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Culture of fear: fear as context and as method of political influence

Bachelor's thesis

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Introduction

As a subject of academic research, fear is characterised by ambiguity, complexity, and dynamic nature in real world situations. There is also conceptual overlap with closely related phenomena such as anxiety and terror. Fear has many inner contradictions, which make the topic multi-faceted. Discussion about only one aspect does not convey the whole truth about the matter; instead, the discussion should be looked at as a presentation of a particular part of the definition of fear.

The purpose of this thesis is to analyse fear in its complexity, ambiguity, and in the diversity of its appearances and forms. The thesis focuses on political fear in contemporary Western societies. The topic and the concepts that are used are ambiguous and that has been seen to complicate establishing a solid knowledge in previous research. The lack of solid knowledge simply means that the knowledge about the topic is quite diverse. Because of that the thesis does not aspire to arrive at a conclusion about fear in its entirety; instead, it intends to simply promote the understanding of the topic in light of its features, agents and procedure. The understanding of fear's vagueness is obtained by analysing fear from various, sometimes controversial angles, both as context and as influence method, fear's structure and agency, subject and object, positive and negative consequences, as well as justification.

The understanding of the topic is enhanced in five chapters. The first chapter focuses on fear as context. The thesis focuses on political fear, but in order to understand fear as context, the first chapter explains fear in general, culture of fear and other related ideas. Political fear can be considered as a sub-category of fear, the term is explained explicitly in the first chapter, and from there forward, mainly political fear is considered. Different agents can use political fear as political method; therefore the second chapter focuses on fear as political influence method and how most common political fears can be used for influencing others. The third chapter explores several positive and negative consequences for the society and different agents of the previously mentioned fear as context and fear as influence method. The foregoing formulates the theoretical part of the thesis. Then, the thesis will take into consideration the perspective of different agents, positive and negative consequences, purposes and side effects of the

influence method, and then the justification of fear is discussed. The philosophical part - the fourth chapter offers a discussion about whether fear as influence method forms justified means of political influence for different parties. The final chapter outlines the limits and prospects of the topic and the analytical model. In order to present the topic more clearly, the empirical part of this thesis consists of examples and references. Thereby the thesis concludes that fear in its structure as context and as influence method, its types, causes, consequences and the justification of its influence vary in contemporary Western societies.

Fear can exist on different levels and fear as context can be real or imagined, political or non-political. Fear at a societal level can be defined as context, as influence method or as a culture. These three approaches all differ from one another in their structure, involvement of agents and consequences. The causes and types of political fears in contemporary Western societies vary; they can co-exist, complement each other and incorporate other fears and causes. The consequences of fear as context and fear as influence method can be both positive and negative and vary from one agent to another. Fear as influence method involves several agents, and depending from whose perspective to analyse, it can be justified or not.

1. Conceptualisation of fear as context and culture of fear

1.1. Fear at different levels

Fear at an individual level, according to Aly & Green (2010:269) is “instinctive, inherent to our psychological makeup and serves a deep psychological need”. Individuals differ in how they feel fear and what creates fear for them. The most common responses to fear are to freeze, flee or fight. Fear is caused either by a physical or a psychological threat. Physiological responses to threats involve cold hands, rapid breathing, tightening in the muscles and sweating. Some of the stimuli that cause fear are inborn, while others are learned. (Ekman 2004:152-154) Fear at an individual level involves the creation of fear and the expression of it in a person. The emotion in this case is personal, characteristic to one individual and not to a collective. It includes the way individuals think, their personal fears and causes of fears (Robin 2004:2).

Fear at a societal level is “experienced where the consensus is that a perceived threat to existence (or the values associated with that existence) cannot be contained or managed using traditional defences” (Aly & Green 2010:269). Fear is felt collectively, and there is a communal and shared understanding of a society or a group in society about what to fear and how to avoid the causes of fear (Altheide 2002:32). Fear is considered as one of the most pervasive public emotions (Goodall 2006:35; Stearns 2006:477; Wallerstein 2010). There is always something or someone to fear that threatens the society to some degree. What changes over time, are the things and phenomena people and countries are scared of and how are these phenomena perceived (Altheide 2002:14).

The current thesis concentrates on fear at a societal level in contemporary Western societies. The Western world today can be described by a culture of fear where the amount of anxiety is high and different types of fears are used for influencing (Furedi 2006:82 as in Critcher 2011:265).

1.2. Defining fear, culture of fear and related concepts

Fear as context, in this thesis, has the meaning of fear itself. Fear arouses a heightened state of experience and makes people think that what they want does not coincide with reality or with what they expect (Robin 2004:4; Stengel 2010:526). It is a natural human emotion that appears in response to a perceived threat, danger (Pain 2009:467) or unknowing. The danger can be real or imagined, but the perception of danger is usually

associated with something certain (Aly & Green 2010:269; Ekman 2004:159). This fear can be both very brief or last for quite a long time, in which case the objects are not always conscious about it (Ekman 2004:150, 156). The reference of fear is usually in the future: the expected outcome is in question and generally perceived negatively (Moisi 2010:18). Fear influences the way people perceive and feel about different things and events and even how they act upon them (Robin 2004:4). Fear has the power to deepen irrationality, emotionality and mistrust in other people.

Fear has many related concepts that can bring forth a similar feeling in an individual or in a society. Anxiety, which fear is closely related to, is a feeling of insecurity and worry in response to an unspecified danger (Robin 2004:9). The main difference between fear and anxiety is that anxiety does not have an immediate threat that is identifiable (Aly & Green 2010:269; Ekman 2004:159), thus making it more vague and free-floating. Terror is also in close connection with fear. It describes a state of extremely intense fear (Aly & Green 2010:269; Margold 1999:64). Terror is an automatic reaction to only physical danger and is very hard to control (Robin 2004:9).

Fear and anxiety, or the perception of them, are always present in societies (Joseph 2008:63; Moisi 2010:48). Fear can arise consciously in response to something certain or, like in case of anxiety, it can also be felt unconsciously. Fear or the apprehension of it can exist implicitly, and when certain fearful events happen, it becomes reality. It is part of human nature (Pyszczynski 2004:827). When all objective reasons for fear are gone, the apprehension of it stays. It cannot be eliminated because people always find something to fear or might even fear the idea that there is nothing to fear.

The causes of fear can be external or internal. External causes mean that the cause of fear comes from outside, from something that is present in a society. When the threat is not present outside but inside of people (e.g. idea or a memory of a threat), then it can be considered internal. (Salas et al. 2012:568) When fears have internal reasons, they are more easily prone to being used as an influence tool because these fears have been associated with individual meaning (Salas et al. 2012:573). Real events are not always needed for the process of influencing, emphasising the right idea can be as effective.

There are no known concrete or universal causes that generate all types of fears in a society. Fear in a society can be generated by different events, reasons, circumstances, uncertainties, unknowing or ideas of them. Depending on the causes, fear can be either

political or non-political. Different hazards like climate change, environmental and ecological disasters (Petersen 2010:358) are non-political fears. Political fear arises from events, conflicts or circumstances that belong to the realm of politics within and between societies (Robin 2004:2, 4).

The concept of fear that is used throughout this thesis means political fear. Political fear is a group's or a society's "apprehension of some harm to their collective well-being" (Robin 2004:2) and it can be used as a means of influence. Political fear begins from and has consequences for society, is collective in essence, has political grounding, is characteristic for the whole group or society and does not emanate from the individual. Therefore, it does not incorporate an individuals' own way of thinking nor includes personal fears which are the fabrications of personal experiences and psychologies of individuals. (Robin 2004:2) Political fear can be generalised to a society as a whole; it is a way of looking at life and certain events (Altheide 2002:3; Altheide 2009:64).

Fear in a society can function as an instrument between different groups of people. People depend on each other in a society and at the same time remain unaware about the intents of others. The expected outcomes of different situations could be perceived as something uncontrollable. Everyone is scared of something or someone, but what frightens some might not have an effect on another (Stabile & Rentschler 2005). Those who are not afraid are harder to influence. Uncontrollable situations and relational fear create a setting where some agents may use fears of other agents to gain something. In this process of politics of fear the objects are being influenced by certain fears and the subjects are the ones who influence. Subjects and objects are the agents in the process of influencing. Fear becomes an influence method when agents who influence others use it. Therefore, fear as influence method can be defined as using political fear in the process of influencing. Otherwise, without the involvement of agents it remains simply a context – the fear itself.

A culture of fear arises in a society when people expect danger to happen and partly define everyday life through those risks (Jeffries 2012:39). A culture of fear describes a state of culture, environment or a society where fear and anxiety dominate the political agenda. People find different issues in a society fearful and through that the issues start to dominate (Robin 2003:64-65). Each member of the society does not personally feel fear all the time as it is not the only emotion; however there is a general concern about the well-being of a society (Robin 2004:16). Fear can be considered a culture when fear

as an emotion is turned into a general and common experience (Jeffries 2012:44). A culture of fear itself can be an environment that evolved from certain fearful events (e.g. environmental disaster) and is not used by agents. Different agents can also take advantage of it or even create a culture of fear by promoting fear. A culture of fear as an environment can have a political grounding (Linke & Smith 2009:4-5) and that environment can be easily used to promote and increase the role of instability, anxiety and a sense of disorder in a society and internationally (Abu-Orf 2012:159; Altheide 2002:188; Altheide 2009:57; Yates 2003:96) to make reasonable people make unreasonable decisions (Joseph 2008:63; Margold 1999:64; Mölder 2011:247). Graph 1 illustrates the logic behind a culture of fear and how it can be created from fear.

Graph 1. The evolving of a culture of fear.



Fear and anxiety can be perceived distinctively but are not wholly measurable (England & Simon 2010:202) at a societal level and that makes it difficult to understand how and why they are used, allowing them to be used easily as an instrument in politics (Robin 2004:3). While the strength of fear is not objectively measurable, it is possible to assess the existence and types of political fears. One way to do this is to observe the media and its coverage on different actual fear inducing topics and their formulation as well as wording. This can give an idea of what the society is afraid of. (Altheide 2006:422) To understand how fearful people are and how prone they are to influence, their attitudes regarding different policies should be analysed. This can be done by looking at the association of fear content in media and political rhetoric with changes in public fear (De Castella & McGarty 2011:180). An effective way to gather the data is to ask people about their opinions regarding certain policies or states of society. When a dangerous

event happens, the people should be surveyed again. Through such research one is able to get an idea about what society thinks and how opinions change.

1.3. Perception of fear in a society

The way fear and anxiety are perceived changes with time. Fear used to be related to known enemies and specific events or instances (Altheide 2002:59; Goodall 2006:35), but now it seems that it is everywhere, connected with uncertainty and mistrust (Altheide 2006:426; Altheide 2009:57; Brissett 2003:115; Critcher 2011:269; Evans 2012:75; Yates 2003:99). Fear in contemporary Western societies is generally perceived as a vague concept. Fears directed towards something certain are rarer nowadays and anxieties have become more common. Even when there might not be something certain to fear, the anxiety does not disappear. Because of that even related aspects to certain fearful events are perceived to be dangerous.

The perception of fear depends greatly on the relevance and sharing of that fear. For fear to arise, people should feel that the matter is relevant and harmful to them or their societies (Lazarus 1991). Important matters and opinions are constantly shared and exchanged with each other (Altheide 2002:54) and the perception of fear changes as the sharing continues. The group and society have a strong influence on the behaviour and opinions (Gleitman et al. 2011:519). The perception of fear is connected to the opinions of the society and other people. Sharing can enhance the idea of insecurity even when there is no actual reason for it. As it was said, the cause of fear does not have to be real (Joseph 2008:63; Kilp 2011c:206), a strong fearful idea that is persistently and repetitively implied as something threatening can easily expand into a culture of fear.

Fear can be perceived as the feeling of unknown because the reasons behind many events remain unknown. People are unaware of causes behind different events and things, which increases unawareness in a society as a whole and makes people scared of things that they cannot explain or understand. The not knowing of all the causes and reasons make people unable to blame someone or make someone responsible. That generates fear and anxiety towards an invisible power. (Hobbes, Pt. I, Ch. 12) In order to live without unending terror and suspense, people repress that perpetual fear and do not concentrate on it (Katznelson 2007:6) which might make the fear they feel unconscious.

Feeling fear can be connected to victimisation which increases the perception of fear. Fear makes people feel as potential victims of the events that happen in their culture room. Being a victim has turned into a status and representation that something might happen (Altheide 2006:434; Altheide 2009:55). Culture of fear makes the world seem small. It makes people believe that the same horrors can happen anywhere and that they are surrounded by constant danger. Australia has not experienced a terrorist attack but in spite of that, concerns about terrorism are there. The reason behind it is that the Western societies have been involved in terrorist attacks and the feeling of dread has impacted the whole culture room. (Aly & Green 2010:270)

Everyone is afraid of something or someone, although types of fears and coping with them vary. Everybody does not perceive fear the same way and can fear different things, but the general atmosphere that favours fear exists for everyone. People can fear different things, perceive the same fears differently and express their fears differently. For example, white women might be more afraid of rape, but black women fear hate crimes. (Madriz 1997 as in Stabile & Rentschler 2005:xv) It is natural to have different fears but having fears in the first place is common to all.

1.4. The origination of a culture of fear

Fear can be found in all eras but its magnitude and the way of producing and sustaining it changes with time (Altheide 2002:14). The culture of fear is not a new phenomenon; it has been a scholarly topic for a long time (Brissett 2003:115; Evans 2012:71; Jeffries 2012:39).

A culture of fear can arise itself from different political or non-political events. It can be caused by fears in an environment that favours the uprise of this kind of culture. Also, it can be generated by different agents, who take advantage of the environment by deepening existing fears and anxieties. Because of its nature, a culture of fear favours politics of fear (Linke & Smith 2009:5). It allows agents to easily use fear as an influence tool in order to achieve a certain goal. Politics of fear emerge when fear and the beliefs of the audience are used to influence people to get them to do something and to attain power (Altheide 2009:66; Stearns 2006).

The rising and promotion of the culture of fear has become an actuality after the 9/11 attacks in the United States (Altheide 2006:416; Boyle 2011:413). It is not just political fear that circulates, but the situations that unfold – the war in Iraq, terrorist attacks,

immigration, crime – can recreate the experience of fear all the time (Stengel 2010:531). Fear is closely in connection with specific events and people start to associate particular situations with particular fears. When a similar event happens, is brought up in the media or when people are reminded of it, then people relate the occasion with fear and experience it (Abu-Orf 2012:161). Though various events can create a culture of fear, the general atmosphere of it has some main characteristics. A culture of fear focuses on the search for safety, finding someone to blame for all the harm done and managing the risks of all the possible adverse events (Cricher 2011:265).

Globalisation offers a generous base for the arising of the culture of fear, for fear to grow into something pervasive and anxiety to spread. The culture of fear in the Western world today has partly originated from and deepened with the globalising world. During the 20th century the world was polarised and everyone took a side. Now the sides are not that clearly set, the world exists with less borders, constantly changing and laying the foundation for increased insecurity and fear. (Moisi 2010:28-29) Though the cultures of fear exist in societies and on local levels, they can be created and shaped globally. Western world is connected and intertwined economically, politically and even culturally, which means that global power relations impact different societies and countries (Linke & Smith 2009:4, 6; Yates 2003:106). For example, Muslims are categorised as the “other” in many Western countries as a result of the 9/11 bombing attacks (Aly & Green 2010:275, 278; Kilp 2011c:215-216). Even the general fear of “others” in some countries can be created through international concept of terrorism that might not even impact those countries directly.

It seems that fear has become an inseparable part of the Western culture and society (Linke & Smith 2009:13; Stearns 2006:477), even though the quality of life has improved. The society is safer, life expectancy is higher, people are healthier and the world is not that dangerous than it was years ago (Altheide 2003:9, 20; Altheide 2006:421). What is important here is not the quantity of risk, but the quality of control over those risks (Yates 2003:99). The quality of control can, for example, mean predicting future, based on risk assessments or acknowledging the fact that the resources for dealing with the risks are under-estimated. There are too many different events, crimes and happenings that involve many people and countries. All those events and people are difficult to manage and thus it is harder to plan ahead. When the quality of control over those events is low, then it is easier for the culture of fear to arise, spread

or to be created in the first place. Risks might be the same, but the world is getting more complicated and thus rather difficult to control.

1.5. Culture without fear

The world without fear cannot exist but the world without a culture of fear is possible. A world without a culture of fear can be characterised by fear-free political agenda, rational and objective decision-making, equality and openness to communication.

Fear-free political agenda. World without a culture of fear is an ideal world and it means that fear does not dominate the political agenda in a society and it is not used by social agents. Fear always exists in some ways and thus a culture without fear in a way that “world is not afraid” is not possible – and it must be noted that fear can easily expand into a culture of fear. Nevertheless, culture of fear without the involvement of agents is more rational because it originates from events that naturally make people anxious. When social agents are involved as mediators, then the culture of fear is based on fears or anxieties that have been created or magnified by those same social agents. A culture without fear where social agents do not mediate fear for their own benefits is an ideal world where the quality of control over different risks is stronger.

Rational and objective decision-making. In a society without a culture of fear people would be able to make plans and decisions more rationally and objectively (Joseph 2008:63). Since no one would magnify fears nor use them for their own benefits, everyone would know what needs to be feared and what not (Grow 2006:61). People would be truly free: free from irrational fear and free to exercise their own reason (Robin 2003:63). As it was said, fear expands into a culture of fear when past events are connected with the sense of dread that the same things might happen and probably will happen again sometime in the future (Altheide 2002:178). In a culture without fear these resentments about the past and fear about the future would not happen so easily and therefore would not be such a great distraction nor have that much influence on people.

Equality. The society without a culture of fear would be more just and equal. All the groups would be more equal, prejudices would not be so definite and no one would be superior (Kilp 2011b:58). Since everyone would be well-informed and self-directed (Robin 2003:64), it would be harder to influence people to agree on and support different agendas that would benefit only certain social agents. Only important issues would be noticed and solutions to them would benefit everyone. Fear in a culture

without fear would be dealt with more directly and transparently and not fought with promoting more fear or attacking the sources of fear (Altheide 2002:196).

Openness to communication. Willingness to be open to negotiations with other people, countries and cultures, a mutual understanding and a will to be responsible would be the characteristics of a culture without fear (Yates 2003:106). In a culture without fear different fears and anxieties would not be magnified and thus people would be more able to categorise objectively what is to be feared. If there are no additional fears people would feel more safe and secure and thus could be happier. They would be more confident, which in turn improves their work, family lives and interactions with others (Goodall 2006:32). The readiness to talk about risks, threats and to stand up against them would dominate at a societal level and would prevent a lot of conflicts.

2. Fear as political influence method

2.1. The process of influencing

Influence can be defined as an effect that someone (a subject) has on another (an object). Its purpose and the goal for subjects is to gain something in accordance with their own intentions. Influence can be considered as domination, when the influencer makes his or her will known to the objects, or as manipulation, when the object is not conscious about the will of the influencer. The subjects influence objects with fear so that they would acknowledge and approve the subjects' actions, which means that they act legitimately and can maintain the power position. (Goldhamer & Shils 1939:171-172) Being in a position of power gives subjects a chance to exercise domination and manipulation. Manipulation cannot be legitimate because the will of the subject should not be recognisable to the audience (Goldhamer & Shils 1939:173). There can be cases where manipulation is recognisable but the attention of the objects is not focused on it. In a context of a culture of fear the emotion of fear can be very intense and because of that the real intention of subjects would stay out of the spotlight. Instead, the attention would be focused on the cause of fear, as well as on resolving the problem as quickly as possible. When either manipulation cannot be recognised or the attention is focused on something else, the audience remains trustful of the subjects.

When influencing, subjects serve the threat to the objects and also propose a method how to get rid of that threat or reduce it (Robin 2004:16). When making decisions, the behaviour of people is usually more influenced by the perceptions of short-term than long-term decisions (Kassin et al. 2010:15). The objects have the information that something is wrong and that the influencers want to improve the situation. Relying on that, decisions are made. The idea that subjects use political fear as influence method to change the thinking of people and to gain personal benefits has become a dominant discourse (Pain 2009:468).

2.2. Favouring factors of fear as influence method

A lot of fears can be and are used as an influence tool, but the ones that are topical and already exist in a society have a better effect and are more useful for influencing. The influencers take into consideration the topical fears and threats at present time, decide which of those are valuable for them and deserve political attention (Yates 2003:100). Subjects then have to magnify, mobilise and focus them in the direction that is useful

for their agendas (Lucas 2012:83). The likelihood of having influence over others is higher and the effect is stronger when subjects know the fears of objects and use those fears to influence them. The effect of influence is weaker when objects know that they are being influenced and understand the causes of their fears.

Using fear as influence method is more likely to happen when fear is already present in a society as a culture of fear (Robin 2003:68). A culture of fear creates an atmosphere and opens up a structure of opportunity for subjects where it is quite easy for them to influence objects using political fear. People who are already generally concerned about different matters are more receptive and sensitive to fear and tend to be guided by what they believe and feel (Doherty & Wolak 2012:304). That is why partly irrational fears could be used to consolidate and maintain control (Aly & Green 2010:274; Evans 2012:71; Jeffries 2012:41).

Objects and groups are more prone to being influenced with fear when their self-esteem and self-awareness are low (Kilp 2011b:61). Globalisation has made the Western culture ambiguous, borderless and easily relatable. A lot of different people can easily identify themselves with the Western culture, because the structure and rules are quite vague. This can also make the self-awareness of individuals and groups quite low. Identification with strict groups usually reduces uncertainty because it imposes certain guidelines for behaving (Kilp 2011b:61). Western culture does not have many strict guidelines to people, thus it might increase the uncertainty of many people. It does impose a certain belief that people can be different, but at the same time it makes everyone similar (Byng). Without strict guidelines and in the process of generalisation, the identity of people may become unclear. This can be one of the reasons why influencing using fear in a setting of a culture of fear has become easier and very actual.

It has been suggested that feelings of fear are related to political attitudes and political beliefs (Lupia & Menning 2009:103), which means that fear can be used in the process of influencing because it serves its purpose. Oxley et al. (2008:1669) find a “correlation between physiological response to threat and political attitudes”. It means that some political attitudes might impact how people react to threat and how threat and fear shape their attitudes and actions. Stam et al. (2012:60) say that the way people perceive the world correlates with their understanding on different security policies. If they perceive the world as more dangerous, then they form their opinions about policies relying on that general perception. There are different results regarding how fear and supporting

different policies are connected. Some say that fear and anxiety reduce the support for risky policies (e.g. Petersen 2010:357), some point out that fear content in political rhetoric has a weak relationship to fear in public (e.g. De Castella & McGarty 2011:191), others have found that fear-arousing messages increase the perception of risks (Chung & Ahn 2013:465) and some suggest that different specific emotions such as fear can be used to persuade the public (e.g. Bosetti 2011:373; Petersen 2010:363).

2.3. The agents in the process

2.3.1. Objects and subjects

At a societal level and in the context of influencing by the means of political fear there are mostly two groups of agents – ordinary people/masses and governments/elites. Usually the first ones are the objects and the latter are the subjects.

Governments and elites have the power in a society, which provides them with more opportunities and knowledge, so it is easiest for them to take advantage of a culture of fear and influence people. Fear either helps them to pursue a specific political agenda or supports their political beliefs (Robin 2004:16). This is the reason why countries and governments have started to use fear and anxiety in societies as a way to influence people to get what they want (Brissett 2003:116; Evans 2012:71; Linke & Smith 2009:4-5). They have a better view over the situation and they have the most accurate information about the state of the society and the country. Because of that, they know what is to be feared, what not and having this knowledge enables them to influence others. Ordinary people are more insecure about the future threats since they do not have the whole overview or the whole power to decide. Because of that they can be easy to influence. The existence of fear might not be enough for people to support the agendas of power-holders, they must have a positive character and an image (De Castella & McGarty 2011:191; Petersen 2010:362).

The influence process is by no means unilateral. It is bilateral in essence (Goldhamer & Shils 1939:175; Green; Linke & Smith 2009:10-11). Fear can also be used as an influence tool by the people and masses who are usually in the role of objects (Robin 2004:14). Western countries are starting to lose control over the world and that scares the elites. They have the privilege, but their leading position is in danger. They have to constantly protect it from other countries and people and that frightens them (Goodall 2006:52; Moisi 2010:28, 133-135). For example, if a large crowd strongly feels the same way about something that does not correspond with the aspirations of the elite,

they can become a strong and united force. People are scared or angry and take action, which scares the government. That kind of power in democratic societies can overrule the desires of elites. Power-holders must compromise and give up some of the power to avoid possible rioting and even more uneasiness.

2.3.2. Media

One of the most important links in the process of influencing today is the media (Altheide 2002:6). The mass media and internet are nearly limitless, so are the amount of information and the constant flow of news. (Matsaganis & Payne 2005:385). Technology develops rapidly and information is obtainable to everyone and that is why media is also considered a big influencer (Altheide 2002). Media can act in the influence process as a mediator, as a promoter and as a subject.

Media as a mediator. Media usually acts as a mediator between the subjects and objects and is important in maintaining the power (Jeffries 2012:42). Mass media in collaboration with power-holders creates, magnifies and develops the culture of fear (Brissett 2003:117). People constantly seek information from the media. The pressure to respond quickly makes the media turn to sources that might have relevant information about those issues (Matsaganis & Payne 2005:385). Media passes on information, which is shaped by the ones who provide information to it. Different social control agencies adjust their messages so that they would match the media and news format criteria (Altheide 2002:12). In that sense the elite who gives out information, still has the power because usually they are the main source that journalists rely on (Altheide 2006:417, 432; Altheide 2009:65; Matsaganis & Payne 2005:385).

Media as a promoter. Media can have a fear promoting effect in a society without even being aware of its consequences. When reporting massive amount of negative news, delivering vague messages about threats and constantly promoting crises and danger (Abu-Orf 2012:166; Altheide 2002:42), the mass media creates an image that danger lies everywhere and there is no escape from this. It has the power to reach out to the whole community at the same time, concentrate on topics that affect everyone and disregard the emotions of individuals (Abu-Orf 2012:167). By reporting and publishing fear-related news, the media has the ability to construct and sell “realities” of fear to people and audiences (Matsaganis & Payne 2005:380), thereby contributing to the production of a culture of fear.

Media as a subject. Media has the power to shape the preferences and thoughts of the public and also the power-holders by deciding what kind of information to publish, sell and how to present it (Altheide 2002:57). In that sense media acts as an influencer. Naturally, governments and power-holders may put pressure on media to act as a mediator, but this can easily turn against them. Western societies have a high Freedom of the Press Index (Freedom House 2014), which means that media is harder to control. By deciding what kind of information to share, what stories to publish and whose perspective to take, the media can also decide who has the power and who and what should be feared.

2.4. Types of political fear

The few main political fears that are frequently discussed in scholarly literature and that are widespread in Western countries include fear of “other”, fear of terrorism, fear of unknown and fear of crime. These fears can exist side by side in a society and not necessarily independent from other fears. In reality different types of political fears can belong to those four groups above but can also be a mixture of them. They are more or less socially constructed since they exist and work at a societal level. These four main political fears are described in the next sub-chapters in order to better understand the possible outcomes that fear and using it for influencing can have.

2.4.1. Fear of “other”

Fear of “other” actually means fear of difference that is manufactured socially, economically and politically because of absence of feelings of safety and security (England & Simon 2010:203). Differences exist everywhere but they become “others” when constructed so in a society or internationally (Kilp 2011c:203). Cultural “other” is created from something that appears as negative, strange and extreme (Kilp 2011a:9) or is unknown. Fear of difference in itself can be considered as fear as context, but when agents use that fear in order to create an “other”, it becomes a political influence method. Therefore fear of “other” can be considered fear as method of influence.

Fear of “other” would not be functional in a very tolerant society where people accept differences and would not think of an unknown or different culture as an enemy. Fear shapes how we relate to groups and cultures (Abu-Orf 2012:166). Unless there is a contradiction between two cultures or the other culture appears mysterious, cultural “other” will not be feared nor used for influencing. That does not mean that in reality

cultural “other” is dangerous or negative: in their culture they are perceived as normal and accepted.

The causes of fear of “other” are mostly internal. Fear of “other” is based on the idea that a different culture or society is dangerous, but the actual threat is missing. When those differences are actually threatening to a core culture, then the cause is external.

Fear of “other” can be created and magnified as a result of self-determination. People identify themselves through the groups they belong to. By doing that they create an image that the outside is threatening, evil and scary and the inside is secure, loyal and trustworthy (Abu-Orf 2012:162; Kilp 2011c:197; Linke & Smith 2009:7). Different cultures can perceive each other as deviant and not fitting to generally accepted norms (Kilp 2011a:12) and because of that trust inside groups has increased and between groups has decreased (Abu-Orf 2012:171).

Fear of “other” can be considered as an important fear because people want someone to blame, especially in times of social, economic and political crises (Kilp 2011c:206; Koskela 2010 as in Abu-Orf 2012:160). Creating a cultural “other” would be impossible without a receptive audience (Glass 1988:218). Politicians, countries, and the media could not succeed in creating the cultural “other” on their own. Common people need a cultural enemy and they accept it. The enemy takes off the weight of responsibility from the people and even more from the power-holders, which makes everyone feel safe and secure (Kilp 2011b:61) because the threat comes from outside.

The reality is that usually fear is created towards those “others” who are naturally the most at risk and in threat. They can be minority groups, religious groups or even different countries. (Jeffries 2012:44; Pain 2009:475; Stengel 2010:532) The “other” might not be the most violent or different, but they are sensed as a threat to security or politics (Kilp 2011c:203, 217, Koskela 2010 as in Abu-Orf 2012:162) because of lack of confidence (Moisi 2010:40). These “others” are the ones who actually fear the dominant culture that has the power over them. But the dominant culture only focuses on the fear that needs to be felt against those “others” in order to remain in power and secure their positions.

Fear of “other” can be magnified by power-holders in order to secure their own position of power (Abu-Orf 2012:172) and using fear of “other” as the means of influence acts as a functional tool for power-holders. Western societies are used to dominating the

world. Globalisation so far has meant that different cultures take over Western traditions, customs and trademarks (Moisi 2010:25). In reality more and more Asian countries start to gain economic power and a lot of people from different cultures and religions immigrate to Western countries (Moisi 2010:133). For example, Islam has become the main cultural “other”. Western world is considered as constantly changing, dynamic and liberal; Islam in contrast is considered as more static and more traditional. (Kilp 2011c:215) Their traditions, unity and willingness to remain true to their traditions might scare the West, especially if more and more Muslims immigrate to the West. This creates fear that another culture can take over and start to dominate. The fear of cultural “other” has started to dominate in the Western world (Bosetti 2011:375).

2.4.2. Fear of terrorism

Fear of terrorism and the concept of terrorism are generally elusive and vague (Nimmer 2011:224). Though fear has always had a role in societies and politics, fear of terrorism is quite new. It became a reality with the 9/11 terrorist attacks in United States (Naber 2006:257; Pain 2009:466). These attacks gave United States and the Western world a perfect opportunity to use these attacks and the fear it created for pursuing a new geopolitical strategy in order to promote Western interests and values everywhere (Northcott 2012:62). The way terrorism is described and used in public discourse gives an idea of an “elusive enemy” who may attack anytime and anywhere (Ellin 2003:54). That induces and deepens their fear even more. (Aly & Green 2010:270; Nimmer 2011:224-225)

Fear of terrorism usually appears in response to terrorist attacks, which makes causes of fear of terrorism external. Nevertheless, the causes can also be internal. The feeling of fear and suspension after an attack can stay in a society for a long time, even though nothing else has happened after the original event. People are fearful of a memory of a past event which means that the cause of fear is inside them.

Fear of terrorism is turned from context into method of influence when agents take advantage of the external causes of terrorism or the lingering fear in people. The purpose of magnifying fear of terrorism is usually for governments to get people to approve of foreign and security policies and agendas. Terrorism is brought up again and again to justify different foreign anti-terrorism policies (Altheide 2006:433; Matsaganis & Payne 2005:387) in order to protect the country (Nellis & Savage 2012:749; Northcott 2012:64). For example, in 2001 the government of USA sustained an

atmosphere of fear in order to get people to justify a new set of foreign policy objectives related to the Iraq War (Naber 2006:244; Northcott 2012:61). It was fear and emotions that made people agree with that (Altheide 2006:415-416). The government mobilised fear by constantly talking about terrorism, showing different attacks in the news and by tough security measures.

Fear of terrorism is bilateral. It is not just the governments and countries involved in anti-terrorism. International terrorism has caused the culture of fear which in turn has manufactured more fear of terrorism. Terrorists create fear by acts of violence (Altheide 2006:427; Evans 2012:71; Nimmer 2011:228). They use the fear of terrorism to create chaos and uncertainty. Their agenda is to show their resistance to the dominating culture and politics and hope that making the societies unstable might give them an opportunity to find support for their ideological goals (Mölder 2011:257).

Media has a big role in creating and maintaining the fear of terrorism. People rely on media and turn to it when something happens, which makes people more trusting towards the information that they get. Serious terrorist attacks do not happen anywhere; they are brought to people by media and news (Nellis & Savage 2012:750-751). It has been found that news about terrorism do impact the perceived risk and fear of terrorism (Nellis & Savage 2012:748, 751).

Fear of terrorism and fear of “other” are closely related: depreciation of the “other” does not just stop with perceiving them as evil, but goes as far as perceiving them as potential terrorists (Evans 2012:72). Unknown and foreign cultures create fear by giving out the idea that they can be dangerous or might engage in terrorist activity. But fear of terrorism can also create fear of “other”. People have an image of a terrorist and usually because of the 9/11 bombing attacks it is an Arab man. A lot of Arabs and Muslims are thought to be potential terrorists, people are afraid of them because of that and they might be treated as ones (Aly & Green 2010:278; Naber 2006:244).

2.4.3. Fear of unknown

The fear of unknown is a feeling of chaos, disorder and uncertainties. We live in a world that is out of control and the only certainty that exists is uncertainty (Yates 2003:96-97). Limitless media and the amount of information can be too much for everyone to consume, thereby creating more uncertainties. Fear of unknown as context also affects making plans for the future and feeling secure (Moisi 2010:33). There is nothing that can be done to take away this constant feeling of anxiety but to wait and prepare for it

(Altheide 2002:136). People adapt to the feeling of meaninglessness and that they have no control over the future. This could easily turn the society passive.

The causes of fear of unknown are internal. It is internal in the sense that it does not need a material threat; being scared of the unforeseeable comes from inside people and from the way that they think and feel.

The unknowing of the future creates insecurity and total reliance on those who can guarantee security. The world is constantly changing, which makes it hard for people to make plans for the future. (Moisi 2010:138) In distress people look for similarity and familiarity (Abu-Orf 2012:161). Usually governments have the power and measures to offer people security or at least make them think that they are capable of that. Power-holders and also the media keep reminding everyone that there are all kinds of threats out there that people have not experienced yet and keep that sense of dread in the population (Aly & Green 2010:269). The rapidly changing world has made manipulating people very easy for power-holders by the means of the fear of unknown.

Fear of unknown can also be targeted on something that might or might not exist – we do not know and we are not sure. Since there are already so many things to be scared of, people cannot be sure that they know all the sources of threats and their magnitudes. Alongside the development of technology, power-holders feel the need to keep people under control. To do that, they must keep an eye on everyone through surveillance strategies. It is a common knowledge that the everyday technology leaves traces and that governments can track that information (Lyon 2003:85). What remains unknown is how far that surveillance reaches and who can spy (Ellin 2003:54; Lyon 2003:83). That kind of unknown areas of information make people scared. Power-holders keep people unaware of how mighty their power of surveillance is in order to make people behave properly. However, people can also use technology and the fear it creates as an influence tool. Surveillance and developing technology give everyone an opportunity to spy on power-holders, who then have to consider it and be extra careful about their words and actions.

The fear of unknown also has an influence on power-holders, who can never be sure of what the future holds. Future and outcomes of different events are not pre-determined nor set (Green); they depend on the decisions and behaviour of the agents who are involved. The power of the governments partly depends on the people, who have to

support the power-holders and elect them to power. By making decisions, the power-holders constantly risk the support of the people. Not being sure about the future and the permanence of their power creates fear in them. They cannot be sure of how the people will react to their decisions. The public can influence them with fear of unknown by keeping them in the dark about the public preferences. The power-holders then might turn to the people for some insurance about the future in the form of support.

Fear of unknown can be caused by and related to fear of terrorism and fear of “other”. Terrorist attacks do not happen every day and not knowing when the next one will appear leads in addition to fear of terrorism to fear of unknown. Fear of “other” on the other hand can come from fear of unknown. The obscure seems fearful and because of that it can turn into an “other”.

2.4.4. Fear of crime

Fear of crime makes people relate to the victims and that makes them feel that anything can happen to them and that they are all exposed to the cruel world. A belief that everyone is a potential victim and needs to be protected has been developed (Altheide 2006:418). Crime is everywhere and the reporting of it in media brings it closer to people (Altheide 2002:135). Media has an important role in implementing and shaping fear of crime (Altheide 2006:420), because that is the main source for people to get information about crimes. With the help of media, fear of crime can be used as method of influence. Without magnifying the severity of crimes in a society, fear of crime is just a context. It can be caused both externally and internally depending on the reality of the threats.

The increase in news and reporting about crime makes people feel insecure and in need for security. To find safety, they turn higher powers (Robin 2004:20). Power-holders influence people and increase the amount of crime control news in order to show that the police and authorities can effectively solve problems, help people and improve their feeling of security. People are shown that all these threats and dangers can be controlled (Altheide 2002:141). That kind of reliance is beneficial to the power-holders because then people trust them and are obedient citizens. The security that was manufactured from fear of crime makes people think that only the government can reduce their fears. That necessity keeps people from rioting or disagreeing with them.

In a society where crime is already very high or very low, using fear of crime to influence people might not be functional. When crime is already very high, magnifying

it more will not make the society more afraid of it. The problem is already present in the society and only something on a much larger scale - like a terrorist attack - could possibly make people more scared. In a society where crime is very low people feel secure, trust their law enforcement agencies and know that their society is safe.

Fear of crime can be associated with fear of “others” as well. A lot of minority groups on lower levels in a society are made into fearful “others” and associated with crimes (Altheide 2006:418). For example poor and homeless people are feared because they are associated with crimes (Altheide 2002:73; Lyon 2003:82) and that fear makes people ignore this part of society, therefore creating an even bigger gap between different social classes.

3. Consequences of political fears for the society and involved agents

When fear is considered a negative emotion (Humphrey 2013:285), then it has negative consequences for the society and agents in it. It is important to understand that fear is as important as hope in politics (Dunn 1992:265-266) and its consequences can be positive as well. Fear as context has both positive and negative consequences for both societies and people. The consequences of fear as method of influence differ from the ones that fear as context can have. One must keep in mind that the consequences of fear as context can be understood as consequences of fear as influence method, but not the other way around. Fear as influence method means the involvement of different agents and a heightened fear, which do not apply to fear as context, because fear itself does not alter itself and the agents are not present to change the context.

Table 1. Consequences of political fears for agents and the society.

	Political fears			
	<i>Fear as context</i>		<i>Fear as influence method</i>	
	<i>Positive consequences</i>	<i>Negative consequences</i>	<i>Positive consequences</i>	<i>Negative consequences</i>
<i>Society</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • New uniting perspective 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Induces conflicts and competition 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • National identity 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Higher levels of insecurity • Induces hostility between groups • Induces intolerance • Misrecognising real problems
<i>Agents/people</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Motivator • Induces cautiousness 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Incapacitating 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The obedience of objects • Perception of safety 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Impartial decision-making • Violation of human rights and civil liberties • Possibility of exposure of real intentions

It is especially important in this chapter that agents are connected to fear as influence method and are defined strictly as objects and subjects in the process of influencing, but people in general can relate to fear as context and fear as influence method, and are defined as the public and people of the society who perceive fear.

The above table (Table 1) summarises different positive and negative consequences that fear as context and fear as influence method can have for society and for different agents within society. The consequences of fear as context and fear as influence method are discussed more thoroughly in the current chapter. First, both sub-chapters bring forth the negative consequences and secondly, the positive ones. On both sides, the consequences for the society in general are analysed, and then the consequences for the people or agents are discussed.

3.1. Consequences of fear as context

What are the negative consequences of fear as context?

- Consequences for societies

A culture of fear emphasises conflicts and competition in society. Alexander Wendt (Wendt 1999 as in Mölder 2011:243) associates culture of fear in international politics with Hobbesian war and the Lockean rivalry among others. In Hobbesian war the political culture is shaped by conflicts. Fear is capable of creating a conflict and confrontation of all against all. In Lockean rivalry, competition shapes political culture, which means that different agents go against each other but at the same time the contradictions are diminished. These types can also characterise the cultures of fear in societies, not just at an international level. Fear as a negative feeling can create differences and extreme situations where the existence of groups or the society is threatened. In order to minimise differences and retain the position, extreme measures have to be used (Kilp 2011a:20). This creates conflicts where groups are set against each other and when adding fear as influence method to this equation, conflicts and differences within society are emphasised even more.

- Consequences for people

Constantly feeling fearful and being scared can be destructive to the health of people. Too much fear creates instability and can have an incapacitating effect (Kilp 2011a:11; Moisi 2010:33). Constant flow of news that report suffering, terror and danger also contributes to desensitising people. People perceive that there is so much bad out there

and that they are powerless against it (Kleinman & Kleiman 2009:294). They realise they will not be able to make their own situation better and have to accept living in fear, uncertainty and in constant worry. Living like this is tiring and disabling in many ways.

What are the positive consequences of fear as context?

- Consequences for societies

The existence of political fear helps the societies to gain new perspective and learn the worth of different political values, thus making the society more united. Robin (2004:4) says that fear of different things teaches to appreciate the opposite. For example, fear of totalitarianism helps to appreciate liberal democracy in Western societies and be content with what we have. (Robin 2004:4) Values of “others” could also be noticed through fear. Rahnema (1997 as in Pynch 2007:212-213) brings out an interesting idea that through noticing and accepting our powerlessness about the political situation people unite with “others” by understanding that they share the same fear. People are then able to look around the fear and see the world more realistically, which again can unite societies and groups within them.

- Consequences for people

In a crisis or in a fearful situation fear as an emotion either makes people paralysed or motivates them. That depends on the amount of fear: moderate amount of fear is considered beneficial, but too much of it can quite the contrary paralyze people, send them to despair and make them think that the situation is irreversible. In a crisis the paralysing situation usually turns into action. (Gilding 2012) A desire arises to eliminate fear and situations that create it. This desire can make people capable of extraordinary things. Being scared gives people a chance to overcome their fears and to take action in order to live a better life and change the situation (Joseph 2008:63; Kilp 2011a:12; Moisi 2010:33, 135).

Fear as context can also create cautiousness in people. It is positive because it makes people guarded and calculating about their actions. The environment is constantly checked for threats and when one is perceived, necessary cautionary measures are taken. Carefully considering everything allows people to live safer and avoid danger. Fear can also hold people back and stop them from doing reckless things. (Joseph 2008:63; Petersen 2010:358) Fear is positive for people “because it drives them away from danger and towards safety” (Joseph 2008:63).

3.2. Consequences of fear as influence method

What are the negative consequences of fear as influence method?

- Consequences for societies

Using fear as influence method and in the process of magnifying, fear helps to maintain the culture of fear in a society and with that higher levels of insecurity settle in. Different fears emphasise the anxieties of people in societies and underline the fact that the future is unknown. Magnifying those fears in a society creates even more insecurities even though the causes of those fears might be gone. Higher levels of insecurity mean that governments must take action to stabilise and protect the society. For example, fear of terrorism has caused the governments to harshen different security measures and surveillance (Ellin 2003:54; Lyon 2003:81). High levels of surveillance take away public freedom and once again, help insecurities to grow. The feeling that everyone is being watched and followed all the time impairs the chance to live freely.

Fear as influence method can make the society more hostile. The influence that authorities have over people in a society manufactures hostility and intolerance. This can be seen using the fear of “other” as an example. Fear towards the “other” is generated because a country or its rulers stigmatize difference and make masses believe that the “other” is the enemy. Manipulation and persuasion using fear can spread from power-holders to the public and society. People easily, and even without realising it, take over the attitudes of authorities and start to act in accordance with them. This can be seen for example in Europe. The outside border of the European Union is strict and there to keep the number of immigrants under control. The border regime is violent; there have been deaths of immigrants which have been covered up. By acting hostile towards immigrants, the authorities set a role model for the population. The hostility towards migrants happens now everywhere: citizens of the dominant culture also violate immigrants. (Linke & Smith 2009:10; Naber 2006:252)

One of the negative consequences for the society is that as a result of using fear as influence method, the society can become more divided and intolerant. Fears create the “other” who is shown as an enemy and by that the dominant society does not want to accept the people who are different from the majority. Intolerance and even racism against the “other” become embedded in societies (Naber 2006:257), the society is divided into opposing groups and unifying those groups later becomes much harder. Without tolerance and respect towards “others” a world without war cannot exist. There

would not be any communication or sharing between those groups, because the bias against them might be misleading (Moisi 2010:136). Human rights and diplomacy would be abandoned, conflicts would arise from even minor differences and war seems to be the best possible way to solve it (Goodall 2006:33, 55; Linke & Smith 2009:3).

Fear leads the society to misrecognise real problems, for example poverty, inequality (Jasper 2000:242), and makes it concentrate on the ones that create more lingering fear (Critcher 2011:262). When people are being influenced using fear, the political fears that are being used are also the current ones that the society is paying close attention to. Both objects and subjects concentrate on a particular fear and ignore other problems that might be more important for the society as a whole.

- Consequences for people

Fear as method of influence also has negative consequences for the agents who are involved in the process of influence. One of the main negative consequences is impartial decision-making that happens when the real problems are misrecognised in a society. Decisions made under the influence of fear or in a culture of fear are biased by the fear itself, therefore can be unreliable. People cannot concentrate on their real matters, are unable to make rational decisions (Robin 2003:63) and in reality, should take their fear into consideration when making choices. The objects of influence concentrate on the specific fear and the subjects try to not let their own fears get in the way of influencing the objects. In either case fear removes the freedom to make impartial decisions that are independent from the fear itself.

Civil liberties and human rights of individuals or groups are invaded by influencing the society using fear. Creating a confrontation in a society has several negative outcomes for the “others” who are being treated as and made an enemy. Their well-being is sacrificed in order to create fear within a dominant group and gain benefits. “Others” have to put up with all the negative attitudes towards them and reconstruct their life. For example, Muslims, also those who live in the Western culture room, are associated with terrorists just by their looks and religion and because of that they are treated differently (Aly & Green 2010:277-278). Using fear as an influence method may violate the rights of the power-holders as well. Surveillance is not used only to spy on public, it is widespread and with the development of technology, it could be used to spy on government officials, too. Therefore, their rights for privacy are invaded as well.

Using fear as method of influence is risky for the subjects. As noted earlier, when real intentions of subjects in the influence process are seen, then the fear would not have a strong effect. Subjects have to be careful in the influence process not to let others guess their real intentions, and carefully plan and execute the plan in order to avoid the objects finding out the master plan. Using fear to influence someone is even riskier when governments take the role of subjects. There is always the danger that somehow people find out that someone is making them scared on purpose and that may have serious negative consequences for power-holders. This might leave the power-holders in a questionable position. People would not trust them anymore and would start paying attention to actual day-to-day problems, and possibly look at the artificially created fear in a different way. In this case it would be impossible for power-holders to remain in power and to keep pushing their self-interests in politics.

What are the positive consequences of fear as influence method?

- Consequences for societies

Common hatred and even more – common fear – unifies and integrates members of the society and thus builds a stronger national identity (Kapust 2008:359; Kilp 2011a:25; Kilp 2011c:197, 215; Pain 2009:469). Negative representation of the cultural “other” can have positive consequences for the core culture too (Kilp 2011c:204). The main benefit to be gained from being afraid of something like the cultural “other” or terrorism is that it strengthens national identity. National identity strengthens through cooperation. Overcoming fear happens by increasing mutual interdependence among agents in a society. (Wendt 1999 as in Mölder 2011:243) Depending on each other creates a feeling that one agent could not succeed on their own and that everyone in a society is necessary. If another culture is considered as a threat, then the feeling of conformity and unification increases and with that the self-esteem of people increases. Fear becomes something that the core culture has in common and that helps people to identify with it.

- Consequences for people

The main positive consequence for the subjects is that they gain the obedience of the public who are consumed by the fear. When the public is the object in the process, then the more fearful they get the more they wish to be saved and given security (Altheide 2002:91; Kapust 2008:364). To feel safe, people need their rulers to take action and be tough (Boyle 2011:421). They start to rely on the governments and authorities more and

more, trust their decisions and follow their instructions in all situations. Then the power-holders can be sure that the population is tamed and under their influence, which makes it easier for them to push through policies and decisions that they can benefit from.

Using fear as method of influence can create a sense of security in people. When objects or people are persuaded using fears, they perceive that their sense of security and safety increases as the government takes action against various dangers. In a culture of fear everybody needs the feeling of security and thus tries to find it (Kilp 2011b:62). The public starts to feel more secure and confident when they see that the power-holders are there to protect them and their society. Again, as it was said, their actual security does not increase, they just perceive it to increase. The threat was manufactured or magnified by power-holders in the beginning and now they just made it seem like they solved the problem.

4. Justification of using fear as political influence method

Current chapter discusses whether using fear as political influence method can be justified. The matter of justification only arises in cases that involve agents who are responsible for creating or using fear. Thereby the justification can be considered mostly in the case of fear as influence method because fear as context exists in the society in itself and without agents.

Fear as method of influence is justified when the purpose for making people scared is morally acceptable and the positive consequences outweigh negative consequences. The following discussion analyses under what conditions and for whom fear as influence method seems fair and then illustrates the matter with different examples.

Justifying fear as influence method mostly depends on whether the justification is done from the perspective of the “winning” or “losing” side (Doherty & Wolak 2012:302).

The “winning” side. The subjects are generally the “winning” side in the process of influence since they try to gain something from it. However, the “winning” side might suffer negative consequences too, though they are probably not as devastating as the negative consequences to the “losing” side. For example, when governments act as subjects and people as objects, high levels of insecurity or surveillance might not feel as bad for the “winning” side - the subjects - when the well-being of the society is still high or their country is still globally dominating. On the contrary, the “losing” side might perceive the same surveillance and fear threatening and paralysing.

The “losing” side. From the perspective of the “losing” side, in order to perceive fear as influence method to be justified, it is important that the positive consequences outweigh the negative ones. Usually the objects are on the “losing” side because they are being influenced using fear. The objects who have suffered and carried losses in the process of influencing have to benefit something from the influencing (Yates 2003:101) for the influence to be justified for them.

4.1. Justification of consequences

Legitimacy and justification of the use of fear can be operationalized by negative and positive consequences for the society and the agents involved. Fear as context already has many negative consequences but when that fear is magnified and used as an influence method those consequences could be magnified even further. Justification

here means that the positive result transcends the negative ones or side-effects that might occur.

When fear as method of influence has positive effects that would not occur without it, then it can be considered justified. Distributing news in media and persuading people using fear can be harmful to the objects, but being in the dark without any information, is even worse. Media plays a great role in creating, heightening and reducing fear in people. News about crime, terrorism and other threats magnify fear in people and make them more receptive to being fearful. Even though media can magnify the fear and help along the influence process, it also has a purpose of informing people about the current affairs. If the news would not be published then people would be uninformed about what is happening in the society (Kleinman & Kleinman 2009:299). The first amendment protects freedom of press (Warr 2000 as in Nellis & Savage 2012:764) which means that the media has the right to publish news even when they may be harmful to the public. The public also has the right to be up to date with the latest news and threats. It would be worse if people felt the uncertainty that fear creates and not get any information or updates about what is actually happening in the world. Then the suspense would be even greater, which makes future planning more difficult.

Culture of fear keeps people from making rational decisions and perceiving the world realistically. Many of the positive consequences that fear has for the society are only the outcome of persuasion using fear. Fear as influence method cannot be considered justified when the positive outcomes are deceptive. For example, the security that people feel is a positive consequence, but it is only felt because the original threat was manufactured or enhanced by power-holders. The security only increases as much as the power-holders allow it. Compared to the actual situation, the threat might still be great. The positive consequences we feel and know, are mostly perceived, they are not real. In order to see what actually needs to be feared; people have to separate constructed fears from real threats.

Some of the positive consequences that fear brings to the society only seem beneficial but are actually harmful to the society as a whole. The positive consequences only seem to outweigh the negative ones and for that reason fear as influence method cannot be justified. The Western world is characterised by freedom of belief, which means that many cultures and groups are mixed but live in the same environment. If fear is directed against one particular group, it will still affect the whole society. Without manufactured

fears towards minority groups, the whole society could be wholly unified, which results in stronger identification. Nation-building as a result of influencing using fear is partial; it brings together similar groups, but not the whole society.

Fear as method of influence involves subjects and objects but the justification from the perspective of “others” needs to be considered as well. Political fear which usually stays at a societal level becomes personalised for the ones identified as an enemy or the “other” (Aly & Green 2010:275). The fear is personal for them because they are the ones that the fear is directed towards and that impacts their everyday lives (Aly & Green 2010:278). They are scared to maintain their daily routine because of how others perceive them and might treat them. The article 2 of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights states that all human beings are equal and therefore should be treated as equals without distinction of any kind (United Nations General Assembly 1948). This overrules the positive consequences, like nation-building and unifying, that persuasion using fear has on the dominant culture because the nation-building happens at the expense of “others”. Usually the “others” are the ones who suffer the most, and thus fear as influence method cannot be considered justified.

Magnifying fear of “others” is not beneficial for the subjects in the long run, especially if they are the power-holders and influencing takes place at a societal level, because they might need to start cooperating with those “others” someday. The world today is connected and intertwined at different levels. People and countries need to communicate with each other, even when they do not want to do that (Yates 2003:105). Lack of tolerance towards each other complicates communication. It seems that tolerance in Western societies is quite high, but not limitless (Petersen et al. 2011:582). Tolerance might have strengthened because of globalisation, but it is easy to create fear of “others” and lessen that tolerance. Fear destabilises the international system (Mölder 2011:245) and with that reduces tolerance. In a world where cooperation is necessary for survival, countries cannot afford to reduce cooperation due to lack of tolerance. When fear as influence method is the reason for weak cooperation, then it cannot be justified.

4.2. Justification of side-effects and purpose of influencing

The fairness of fear as method of influence depends on whether the purpose of influencing is considered beneficial. Fear as influence method in itself cannot be considered fair from the perspective of objects since it means using a negative emotion (fear) to influence an object for self-gain. Political processes that have positive results

for the public might not be supported when it is perceived that the used methods are unfair. (Doherty & Wolak 2012:302) Ethical principles and perception of fairness plays a role (Goldhamer & Shils 1939:173). Fear as influence method could be considered to be fair if the motives of the subjects are unknown or when the outcome of the process is perceived beneficial. The goal or purpose of influencing can, in addition to benefits for the subjects, bring along benefits for the society as a whole. In that case achieving common good is more important than the unfair method used.

Fear as influence method is justified as long as it motivates the societies to take action and aspire them to grow. So, some of the positive consequences are the following: fear might motivate individuals and groups to take action, create a better life, make a change in the world and overcome problems. Fear does have that power to push people into taking action. But there is already so much fear in our culture and using it as an influence method and magnifying it might lead the society to a point, where the amount of fear is too high. Too much of fear is not motivating, it becomes harming. In the case of too much fear, society would just stand still, the motivation to make it better would be gone and there would be no development. Negative consequences would dominate and the method could not be considered as justified. A little bit of fear is important for the survival of the society; it helps to notice the surroundings and what is happening in a society (Moisi 2010:135). It seems that to a certain level, fear as influence method is justified, but there is no way to be sure as to where to draw the line and stop.

The purpose of fear as influence method can also be beneficial for the society as a whole, in which case it can be justified. In addition to serving the needs of the subjects, influencing people by using fear can be advantageous for the society when it helps to contribute to the safety of people. When protection of the people is the goal, then it overrules the method. Power-holders often defend promotion of fear and the influence process by claiming that it is a minor loss compared to the importance of the message that reaches the public. Fear makes people seek protection to feel safe and avoid being victims. (Altheide 2002:91) In a situation where a group is in danger and feels the need to defend themselves, protective measures that otherwise might not be considered as appropriate are justified (Kilp 2011a:20). That partly justifies fear of terrorism in countries or places where the threat of a terrorist action is high and a terrorist attack is indeed likely to happen.

When influencing people by using fear and gaining benefits through that becomes more important for the subjects than morals and values of the society, then the rights of the people might be violated and fear as influence method cannot be considered justified. This can especially be seen in the case where governments and power-holders are the subjects. The West has worked out different supranational rules and guidelines that have to be followed and that emphasise the importance of qualities like human rights, equality, freedom and transparency. In the West these qualities are very important. Governments and people using fear to influence others for their own benefit are probably acting against those beliefs. Fear creates inequality and reduces the freedom of people. For example, when governments act against the beliefs of their countries and at the same time try to force others to follow them, (Moisi 2010:137) their methods for achieving peace and security might not match with the goals (Northcott 2012:65). The goal is to increase security and safety of the people, but the methods that are used suggest the opposite. For example, terrorists are not being treated equally compared to other criminals. They are being tortured and put into indefinite detention (Evans 2012:73). Also, terrorist actions are considered deeply wrong. But when comparing terrorist actions to anti-terrorist methods and actions, there is a great similarity. Liberalist countries that should promote and believe in human rights, in reality, treat terrorists worse than other criminals (Evans 2012:73) and invade their human rights. This shows that countries do not act in accordance with what they say they believe in.

Fear as method of influence is justified for the power-holders when the possible positive outcomes for them seem more important than the possibility of the objects finding out about the unfair method. When the objects find out that they are being influenced, the subjects could lose a lot in the process. Thus, fear as method of influence can be considered justified from the perspective of subjects if they have considered all the losses and gains of the process for themselves, find the process profitable and only then decide to use fear for influencing. Using persuasion to pursue their own goals, the subjects risk their position and the trust of the objects. To decide whether their goals are worth risking their power-position, real motives need to be figured out. It is difficult to find out the real motives for the actions of someone else and because of that it is hard to state if fear as influence method is justified from the perspective of the subjects. One can only conclude that the subjects have considered the pros and cons beforehand.

To sum up, there are different positive consequences for objects, but who could say that the same results would not appear from legitimate and already existing fears? Many of the positive consequences of influencing people by using fear appear because of manufactured and contrived fears. Fear still exists in the world but without magnifying it and making it worse, people might still act the same way and it might lead to the same positive consequences (e.g. nation-building, security). The only difference would be that an agent, who has the authority to do so, would not influence the public. Then the people might be able to deal with the real fears effectively (Grow 2006:61) and actually find solutions to them.

5. Limits and prospects of the analytical model

There are many limits and downsides to consider when analysing culture of fear and fear as an analytical model, as it has been done in the current thesis. The first concern is that it is risky to analyse the consequences of influences using fear when the level of fear in society cannot be measured. Fear at a societal level can be used to describe the general environment that the society exists in. It is neither static nor only negative, as it was mentioned before. Fear is constantly changing, reshaping and people perceive it critically. This is one of the reasons why fear cannot be fully measured or known. (Pain 2009:475) Without being able to objectively measure fear, it is difficult to discuss and analyse culture of fear, as it is constantly changing. There is no tool to actually measure how fearful the society is and how levels of fear rise or fall due to influences from various agents.

One of the main limits of analysing fear and how it is used for influencing at a societal level, is that fear is universalised and discussed in a way that it applies to everyone and everywhere in the Western culture room. It is not considered that fear can differ in different places and different times. (Pain 2009:471) The author tries to limit political fear in the 21st century and in the Western societies, though different countries and groups possibly still vary in the way they feel and perceive fear. In addition to that the author has tried to separate the fear of elite and the fear of public, even though public could be subdivided into smaller groups and elite could be defined in several different ways.

The thesis is based on an assumption that in a setting of a culture of fear the subjects influence the objects and as a result they benefit something from it, but the true motives of the subjects are unknown and remain unknowable (De Castella & McGarty 2011:181). It is implied that the motives of the subjects from the beginning are the benefits they gain in the process. Motives are deeply personal and there is no way to be certain of another person's or groups' purposes for doing something. Even when they express their motives, there is no way to be certain that these are true. That makes it impossible to prove that subjects manipulate and influence the objects. Even the existence of evidence will not be enough to prove that the manipulation was deliberate (De Castella & McGarty 2011:182).

Though the thesis has some limitations that come from the topic, it is able to give a general picture about the culture of fear, how fear is used for influencing others and what are the consequences of influencing. The thesis tries to give a multifaceted picture about how fear can be used for influencing in the society and how different agents can be involved. It also treats fear as a general culture, not just as an emotion that usually materialises in people (Pain 2009:473). Margold (1999:65) argues that if fear is equated with culture then it means that fear is constantly on the minds of people and defines them. They cannot escape from fear. And that raises the question how to resist fear and how to escape from it. It is suggested that it might be better to discuss the matter in a way that views fear and political violence as a “set of practices that manipulate cultural understandings through performed displays of threat” (Margold 1999:66).

Conclusions

The purpose of this thesis was to analyse different aspects of fear in order to understand its complexity, ambiguity and the diversity of its appearances and forms. The analysis was mainly focused on political fear in contemporary Western societies.

Fear at a societal level can exist as context, as a culture or as influence method. Fear as context can be real or imagined, political or non-political. Fear as context and fear as influence method differ in their structure, involvement of agents and consequences. Depending on the structure of fear and the agents, the consequences can be both positive and negative. Fear as influence method involves several agents, and depending from whose perspective to analyse, it can be justified or not.

The thesis concludes that fear as context and as influence method in contemporary Western societies varies a lot in its types, causes, consequences and in the way it can be justified. The concept of fear is indeed ambiguous and complex, mostly because of its many inner contradictions. In order to understand the topic of fear, different facets of fear were explained and discussed throughout the thesis.

Structure and agency. Fear as context is always present at a societal level, but it is not possible to measure fear in its entirety. The causes of fear can be real or imagined and external (coming from real outside threats) or internal (coming from the ideas and memories inside the people). Depending on the causes, fear can be political, which means the causes belong to the realm of politics, or non-political, which means that causes are not associated with politics (e.g. natural disasters). The effects of fear depend on the types and causes of fears. Different causes and types of fears can exist side by side in a society, complement each other and include other fears and causes. There are different types of political fears in societies; the most widespread of them are fear of “other”, fear of terrorism, fear of unknown and fear of crime. These are not the only types, they are more general types that include and form other fears. When fear becomes a dominating part of political agendas, it creates a culture of fear.

Context and method. Fear at a societal level can exist as context but can also appear as method of influence. Fear as context is fear in itself and when different agents use it for influencing others then that fear becomes a method of influence. Fear as context and fear as influence method differ from culture of fear. Culture of fear is an environment

that can evolve from non-political, as well as political events. It can also be created by agents who use fear as influence method and as a result fear then can become part of the political agenda. At the same time, culture of fear can arise itself because of political causes (e.g. terrorist attack) and different agents might take advantage of it and promote that fear even further. In all cases culture of fear provides a conducive atmosphere for various types of political fear to have an influence on people as well as for different agents to use fear as method of influence.

Objects and subjects. Fear in a society functions as a mediator between different groups of people. When fear as context is used by agents, it becomes a method of influence. Fear as influence method is characterised by the involvement of two groups of agents – subjects and objects. In the process of influencing, subjects are the ones who influence and objects are being influenced. Using fear helps the subjects to attain power or gain something. In Western societies two groups can be distinguished: power-holders and the public. Both groups can act as subjects and objects. The media has an important role: it can be a mediator, promoter and even a subject.

Positive and negative consequences. The consequences of fear as context and fear as influence method can be both positive and negative. They are different for the agents involved. The consequences of fear as context can apply to fear as method of influence as well, because fear as method means magnifying the already existing fears by an agent. Fear as influence method is foremost beneficial for the subjects who do the influencing (self-gain), but it can have some positive consequences for the objects (perception of safety, motivation) and the society (national identity) as well. From the perspective of the objects and the society, usually negative consequences dominate. Negative consequences for the objects include impartial decision-making and negative consequences for the society include higher levels of insecurity, hostility and intolerance.

Justification. Justification can be considered only in the case of fear as influence method, because fear as influence method involves different agents who can be held responsible for it. Justification of fear as influence method depends on the situation, the purpose of influencing and the perspective that is used to analyse justifications. Fear as method of influence is justified when positive consequences outweigh negative ones and it can mostly be considered justified from the perspective of the winning side or in

other words, the subjects. Fear as method of influence can be considered justified when the process or the outcome is beneficial for the society as well.

It should be noted that there is no final truth on the matter. Instead, understanding and conclusions can be drawn about the topic based on its analytical distinctions of different facets. Although there are many limits to analysing the topic, this thesis simply tried to provide a general framework of fear and suggest one way to connect particular concepts within the notion of fear.

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Kokkuvõte

Hirmukultuur: hirm kui kontekst ja hirm kui poliitiline mõjutamisvahend

Käesolevas bakalaureusetöös analüüsitakse tänapäeva lääneriikides esineva poliitilise hirmu erinevaid külgi ja esinemisvorme, et edendada arusaamist ja mõistmist selle keerukuse, mitmetähenduslikkuse ja mitmekesisuse osas. Teadmiste saamiseks analüüsiti hirmu selle erinevatest aspektidest: hirm kui kontekst ja vahend, selle struktuur ja toime, toimijad ehk mõjutatavad ja mõjutajad, positiivsed ja negatiivsed tagajärjed ning õigustatus.

Hirmu üks liike on poliitiline hirm, mis on ühiskonnale kollektiivselt omane. See võib ühiskonna tasandil esineda hirmukultuuri, konteksti kui ka mõjutamisvahendina. Hirmukultuur soodustab hirmu kui konteksti teket ning selle muutumist mõjutamisvahendiks, mis omakorda süvendavad hirmukultuuri kinnistumist. Need kolm nähtust erinevad omavahel ülesehituse, toimijate osaluse ja tagajärgede poolest. Hirmu tagajärjed olenevad omakorda hirmu toimijatest ja struktuurist ning võivad olla nii positiivsed kui ka negatiivsed. Tagajärjed ja mõjutamise eesmärk annavad võimaluse uurida hirmu õigustatust erinevate toimijate vaatepunktist.

Töös jõutakse järeldusele, et hirm kui kontekst ja hirm kui mõjutamisvahend erinevad nii liigi, põhjuste, toimijate, tagajärgede kui ka õigustatuse osas. Hirm on tõepoolest vastuoluline ja mitmetähenduslik nähtus.

Hirmu uurimisel tuleb arvestada sellega, et raske on jõuda ühese tõeni, kuna hirm on niivõrd mitmetähenduslik nähtus. Seetõttu ei ole antud bakalaureusetöö eesmärgiks esitada kindlat tõde või selleni jõuda, vaid arutada ja mõtestada selle üle osade kaupa. Töö ei esita „kogu tõde“ hirmu kohta, vaid sellele lähenetakse läbi tema alaosade, toimijate ja liikide ning sel moel ammutatud teadmised ei ole ammendavad ega kõikehõlmavad, küll aga aitavad hirmu kui nähtust ja selle toimimist mõista. Antud töö pakub välja ühe võimaluse, kuidas teemat uurida ja lahti mõtestada.