

Towards privacy enhancing security technologies - the next steps

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# THE PRIVACY VS SECURITY DILEMMA IN A RISK SOCIETY

INSIGHTS FROM THE PRISE PROJECT ON THE PUBLIC PERCEPTION  
OF NEW SECURITY TECHNOLOGIES IN SPAIN



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# INTRODUCTION: SECURITY, TECHNOLOGY AND DEMOCRACY

The tragedy of 9/11 and subsequent war on terror have considerably increased the political importance of security and led to the introduction of new security policies, often based on the implementation of new security technologies.

## GROWING DEBATE ON

### 1) RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN SECURITY AND PRIVACY

(Levi and Wall 2004, Bowyer 2004, Strickland and Hunt 2005, Ekberg 2007)

- How do we manage the trade-off between privacy and security?

### 2) THE SOCIAL AND POLITICAL IMPLICATIONS OF SECURITY TECHNOLOGIES

(Weiss 2004, Zureik 2004, Shearing 2005, Spence 2005, Liberatore 2007, Duffield 2006, Erikson & Giacomello 2006)

- Is the rapid uptake of new security technologies occurring at the expenses of democratic scrutiny and social participation?
- Is the implementation of new security technologies leading to authoritarian slippery slopes?

# LIVING A RISK SOCIETY

Approaching the relationship between technology, privacy, security and democracy from a “risk society” perspective (Beck 1992, 2002, 2003, 2005).

## RADICALIZATION OF MODERNITY FORCES THE INTERACTION BETWEEN INDIVIDUALIZATION AND GLOBALIZATION

Are challenging

- ☞ Some basic *institutions* of modernity, such as the nation-state and the nuclear family
- ☞ Some basic *principles*, like rational control, binomy science-rationality, as well as mastery of nature.

## LIVING IN A RISK SOCIETY II

These challenges are leading western society to a second and self-reflexive modernity...

Characterised by

- A) the existence of 'systemic' risks
- B) the permanent management of risks that are structurally different from the past and affect societies as a whole...
- C) the blurring of traditional boundaries (us/others, private/public, inside/outside etc.)

In a word, to a GLOBAL RISK SOCIETY.

## LIVING IN A RISK SOCIETY III

These risks are different from the past because:

- 1) They are not quantifiable or controllable.
- 2) They cannot be immediately observed by the citizens.
- 3) They are mainly set and defined by political actors...
- 4) ...and communicated to the public through the media.
- 5) They are de-territorialized and defy spatial and temporal localization.

# THE SOURCES OF RISKS

This new type of risks are essentially global and proceed from:

- 1) ENVIRONMENTAL CHANGES
- 2) FINANCIAL TRANSACTIONS
- 3) TERRORISM AND SECURITY THREATS

# SECURITY AND POLITICS IN A RISK SOCIETY

How is western society responding to the risk emerging from terrorist threats?

- 1) Terrorism as a global threat: intellectually external, structurally internal (inside/outside) (Beck 2002)
- 2) The new enemy: the alien neighbor (us/them) (Beck 2003)
- 3) Government matter again. BUT provision of security at the expenses of framework of democracy (Beck 2003)
- 4) A world of suspects: collapsing the distinction innocent/guilty and public/private (Beck 2003)
- 5) From *individual* to *homeland* security (Duffield 2006)
- 6) From active trust to active mistrust (Beck 2002)
- 7) Permanent economic and political mobilization of citizens (Spence 2005)

# SECURITY AND TECHNOLOGY IN RISK SOCIETY

The EU-US policy response has been a mixture of first and second modernity:

- It acknowledges the innovative, global and unpredictable, nature of terrorist threats (Beck 2005)
- But the solution is offered in modern terms, i.e, seeking to control and dominates problems through the implementation of new technological devices within given territorial boundaries (Beck 2005, Duffield 2006, Levi and Wall 2004).
- Yet, science and technology are increasingly perceived as cognitively and socially problematic: multiple rationalities are acknowledged (Beck 2003, 2005).
- Therefore, further legitimacy is sought for on non-scientific knowledge, through studies in public perception and PTAs.

DECISIONS STILL NEED TO BE TAKEN....



# RESEARCH QUESTIONS

- 1) How do citizens actually frame the implications of security technologies?
- 2) Second, do they frame security as a negative function of privacy and, if so, to what extent are willing to surrender privacy and liberty in exchange for more security unconditionally?
- 3) Has terrorism made the public highly sensitive to the issue of security and, if so, what are the security threats they perceive as most urgent and compelling?
- 4) And finally, are they aware of the potential political implications of framing liberty as a function of security?

# EXPLORING RISK SOCIETY CLAIMS IN SPAIN

Why Spain, and specifically, Madrid?

- 1) Favourable opinion toward introduction of new technologies
- 2) Citizens accustomed to surveillance
- 3) Previous cases of terrorist attacks, the ETA and 9/3 2004

Methodology:

PRISE interview meeting (with some differences in recruiting methods) and consecutive focus groups.

# PRIVACY VS SECURITY? YES, BUT...

## PRIVACY CONCERN

*"If you have nothing to hide, why bother?"*

Vs

*"If I have nothing to hide, why monitor me?"*

## SOCIETAL MISTRUST

*"They are selling us security for the benefit of the economy"*

## ARTIFICIAL FEAR AND MANIPULATION

*"If they didn't scare us, we would not accept it"*

## OVER-EMPHASIS ON TERRORISM

*"I am scared of other things... technology is fine but they should apply it to other things, not just focus on terrorism"*

# CITIZENS' DOUBTS...

Are these technologies really effective?

Citizens doubted:

- a) Never able to cover all risks
  - b) Criminals are always a step ahead
  - c) Ethical and professional profile of security operators...
  - d) They might reinforce social discriminations based on common places.
- ☞ The problem wasn't about being *monitored* but about being *interpreted*.

# ...AND CITIZENS' PRIORITIES !

## GENDER VIOLENCE

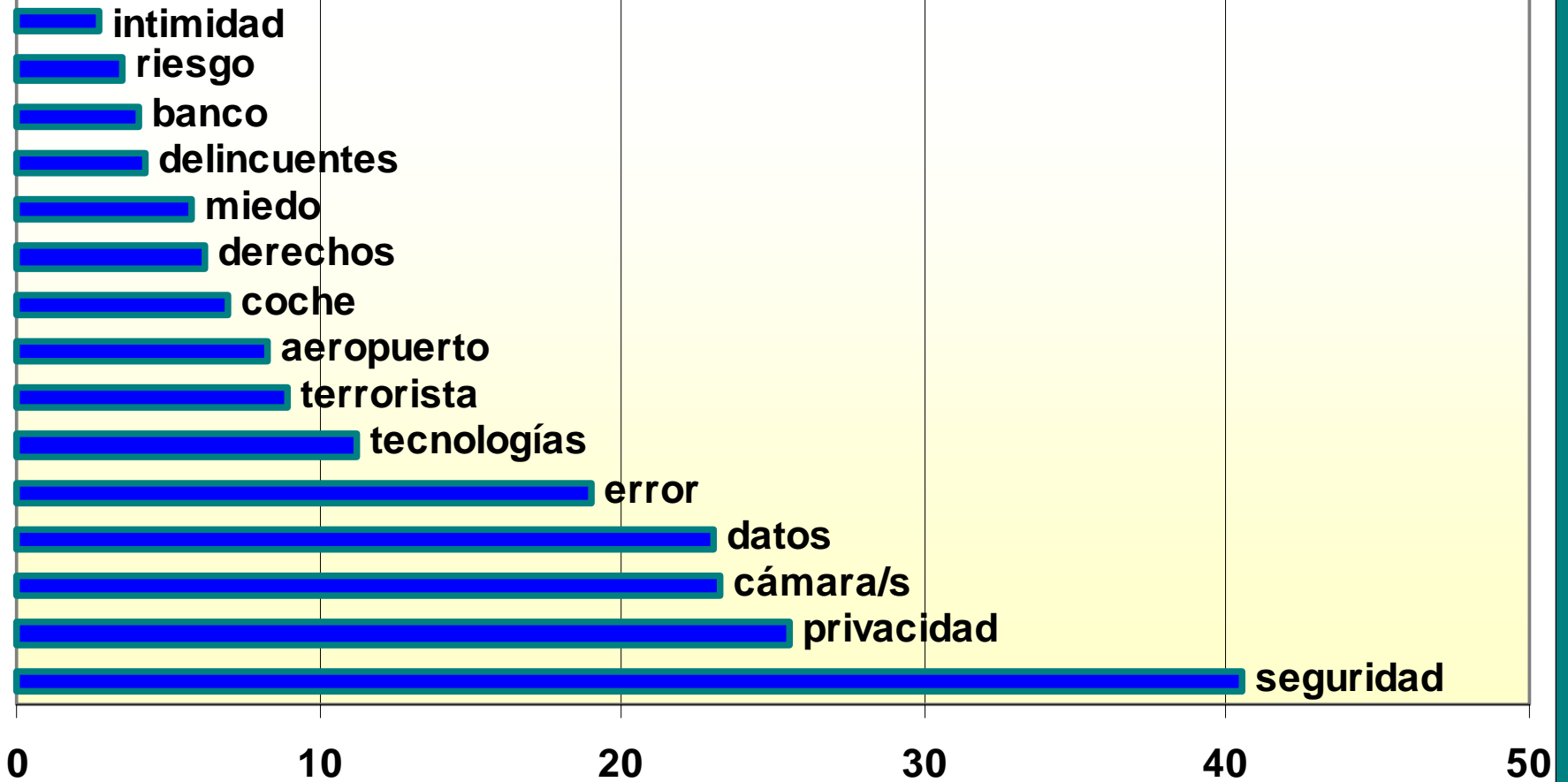
*"There are more victims because of violent husbands than for terrorism... I do not know the exact data but I am sure"*

## ORDINARY CRIME

## TERRORISM

SECURITY TECHNOLOGIES FOR VULNERABLE  
TARGETS (children and elderly people)

# MOST RELEVANT AND USED WORDS IN THE FOCUS GROUP DISCUSSIONS



# SECURITY, DEMOCRACY AND PARTICIPATION

*Participation:  
yes but who  
shall  
participate?*

## ALWAYS:

- A) Experts
- B) Consumer associations
- C) Human rights associations

## CONTROVERSIAL:

- D) Lay public
- C) Politicians

## NEVER:

- E) Banks
- F) Industrial and corporations

# PRIVACY VS SECURITY: GOLDEN RULES

The introduction of new security technologies should:

- A) be gradual and transparent;
- B) occur in a context of clear rules and widespread information;
- C) focus on specific cases and places;
- D) performed by trained and accountable personnel;
- E) previously authorised by judicial authority;
- F) be proportionate to risk and impact;
- G) affect intimate sphere as little possible;
- H) be left to individual choice whenever possible.



# RISK SOCIETY AND SECURITY NARRATIVE: WHAT'S GOING ON?

The study seems to confirm some of the social and political changes suggested by the Risk Society Thesis.

- A) individualization (individual choice approach);
- B) blurring boundaries us/them, inside outside, public/private, innocent/guilty;
- C) tendency to permanent economic and political mobilization of citizens (which they resist);
- D) de-territorialization of risks (which they also resist);
- E) growing sense of vulnerability and fear;
- F) adoption of *active mistrust* attitude;
- G) mixed (modern/self-reflexive) policy responses.

# AN ECONOMICS AND POLITICS OF FEAR? SOCIAL AND POLITICAL IMPLICATIONS



The **Homo Oeconomicus**: self-sustaining motivational system, based on the rational pursuit of self-interest, in a democratic context separating public and private sphere

The **Homo Metuens**: Non self-sustaining motivational system based on permanent political mobilization in the name of homeland security and consumption for the sake of national economy. Public/private boundary gets blurred.



THANKS!

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QUESTIONS?

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