

VU Research Portal

Orde in veiligheid

Schuilenburg, M.B.

2012

document version

Publisher's PDF, also known as Version of record

[Link to publication in VU Research Portal](#)

citation for published version (APA)

Schuilenburg, M. B. (2012). *Orde in veiligheid: een dynamisch perspectief*. [, Vrije Universiteit Amsterdam]. Boom / Lemma.

General rights

Copyright and moral rights for the publications made accessible in the public portal are retained by the authors and/or other copyright owners and it is a condition of accessing publications that users recognise and abide by the legal requirements associated with these rights.

- Users may download and print one copy of any publication from the public portal for the purpose of private study or research.
- You may not further distribute the material or use it for any profit-making activity or commercial gain
- You may freely distribute the URL identifying the publication in the public portal

Take down policy

If you believe that this document breaches copyright please contact us providing details, and we will remove access to the work immediately and investigate your claim.

E-mail address:

vuresearchportal.ub@vu.nl

Summary: Order in Security. A Dynamic Perspective

The delivery of security has changed substantially in recent times. Whereas governments have traditionally been responsible for security, the past two decades have seen increasing numbers of other parties, from both the public and private sectors, taking over varying degrees of responsibility for these tasks from the authorities. This has created a situation totally different from that in the past, with a multitude of new players and a dynamism of its own. This book sets out to establish a new and, in many respects, critical perspective for examining the dynamic nature of the provision of security as a whole. Recourse was sought primarily to French philosophers of difference, while also drawing on views from other academic disciplines. The book also seeks to provide greater insight into the alliances set up to deal with the issue of security by various parties from varying backgrounds, given the scarcity of academic research into the dynamics driving these partnerships.

With this in mind, theoretical and empirical studies were conducted into how security is arranged and delivered, and the changes that are being seen in these respects. The main sources of information from a theoretical perspective were the works of the French philosophers Michel Foucault (1926-1984), Gilles Deleuze (1925-1995) and Gabriel Tarde (1843-1904). Studies of their concepts of security (*sécurité*), assemblage (*agencement*) and interaction established a dynamic perspective for improving our understanding of changes in the general sense and the way these translate into the delivery of security, as well as improving our ability to examine and describe these changes empirically and normatively. Four case studies examined the actions of actors with roles in a security program in order to identify the dynamic forces at play in specific situations. The theoretical and empirical studies touch on societal issues of in- and exclusion, and raise questions concerning citizens' equality before the law. The study consequently also considered changes in the urban environment, as well as recent developments relating to the concept of citizenship.

The red thread running through this book is the thinking of Foucault, Deleuze and Tarde. My analysis shows their point of departure to be relational. Although this is a common theme in their work, each of them interprets it differently. I discuss the power relations that Foucault introduced in his series of lectures at the *Collège de France* between 1978 and 1979. This concept adds a new dimension to his earlier analysis of power in *Surveiller et punir* and *La volonté de savoir*. The power relations in security date back to the nineteenth century and the problems of public health and efforts to combat smallpox. The fight against smallpox demands preventive measures that affect the whole population, as well as the use of statistical information from which a norm is derived and groups constituting a potential risk, either to each other or to society as a whole, are identified. The process by which general modalities such as prevention, population, regulation and risk are increasingly imposed on society is referred to here as the 'securitization of society'. By this I mean the way in which, since the nineteenth century, society has seen the gradual introduction of techniques designed to ensure a safe and secure future. Security in this form

encroaches on areas of life such as spatial planning, social welfare, housing and education, and links them together in ever-expanding wholes.

In Tarde, too, the relational aspect plays an important role. In contrast to the functionalistic approach of his contemporary Durkheim, who interpreted individuals' actions in terms of their social functions and disregarded violence and power, Tarde specifically emphasized that actions can come into conflict with each other and disrupt existing patterns. In that way he focused attention on quotidian actions and interactions in the here and now. In interpreting Tarde's work I put forward the view that he approached the relational (taken here to mean 'social relations' or 'interactions') as an autonomous variable serving as a source of dynamism in the social reality. The relational aspect possesses an autonomy that is not inherent in the persons through which it is linked. This is because, according to Tarde, human interactions cannot be attributed to a single moment, but are instead part of a continuum, generating new series of actions and thus resulting in a continually changing social reality. This is reflected in the processes of imitation and invention, where two branching series of relations each constitute a reality in themselves, while also influencing each other.

Of the three authors, Deleuze focuses most explicitly on the relational in his thinking. I develop his concept of an assemblage as a node of power relations and social relations in a specific environment, where each element of the assemblage can itself be seen as an assemblage, *ad infinitum*. It is important to realize that each assemblage points to other assemblages that are already in or will later come into play, and that the assemblage changes as soon as new elements are added or old elements disappear. Assemblages are thus perpetually in motion and cannot be delineated by rigid boundaries or by being separated from the rest of the social reality. In this respect I show that an assemblage has a sphere of operations of its own; an assemblage is self-organizing. This self-organization arises from the relations that allow the elements of an assemblage to function as a whole. The driving force of this relational process is never, therefore, to be found outside an assemblage. The effect of an assemblage can thus never be determined in advance, but only retrospectively in the order that has by then become established.

In order to establish a practical concept for examining the dynamism in the provision of security I refer to a 'security assemblage'; in other words, to a temporary or lasting constellation of territories, rules and authorities. Within a security assemblage I distinguish two levels. On the one hand, there are the objectives set and agreements reached in order to reduce insecurity, as well as actions with a high degree of predictability, such as technical routines, daily rituals and the formal use of language by authorities, all of which I define as molar. At the same time there is also a molecular level, which cannot be conceived of within the 'ordinary' systems of representation. These are processes that drive themselves and contain their own dynamism, and that also experience a tension with the structure imposed from above.

The empirical study examined four security assemblages at a molecular level: efforts to combat cannabis cultivation, the approach to road freight crime, urban intervention

teams, and the Collective Shop Ban operating in the Netherlands. The study of the approach to cannabis cultivation found the collaboration primarily to be a matter of push-and-pull, with parties deploying self-designed motivational tactics to prompt other parties to take action. The approach to dealing with road freight crime meanwhile has given rise to a new vocabulary, with terms such as 'rock & rolling', 'campsite contacts' and 'birthday invitations'. This is used effectively within the specific assemblage, but raises questions outside that whole. Similarly, the approach adopted by urban intervention teams also shows that collaboration cannot automatically be assumed. The integrated approach envisaged in this field is insufficiently effective in practice because the authorities identify more with their own organization than with the common goal of the intervention team. Here, a degree of robustness at the molar level allows divergent actions to be readily accommodated. In retail exclusion schemes, such as the Collective Shop Ban, retailers act as mini-sovereigns by imposing penalties that have no basis in the official agreements reached with the authorities. These penalties range from demanding double payment for a stolen item to 'naming and shaming', with the personal views of the individual retailers largely determining the punishment meted out.

The security assemblages discussed here have opened up cities and made them manageable. At the same time, they have also transported citizens into new realities. This combination is perhaps one of the most striking aspects of the securitization process, with security assemblages such as urban intervention teams and the Collective Shop Ban showing that security as a social problem cannot be viewed in isolation from its spatial dimension. These assemblages demand a place for themselves in the urban environment, and have the capacity to establish and control new boundaries. A relevant aspect here is that the reality of these boundaries varies from one group in society to another. This is demonstrated by the Collective Shop Ban, which allows offenders to be excluded from large parts of the city centre for up to a year. In this way certain marginalized individuals, whom I refer to as 'margizens', are excluded from the city centre and the facilities it offers. These are developments of which we may often be unaware, but which are having a determining influence on life in our urban environment.