

Newsletter of the *European Society of Criminology*

CRIMINOLOGY IN EUROPE



Inkeri Antilla on Criminology

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Csaba Györy

THE VILNIUS CONFERENCE

At Vilnius airport, the wait times one is conditioned to expect, rather refreshingly, do not exist. So I end up having checked in way too early to my flight back home. I look for a relatively silent corner, and settle with my book, a Swedish crime novel. After some time I realize that the person who has been sitting next to me, and who is now packing, has been reading the same book. I smile at him, he smiles back. He looks definitely very familiar: I assume another criminologist whose name will hopefully come into my mind later if we start a conversation. "Is it worth reading?" I ask him, and halfway through the question I realize I am talking to the actor John Malkovich. "Yes" he answers with the slight annoyance famous people must feel when approached in their private moments just because they are famous. Our common ground of having attended the same conference thus evaporated, I feel compelled to apologize for my intrusion into his privacy, so I say, slightly overwhelmed by this unlikely encounter at the unlikeliest of places: "sorry, I thought you are a criminologist". He throws an even more irritated look at me, and after some silence asks: "a what?" I say "never mind, I just took you to be someone else" to which, as he replies "I thought you think we are reading the same book". Then he fires off a short "bye" and he is gone.

John Malkovich is not a criminologist but almost everyone else seemed to be one for a couple of days in September in Vilnius: be it a bar, a bus, a museum or just the streets, I constantly ran into people wearing the brownish-yellow conference tags.

Vilnius was also the first ESC annual meeting, where most of the participants stayed in the same hotel. This, I believe, was a good thing: it led to the scenes where someone exiting the elevator at 2 a.m. could bump into a bunch of people, fresh from the bar, loudly gesticulating and talking about criminology. Criminological chatter was the background noise in the restaurant, in the bar, in the sauna and in the swimming pool. How the other guest took this onslaught of criminologists, we don't know for sure. But it was fun.

The conference, which was organized by the Vilnius University, the Law Institute of Lithuania, the Centre for Crime Prevention in Lithuania and the Lithuanian Association of Criminology, opened in the beautiful deconsecrated baroque church of the university with an address by the Minister of Justice of Lithuania, Remigijus Šimašius, a PhD and a former lecturer of legal philosophy himself. This was followed by a speech given by our host, Aleksandras Dobryninas. In a short, but engaging talk, which clearly served as a theoretical underpinning of the concept of the conference, Professor Dobryninas invited us on a philosophical journey to contemplate the notion of "fighting evil" and "fighting crime". In his lecture, he made a case for an entirely new approach to crime, the "aphoristic criminology" as he called it, that defines crime in a negative way; a criminology that concentrates not on the definition of crime, but on what is not a crime: on the wellbeing and the better organization of society.

And indeed: the program of the conference itself was the evidence how much of a broad sweep criminology has in Europe in the meantime.



Nothing symbolizes this better than the works of Sappho Xenakis, the recipient of the 2011 Young Criminologist Award, whose scholarship saddles criminology, international relations and political science (in this issue).

The diversity was evident in the subjects, the theoretical framework and the methodology. There was, for example a separate panel on the cultural criminology of international criminal justice and on the role religion in the socialization of youth in ethnic communities. It was also evident that new methodological approaches are also gaining momentum: these range from the ethnographic study of compliance mechanisms in financial institutions (Rachel Southworth, Cardiff) to the social network analysis of organized crime groups in Naples (Ernesto Savona, Milan).

Yet despite these new developments, the bulk of the sessions showed what the strength of ESC scholarly community really is: an empirically informed critical stance on criminal policy and criminal justice practices. More than ten sessions were devoted to various issues in the alternatives of imprisonment; also many sessions dealt with the analysis and possible reforms of policing practices, including ethnic and racial bias.

And this interest is very much in line with the strongly worded address of Inkeri Antilla, the recipient of this year's ESC European Criminology Award, summing up the experiences of her career in academics and public service that spanned more than half a century: "being critical, and being constructive and practical are not mutually exclusive alternatives. Getting involved in penal reform does not exclude the opportunity for critical research, quite the opposite." (The full text of her address is published in this issue).

But there is still more to be done. As the presentation of Alida Merlo and Bitna Kim of Indiana University of Pennsylvania showed (you will find a summary of their finding below this article), European criminologists are still not engaging in international cooperative research projects in large numbers, and tend to concentrate their attention on a single country. Truly pan-European research projects, like the ISRD, are still relatively rare.

Despite the success of the ISRD (there were two separate, crowded sessions solely devoted to findings based on the ISRD data set, with ISRD-based presentations also disseminated in many other panels) this was a very sad occasion for the researchers of the ISRD team: it was the first ESC Annual Conference without Josine Junger-Tas, the initiator and the driving force of the ISRD project, and the founding member of the ESC. Her enormous impact and popularity was evident at the fully packed panel session "Compassionate criminology" which served as a tribute to her and her work. But the project she initiated will continue and expand as the Vilnius conference also hosted the preparatory meeting for the ISRD3, which will greet even more countries on board.

One of the things that really struck, I think, all the participants in Vilnius was the extremely professional, yet heartfelt manner in which the hosts and hostesses (all of them students of criminology), carried out their tasks. Their engagement gave a personal touch to the otherwise swift and skilled service of the hotel staff. And this is probably an even better sign, than this extremely professional conference: if so many engaged students are going to inhabit it, criminology will have a very bright future in Lithuania.

TO THE READERS OF THE ESC NEWSLETTER

Due to technical reasons, the posting of the last 2011 issue suffered considerable delays, for which we would like to apologize. The problem is now solved and the 2012 issues will arrive in your mailbox according to the usual schedule.

Thank you very much for your understanding.

Csaba Györy
Editor

COMPARATIVE CORRUPTION RESEARCH

My research seeks to assess the impact of international relations on domestic socio-political change through the medium of crime control, and is particularly focused on the relationship between state power and the international diffusion of values and policies against corruption, organised crime, and political violence. Working on the cusp of criminology, on the one hand, and politics and International Relations, on the other, my research to date has principally focused on Greece and the UK, and I have increasingly pursued comparative perspectives (including, for example, co-editing the book *Crime and Punishment in Contemporary Greece: International Comparative Perspectives*, published by Peter Lang in 2011).

My doctoral thesis, awarded in 2006 by the University of Oxford, sought to explain the reasons for, and the effectiveness of, the transfer of international policy against organised crime to Greece between 1989 and 2001. Post-doctoral projects have extended the scope of the doctoral work to consider the mechanisms by which the cross-national transfer of values and policies has been made possible. Over the last two years, for instance, as a Marie Curie Intra-European Fellow funded under the European Union 7th Framework Programme and hosted by the Hellenic Foundation for European and Foreign Policy (ELIAMEP) in Athens, I conducted research into the experience of security policy transfer to Greece. Building upon this study, a pilot project examining experiences of security policy transfer to Turkey is currently in progress, supported by a 2011-2012 Strategic Research Initiative grant from the British Institute at Ankara and hosted by the School of Interdisciplinary Area Studies, University of Oxford. The research is scheduled for further expansion, with a two-year research project comparing the experiences of security policy transfer of Britain, France, Greece, and Turkey. The latter project, which is due to begin in January 2012, has been made possible thanks to the award of a Junior Research Fellowship funded by the European Union 7th Framework Programme, and is to be hosted by the Centre for Sociological Research on Law and Penal Institutions (CESDIP) at the Université de Versailles Saint-Quentin-en-Yvelines in Paris, France.

The topic of the article for which I received the 2011 ESC Young Criminologist Award was comparative corruption analysis¹. In studying socio-political change and crime control in Greece, both the issue of corruption and debates about the extensiveness and severity of the phenomenon in the country by international comparison were inescapable.

Greece is a country whose reputation has suffered much in the eyes of the international public over recent months, with considerable political and media attention associating the extensiveness of corruption in the country with the many and severe economic ills that have befallen it. Yet the turmoil centring around Greece was closely preceded by a stream of major international scandals involving the intertwined business and political elites of the economically advanced world – from Enron, to BAe Systems, Fannie Mae, and Halliburton, to mention just a few –, and these produced negative political and economic ramifications at a global level and of unprecedented severity for our times. Whilst it is perhaps not realistic to expect such experiences to chasten elite discourse, especially when elites hold in judgement the experiences of semi-peripheral states and societies, such as Greece, it is surprising that so much scholarly literature has been reluctant to address the prejudices underpinning such discourse, or willing to support it.

At a time when a significant strand of public debate has turned towards the language and lessons of the 1930s to understand the current global financial crisis, a significant segment of the international academic community has continued to advance along the assumptions of US theorists from the 1950s; namely, that gangster capitalism is a thing of the past for advanced economies, which are instead in a position to advise others how to follow their successful route to maturity. It appears that today many of the theoretical assumptions of what could be termed, for shorthand, the 'pre-politically correct era', are no longer considered taboo, and are instead proving a welcome source of inspiration for many contemporary theorists of the relationship between corruption, development, and democracy.

Reductive variables, such as a country's dominant religious tradition, its civic culture, the framework of its political institutions, and market freedoms, are repeatedly harnessed to theorise the findings of international survey data on perceptions of corruption, the collection of which has grown significantly over the past twenty years. Given the paucity of comparable data on actual trends in corrupt practices, the very growth of perception-based datasets has made them a seductive, if still ultimately illusory, means of tracing the social, political, and economic determinants of corruption. On one hand, then, and despite widespread acknowledgement of the dangers in equating perceptions with practice, a significant vein of typological comparative corruption literature has persisted in surreptitiously conflating the two, by attributing perceptions to such reductive variables that

are destined to confirm their validity, thereby implying that perceptions are sufficiently accurate guides to practice. On the other hand, the variables selected to explain perceptions commonly appear to have little grounding in empirical reality. These points are elaborated in the article through discussion of the case of Britain².

The British case is important to comparative corruption literature not only because of its relatively high ranking in the corruption perceptions indices, nor simply the way in which its history of corruption reduction has often been regarded as a model for others. It is also because British institutions and culture have been highlighted by some scholars as having helped to ‘corruption proof’ other societies when exported under colonial rule, from its democratic and common law traditions to its Protestantism. According to the schema commonly presented in international comparative typological research, Britain’s success as a country of low corruption should be attributable to the country’s civic culture, the weakness of its family units and the predominance of moral individualism as opposed to amoral familism, the relaxed acceptance by the British of risk-taking and their internalisation of normative proscriptions which negate the need for an overt web of moral dictates to be imposed by society. Alongside which, its Protestantism is alleged to have contributed to the development of a healthy free market economy, as have high levels of xenophilic trust, high levels of civic engagement and anti-authoritarianism, as well as a vibrant political opposition and free press, and an allegedly less competitive, less anxious, and more compassionate culture.

But there are stark discrepancies between these proposed variables and the social, political, and economic realities of contemporary Britain. To mention just a few of these, recent decades have seen the increasing centralisation of political power in Britain, declining voter turnout and the weakening electoral mandates of British governments, one of the steepest declines in political party membership amongst older European democracies, and falling levels of extra-familial trust. At the same time, there has been a very significant rise in wealth inequality, which has been accompanied by declining social mobility. Protestantism and so-called ‘Protestant ethics’, meanwhile, appear entirely irrelevant to the lives of the majority of British citizens today.

The inconsistencies illustrated by the British case indicate the broader inadequacy of the nexus between perceptions and the variables used by typological comparative research. As the paper goes on to elaborate, however, qualitative, nationally-focused studies of corruption in Britain have also been hindered by unsubstantiated assumptions about the conditions that have supposedly produced an environment

that is conducive to corruption. By commonly relying on the thesis that long-established parliamentary traditions, combined with national affluence, have limited the severity of corruption in the UK, little attention has been paid to those dimensions of corruption that are often thought to pertain only to countries of the global periphery, such as practices of nepotism, patronage and hereditary privileges, and cultures of gift exchange. For example, it logically follows, but is nonetheless striking, that there has been a dearth of systematic research into contemporary gift-giving practices amongst political, corporate, and media sectors in core Western states, although they are hardly insignificant in terms of either their protagonists or their monetary value.

The paper concludes with three proposals about how to enhance the validity of international comparative and nationally-focused analyses of corruption, how to reduce bias and further the comparability of findings, and how to ensure that research is both convincing and pertinent to contemporary lived experience. Firstly, it is suggested that there should be greater reflective engagement between international comparative and nationally-focused analyses. Secondly, that the balance of nationally-focused corruption research needs to be redressed and the relative neglect of core Western states ended. And thirdly, that consideration of domestic and international relations of power, which shape practices and perceptions of corruption, needs to be systematically incorporated into research at both levels of analysis. To identify and explain distortive discourses concerning corruption by reference to pride and prejudice is not to suggest that the whole concept of corruption is simply an illusion with no consequences. On the contrary, as the paper seeks to argue, recognition of the role of international and domestic power relations in shaping practices and perceptions of corruption is a crucial precondition to appreciating the very real political, social, and economic harms that are generated by corruption.

Sappho Xenakis, PhD, is currently working as a research associate at the School of Interdisciplinary Area Studies, University of Oxford. She is the recipient of the 2011 ESC Young Criminologist Award.

- ¹ Sappho Xenakis, ‘Pride and prejudice: Comparative corruption analysis and the British case’, *Crime, Law and Social Change*, 54, 1 (2010): 39–61.
- ² See also Sappho Xenakis, ‘Corruption and Organised Crime in the UK’, in Philip Gounev and Vincenzo Ruggiero (eds) *Corruption and Organised Crime in Europe: Illegal Partnerships*. London: Routledge (forthcoming 2012).



AN EXAMINATION OF INTERNATIONAL OR COMPARATIVE STUDIES UNDER THE AEGIS OF THE ESC

In an attempt to explore the status of conference presentations and journal publications that have an international or comparative focus, the authors compared all 3,786 scholarly presentations (the unit of analysis) at the European Society of Criminology conferences from 2001 to 2010 with all 171 articles published in the *European Journal of Criminology* from 2004 to 2010 utilizing content analysis. The content analysis results indicate that 85.6 percent of the conference presentations over the nine year period were by presenters who had a European affiliation; and their presentation was Europe-centric. The conference presentations sug-

gest that when it comes to comparative criminal justice and criminology in the meeting presentations, a transnational partnership (two or more countries studied) occurs infrequently. There were only 57 presentations out of 3,786 in the nine year period that compared two or more countries in a transnational partnership; and 0.1% (N=3) presentations that compared two or more countries in a transnational partnership where one of the countries was outside of Europe.

Of the 171 articles published, 159 (93 percent) examined only one country in Europe, and the author was affiliated with a European institution or organization.



Table 1-1. International/Comparative nature of ESC presentation by years, N = 3,786^a

Nature of presentations

The comparative/international nature of 168 (4.4%) cases could not be determined.

Year	Europe-affiliated & Europe studied	Comparative	Non-Europe-based, non-comparative	Total
2001	7 2.9%	216 88.5%	11 4.5%	244 100.0%
2002	17 4.4%	293 75.7%	46 11.9%	387 100.0%
2003	14 5.5%	201 79.1%	23 9.1%	254 100.0%
2005	14 3.9%	298 83.7%	32 9.0%	356 100.0%
2006	14 3.6%	322 82.6%	37 9.5%	390 100.0%
2007	29 5.2%	444 79.9%	55 9.9%	556 100.0%
2008	25 4.5%	459 83.0%	55 9.9%	553 100.0%
2009	16 3.0%	447 84.5%	46 8.7%	529 100.0%
2010	12 2.3%	440 85.1%	42 8.1%	517 100.0%
Total	148 4.1%	3,120 86.2%	347 9.6%	3,618 100.0%



There was one publication (0.6%) that compared two or more countries in a transnational partnership where one of the countries was outside of Europe. These data suggest that the vast majority of presenters at the ESC meetings are affiliated with European institutions; and their presentations tend to focus on one country in Europe. Similarly, articles published in the *European Journal of Criminology* focus on a single country in Europe and are authored by a scholar who is associated with a Europe-based institution or organization.

In her last President's message in 2002, Dr. Josine Junger-Tas asked, "What should be the role of the ESC? First and foremost, we must encourage empirical research in all its forms and varieties, always insisting on high standards of methodological quality. This is also embodied in the credo of the *European Journal of Criminology*, which states as its objective '...to bring together broad theoretical accounts of crime, analyses of quantitative data, comparative studies, systematic evaluations, and discussions of criminal justice institutions'"¹.

This preliminary study suggests that the ESC is at a crossroads. Does the ESC embark on a path to recruit and involve more non-European scholars and research or does it stay the course? Should the journal editorial board solicit

more non-European comparative studies? Conversely, the first decade demonstrated the enormous success of the organization and journal. Is it best to continue on the path without significant changes? This may be an appropriate time to consider these questions.

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Table 1-1 and Table 1-2 present data on the numbers and percentages of presentations/publications by year.

- 1 Junger-Tas, J. (2002). My hopes for the future of criminology in Europe. *Newsletter of the ESC*, 1(3) November: 2, 15.

Table 1-2. International/Comparative nature of EJC Publications by years, N = 171^a

Nature of presentations

Year	Europe-affiliated & Europe studied	Comparative	Non-Europe-based, non-comparative	Total
2004	0	19	1	20
	0.0%	95.0%	0.5%	100.0%
2005	1	20	1	22
	4.5%	90.9%	4.5%	100.0%
2006	1	17	1	19
	5.3%	89.5%	5.3%	100.0%
2007	1	19	0	20
	0.5%	95.0%	0.0%	100.0%
2008	2	19	0	21
	9.5%	90.5%	0.0%	100.0%
2009	1	24	1	26
	3.8%	92.3%	3.8%	100.0%
2010	2	29	0	31
	6.5%	93.5%	0.0%	100.0%
Total	8	159	4	171
	4.7%	93.0%	2.3%	100.0%

ADDRESS TO THE ESC ON THE OCCASION OF THE EUROPEAN CRIMINOLOGY AWARD 2011

First, I want to extend my sincere thanks to the European Society of Criminology for the considerable honour of being chosen to receive the ESC European Criminology Award.

It would have been a great pleasure for me to attend this conference, and to visit Vilnius.

However, I regret that, taking into account my fairly advanced age and my physician's advice, I must unfortunately be content with delivering my address in writing.

As some of you may know, I retired from my University chair already some 45 years ago. Although I did continue to work in the European Institute for Crime Prevention and Control, affiliated with the United Nations (HEUNI) and with the reform of the Finnish criminal code for the 35 years following my retirement, it is fair to admit that some of the very latest debates in criminological theory may have eluded my attention.

However, I do have some perspective and personal views on the development of criminological research in Finland – and in the other Nordic countries – over the past 60 years or so.

And, thanks to a number of lucky coincidences, I have had the opportunity to see how the findings of criminological research have been implemented and applied in the formation of national penal policies. – By honouring me with the ESC European Criminology Award, you have kindly provided me with an opportunity to present my ideas on these issues to you.

I started my professional career as a lawyer and as a university teacher of law in the late 1940s, and taught law at the University of Helsinki. In those days, many criminologists had a similar background in law. During the 1950s I worked in the personnel training centre of the Finnish prison system, a system which was – at that time – not only hard but also harmful for many prisoners. For someone with my background, the combination of research with practical reform work was a quite natural starting point.

Criminology as we know it today came to the Nordic countries during the 1950s and the 1960s. Much of the research of that time was inspired by problems related to the sanctioning system and the treatment of offenders.

These themes were also of major relevance for everyday penal practice.

Criminologists did not isolate themselves from the rest of the society. Many of them also had visible positions in political life and civil service. We did make a lot of effort to disseminate our arguments, not only to other researchers, but also to civil servants, politicians and the general public as well. I thought then that this was the right course of action – and I still do.

We did have some success, as well. With a little help from our Scandinavian friends, we managed to put forward critical comments about the rationality and sensibility of the existing sanctioning practices in Finland. I wish to stress that this was a joint project with friends and many colleagues from universities, courts and government, both in Finland and abroad, Europe and elsewhere. The contacts that we established in those times, still prevail, although some of us are admittedly getting older.

The impact of the research community was not confined to the reform of the system of sanctions. The growth of criminology and new research evidence made its mark also in the more general public debate regarding the nature and extent of the problem of crime and the proper means for tackling these issues.

At that time – the early 1960s – police recorded data was deemed to be the central – if indeed not the sole – source for any crime policy analysis. This started to change once the first pieces of research on self-reported delinquency were published during the early 1960s. For many, the results were shocking. The first reaction was to panic: So much more crime than we had ever anticipated!

However, soon the debate took another direction.

Crime became, so to say, normalized. Or rather: Those who commit offences were no longer seen to be abnormal and in need of treatment. They were people like us. Instead of trying to identify the causes of crime from personal pathologies, we should direct our attention to social, circumstantial and environmental factors. Our conviction was that good societal policies provide the best criminal policy. And this is the way I am still inclined to think.

This realisation also led us to suggest that similar studies should be carried out from a complementary perspective. If self-report studies revealed that criminal behaviour was far from abnormal, what would we be able to learn from similar studies directed at potential crime victims? This idea was picked up by other, influential colleagues, and the consequences were again widespread disbelief and shock. So much more victimisation than we had known about!

Also this debate eventually became more focused on positive interpretations: if victimisation could be measured and assessed, then surely new insights into how we could prevent crime would emerge.

Working with the media: many of us tend to see the media as an unavoidable evil, as something that is guilty of sensationalism and creating panics, which are accompanied by the risk of simplistic and populist criminal policy shifts and turns.

My understanding is different. I am inclined to see the media as a necessary and valuable partner for experts and researchers in order to disseminate their insights and arguments to decision-makers, other experts, and the general public. I, myself, may have had a lot of free media time, thanks to the fact that I was the first female

doctor of law in the country, and the first woman to be appointed professor of law in Finland. For me it may therefore have been easier to be heard than it was, or is today, for many others.

I am nevertheless convinced that in today's society, the role of the media in policy-making is very important, and that those with expert knowledge on issues related to criminal policy must not refuse to participate in the popular debate.

The debate has, of course, also been going on at the international level. In my time, the most important fora for this were in part, international scientific associations, and in part the Council of Europe and the United Nations. It was through these avenues that innovative thinking on criminal policy issues could be aired, exchanged, disseminated and critically discussed. Of international scientific associations, the *Défense Sociale*, the International Society of Criminology, the AIDP, and the Nordic Association of Criminalists were in the forefront – I spent much effort in participating in the activities of these bodies, because I saw them as fruitful avenues of debate and development. We must remember that it was such fora where criminologists could meet – there just was no European Society of Criminology yet.

Kauko Aromaa

WHO IS INKERI ANTILA?

Born in 1916, she is celebrating her 95th birthday in the end of November 2011. She was the first female professor of law in Finland, the director of the Institute of Criminology 1963-1974, director of the National Research Institute of Legal Policy 1974-1981, and director of HEUNI 1981-1990, Finnish minister of Justice in 1975, and one of the key experts involved in the total reform of the Finnish Penal Code. Overall, she has had a fundamental role in promoting evidence-based penal policy, both through her scientific and practical work.

She was an active participant in all relevant international scientific associations in the field, at national, Scandinavian, European and global level, and had a strong impact on central developments of criminal policy ideas on all of these levels.

Primarily an academic in criminal law, her scientific work yet connected with many criminological topics, including a decisive role in the introduction of surveys on self-reported delinquency and on criminal victimisation. Her conviction has been that experts with knowledge of criminal law and the criminal justice system have the obligation to reveal unacceptable conditions within that system, and to take part in reform work addressing such circumstances. This obligation also means that experts must participate in the public debate concerning these issues, and disseminate their knowledge of reform needs and solutions to decision-makers and the general public. The volume of her scientific publications is vast, and in particular the central pieces of her writing on issues of criminal policy are also published in the English language, Finnish being regrettably too much of a minority language in the world for the time being.



The Nordic Association of Criminalists was the first Nordic forum for scientific debate on criminological issues. It was this association that was able to connect Nordic experts in the area, and to provide an intellectual framework in which critical debate on criminal policy issues was possible. This association was very clearly a place where practitioners, policy makers, academics and researchers could meet and share new ideas.

Of inter-governmental cooperation organisations, the Council of Europe and the United Nations had central roles. There was no European Union at the time, and the Council of Europe criminological colloquia and research conferences were highly relevant for professionals in the area, promoting also an explicit policy perspective. At that time, Finland was not a member of the Council of Europe, but non-members were allowed to participate, and I was successful in gaining influence in those circles too.

The United Nations played a similar role at the global level. Through the connections created in the various international fora, it became possible to gain an active role also on that level.

All of these connections made possible two important avenues of action. First, we were able to promote our lines of thought in all of these fora. And second, we could import much of the international influences to the North. It is essential to recall that at that time, there were very few opportunities for mutual debate among practitioners, decision-makers and experts overall. Our indi-

vidual countries were living in relative isolation, the bonds of which were broken only with great effort.

From the practical policy perspective the important thing was that research was able to put forward convincing arguments regarding the relative ineffectiveness of imprisonment, the relevance of social and situational factors in crime, as well the highly selective functioning of the criminal justice system. There seems to be an ever-returning tendency among decision-makers as well as the general public to forget such fundamental facts, and they need to be reminded of them over and over again. One focus of research should permanently be in these fundamentals.

Not all may agree with what I have said. And some may think that a truly critical criminologist should remain at a distance from official crime policy.

But, being critical, and being constructive and practical are not mutually exclusive alternatives. Getting involved in penal reform does not exclude the opportunity for critical research, quite the opposite.

There are no perfect penal practices; many of them are pretty awful. Some of them may be improved, but evidently not all. But none of them will be improved, unless the flaws of existing practices are exposed, reported and communicated to the general public and the policy makers.

INVITATION TO EJC REVIEWERS

Interested in becoming a reviewer for the European Journal of Criminology? An official publication of the European Society of Criminology, the EJC is the leading source of scholarship devoted to criminology in Europe. The EJC is a prestigious journal, widely-respected and widely-read. In 2010, Thomson ISI rankings gave the journal an impact factor of 1.159, a particularly strong result for a journal during its first year in the rankings. The EJC is also increasingly popular. We receive an ever high number of submissions, and to maintain the quality and integrity of the process, we need to continue to build our list of reviewers.

We are looking for reviewers with recognized expertise in a particular field, whether an area of research or methodological technique. We are looking for reviewers across Europe. As an EJC reviewer, you will have an important part in building the knowledge-

based of European criminology and provide a vital service to colleagues in criminology. The publisher, SAGE, also offers as a 'thank you' to reviewers: complimentary access for a specific period of time to 550 journals and a discount on purchase of books.

Contact the editorial office if you are interested. Let us know your areas of expertise and research specialization. While we cannot promise that everyone will be accepted as an EJC reviewer, we are happy to answer any questions you may have about qualifications or the review process. We look forward to hearing from you!

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About the University

- One of the largest Universities in the UK and Ireland with over 25,000 undergraduate and postgraduate students.
- A long and distinguished history of university education since 1849.
- A member of the Russell Group of leading UK research universities.
- A recent £200 million investment in state of the art library facilities, the Elms student village, and a dedicated International & Postgraduate Student Centre.

Research Performance

The Institute of Criminology and Criminal Justice is located in the School of Law. The School of Law received an impressive top-ten ranking in the 2008 Research Assessment Exercise, finishing 7th in the UK. 95% of research in School of Law is rated as international in quality, and 60% rated as world leading.

ICCJ Staff Research Interests

- Clare Dwyer** – Penal policy; prisoners; transitional justice
- Graham Ellison** – Police reform; community safety; security governance
- Ruth Jamieson** – War and crime; gender and armed conflict; effects of imprisonment
- Shadd Maruna** – Desistance; psychosocial criminology; prisoner reintegration
- Anne-Marie McAlinden** – Child sexual abuse; sex offenders; restorative justice

Kieran McEvoy – Restorative justice; truth recovery; transitional justice

Marny Requa – Truth recovery; human rights; transitional justice

Phil Scraton – Deaths in controversial circumstances; criminological theory; prisons

Pete Shirlow – Segregation and violence; ethno-sectarianism; political violence

Hakeem Yusuf – Transitional justice; legal & political theory; comparative criminal justice

Criminology and Criminal Justice Programmes in the School of Law

- MSc Criminology
- MSc Criminal Justice
- LL.M in Human Rights & Criminal Justice

The School of Law also has a vibrant PhD research programme. Staff welcome prospective PhD applications in their area of research.

Further Information

Further details about Criminology & Criminal Justice programmes at Queen's and the application process are available online at the School of Law's website:

www.law.qub.ac.uk

Alternatively contact the School's Postgraduate Office at:

pglawenquiries@qub.ac.uk



VILNIUS, CRIMINAL POLICY AND COMPARATIVE RESEARCH

Presidential message

From now on, it is demanded from future organizers of ESC conferences to hold the opening ceremony in a building at least as splendid as the one in Vilnius. The baroque church of the University also mirrored the social construction of reality that is so central to criminology – the illusion, the rhetoric, the hierarchy, the hidden power structures and the portraying of saints and sinners. Huge thanks to you Aleksandras Dobryninas and your fellow organizers for this welcome and, of course, for the whole conference. I can recommend anyone who wants to organize a conference to hire this “firm” – not least because of all the voluntary and unpaid work that was put down in the project.

At the Vilnius conference, as usual, a change of guards took place. Miklós Lévy left the presidency. Thank you Miklós for having represented our Society so well and for your efforts to try to bring Central and East European criminology more into the ESC. We are looking forward to see you in charge of the conference in Budapest in 2013.

There was also a change of editors at both The European Journal of Criminology and the Newsletter of the Society. Julian Roberts leaves as the editor of the journal in 2012. We thank him for his work and great achievements. The journal is now well established among international journals in criminology and penology: last year, barely 6 years after its launch, with an impact factor of 1,159, it already ranked among the top 20 criminology journals worldwide. I am confident that under the new editor, Paul Knepper of Sheffield University, the journal will continue its rise. We also would like to thank Michael Tonry, our ever present European-American criminologists, for having taken care of the Newsletter from its very start. And finally we would like to express our gratitude to our executive secretary, Marcelo Aebi and his colleagues at the secretariat of the ESC, especially Grace Kronitz, who will fortunately continue their work for ESC. Without you we haven't managed.

The Vilnius conference did – as usually – show the immense versatility of criminological research in Europe. Among others, there were presentations in the tradition of unveiling hidden crimes and injustices (trafficking, domestic violence, economic crimes, hate crimes, green criminology ...) and presentations on crime prevention, some positively trying to find remedies against crime, others negatively through critique of those proposed or already applied solutions. There were also a great number of paper on policing, a topic that well deserves the attention of criminology as it has increasingly come to the forefront in criminal policy as the perceived solution to the crime problem. And, last but not least, there were, as always, large a number of presentations on trends in criminal policy.

This leads to an observation. At the conference, the topic of criminal policy clearly dominated the plenary sessions. Miklós Lévy

in his presidential message reporting from the World congress of Criminology in Kobe in August also brought up criminal policy and the relationship between crime and criminal policy with general political and economic change. The annual conference of the European Group for the Study of Deviance and Social Control equally focused on penal policy and especially on immigration policy and the large number of foreigners in prisons in Europe.

Questions concerning criminal policy arise typically in comparative research. A policy that looks natural in one's own country might turn out to be fairly arbitrary when compared with the situation in other countries. Dissimilarities in criminal policy lead to searches for explanations in terms of culture, politics and the distribution of wealth and welfare. Equally, crime patterns get different interpretations when related to other countries.

This leads to the question of comparative research in the ESC. We had some of it but not very much in the conference presentations in Vilnius. In this Newsletter, Bitna Kim and Alida Merlo are publishing an analysis of the comparative focus of the ESC conference presentations and EJC publications up until 2010. The number of presentations and publications that have been comparative are quite small. In the same issue, Young Criminologist Award winner, Sappho Xenakis, stresses the importance of comparative criminology. Also Miklós Lévy underlines the importance of the comparative approach in both criminological teaching and research. The conclusion seems obvious – comparative research should be expanded. For European criminologists criminal policy seems to be a particularly fruitful theme, in terms of both theory and practice.

This brings up some practical reflections on the presentations. It is most important when writing a paper for an ESC conference to think in terms of “the other”, that is, the participating criminologists from other countries. Some presenters seem to take for granted that national conditions are well known in other European countries. They are usually not. Some presentations were also somewhat local. An analysis of a local phenomenon can of course be scientifically interesting. It would then, however, have to be done in terms of theories, concepts and methods that can inspire criminologists from other countries in their research. Ask yourself: “In what way can my paper be of interest and helpful to someone from Spain, Denmark or Lithuania?” This will improve the scientific quality.

That said, the Vilnius conference was, like any other ESC conference, of course in a way a huge success in terms of comparative criminology. Sessions with presentations from different countries and meetings with colleagues from Europe and elsewhere are the fundamental prerequisite of the comparative idea. The ESC meeting-places – the conferences, the working groups and the Journal – will hopefully inspire more comparative research.