Global Constellations of Crime: Exploring the Economic and Socio-cultural Origins of Contemporary Forms of Crime, Crime Control and Criminalization within a Global Age

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Abstract

Globalisation is a definitive force of contemporary social change that intrinsically affects all social actors as it inspires a fundamental reconstruction of the way in which we understand the modern world and our places within it. A focus upon the consistent and durable national horizons which once defined the nation state and the normative symbolic foundations of national identities, has been overstepped by the need to appreciate the impact of a complex multiplicity of global constellations which now link nations both in economic and socio-cultural terms. The study of globalisation is deeply cross-disciplinary, but it has only recently begun to pervade into criminological discourse, as crime, crime control and criminalization have been traditionally discussed as the product of distinctly national social problems and concerns. This article seeks to represent the way in which different processes of both economic and socio-cultural globalisation have reconstituted the forms that crime, crime control and criminalization now take within newly

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global social realities. This article explores how the most significant underlying mechanisms of globalisation affect both global and local contexts, perpetuating the creation of new inequalities, new incentives, and new opportunities that motivate the commission of crime, ultimately adding newly global dimensions to the national problem of crime and its potential control and criminalization.

Keywords: Globalisation, global constellation, crime.

Essay

Within and throughout the contemporary world, all societies irrespective of their social, economic or political character are undergoing a metamorphosis in the wake of a plethora of tempestuous social changes. Globalisation is heralded as the precursor to these deep rooted social changes, and though globalisation is not a new process, it is the sheer volume and expansive reach of new global interconnections between nation states that has no precedent (Held and Law, 2000). As proximate and distant social realities collide by virtue of high speed communications technologies, the periphery now dwells at the centre (Massey, 2005), and the proliferation of newly pluralistic and post-modern social realities within local communities evidence the growing power of rapidly expanding global networks and flows (Beck, 2006). It is within contexts such as these, that the intrinsic nature of deviance, crime control and criminalization have taken on new dimensions of complexity, as globalisation is accompanied by unforeseen risks that not only generate new forms of both 'local' and 'global' crime, but that also hinder the competency of nation states to control and police crime within national boundaries (Findlay, 1999).

This article explores the manner in which processes of globalisation have altered the way that deviance, crime control and criminalization can be understood within newly global social realities. In order to understand how globalisation affects the forms that crime can take, and the motivations which drive it, one must differentiate between the economic and socio-cultural dimensions of globalisation. Each aspect affects understandings of crime, crime control and criminalization in a separate yet related manner. Economic globalisation and the proliferation of flows and networks of capital, goods, and persons, introduce substantial structural and institutional developments within

and between states, leading to the production of new spaces, avenues, and opportunities, through which new forms of crime can be committed (Castells, 1998; Franko Aas, 2007).

Globalisation also challenges the integrity of the nation-state, depreciating the long standing primacy of one set of socio-cultural boundaries, and the persistence of a consistent, durable system of normative and symbolic collective meanings. This change pluralises and fragments the social order, leading to the potential development of high levels of instability, dysfunction and to a degree anomie. Each of these factors can be conducive to higher rates of more 'ordinary' and less 'global' forms of crime. The implications of both forms of globalisation and their impact upon deviance, crime control and criminalization shall now be examined.

Economic globalisation is centrally underpinned by three major mechanisms; the introduction of distanciating mechanisms that lift social interactions out of the confines of national spaces (Giddens, 1991), the compression of the time and space that separates distant and proximate locations (Harvey, 1990), and the proliferation and integration of neo-liberalism and neo-liberal social policy (Ohmae, 1990). Giddens explains how the development of symbolic mediums of capital, and the high speed digital transfer of capital, communications and media, between physically absent individuals, has allowed many forms of interaction to be 'dis-embedded' from the confines of national spaces (1991:102). This process of dis-embedding enables the 'distanciation' of time and space, and a stretching of social interaction across larger distances, as the frictions associated with physically negotiating places, are overstepped by a technological mastery of space. Whilst Giddens explains the character of transnational flows and networks, David Harvey refers to the genealogy of capitalism to explain how the constant capitalist drive towards more efficient modes of production, and faster exchanges of both goods and capital, has led to the genesis of network interconnections that compress the space and time between distant locations (1990:240). By virtue of the technology that allows flows of people, capital, goods, and communication to travel at high speed between various points in a global network, more goods can be produced and transported across larger spaces in less time.

Harvey and Giddens both explain how global networks function on a transnational stage between states, but it was the integration of neo-liberal social policies on a global basis that enabled global networks and flows to actually penetrate and inter-connect nations (Ohmae, 1990). The high speed

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and flexible flows of capital that characterise global networks would not be as efficient if the underlying principles of neo-liberal market economics did not actively promote the de-regulation of market forces, the lowering of trade boundaries and restrictions, and the promotion of 'laissez faire' market economics. Global networks inherently require 'basing points' (Friedman, 1986), where the structural and institutional hardware that connects different points of a global economic system must be built, before global flows can truly interconnect one place to another. The global integration of neo-liberal policy reduces the limitations upon where these basing points can be built, and it inspires a 'race to the bottom' (Schram, 2000) amongst nations who compete on the basis of how quickly, and how entirely, they can reduce trade boundaries, and abandon any form of state regulation of foreign investment within their borders.

As Manuel Castells vividly illustrates, places are no longer valued in terms of the quality and character of their physical spaces, but only in terms of how well connected they are within global networks that exist in the digital and flexible 'space of flows', not the 'space of place' (Castells, 1992: 146). The ultimate effect of this process is the creation of two completely opposed experiences of a global world system, and newly global social realities. On the one hand, nations that are successfully integrated into the global world system are capable of hosting 'global cities' that form portals through which huge volumes of capital and investment can travel (Sassen, 2001). Yet, for those states that are excluded or disconnected from the global world of networks and flows, deep and severe poverty is common place, as the inequalities between core and peripheral states are stark and overwhelming (Wallerstein, 1976). Peripheral states are valuable only in so far as they can be used as the headquarters for the production of goods, that are later shipped away to be sold in western markets. Multi-national corporations select these nations as the locus of production, precisely because they are host to weakly protected labour forces, and unstable governmental and institutional frameworks.

The stark duality that characterises the global inclusion of core nations and exclusion of peripheral nations has fundamental implications for the study of contemporary forms of deviance, as these deep global inequalities lie at the heart of a continually expanding 'global criminal economy' (Castells, 1998). As Castells, explains criminal syndicates have 'taken advantage of communications and transportational networks', in order to elevate their once localised and national activities onto

the global stage (1998: 172). Through the use of networks of both capital and trade, transnational cartels are able to traffic an array of illicit goods, including arms, nuclear materials, and drugs, around the world, through mediums that are incredibly difficult to police (Findlay, 1999). This is due to the way that the gathering and processing of goods, the exchange, payment and laundering of capital, all take place in several different locations, often between nation-states. According to the United Nations Conference for the Prevention of Organised Crime in 1994, it was estimated that approximately 500 billion dollars circulated the global criminal economy during the course of one year, which was larger than the global trade in oil (Castells, 1998). Castells attributes the success of transnational criminal organisations to 'strategic alliances of cooperation' that have been formed between different cartels, in separate countries (1998: 171). In the past, each cartel would fiercely protect their monopoly over the distribution and sale of illicit goods within a given territory, but now the opportunity to export and exchange with foreign cartels on a global stage has inspired the development of networks of cooperation, built upon a mutual self interest. As a direct result 'Italian syndicates sell American Italian drugs in Europe, Russians buy stolen cars from the Japanese Yakuza, [and] Albanians move Asian heroin for Turkish drug clans (Galeotti, 2004:1).

In a fashion that mirrors the investment patterns of multi-national corporations, transnational syndicates base the production or growth of illicit goods (drugs in particular), amongst locations that are on the periphery of the global world system. Amongst peripheral states, the widespread poverty that is produced by exclusion from the global economic system ensures that cartels can locate cheap and willing workforces, within states that are host to poor governmental control, and very limited police surveillance (Franko Aas, 2007). These states are labelled 'failed states' (Global Economic Symposium, 2009) because of their inability to find their place within a differentiated global order where the fate of a national economic system rests on its ability to harvest and export goods competitively. If an export niche is not found, then the nation is ultimately vulnerable to criminogenic infiltration, and forced into a position where they must grow, or gather, illicit goods for which there is a demand. Afghanistan is a clear example of a country which has failed to integrate within the legitimate global economy, but yet has succeeded within the global criminal economy, as 'it derives its livelihood by providing 90 per cent of the world's opium production' (UNODOC, 2007 cited in Franko Aas, 2007).

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Given the vast global inequalities that cause the poverty within what Castells describes as the 'black holes of human misery' (1998:162) that exist amidst the global world system, it is almost inevitable that the proportion of migrants travelling to the western world, in search of a better standard of living has risen substantially over the last few decades. A third world migrant wishing to enter and remain within a western country is immediately categorised or criminalized as an 'illegal migrant', and as a consequence of an increased securitization of borders in recent history, the flow of illegal immigrants is not necessarily lessened, but it is instead funnelled through other routes that the migrant cannot navigate alone. Subsequently, the migrant is forced to resort to the services of smuggling networks, in order to successfully cross the border. Given the 'push' factors that encourage migrants to leave their home countries, and 'pull' factors like the demand for cheap labour, that draw migrants to western countries, there is now such a huge demand for the services of illegal smugglers that Miller and Castles deem it to be a 'migration industry' (2003:114). It becomes clear that the landmarks of progress that have marked the gradual evolution of a global world system have been accompanied by a plethora of unforeseen and unpredicted risks and new forms of crime and criminalization (Beck 1992).

Consequentially, the mobilities that free and de-bound civilians amongst wealthy western nations are the anti-thesis to the flows of illegal mobilities that facilitate illegal activities, such as human trafficking, smuggling and the illegal trade in human organs (Castells, 1998). Though the realms of both legal and illegal global mobilities may appear to be worlds apart, they are in fact branches that extend from the same tree, as both draw their power from the same distanciating and globalising mechanisms. This is particularly well illustrated when one considers the recurrent threats of terrorism that have generated a perpetual sense of fear and unease amongst the world's global cities (Deflem, 2004). This sense of fear is derived from the realisation that the historical conflicts between East and West can no longer be fought and negotiated at a distance, as trains, buses, and planes are vessels that simultaneously transport both the archetypal western consumer, and the potential suicide bomber (Hannerz, 1996). Subsequently, the policing of global flows of capital, goods and people of either a digital or physical nature, becomes implicitly difficult, as the legality and illegality

of different acts is difficult to discern, amongst a global network of transnational connections, where the two are inherently intertwined.

Attempts to control global networks through the introduction of tighter border securitization are severely hindered as domestic economies are greatly dependent upon the translucent nature of borders, and the minimal restrictions that are placed upon the networks of tourists and capital that enter and leave the nation (Aas, 2005a). The border is designed to act like a membrane that allows 'good' global flows of capital and tourists in, but keeps 'bad' global flows like the transport of illegal goods and illegal immigrants out. The criminalization of 'good and bad' global networks is promoted by the governmental tendency to aggressively police certain global networks to a greater degree than others (Bauman, 2000). Networks of capital remain largely unrestricted, facilitating the industrial scale laundering of vast sums of illegally accumulated capital that is re-invested within the legitimate economy. Yet, in sharp contrast, the policing of 'bad' mobilities has inspired a maelstrom of new forms of social controls that include; the militarization and securitization of borders that encase 'fortress continents', the use of heightened modes of surveillance including; 'bio-checks', 'biometric passports' (Lyon, 2003a: 72), and the introduction of tracking programs such as the 'Schengen Information System' (Franko Aas, 2006). All of these methods are designed to identify and isolate an unwanted 'other', or what Bauman labels as the 'global vagabond' (2000). The global vagabond is contrasted against the 'global tourist' who is welcome everywhere, and receives protection because of the capacity to be a productive consumer (Urry, 2002).

Despite the efforts that individual nation states have invested in the protection of domestic territorial boundaries, governments have appreciated that the arrival of drugs at customs gates, the growing numbers of illegal migrants that reside within a state, or the devastation that is caused by terrorist attacks, ultimately form symptomatic representations of a broader and potentially more harmful global criminogenic problem. Governments have acknowledged that the global causes of domestic problems can only be addressed by the widespread and concerted cooperation between nations. Subsequently, police forces have sought to internationalise investigations through cooperation with both transnational legal authorities such as the UN, and with police forces in other countries (Sheptycki, 2000a). These strategic alliances have paved the way for a new multi-cited form of policing that is competently able to track and follow the development and activities of

criminal cartels, through information sharing between police forces in other nations. The UN is a highly valued source of intelligence, as it draws together and organises a comparative portrait of the seriousness of different forms of transnational crimes between states. Programmes published by the UN, like for example 'The Global Program Against Corruption', 'The Global Program Against the Trafficking in Human Beings', or 'The Program for Addressing Transnational Organised Crime Groups', consolidate the strategies and efforts of a collection of nations towards one common interest (Carrabine *et al.* 2009).

Whilst inter-state cooperation between both governments and police forces has continued to grow over the course of recent years, there is a growing tendency for a small and select group of states to form alliances that are designed to police transnational crime through warfare. The 'War on Terror' and the 'War on Drugs', are two lucid examples of military campaigns that form responses to a perpetual global threat to national security, that governments advocate is severe enough to warrant the holistic and aggressive mobilization of the criminal justice system. Hence, the war against terror in Afghanistan is simultaneously a war against terrorism, and a war against the production and distribution of drugs to the western world. Policing through warfare is hugely controversial, as the political legitimacy of declaring war, and engaging in prolonged campaigns, has raised questions about the possible crimes that military forces commit, whilst engaging with perceived foreign threats. As these powerful states control the discourse of criminalization, and the legal differentiation between 'good' and 'bad' global networks and mobilities, there are serious concerns about how to criminalise and punish crimes committed by the state, and which authority could possibly have the power to impose such judgment (Findlay, 1999).

With these issues considered, it is clear that economic globalisation and the growth and expansion of networks and transnational flows have created a vast array of new ways in which crime, crime control and criminalization can be considered. However, as many commentators of globalisation have pointed out, globalisation is not something that solely occurs in a transient realm or 'space of flows', external to the nation state (Massey, 2005). Globalisation is a process which is intrinsically embedded within the intimate contexts of familiar domestic settings, within which distant and proximate social and cultural realities collide. Robertson conceptualises this synergy as the 'glocalisation' of national spaces (1996), as it is no longer possible to separate the local and global

realms, as though they were two autonomous realities. Rather one must consider the complex ways in which the local and global are integrated within 'ethnoscapes' (Appadurai, 1996), characterised by a multiplicity of difference and diversity. Within 'glocal' spaces, especially global cities, the primacy of one identity, one set of national values, and one homogenous normative system, are fragmented and pluralized. It is now more appropriate to discuss modern identities in post-modern terms, as globalisation has fostered both a deep individualism, and consumerist identity, that call into question the idea of a nation defined by one collectively shared 'imagined community' (Anderson, 1986).

The fragmenting and diversifying nature of global processes has altered the fundamental characteristics of community life, social capital, and the bonds of solidarity which unify not only communities, but also unite larger populations across national horizons. It is increasingly difficult to discuss communities as homogenous enclaves of national citizens, who share a relatively consistent and stable body of social norms and values. In modern globalising realities, the nation is better characterised by a mosaic of communities, which are increasingly demarcated by their own distinct systems of cultural and social norms. On this basis, communities are not integrated to the same degree as they are segregated from one another. These social changes have lead to a revival and renaissance of classical criminological theories of social disorganization as pioneered by the Chicago school. Even now, these theories retain the potential to explain how the depreciating power of social bonds and solidarities, within and between local communities, have a considerable impact upon increasing rates of deviance, especially amongst the young. As Sutherland (1924; 1934; 1939) stressed, the weakening of traditional modes of socialisation such as the family unit, and intimate communal networks, leads to a breakdown in the transmission of key values and modes of social control. These elements characterise a process that ultimately catalyses higher rates of deviance. Similarly, as Travis Hirschi (1969) explained, the social bonds and attachments that one comes to develop during childhood and adolescence, such as attachments to family and peers, a commitment to legitimate social behaviour, and the belief in a common system of values, increase the likelihood that an individual will not resort to criminal enterprise. Once these social bonds begin to loosen, an individual's 'stake in conformity' is potentially weakened, as there are fewer restraints, or controls upon the commission of an illegal act.

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As Young (1999) explains, the forms of social cohesion that existed during the 'Golden Age' of the 1950s and 1960s endowed the actor with a certain degree of social integration within communities that were relatively stable. The level of value consensus that existed at this time facilitated a form of penal welfare that was built upon the principle of re-habilitating and reintegrating 'the deviant' back into the societal community. However, in the wake of pluralizing global forces and the proliferation of so many different forms of community, the introduction of welfare and policy reforms ultimately benefits some to the detriment of others. As a result, the tone of contemporary penology has changed to one that appears to have resigned to the reality that the inclusion and reintegration of the deviant, on a national level, is simply not possible. Rather, Young explains that; 'late modernity has generated both economic and ontological insecurity, a discontinuity of a personal and social narrative, and an exclusionary tendency towards the deviant' (Young cited in Franko Aas, 2006: 16). This exclusionary tendency is exemplified, within a new form of 'actuarial justice' (Feeley and Simon, 1992) that no longer adheres to the same integrative concerns of social welfare, and egalitarian priorities of the past. Rather, actuarial justice acts to isolate and segregate particular populations that pose the greatest risk to the social order, so that they may be managed and contained. The deviant is now considered to be beyond inclusion, or reintegration, and the result is the rise of mass imprisonment, within what Bauman calls 'factories of immobility'. Factories of immobility are not concerned with re-education, but simply with the 'advanced marginalisation' (Wacquant, 1999) of 'dangerous' populations where they may be kept static and contained.

These excluded populations become the focus of blame for a range of social problems that globalisation encourages; and as these problems have no clear line of causation, these groups act as 'lightning rods for the invisible threats that are inaccessible to direct action' (Beck 1992: 75). The invisible threats that global processes produce invoke a sense of fear that precedes a cultural essentialism that has generated an increase in race related hate crimes against ethnic minorities in recent years. As Loader and Sparks explain; it is 'precisely under globalising conditions that people's sense of place and the differences between 'here/there', 'inside/outside', 'us and them' takes on renewed force (2002: 104). Both the excluded native deviant, and the stereo-typical 'deviant immigrant', are symbolic representations of a newly aggressive mode of delimiting and reaffirming

the fragile and changing socio-cultural values of contemporary societies. Within what Garland terms the 'Criminology of the Other' (2001a), the classification of deviants as 'beyond rehabilitation', inherently underscores that the deviant and the law abiding individual are fundamentally different entities, unfamiliar to one another and diametrically opposed. As globalisation erodes national solidarities and one dominant national identity, Garland stresses that the criminalization of a deviant other, effectively functions as a mode of reasserting and strengthening social bonds, as moral panics create a fervour of collective support for the introduction of increasingly punitive measures to resist the unpredictable threats posed by the 'deviant other' with any force necessary.

In conclusion, the forces and processes which accompany globalisation have reconstituted the way in which crime, criminalization and crime control can be understood, both within the familiar context of local national communities, and within and throughout a wider global world system. As the preceding discussions demonstrate, it is important to appreciate the multi-faceted anatomy of globalisation, in order to understand how globalisation is at once both an economic and socio-cultural process. Both of these dimensions are causally significant and promote new forms of crime and deviance by virtue of the new opportunities for crime that reside within global networks and flows, the newly severe inequalities within a global economic system which leaves 'failed states' few other options, or within the fragmenting and pluralizing core of contemporary 'cosmopolitan' communities.

Each of these 'portraits' of globalisation are not only intertwined with a particular form of globally orientated crime, but they also have different implications for both criminalization and crime control. As nations continue to progress through a process of global change and transition, characterised by the continual negotiation of cultural and social boundaries, between and within nations, fear and uncertainty have created a tendency to criminalize global crimes using dichotomies such as 'good' and 'bad' mobilities, or the distinction between the excluded 'deviant other' (Young 1999; Garland 2001a) and the 'dangerous immigrant'. These political responses to perceived global threats actively perpetuate discrimination and marginalization, potentially worsening the problems that they seek to remedy. It is now fundamentally important to carefully consider how globalisation has reconstituted the form and causes of deviance, in order to inform

and guide the construction of future crime control strategies. Thus far, global crime control measures have advanced considerably as police cooperation on a transnational level has developed in harmony with UN guided strategies. However, within the national framework, much still needs to be done in order to construct strategies of crime control that avoid exclusionary measures, and that are competently able to manage the challenges that manifest in newly diverse and pluralized local communities (Findlay, 1999). These strategies can only be forged through a simultaneous consideration of the global causes of local forms of social disorder and deviance, and the consideration of how these causal factors change and reconstitute the applicability, efficacy and appropriateness of theories of criminology which fail to look beyond national boundaries and back again

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