

## **European Group for the Study of Deviance and Social Control**

### **38<sup>th</sup> Annual Conference: Report**

#### **The Lesvos Conference**

First of all many thanks to the organising team for the 38<sup>th</sup> Annual Conference of the European Group for the Study of Deviance and Social Control on the Greek Island of Lesvos 1<sup>st</sup> – 5<sup>th</sup> September 2010. Stratos Georgoulas, and his organising committee of Angeliki Kitsiou, Christos Kouroutzas, Nikolaos Rinis and Dimos Sarantidis were excellent hosts for the five day conference. Their generous hospitality and that of their secretarial team was very much appreciated.

The Lesvos conference was attended by more than 70 delegates from countries across Europe including Italy, Germany, Belgium, France, Spain, Norway, Cyprus, Sweden, the United Kingdom, Ireland and Greece. It was encouraging that there were many new faces at the conference, including a substantial number of postgraduate students from Greece. There were more than 50 scheduled papers on the programme, including 12 papers in dedicated Greek sessions on the final day. The excursion was a fascinating trip to the Lesvos Olive Press.

A number of the delegates also met with Bernd Kasperek, Linda Gubler and Aida Obrahim from *No Border* on the final day of the conference. The meeting discussed the work of No Border in Lesvos and in other parts of Europe; the common political and philosophical ground between the European Group and No Border; and the possibility of representatives from No Border attending / presenting at next year's conference. It was agreed that further contact would be made with No Border over the coming months.

#### **'Politics of Criminology' Open Forum**

At the start of the open forum a two page statement reflecting on the life of Karen Leander (written by Phil Scraton) was read out by Ann Singleton. Karen had performed a monumental role in the organisation of the European Group for the last quarter of a century. Her presence and commitment was greatly missed and she was in the thoughts of many people during the conference.

David Scott was asked in advance to chair the open forum, which then went on to discuss the following issues:

#### *The 2011 Conference*

Two offers to host the conference in 2011 were discussed– Cyprus and France. Demetra Sorvatzioti from the European University of Cyprus, Nicosia, Cyprus offered to host the 2011 conference from the 10<sup>th</sup>-15<sup>th</sup> September. The proposed dates were the earliest possible because of the hot weather in Cyprus at the start of September. In the meeting it was felt that the delayed date may negatively influence attendance and that the Group needed more time to reflect on the implications of hosting the conference later than usual. Emma Bell from the Universiti de Savoie, Chambéry, France offered to host the 2011 conference from the 3<sup>rd</sup> – 7<sup>th</sup> September. The date was influenced by a history of deviance conference that is being organized by Neil Davie in Lyon from the 8<sup>th</sup> September 2011. It was felt that new delegates may be attracted to the European Group who were also attending the history conference. The final decision of the Group was that the 2011 Conference would be held in Chambéry and that Cyprus would be considered as the host nation for a Group conference in the next couple of years. Emma Bell has, post-conference, confirmed authorization for this to go ahead from the Université de Savoie, Chambéry.

#### *Conference Theme*

It was agreed that the conference theme and call for papers should be sent out as soon as possible. It was requested that we try and do this by the end of September/ beginning of October. There

were two suggestions for the conference theme but no final agreement was reached. The two proposed themes so far are:

- Austerity and Securitization
- Cosmopolitanism and No Borders

The latter theme arose after discussions with the No Border activists. It was proposed that alternative suggestions / amendments / elaborations on these themes be requested via email.

#### *Future Conferences*

In addition we had two further offers at Lesvos to host future conferences. These were Oslo, Norway from Ragnhild Sollund and London, England from Richard Wild. There was one other suggestion about hosting a future conference, though this person was unable to attend this year.

#### *Co-ordinator and 'Conference Steering Committee'*

The group discussed the organisation of the conference next year. David Scott agreed to be the co-ordinator of the European Group. This would be reviewed next year with the option that David Scott would potentially continue in this role for 2011/12. To help with the organisation of the French conference and beyond a new 'conference steering committee' was established. This would comprise of David Scott, who organised the 37<sup>th</sup> Annual Conference in Preston, alongside:

Emma Bell (Chambéry 2011)

Ragnhild Sollund (future conference in Oslo)

Demetra Sorvatzioti (future conference in Nicosia)

Richard Wild (future conference in London)

To ensure continuity and sharing of conference organising experience Stratos Georgoulas was invited onto the committee. The general feeling of the meeting was that Phil Scraton, who was unable to attend this year for health reasons, should also be invited to have a role. Alongside committee members it was suggested that a treasurer and secretary should be part of the committee. These positions may be filled by the above people or two new people may be invited to perform these functions.

It is envisaged that the conference steering committee will work closely and in consultation with the national representatives of the European Group. The rationale of the committee is to help share the burden of conference organisation and also work towards the accumulation of greater experience. New people would be invited on the committee when wishing to host a future conference to gain experience in advance, whilst those currently serving on the committee would be expected to relinquish their position after a certain period of time (say between 2 – 4 years depending on numbers / experience etc).

The first tasks of the 'Conference Steering Committee' are

- Organise new Bank Account
- Update and organise European Group Email List
- Finalise 2011 conference theme
- Write conference call for papers
- Discuss roles of treasurer and secretary

### *National representatives*

A number of new national representatives were appointed at the conference. These were

Demetra Sorvatzioti - Cyprus

Emma Bell - France

Caroline De Geest - Belgium

Conor O'Reilly – Portugal (subject to ongoing discussions with University of Porto)

### *Conference and postgraduates*

There was a general feeling that more emphasis could be given to advising post-graduate students at future conferences. A number of references were made to the sessions that Phil Scraton had run in the past and if we could re-establish something along these lines.

### *Group Interventions*

The role of the European Group in making political interventions was discussed. In general it was felt that at future conferences the Group could discuss a key political controversy, protest or activist movement and then consider writing / releasing a statement in support of the local campaign. It was suggested that the conference steering committee discuss idea this for the French conference.

This year the group discussed the decision in the UK not to prosecute the police officer responsible for the death of Ian Tomlinson in April 2009. Below is the 'European Group Statement in support of Ian Tomlinson', drafted prior to the conference by Joe Sim.

*As members of the European Group for the Study of Deviance and Social Control we unequivocally condemn the decision by the Crown Prosecution Service not to bring charges against the police officer involved in the death of Ian Tomlinson at the G20 protests. This pronouncement emphasises a wider unwillingness to hold the Police Service to account and a failure to fully acknowledge responsibility for the harmful actions of individual officers. We call upon the British government to institute a full, independent inquiry into how this decision was arrived at. We also offer our full support to the family of Ian Tomlinson in their desire to see justice done.*

The statement was agreed in principle, although it was proposed that Joe Sim could consider adding a further sentence regarding political protest if felt appropriate.

[For Further information please see <http://www.iantomlinsonfamilycampaign.org.uk>]

I hope the above outline is clear but if you would like any further clarification on the things we discussed at the open forum please do get in touch. I do hope that you will be able to attend the European Group conference next year.

David Scott