As part of Workpackage 4 on “Perceptions of Crime and Insecurity” a seminar was held on 1.-2. of June 2007 in Esslingen am Neckar (Germany) which focused mainly on theoretical, sociological and historical aspects of how constructions of crime and insecurity have developed1. The objective of this conference was to present and dis-
cuss comparative analyses of different social, political and cultural aspects that shape the public and political issues of insecurities in Europe.

1 - History, Concepts and Perspectives of Insecurity

In the first conference of this working group, held in Hamburg in March 2007, the central issue was defined as “fear of crime”, and it was discussed from both the methodological and empirical viewpoints. “Fear of crime” is very often presented as a rather new topic for criminology and sociology (see Sessar, Newsletter 11). The starting point of the recent research and discussions on this issue was the US studies on victimisation and fear of crime in the 1960s, when for the first time security and law and order became a presidential-election issue, and several presidential commissions were established to develop solutions for coping with street crime and violence (Kerner Commission, Eisenhower Commission, Katzenbach Commission)2. The reports of the Katzenbach Commission, in particular, had a major political and criminological impact in proposing periodical statistical reports and research funding for epidemiological studies on crime, victimization and fear of crime. Since then, research into “fear of crime” has become one of the central topics in empirical criminological research not only in the US but in all developed countries3.

Studies into the “fear of crime” are nowadays an integral part of crime-prevention policies at local and national level in all European countries, and in this way the concept has become an applied social science issue for planning and legitimizing crime policy. Even if the use of empirical studies on the “fear of crime” in policy making and legitimisation differ largely across the various countries in Europe, they are conceptualized in such a way that they could be used directly for political purposes; as a kind of public opinion poll, most research into the “fear of crime” is a kind of applied science or administrative criminology that lacks any theoretical considerations or reflections on the meaning of the subject being studied.

In these studies questions of the extent of “fear of crime” and its correlates based on rates of victimisation, social relations and incivilities in the neighbourhood, on gender, sometimes also on media consumption are the most analysed. Security and Insecurity are conceptualised as personal feelings and attitudes towards crime and victimisation that are seen as relevant for crime policy formulation.

“Fear of crime” has normally been conceptualised in a narrow sense as an emotional dimension related to crime and victimisation (fear), but other dimensions have been introduced in criminological re-

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2 National Advisory Commission on Civil Disorders (Kerner-Commission) 1968; National Commission on the Causes and Prevention of Violence (Eisenhower Commission) 1970; President’s Commission on Law Enforcement and Administration of Justice (Katzenbach Commission) 1967a,b.

3 For the history of the “fear of crime” concept see, in particular, Boers (1991) and Lee (2007).
search: a cognitive dimension as *personal risk assessment* of becoming a victim of crime or violence in the near future, a *behavioural dimensions* as avoidance or coping behaviour in situations perceived as being risk situations, and more general attitudes towards crime (*concerns about crime*) and crime policy (*punitive attitudes*) (Figure 1).

2 - Critical aspects and limits of the “fear of crime” perspective

From the beginning, studies on the “fear of crime” have been criticised for their methodological weakness, which was also discussed at the Hamburg meeting. In particular, the operationalisation of the concept with the standard item “fear of walking alone in the dark in the neighbourhood” has been a topic of widespread discussions. Its advantage lies in the fact that it has been used regularly in empirical research since the 1970s, and therefore a time series of the development can be constructed. But at the same time it has been argued that we do not know exactly what is measured with this item, nor whether it has anything to do with “insecurity” or “fear of crime”.

In this context the research of the Keele group has attracted much attention (Farrall *et al.*, 1997; Farrall, Gray, Jackson, 2006, 2007; Farrall, Jackson, Gray, 2006, 2007; Gray, Farrall, Jackson, 2007; Gray, Jackson, Farrall, 2006; Jackson, Farrall, Gray, 2006). In a combination of standardized and qualitative measures, they have shown that not only the standard item largely overestimates “fear of crime” but that this concept also hides behind very different dimensions and aspects of emotions, attitudes of anger, protest and discontent. While classical research studies on “fear of crime” have already differentiated various cognitive, emotional and behavioural dimensions of insecurity, now the emotional dimension of the “fear of crime” itself seems to be differentiated in quiet different dimensions and aspects.

As regards the theoretical approaches to explaining the “fear of crime”, it has been argued that in most empirical studies a “multifactor approach” has been applied, and very often the analyses are limited

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For an overview of research findings see for example Ditton, Farrall (2000); Hale (1996); Farrall, Jackson, Gray (2007).
to ad-hoc explanations pointing to some isolated factor in the individuals’ surrounding social and physical environment, such as direct or indirect experience with victimisation, social integration, collective efficacy and incivilities in the neighbourhood, or life-style variables, without being able to integrate them into a more general theoretical perspective. In this sense, fear of crime studies mostly follow a socio-psychological frame of reference (see Farrall et al., 2000): crime is seen as a stress factor for the public and fear is seen as an indicator of psycho-social stress which is moderated, buffered or mediated by coping resources. In this sense, fear of crime studies are conceptualised according to the psycho-social stress research model (see figure 2).

As mostly related to policy and applied research the socio-psychological “theoretical” approach seems to have certain advantages, as it allows one to formulate concrete policy measures for reducing the fear of crime by intervening in these factors. Even if this multifactor approach could be of importance for producing the empirical bases for theoretical explanations, it has its limits in not allowing more generalized explanations focusing on social, cultural and political developments in modern societies. This is not a question of social, cultural and political “causes” of the “fear of crime”, but the question of the “fear of crime” itself.

In the context of victimisation studies, very often levels of “fear of crime” are contrasted with “real” risks of victimisation differentiated by age, gender and educational level. The conclusion is that “fear of crime” levels are regularly very much higher than the “real” risk of being a victim of crime. In this sense, the “fear of crime” seems to be irrationally high, especially for certain groups like women and the elderly. Translated into crime-prevention policy, this conclusion has led to prevention measures that incorporate the “fear of crime” as a separate policy task; in most European countries, reducing the “fear of crime” has become a policy aim in its own right, independent of the reduction in crime.

But, what is the “normal”, “rational” or “acceptable” level of “fear of crime”? At least implicit in survey research and crime-prevention policies is the assumption of a “normal” level of “fear of crime” that should be achieved, and this level should be similar to the level of risk of becoming a victim of crime.

There are two basic assumptions leading to this idea: Firstly, “fear of crime” is something measurable, and solving the methodological problems of measurement, asking the right questions, would lead to the “real” level of fear. This is the base idea of all empirical research on the “fear of crime”. Empirical research measures the “fear of crime”, and the result is that it finds “fear of crime”, so there is fear of crime which has political and social consequences that are based on assumptions of what fear of crime is. In this sense criminology participates in the creation of fear of crime (Lee, 2007). But measuring
this construct against the calculated aggregated risk of becoming a victim of crime makes no sense, because the two calculations are not at the same level. Whereas “fear of crime” is measured and constructed as an individual emotion, risk of victimisation is an aggregated calculation of probability that could not be broken down to the individual level (assuming that the “fear of crime” has something to do with insecurity). To put it more concretely in an example: If the calculated risk of women of a certain age group contracting breast cancer is 0.3 % per annum, then there is no way to calculate how many women should fear breast cancer, because it could in fact be every woman (and no one would ask them to reduce their level of fear).

Secondly, if we know the “real” causes of fear, this acceptable level of fear could be reached by taking the right measure. This is the base idea of applied or administrative criminology in this field. Here a similar argument applies: Searching for causes of the “fear of crime” means the comparison of contrast groups (men against women, areas with signs of incivilities against areas without, etc.) where the differences between these groups are interpreted as a causal relationship. In finding differences that “make sense”, the concept of the “fear of crime” is filled with validity and policies are justified that reduce fear. For example, programmes of gentrification regularly result in a reduction of the “fear of crime” in the area in question. But even if this result is not produced by a new population as a result of gentrification, there is good reason to assume that the reduction of the “fear of crime” is due to an overall increase in quality of life that has nothing to do with crime or insecurity – an assumption confirmed by qualitative research into the “fear of crime” (Gray, Farrall, Jackson, 2007). However, the differentiation of groups with different levels of “fear of crime” gives rise to the idea that the group with the lower level represents the “normal” level, whereas the higher level of fear demands an explanation, and is “abnormal”. Even if we were able to reduce the difference between the levels of “fear of crime” of different groups, we would always find different levels of “fear of crime” between other groups that could allow for political intervention.

As a consequence, we have a lot of precise answers provided by fear of crime research, but we do not know what they mean, and it seems as if we have forgotten the question that led us to carry out this kind of empirical research.

The risk of becoming a victim of crime is just one of an endless list of possible threats people face every day and in the course of their lives. Discussions about the “risk society” assume in particular that

5 Implicit in this idea is the question: if the level of fear closely corresponds to the level of risk of becoming a victim of crime, are the people who fear it “right” to fear it, because they have a higher risk level?

6 Even attempts to replace the “fear of crime” with risk perception (Ferraro, 1995) do not necessarily avoid these traps insofar as the basic assumption is that there is an irrational distortion if the “real” risk does not correspond to the perception of risk.

7 A similar argument concerning crime is used by Durkheim for his famous notion “crime is normal” (see Philipson, 1971, chapter 3).
late modern societies are marked by an exceptional increase in the definition of situations as being problematic and representing risk; contemporary times are marked by a particular risk culture based on measurability, probability calculations and identification (or invention) of risk situations, populations and behaviours. Research into the “fear of crime” fits well into this picture. Another well-founded idea of risk sociology is the assumption that in late modern societies there are different social and cultural contexts that guide the selection of “appropriate” risks in relation to their need for group integration, stabilisation and regulation.

Starting from this assumption, the question is no longer what causes a “fear of crime” but what kind of cultural, social and political conditions makes the construction or the selection of crime risks and fear of crime a public issue.

There seems to be consent that the “fear of crime” concept is a rather new topic in criminological and sociological research, which began with large empirical research projects in the 1970s. But concerns about crime and disruptions to social order fall in line with reflections on modern societies from the earliest days, with the constructions of “dangerous classes” and “dangerous places” (e.g. see Chevalier, 2007; Emsley, 1987; Emsley, Knafla, 1996; Lee, 2007, 25 ff.), followed by “dangerous adolescents” like rockers, hippies, hooligans and punks. And it continues nowadays with the construction of other “dangerous categories of people” like foreigners, drug addicts, Islamic terrorists, categories of sexual deviants, or dangerous places in European suburbs or American ghettos. These aspects of insecurity in the past and in contemporary societies are not perceived by the “fear of crime” perspective and also seem to justify the choice of other conceptual tools and methodological approaches.

II - Crime and Insecurities as a Social Problem

Whereas the “fear of crime” perspective focuses on individuals and theirs capacities, orientations and life-style in their surrounding social networks as causes for group differences in fear, a social problems perspective focuses on two different but interrelated questions: firstly, what is the structure of the cultural and political contexts that frame constructions of insecurity, concerns about crime and other social problems, as well as their consequences for social organisation and the political institutions of societies affected and structured by a wide range of problematic and insecurity issues; and secondly, why insecurity and the “fear of crime” could have become one of the central social and political issue of the last 20 years: How has insecurity been invented? And why could it have gained such legitimacy and persuasiveness that it decides elections, leads policy and guides everyday life? The goal is to understand why some hazards, conditions or events come to be of social and political relevance while
other events fail to become durable public and political issues.

In contrast to the socio-psychological stress model of the fear of crime, the social-problems perspective is more concerned with social, cultural and political discourse about risk and insecurity as well as with its social, political and cultural consequences (Figure 2).

Figure 2: Thematic focuses from the fear of crime perspective and the social problem perspective

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<thead>
<tr>
<th>Crime and Insecurity as Individual Stress</th>
<th>Crime and Insecurity as a Social Problem</th>
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<tr>
<td>1. Individual Concern about Crime</td>
<td>1. Cultural Images of Crime and Criminals</td>
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There are two broad approaches to tackling these questions: The first one, based on the sociological diagnosis of modernisation and social change, analyses economic, social, cultural and political developments in modern societies, in assuming that changing social institutions make growing insecurities understandable. In this context, the concepts of ‘risk society”, “reflexive modernisation” and “network society” have gained much prominence. From this perspective, increasing concerns about security issues and crime are the result of a loss or degeneration of traditional forms of social integration and regulation (individualisation, pluralisation etc.), that are seen as an unavoidable consequence of modernisation, or sometimes also as a consequence of disruptive political and social transformations.

The second approach follows more a perspective of social construction. Whereas the first approach could also be interpreted as a perspective that seeks causal explanations for insecurity and “fear of crime” in the development of modern societies, the second approach more directly faces the question of why and how concerns about crime have become a public issue. In this context, concepts of “claim-making activities”8, (see 3 A) “moral panic”, and recently “cultural trauma” (see 2 B) have gained prominence. With regard to these

8 Essentially, the position of social constructionism is based on the assumption that the sense of what is or is not a social problem is a product, something that has been produced or constructed through social activities (e.g. lobbying, activities of social movements, media reporting, social science reports). In this perspective social problems are defined in terms of these activities, for which Spector and Kitsuse (1977, 75), have use the term «claims making activities»: Social problems are „the activities of individu-als or groups making assertions of grievances and claims with respect to some putative conditions.» In this view, social problems (like for example fear of crime) are not problematic social conditions that could be discovered; they are invented by and in the course of “claims making activities” and the social conditions are merely the subjects of these claims.
concepts, the media have also gained much attention by constructing contemporary insecurities. This was the topic of another seminar that formed part of this workpackage (see Meško, 2008). Concerns about crime and insecurity are seen more as an outcome of social and political strategies.

The issue at stake is insecurity or risk (perception) in its widest sense, often conceptualised as concerns about crime, attitudes toward crime and criminal justice (punishment), different indicators of changes in crime policy, or the spread of discourse on crime and fear as a public issue. Even if “fear of crime” is sometimes used as an indicator, it is more in the sense of its use in political and criminological discourse on “fear of crime” than as the reified object itself.

1 - Modernisation and Insecurities

A - Concerns about crime in an age of risk and anxiety

In discussions about the development of a “risk society” (Beck), “reflexive modernity” (Beck, Giddens, Lash), “liquid modernity” (Bauman) or “network society” (Castells), the question of insecurities has been put into a wider macro-sociological perspective. Even if there are great differences in these approaches to growing insecurity, the authors agree on the fact that modern societies are characterised by processes of de-traditionalisation and by the increased complexity of social relations and individual orientations, in which traditional forms of social integration, social relations, identities and regulation dissolve. Drawing on the central concepts in this debate, such as individualization, informatisation9, internationalization and informalisation, Hans Boutellier, in his paper “Security Politics in Network Society”, analysed these dimensions as central aspects of growing insecurity in contemporary modern society and their consequences for crime prevention and criminal justice in general.

These arguments fit in quite well with crisis the diagnosis proposed, for example, by Taylor (1999), who provides eight different dimensions of crises that affect security and the fear of crime in late modern societies: job crises (increasing unemployment); material poverty and growing inequality (insecurity of individual status); multiculturalism (fear of foreigners); crises of inclusion and exclusion (insecurity related to social integration); crises of ‘culture’ (insecurity of individual orientation); crises of masculinity and gender order (insecurity of gender identity); and crises of family and parenting (insecurity of intimate social relations and education).

For the UK in particular, these insecurities are accentuated by the changes in the economy, marked by the UK’s fall from a world-leading eco-

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9 “Informatisation” is a concept used in the work of Manual Castells and refers to the widespread and growing significance of information flow, information collection and information use through the internet and similar forms of digital information net-works.
nomic power to a net importer of goods and services in the 1990s, but these developments can be generalised as being central characteristics of late modern societies after the Second World War, and especially after the long period of economic growth ended in the mid-1970s.

These insecurities are condensed “into more easily expressed fears about crime and those individuals associated with it in this moral discourse (‘yobs’, homeless people, ‘young people’, ethnic minorities, ‘foreigners’ and so on)” (Farrall, Gray, Jackson, 2007, 19). Bauman (Bauman, 2000, 215) also argues along the same lines. He says that governments “are relatively powerless in the face of both the market and the anxieties it engenders; they have conceded power to the market and it’s ‘forces’ which, in an increasingly globalised system of capital transfer, are harder and harder for any one government to control and almost impossible to predict with any degree of certainty”. Instead, governments focus on efforts to ‘do something’, often translated into punitive measures.

This argument is based on another assumption developed in the context of discussion about the “risk” society: In contrast to traditional hazards, threats and insecurities, late modern (and especially technological) risks are characterized by being invisible, unpredictable, and with uncontrollable consequences. On the other hand, discourse about the fear of crime seems to be knowable, decisionable (actionable), and potentially controllable. In an age of uncertainty, discourses that appear to promise a resolution to ambivalence by producing identifiable victims and blameable villains are likely to figure prominently in the State’s ceaseless attempts to impose social order. Thus the figure of the ‘criminal’ becomes a convenient folk devil and the fear of crime discourse a satisfying location for anxieties generated more widely (Hollway, Jefferson, 1997, 265).

B - Multicultural Society and suitable enemies

The ‘criminal’, or some types of criminal, seem to be especially well-suited to becoming a receptacle for projecting social anxieties. As Farrall, Jackson and Gray (2007, 19) have argued: Crime is a convenient receptacle for anxieties associated with modern living for a number of reasons. ... it represents one of the last remaining ‘others’ in a complex society. The ‘criminal other’ represents a traditional ‘bogeyman’ where anxieties can be safely projected and attacked. What sets the ‘criminal other’ apart from, for example, the ‘racial other’ is that in modern societies many people know, often as family members, people from ethnic minorities and as such, processes of racial othering are harder to undergo. In addition, widespread social condemnation of explicitly racist opinions has made this all the harder anyway. This has not happened, however, with those people identified as ‘criminal’. Thus the ‘criminal other’ represents a convenient location for the storing of anxieties.
But their argument that the ‘criminal’ substitutes the ethnic other as a suitable enemy to social order and a threat to personal security does not seem to be very convincing, as Romain Garbaye showed in his paper *Multicultural Society and Perceptions of Crime and Insecurity*, presented at the workshop. In an international comparison of local integration policies, he showed that especially after 9/11 and the London bombings, the Muslim communities in particular became a favourable target for suspicion, along with Caribbean blacks, who have always been an object of ‘othering’ in fear-of-crime discourse. The development of a multicultural society is seen as threat to social integration and social order, and the related anxieties can easily be used to construct suitable enemies, especially if they can be constructed as the criminal alien. This issue was also highlighted in the paper presented in the workshop by Willem de Haan, on *The Changing Culture of Control in The Netherlands. From Multicultural Drama to Cultural Trauma*, which analysed the representation of the murder of Theo van Gogh in 2004, and the consequences of that representation (see 2.2).

Conventional research into the fear of crime has very often confirmed a strong connection between xenophobic and right-wing political orientations and concerns about crime and law and order. But, as Robert and Pottier (2004, 2006) have shown for France, these connection seems to become weaker in recent years, and the authors conclude that increasingly crime issues appear to be focused on as an issue independent of ethnic or racial issues.

**C - Contemporary Insecurities within the framework of social and political transformations**

An argument based on general insecurities associated with social change has also been applied to explain the increased fear of crime levels in countries that have undergone disruptive social and political transformations, such as the former socialist countries, or those in transition from dictatorship to democracy, like Spain and Portugal. A central part of the workshop was devoted to this question, involving case studies on insecurity in Portugal (Cândido da Agra and colleagues: *Good Insecurity and Bad Insecurity - Insecurity and Transformations from Dictatorship to Democracy in Portugal*), Germany (Helmut Kury: *Traditions and Transformations from Socialism to Democracy: Germany*), Slovenia (Benjamin Flander: *Social Transformation, Insecurity, and Fear - Reflections on Slovenia’s Transition*) and Poland (Krzysztof Krajewski: *Social Transformation, Insecurity, and Fear in Poland*).

These transformations are extremely interesting, as they provide a kind of social laboratory situation to analyse the relationship between macro-social and political change, and deviance and social control. Unlike the above-mentioned crises, transformation processes are characterised by rapid or disruptive changes of central institutions, norms and orientations that do not allow for
smooth coping and adaptation processes. Thus, this kind of transformation is by definition marked by social disorganisation and social disintegration that affects individuals directly in their everyday lives, and creates social anxieties, uncertainties and insecurities.

The period following the transformation of the former socialist countries, in particular, is marked by an extreme increase in crime. But, as Boers (1995, 163) concluded, this development could not necessarily be interpreted as consequence of social disintegration but must be seen as structural side effect of modernisation. Capitalist economies are built on incentives for consumption, and these incentives could not be paralleled by increasing police control. Transformation and capitalist modernisation are always linked to an increase in criminal opportunities, especially property crime. Furthermore, the free exchange of goods demands more or less open frontiers, and with regard to differences in economic development, at least between East Germany and Poland, the opportunity and motivation for migration and criminal economic activities increases. Similar conclusions were drawn in the workshop by Benjamin Flander for the Slovenian case.

These developments were verified by data presented by Helmut Kury in the workshop, especially for East Germany, showing a sharp increase in property crime, which very quickly (in two years) rose almost to West German levels. Concerning the fear of crime, it was shown that in the years following German re-unification, the level of fear of crime and risk perception in East Germany was at least twice as high as in West Germany. But it was also shown that people adapted to these levels over time. Obviously, the new image of crime after the transformation became a routine part of living in modern societies. Krzysztof Krajewski reported data from local fear-of-crime studies, which largely confirmed increased levels of fear of crime for Poland.

But it is not at all clear whether the assumption of general social insecurities, uncertainties and anxieties as a basis for fear of and concerns about crime can be empirically verified. In conventional fear-of-crime research, the direct correlations between the fear of crime and marginalised or uncertain social positions are seldom very strong, if they exist at all. Another weakness of these macro-sociological perspectives is their – at least implicit – assumption of a continuous increase in the fear of crime as modernisation goes on to produce individualisation, demands for flexibilisation and the “liquefaction” of social relations. There is not only a logical limit to this development, but also an empirical weakness showing a rather unstable and differentiated level of fear of crime over time, and even a considerable decrease in some European countries.

When focusing on the macro-social causes of the fear of crime, the link between modernisation and the expressed orientations of individuals concerning crime is often constructed as a kind of strategic manipulation “from above” (see Hollway, Jefferson, 1997) or
by the construction of suitable enemies supported by the media.

In this respect, the analysis of Portugal’s case (Cândido da Agra and colleagues) offered valuable insights. The authors showed that the processes of rapid and disruptive transformation are not necessarily connected with an extraordinary increase in concerns about crime and insecurity. Particularly in the post-revolutionary period, issues of insecurity were connected more with the institutions of the old regime and with terrorist attacks, but not especially with crime issues such as street crime or youth violence. This situation changed in the 1980s and 1990s when the security issue was taken up by political parties in election campaigns. However, in international comparisons, Portugal now appears to be one of the European countries with the highest “fear of crime” levels.

These reflections highlight the significance of political institutions and strategies in constructing insecurity and crime issues, not only as a link between macro-social developments and the construction of insecurities, but also as an important factor in their own right for analysing contemporary insecurities and concerns about crime.

2 - Insecurities as social and political constructions

A - The culture of control

One prominent answer to the question of changing concerns about crime with reference to institutional change has been the conceptualisation of a ‘culture of control’ by David Garland (2001). One of the starting points in his argumentation is rising or high crime rates that affect the everyday experience of citizens, especially the middle classes, which lead to a generalised ‘crime consciousness’: High crime rates are regarded as a normal social fact and crime-avoidance becomes an organizing principle of everyday life. Fear of crime is sufficiently wide-spread to become a political reference point and crime issues are generally politicised and represented in emotive terms. Concerns about victims and public safety dominate government policy and the criminal justice state is viewed as severely limited in its impact ... A high level of ‘crime consciousness’ comes to be embedded in everyday social life and institutionalised in the media, in popular
The new culture of control has also been created by images in the media, by political rhetoric, but most importantly by the collective experience of crime in everyday life. Private citizens have adapted to this prevalence of crime with their own prevention and control adaptations. But the demands of the middle classes in England/Wales and the USA for security have lead to changes in the basic orientations and institutions within the penal system, which are connected with socio-structural and political developments, but which have also formed a stream of development with its own specific dynamic.

His analyses lead him to the conclusion that there has been a decline in the rehabilitative ideal in criminal justice, which leaves room for bifurcation: on the one hand there is a tendency towards the rationalisation and de-moralisation of crime leading to processes of decriminalisation, an orientation towards risk and harmorientated policies, and a process of holding the citizen responsible (‘criminology of everyday life’) and, on the other hand, a ‘criminology of the other’, which echoes the notion of moral panic (see below), including high-profile crimes that call for drastic, symbolic and pervasive action by policy makers.

Drawing on this argumentation and the idea of Dario Melossi (2008) of long cycles in the problematisation of social order problems, Axel Groenemeyer, in his paper From Sin to Risk? Images of Crime and Insecurity in Late Modernity presented at the workshop, developed the idea that changing images of deviance in public discourses are linked to changes in solidarity with deviant individuals, and this solidarity guides not only the public perception of crime but also demands for and legitimisation of public policy. Solidarity with the deviant and the acceptance of a certain image of the deviant corresponds with changing political ideas of social integration and the mechanisms for creating social order. When the deviant is imaged as the stranger, the other, the enemy or even the monster (criminology of the other) then demands for expressive forms of exclusive punishment gain legitimacy. This image corresponds with conservative ideas of social order created by common values and with the diagnosis of a decay of these values in modern societies. The image of the criminal as hedonistic rational actor calls for rational choice explanations and for forms of rationalised and professionalized deterrence. This image corresponds with the liberal idea of social order created by private interests and the market. The social democratic idea of integration and social order via welfare policy is reflected by an image of the deviant as a deficient individual lacking socialisation, capacities, or resources, which demand re-socialisation, medical or therapeutic treatment, or social policy measures. It is this image that has largely guided criminal justice in the 20th century, replaced nowadays by the image of the deviant as a member of a risk population responsible for causing causes harm to others and to society, who must be avoided using technical risk-
management measures or exclusion policies in defence of society.

From these perspectives, concerns about crime and security are seen not so much as a direct consequence of social developments that affect citizens, but as cultural changes that guide institutional responses to threats to social order and their public support. Insecurity and concerns about crime are to be understood as encompassing a concept that is embedded in more general constructions of social problems and deviant behaviour.

B - Concerns about crime as moral panic and cultural traumas

A similar approach, emphasising the social and cultural processes of constructing images of social problems and deviants, was developed by Jock Young (1971) and Stanley Cohen (1972) at the end of the 1960s and the beginning of the 1970s, with the concept of moral panic. This concept still seems to be well suited to the analysis of insecurities and concerns about crime today. In Cohen’s now classic definition, he stated: Societies appear to be subject, every now and then, to periods of moral panic. A condition, episode, person or groups of persons emerge to become defined as a threat to societal values and interests, its nature is presented in a stylized and stereotypical fashion by the mass media; the moral barricades are manned by editors, bishops, politicians and other right-thinking people; socially accredited experts pronounce their diagnoses and solutions; ways of coping are evolved (or more often) resorted to; the condition then disappears, submerges or deteriorates and becomes more visible (911).

Drawing on the “symbolic crusade” concept developed by Joseph Gusfield (1963), the concept highlights processes involving the social construction of “moral panic” and “folk devils”; such phenomena arise out of considerable moral disturbances rooted in significant structural and value changes within society. The subjects of panic are not random but rather trigger points in such transformations (Young, 2009, 4). In this sense the concept is rooted in ideas of cultural conflict, which find their expression in heated public moral debates and moral indignation by constructing suitable enemies that become symbols of the moral decay of society and give rise to demands that “something must be done”. Even if not limited to it, the concept seems to be best suited to analysing the construction of public enemies by presenting exceptional symbolic situations and events that justify moral indignation even if the underlying condition developed over a longer period.

In another theoretical context, the concept of “cultural trauma” (Alexander et al., 2004) has been developed, which shows remarkable similarities with “moral panic”. In discussions about the construction of “collective or public memories”, cultural trauma

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11 It is worth citing this definition in length, as very often “moral panic” has been associated with some notion of “disproportional reaction”, which is obviously not mentioned in the original definition (see Young, 2009, 13 f.). Disproportionate public and political reaction involves a normative statement and makes the concept difficult to apply in sociological analyses.
means “a memory accepted and publicly given credence by a relevant membership group and evoking an event or situation that is a) laden with negative affect, b) represented as indelible, and c) regarded as threatening a society’s existence or violating one or more fundamental presuppositions”. … “cultural trauma occurs when members of a collectivity feel they have been subjected to a horrendous event that leaves indelible marks upon their group consciousness, marking their memories forever and changing their future identity in fundamental and irrevocable ways” (ibid, 1)\(^{12}\).

Drawing on this idea, Willem de Haan in his paper on *The Changing Culture of Control in The Netherlands. From Multicultural Drama to Cultural Trauma* presented at the workshop an analysis of the way in which the murder of Theo van Gogh in 2004 in Amsterdam was publicly presented, and the consequences of that presentation. The murder had a major impact on the Netherlands’ self image as a liberal, open and tolerant society, and its consequence affected the course of political orientations concerning crime, ethnicity and security. In the same way, André Lemaître in his paper on *Cultural Drama and Insecurity in Belgium* presented research on the “Affaire Dutroux”, which together with other exceptional events led to important institutional and political changes concerning insecurity in Belgium. Both authors emphasise that these events or situations carry a highly symbolic meaning that has been broadly mediated and emphasised by media coverage, but, nevertheless, these symbols seem to express widespread underlying feelings of anxiety and insecurity in the population, and consequently new measures and political orientations find easy acceptance amongst the public.

### 3 - Insecurities and “claim-making activities”

Analyses of “fear of crime” very often, at least implicitly, follow the idea that it matters what the people think. Changes in crime policies are explained by changing public concerns about crime and fear. These considerations are also sometimes expressed in arguments about insecurity as a consequence of modernisation. From this kind of “bottom-up” perspective, the political system is seen as an instrument of public will. In some critical and constructionist views, one finds the opposite assumption: that insecurity is the consequence of the strategic policy of powerful or hegemonic political elites, or groups (e.g. the media) that impose cultural significance upon the population. This kind of “top-down” political perspective implies an image of the political system as the “great manipulator”. Even if such a confrontation of these two positions is rather simplistic and does not do justice to most of the cited analyses, it emphasises that the question of links between the political system and policy, and social developments and the public, should be made explicit.

\(^{12}\) In their book, the authors analyse as examples of “cultural trauma” 9/11, Slavery in the USA, the Holocaust in Germany and the disruptive transformations in post-socialist countries, amongst other examples.
A - Claim-making from “below”? 

As an element of administrative criminology, fear-of-crime polls are designed to inform the political system about the public’s demands and orientations. In this sense, criminology plays the role of a “claim-maker” well, insofar as it has created a concept that defines a social problem, justified by the image of rationality and scientific knowledge and of direct use for political decision making; even if it is another question what kind of use is made out of its results.

Analysis and discussions of “claim-making activities” within the framework of the sociology of social problems in general emphasise, the active role of social movements, moral entrepreneurs, the media, interest and professional groups, public administration and organisations forming part of the political system. These groups and institutions in general play an active role in the conflictual construction of public issues by trying to impose their particular interests and moral orientations on the public and the political system. The history of problematisation of security and fear of crime as a public and political issue mostly is based on analyses of media productions and the activities of the political system13.

B - The political instrumentalisation of insecurity

“Fear of crime” has been used to justify various crime-control policies. When introducing more punitive sentences, restrictions on the rights of the accused, or more intensive forms of supervision and surveillance, politicians have sought to justify the proposed measures in terms of reducing the fear of crime (Farrall, Jackson, Gray, 2007, 19).

Throughout the history of the concept, it has always been stressed that concerns about crime and fear of crime were originally introduced by Barry Goldwater and Richard Nixon during their 1964 and 1968 US presidential electoral campaigns, respectively. In the UK, the first politician who made political capital out of the fear of crime was Margaret Thatcher in the 1979 general election, culminating in Blair’s expressed desire to be “tough on crime and tough on the causes of crime” in the 1997 general election. The fear of crime thus became something which, whilst reflecting some pre-existing set of concerns or anxiety, became something that appropriately-minded politicians could use to stoke up public feelings on certain topics (ibid.; Lee, 2007, 56 ff., for France see Mucchielli, 2008).

Lee (2007, 77) stresses the connection between criminology and political instrumentalisation as a “fear of crime feedback loop”: research into fear of crime — through crime and victim surveys — produces 

13 An exception to this is the analysis of the role of the feminist movement, which operated in the 1970s as a collective actor in criticising the limited focus of male-dominated criminology on the male criminal alone, and the fact that it neglected to analyse, in particular, the female victims of violence. It seems as if, especially in Britain, the feminist movement has had a considerable influence on formulating the “fear of crime” as a criminological, public and political issue (see Lee, 2007, 97 ff.).
the criminological object fear of crime statistically and, discursively, a concept is constituted. This information then operates to inform the citizenry that they are indeed fearful, information the fearing subject can reflect upon. The law and order lobby and politicians use fear to justify a tougher approach on crime (they have to, the citizenry are fearful apparently), a point on which they grandstand and in doing so breed more fear. The concept feeds the discourse and the discourse in turn justifies the concept. This conclusion dovetails well with the concept of “governing through crime” developed by Jonathan Simon (2007) for the USA, in stressing the uses of insecurity in political processes (especially in election campaigns).

However, it must be noted that this feedback loop does not follow a natural law but depends on the structure of the political regime, institutions and culture. In his paper on “Political Regimes and Insecurity: England and Norway” Peter Green presented a model connecting political regime structure, media culture and public perception to explain the different sensibilities of political elites regarding public perceptions of problems in England and Norway. A comparison of public, media, and political responses to two child-on-child homicides in England and Norway from the early 1990s reveals differing incentives for penal populism in each country. Differences in political and media culture might help to account for higher levels of fear and public concern following these two events. The highly adversarial, majority-based political culture in England meant that the press and politicians legitimized each other’s assertions that the James Bulger murder was indicative of a deeper social or moral malaise. In the case’s immediate wake, public concern about crime doubled, the number of offenders sentenced to imprisonment rose, and after responding forcefully and morally to the murder in the tabloids, Tony Blair emerged as a viable Labour party leadership contender to challenge the Tory party on law and order. In contrast, Norway’s consensual political culture helped to prevent the death of Silje Redergård from being politicized at all by rival parties, and even the tabloid press treated her death as a tragic accident. Even if this case study also falls within the concept of “moral panic”, it emphasise the significance of political institutional structure and culture in explaining different responses to security threats.

In fact, the European model of political regimes and culture seems to be better able to avoid the direct influence of public and media constructions on the political system than the Anglo-Saxon model. In the same way, political regimes with strong professional and welfare organisations and a highly professionalized criminal justice system, with almost no direct citizen-participation, without a system of elected police officers and prosecutors, and a democratic culture based more on party consensus than on party conflicts, seem to be better equipped to break the feedback loop, even if there have also always been attempts in most European political systems to instrumentalise
security for political purposes. So further research needs to be carried out to discover whether the concepts developed in the British and US contexts also hold good for continental European systems.

**III - THE ROLE OF SOCIAL, POLITICAL AND CULTURAL TRANSFORMATIONS IN CONSTRUCTING CONTEMPORARY INSECURITIES - INSTEAD OF A CONCLUSION**

The issues developed in this workshop were considered to be extremely broad, and it seemed inappropriate both to examine all aspects relating to this question, and to have presentations from all countries on the various topics. So the aim of these discussions was to provide answers but to widen our perspective of insecurity. This approach gave rise to numerous questions, which need to be followed up by looking at them from an international viewpoint.

This is even truer in the case of the limited space available in this report. We have only been able to stress a few aspects (mostly more or less in caricature) about the role of social, political and cultural transformations that are of importance for explaining contemporary constructions of insecurity. So far, no approach has been highlighted that might have encompassed all of the dimensions and perspective mentioned in the workshop and in this paper. But at least one conclusion might be drawn from these discussions, in the form of a platitude: “Further research and international discussions are needed”.
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