



**Review article: Michel Foucault, Security, Territory,  
Population: Lectures at the College de France 1977-1978.  
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Salter's argument regarding the role that Foucault's notion of 'confession' plays in border security at airports, Dean's argument seems particularly apt in contemporary contexts. Conventional categories of class, gender and nationality decrease in importance in the face of emerging 'forms of life', and the contemporary proliferation of borders and the strategies and technologies of risk used to manage mobility at these sites, such as the ubiquitous 'trusted traveller' programmes, only underscore Dean's assertions.

The latter portions of Dean's text addresses more directly his 'long twenty-first century', wrestling with the (im)possibilities of the illiberal practices of liberal regimes, assertions regarding the emerging state of exception as the norm and what is an almost dutiful engagement with Giorgio Agamben and the dark political vision that places political origins closer to Auschwitz than Athens, using the now almost prosaic example of Guantanamo Bay as a point of reference. Although in terms of its thoroughness and theoretical elegance Dean's analysis is sterling throughout this portion of the book, his subtler points regarding the expansive and enduring extensions of state power that liberalism offers, the careful approach to come to terms with the reconfiguration of sovereignty but also look past it, are where its true strength lies. Taking account of the relationship between the political norm and the exception in the shadow of Agamben's biopolitical *nomos* – 'the camp' – Dean raises fundamental questions regarding the nature of contemporary sovereign power, the capacity of liberal states to exert exceptional power and the extension of sovereign power in the figure of the police. Dean's analysis is timely, measured and thorough, and deserves a close read by interested parties from across the social sciences.

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Michel Foucault, *Security, Territory, Population: Lectures at the Collège de France 1977–1978*. Basingstoke: Palgrave, 2007. 417 pp. ISBN-10 1403986525; ISBN-13 9781403986528, £19.94 (pbk)

The lectures by Michel Foucault compiled in this book raise a number of questions concerning the formation of the modern world (taking into account that the lectures focus mostly on a western history of the modern world). As the title of the lecture series indicates, the themes under discussion are closely connected to the concept of 'bio-power'. Foucault defines bio-power as a set of mechanisms in which 'basic biological features of the human species became the object of a political strategy' (p. 1). In the lectures a 'genealogy of the modern state' (p. 354) is discussed not in terms of an archaeology of knowledge, but from a 'perspective of a genealogy

of technologies of power' (p. 36). In this sense, questions concerning the security of a territory or the management of a population are situated in transformations taking place within political thought and the formation of political technologies, particularly from the 16th to the 18th century. Foucault makes a detour to the formation of pastoral power in relation to what he sees as the governmentalization of the state (p. 110), where the history of the subject and questions of individualization are brought to the fore (p. 128). These themes, as we know, turned out to be important for Foucault in his later work, which deals with subjectivity and power, technologies of the self and the hermeneutics of desire.

Foucault borrows the idea of the 'government of men' from its Greek and other pre-Christian sources in order to analyse the organization of pastoral power (p. 123). The rough conclusion that Foucault arrives at is that the Christian church formed a pastoral power unique to the 'precise mechanisms and definite institutions' (p. 124) of the shepherd taking care of his flock. He argues that the pastorate as a type of power is an important model for the government of men, which begins with Christianity: the pastorate is a prelude to governmentality 'deployed from the sixteenth century', which involves 'the history of the subject' (p. 184). Foucault offers space for various counter-conducts towards the pastorate in demanding obedience when confronted with problems, but also discusses later political revolts inherent in political thinking of the state (pp. 194–216; 300–6).

*Security, Territory, Population* is akin to *Discipline and Punish* (1977), albeit not similarly sinister towards the Enlightenment. In discussing how the police were governing before the 17th century, Foucault suggests that one of the purposes of this assemblage of political technologies was to produce 'happiness of the subjects' (quoting von Justi). This is absent in *Discipline and Punish*, where the soul is the prison of the body. Foucault moves into the terrain of history familiar from his earlier works, but his emphasis has shifted considerably from books such as *The Order of Things* (1970). Governmentality is the main focus. Foucault asks repeatedly how the governing of people has evolved historically. The most important aspect of the book in this sense is the state (*raison d'état*, particularly) formed within political thought after Machiavelli's *The Prince* (2004[1532]).

He investigates the coming of modern society by looking at technologies of security and asks us how we can 'speak of a society of security' (p. 11). To this end the theme of space, at its widest considered as territory, is taken up. Here he stresses that in order to understand different aspects of societies, questions such as the multiplicity of societal events need to be taken into account so that we can explicate a wide range of operations and processes. Recognizing that 'sovereignty is exercised within borders of a territory' (p. 11) is not enough. Much of this is familiar from *Discipline and Punish*, where structures of space are discussed in relation to town planning and the panopticon. What is interesting in this collection is that



Foucault specifically relates territory to theories of the art of governing, not as something new in history in this particular form, but new in the manner of linking this to the problem of the workings of the state. Yet it is not territory that is most important for this line of thinking about the rationality of a state (*raison d'état*), but people and the daily functioning of the state 'in its everyday management' (p. 238). At the borders of the state there operates a 'permanent military apparatus' and a system of diplomacy, while internally a 'political apparatus of police' is at work (pp. 296, 304–6, 312).

Foucault also hints at a problem regarding the notion of freedom within liberalism and civil society. These aspects are dealt with only briefly, but indicate the direction of further work on the 'genealogy of governmentality', which is taken up in the lectures of 1978–79 under the heading 'The Birth of Biopolitics'. These themes are important for understanding our current world and I think that the importance of Foucault's work is closely linked to these themes. Studies of governmentality have taken much inspiration from Foucault in analysing, most notably, neoliberalism and 'powers of freedom'. For cultural studies, Foucault's *Security, Territory, Population* lectures are useful for thinking about the ongoing changes that states are confronted with, for example, regarding the movement of people, questions of borders and security and concerns about populations and the economy. This is not, of course, everything for which Foucault's work on governmentality is useful. One of the most fruitful aspects of taking territories, spaces and materiality into account is that this enables us to analyse questions around agency and technologies of the self. For cultural studies, such an approach would offer possibilities for ethnographic work in tracing the workings of power at a micro-level. This is also a way to relate a technology of production to questions of societal power relations and the formation of subjectivities in the contemporary world.

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