Dit artikel uit Tijdschrift over Cultuur & Criminaliteit is gepubliceerd door Boom juridisch en is bestemd voor anonieme bezoeker

SIGNIFICANT OTHERS

‘The closer you are the more information you get’ – interview met professor Emanuel Marx

Dina Siegel

Zygmunt Bauman noemde Emanuel Marx (90) ‘een onvermoeibare onderzoeker van manieren van interactie tussen culturen en het versnelde tempo van culturele transformaties’. Prof. Emanuel Marx volgde zijn opleiding tot sociaal antropoloog aan de beroemde Manchester School (met Max Gluckman en Emrys Peters als zijn mentoren) en leverde een belangrijke bijdrage aan de studie van nomaden, vluchtelingen en immigranten – in negen boeken en talrijke artikelen en presentaties. Zelf gevlucht uit Hitlers Duitsland verbreedde Emanuel Marx zijn interessegebied van het onderhoud van Palestijnse vluchtelingenkampen op de Westbank en in de Gazastrook naar conflicten tussen Joodse Noord-Afrikaanse immigranten en de bureaucratie van de Israëlische samenleving, en hervestigingsprojecten voor bedoeïenen in de Negev en de Sinaï. Emanuel Marx was de oprichter van de afdeling Sociale Antropologie aan de Universiteit van Tel Aviv en won in 1998 als eerste en enige antropoloog de prestigieuze Israëlprijs.

Ik interviewde Emanuel Marx, een van mijn ‘significante anderen’, bij hem thuis in Ramat Hasharon in Israël, onder het genot van sterke Arabische koffie en Joodse *Shabbat cholent* en met een mooi uitzicht op de sinaasappelbomen in zijn tuin. We bespraken zijn werk op het gebied van migratie, geweld, multidisciplinair onderzoek en participerende observatie als fundamentele en ‘beste’ onderzoeksmethode voor zowel antropologen als cultureel criminologen. Het interview werd in het Engels afgenomen.

I. Dina Siegel
R. Emanuel Marx

I. … So this is a journal of cultural criminology. How do you see cultural criminology from your anthropological point of view? What is your interpretation?

Tijdschrift over Cultuur en Criminaliteit 2017 (7) 3
doi: 10.5553/TCC/221195072017007003006

Dit artikel uit Tijdschrift over Cultuur & Criminaliteit is gepubliceerd door Boom juridisch en is bestemd voor anonieme bezoeker

R. The methodology and theory are anthropological. To my mind, this is one of the most important ways of studying crime. It basically means that you do fieldwork, and spend a lot of time in the field, knowing there is never enough time. And then you need even more time to understand what you saw in the field by combining facts and their interpretation in a tightly integrated account.

Fieldwork with Bedouins and the Manchester school of anthropology

I. Let's start from the beginning. This interview is in the framework of the 'significant other'. For me you are my significant other, one of the best anthropologists of our times. How did you start with anthropology?

R. After my release from the Israeli army I enrolled in the Hebrew University, at the time the only university in the country. I wanted to study subjects which would help me understand the fighting I had experienced and generally, the situation in the Middle East. So I took up sociology and orientalist studies. Sociology turned out to be of the Parsonian functionalist type. Too late I realized that I had made a terrible mistake, for this type of sociology took no interest in real people. It developed a single theoretical model of a closed society and a single paradigm of social action. Luckily I also studied orientalistics, specifically Arabic language, and Middle Eastern history and economics. These subjects were taught very well and kept their attraction over the years. When the time came to prepare my MA thesis, I chose a theme that would combine all these fields, by studying an Arab society in Israel. In my ignorance I assumed that it would be very difficult to study an Arab town or village as these were very complex social formations, and especially because there was so much intermingling between Jews and Arabs and there was much political intervention, through military government, and trade and everything. And of course the Israelis were out to grab the lands of the Arab inhabitants. In contrast, so I thought, the Bedouin of the Negev were a simple society living on the margins of the modern state, and would be quite easy to understand. I am a bit ashamed now, but I wanted a simple theme which I could explore easily within three months and write a thesis. Of course I had read the literature on Bedouin which described them as simple tribal people who lived in the desert, were organized in tribes and smaller groups called *hamulas*, and were organized in a segmentary political system. S.N. Eisenstadt, professor of sociology at the Hebrew University of Jerusalem, agreed to supervise the study. He even got me some money for fieldwork from the Prime Minister's office in Jerusalem. I spent three strenuous but happy months with the Azazma tribe, south of Beersheva, staying mostly with their now legendary sheikh. In the 1940s the sheikh had been working with the Jewish settlements in the Negev, and had been appointed as chief of his tribe by the new Israeli government. He was a very charismatic person who ruled his tribesmen with a strong hand.
Within days my whole sociology had become useless. I felt that I knew nothing about sociology, and even less knew about the Bedouin. I was confronted with a perplexing situation. Most of the Bedouins had left the country. They were afraid

Dit artikel uit Tijdschrift over Cultuur & Criminaliteit is gepubliceerd door Boom juridisch en is bestemd voor anonieme bezoeker

of the Israeli army and most of them either fled or were expelled, and only a small number of Bedouin remained behind. These Bedouin were very eager to reestablish contact with the Israelis. So they gathered around men who had good contacts with the authorities and were therefore appointed as chiefs of reconstituted 'tribes'. These chiefs (sheikhs) at that time controlled access to farm land and also made money by mediating access to the authorities. For instance, chiefs could help Bedouin to obtain identity papers. A Bedouin who wanted to become an Israeli citizen, would ask the sheikh to tell the authorities that he was a good man who had never taken up arms against Israeli forces and should be allowed to remain in the country. Food was still in scarce supply and the chiefs distributed the rations of sugar and flour through their store against payment. The Bedouin were put under a military government which concentrated them in a reservation. Each time they wished to leave the reservation for more than a few days they had to obtain a movement permit. And the sheikhs could help obtain these permits.
No wonder that my sociology broke down. I had been taught that Bedouin were a simple people organized in tribes, that they raised camels and sheep for their subsistence, and that they did not depend on the outside world. A tribe had territorial boundaries and you looked at people living within that boundary. What I saw in fact was a total dependence on the outside world, a world that shaped the lives of the Bedouin in every way. And so five years of sociology went down the drain. Then I started looking around for alternatives. I soon discovered that there were some people that studied Bedouin. One of them was Emrys Peters, an Oxford graduate who had studied Bedouin in Libya. I got in touch with Emrys Peters and asked him whether he had published parts of his doctoral thesis. He wrote back, not immediately, six months later, saying that he was very busy writing, and that within weeks a first article of his was going to come out. The article did come out, five years later. Anyway, I started reading anthropology and I felt that there was something in it.
Then I met Professor Max Gluckman from the University of Manchester. He came to visit Jerusalem and when I told him about my work in the Negev he advised me to come to Manchester and study with Emrys Peters, and that's what I did.

I. That brings me to the next question about your own significant others. Who have played the most important role in your life?

R. My significant other was only one. It was Emrys Peters. Emrys Peters was a great teacher who had a knack of producing good students (like Abner Cohen). There were some other great scholars in the department, like Victor Turner, Ronald Frankenberg, Bill Epstein and, of course, Max Gluckman. But Peters converted me to anthropology. When I arrived in Manchester in 1959 Peters arranged a seminar for me personally. It was to take place on Wednesday morning at 9 o'clock. We both appeared at 9 o'clock in the department. Peters seemed preoccupied and said: 'I'm very busy today and have no time for you. But let's go and have a coffee first. Then we part ways and I will go back to my work.' So we went to a transport cafe, a roadside cafe frequented by truck drivers. Over a cup of coffee we started talking about 'random' subjects. A lot of it was gossip about who

Tijdschrift over Cultuur en Criminaliteit 2017 (7) 3
doi: 10.5553/TCC/221195072017007003006

Dit artikel uit Tijdschrift over Cultuur & Criminaliteit is gepubliceerd door Boom juridisch en is bestemd voor anonieme bezoeker

sleeps with whom and who fights with whom. We talked and talked and after three hours Peters noticed that he was very late and had to get back to work. He repeated the performance for several weeks, until I realized that he was 'cheating' me. He was trying to teach me informally without my putting up resistance. He succeeded so well that after a year was up I felt I had not learned anything. While I believed that nothing had changed, I had in fact become an entirely different person. I had changed so much, that I did not even remember the past. My whole sociological training was wiped out. That's what happens in a complete transformation.

I. So what kind of person did you become?

R. I became an anthropologist. I started thinking like an anthropologist. The main difference was that I started examining the social context. Of course I still looked at people, but they were no longer simply individuals, but persons influenced by a lot of forces. Some of these influences were found close by (such as family, friends, neighbours) and some were quite distant, even overseas, and yet could affect people in a very extreme manner.

'Social world' and network theories

I. That is how you developed these 'social world' networks. You always refer to the social world of somebody, right? Social context and social world. Then these social networks. How are they connected?

R. For some time I talked about social networks. It all started with the work of John Barnes who wrote about Norwegian fisherman. He realized that Norwegian fisherman were part of a big international industry which he compared to a fishing net: everyone was connected to everyone else, either directly or indirectly. Some links were important while others were less important. The fact that these men were fishermen and Norwegians did not exhaust their links. If they could fish in a certain part of the Atlantic ocean and not in another region it had to do with international politics. So their networks included the highest levels of Norway's international relations. And at the same time they remained close to and dependent on the state and its various officials. John Barnes was the first scholar to understand this. He had very few followers at the time. People did not realize how significant his work was. And I feel that at the beginning even he didn't understand it.
Later on, when I came under the influence of Anselm Strauss, I also began to use his concept of social worlds, which referred to highly significant segments of a person's social network. Actually, network theory had roots in Max Gluckman's famous essay 'Analysis of a social situation in modern Zululand' (1940), often fondly referred to as 'The Bridge'. The official opening ceremony of a bridge suddenly revealed the complicated networks of relationships between black and white people in South Africa. It was a very simple version of network theory. John Barnes started something much more sophisticated. But the Manchester

Dit artikel uit Tijdschrift over Cultuur & Criminaliteit is gepubliceerd door Boom juridisch en is bestemd voor anonieme bezoeker

people stuck to the Bridge, it became their rallying cry. If they had taken better note of Barnes' work they might have taken up additional themes of study. For instance, instead of persevering on working in Africa where they worked under strict government supervision, they could have studied their own and other European societies. Anthropologists working in Africa from the 1970s onward had to be very careful about what they did. They could not write about African politics, so they worked on African cosmologies and the South African law systems and things like that and produced magnificent studies in these fields. Take Victor Turner as example. Along with Max Gluckman he is often considered the outstanding exponent of the Manchester school. Turner was very wise and thoughtful, and had a deep understanding of society. He was the person who brought symbolism into the study of anthropology. If we look at his work with the Ndembu, we can only marvel at his deep insight. But a closer look reveals that the impact of colonial rule is not discussed in his work. He deals only with local power relationships, and does not even discuss the provincial governor in great detail, although he was much more important than any other person there. The fear of getting involved in colonial politics was not unique to Turner; it bedeviled Africanist anthropology since its early days.

'Going native' and ethics of anthropological research

R. I learned to love Turner. I attended his seminar together with two to three other students. The seminars with Vic Turner were wonderful, informal and unrestrained. He spoke very openly about anthropological issues, especially about fieldwork. The most important thing he told us, was that there were no standard rules, that for every study you had to develop you own fieldwork methods.

I. You mean: no rules methodologically and also no ethical rules?

R. On the contrary, there were many ethical precepts. The main rule was: don't spoil your own nest. Do not get involved with women, for instance. Do not get involved in local politics. Do not get too close to people in general. All these were rules that we later on broke with impunity.

I. You think so? Because now we are talking about 'going native' as a positive point. Like 'participant social action' method. What do you think about it?

R. I used to think that one should keep a respectful distance from people, while trying to learn as much as possible about them. But I changed my attitude as a result of the fieldwork of one of my Ph.D. students. She worked with a group of some ten Bedouin fishermen in the Red Sea. They jointly owned a boat and went out on fishing expeditions on the Red Sea that could continue for a week. She went along with the fishermen, as the only woman on board. While they became very intimate with her they always respected her privacy. As they brought in the daily catch she would observe them and take notes. Gradually she sold the fish for them and ran the accounts and eventually they turned her into a partner and she

Tijdschrift over Cultuur en Criminaliteit 2017 (7) 3
doi: 10.5553/TCC/221195072017007003006

Dit artikel uit Tijdschrift over Cultuur & Criminaliteit is gepubliceerd door Boom juridisch en is bestemd voor anonieme bezoeker

made good money. At first I was very unhappy with this situation. I felt that she was getting too close to people, so close that she could not study them anymore. But then I changed my mind, for as the result of this situation she got more information than anybody else could have got. She still had the chance to sort herself out and to analyze the situation after leaving the field. As a result of her work, I understood that there was actually no limit to how close you could become to people.

I. So you think it is alright to go native today?

R. The closer you are, the more information you get.

I. One of the arguments in criminology is: if you are getting close to criminals, you become a criminal yourself. You know too much and you have to report it and if you don't do that you are participating in crime.

R. This is a practical problem, and not an easy one. On the other side there is the fact that the closer you get the more information you obtain.

I. Do you think you can get more information if you get involved so deep. One of the arguments of not going native is that you cannot be objective. You cannot look at it from outside anymore. You will justify what they are doing. It will be more like brainwashing.

R. The dichotomy of subjective/objective is no longer significant, the closer you get, the more involved you are and what really important is: what is the information you get. If you are very close, you get much more detailed information. It makes it a different type of information, in fact. Things which on the surface look like 'a', may look like 'b' once you get closer. If you keep your distance this does not mean that you are objective; it only means that you do not overcome your stereotyped notions about the people you study. There is of course a point when the information collected must undergo a process of objectivization. But that comes at a later stage. While you are in the field you know that you get a lot of information that you are not going to understand.
The wonderful thing about fieldwork is that you don't know what information you are going to get. Reality will always surprise you and will always be different from what you expect. The world is so complicated that you will never make the right guess. There are a thousand factors influencing people in any situation, and there is very little chance that you pick out the right ones. That's what is so wonderful about anthropology. In addition, it provides you with fond memories in the long run.

Drug trafficking by Bedouins

I. You wrote an article about hashish smuggling by Bedouins and the prestige of these smugglers in their environment. How did you study it? How did they allow you to know that they engaged in illegal activities?

Dit artikel uit Tijdschrift over Cultuur & Criminaliteit is gepubliceerd door Boom juridisch en is bestemd voor anonieme bezoeker

R. It was a specific situation. I was doing fieldwork during the Israeli occupation. There was hardly any smuggling, because it became too dangerous. There were two armies facing each other and to get through the barrier of two armies was much too dangerous. There was very little smuggling, except that allowed by the government. There was a boat going from Sinai to the Egyptian mainland once a week. The military government decided who was going onto that boat. Most of the people who were allowed to go were dedicated suppliers of information to the authorities. Because the army could not pay them money, they allowed them instead to take drugs. So you have this interesting situation that people were officially allowed to go from Sinai to Egypt on a boat and to take drugs with them. That was the only drug transportation that was available at the time. But the drugs smugglers expected that the situation would change sooner or later, and that Israel would leave Egypt and that the old political conditions would return. Then they would once more take part in the international drug traffic and make a lot of money out of it. Drug smuggling was so important that it provided before the occupation about 30% of the national income of the Bedouin in Sinai. So the drug smuggling organizations remained intact, but were inactive at the time. In these conditions people were much more open to talk about smuggling, they did not risk so much by talking about it. You could go to one of the half deserted villages of smugglers and meet people. Some of the leading smugglers were very nice and friendly people. And they talked quite easily about their work.
How were they involved in the chain of traffic? Most of the drugs were cultivated in Lebanon. From there they were transported through Jordan into Saudi Arabia, to the town of Haql on the Gulf of Aqaba. From there the cargo was shipped by small boats to Sinai, a distance of just 10 miles. There the Bedouin picked up the drugs and transported them by camel across Sinai. From there fast taxis took the drugs to their final destination, the Nile Valley. Evidently the Bedouin of Sinai were just a segment of an enormous international organization of drug smuggling. Drug smuggling was not only economically very important, but also contributed to the peace between Bedouin tribes. The people of South Sinai always argued that they were peaceful Bedouin. They would typically say: in fifty years there has never been a murder in Sinai. Why did they not murder? Because they were all involved in the drug traffic. Drugs moved through the territories of various tribes and each tribe had the right to participate. If one tribe was left out, the whole operation broke down. They lived in peace, because smuggling provided much of their income. During my time in Sinai there was no drug smuggling and therefore people settled outstanding accounts by shooting each other. When Israel left Sinai the drug traffic resumed and peace came back to South Sinai.

The social context of violent behaviour

I. Another criminological subject you dealt with was violence. You wrote about immigrants, who used violence against officials, and officials against immigrants, in Ma'alot, a new town in northern Israel populated by Jewish immigrants from North Africa.

Tijdschrift over Cultuur en Criminaliteit 2017 (7) 3
doi: 10.5553/TCC/221195072017007003006

Dit artikel uit Tijdschrift over Cultuur & Criminaliteit is gepubliceerd door Boom juridisch en is bestemd voor anonieme bezoeker

R. Actually I never intended to write about violence. My initial plan was to study the assimilation of immigrants. The idea to study violence was all due to Menachem (Mendele) Amir. One day, after I left the field, Mendele approached me: 'I am organizing a conference about violence, and would like to include the anthropological viewpoint. Could you talk about this?' I rashly said 'yes, of course', thinking that all I needed was to look up the anthropological literature about violence. As I perused the literature I realized to my horror that there was hardly anything. Then I remembered that I experienced quite a few incidents of (minor) violence in Ma'alot. Why not examine my own material? So I started looking at it and got quite a few ideas for the lecture, followed up by a theoretical article on social violence (in Hebrew) which became the outline of the monograph. As I immersed myself in the theme it became more and more interesting. Why did it become interesting? Because it took me back to my childhood in Nazi Germany. It has taken me many years to understand that the violence I experienced there has affected me deeply. As a result I became, and remained, an insecure refugee, and have never established roots anywhere. Even if I were to go back to Germany I would not be able to sink roots there. Besides, I experienced the soul-searing trauma of parting with my parents. While I was reunited with my parents just a year later in Palestine, I could not renew an intimate tie with them. In a sense, they were no longer my parents as I had grown up during their absence. It has taken me many years to work out this trauma. Only in recent years, after I started analyzing my own past by studying Nazi society, things have improved a little. This problem began to surface in my study of Ma'alot. I did not only deal with violence, but also with the debilitating dependence on authorities. I was concerned with the way people use violence to overcome the crushing power of authorities that control their lives.

I. When you look at refugees today it is exactly the same story in Western Europe. They are not allowed to move, to work, to go to school without special permission. They are not even allowed to do informal work.

R. Conditions today are even harder. In Ma'alot at least the authorities had good intentions, and did not realize how much they were harming people by keeping them dependent with regard to their basic needs. There was no employment in Ma'alot, but the authorities provided the men with steady relief work. All the apartments were owned by the state, but there was no lack of accommodation and the rent was usually paid by the welfare service. The state also provided elementary schools (but no advanced education), medical services, and social welfare payments. This heavy dependence on officials eroded kinship ties. Nowadays people complain that an Ashkenazi establishment keeps Oriental Jews dependent. That was not the case in Ma'alot, where not only the immigrants but also most of the officials dealing with them were of North African origin. Some of these officials manipulated the immigrants in various ways. For instance, the representative of Amidar, the national housing corporation, came from exactly the same cultural and lingual background as most of the inhabitants in Ma'alot and resided in the town. But he tried to avoid conflict and did not inform the inhabitants of

Dit artikel uit Tijdschrift over Cultuur & Criminaliteit is gepubliceerd door Boom juridisch en is bestemd voor anonieme bezoeker

their legal rights. In order to obtain a suitable apartment, people had to put pressure on him which occasionally turned violent. Violence allowed a client to overcome the difference in power and to turn the official into an equal. This type of violence was often quite effective and therefore I tend to approve of it. Even this almost benign kind of violence cannot be exercised by today's African and Asian refugees in Europe.
An interesting fact is that there wasn't much corruption in Ma'alot, because all negotiations were very open. You couldn't keep secrets. For instance, if there were many candidates for a new apartment everybody knew who was getting it and why. They knew that is was because of a specific political or kinship connection. This certainly was corruption. But when corruption is exercised quite openly it loses some of its dangers. Indeed, everyone would like to enjoy the benefits of corruption and will strive for it with all his might.

I. Then there is no corruption.

R. It depends on what you call corruption. Academic appointments are often corrupt, but the corruption is disguised. Those who are appointed are always the people with the largest number of publications who are considered the most promising scholars.

I. Why do you think this practice is corrupt?

R. Because excellence in scholarship is not about numbers of publications, but about originality of thought and strength of character. I'll explain. The late Daan Meijers, a Dutch anthropologist from the VU, always warned me that I make wrong appointments, that I appoint people because I think they are good anthropologists. He argued: 'These people are going to betray you. They are going to hate you. What you need is people of good character. They will also become good anthropologists in the end and, furthermore, they will be true and honest, but not necessarily faithful.'

Palestinian refugee camps

I. Let's focus on your work at the Palestinian refugee camps. In Europe we talk a lot about radicalization among young Muslims in Europe, when one of the root causes is connected to the Palestinian-Israel conflict.

R. Today's Middle East refugees are created by America's loss of interest in the region. During the twentieth century America had relied on Middle Eastern oil and therefore supported the regimes that ensured its access to oil. It now appears that the oil wells may dry up within decades. In the near future oil is going to become more and more expensive, so it has become worthwhile for America to return exploiting its own deep oil wells and to prospect for alternative sources of energy. The Middle East is becoming less and less important for America and it is no longer prepared to become involved in its politics. The growing political strife

Tijdschrift over Cultuur en Criminaliteit 2017 (7) 3
doi: 10.5553/TCC/221195072017007003006

Dit artikel uit Tijdschrift over Cultuur & Criminaliteit is gepubliceerd door Boom juridisch en is bestemd voor anonieme bezoeker

in the region is due to America's withdrawal, which accelerated during the Obama administration.
The Gulf countries survived the Arab spring almost unscathed because they exported their rebels to other countries. The Saudis have an even longer tradition of sending missionaries to Arab countries, including many persons who could endanger the regime. The state paid them for undermining other Arab countries. During our stay in Egypt in the 1990s I could observe the process with my very eyes. Thus Saudi Arabia established an Islamic university in Cairo which teaches mainly Wahabi theology. The university offered generous scholarships to Egyptian students, thus undermining other universities, and exporting their brand of Islam.
The late Usama bin Laden was a typical example of the process. He was the scion of a Saudi construction magnate and owned great personal wealth. Over the years he became very religious and used his wealth to support rebel movements in various countries. His ultimate concern was, however, to remove the Saudi Arabian royal family from power and restore true Islam. Why did he wish to harm America? Because America supports the Saudi Arabian regime in return for a steady flow of oil. Without American support the Saudi Arabian regime would have toppled ages ago.

I. I am trying to understand how it is linked to the Palestinian-Israeli conflict.

R. The Palestinian-Israeli conflict has become less important in recent years because the states of the Middle East have even more complex problems on their hands. But there also are other reasons: many Palestinians have immigrated to other countries and have been absorbed in their economies. Others have found new homes in Palestine, Israel or elsewhere. The refugee camps have evolved into new towns, thus practically resettling the former inhabitants. Israel too has changed: it is constantly negotiating a series of mostly secret agreements with the Palestinians. At the same time, Israel has made peace with some of the Arab countries, and established commercial relations with the Gulf countries. Israel is no longer exposed to concerted terror attacks.

I. So there is a replacement of the conflict to Europe.

R. What happened could have been foreseen. The breakdown of governance and the resulting chaos in many Middle East and North African countries is the result of economic and political decline. Due to social unrest even tourism, an important economic standby, is losing ground. Civil wars are racking Syria, Iraq and Libya and causing tidal waves of refugees. The great powers support opposing militias and are unable to put an end to the civil wars. Millions of persons have been displaced and suffer every conceivable calamity, and only a minority of young, energetic and skilled manage, at great expense, to escape and to become refugees in Europe. This is the golden egg that Europe has brought on itself and, ironically, has been unable to make use of.
Refugees often are a blessing for the countries that receive them. And here you have a very interesting selection of refugees. The best people are becoming refu-

Dit artikel uit Tijdschrift over Cultuur & Criminaliteit is gepubliceerd door Boom juridisch en is bestemd voor anonieme bezoeker

gees, namely people with skills, money, education, initiative, people capable of moving. These people should not be expelled, but induced to stay. Here you have this wonderful stream of immigrants into countries that are aging and losing population and lack a young work force. And here you have these people willing to do anything. Yet they are kept out of the economy. It is madness. The rejection of the mostly Muslim refugees has had tragic implications for Europe. The new arrivals compounded the mismanagement of earlier waves of refugees. The situation has radicalized Muslims and will also radicalize political life in Europe. All Europe is moving continuously to the right and becoming more nationalistic, more xenophobic, more Christian, more anti-Islam, and more anti-Jewish.
A word about UNRWA, the organization that has been assisting Palestinian refugees since 1950. It cannot disband because it is 'owned' by its labor force of 31,000 all but 100 of whom are Palestinian refugees. While it collaborates smoothly with Israeli authorities, it also produces a lot of anti-Israeli propaganda, in order to obtain funds for its continued operation. For it must show that the Palestine refugees are suffering terrible deprivations, and that Israel is responsible for their plight.
Today the question of the Arab (mainly Syrian) refugees overshadows that of the Palestinian refugees. There are a million refugees in Jordan, three million in Turkey, and a million in Lebanon. The poor Turks especially are suffering terribly because the fighting in Syria and Iraq resuscitates the Kurdish quest for a homeland of their own. This is part of the reason why Erdogan is establishing a dictatorship. He has to defend and redraw the boundaries of Turkey.

I. What is the difference now between Israeli mass immigration and this in Europe? You studied refugee camps many years ago, right? What is the difference now? Numbers?

R. UNRWA handled the Palestine refugees more efficiently than the Europeans today. It set up refugee camps in which each family received a building plot of 100 square meters with a 'shelter' of 9 square meters. In the beginning this was a tent, and from 1955 onward it was a hut of concrete. Over the years people built up the whole plot and became the owners of the site. In recent years the refugees constructed residential and commercial buildings with 3 to 5 floors. Today refugee camps exist only in name. Still, there is a basic difference between the former refugee camps and other urban quarters. The inhabitants of 'camps' in practice own the land and the buildings they constructed on it, whereas in other urban quarters most people do not own land and live in small rental apartments.

Multi-disciplinary research

I. You worked with prehistoric archeologists in the upper Jordan valley. What do you think about doing multi-disciplinary research? What do you think about working with other disciplines?

Tijdschrift over Cultuur en Criminaliteit 2017 (7) 3
doi: 10.5553/TCC/221195072017007003006

Dit artikel uit Tijdschrift over Cultuur & Criminaliteit is gepubliceerd door Boom juridisch en is bestemd voor anonieme bezoeker

R. I worked with colleagues from numerous disciplines, and particularly enjoyed working with prehistorians. I admire their willingness to constantly test their ideas. For instance, today they may claim that humanity began 5 million years ago and next year new discoveries may force them to put back the date by a million years. They are prepared to revise their theories again and again. On the other hand, they stick to evidence based on the ground. In consequence they often write beautiful articles full of a deep logic.

I. They base themselves on empirical evidence.

R. They are very empirical and yet totally openly theoretically. There is only one thing that is problematic: if there is no evidence in the ground, they are lost. For instance, they will never think about human society in the abstract. Based on evidence in the ground they can tell us when hominids first produced fire, or whether they ate certain vegetables. But if there are no archaeological finds, they refuse to speculate.

I. So this was your contribution, to create an image of human society 800,000 years ago.

R. We all felt that this was important, because it would help the prehistorians to get away from the obsessive search for the evolution of the hominin skeleton, and formulate new research questions. In order to remain close to reality I relied on ethnographies of contemporary hunter gatherers, especially the pygmies of the Congo. Let me illustrate this with an example. The ancient hominins probably did not have families, because they lived in a generous environment that supplied all their needs throughout the seasons. They did not need to accumulate property, and certainly not children, as they would be dead by the time the children grew up. They formed short-lived sexual attachments, and the children born of these units would be raised and spoiled by all the members of a band, the band that would also take care of old and sick people.
When you think of the family in this way, it no longer looks 'natural' and becomes a cultural artefact. You realize that it can change quite easily. This seems to be happening today. The typical family consisting of father, mother and children is disappearing, and is being replaced by a wide variety of domestic arrangements.

Israeli (cultural) criminology and social anthropology

I. What is happening today: Israeli criminologists almost never appear at international congresses. There is criminology in Israel which is not presented to the outside world. Menachem Amir was everywhere, he was the 'face of Israeli criminology' and now you see almost nobody.

R. You don't hear of them here either. Israeli criminology was dominated by two eminent scholars: Shlomo Shoham, who wrote many books and had few students and Menahem Amir, who wrote little but had quite a few students. When Menahem died the subject went into a temporary recession.

Dit artikel uit Tijdschrift over Cultuur & Criminaliteit is gepubliceerd door Boom juridisch en is bestemd voor anonieme bezoeker

I. What is today the contribution of Israeli anthropology to the theoretical issues, to the development of new fields. What can these Israeli anthropologists be proud of?

R. You must take into account that Israeli anthropologists are a very small community. They are about 30-40 professional anthropologists. Compare this to America with its 5000-6000 anthropologists. Recently I compiled a list of the really valuable books that came out of Israeli anthropology since it came into existence in the 1960s. The list included some thirty books, quite a respectable harvest. The future of Israeli anthropology is shrouded in darkness, but we already see a number of younger innovative scholars.

I. What kind of subjects should now be the focus of Israeli anthropology and cultural criminology? From a political perspective and of social relevance.

R. Anthropology is not focused today. Instead, the young generation have taken on new themes. These do not necessarily include themes that are on my wish list: there is hardly anything about settlements, the occupation, about politics. There is no new ethnography of an Israeli school, factory or high-tech firm. People hardly engage in long term fieldwork.

I. What do you think are the important themes for Europe's anthropologists and cultural criminologists?

R. I think this is an endless subject for conversation. You can study any theme whatsoever. And by doing so you get a handle on some of the most complex and intricate themes. For instance, by studying a high-tech firm you expose a slice of the economic world. Otherwise you cannot understand what a high-tech firm is about.

I. Think for a moment what are the important criminological issues? Those that are relevant in Israel and in the world.

R. There are two huge fields that cry out for study: one is the production and distribution of commodities, such as drugs, diamonds (I refer to your own work), medicines. Some people are doing it, but not on a sufficient scale. The other theme is banks and their shady operations.

I. These research settings are the most difficult.

R. Sure, because the criminals don't allow you in. But there are ways of overcoming the difficulty. For instance, take a bank. Somebody has to get employed by a bank, climb the career ladder and engage in a long term study. But this has rarely been done.

I. How about refugees?

R. A very urgent theme for study. But refugees are not criminals, even when they cross borders illegally. Interestingly, there are few new studies of refugees in

Tijdschrift over Cultuur en Criminaliteit 2017 (7) 3
doi: 10.5553/TCC/221195072017007003006

Dit artikel uit Tijdschrift over Cultuur & Criminaliteit is gepubliceerd door Boom juridisch en is bestemd voor anonieme bezoeker

Israel, although it is so close to the major flows of refugees. After all, Syria is next door to Israel. Yet we know very little about what is going on in the war zones of Syria, Iraq and Egypt. Israeli scholars, much like the politicians, take little interest in what goes on beyond the country's borders.