scales, across different temporalities and spatialities, and for diverse, often conflicting purposes. This renders unrealisable simplistic ambitions for complete territorial control, or regimes of total proscription and prohibition. Thus mega-event security is not so much a question of universal principles, than of everyday negotiations and micro-adjustments between various actors, needs, driving forces and rationalities.

The third paper, written by Francisco Klauser, further pursues this discussion. It explores the multiple interests, forms of expertise and sources of authority involved in the planning and instauration of Olympic venue security at Vancouver 2010. On these grounds, the paper critically studies the manifest and latent functionalities and ambitions that shape the functioning of mega-event security in its relationship to space. There are various questions addressed in this investigation, but three key issues stand out, relating to the public–private interactions of expertise and coalitions of authority, the interactions of scale (local, national, global), and (3) the related processes of policy imitation and transfer that shape the functioning of contemporary mega-event security.

Whilst Klauser foregrounds the role and importance of IT companies' technical know-how in security governance at sport mega events, Adam Molnar's paper turns its main attention to the military involvement in event security. The paper shows how military expertise and technologies have been carefully interwoven into the exercises and security preparation for the Vancouver 2010 Olympics, thus contributing to, and reflecting, wider processes of 'military urbanism' and 'militarised urban policing'. The field of sport mega-event security, in this light, also appears as a catalyst for the development of novel inter-organisational relationships that blur the traditional distinctions between civilian–military, war-law enforcement, and internal–external security. Talking about the security legacy of sport mega events also requires critical attention to such developments and dynamics.

The last paper, written by Chiara Fonio and Giovanni Pisapia, rounds off the present collection with a study of the inclusionary and exclusionary dynamics and implications of the security measures deployed at the 2010 FIFA World Cup in South Africa. Focusing in particular on the city of Johannesburg, discussed security measures range from crime mapping and analysis to stadium security rings and larger, security-driven urban regeneration projects. Crucially, this analysis also incorporates questions regarding the role, authority and commercial agendas of non-state actors in providing event security, which are of heightened relevance in the South African, post-apartheid context.

Together, the five papers not only make a significant contribution to existing scholarly literatures dealing with the opportunities and problems of sport mega-event security, but also draw wider conclusions with regard to some of the most salient contemporary developments in security governance, ranging from the increased militarisation of public safety to the commercialisation, globalisation and techno-logisation of contemporary surveillance practices and strategies. Today, these developments give rise to profound social questions and preoccupations that reach far beyond the world of sport mega-event security. Yet, as the papers in the present collection show, the mega-event field indeed offers a particularly worthwhile analytical lens through which to lay bare the driving forces and power relationships that shape these trends, whilst also, ultimately, pointing at the need for a broader theoretical project that challenges the imbrications of power, space and surveillance in the contemporary world more generally.

References

Baasch S 2011 Event driven security policies and spatial control: the 2006 World Cup in **Bennett C and Haggerty K** eds *The security games* Routledge, London 103–19

Boykoff J 2013 *Celebration capitalism and the Olympic Games* Routledge, London

Boykoff J and Fussey P 2013 London's shadow legacies: security and activism at the 2012 Olympics *Contemporary Social Science* advance online publication DOI 10.1080/21582041 .2013.838292

Eick V 2011 'Secure our profits!' The FIFA™ in Germany 2006 in **Bennett C and Haggerty K** eds *The security games* Routledge, London 87–102

Fonio C and Pisapia G 2011 The XX Winter Olympic Games: Torino 2006 in **Bennett C and Haggerty K** eds *The security games* Routledge, London 137–49

Fussey P 2014 Command, control and contestation: negotiating security at the London 2012 Olympics *Geographical Journal* advance online publication DOI 10.1111/geoj.12058

Fussey P and Coaffee J 2011 Olympic rings of steel: Constructing security for 2012 and beyond in **Bennett C and Haggerty K** eds *The security games* Routledge, London 36–54

Fussey P, Coaffee J, Armstrong G and Hobbs D 2011 *Securing and sustaining the Olympic city: reconfiguring London for 2012 and beyond* Ashgate, Aldershot

Giulianotti R and Klauser F 2010 Security governance and sport mega-events: towards an interdisciplinary research agenda *Journal of Sport and Social Issues* 34 49–61

Haggerty K D and Boyle P 2009 Spectacular security: mega-events and the security complex *Political Sociology* 3 257–74

Jessop B 2002 Liberalism, neoliberalism, and urban governance: a state-theoretical perspective *Antipode* 34 452–72

Klauser F 2011 Commonalities and specificities in mega-event securitisation: the example of Euro 2008 in Austria and Switzerland in **Bennett C and Haggerty K** eds *The security games* Routledge, London 120–36

Klauser F 2013 Spatialities of security and surveillance: managing spaces, separations and circulations at sport mega events *Geoforum* 49 289–98

Lenskyj H J 2000 *Inside the Olympic industry: power, politics and activism* New York University Press, New York

Massey D 2007 *World city* Polity Press, Cambridge

McMichael C 2013 Clearly blown away by the end of the morning's drama: spectacle, pacification and the 2010 World Cup, South Africa *Socialist Studies* 9 111–29

Molnar A and Snider L 2011 Mega-events, mega-profits: unpacking the Vancouver 2010 security development-nexus in **Bennett C and Haggerty K** eds *The security games* Routledge, London 150–68

Samatas M 2007 Security and surveillance in the Athens 2004 Olympics: some lessons from a troubled story *International Criminal Justice Review* 17 220–38

Samatas M 2011 Surveilling Athens 2004 Olympics under the exploitation of 9/11 impact: international pressures and domestic implications in **Bennett C and Haggerty K** eds *The security games* Routledge, London 55–71

Wall Street Journal 2013 New details show broader NSA surveillance reach 20 August** (http://online.wsj.com/article/SB10001424127887324108204579022874091732470.html) Accessed 15 April 2014