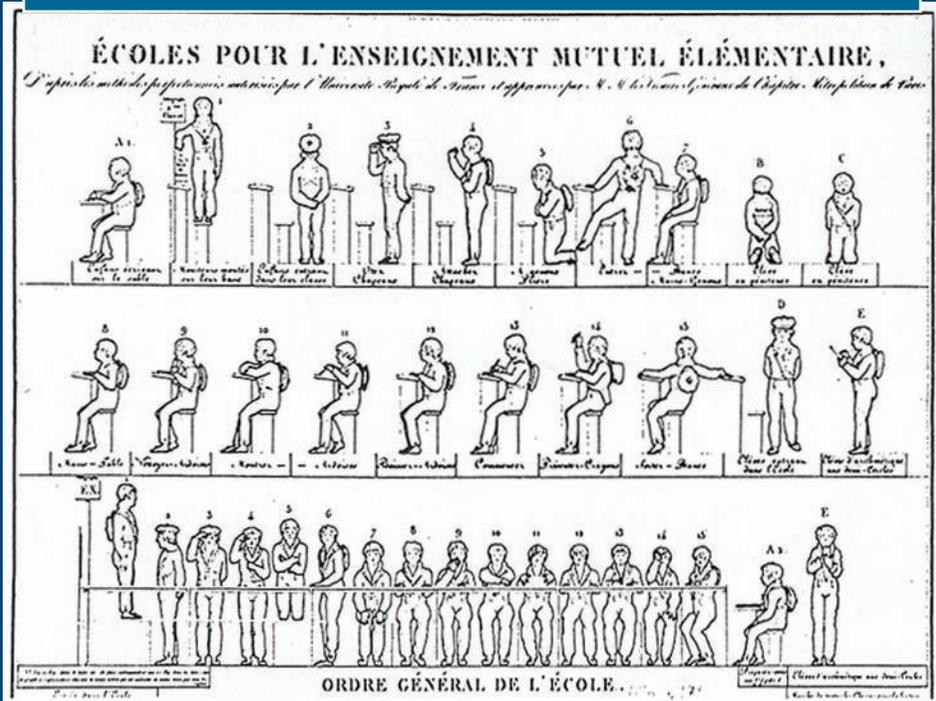


# Governmentality Studies in Education

Michael A Peters, A.C. Besley, Mark Olssen,  
Susanne Maurer and Susanne Weber (Eds.)



SensePublishers

# Governmentality Studies in Education

# CONTEXTS OF EDUCATION

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*Contexts of Education*, as handbooks, are conceived as reference texts that also can serve as texts.

# Governmentality Studies in Education

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# CONTENTS

<b>Acknowledgements</b> .....	<b>ix</b>
<b>Foreword: Pedagogy, Psychagogy, Demagogy</b> .....	<b>xi</b>
<i>Colin Gordon</i>	
<b>Introduction</b> .....	<b>xxvii</b>
Governmentality, Education and the End of Neoliberalism? <i>Michael A. Peters</i>	
<b>I. Foucault on Governmentality</b>	
1. Governing Liberal Societies: The Foucault Effect in the English-Speaking World.....	3
<i>Jacques Donzelot and Colin Gordon</i>	
2. Michel Foucault's Understanding of Liberal Politics.....	17
<i>Jacques Donzelot</i>	
3. An Indigestible Meal? Foucault, Governmentality and State Theory .....	35
<i>Thomas Lemke</i>	
4. Open-Context Expertise.....	55
<i>Risto Eräsaari</i>	
5. Governmentality and Subjectivity: Practices of Self as Arts of Self-Government.....	77
<i>Mark Olssen</i>	
6. Neoliberal Governmentality: Foucault on the Birth of Biopolitics .....	95
<i>Michael A. Peters</i>	
7. Reflections on Governmentality .....	109
<i>Qizhi Yu</i>	
<b>II. Foucault, Education and Governmentality: Anglo-American Perspectives</b>	
8. Foucault as Educator.....	125
<i>Thomas Osborne</i>	
9. Michel Foucault on Power: From the Disciplinary Society to Security .....	137
<i>James D. Marshall</i>	

CONTENTS

10. Social Capital: Governing the Social Nexus.....	153
<i>Robert Doherty</i>	
11. Governmentality of Youth: Beyond Cultural Studies.....	165
<i>Tina (A.C.) Besley</i>	
12. Lifelong Learning, Subjectivity and the Totally Pedagogised Society .....	201
<i>Stephen J. Ball</i>	
13. Why the Desire for University-School Collaboration and the Promise of Pedagogical Content Knowledge may not Matter as much as we Think .....	217
<i>Thomas S. Popkewitz</i>	
14. Casting Teachers into Education Reforms and Regimes of Inspection: Resistance to Normalization through Self-Governance.....	235
<i>Jeffrey Stickney</i>	
15. Producing Entrepreneurial Subjects: Neoliberal Rationalities and Portfolio Assessment .....	257
<i>David Lee Carlson</i>	
16. Neoliberalism, Knowledge Capitalism and the Steered University: The Role of OECD and Canadian Federal Government Discourse.....	271
<i>Adam Davidson-Harden</i>	
17. Governing the Invisible: Psychological Science and Conditions of Proof.....	303
<i>Bernadette Baker</i>	
18. Analysing Secondary School Strategies in Changing Times: The Insights and Gaps of a Governmentality Lens.....	341
<i>Lew Zipin and Marie Brennan</i>	
19. The Special Branch: Governing Mentalities Through Alternative-Site Placement .....	355
<i>Linda J. Graham</i>	
20. Growing Dendrites: Brain-Based Learning, Governmentality and Ways of Being a Person .....	369
<i>James Wong</i>	
21. Governing Autism: Neoliberalism, Risk, and Technologies of the Self .....	379
<i>Majia Nadesan</i>	

### III. Foucault, Education and Governmentality: European Perspectives

22. The Art of Being Governed Less: Educational Science in Germany and Governmentality .....	397
<i>Susanne Maria Weber and Susanne Maurer</i>	
23. What's the Use of Studies on Governmentality in Social Work? A Critique on the Critique.....	415
<i>Fabian Kessl</i>	
24. Learning to Become an Entrepreneurial Self for Voluntary Work? Social Policy and Older People in the Volunteer Sector .....	433
<i>Ute Karl</i>	
25. Free play of Forces and Procedural Creation of Order: The Dispositive of Democracy in Organizational Change.....	453
<i>Susanne Maria Weber</i>	
26. Economizing and Pedagogizing Continuing Education .....	473
<i>Daniel Wrana</i>	
27. From Pastoral to Strategic Relations in Adult Education? Governmentality Theory-Based Thoughts on a Changing Relationship .....	487
<i>Hermann J. Forneck</i>	
28. Modularized Knowledge.....	499
<i>Thomas Höhne and Bruno Schreck</i>	
29. How to Govern the Professor? Reflections on the Alma Mater Bolognese .....	509
<i>Andrea Liesner</i>	
30. Fabricating the European Citizen.....	515
<i>Andreas Fejes</i>	
31. "The Art of not being governed like that and at that Cost": Comments on Self-Study in Studies of Governmentality .....	527
<i>Maarten Simons and Jan Masschelein</i>	
<b>Contributors .....</b>	<b>549</b>



## ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

This collection has taken much longer to assemble and edit than the editors first thought given the fact that we brokered the idea back in 2005 while attending a conference together in Germany. This was the first time that we entertained the idea of such a collection. The five of us thought that the attempt to bring together an omnibus collection on Foucault, governmentality and education, inviting contributors from around the world was a constructive enterprise and useful step in Foucault scholarship. Originally the collection focused on contributors from English-speaking countries, mainly US and UK, and Germany. The collection was extended when we decided to invite some of the foremost Foucault scholars to become involved and were delighted at the generous response from Colin Gordon, Jacques Donzelot, Thomas Lemke, Tom Osborne and others. The result is a larger and much more considered collection that has three sections: a general theoretical section comprised of scholars from France, Germany, UK, US, Finland, and China; a section that focuses on English-speaking, mainly Anglo-American contributors but also contributors from Australia, New Zealand and Canada; and a final section based on chapters written by contributors from Germany in the main, but also contributors from Belgium and Sweden. Colin Gordon kindly agreed to write the Foreword and Vivianna Pitton provided translations of the pieces by Gordon and Donzelot, although only one of her translations is included here. Tina Besley and Michael Peters would also like to thank Rodrigo Britez and Ergin Bulut, both PhD scholars at the University of Illinois, who did most of the formatting and some of the editing work of the collection as a whole. Jacques Donzelot's 'Michel Foucault's Understanding of Liberal Politics' ('Michel Foucault et l'intelligence du libéralisme') was first published in *Esprit* November, 2005 (trans. V. Pitton) and appears here with the permission of the autor and French Publisher. 'Neoliberal Governmentality: Foucault on the Birth of Biopolitics' by Michael A Peters first appeared in S. Weber & S. Maurer (eds.) *Gouvernementalität und Erziehungswissenschaft* (Governmentality and educational science), VS Verlag, Wiesbaden, Germany, pp.37-50.



COLIN GORDON

**FOREWORD: PEDAGOGY, PSYCHAGOGY,  
DEMAGOGY**

Cettui-ci apprend à parler, lors qu'il lui faut apprendre à se taire pour jamais.

On peut continuer à tout temps l'étude, non pas l'écolage: la sottise chose qu'un vieillard abécédaire!

This person is studying how to speak, when he should be learning to be silent for ever. One can always continue with study, but not school-work: how foolish for an old man to be learning his ABC!

Montaigne *Essays* 2:28: 'For everything there is a season.'

Tout le monde sait, et moi le premier, que nul n'a besoin de courage pour enseigner.

Everyone knows, and I know as well as anyone, that no one needs courage to teach.

Michel Foucault, Lecture given at Collège de France, 1<sup>st</sup> February 1984<sup>1</sup>

1.

None of Foucault's investigations has a central focus on the history, practice or politics of education. These themes, nevertheless, appear often in the course of some of the key developments in his work. And indeed it would be surprising if a career devoted to a Nietzschean history of thought never paid attention to the processes and mechanisms of the pedagogical communication and reproduction of knowledge.

The political events of May 1968 in Paris, which briefly shook the Gaullist state, were, in their immediate origins and in terms of their protagonists' immediate preoccupations, classroom revolts. Foucault embraced their cause to the extent of accepting, for a brief period, responsibility for organizing the philosophy department at the new experimental university of Vincennes, which was created as a direct response to the events. 1968 changed the political context of Foucault's work and writing, and gave a new inflexion to its style, its purposes and its themes.

No doubt Foucault was consciously writing the history of this present when he made the famous comments in *Discipline and Punish* on the mutual resemblance of the prison, the school, the factory and the convent. But just as his experience at Vincennes sharpened his sceptical opinion of socialist revolutionary politics, Foucault afterwards expressed some scepticism about the relative importance of

educational institutions as loci of power in modern society: “One has to be really naïve to imagine that the effects of power linked to knowledge have their culmination in university hierarchies. Diffused, entrenched and dangerous, they operate in other places than in the person of the old *prof*”.

Foucault’s work has had a dynamic influence in several fields of study which were not directly his own. Educationists, in this sense not unlike geographers, have from an early date found there and adopted to their own concerns useful tools, concepts and styles of problematisation<sup>2</sup>; this volume demonstrates the range and continuing fruits of their work; but they can also find, dispersed across his output, a significant number of direct treatments of educational themes. As with the themes interesting to geographers, this available corpus has grown in recent years with the continuing publication of Foucault’s shorter writings and lectures. As in the case with his work on governmentality, we can usefully consult, alongside these discussions, additional complementary sources including work by a certain number of Foucault’s co-researchers which followed up on hints and suggestions in his work. A more extensive, accurate and coherent knowledge of Foucault’s work may still offer us new ways of enhancing our capability to pose and explore new questions about our present and its history, in this domain as in others. In the hope of furthering this process, the following pages offer a quick, zigzag tour of some places where Foucault discusses education. There is a danger, as in all such exercises, of fabricating false coherences; genealogy teaches, among other things, the contingency and recency of our units of historical comparison, and we should be prepared to conclude from a survey of Foucault’s observations on the subject that, just as there may be no simple formula to encapsulate Foucault’s very distinctive capabilities as an educator<sup>3</sup>, his analyses may assign no privileged or definitively identifiable place to the pedagogical in the problem-field of the technologies of individual formation and guidance.<sup>4</sup>

The title of this foreword proposes, for what it is worth, a triadic framework (inspired by the triadic domain-cluster of knowledge, ethics and government which Foucault several times uses in later texts and lectures when explaining the overall scope of his project) within which some of Foucault’s observations on pedagogy and various sibling practices might be situated. Foucault uses the term ‘psychagogy’ in his 1982 lectures, defining it, specifically in contrast to pedagogy, as “the transmission of a truth whose function is not to endow an individual subject with aptitudes, but to modify that subject’s mode of being”. Foucault says here that pedagogy and psychagogy are often coupled practices in Hellenistic culture, but become decoupled in Christianity.<sup>5</sup> In the 1983 lectures Foucault speaks of “the problem of the government of the soul, of psychagogy. In order to conduct oneself and others, to conduct others well by conducting oneself well, what truths does one need? What practices and techniques are necessary? What knowledge, what exercises, etc.?”<sup>6</sup> ‘Demagogy’ is added here, on my own responsibility, as a third scoping term, understood in one of its less pejorative original usages, to mean discourse addressed to the people for its formation or edification: the care of the soul, or the conscience, of the citizen.<sup>7</sup> Foucault himself uses the term ‘demagogy’ in its pejorative sense, in one important discussion in his 1983 lectures, as the

practice of ‘false truth-telling’ which is linked to the tendency of democracy – illustrated by the primal example of Athens – to put at risk the practice of (true) truth-telling on which its own survival depends: “true discourse, and the emergence of true discourse, is the very root of the process of governmentality. If democracy can be governed, it is because there is a true discourse’.” (167)<sup>8</sup>

## 2.

In 1969 Foucault published an Introduction<sup>9</sup> to an edition of Arnauld and Lancelot’s *Grammaire Générale et Raisonnée*. This essay forms a pendant to his preceding book, *The Order of Things*, in which a significant role was assigned to a companion treatise by the same two authors, the *Port-Royal Logic*. Foucault here links a mutation in the role attributed to grammar to a key component of sixteenth- and seventeenth-century educational reforms: the shift from the ‘direct method’ of teaching of Latin in Latin to the teaching of Latin and vernacular languages in the student’s own vernacular. As a consequence, Foucault argues, the study of language is unburdened of a series of speculative preoccupations inherited from the Greek grammarians: the natural or artificial origins of words, the value of etymology, or the reality of universals, and finds itself instead with ‘a previously unknown task: looking for the rationale of usages (*rechercher la raison des usages*)’. These remarks suggest a research question which would be worthy of attention, if it has not already been addressed: to what extent is the *episteme* of representation, a discursive regime analysed in *The Order of Things* as jointly governing a set of early-modern knowledges (general grammar, natural history and the theory of wealth), whose principles Foucault sees as being conceptually announced and summarised in the Port-Royal texts, a regime of knowledge and enquiry shaped by the agenda and requirements of a specific pedagogy?

## 3.

All cultural progress, by means of which the human being advances its education, has the goal of applying this acquired knowledge and skill for the world’s use. But the most important object in the world to which it can apply them is the human being: because the human being is its own final end.

Kant, *Anthropology from a Pragmatic Point of View*, Preface

A book of daily exercise. Not of theory or the School.... The world being its own school, the purpose of anthropological reflection will be to situate man in this formative element... It teaches the human being to recognise in its own culture the school of the world. Here it can be said to have a kind of kinship with *Wilhelm Meister*, since it discovers, too, that the World is a School.

Foucault, Introduction to the *Anthropology* [33/53f]

The recent publication of Foucault’s 1961 ‘complementary’ doctoral dissertation, his preface to his translation of Kant’s *Anthropology*, brings to light unnoticed lines of

continuity and development running from the start to the end of Foucault's trajectory.<sup>10</sup>

In his last, newly published lecture series of 1984, Foucault locates the late 18<sup>th</sup> century as the point where a certain neoclassical notion of a 'philosophical life' reaches its end: philosophy becomes a university profession and the militant, missionary vocation of the Stoic or Cynic philosopher-hero, after a literary apotheosis in the personage of Goethe's *Faust*, migrates towards the political domain, to the figure of that different and new exemplary personage, the revolutionary. Foucault's 1961 commentary already locates, in the late Kantian text of 1798 (the final written form of a public lecture series delivered annually for 25 years) precisely such an end-point of a neo-Stoic conception of philosophy conceived as an art of dietetics or life-conduct, rather than as a theoretical or scientific doctrine (Kant explains his 'pragmatic' style of anthropological inquiry by comparing the unrealisable Cartesian ambition to explain the physical workings of human memory with the useful and practical study of the 'obstacles and stimulants' of memory which can lead to techniques for its cultivation and improvement.) Pragmatic anthropology is a user's guide to human capabilities. Foucault notes that Kant's letter 'On the power of the mind to master its morbid feelings by sheer resolution', setting out his 'Dietetic', or personal recipes of healthful daily living, overlaps in its core concerns, in time of its production, and in part of its content with the draft text of the *Anthropology*.<sup>11</sup> Likewise anticipating the terms of Foucault's later discussion of the care and 'usage' of the self and the aesthetics of existence are the terms in which he sets out the Kantian problematic of pragmatic anthropology. Kant had written in an earlier text that 'we investigate the human being here ... to know what it can make of itself and *how it can be used*'; by 1798 the question is no longer how the human being can be used but "what can be expected of it" and what the human being "can and should" make of itself. The connection between 'can' and 'should', Foucault writes, 'is ensured by the concrete movement of daily exercise: by *Spielen* [play]. This notion of *Spielen* is singularly important: man is nature's game, but he himself plays the game, and plays with it... So the game becomes a "*künstlicher Spiel*" [an artful/artificial play]'. [32f/52f]

Implicit in the 1961 commentary are many points of contact between the purposes of the *Anthropology*, focussed on the self-education of the human being as citizen of the world, and the theme of Enlightenment. Two famous Kantian questions come to prominence at different times in Foucault's thought: '*Was ist der Mensch?*' ('what is the human being?') and '*Was ist Aufklärung?*' ('what is Enlightenment?'). As far as I know, there is no published text where Foucault explicitly comments on the relation between these two questions; there is some work here for commentators. We can say that Kant himself connects the questions closely enough by defining Enlightenment as a key event in the history of humanity, the human being's exit from its state of self-imposed tutelage. In the commentary on Kant's essay '*Was ist Aufklärung?*' in the second lecture of his 1983 course, Foucault explicitly rejects the idea that the human being is considered by Kant to require some supplementary education or development in order to achieve enlightenment. Human beings continue to live in tutelage not because of

our ignorance or immaturity, but because of our indolence and cowardice, and in particular our indolent tendency to entrust the guidance of our conduct to those who ‘obligingly’ offer us their services – a textbook author, a director of conscience or a medical advisor – not, Foucault adds, that such sources of advice or guidance are in themselves to be criticised as illegitimate: our fault is only to substitute these aids for the exercise of our own understanding, conscience and judgement. Foucault notes that Kant excludes the possible role as agents of Enlightenment of philosophers or public teachers who liberate mankind by educating it: such as process can end (Kant remarks in 1784) only in the subjection of the liberated to their liberators. On the other hand, Foucault draws attention, in his parallel discussion of a later text by Kant on the evidence for the prospects of human progress, to the decisive significance attributed by Kant in this respect to contemporary events – in particular, not to the event of the French Revolution, but to that of the popular and public responses of enthusiasm and sympathy to the news of that revolution.

Kant, it appears, did think that the capability for such disinterested sympathies and responses was something which could, and should, be taught. In his treatise on *Education* he states that youth should be encouraged to cheerfulness, even temper, dutifulness and ‘in love towards others, as well as to feelings of cosmopolitanism. There exists something in our minds which causes us to take an interest in ourselves, in those with whom we have been brought up, and there should also be an interest in the progress of the world. Children should be made acquainted with this interest, so that it may give warmth to their hearts. They should learn to rejoice at the world’s progress, although it may not be to their own advantage or to that of their country.’<sup>12</sup> Kant is opposed to the total state control of schools (and calls for a regime allowing for experimentation in schooling) because it is liable to impede this enlightening educational task: ‘we are met by two difficulties—parents usually only care that their children *make their way* in the world, and Sovereigns look upon their subjects merely as *tools* for their own purposes. Parents care for the home, rulers for the state. Neither has as their aim, the universal good and the perfection to which man is destined, and for which he has also a natural disposition. But the basis of a scheme of education must be cosmopolitan.’

Foucault’s early and late Kant discussions are linked by a sharp sensitivity to the network of new significations in Kant of notions of the *public* and the *popular*. Foucault cites an earlier passage in his *Logic* in which Kant characterises ‘popularity’ as a form of perfection in the presentation of knowledge, a balanced completeness which ensures its immediate and universal perspicuity and availability. In the Preface to the *Anthropology* where Kant alludes to the public or ‘popular’ status of his lectures, this notion is further linked to his conception of the pragmatic: ‘An anthropology written from a pragmatic point of view that is systematically designed and yet popular (through reference to examples that can be found by every reader) yields an advantage for the reading public: the completeness of the headings under which this or that observed human quality of practical relevance can be subsumed offers readers many occasions and invitations to make each heading a theme of new observations, which can be placed in the appropriate section...’

Foucault adds that ‘popular’ has a further dimension here because it includes the idea of an exposition of ‘popular knowledge’, meaning that knowledge which humanity already collectively possesses, and that this aspect is developed in Kant’s text through a relatively new relationship (distinct from that found in his major philosophical texts) to the vocabulary, with its distinctive semantic structures and expressive capabilities, of his own vernacular, national language – German. In this respect, and as a further stage in the disengagement of learned culture from Latinity which Foucault evokes in relation to the Port-Royal *Grammar*, pragmatic anthropology begins to function like a kind of ordinary-language philosophy.

## 4.

Foucault’s most extended discussion of education is in the famous third section, ‘Discipline’, of *Discipline and Punish*. Most of the illustrative material is drawn from the two most influential French schooling manuals of the early modern period, De La Salle’s *Conduite des Écoles chrétiennes* and the *Instruction méthodique pour l’école Paroissale*.<sup>13</sup> Foucault’s purpose here is not so much to establish the distinctive features of these authors’ pedagogical technique, as the methods shared with other institutions, and with those of one in particular. “Is it surprising that prisons resemble factories, schools, barracks, and hospitals, which themselves all resemble prisons?”

James Tully’s remarkable chapter on Locke and the government of conduct, published after Foucault’s death and dedicated to him, gives an account of Locke’s programme for popular education which, within a Protestant theological and political context, and with particular emphasis on the link between popular education, enclosed institutions, compulsory labour and the policing of the poor, aptly identifies the same key elements of the disciplinary thematic analysed, from mainly French examples, in Foucault’s survey.<sup>14</sup> Tully connects a mutation in pedagogical technique advocated in Locke’s *Some thoughts concerning education* and *On the conduct of the understanding* to wider contemporary developments in disciplinary technique. The “assault on the Renaissance techniques of memorising rules, and its replacement with education as habit formation by repetition and drill, by ‘exercises’”, Tully writes, “is part of a much broader dispersion of techniques of discipline by drill throughout Europe from roughly the time of the revolutionary reform of training in the Dutch army in the 1590s.” (p. 232)

The genealogy of the penal and the disciplinary perspectives is, however, only one of a set of linked approaches which Foucault brings to bear in his work of the 70s on the development of Western practices of individual formation and guidance. In the 1973-74 Lectures on *Psychiatric Power*<sup>15</sup>, Foucault first discussed Bentham’s *Panopticon* as a technical prototype, not of the modern prison, but of the 19<sup>th</sup>-century asylum. In the same lecture course, foreshadowing the governmentality lectures of 1978, he sketches an early modern problematic of individual ‘government’ which spans the same range of practical domains as *Discipline and Punish*, and which gives a prominent place to the developments in early modern schooling due, notably, to an ascetic and mystically inspired religious group founded in 14<sup>th</sup>-century northern Germany, the Brothers of the Common Life<sup>16</sup>. He

links these developments to the historic process of the ‘colonisation of youth’ – the pacification, domiciling and segregation of the anarchic and itinerant mediaeval university student population. “We find the mould, the first model of the pedagogical colonisation of youth, in this practice of the individual’s exercise on himself, this attempt to transform the individual, this search for a progressive development of the individual up to the point of salvation, in this ascetic work of the individual on himself for his own salvation. On the basis of this, and in the collective form of this asceticism in the Brothers of the Common Life, we see the great schemas of pedagogy taking shape, that is to say, the idea that one can learn things only by passing through a number of obligatory and necessary stages, that these stages follow each other in time, and that in this ordered movement through time, each stage represents a degree of progress. The twinning of time and progress is typical of ascetic practice, and it will be equally typical of pedagogical practice.” (p. 67)

In *Discipline and Punish*, Foucault again cites the educational initiatives of this community, and their significance of their transposal of spiritual techniques to the educational domain for the modern history of discipline: “the theme of a perfection towards which the exemplary master guides the pupil became with them that of an authoritarian perfection of the pupils by the teacher; the increasingly rigorous exercises that the ascetic life proposed became tasks of increasing complexity that marked the gradual acquisition of knowledge and good behaviour; the striving of the whole community towards salvation became the collective, permanent competition of individuals being classified in relation to one another.” (pp. 161–2).

Foucault’s discussion in *Discipline and Punish* (1976) of the individualising technique of the examination can properly be understood, at least in part, a development and extension of a key theme in his earlier *Birth of the Clinic* (1963) which is made explicit in its subtitle, ‘An archaeology of the clinical gaze’. In his later work Foucault makes a key reference to Georges Canguilhem’s book on the *Normal and the Pathological*, noting the extent to which normalizing and disciplinary practices can incorporate a quasi-clinical component – an individualising gaze which detects, measures and classifies the deviations of an individual, and of individual development, from a norm. In his earlier book, Foucault develops the idea that the organized space of the hospital where the clinical gaze holds sway, is not only a machine for cure and a machine for diagnosis and research, but a machine for teaching. “Clinical observation relies on the organization of two conjunct domains: the hospital domain and the pedagogical domain”. The hospital works by arranging patients in series of similar cases so that the underlying common features of each pathology can be recognised. “The way that truth is made apparent through repetition also indicates the way that the same truth can be acquired. It offers itself to be learned by the same process that it offers itself to be cognized... the genesis of the manifestation of truth is also the genesis of the acquisition of truth. There is no difference in nature between the clinic as science and the clinic as pedagogy. In this way a group is formed, comprising the clinical teacher and his students, within which the act of recognition and the effort to learn are accomplished in a single process.”<sup>17</sup> The clinic is a case, one among several

which Foucault observes in his genealogies, of the hybridisation or symbiosis of pedagogy with other practices.

## 5.

The disciplinary history of the school is taken up in a study by three young French historians, Roger Chartier, Didier Julia and Marie-Madeleine Compère, in their book *L'éducation en France du XVIe au XVIIIe siècle*<sup>18</sup>, published a year after Foucault's *Discipline and Punish*, and already citing it (the work is in turn cited in the editorial commentary by Michel Senellart on Foucault's 1978 lectures, *Security, Territory, Population*).<sup>19</sup> Roger Chartier, much of whose work has focussed on the material history of reading, writing, and printing, has been perhaps the most innovative mainstream French historian of the last 30 years to have acknowledged Foucault as a major influence. He was elected in 2007 by the Collège de France to a chair of Writing and Cultures in Modern Europe. Chapters in their 1976 volume by Chartier and Julia appear to both echo and anticipate strands of Foucault's research, notably the linked early-modern concerns with schooling, the Erasmian educational idea of Christian civility (the humanist *paideia* of conduct integrating piety and manners, public self-presentation and corporal decorum) and the education of princes and aristocrats. It is possible and perhaps probable that Foucault read this work at the time of its publication. Francois de la Noue formulated in late 16<sup>th</sup>-century France an influential plan for academies designed to provide the sons of the nobility with, in the words of Chartier and Julia, "an apprenticeship in the government of oneself and others." Not only do renaissance scholars (Erasmus and others) publish manuals for the education of the Christian Prince, but generations of the children of royal families are entrusted to high-profile educators who produce, for the occasion, dedicated treatises – in the case of Bishop Bossuet, appointed as 'director of political conscience' to the Grand Dauphin (heir apparent to Louis XIV), this included treatises on politics, grammar, history and logic (pp. 175–6). Education of the prince and advice to the prince are overlapping genres; a key component of royal advice (whose history, some of which Foucault was to explore in his later lectures, dates back to Plato) is the art of distinguishing true counsel from flattery; in his 1983 lectures, Foucault alludes to the mode of truth-telling required of the royal minister in the early modern monarchical state (8): reason of state (he may perhaps have been suggesting) might in this light be seen as one of the forms of early-modern political *parrhesia*. Good government, in turn, requires the virtue and education of the governed: citing Xenophon and Plato, Erasmus observes that "the chief hope of the state is founded in the proper training of its children" and "nothing is of greater importance for the prince than that he should have the best possible citizens."<sup>20</sup>

The education of the royal heir, whose set-piece experiences could include the direction of elaborate mock battles fought between sizeable armies of real combatants, could itself readily become an intellectual battlefield of dynastic and court policy. The prince, as Erasmus had explained, required a knowledge of his realm in order to be able to rule it; this could be acquired in part by geography lessons, in part by travelling. For the education of the Duc de Bourgogne, grandson

and heir of Louis XIV, a grand survey of the state of France was commissioned, based on detailed reports commissioned from regional intendants. As Foucault records, the writer commissioned to summarise the reports, the duc de Bouleauvilliers, interposed his own denunciation, on behalf of the dispossessed nobility, of the fraudulent historical and legal origins of the royal despotism, attacking in particular, the historical-administrative ‘power-knowledge’ wielded by the bureaucratic state through its monopolistic manipulation and exploitation of the public and legal archives.<sup>21</sup>

## 6.

Elsewhere in these remarkable 1976 lectures, the educational institution figures as a context for the changing politics of historical and other knowledges. (ibid 178-84) This is in the course of the first of two brief but striking ‘digressions’ in the 70s lectures – the second is in the 1978 lectures, *Security, Territory and Population* – where Foucault suggests a recontextualisation of the core themes of *The Order of Things* (and indeed also revisits, in an unusually direct way, part of the agenda of his 1970 inaugural lecture, *The Order of Discourse*). Foucault rapidly outlines here a view of how the changing regimes of knowledge of life, labour and language respectively entered into, and became stakes in historico-political debates and struggles over race, class and nation.

Foucault links these developments to the organization of the modern University (which he sets in France at the turn of the 18<sup>th</sup> and 19<sup>th</sup> centuries), setting the shifting politics of historiography against wider changes in the institutional regulation of knowledges and discourses – the shift from a system of norms governing the permitted *content* of statements (including religious censorship of science) to a system of academically administered norms governing the *form and conditions* of their enunciation – the regime shift, as he puts it, from an ‘orthodoxy’ to an ‘orthology’.

## 7.

In the 1978 lectures on governmentality, Foucault again makes a point of linking his discussion back to the classical *episteme*, the early modern knowledges of grammar, natural history and wealth, and the transformations which mark its beginning and end. The ‘man’ of the human sciences, of philology, biology and political economy, is the knowable unit of population as an object of government. Just before this ‘digression’, Foucault makes a significant remark on the linkage between population, the public sphere and education:

Taking the effects specific to population into consideration, making them pertinent if you like, is, I think, a very important phenomenon: the entry of a nature into the field of techniques of power, of a nature that is not something upon which, over which, or against which the sovereign must impose just laws. [...] We have a population whose nature is such that the sovereign must deploy considered procedures of government within this nature, with its help, and paying it due regard. In other words, with population we have something completely different from a collection of subjects of right differentiated by

their status, localization, goods, responsibilities, and offices: [we have] a set of elements that, on one side, are immersed within the general regime of living beings and that, on another side, offer a surface on which authoritarian, but considered and calculated transformative interventions can take hold. [...] With the emergence of mankind as a species, within a field of the definition of all living species, we can say that man appears in the first form of his integration within biology. From one direction, then, population is the human species, while from another it is what will be called the public. [...] The public, which is a crucial notion in the eighteenth century, is population seen under the aspect of its opinions, ways of doing things, forms of behaviour, customs, fears, prejudices, and requirements; it is what one can get a grip on through education and campaigns of proselytisation and persuasion. The population spans everything from the biological substrate, through species-life, to the graspable surface of the public. From the species to the public; we have here a whole field of new realities, realities in the sense that they are pertinent elements for mechanisms of power, the pertinent space within which and on which one must act. (p.75)

From the species to the public, or (we might also say) from population to the popular.

## 8.

Foucault's French editor adds a footnote reference here at the word 'public', to the celebrated early work by Jürgen Habermas on the *Public Sphere*, which in 1978 had just been translated in France. One may also think here of the well-known passage in the 1979 lectures where Foucault discusses Adam Ferguson's history of civil society as offering conceptual underpinnings for a liberal governmentality: the history of a human sociability whose nature includes the core characteristics of historical contingency, mutability and facticity, and characterises the new notion of civil society as a "transactional reality in the history of governmental technologies"; the location of "the mutual play of power relations and the things which continually elude their grasp".<sup>22</sup> Three years earlier, Foucault had analysed Sieyès' *What is the Third Estate?*, and the bourgeois historiography of Thierry, as breaking with a polemical historico-political culture in which history is a weapon against the state for the righting of ancient wrongs, and becomes a conciliatory and triumphal narrative of the class which, out of its own resources and capabilities – "not only wealth, but administrative capacity, and also a morality, a certain way of living, a certain way of being, a will, an instinct for innovation" – becomes the architect of State and nation as historical incarnations of universality.<sup>23</sup> Common to Foucault's remarks on Ferguson and on Thierry is the perception of a new programmatic and pedagogical role assumed by liberal historical discourses, at once formulating and formative of a public space, and of the role of actors in that space.

In the 1978 lecture, after making his linkage back to *The Order of Things*, Foucault says in his concluding comments that

the theme of man, and the human sciences that analyze man as living being, working individual, and speaking subject, should be understood on the basis of the emergence of population as the correlate of power and the object of knowledge. After all, ‘man’, as he is thought and defined by the so-called human sciences of the nineteenth century, and as he is reflected in nineteenth century humanism, is nothing other than a figure of population. (p. 79)

We are of course now familiar with bio-power (even if Foucault was by now apparently close to discarding this term) as the mode in which government deploys the knowledges of human and biological sciences to govern populations; but it is helpful to retain here Foucault’s other remark that the dimension in which a population offers itself to governmental influence or intervention is the public sphere, and that the modes of that intervention include education. That might reasonably lead us to ask what can be said about the role of educational policy within governmentality in general, or within a specific form of governmentality: some suggested answers will be found in the contributions to this volume.

## 9.

Two years earlier, in the 1975 lectures, *Abnormal*<sup>24</sup>, which centred on the genealogy of forensic psychiatry and criminology, Foucault refers (in his lecture on March 5<sup>th</sup>) to the wave of publications in later 18th-century France and Germany calling for the establishment of public, national or state-supervised systems of education (a notion about which Kant, as noted above, expressed significant reservations). Foucault was discussing here the changing governmental status and function of the early modern family (ideas afterwards developed in Jacques Donzelot’s *The Policing of Families*) and the idea of an implicit compact between state and family over their respective roles in the formation of the young – a point of strong intersection between the history of governmentality and the history of sexuality.

The question of respective roles of parental nurture and schooling, this time as elements of investment in the formation of the non-genetically determined component of human capital, reappear in a contemporary setting the following year in Foucault’s lectures on neoliberalism, where he draws attention to new analyses which highlight the level of investment in human capital as a determinant of the rate of economic growth in the postwar West, the developing world, and early modern Europe.<sup>25</sup>

## 10.

The present volume amply illustrates the ways in which Foucault’s work, including the later work focussed on governmentality, offers hints, fragments and building blocks for a genealogy of pedagogical practice and knowledge. At the core of the enterprise as Foucault conducts it there is, of course, the linkage between investigation and problematisation. What is it that we wish to problematise when we study the genealogy of education?

There can be many answers, of course. One question which the preceding assemblage of scattered moments in Foucault's writings might help bring to mind, and which might merit further attention, is the role of education in modern societies as an axis linking the governability of societies to the formation of a public discursive space.

The 'public', Foucault tells us in 1978, is the surface via which the independent natural life of population offers itself to the educational interventions of government. The 'liberal' academic institution, formally independent of doctrinal censorship by church and state, is the place of production of normalising knowledges. The public thinker is, in some senses, by definition or by vocation, a public educator or moralist. Modern critique is, Foucault argues, originally and essentially critique and resistance of a way of being governed, and also, if not invariably, an argument for being governed otherwise, or less, or conceivably not at all. In his 1983 lecture, Foucault situates Kant's view of Enlightenment as a reconfiguration of the relation between the government of self and the government of others. But how to be governed is, as we have seen, the educational subject par excellence. Foucault's reflections on the status of the intellectual, which evolve into his investigations of truth-telling and the truth-teller, and are continuously linked to his Kantian thematic of Enlightenment as the problematisation of the present, are not unrelated to this focal location of the public critical and intellectual function at the point of contact of the governmental and the educational. It is not accidental that Foucault chooses the trial of Socrates, and the tense, lateral and partly antinomic relations in ancient Greek culture between philosophical truth-telling and '*psychagogy*' on the one hand the political or pedagogical forms of *paideia* or 'conduction', on the other<sup>26</sup>, as a main theme of his final lecture courses. It may not be over fanciful to read some of the critical responses to Foucault's work during his later and post-humous period of celebrity in the United States, by public thinkers and moralists such as Charles Taylor, Clifford Geertz, Richard Rorty, the heirs and survivors of the Frankfurt School and others, as reactions to a perceived subversion of, challenge to, or competing exercise of a function within modern societies of moral tutorship of the young which has been, from Goethe, Arnold, Thoreau and Ruskin through Tolstoy, Russell, Alain, Dewey, Gandhi and Wittgenstein to the recent present, a frequent, if not integral component of the life and preoccupations of the public intellectual.

In several of his lecture series, Foucault discusses Athenian, Shakespearean and classical French theatre as media for the exposition of 'public law', the narrative or doctrinal articulation of the foundations of sovereign authority. He criticises the Marxist analytical category of 'ideology' for its assumption that power is necessarily sustained by means of deceptions and mystifications. In his (as yet unpublished) 1980 lectures, he proposed that western societies are characterised by a recurring requirement, frequently varying in its concrete forms, to connect the governmental exercise of sovereignty with the public manifestation of truth: truth-telling (*parrhesia*) is one, but only one, of the possible modes of such manifestation of truth (*aleurgia*). There are clear hints from Foucault's last years that he wanted to go on to apply the analytical tools developed in his investigations

of antiquity to the genealogy of early modern and contemporary politics. Some readers have felt irresistibly moved to sense a testamentary, valedictory pathos in Foucault's highly remarkable last lecture course. In fact, he began his opening lecture (delayed by illness) on February 1<sup>st</sup> 1984 by voicing an impatience to move on to a new phase of work, saying that his immediate intention was to conclude his five-year "Greco-Latin trip" and then to "return to a certain number of contemporary problems".<sup>27</sup> There are signs that one of the subjects of those planned investigations, which others might still want to carry forward, might have been the forms of manifestation and inculcation of public knowledge and public truth, administered, among others, by educational institutions and actors, which our societies require in order to function.

Foucault says that a defining character of *parrhesia* is that its performance entails risk and courage, because it consists of uttering a true discourse which is uncomfortable for its recipient – who may be a friend, patron, prince or the democratic majority of one's fellow-citizens.<sup>28</sup> Writing in praise of a journalist and friend, Jean Daniel, who he admired for these truth-telling qualities (this is one of the pieces where Foucault first discusses Kant's idea of Enlightenment as a critical semiology of the present moment), Foucault uses the phrase 'a morality of discomfort'.<sup>29</sup> The discourse of the flatterer or demagogue is the exact opposite – an opportunist discourse calculated to comfort and please the dominant audience of the moment. Public moral discourses addressed to the people ('demagogy' in the non-pejorative sense), and possibly particularly to the young, discourses designed to protect – perhaps with particular zeal during the period leading up to and following the end of the Cold War and the consequent depolarisation of an established global regime of moral orientation – against a range of dangerous intellectual, moral or political tendencies (cynical passivity and despair; sceptical relativism and nihilism; terrorist violence), may in some cases constitute a practice of *parrhesia*; they may also be versions of pastoral, missionary or militant discourse – Foucault provides partial genealogies of all three of these forms<sup>30</sup>; as such, they may in some cases be anti-parrhesiastic, and even (in the pejorative sense) demagogic discourses, if part of their function is to disqualify or silence other, less comfortable discourses or truths. Discourses of public edification, Foucault cautions (following Kant), may be prone to a self-corrupting flaw: pious, high-minded allegiance to the values of the Enlightenment can become 'the most touching of treasons'; the pedagogy of democratic virtue can in certain circumstances become (as Kant might have put it) the euthanasia of that democratic truth-telling which, Foucault tells us, is indispensable to a democratic governmentality. The art of telling a flatterer from a friend, a demagogue from a truth-teller, is as necessary in our time as in that of Plutarch or Erasmus.

## NOTES

<sup>1</sup> *Le Courage de la Vérité* (2009) ed. Frédéric Gros, Gallimard, Paris: p. 24.

<sup>2</sup> This process began early on. Karen Jones and Kevin Williamson (1979) 'The Birth of the Schoolroom', *Ideology and Consciousness*, 6. This article appeared in the same issue as the first translation of a Foucault lecture on governmentality.

- <sup>3</sup> See Thomas Osborne, 'Foucault as Educator', this book.
- <sup>4</sup> Reading Foucault's most recently published and final lecture series of 1984, one finds more on this subject. Here, after distinguishing four general modes of 'veridiction' or true utterance, Foucault sees the mediaeval West as operating a new distribution in which the modalities of prophesy and parrhesia. Five volumes of the Collège de France lectures remain to be published in French, seven in English.
- <sup>5</sup> In his as yet unpublished lecture course of 1980, *Le gouvernement des vivants*, Foucault situates this shift within the early development of Christianity, around the end 2<sup>nd</sup> century, between Clement and Tertullian. (Lecture of 13 February 1980).
- <sup>6</sup> The German scholars Paul Rabbow (1914,1954) and Ilsetraut Hadot (1969) introduced this theme in modern scholarship under the terms 'Seelenleitung' and 'Seelenführung'.
- <sup>7</sup> Demogogy thus understood is the pedagogy and psychagogy of the citizen. C Gordon, 'The Soul of the Citizen: Max Weber and Michel Foucault on Rationality and Government', in S Whimster and S Lash eds., (1987) *Max Weber, Rationality and Modernity*, London: Allen & Unwin.
- <sup>8</sup> I am grateful to Graham Burchell for reminding me of this remark, for other advice, and for discussion of these subjects over several decades.
- <sup>9</sup> *Dits et écrits*, Gallimard, 1994, Vol 1 732-752 (a shorter version had appeared in 1967).
- <sup>10</sup> Kant, *Anthropologie du point de vue pragmatique*, tr. *Michel Foucault; Foucault*, Introduction à l'Anthropologie, edited by Daniel Defert, Francois Ewald and Frederic Gros, Paris, Vrin 2008. Introduction to Kant's Anthropology, ed. Roberto Nigro, tr. Roberto Nigro and Kate Briggs. *Los Angeles, Semiotexte 2008. Kant, Anthropology from a Pragmatic Point of view*, tr. and ed. Robert B Loudon with an introduction by Manfred Kuehn, Cambridge UP, 2006.
- <sup>11</sup> Kant explicitly warns in the *Anthropology*, in the chapter on "Self-observation", against the dangers of the keeping of spiritual diaries. The "affected composition of an inner history of the involuntary course of one's thoughts and feelings" is "the most direct path to illuminism and even terrorism". He cites the case of the savant Albrecht von Haller, whose daily keeping of a spiritual diary induced a condition of acute mental anguish. "This eavesdropping on oneself is either a disease of the mind (melancholy), or leads to one and to the madhouse". (22)
- <sup>12</sup> *Kant on Education* (Boston, 1900, tr Annette Churton) <http://oll.libertyfund.org> pp15ff (Foucault does not discuss this text.)
- <sup>13</sup> The Port-Royal authors do not figure in this discussion.
- <sup>14</sup> James Tully, (1993) *An approach to political philosophy: Locke in contexts*, CUP. Chapter 6, 'Governing conduct: Locke on the reform of thought and behaviour', pp. 179–241.
- <sup>15</sup> Ed. Jacques Lagrange, tr. Graham Burchell, Palgrave Macmillan 2006.
- <sup>16</sup> Erasmus was educated at one of the Brothers' schools.
- <sup>17</sup> *The Birth of the Clinic*, (1973) tr. Alan Sheridan, Routledge, Chapter 7.
- <sup>18</sup> Paris, 1976. See also Georges Vigarello's important study *Le corps redressé. Histoire d'un pouvoir pédagogique* (Paris, Delarge, 1978), a history of corporal pedagogies and orthopaedics, influenced by the agenda of *Discipline and Punish*.
- <sup>19</sup> Ed. Michel Senellart, tr. Graham Burchell, Palgrave Macmillan, 2007.
- <sup>20</sup> Erasmus, (1997) *The Education of a Christian Prince*, Cambridge UP, tr. and ed. Lisa Jardine, p. 72. Jardine comments that the work "presents a manifesto for the crucial role of a 'philosopher' (or professional educator) in the administration of a properly run state" (xx). Erasmus makes clear that parrhesia, the fearless telling of truth to princely power, forms part of this educational package. The bound volume which Erasmus sent to Henry VIII containing his Education also included his translation of Plutarch's 'How to tell a flatterer from a friend', an essay discussed by Foucault in his lectures on parrhesia given in Paris and Berkeley in 1983.
- <sup>21</sup> Michel Foucault, (2003) *Society must be defended* tr. David Macey, Allen Lane: 127ff.
- <sup>22</sup> Lecture of April 4<sup>th</sup> 1979.
- <sup>23</sup> *Society must be defended*, ibid: 235 (translation amended).
- <sup>24</sup> Ed. Valerio Marchetti and Antonella Salomoni, tr. Graham Burchell, Verso 2003.

- <sup>25</sup> *The Birth of Biopolitics*, lecture of March 14<sup>th</sup> 1979.
- <sup>26</sup> See, notably, the important discussion in *The Hermeneutics of the Subject* of Epicurus's critique of *paideia*. (238-244): the opinion of Montaigne cited in the epigraph above is in this tradition. (Foucault suggests that we re-read Montaigne "as an attempt to reconstitute an ethics and an aesthetics of the self".) Two of the Socratic dialogues which Foucault studies most attentively, *Alcibiades I* and *Laches*, are about young men or adolescents who have been badly educated. For the philosophical critics of, as Frederic Gros describes in his 'Course Context', quoting from Foucault's unpublished notes: 'one can only be led to oneself by unlearning what has been instilled by a misleading education... "Education is grounded on a basis of errors, deformations, bad habits and dependencies which are sedimented in us from the start of life."' (536)
- <sup>27</sup> It would also be an excess of piety to assume that the purpose of that 'trip', and the vivid portrayals in the 1982-4 lectures of various versions of Greco-Roman philosophical life, is primarily to propose to modern readers a set of *exempla* for contemporary ethical practice. The arresting portrait of the Cynic philosopher, filtered through its revisionist rendering by the Stoic philosopher Epictetus, as a 'functionary of humanity', 'associated with the government of Zeus', might be taken to lend itself to critical and cautionary reflections as much as to the deduction of new moral agendas.
- <sup>28</sup> The remark from the 1984 cited above as an epigraph implies a sharp partition between pedagogy and *parrhesia*, given that courage is declared unnecessary for the former and definitionally essential for the latter. The remark was no doubt intended to refer primarily to the conditions of western liberal democracies, not to all political and social circumstances. Foucault was at this time looking forward to paying a forthcoming visit, in the footsteps of other Western academics to the famous clandestine philosophy seminar in Prague. In the 1984 lectures he briefly discusses, praises and recommends *Plato and Europe*, the recently translated work by the founder of that seminar, Vaclav Havel's mentor, Jan Patocka. Although Foucault does not here discuss the fact that Patocka's recent death had followed a police interrogation relating to Patocka's signature of *Charter 77*, one may guess that his interest in Patocka and the reason for this reference is not exclusively in terms of Plato scholarship. It is hard to read these lectures without sensing a reference to Havel's (then unpublished) writings published shortly afterwards in the volume entitled *Living in Truth*. In his 1978 lectures, which included a citation from Andrei Sinyavski's *The Shade of Gogol*, Foucault expressed a marked scruple and reluctance to adopt the term 'dissident' as an analytic category, referring to its banalisation as an intellectual fashion ("After all, who doesn't have their theory of dissidence nowadays?" (201)) In 1977, Foucault had organized a public reception in Paris for exiled Soviet dissidents, at which Sinyavski was among the honoured guests.
- <sup>29</sup> 'For an ethic of discomfort' (original title: 'Pour une morale de l'inconfort'), *Power*, pp. 443-448. In 1983, Foucault interviewed Edmond Maire, the leading figure in the non-communist left trade union federation CFDT, together with whom Foucault had publicly protested against the French socialist government's condoning of the declaration of martial law in Poland. In his questions, Foucault shows interest in both the pedagogical and the truth-telling roles played by Maire and the CFDT. ('La Pologne, et après?' *Dits et écrits*, IV: pp. 496-521.)
- <sup>30</sup> In the lecture series of 1978, 1984 and 1976 respectively.



MICHAEL A. PETERS

## INTRODUCTION

### *Governmentality, Education and the End of Neoliberalism?*

#### THE BIRTH OF NEOLIBERALISM?

This collection of essays utilizes Foucault's notion of 'governmentality' to identify and analyze the main forms and characteristics of economic liberalism in its main geopolitical schools – Austrian, German, French and American – that have dominated the economic and policy landscapes of the post-war era, and also laid a template of sorts for the institutional world architecture called 'Bretton Woods' as the monetary system based on liberal conception of the 'open' market with its commitment to 'free' flows of capital and trade, the convertibility of currencies, and the formal apparatus of the International Monetary Fund (IMF) and World Bank (WB). After a general section comprising seven essays that together theorize Foucault's notion of governmentality in relation to liberalism and neoliberalism, this collection applies and develops Foucault's governmentality studies in relation to the field of education, providing both Anglo-American and European perspectives. Neoliberalism in the popular sense is a label for what is commonly understood as the doctrine of political and economic liberalism and set of policies originating in the 1970s that wielded together classical liberal political theory as exemplified by the Mont Pelerin Society after WWII and neoclassical economic theories that became identified with the so-called Chicago school under Milton Friedman in the 1960s.

It is not a unified and coherent doctrine and it has taken on different manifestations at different times and places sometimes with contradictory results. For an ultimately moral doctrine based on a classical account of political and economic freedom – a marriage of the 'free market' and the 'open society' – beginning Chile in 1973 where administrations and policy regimes based on the minimal state and open global market, paradoxically, were brutally established with force and coercion, against the rule of law and in a savagely anti-democratic way. This imposition became commonplace during the 1980s with 'structural adjustment' policies of the IMF and WB that 'forced' the transitional economies of Latin America and elsewhere to liberalize trade and monetary systems, to open up their economies and to privatize state assets and cut back state welfare.

For analytical purposes, we can postulate a rough chronology of neoliberalism:

- The development of the Austrian, Freiburg and Chicago schools in neoclassical economics as a continuance of classical liberalism in the first part of the twentieth century;
- The establishment of the Austrian school by Carl Menger with the publication of *Principles of Economics (Grundsätze der Volkswirtschaftslehre)* in 1871, his

- ‘subjective theory of value’ (theory of marginal utility) and the attack on historicism in the debate over epistemology (*Methodenstreit*) in economics that took place in the 1880s;
- Menger attracts Eugen von Böhm-Bawerk, Friedrich von Wieser and later Ludwig von Mises who extends marginal utility theory to money in *The Theory of Money and Credit* (1912) and recruits Friedrich von Hayek who develops Mises’ business cycle theories and becomes Director of the newly formed Austrian Institute for Business Cycle Research in 1927;
  - On the invitation from Lionel Robbins, Director of the London School of Economics, Hayek shifts to Britain, and in opposition to John Maynard Keynes develops his theory of spontaneous institutions, and engages in debates against socialist planning in the late 1930s;
  - The founding of Freiburg School or the Ordoliberal School in the 1930s at the University of Freiburg in Germany by Walter Eucken, Franz Böhm and Hans Großmann-Doerth;
  - The ‘first globalization’ of neoliberalism with the establishment of the Mount Pelerin Society in 1947 founded by Hayek who writes *The Road to Serfdom* as a tract against big government and totalitarianism;
  - The establishment of the Chicago school in the with Frank Knight, Milton Friedman, George Stigler, Ronald Coase, Gary Becker and others from the 1940s with an emphasis on the assumption of rationality in macroeconomics, monetarism, economics of education and human capital, the economics of information, innovation and political economy of property rights and contracts;
  - The development of the ‘Washington consensus’ during the 1970s;
  - The CIA sponsored coup against Salvador Allende in Chile and the subsequent imposition of neoliberal market reforms by General Pinochet from 1973-1990;
  - The New Right ascendancy of the Thatcher-Reagan years during the 1980s and the ‘export’ of neoliberal ideology;
  - The emergence of structural adjustment loans and institutionalization of neoliberalism through a series of world policy agencies such as IMF, WB, OECD (Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development) and WTO (World Trade Organization);
  - The transition to ‘knowledge economy’ (OECD) and ‘knowledge for development’ (WB) in the 1990s and beyond;
  - The collapse of neoliberal financial infrastructure and ethos, and the roll-back of neoliberal policies by Barack Obama’s administration during the first term (2009-2013).

This is not the place to detail the growth of neoclassical economics in the Anglo-American and Continental traditions, but suffice it to say that standard economic history explains that the Austrian school emerged with Carl Menger in the late nineteenth century with its twin pillars of the subjective theory of value and the political defence of laissez-faire economic policy which became clearer in the hands of Friedrich Wieser, Eugene Böhm-Bawerk, and later, Ludwig von Mises and Friedrich von Hayek.<sup>1</sup> The neoliberalism of the Chicago school really emerged around George Stigler’s leadership and Friedman’s monetarism in the 1960s that

was fiercely anti-Keynesian and against the concept of market failure. This school often referred to as the ‘second’ Chicago school included work on search theory (Stigler), human capital theory (Becker) and transaction cost analysis (Coase) which then served as the basis for a series of innovations and new directions often characterized as the ‘third’ Chicago school including monetarism (Friedman), public choice theory (Buchanan), new classical macroeconomics (Lucas), new institutional economics (Coase), new economic history (Fogel), new social economics (Becker), and Law-and economics (Posner).<sup>2</sup>

The Freiburg School or the Ordoliberal School was founded in the 1930s at the University of Freiburg in Germany by economist Walter Eucken and two jurists, Franz Böhm and Hans Großmann-Doerth. The founders of the school were united in their common concern for the question of the constitutional foundations of a free economy and society and were anti-naturalist in their conception of the market believing it was a legal-judicial construction.

### FOUCAULT’S GOVERNMENTALITY

In his governmentality studies in the late 1970s Foucault held a course at the Collège de France on the major forms of neoliberalism, examining the three theoretical schools of German ordoliberalism, the Austrian school characterized by Hayek, and American neoliberalism in the form of the Chicago school (see Foucault, 2008). Among Foucault’s great insights in his work on governmentality was the critical link he observed in liberalism between the governance of the self and government of the state – understood as the exercise of political sovereignty over a territory and its population.

Foucault’s approach to governmentality including his analysis of German *ordoliberalism*, a source for the ‘social market economy’ and the EU’s ‘social model’, begins with an analysis of the self-limitation of governmental reason which is taken to be synonymous with liberalism which he suggests should be understood very broadly as

- Acceptance of the principle that somewhere there must be a limitation of government and that this is not just an external right.
- Liberalism is also a practice: where exactly is the principle of the limitation of government to be found and how are the effects of this limitation to be calculated?
- In a narrower sense, liberalism is the solution that consists in the maximum limitation of the forms and domains of government action.
- Finally, liberalism is the organization of specific methods of transaction for defining the limitation of government practices:
  - constitution, parliament
  - opinion, the press
  - commissions, inquiries (Foucault, 2008, pp. 20–21)

Foucault’s lectures on ‘The Birth of Biopolitics’ could easily have been called ‘The Birth of Neoliberalism’. Liberalism Foucault suggests ‘is a word that comes to use from Germany’ (2008, p. 22) in the second half of the twentieth century. In later chapters he provides an understanding of German neoliberalism beginning

with Ludwig Erhard in 1947 to examine contemporary German governmentality: economic freedom, the source of juridical legitimacy and political consensus. Foucault focuses on Erhard in retelling the story of German post-WWII reconstruction. After serving as economics minister for Barvaria (1945-46) Erhard becomes director both of the Advisory Committee for Money and Credit (1947-48) and the economic council for the joint Anglo-U.S. occupation (1948-49) where he is responsible for instituting currency reforms. As economics minister of the new Federal Republic of Germany under Chancellor Konrad Adenauer Erhard was responsible for policies of reconstruction successfully applying his social market system to problems of economic renewal.

What preserves liberalism in its new formation is the way in which neo-liberalism picks up on the classical liberal political practice of introducing a self-limitation on governmental reason while departing from it in terms of a theory of pure competition and the question of how to model the global exercise of political power on the principles of a market economy. *Ordoliberalism* thus issues in a critique of the protectionist economy according to List, Bismarck's state socialism, the setting up of a planned economy during the First World War, Keynesian interventionism; and the economic policy of National Socialism.

The innovation of American neoliberalism for Foucault is the generalization of the model of *homo economicus* to all forms of behavior representing an extension of economic analysis to domains previously considered to be non-economic and the redefinition of *homo economicus* as entrepreneur of himself with an emphasis on acquired elements and the problem of the formation of human capital in education. Foucault goes on to discuss a resumption of the problem of social and economic innovation and the generalization of the 'enterprise' form in the social field.

Foucault (1991) uses the term 'governmentality' to mean *mentalities of rule* and, historically, to signal the emergence of a distinctive mentality of rule that he alleged became the basis for modern liberal politics. He begins to examine the problematic of government by analysing the *series*: security, population, government, maintaining that there is an explosion of interest on the 'art of government' in the sixteenth century which is motivated by diverse questions: the government of oneself (personal conduct); the government of souls (pastoral doctrine); the government of children (problematic of pedagogy) (Foucault, 1991). At the intersection of two competing tendencies – state centralisation and a logic of dispersion – Foucault says, the problematic of government can be located; a problematic which poses questions of the *how* of government and seeks "to articulate a kind of rationality which was intrinsic to the art of government without subordinating it to the problematic of the prince and of his relationship to the principality of which he is lord and master" (Foucault, 1991, p. 89). By the term 'governmentality' Foucault (1991, pp. 102-3) meant three things:

- The ensemble formed by the institutions, procedures, analyses, and reflections; the calculations and tactics that allow the exercise of this very specific, albeit complex, form of power, which has as its principal form of knowledge political economy and as its essential technical means apparatuses of security.

- The tendency which, over a long period and throughout the West, has steadily led toward the pre-eminence of this type of power that may be called government over all other forms (sovereignty, discipline, etc.) resulting, on the one hand, in the formation of a whole series of specific governmental apparatuses, and, on the other, in the development of a whole complex of *savoirs*.
- The process, or rather the result of the process, through which the state of justice of the Middle Ages, transformed into the administrative state during the fifteenth and sixteenth centuries, gradually became ‘governmentalized.’

Liberal modes of governing, Foucault tells us, are distinguished in general by the ways in which they utilise the capacities of free acting subjects and, consequently, modes of government differ according to the value and definition accorded the concept of freedom. These different mentalities of rule, thus, turn on whether freedom is seen as a natural attribute as with the philosophers of the Scottish Enlightenment, a product of rational choice making, or, as with Hayek, a civilizational artefact theorised as both negative and anti-naturalist.

Hayek’s conception of freedom, for instance, was one that characterized the market as neither natural nor artificial but rather the product of a spontaneous social order governed by rules selected in a process of cultural evolution. His conception of freedom and ‘the constitution of liberty’ has special application in the so-called ‘knowledge economy’ where, as Foucault also acknowledges, following a Kantian critique, the state is strictly limited in its power to know. Hayek argued that the price mechanism of the ‘free’ market conveys information about supply and demand that is dispersed among many consumers and producers and cannot be coordinated by any central planning mechanism. His early work emphasized that the key to economic growth is ‘knowledge’ and this insight provided him with the grounds for casting doubt on socialism and state planning, and for advocating that the market was the best way to organize modern society.

For neoliberals inspired by Hayek’s insights the commitment to the free market involves two sets of claims: claims for the efficiency of the market as a superior allocative mechanism for the distribution of scarce public resources, and; claims for the market as a morally superior form of political economy. Neoliberalism as a political philosophy, it is often said, involves a return to a primitive form of individualism: an individualism which is ‘competitive’, ‘possessive’ and construed often in terms of the doctrine of ‘consumer sovereignty’. It involves an emphasis on freedom over equality where freedom is construed in negative terms and individualistic terms. Negative freedom is freedom from state interference which implies an acceptance of inequalities generated by the market. Neoliberalism is both anti-state and anti-bureaucracy, and its attack on big government is made on the basis of both economic and ethical arguments (see Peters and Marshall, 1996). But this is to treat neoliberalism as a doctrine or ideology rather than a set of governmental practices.

## CHARACTERISTICS OF NEOLIBERALISM

In *Poststructuralism, Marxism and Neoliberalism* (Peters, 2001), a book written for a U.S. audience and devoted to the proposition that poststructuralism is neither anti-Marxist nor anti-structuralist, I identified twelve features of neoliberalism from a viewpoint heavily influenced by Michel Foucault's (1979) notion of governmentality. Foucault uses the term 'governmentality' to mean the art of government and, historically, to signal the emergence of distinctive types of rule that became the basis for modern liberal politics. His starting point for the examination of the problematic of government is the series: security, population, government. He maintains that there is an explosion of interest on the 'art of government' in the sixteenth century which is motivated by diverse questions: the government of oneself (personal conduct); the government of souls (pastoral doctrine); and the government of children (problematic of pedagogy). Foucault says that the problematic of government can be located at the intersection of two competing tendencies: state centralisation and logic of dispersion. This is a problematic that poses questions of the how of government rather than its legitimation and seeks "to articulate a kind of rationality which was intrinsic to the art of government without subordinating it to the problematic of the prince and of his relationship to the principality of which he is lord and master" (Foucault, 1991, p. 89). It is only in the late sixteenth and early seventeenth centuries that the art of government crystallises for the first time around the notion of 'reason of state,' understood in a positive sense whereby the state is governed according to rational principles that are seen to be intrinsic to it. In charting this establishment of the art of government Foucault thus details the introduction of 'economy' into political practice (understood as 'the correct manner of managing goods and wealth within the family').

In line with this analysis, Foucault defines governmentality in terms of a specific form of government power based upon the 'science' of political economy, which over a long period, he maintains, has transformed the administrative state into one fully governmentalized, and led to the formation of both governmental apparatuses and knowledges (or *savoirs*). In elaborating these themes Foucault concentrates his analytical energies on understanding the pluralized forms of government, its complexity, and its techniques. Our modernity, he says, is characterized by the 'governmentalization' of the state. He is interested in the question of how power is exercised and, implicitly, he is providing a critique of the contemporary tendencies to overvalue the problem of the state and to reduce it to a unity or singularity based upon a certain functionality. This substantive feature – the rejection of state-centred analyses – has emerged from the governmentality literature as it has become a more explicit problematic. In outlining the main features of neoliberalism it is important to realise that there are affinities, continuities, and overlapping concepts as well as differences and theoretical innovations with classical liberalism.

I have previously focused on the 'new prudentialism' (O'Malley, 2002) in education based on the entrepreneurial self that 'responsibilizes' the self to make welfare choices based on an actuarial rationality (Peters, 2005). The promotion of the entrepreneurial self represents a shift away from a rights-based welfare model

of the citizen to a consumer-oriented market individual (based on the rejuvenation of *homo economicus*) willing to calculate the risks and invest in herself at critical points in the life cycle. I have also analyzed Foucault's account of German *ordoliberalism*, a configuration based on the theoretical configuration of economics and law developed at the University of Freiberg by W. Eucken and F. Böhm that views the market contingently as developing historically within a judicial-legal framework. The economy is thus based on a concept of the Rule of Law, anchored in a notion of individual rights, property rights and contractual freedom that constitutes, in effect, an economic constitution. German neoliberal economists (Müller-Armack, Röpke, Rüstow) invented the term 'social market economy' which shared certain features with the Freiburg model of law and economics but also differed from it in terms of the 'ethics' of the market (as did Hayek in *The Constitution of Liberty*). This formulation of the "social market economy" proved significant not only in terms of the post-war reconstruction of the (West) German economy but through Erhard, as Minister and Chancellor, became important as the basis of the EEC's and, later, EU's 'social model'.

- Classical liberalism as a critique of State reason: A political doctrine concerning the self-limiting State; the limits of government are related to the limits of State reason, i.e., its power to know; a permanent critique of the activity of rule and government.
- Natural versus contrived forms of the market: Hayek's notion of natural laws based on spontaneously ordered institutions in the physical (crystals, galaxies) and social (morality, language, market) worlds has been replaced with an emphasis on the market as an artefact or culturally derived form and (growing out of the 'callaxy' approach) a constitutional perspective that focuses on the judicio-legal rules governing the framework within the game of enterprise is played (see Buchanan, 1991).
- The Politics-as-exchange innovation of Public Choice theory ('the marketisation of the State'): The extension of Hayek's spontaneous order conception (callactics) of the institution of the market beyond simple exchange to complex exchange and finally to all processes of voluntary agreement among persons (see Buchanan & Tullock, 1962).
- The relation between government and self-government: Liberalism as a doctrine which positively requires that individuals be free in order to govern; government as the community of free, autonomous, self-regulating individuals; 'responsibilisation' of individuals as moral agents; the neo-liberal revival of *homo economicus*, based on assumptions of individuality, rationality and self-interest, as an all-embracing redescription of the social as a form of the economic.
- A new relation between government and management: The rise of the new managerialism, 'New Public Management'; the shift from policy and administration to management; emulation of private sector management styles; the emphasis on 'freedom to manage' and the promotion of 'self-managing' (i.e., quasi-autonomous) individuals and entities.
- A 'degovernmentalisation' of the State (considered as a positive technique of government): Government 'through' and by the market, including promotion of

- consumer-driven forms of social provision (health, education, welfare), 'contracting out', and privatisation.
- The promotion of a new relationship between government and knowledge: 'Government at a distance' developed through relations of forms of expertise (expert systems) and politics; development of new forms of social accounting; an actuarial rationality; referendums and intensive opinion polling made possible through the new information and computing technologies; privatisation and individualisation of 'risk management'; development of new forms of prudentialism.
  - An economic theory of democracy ('the marketisation of democracy'): an emerging structural parallel between economic and political systems – political parties have become entrepreneurs in a vote-seeking political marketplace; professional media consultants use policies to sell candidates as image products; voters have become passive individual consumers. In short, democracy has become commodified at the cost of the project of political liberalism and the state has become subordinated to the market.
  - The replacement of 'community' for 'the social': The decentralisation, 'devolution' and delegation of power/authority/responsibility from the center to the region, the local institution, the 'community'; the emergence of the shadow state; the encouragement of the informal voluntary sector (and an autonomous civil society) as a source of welfare; 'social capital'.
  - Cultural reconstruction as deliberate policy goal ('the marketisation of "the social"'): The development of an 'enterprise society'; privatisation of the public sector; the development of quasi-markets; marketisation of education and health; a curriculum of competition and enterprise
  - Low ecological consciousness (Anthony Giddens): 'green capitalism'; 'green consumerism'; linear as opposed to ecological modernisation; 'no limits to growth'; market solutions to ecological problems
  - Promotion of a neoliberal paradigm of globalisation: world economic integration based on 'free' trade; no capital controls; International Monetary Fund (IMF), World Bank (WB), World Trade organisation (WTO) as international policy brokers.

#### GOVERNMENTALITY STUDIES AND THE CHALLENGE OF GLOBALISATION

Foucault's concept of governmentality developed in the last years of his life has been developed by a range of thinkers including those who worked with him helping to prepare his famous lecture course, including Jacques Donzelot whose work features prominently in this collection both in a chapter and in interview with Colin Gordon, one of Foucault's English translators and the leading thinker of the Anglo-Foucauldian group that includes Graham Burcell, Peter Miller, Nikolas Rose, Barry Hindess and Mitchell Dean, among others. In Germany the work of Thomas Lemke has been essential reading and his work has been highly influential in governmentality debates around the world. We are fortunate to be able to include a chapter by Lemke. In the development and application of Foucault's

work on governmentality we can discern a number of stages: its initial invention and development arising out of Foucault's late political and ethical thought in the late 1970s; the set of sustained reflections on the concept and its relations to biopolitics and neoliberalism in the course entitled 'The Birth of Biopolitics' delivered in 1978-79; the subsequent development of governmentality in a series of courses including 'Du gouvernement des vivants' (1979-1980), 'Subjectivité et vérité' (1980-1981), 'Le gouvernement de soi et des autres' (1982-1983), and 'Le gouvernement de soi et des autres: le courage de la vérité' (1983-1984) some of which have not yet been transcribed in French or translated into English. The book *The Foucault Effect: Studies in Governmentality* (1991) edited by Graham Burchell, Colin Gordon and Peter Miller combined three essays of Foucault's including the 1978 'Governmentality' with original an introduction by Colin Gordon and original essays by Pasquale Pasquino, Graham Burchell, Giovanna Procacci, Jacques Donzelot, Ian Hacking, François Ewald, Daniel Defert and Robert Castel. This was followed by Hunt and Wickham's *Foucault and Law* (1994), the collection by Andrew Barry, Thomas Osborne and Nikolas Rose (1996), *Foucault and Political Reason. Liberalism, neo-liberalism and rationalities of government*, and Mitchell Dean's (1999) *Governmentality: Power and rule in modern society*.

Since the end of the 1990s we have seen a flowering of governmentality studies with applications and development across the full range of the social science and humanities: in anthropology<sup>3</sup>, politics (Lipschutz & Rowe, 2005); international studies (Larner & Walters, 2004; Sending & Neumann, 2006; Merlingen, 2006); rights and political freedom (Ciccarelli, 2008), cultural studies (Bratich et al, 2003), security (Leander & Rens, 2006) and 'terrorism' (Ventura et al, 2005; Tagma, 2006), development (Watts, 2003; Li, 2007), law (Pavlich & Wickham, 2001), geography (Crampton & Eldon, 2007), education<sup>4</sup> (Masschelein, 2007), everyday life (Nadesan, 2008), European governance (Walters & Haar, 2005) and environment (Death, 2006; Luke, n.d.). This is by no means a comprehensive list or summary.<sup>5</sup> The standard introductions to the concept of governmentality have been provided by Colin Gordon (1991; 2001; this volume), Nikolas Rose et al (2006) and most recently in a new collection by Ulrich Bröckling, Susanne Krasmann, Thomas Lemke (2009) entitled *Governmentality: Current Issues and Future Challenges* which explores the advantages and limitations of adopting Michel Foucault's concept of governmentality as an analytical framework. The workshop on which the book is based begins:

The publication of *The Foucault Effect: Studies in Governmentality* in 1991 marked the beginning of a growing interest in the notion of governmentality in the social and political sciences. In the following years, 'governmentality' became a key term that inspired empirical analyses in different subject areas and academic disciplines. The so-called studies of governmentality offered quite a different perspective on state theory and political analysis: They went beyond traditional accounts structured by the opposition between state and civil society, public and private spheres, freedom and constraint by focusing on the interplay between processes of subjectivation and power mechanisms, political rationalities and governmental technologies. However, the concept

of governmentality also engendered serious criticism in recent years which may point to some limitations and shortcomings in this theoretical perspective. 16 years after the publication of *The Foucault Effect* the workshop shall provide the opportunity to discuss the theoretical and empirical achievements, future perspectives and persisting problems of an analytics of government. It takes up three major themes that encountered discussions and also critical attention in recent years ([http://www.unikonstanz.de/kulturtheorie/Workshop\\_TheStateofGovernmentality1.pdf](http://www.unikonstanz.de/kulturtheorie/Workshop_TheStateofGovernmentality1.pdf)).<sup>6</sup>

The brief for the workshop proceeds to highlight the three themes as: 1. Beyond the nation state: Sovereignty, bio-politics and trans-nationalisation; 2. Biological citizenship and the government of life; 3. The economy of government. One of the alleged limitations in Foucault's work, these authors argue, is the focus on the territoriality of the modern state, especially in an increasingly globalized world. Yet a number of authors have begun to apply the governmentality framework systematically beyond the territoriality of the modern state (Perry & Maurer, 2003; Larner & Walters, 2004; Walters & Haar, 2005).

Larner and Walters (2004) emphasized the way in which 'governmentality' has been used in two distinct ways in the literature: (1) "a form of power whose logic is not the defense of territory or the aggrandizement of the sovereign but the optimization of the health and welfare of the population" and (2) "an approach that explores how governing always involves particular representations, knowledges, and expertise regarding that which is to be governed" (p. 495). They develop the second sense of the notion as "the practice of government [which] involves the production of particular 'truths' about .... the constitution of our societies and ourselves" (ibid.). This 'governmentality' of the international allows Foucault's approach to be used and mapped onto current debates about globalization where "the role of nonstate actors in shaping and carrying out global governance-functions is not an instance of transfer of power from the state to nonstate actors but rather an expression of a changing logic or rationality of government (defined as a type of power) by which civil society is redefined from a passive object of government to be acted upon into an entity that is both an object *and* a subject of government" (Sending & Neumann, 2006, p. 651). In a more porous and interconnected world governmentality can shed light on changing practices of political rule that define the identity and functioning of key actors in world politics. Such an understanding is crucial if we are to understand the new economization of the state which depends on networks and the complexity of network effects that challenge the space of pure economic rationality assumed by neoclassical economics and the ideal of rationally calculating economic man. Human capital theory based on this ideal then becomes the focus for an analysis of 'the entrepreneur of oneself' as a technology of indirect government control exercised *across* government policies that traverse national spaces, especially in the field of education and health where these indirect technologies are the substance of biopolitics.

Michael Merlingen (2006) provides a useful discussion of the attempt to extend governmentality beyond the state, reviewing three books: Larner and Walters

(2004) collection *Global Governmentality: Governing International Spaces*; Perry and Maurer (2003) collection *Globalization under Construction: Governmentality, Law, and Identity*; and, Walters and Haahr's (2005) *Governing Europe: Discourse, Governmentality and European Integration*. He identifies six strengths of "governmentality theory", which, as he argues "promise to provide some new interpretative purchase upon deterritorialised and de-stated politics" (p. 184). These he lists as: *Networked Governance* that enables governmentality theory with the aid of actor network theory (Latour, Callon) to study policy networks; a *Semiotics of Materiality* that enables "governmentality theory" to go beyond "discourse-centred poststructuralist and constructivist approaches in IR and EU studies" (p. 187); the *Denaturalisation of Governance* that helps "to strip political rule of its self-evident, normal or natural character" (p. 188); *Exploring the European/Global through Micropolitical Sites and Practices* "adds to the exploration of these microworlds is the excavation/mapping of all those little knowledges and humble and mundane technologies through which the European/global is articulated" (p. 189); *Resistance and the Fragility of Governance* "emphasises the likelihood of resistance and the reversibility of power relations" (p. 190). Perhaps most importantly, this feature in

Its peculiar conceptualisation of the linkage between domination and people's capacity for self-control makes the theory well suited for bringing into focus the tensions and opposition between the government of others and self-government and for adding a new perspective on the diverse and often inconspicuous ways in which citizens resist being enrolled in governmental projects of order(liness) (p. 190).

Merlingen (2006) adds *Power and Domination* that understands strategic power as the "reciprocal attempt of people to shape each other's conduct and the correlated games of control and resistance", states of domination "which are asymmetric, institutionalised patterns of interaction, say, between the coloniser and the colonised, man and woman" (p. 190), and "technologies" as the third concept of power that together provides a toolbox for researchers.

Where researchers only a few years ago were attempting to demonstrate the policy convergence of neoliberalism, its 'export' and institutionalization, and its constitution of globalization (or at least one version), the wheel has turned again with the election of Barack Obama and his instant roll-back of many of Bush's policies, although not all neoliberal policies. Indeed, the crisis of Keynesianism and the welfare state has been followed by the crisis of neoliberalism and free market fundamentalism.

#### THE END OF NEOLIBERALISM?

George Soros, the Popperian financier, has warned that this is the age of 'the destruction of capital'. Already conservative estimates indicate that 50 trillion dollars have been wiped off the books worldwide (30 trillion in equity funds, 4 trillion in credit, 3 trillion in lost output, 3 trillion in the sub-prime housing market). The world economy still (at the time of writing in early April 2009) has

not showed any consistent signs of improvement or growth. A groundswell of opinion from a variety of scholars point to ‘the end of neoliberalism’ and the beginning of a new age of state intervention, although there is fierce debate over the extent of further stimulus packages. The Nobel prize-winning economist Joseph Stiglitz (July 7, 2008)<sup>7</sup> in *Project Syndicate* begins his column with the assertion that the ideology of “market fundamentalism” has failed

The world has not been kind to neo-liberalism, that grab-bag of ideas based on the fundamentalist notion that markets are self-correcting, allocate resources efficiently, and serve the public interest well. It was this market fundamentalism that underlay Thatcherism, Reaganomics, and the so-called “Washington Consensus” in favor of privatization, liberalization, and independent central banks focusing single-mindedly on inflation.

Writing before the collapse of Wall Street’s investment banks—the bankruptcy of Lehmann Brothers, the sell off of Merrill Lynch, the Federal bridging loan of \$85 billion to AIG, the ‘stimulus package’ and Obama’s March 2009 budget requiring 3.6 trillion dollars—Stiglitz criticizes neoliberal policies and their costs to developing economies.<sup>8</sup> He faults the financial market allocation of resources to housing in the 1990s and the sub-prime crisis that has precipitated a global financial crisis and credit squeeze he thinks will be prolonged and widespread. He criticizes the selective use of free-market rhetoric used to support special interests and the way that Bush’s policies have served the military-industrial complex. He concludes:

Neo-liberal market fundamentalism was always a political doctrine serving certain interests. It was never supported by economic theory. Nor, it should now be clear, is it supported by historical experience. Learning this lesson may be the silver lining in the cloud now hanging over the global economy.

Others<sup>9</sup> such as John Quiggin (September 8, 2008)<sup>10</sup>, the Australian social-democrat, have remarked:

The fact that the credit crisis has reached this point marks the failure of the central claim of the neoliberal program, namely that private capital markets, free from intrusive government regulation, can enable individuals and households to handle the risks they face more flexibly and efficiently than a social-democratic welfare state.

In some sense the current series of crises that have rocked Wall Street to its foundations and threatened to destabilize the world financial system and its major banking and insurance institutions is just the latest round of failure for the global justice movement that has coordinated worldwide demonstrations against neoliberalism, ‘the American imperialist project’, the Iraq War, and strands referred to since the early 1980s as ‘Monetarism,’ ‘Supply-Side Economics,’ ‘Reaganism/Thatcherism.’ Longtime critics of neoliberalism and its policies of privatization, state non-interference and deregulation summed up in the so-called ‘Washington consensus’<sup>11</sup> such as the economists Stiglitz, and Robert Polin (2003), sociologist

Pierre Bourdieu (1998), geographer David Harvey (2005), philosopher/ linguist Noam Chomsky (1999), as well as the anti-globalization movement in general,<sup>12</sup> have consistently argued that neoliberalism is a class project that benefits the rich and leads to ever-increasing inequalities both within and between states.

A major overhaul of the financial system is almost certainly required and government regulation needs to be established, minimally, to ensure transparency and full disclosure, to spell out capital requirements and to avoid conflicts of interest. In 2009, Timothy Geithner as Obama's Treasury Secretary is currently implementing a plan to buy over \$1 trillion in troubled assets and mortgages and the G20 under Gordon Brown is pushing for a new global framework for tighter regulation, spelling the end of global financial *laissez-faire*. The move to state-centric policies and to forms of regulation in the U.S. and elsewhere seems almost inevitable. Government intervention and (neo)Keynesianism is now suddenly back in fashion. The move to Federal regulation and a reform of the financial system seems to chime with the development of state capitalism elsewhere, especially in East Asia.<sup>13</sup>

As the centre of economic gravity shifts to East Asia it is not clear whether new Keynesianism will be embraced or whether in face of such intensive global competition and fierce economic nationalism whether Western economies can ever afford it. There is never the option of an innocent return historically and a return to the golden days of the welfare state in Scandinavia or New Zealand, or to the 'social model' in Europe, especially as new costly environmental and energy contingencies begins to bite. Some argue that what is required is a change of *ethos*—not 'confidence' and 'trust' of the market but rather the development of trust that comes with the radically decentred democratic collaboration that epitomizes distributed knowledge, political and energy systems. Yet all these explanations seem to be predicated upon understanding neoliberalism as a doctrine, ideology or set of policies and none have benefited from Foucault's notion of generality as a mentality of rule.

President Barack Obama has a strong vision for reclaiming the American dream and for a political and economic philosophy based on a combination of American pragmatism with a strong emphasis on 'what works' and an interventionist government-led emphasis on ethics and responsibility to change the culture of corruption in Washington. Obama's political philosophy is based on the notions of unity, community, equality and hope. He wants to transcend all divisions, to provide a new universalism of provision and encourage a greater inclusiveness that moves beyond the dualism and dichotomies that haunt the U.S. going back to the 1960s—white-black, male-female, Democrat-Republican—in order to assert the American moment and to provide global leadership.<sup>14</sup> Obama's administration is attempting to implement a progressivist egalitarian economic philosophy that is a managed form of capitalism oriented to crisis management in the short term with massive government assistance to banks, tax cuts to the middle class, and huge infrastructure investment aimed at economic recovery. In the longer term Obama is pursuing market-friendly innovation policies based on the reform of science and technology and structural reforms in green energy and universal health care.

The question is whether this really does mean the end of neoliberalism. Clearly, the IMF and WB are still pursuing their old structural adjustment policies especially in bankrupt states like the Ukraine and Latvia. Both internationally and within the U.S. the neoliberal mantra against big government has been given short shrift as governments world-wide has embarked on interventionist policies consisting in bail-outs, stimulus packages and in some cases wholesale nationalization of banking and insurance institutions or partnership with private interests. At the same time there is a clear set of policy intentions from Obama's administration to intervene directly in the economy by socializing and universalizing health as well as investing heavily in education, energy, science and technology. This means that the state under Obama has begun to move toward a model of greater collective responsibility reversing the earlier neoliberal strategy of making individuals responsible for social risks while at the same time resisting the move to Keynesian policies of full employment. The question is whether the concept of governmentality now provides the means to understand the constitution of new political forms and the reshaping of identities and subjectivities that follow from a community model.

Contemporary social theory, strongly influenced by Foucault focusing on identity studies seeks the constitution and manufacture of consciousness and subjectivity in more nuanced ways, emphasizing cultural processes of formation within larger shifts concerning globalization, the 'knowledge economy', and the mobility of peoples across national boundaries and frontiers. Economists have given greater attention to the world of social media and new technologies in relation to identity formation and the transformation of patterns of work and its definition in a post-industrial society. In economics there has developed an entire new field called 'behavioral economics' that repudiates aspects of neoclassical theory based on the simplifying assumptions of *Homo economicus*, importing and basing its insights on psychology.

At one time, at the very beginning of its disciplinary formation in the heyday of 'political economy', economics had a strong relationship to the other social sciences and, particularly, to questions of psychology. In *The Theory of Moral Sentiments* Adam Smith (1759) commented upon the psychological principles guiding human behavior providing the ethical and methodological principles for his later works. Broadly speaking, Smith followed his mentor, Francis Hutcheson, in dividing moral systems into two: nature (Propriety, Prudence, and Benevolence) and motive (Self-Love, Reason, and Sentiment). Smith, in contrast to Hutcheson, provides us with a psychological account of morality, beginning *Moral Sentiments* with the observation that however selfish a man may be supposed to be there are 'some principles in his nature, which interest him in the fortunes of others, and render their happiness necessary to him, though he derives nothing from it, except the pleasure of seeing it'. As the discipline developed, especially during the neoclassical phase, economists began to distance themselves from psychology as they sought to base their explanations on the hypothesis of rational agents, especially with the development of the concept of *Homo economicus* that appeared for the first time in the work of John Stuart Mill where the psychology of the

postulated entity was defined as fundamentally rational. In ‘On the Definition of Political Economy, and on the Method of Investigation Proper to It’, Mill (1836) suggests that political economy is concerned with “...[Man] solely as a being who desires to possess wealth, and who is capable of judging the comparative efficacy of means for obtaining that end.”

The essential aspect of *Homo economicus* is the ‘rational’ element in the sense that well-being is defined by the optimization of the utility function and is normally described in terms of three governing assumptions: individuality (all choices are made by individuals); rationality (these are conscious deliberative choices); and self-interest (they are made in the interest of the choicemaker). The rationality of Economic Man has been called into question by other disciplines that emphasize the cultural and gendered nature of rationality or point to the way in which economic agents act irrationally or in not rational optimal ways. The rejuvenation of *Homo economicus* as a basis for addressing public policy came during the decades of neoliberalism beginning under Thatcher and Reagan that so drastically restructured the public sector, reducing the number of public servants, commercializing and privatizing state enterprises, and selling off state assets. It also reshaped the global labor marketplace and restructured higher education in accord with its own globalization ideals. The building of ‘enterprise culture’ was as much a moral crusade to redefine the nature of society through a redefinition of work as were the first attempts to theorize the economic nature of humankind.

A new generation of social theorists and researchers now look for approaches that link discourse, power, psychology and the self with economics to explain the failings of assumptions of *Homo economicus*. Nowhere is this confluence of psychology and economics more important than the in newly emerging field of behavioral economics and finance. Robert J. Shiller, one of its ablest practitioners, writes, ‘Behavioral economics incorporates insights from other social sciences, such as psychology and sociology, into economic models, and attempts to explain anomalies that defy standard economic analysis’. He treats behavioral economics alongside institutional economics as ‘the study of the evolution of economic organizations, laws, contracts, and customs as part of a historical and continuing process of economic development’ and notes that ‘topics include economic fluctuations and speculation, herd behavior, attitudes towards risk, money illusion, involuntary unemployment, saving, investment, poverty, identity, religion, trust, risk management and social welfare institutions’.<sup>15</sup>

The fact is that the question of identity strongly influences economic thinking and behavior and people do not behave in the way that the strong rationality model of neoclassical economics has taught us to believe on the basis of *Homo economicus*. In this vein I am reminded of Foucault’s (2008) lectures on the birth of neoliberalism and in particular lectures nine to twelve where he analyzes American neoliberalism and the theory of human capital—the application of economics to the domain of social life (law and criminality) and the redefinition of *Homo economicus* as entrepreneur of himself, in effects, its generalization to every form of behavior. Foucault comments how *Homo economicus* emerged as the basic element of the new governmental reason in the eighteenth century as a correlate of

the liberal art of government with its focus on civil society which he traces to Ferguson's (1787) *A History of Civil Society*.

When Obama (2009) asserts that ours is a market society in a strong sense he is also adverting to the deep institutionalization of *Homo economicus* in American society, the bi-partisan acceptance of human capital theory in economics and all spheres of life, especially in terms of a generalization of the form 'entrepreneur of himself' chiming with an embedded American ethos, even if under Obama this might come to mean a greater socialization of entrepreneurship and corresponding a greater personalization of services through social networks and social media.

#### THE ORGANIZATION OF THIS COLLECTION

Foucault (2008, p. 407) ends his lectures on the birth of biopower with the statement:

You can see that in the modern world, in the world we have known since the nineteenth century, a series of governmental rationalities overlap, lean on each other, challenge each other, and struggle with each other: art of government according to truth, art of government according to the rationality of the sovereign state, and art of government according to the rationality of economic agents, and more generally, according to the rationality of the governed themselves. And it is all these different arts of government, all these different types of ways of calculating, rationalizing, and regulating the art of government which, overlapping each other, broadly speaking constitute the object of political debate from the nineteenth century. What is politics, in the end, if not both the interplay of these different arts of government with their different reference points and the debate to which these different arts of government give rise?

The essays of this collection focus on how neoliberal, third way and neo-conservative policies rely on a set of practices that might be termed 'government through the market' to produce 'responsibilized' citizens who harness their own entrepreneurial and self-governing capabilities. This collection while including general essays by some of the world's most renowned Foucault scholars in the area of governmentality is primarily targeted at issues concerning the field of education and education policies. It is a landmark text in Foucault studies in education drawing on work currently being developed by scholars working in Germany, Belgium, Canada, Australia, China, Finland and New Zealand as well as the U.S. and United Kingdom. The collection fosters both internationalization and comparative policy analysis in education as well as general reflections on Foucault and the concept of governmentality. Many of the essays in this collection build upon previous research which has analyzed Foucault's approach to governmentality and 'the generalization of an "enterprise form" to all forms of conduct' (Burchell, 1996) and the way in which the promotion of enterprise culture has become a style of governance characteristic of both neoliberalism and Third Way politics.

The collection begins with a Foreword by Colin Gordon and a set of general chapters by Colin Gordon and Jacques Donzelot, Thomas Lemke, Risto Eräsaari, Mark Olssen, Michael A. Peters and Qizhi Yu. The next two sections comprise a set of chapters from Anglo-American perspectives and European perspectives. Anglo-American perspectives includes essays by Thomas Osborne, James D. Marshall, Robert Doherty, Tina (A.C.) Besley, Stephen J. Ball, Thomas S. Popkewitz, Jeff Stickney, David Lee Carlson, Adam Davidson-Harden, Lew Zipin and Marie Brennan, Bernadette Baker, Linda J. Graham, James Wong, and Majia Nadesan. The essays are comprehensive and wide-ranging examining 'Foucault as Educator' (Osborne), the shift from disciplinary to security society, social capital, the governmentality of youth, life-long learning, university-school collaboration, the development of 'psychical science', brain-based-learning, possibilities of resistance for teachers, entrepreneurial subjects, neoliberalism and knowledge capitalism, secondary school strategy, special education and autism. European perspectives include a range of essays by Susanne Maria Weber, Susanne Maurer, Fabian Kessl, Daniel Wrana, Ute Karl, Thomas Höhne and Bruno Schreck, Andrea Liesner, Hermann J. Forneck, Andreas Fejes and Maarten Simons and Jan Masschelein. These essays, equally impressive in their range and depth, examine educational science in Germany, governmentality in social work, continuing education, older people and social work, modularised knowledge, governing the professor, adult education, organizational change, the fabrication of the European citizen, and self-study.

This collection on governmentality distinguishes between the different forms of neoliberalism in its historical and contemporary complexity in term of actual governmental practices. It also addresses forms of Third Way and neoconservative governmentality in the theoretical overview. The collection focuses on philosophical, historical and sociological understandings of 'governmentality' with an accent on *the entrepreneurial and enterprising self* and techniques of governing through the market. The theoretical overview will also trace the centrality of 'law and order', *ordnung*, and relation of the Rule of Law to economics, in liberal and neoliberal constitutions of 'freedom' and explore the field of constitutional economics, especially in relation to the funding, provision and regulation of public education.

Many of the essays in this collection are based on the theoretical promise of the problematic made explicit by the so-called Anglo-Foucauldians. I am referring mainly to the British and Australian neo-Foucauldians (including for example, Gordon, 1991; Burchell, 1993; Rose, 1993), as distinct from both the French and U.S. neo-Foucauldians, and as exemplified in an edited collection called *Foucault and Political Reason* (Barry et al., 1996). Besides the editors themselves, the collection edited by Barry, Osborne, and Rose (1996), includes the following contributors: Barry Hindess, Vikki Bell, Ian Hunter, Alan Hunt, Pat O'Malley, Mitchell Dean, and Barbara Cruikshank. (See also Dean, 1991, 1999; Hindess, 1996; Hunter, 1994; Hunt and Wickham, 1994; Rose, 1999, 2006). The Anglophone neo-Foucauldians might be distinguished from the French (e.g., Donzelot, 1979; Donzelot, 1991; Donzelot, this volume), and the U.S. neo-Foucauldians especially that based around the work of Paul Rabinow and Hubert Dreyfus (1983), and more

recently the work on the anthropology of modernity by Paul Rabinow and his colleagues in the Anthropology department at the University of California, San Deigo.<sup>16</sup>

They may also be distinguished from various feminist appropriations of Foucault, which are both too diverse and complex for me to outline here. In terms of education the intention has been to include as many as possible of the Foucault theorists who have been writing in the field for some time and broadly to follow a neo-Foucauldian approach to the sociology of governance epitomized by *Foucault and Political Reason*. A neo-Foucauldian approach to the sociology of governance avoids interpreting liberalism as an ideology, political philosophy or an economic theory to reconfigure it as a form of governmentality with an emphasis on the question of *how* power is exercised. Such an approach makes central the notion of the self-limiting state, which in contrast to the administrative (or “police”) state, brings together in a productive ways questions of ethics and technique, through the “responsibilization” of moral agents and the active reconstruction of the relation between government and self-government. It also proposes an investigation of neo-liberalism as an intensification of an economy of moral regulation first developed by liberals and not merely or primarily as a political reaction to “big government” or the so-called bureaucratic welfare state of the post-war Keynesian settlement. Indeed, as Andrew Barry et al (1996) point out, some who adopt this approach the era of post-war view welfarism as an aberrant episode that has little to do with liberalism *per se*. The approach enables an understanding of the distinctive features of neo-liberalism. It understands neo-liberalism in terms of its replacement of the natural and spontaneous order characteristic of Hayekian liberalism with “artificially arranged or contrived forms of the free, *entrepreneurial* and *competitive* conduct of economic-rational individuals” (Burchell, 1996: 23). And, further, it understands neo-liberalism through the development of “*a new relation between expertise and politics*” (ibid.), especially in the realm of welfare, where an actuarial rationality and new forms of prudentialism manifest and constitute themselves discursively in the language of “purchaser-provider”, audit, performance, and “risk management”.

Now the geopolitical world template has shifted in part as a consequence of neoliberal policies involving among other things the huge growth and collapse of finance capitalism, in the US and elsewhere in the West, there is a tendency towards community-building, providing jobs and a new focus on sustainability. It is too early to say whether this shift really signals the end of neoliberalism and the beginning of new forms of governmentality except to say there are clear signs that the emphasis of education to contribute to economic growth through research, innovation, and creativity is a development of historically deep-seated liberal notions about the expressive and creative self and the ways in which various freedoms to speak, teach and publish form a basis for governing liberal societies.

## NOTES

- <sup>1</sup> This description is drawn from 'Schools of [Economic] Thought' at <http://cepa.newschool.edu/het/>.
- <sup>2</sup> See the Chicago Department of Economics website at, <http://economics.uchicago.edu/index.shtml>, where it makes the following description: 'Any definition of the "Chicago School" would have to find room for the following ideas (in chronological order from the 1940s to the present): the economic theory of socialism, general equilibrium models of foreign trade, simultaneous equation methods in econometrics, consumption as a function of permanent income, the economics of the household, the rationality of peasants in poor countries, the economics of education and other acquired skills (human capital), applied welfare economics, monetarism, sociological economics (entrepreneurship, racial discrimination, crime), the economics of invention and innovation, quantitative economic history, the economics of information, political economy (externalities, property rights, liability, contracts), the monetary approach to international finance, and rational expectations in macroeconomics.'
- <sup>3</sup> See the work that originates with Paul Rabinow and others 'Critical Ethnographies of Globalization and Governmentality' <http://ls.berkeley.edu/dept/anth/gandg.html>.
- <sup>4</sup> See also the website 'Contemporary Theory, Poststructuralism and Governmentality' at <http://edtheory.ning.com/>.
- <sup>5</sup> For a more comprehensive summary see the journal *Foucault Studies* at [http://rauli.cbs.dk/foucault\\_splash.html](http://rauli.cbs.dk/foucault_splash.html) and the special issue on Neoliberal Governmentality (Issue No. 6, February, 2009) edited by Sverre Raffnsøe, Alan Rosenberg, Alain Beaulieu, Sam Binkley, Jens Erik Kristensen, Sven Opitz, Morris Rabinowitz, Ditte Vilstrup Holm.
- <sup>6</sup> The workshop was held at the University of Leipzig, Dept. of Political Sciences, September 14-15, 2007.
- <sup>7</sup> See Stiglitz's commentary at <http://www.project-syndicate.org/commentary/stiglitz101>.
- <sup>8</sup> It seems almost inevitable that both Morgan Stanley and Goldman Sachs will also disappear. Morgan Stanley is in talks with the China Investment Corp. In the UK the Government rescued Northern Rock and Lloyds has bought out HBOS. Central banks around the world offered \$180 billion to banks outside the US to weather the financial storm.
- <sup>9</sup> See Lance Freeman's blog of March 2008 at <http://www.planetizen.com/node/30187> and Robert Reich's Blog at <http://robertreich.blogspot.com/>. Both talk of the end of neoliberalism; see also Wallerstein's (2008) 'The Demise of Neoliberal Globalization' who argues the end of neoliberalism is a cyclical swing in the history of the capitalist world-economy, at <http://www.monthlyreview.org/mrzine/wallerstein010208.html>.
- <sup>10</sup> See his blog at <http://johnquiggin.com/index.php/archives/2008/09/08/the-end-of-neoliberalism/>.
- <sup>11</sup> The original consensus was based around the following tenants: 1. Fiscal discipline; 2. Reorientation of public expenditures; 3. Tax reform; 4. Financial liberalization; 5. Unified and competitive exchange rates; 6. Trade liberalization; 7. Openness to DFI; 8. Privatization; 9. Deregulation; 10. Secure Property Rights.
- <sup>12</sup> I take Susan George's 'A Short History of Neoliberalism' as emblematic of this movement, see <http://www.zmag.org/CrisesCurEvs/Globalism/george.htm>.
- <sup>13</sup> In this regard see, in particular, Parag Khana's (2008) *The Second World: Empires and Influence in the New Global Order*.
- <sup>14</sup> Barack Obama, 'Renewing American Leadership' *Foreign Affairs*, July-August, 2007, at <http://www.foreignaffairs.org/20070701faessay86401/barack-obama/renewing-american-leadership.html>.
- <sup>15</sup> See his course description of 'Behavioral and Institutional Economics' at <http://www.econ.yale.edu/~shiller/course/527/ec52704.rl.htm>.
- <sup>16</sup> For the program and publications see the website at [http://www.anthro.ucsd.edu/Divisions/modernity\\_anth.html](http://www.anthro.ucsd.edu/Divisions/modernity_anth.html).

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PETERS

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## **I. FOUCAULT ON GOVERNMENTALITY**



JACQUES DONZELOT AND COLIN GORDON

## 1. GOVERNING LIBERAL SOCIETIES

*The Foucault Effect in the English-Speaking World<sup>1</sup>*

### INTRODUCTION

On the occasion of the publication in France of Michel Foucault's 1978-9 lectures on the history of governmentality, Jacques Donzelot invited Colin Gordon to discuss the extensive impact of these lectures in the English-speaking world, and the sources, scope and capabilities of the work which these lectures have inspired in the field of 'governmentality studies', particularly in relation to the contemporary impacts of liberalism and neoliberalism.

**JACQUES DONZELOT** In the two volumes of his lectures of 1978 and 1979, we see Michel Foucault making a major intellectual change of direction, moving away from an analysis of power as the formation and production of individuals towards an analysis of governmentality, a concept invented to denote the 'conduct of conducts' of men and women, working through their autonomy rather than through coercion even of a subtle kind. Out of this concept and the extended analysis of political economy which provides the material for its elaboration, Foucault never produced a published work. He broke off this series of investigations to occupy himself up to his death in 1984 with the writing of two books, which were evidently closer to his heart, of a history of the subject passing by way of the *Care of the self* and the *Use of Pleasure* (Foucault 1989a; 1989b). This however did not prevent this concept of governmentality from meeting with great success in the English-speaking world, in many ways stimulating there an intellectual dynamic more intense than in the case of his published works, which rapidly became classics and were treated as such and with the deference that status entailed, but not with the excitement which met the lectures on governmentality. In 1991 your volume *The Foucault Effect* (Burchell, Gordon, Miller, 1991) set off this dynamic by centring the 'effect' in question precisely on this notion of governmentality. But in France Foucault's lectures on the subject were not published until 2004 and without at first arousing great interest. So what accounts for this singular success of Foucault's reflection on governmentality in the Anglo-Saxon world?

**COLIN GORDON** We had a few advantages in Britain. In the first place, Foucault in his lifetime was more easygoing about foreign translations of his interviews and lectures than he was about their publication or reprinting in France. There may also have been more editorial latitude for juxtaposing this material with

the work of people who were collaborating, virtually or actually, with Foucault. Some of Foucault's important later lectures and texts dealing with government were given in America and originally published there. In *The Foucault Effect* I was able to publish a summary, based on lecture notes and tapes, of his governmentality lectures: many people could certainly have done the same in France.

Secondly there is the difference in the national political conjuncture. In France after 1981 the dominant preoccupation remained socialism rather than liberalism, whereas Foucault had seen the importance of liberalism as a political issue and (I believe) conceived his 1979 lectures partly in response to the conjuncture of the Left's 1978 electoral defeat at the hands of Giscard d'Estaing. It is reasonable to suppose he would not have greatly lamented the defeat of a Left coalition in which the Communist Party played a major role. Here Foucault presents neoliberalism as a modern political rationality worthy of attention and a certain intellectual respect, while commenting that democratic socialism for its part has failed to engender a distinctive governmental rationality. This seemed a prescient and pertinent observation to some of us in Britain who were entering in 1979 on 18 years of Conservative government, whereas in 1981 France was to enter on twenty years of mainly socialist government, endowed with the legacy of the '*trente glorieuses*', the three French post-war decades of notable socio-economic progress. Viewed from across the Channel, the French socialist governments seemed to be protecting, and indeed extending these enviable accomplishments, while a right-wing British government was busy dismantling the semi-corporatist post-war national system, and other English-speaking countries over the same period were getting a dose of the same medicine.<sup>2</sup>

**JACQUES DONZELOT** One can entirely accept this explanation of the success of governmentality studies in the Anglo-Saxon countries. There, neoliberalism triumphed and became an object of study whereas in France, given the relative dominance of the Socialist Party, we had to struggle for twenty years to produce a reflection on the social which uncoupled it from socialism and addressed it in terms of the governability of democracy. Showing that there existed an acceptable exit from socialism seemed to us more important than grasping the subtleties of liberalism as a political rationality. I have in mind a series of authors working to that agenda, including Robert Castel and myself, who were for a time close to Foucault, and others like Pierre Rosanvallon, who were not, who exemplify this national particularity of our relation to the question of government, in contrast to what you say about the destiny of that question in the English-speaking countries.

One can also wonder if the fact that Foucault's reflection was at odds with this French conjuncture might not have contributed to a certain hardening of his political stance in this terrain, a difficulty in positioning himself which led to abandoning this aspect of his reflection to concentrate on the care of the self? Because the context was a very delicate one: he had parted company with his 'revolutionary' links without lapsing into the kind of political philosophy which he hated, the question of regime, of the State, of all those official objects which he had been so well able to bypass. It was also the moment when the circle of friends

around him in the 70s broke up and he contented himself with a few close supporters. In a way you invented a French Foucauldian school which never existed, or no longer exists in France, but, with this “Foucault effect” where you assembled texts from this loose group of friends in the 70s, weren’t you fabricating an artefact which gave the illusion in Anglo-Saxon countries of a dynamic which no longer existed in France.... and thereby managed to produce one in those countries? Hence my second question – what was it that led to this interest in governmentality there?

**COLIN GORDON** It is quite true that in our volume we did not inform our readers about some political and personal disagreements between our authors, where we could not see that these were linked to a clear intellectual difference. My introduction to our book was (as I admitted) an attempt to construct a plane of consistence between the work of individuals who, in some cases, had never met, and in others were no longer collaborators or desiring to be perceived as such.<sup>3</sup> The fabrication of our artefact ended up taking some time, nearly a decade in all: Foucault’s death in 1984 complicated and changed the terms of the project, which had been begun with his knowledge and approval, in various ways. Now that five volumes of Foucault’s lectures from the 1970s have been published, however, one can more easily see how much of what became, for a time, a shared research programme was already well developed in his own work, in parts well before 1978.

As to Foucault’s trajectory, I think it is with his 1976 lectures, at the latest, that he starts to distance himself from the militant ideal of the time. The discussion in those lectures of Sieyès and the Third Estate seems already to prefigure his later reflection on the formidable capabilities of liberalism as a political rationality. The intellectual path that led Foucault from the analysis of disciplines to that of governmentality is perfectly consistent, just as the theme of governmentality connects consistently in turn with his later themes of care of the self and truth-telling. Let’s also remember that this ‘late’ or ‘final’ Foucault, who is supposed to have retreated into solitary study of the Church fathers and the history of the sacraments of penitence, was also the treasurer of the French branch of Solidarnosc, engaged in public discussion with the socialist trade union leader Edmond Maire, and in an institutional project with the law reformer and justice minister, Robert Badinter. It seems, as Michel Senellart rightly notes in his excellent editorial postscript to the 1978-79 lectures, that Foucault’s interest in liberalism and neoliberalism is very much connected, around 1978, with his support for the East European dissidents. There is a marked anticommunist context in his lectures of 1978-9.

I have always been surprised that there was so little contemporary resonance at the time in France for Foucault’s work on governmentality. In 1979 Foucault said that he would work in the following years’ lectures on the genealogy of political parties – especially, I believe, that of the French Socialist party. I suspect that he was discouraged from pursuing this plan by the limited success of his dialogue with friends in, or close to, the Socialist Party. Perhaps his anticommunism still posed too many problems. But there was never any sign that he had repudiated this

series of analyses. In the following years he encouraged and supported some young researchers he taught at Berkeley who did research into governmentality in America. At the time of his death, he had a book announced for publication with Editions du Seuil entitled *Le gouvernement de soi et des autres*.

I never thought that Foucault would have been in serious political disagreement with your work at around this time, or indeed that you would be likely to dissent from his views about security and autonomy in the Welfare State, as set out in his discussion with Robert Bono of the CFDT. Indeed I tried to show that Foucault's analyses of liberalism were consistent with the approach of your *L'invention du social* (Donzelot [1984] 1994), notably in the lecture he gave in 1979 on Fergusson's *History of Civil Society* where he sees emerging a notion of society as a « transactional reality », a mobile surface of engagement between the practices of government and the universe of the governed which constantly tends to escape their grasp. Whereas he had clear political differences with Deleuze – who was another philosophical genius, but no genius in politics. Nowadays, as you know, there are many people in the world, academics in particular, who prefer a Deleuzian Foucault interpreted by Agamben or Negri, as there are people interested in governmentality studies. While the successive waves of posthumous publication and circulation of Foucault's work are reaching and inspiring new generations of readers, some of those who responded to his published work of the 70s and 80s may by now be looking elsewhere for stimulating novelty (unless, as is of course entirely feasible, Foucault's newly published work is reinterpreted and adapted to serve an agenda different from his own).

As for the results of English-speaking governmentality studies (not to speak of work in the rest of the world outside France), it is hard to give a short and summary answer. Nikolas Rose and Mitchell Dean published books which have been seen as aiming to systematise governmentality, to make it into a theoretical programme. But many people (and probably both of these authors) would deny that there is or was a 'governmentality school' in any clear-cut sense. Apart from the reference to a limited set of canonical texts by Foucault, there is typically a focus round the issue of liberalism and liberty, signalling the need to take liberalism seriously as an intellectual force which is also subject to historical transformation. Some original fields of research have been developed, such as the work of Peter Miller on the genealogy of management, and of Paul Rabinow and Nikolas Rose on biotechnologies; links have been made with other approaches, notably with Latour and actor network theory, in work on 'government at a distance'. James Tully, Duncan Ivison, Tom Osborne, Graham Burchell and I have been interested in the affinities between Foucault's works on governmentality and certain currents of English-language history of political thought, such as John Pocock's work on civic republicanism. Then there is work by people who were taught by Foucault at Berkeley, including interesting studies of modern governmentality by David Horn and Keith Gandall, and Jonathan Simon's important work on American penal justice. In recent years it is also becoming clearer that Foucault's legacy, and particularly his work on governmentality, has had major international impacts in

the rapidly changing disciplines of geography<sup>4</sup> and anthropology and the new and important sector of postcolonial studies.

Does this work imply a distinctive political orientation? In broad terms we are a loose faction in the post-New Left diaspora which is still in search of its moral and ideological identity; more particularly, an episode in the experience of a Left coming to terms with a fresh advent and partial triumph of liberalism. There is not much evidence of a direct impact of this body of work on the political domain. I am not aware that Blair has read Foucault. Anthony Giddens, for a time the Blair-Clinton court philosopher, usually includes a caricature account of Foucault only as a marginal item in his doctrinal digests. But I think parts of the formulae of Clinton and Blair for a 'third way' may have effectively carried out a form of the operation which Foucault might have been taken as challenging the socialists to contemplate – the selective incorporation, in an updated and corrected social democracy, of certain elements of neoliberal analysis and strategy. In some ways it is the continuation of a trend initiated in the 70s by Schmidt in Germany, Giscard in France and Healey in Britain, and in her different way by Thatcher – the truth-telling role of government, in a world of global economic uncertainty and competition, as moral tutor of citizens in an ethic of enterprise and responsibility. The success of this formula in Britain seemed for a long time to be limited only by the irritability of citizens and the claims of the fourth estate, the media, to make and unmake governmental power (both of these reactions being severely aggravated, of course, by Blair's imprudent extension of his governmental agenda to embrace the neo-conservative enterprise of civilisation confrontation and global war on terror).

'Governmentality studies', where they are identifiable as such, have been an academic activity governed by prevailing institutional and discursive norms; Foucault's work, while inspiring to many, does not have the capacity to turn lead into gold. As part of this discursive order, there has been an ongoing discussion about which side such investigations are, or should be, on: that of a new rationalisation of government, or that of a critique of such rationality? No one has quite followed the trajectory of Francois Ewald, from a genealogy of social insurance to an ethical ontology of risk as the noble spirit of the enterprising class. All the same, the theme of governmentality has become involved in a debate where some are accused by others of seeking to legitimate, rather than to problematise, the idea of a 'risk society' considered as the ineluctable contemporary form of collective reality which all citizens and governmental techniques are necessarily obliged to confront.

The reception of Foucault's analysis of neoliberalism unfortunately often seems to be flattened into a set of polemical, ideological and globalising generalities, dispensing with the kind of descriptive investigation Foucault undertook in 1979 of the different avatars of neoliberalism with their national, historical and theoretical specificities. Indeed, neglect of post-war history seems to be a frequent feature of this polemical discourse: from a recent book on neoliberalism by David Harvey, a post-modern geographer who views Foucault's work as obsolete, one might think that neoliberalism had been an invention of the 1970s.

I hope the full publication of these lectures will revitalise this area of research. I think their publication will also show that this notion of governmentality can usefully be applied alongside Foucault's earlier and later ideas (power/knowledge, discipline, government of self, *parrhesia*). The theme of governmentality certainly needs to be seen in its continuity with the themes of the « late » or « final » Foucault (we are only talking here of an interval of five or six years): ethics, care of self, *parrhesia* or truth-telling, the conditions of existence of critical discourse. To understand these implications in full we will have to await the publication of the final lectures.

**JACQUES DONZELOT** After listening to this harangue, I plunged into the 'governmentality studies' for which you had pointed me to some of the key protagonists. And I emerged – at least for the moment – with mixed feelings of pleasure and unease.

The pleasure was especially in reading sections of the books co-edited and written by Nikolas Rose – *Foucault and Political Reason, The Powers of Freedom*, and the articles of Thomas Lemke. All of these show the pertinence of analysis in terms of governmentality in addressing neoliberalism. They all rely on the Foucauldian refutation of a fixed distinction between the domain of the State and the domain of civil society, between the domain of power and the domain of subjectivity. They use it to show that the 'retreat of the State' which is supposed to constitute neoliberalism in fact corresponds to an extension of government.

This extension is made possible by replacing the direct government of society by the State with a form of government at a distance. There is a destatification of government which goes in hand with the appearance of social technologies which delegate responsibility for individuals to other autonomous entities: enterprises, communities, professional organizations, individuals themselves. The use of contractual agreements, defined of objectives, measures of performance, combined with local autonomy, allows this shift of responsibility to governmental action at a distance. In this perspective,

Individuals are to become 'experts of themselves', to adopt an educated and knowledgeable relation of self-care in respect of their bodies, their minds, their forms of conduct and that of the members of their own families. (Rose in *Foucault and Political Reason*, 1997, p. 59)

Individuals become 'entrepreneurs of themselves', and it is as such that they are bonded into society through the choices they make, the risks they take, and the responsibilities themselves and others which thereby arise and which they are required to assume. Citizenship is consequently no longer exercised in a relationship with the State or within a public space (such a space becoming indeed difficult to discern as such) so much as a varied range of private, corporate or quasi-public practices, ranging from work to consumption:

the consumer citizen becomes an active agent in the regulation of professional expertise; the prudent citizen becomes an active agent of security, the citizen as employee becomes an active agent in the regeneration of industry. (ibid)

It is at this point, at this equation of the simultaneous growth of individual autonomy and responsibility – one believes oneself autonomous: what is worse, one is; but this autonomy is designed to make us into agents of the system – that my unease begins. Not because the analysis is false – I entirely endorse it as a necessary stage, as far as it does – but because it is presented as sufficient, whereas the underlying questions start just at the point where it stops, sure of itself and of its intellectual effect. The sophisticated social technologies of advanced neoliberal society, it tells us, contain an enlarged component of freedom along with an enlarged component of required responsibility in comparison with those of the Welfare State. Just as the latter marked an advance on old-style political economy, so political economy had represented a move beyond the model of reason of state. Each new model is evaluated only against the performance of its predecessor: they are always analysed at their ‘technical’ level, never in terms of a political criterion or in terms of value. This is the cost of the ability of governmentality studies to describe the materiality of social technologies while avoiding, for instance, the habitual denunciations of neoliberalism as an ideological rhetoric designed to mask a false economic theory and a practical anti-humanism, as Marxists and anti-globalisers like to put it. But doesn’t the avoidance of that kind of simplification lead, in its turn, to a central ambivalence at the core of this kind of analysis? Isn’t that what you yourself point out when you say that this kind of analysis can lead either to a critique of political rationality or to a rationalisation of this same set of policies?

In terms of political rationalities, in France we can all think of Francois Ewald’s celebration of risk written from his current standpoint as a leading official of the national employers’ organization. This is a classic case of counter-transference where the analyst falls blindly in love with his object, in this case the technology of insurance, and finds in it the key to all problems of social and political life.

But the other standpoint, the critique of political rationality, can be no less irritating when it is presented as a self-sufficient conclusion. I will give two examples which have struck me from my recent remedial reading course in governmentality studies.

The first is from Nikolas Rose’s book *Powers of Freedom*. In a chapter called ‘the community-civility game’, he tries to establish a parallel between Bentham’s famous Panopticon and the virtues claimed for it by Bentham in terms of preserving morality, stimulating industry and spreading education, and the qualities attributed to the notion of community promoted by authors like Etzioni, Putnam, Fukuyama and Belloch (already a somewhat hastily amalgamated group), or with that of the idea of associational networks considered as new diagrams of power, promoting ‘moral’ conducts in likewise subtly imperious ways. The ‘we’ of community is shown as exercising a technico-moral authority akin to that of the penitentiary Panopticon. At a stroke the Foucauldian analysis of governmentality as ‘conduct of conducts’, as action at a distance, loses its distinction from the disciplinary techniques of the 19th century. But more serious is the way this assimilation serves the cultivation of a posture of radical critique.

In Barbara Cruikshank’s analysis of the function of the notion of empowerment in the USA, I found this same inclination to adopt a posture of radical critique at the cost of losing the subtle capabilities inherent in of this notion of the ‘conduct of

conducts'. When she denounces the invitation to self-empowerment, she is not so far from our own Jean Baudrillard and his celebration of the inertia of the silent majority as a form of resistance to the modern injunctions to participation and expression. One needs to be aware that she is analysing Californian 'Welfare to work' programmes which are more systems of forced labour under harsh conditions than steps to the empowerment of individuals over themselves or in their relation with others: whereas this theme of empowerment does also and above all have a dimension of acquisition of power over oneself thanks to the power which the collective one belongs to is able to produce. The collective in this case is not thought of as demanding a sacrifice from the individual, but rather as a necessary support for individual self-affirmation. But the choice as examples of these caricatured initiatives may also serve as indicating a wish to cultivate an exclusively critical posture.

One can also wonder if this ambivalence of these analyses in terms of governmentality may not lead them to incline towards one side or the other, the critical or the laudatory side, depending on the location where it is conducted. In Anglo-Saxon countries where neoliberalism was imposed from the start of the 80s, Foucault studies provide the means of a sophisticated critique, albeit one which is visibly lacking a capacity to propose alternatives. Does this political ambivalence in the notion of governmentality not condemn it to serving an ideological function, determined by political circumstance, whereas it aspires to be precisely the antidote of an ideological reading of forms of government?

**COLIN GORDON** One negative feature of the Foucauldian diaspora is that people can be seduced by the idea of revealing the truth of the present, but this is can be contaminated by a taste for hyperbolic discourses which exceed any critical purchase on the real. The leading example of this is no doubt the work Giorgio Agamben who detects in all government a virtual programme of extermination, and views the condition of the governed as universal reduction to the condition of *homo sacer*, and the like-minded commentators who in the UK see every Blairite innovation in the policing of families as a step on the road to serfdom.

As for the question behind your question, that is to say Foucault's critical standpoint vis-à-vis governmentality in terms of its potentiality for progressive technical invention, I suggest this brings us back to the distinctive quality of liberalism itself. Foucault says that the liberal art of government consists in the production and consumption of freedom, the creation and destruction of freedom. It is (as some say) the government of freedom and (as others remind us) the government of unfreedom<sup>5</sup> – or rather, the government of a freedom which is itself an unfreedom. Liberals (Keynes and Beveridge) were architects of the Welfare State: other liberals have been its critics and reformers. It is the paradox of liberalism in all its forms (neo, advanced, post...) that much action is necessary before one can *laisser faire* – action even to the extent of acting to bring into existence the reality (freedom, society) which it is desired to *laisser faire* – '*faire société*', as indeed you have it in the title of your recent book. Hence one might partly counter some of your reproaches by saying that this kind of analysis brings out the ambiguity and

ambivalence of liberal realities, in advance of any question of the practical consequences one chooses – or fails to choose – to infer from the analysis.

The detached, Weberian value-freedom of Foucault's description of the constitutive operations of liberalism as a governmentality may look to some like a disarming of the power of critique. You are asking whether and how, having unlearned the easy rhetoric of denunciation, one can then reintroduce a pertinent basis for critical evaluation.

In the first place, the very experience of a degree of discomfort at the paradoxes, antinomies and aporias of liberal liberty may help lead to healthy lucidity rather than moral incapacitation. Further, this element of detachment does not prevent, but even encourages the introduction of certain counter-analyses within the terms of the liberal paradigm: for instance, the theory of social capital invented by Robert Putnam (that is, of the resources which individuals draw from relational networks of solidarity and local and private forms of mutual support), or again, in relation to the Lockean theory of self-ownership as the necessary foundation of the liberal economy, the requirement that each person be endowed with the necessary resources to enable that self-ownership to be effective in practice (as Robert Castel argues in his recent book on *Social Insecurity*, in terms interestingly similar to those of Amartya Sen's work on 'capability rights').

Having said this, many who work in governmental studies do not feel called upon to take up the tasks you propose to them. In the book you quote, Nikolas Rose writes that in this type of work the aim is to destabilize and think beyond 'all those claims made by others to govern us in the name of our own well-being', and that studies of governmentality 'do not try to put themselves at the service of those who would govern better' [59-60]. This sounds like a form of knowledge which wants to serve only on the side of contestation. However, while recognising the critical contribution which his analyses have indeed made, others might wish at least to qualify those statements of position (which Nikolas himself firmly refuses to assert as group doctrines). Because it is hard to see why it should be a necessary axiom of the study of governmentality that all government (even one which claims to take account of the good of the governed) is an evil in itself, or that the wish to govern better should necessarily be something from which one ought ethically to disassociate oneself. Certainly, Foucault himself said that critique is not obliged to harness itself to the programming of a reform designed only to maintain an existing relation of forces, but he also said that in talking with a government one can be '*debout et en face*' – that is, engage in dialogue as an independent and equal interlocutor. In this view of things, critique, struggle, discussion and collective invention are compatible and complementary tasks. I suppose that it was not out of pure malice that Foucault suggested to the French Socialists in 1979 the project to invent a governmentality of their own; he indeed subsequently showed some evidence of willingness to assist with that task.

The seductive element in Foucault's rereading of liberalism was the thought that the art of better government was presented as the art of governing less, and that in this sense liberalism forms an autocritique of governmental reason: a governmentality which develops and corrects itself through its own critique. Alongside this there

was his other seductive notion of critique (inspired by Kant's definition of Enlightenment as an emancipation from tutelage) as an indocility of the governed, a will not to be governed so much or in such a way. That is where the permanent task of critique would demand an inventive sequel: how to govern in order to be governed less, how to govern in order to be governed or to govern oneself in the way one wishes? Here we meet Foucault's refusal of the double blackmail, by the policy experts for whom a critique is invalidated if not accompanied by a prescription for reform, and by those who use the converse charge of recuperation, for whom every unprejudiced discussion of what is possible or desirable comes down to a capitulation of critique before the status quo.<sup>6</sup>

It is true that most of us have remained at a certain distance from the attempts, in the English speaking world as in France, to 'remoralise' politics through the injection of new or revived doctrines of civic and democratic virtue. Some thinkers, like William Connolly and James Tully, have made interesting attempts to incorporate values of difference and multiplicity in political ethics. My reading of your recent book *Faire société* suggests to me that you also subscribe to that general project.

Why have we kept our distance from these initiatives (apart from the consideration that today's civic pedagogues are sometimes too easily recognisable as recycled revolutionary ideologues)? For heuristic reasons Foucault drew a distinction between his field of research on governmental practices and the history of the political doctrine of sovereignty and its legitimate foundation, the history of citizens and their rights. This may have been initially necessary and effective as a means to establish and make visible a new object of study (except in respect of making that new object visible to historians of political thought), but I think it is time now for a more connected approach so that we can look, for instance, at what relation there might be between a certain notion of citizenship and a certain way of being governed<sup>7</sup>. This might help us to think more effectively about what we are becoming and what we wish or do not wish to become.

Another benefit of Foucault's initiative which has been noticed recently is that it anticipates the effects of globalisation in relativising the status of national state institutions. It surprised me that François Ewald and Blandine Kriegel said recently that Foucault was concerned with problems of his time and that now we have other concerns. Foucault's concerns in his later years seem to me to include notably neoliberalism, Islam, security, ethics, and the rights and global solidarity of the governed, all issues which I think we still recognise as pertinent today.

**JACQUES DONZELOT** I agree with this idea that the concept of governmentality has a prescient value in relation to globalisation, because it registers, in a sense in advance, the relativisation of States and nations, and I would also see in this advantage an enhanced possibility of linking the 'technical' analysis of governmentality with the 'moral' analysis of forms of citizenship corresponding to this new historical context.

The analysis of neoliberal governmentality shows a common orientation of developed countries striving to adapt to new realities. This orientation involves reducing the direct role of States in the economy and social relations, in favour of a

new economy of social relations which emphasises autonomy and individual responsibility at all the local levels where autonomy and responsibility can be brought into interaction. In this sense, neoliberal governmentality is indeed a pure ‘technical’ product of critiques addressed to the Welfare State for the pasty forty years : left critics denouncing the creation in the name of progress of an order ever more disposed to control individuals, reducing their effective autonomy under the guise of an enhanced solicitude, and critics on the right who indicted the dismantling of the order necessary for progress through the deresponsibilising of individuals living under the increasing care of the State. The difficulty of sustaining an ever-rising burden of State revenues without affecting the global competitiveness of enterprises prompted governments to use and play off these two critiques against each other, to counter the growth of demands and recriminations addressed at the State.

The ‘civic’ question is so little foreign to this ‘technical’ solution that it arises out of the very fact of its application. For it is all very well to govern at a distance, relegating to the local level the play of encounters between the needs for autonomy and the demand for responsibility. That still requires that these ‘localities’, these diverse groupings, communities, enterprises, collectivities, form a society, and are not too disparate, too mutually estranged, too indifferent to anything outside of their own destiny, too incapable of a shared appreciation of what is right and just for all members of these constructed collectivities. Here there arises the question of consent to shared institutions, and therefore to the shared costs they impose. This consent is a form of civic engagement (*civisme*), its abstract incarnation, which we can counterpose to the direct mutual trust of people and citizens within the local frame of the specific community where they live.

Trust and consent are two relative values, the balance of whose roles can vary in the production of a civic society. They are in some sense the equivalents for citizenship of what autonomy and responsibility represent in the context of governmentality. They call for a similar concern for their mutual adjustment – what is the right relation of these two registers to permit the establishment of a civic society? And the intersection of these two registers, the ‘technical’ register of autonomisation and responsibility, and the ‘civic’ relation of consent and trust determines the way the concern for governmental effectiveness succeeds or fails to connect with the realisation of a civic society. Bringing together these two demands allows us to pose the question of how to make society exist in the context of neoliberalism. It seems to me that Europe is the place *par excellence* for the search for equilibrium between these two lines of transformation, the one which affects the governed and the one which affects the citizen.

**COLIN GORDON** Consent and trust and also, if possible, respect, are certainly things which every government today desires to produce and to enjoy – respect being incidentally the item which others most like to deny government, at least in Britain. The production of respect demands, in turn, persuasion and pedagogy. Persuasion for the social classes which are resistant to change because they feel insecure, and pedagogy for the minorities who may be inclined to disorder or

revolt. On these subjects, alongside Foucault's accounts of the pastoral function of government it is worth reading Paul Veyne's essay on the irritability of the governed, 'When the individual is fundamentally affected by the power of the State' (*Economy and Society*, Vol. 34, No. 2, May 2005, translated by Graham Burchell). Veyne explains how Roman opinion was humiliated and violated by the spectacle of a ruler, the emperor Nero, who forced the ruled to serve as the audience of an aesthetic performance. In Britain we have had for a time a ruler who was the great tenor of what you in the 80s dubbed the coming 'civilisation of change': the man of truth as 'change-maker', telling the truth of global competition and the consequent obligation of all and each to be changed. But, just as Foucault taught us, it transpires that people can resist anything, even governmental *parrhesia*, even the pedagogy of reality and the ethic of change. The man of change and truth has not been assassinated, but he has been judged a corrupter and a liar. No governmentality will abolish resistance to government.

Could the currents of work and reflection we have been discussing contribute to the formation of a European political culture? 'It would be a good idea', as Gandhi said of Western civilisation. Foucault talked less about the common market than the social market (expect perhaps in that enigmatic question in one of his 1976 lectures: 'and what if Rome, once again, were to conquer revolution?'): is anyone writing the history of the linkage between those two themes?<sup>8</sup>

Foucault sketched the 20th-century international transfers (sometimes covert, often mediated by emigration and exile) of neoliberal techniques and formulae, much as he had outlined the international movement of ideas around 1900 on crime, security and social defence. It would be interesting today to continue this kind of analysis, tracing for instance the transfer between national and political camps of notions and techniques of social exclusion and inclusion.

Perhaps we need to enlarge our thinking even beyond the still growing European space. It is worth noting that the global (at least Anglophone) impact of the notion and theme of governmentality has coincided and in several cases interacted with the growth of the new discipline of postcolonial studies. The relation between proponents of postcolonial studies and Foucault's work have been, in a somewhat similar way to the situation in feminist studies, contested and often contestatory; sometimes one has the impression of a generation of fractious and needy orphans, afraid of their own freedom, who cannot forgive Foucault for failing to write their books as well as his, or for only having written the books he lived to write; nevertheless, the encounter has led to some promising beginnings of analyses of colonial and post- or neo-colonial styles of governmentality.<sup>9</sup> Perhaps we are also seeing the beginnings of a new analysis of the question which preoccupied Foucault, along with neoliberalism, in 1978-9, namely 'Islamic government', together with the now very current question of the possible civil and political modes of existence of Muslim citizens in societies with a liberal regime of government. If a European political culture was capable of accommodating and welcoming such reflections, it would be a step forward for Europe and the world.

*Translated by Colin Gordon*

## NOTES

- <sup>1</sup> Translated (with minor revisions to Colin Gordon's contribution) from *Esprit*, Novembre 2007, 82-95: 'Comment gouverner les sociétés libérales? L'effet Foucault dans le monde Anglo-Saxon'.
- <sup>2</sup> Though Thatcher had fallen from power by the time *The Foucault Effect* was published; in the 80s the British Left's preferred intellectual guide for the understanding of Thatcherism was Gramsci, not Foucault.
- <sup>3</sup> Sylvain Meyet (2006) points out, accurately, that no contributor to our volume except Foucault himself and the editors explicitly uses the term 'governmentality'.
- <sup>4</sup> Legg (2006).
- <sup>5</sup> Hindess (2001).
- <sup>6</sup> To state what may be obvious: Foucault's insistence on recognising the critical and anti-essentialist components of liberalism and neoliberalism does not mean that these doctrines are therefore to be considered as the permanent homeland of critical thinking in general.
- <sup>7</sup> As early as *Histoire de la Folie*, Foucault had identified the modern political problem of reconciling two incarnations of the citizen, the "man of law" and the "man of government".
- <sup>8</sup> It is interesting that in his 1979 lectures on liberalism Foucault cites Kant's Perpetual Peace on the cosmopolitan right, prescribed by nature, of global free trade. "The guarantee of perpetual peace is, in effect, commercial globalisation (la planétarisation commerciale)" [2004, 60: my translation].
- <sup>9</sup> For a useful survey see Legg (2006).

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## 2. MICHEL FOUCAULT'S UNDERSTANDING OF LIBERAL POLITICS

Last year, the 20th anniversary of Foucault's death was celebrated worldwide with large manifestations aiming to demonstrate the persistent currency of one of the greatest French intellectuals of the last century. However, they have missed, by only one year, the chance of coinciding with the issue that currently haunts us the most in France and that has pinnacled with the recent referendum on the subject of the European constitution, namely, the relationship between economic liberalism and politics. And, therefore, it is on this subject that his thinking could have appeared as the most current.

Michel Foucault has invented a unique method for reconsidering our ways of thinking about all of those objects supposedly universal such as madness, delinquency, sexuality and government. For him, it was not about showing their historical relativity, nor refusing their validity, as it is often argued, but rather, it was about claiming a priori their inexistence and unmaking all the certitudes of which they are object, such as their pure historicity. That has allowed him to wonder how what did not exist could take place, how a series of practices could be arranged to produce, in relation to each of those objects, a regime of truth, a fact of power and knowledge combined, which enabled to say, as long as the aforementioned regime of truth imposed its efficacy, what it was true or false in matters of madness, delinquency, sexuality and government. On each of these subjects, Michel Foucault produced canonic work...except for his work about government or his work taking into account his analysis of the relation between economic and political liberalism. Why this omission? Has his premature death prevented this analysis? It is difficult to say, because after having discussed this issue with unique passion, he suddenly abandoned it and devoted the rest of his life to the delight of a history of subjectivity whose interest, as considerable as it can be, nowadays one may think that it is not as important as the one he has abandoned along the way.<sup>1</sup>

In a certain way, posterity has censured his premature abandonment of the issue of the government of men in favor of the self-behavior. Everywhere the studies on governmentality constitute the most vivid part of his work<sup>2</sup>. This Foucauldian analysis of liberalism has been hardly taken into account in France<sup>3</sup>. We would like to remedy this by freely inspiring us from his analysis to comment on the current political conjunction, which is characterized in France both by the negative response to the referendum on the project of the European constitution that has revealed the extent to which liberalism is being rejected and by the Left's incapacity to adopt a position about globalization different of its withdrawal from it.

In France, liberalism is viewed as a suspicious doctrine, tolerated by necessity, but strange to our thinking. One opposes it more than one thinks in function of it or starts from it. Compared to the brightest thinkers of the Republic, to many it looks like their opposite, the sign of their slackening, the mendacious promise of a harmony which would not be possible if it were not from the demanding imposition of the general interest by a State liberated from the influence of particular interests. Essentially, our political thinking is positioned at a calculated distance from this Anglo-Saxon doctrine: quite distant to succumb to its evil spells, but at the same time, not too far to sustain the principle of resistance to extremism which, otherwise, could repress the universal aspiration of our republican virtues in the narrowness of the national setting.

Because of our ideas against liberalism, without thinking about it, without taking into account the intelligence it contains, we go past the reasons that make its force and its unlimited expansion, and we adopt an increasingly fixed and sterile position in the future of the world. On the contrary, while in the Collège de France Foucault intended to recover the thread of liberalism as the thought of government and not as the opposite of the republican art of governing. This idea took up two years of his courses in the Collège de France, namely 1978 and 1979. The first one was entitled "Security, territory and population" and the second, "The birth of biopolitics". Seuil has edited both in 2004<sup>4</sup>. I have to say I started reading the transcription of my former professor's courses with the bizarre curiosity that one can experience about words that were once familiar and exciting before they became irritating and strange, and without having attended these two courses or any other afterwards and currently sustaining one of the most distant positions vis-à-vis the group of loyal followers who keep alive the cult of M. Foucault's memory. Very soon, though, the currency of his analysis on liberalism after 25 years of its formulation stunned me more than the past memories. This analysis shows wonderfully how the power of economics lies in an economy of power, as much during the emergence of liberalism at the end of the 18th century as when neoliberalism surfaced between the 30s and 50s. What aspects of Foucault's analysis are current and which ones are new? On the one hand, his analysis is current because of its remarks on the bifurcation of the French political thought vis-à-vis the Anglo-Saxon, its insistence about the law as the expression of a will, its view on the constitution as the result of the individuals' voluntary renunciation of their sovereignty, in sum, because of everything we have experienced about the referendum on Europe. On the other, what makes this analysis new is considering that neoliberalism calls for another kind of engagement with the idea of social justice, inherited through the 'welfare state' of the classical liberalism. Or rather, that this engagement calls for revision and adaptation in order to protect its resources and its efficacy and to avoid it is defended with tooth and nails. I would like to present first both moments of Michel Foucault's analysis on the birth of liberalism and its renewal in the half of the 20th century before drawing some remarks about our context, more than 25 years apart from his lectures.

## THE INTELLIGENCE OF LIBERALISM ACCORDING TO MICHEL FOUCAULT

The beginning of the political economy constitutes the real object of the 1978 course, entitled "Security, territory, population". How are the title and the object related? They seem to be unrelated at first glance, which can be explained by the progressive detour of the course from an analysis of power towards an analysis of governmentality, a concept created in 1978 to account for the introduction of the political economy in the art of governing.

In the beginning of his course, Foucault intends to describe the passage, during the 18th century, from a power whose target is a territory to a power exercised over the population. The logic and the periodicity are similar to those used to deal with the history of punishment in *Discipline and Punish*—from "l' éclat des supplices" to "la douceur des peines"<sup>5</sup>—or in the conclusion of the first tome of the history of sexuality—"du droit de mort au pouvoir sur la vie"<sup>6</sup>—which announced a general reflexivity about bio-power of which this course must ensure its beginning. One is, thus, in known territory, ready to 'listen' to an author who masters his art and his object. However, he resolves to refuse the thesis of his main work, *Discipline and Punish*. For this occasion, he announces three subjects susceptible to support his argument in the case in point, that is, the displacement of the application of power over a territory to the population: the city, the famine and the illness.

Within the framework of a power aiming to secure a territory, each subject is discussed within a logic of demarcation, of separation, of fortification, as the territory is like a building that one must protect against internal and external threats. Cities must be fortified and protected from the outside in order to undertake commerce and craftsmanship. Also, they have to send their wealth to the capital, the place of the sovereign. The country too has to be controlled by the law of the landlord, of course, but also and above all, by the prohibitions of the sovereign in relation to anything related to the commerce of grain, whose costliness affects the inhabitants of the cities, thus, causing famines and arousing riots. Additionally, the sovereign outlaws the stock of grain by the peasants. In this way, the prix of grain can be increased and it can be sold to foreign countries. It is convenient that peasants make little profits so that the people of the cities can nourish themselves at the lowest price. Finally, vis-à-vis the epidemic illnesses such as smallpox, leprosy and cholera, it is better to proceed by separating and isolating the ill. In sum, the security of the sovereign's territory needs that he mainly resorts to separation and prohibition measures.

Foucault explains that the power mechanisms will change completely when the sovereign no longer worries about the security of the territory, but rather, about the security of the population. Regarding the cities, the problem would no longer consist in enclosing them with fortified borders, but in opening them to allow their growth and to avoid urban congestion. The concern shifts from caring about the limits imposed to caring about the facilitation of a good circulation of people, merchandise, and even the air. The same principle would prevail for avoiding famines: instead of limiting the commerce of grains to "iron collar" measures, it is better allowing the flux of merchandises and achieving the self-regulation of prices through the game of profits authorized in this way. As these profits would be

invested in the new crops, the amount of grain for sale next year would increase, and concomitantly, its price would decrease. The possibility of importing, which had been agreed upon, would counteract better the attempts of stocking than its prohibition would. Certainly, this would not eliminate the revolts completely, but it would deprive them of its justification, as the sovereign would be acting conforming to “the nature of things” and not in terms of the prohibitions for whose inefficacy he could be accused. The nature of things can be found as well in the inoculation and vaccination, which consist in reducing illness by “authorizing” its entrance to the body. The body, thus, learns to protect itself, in the same way the authorized costliness of grain ends up leading to its decrease.

From needing his subjects’ obedience to protect the security of his territory, the sovereign passes to a good use of freedom to secure the population. However, what supports the sovereign now? How does the notion of power applied to the population evoke the exercise of sovereignty? As Michel Foucault advances in his analysis, he feels uncomfortable mixing up the word sovereign with the word population: saying that the sovereign no longer reigns on his subjects but on a massive population makes these two terms clash. Also, he prefers using the term government in relation to the term population than to the word sovereign.

As I talked about the population, there was a word which constantly returned—you may not say that I have done it deliberately, perhaps not entirely—. It is the word ‘government’. The more I talked about the population, the more I avoided saying ‘the sovereign’.<sup>7</sup>

However, what are the implications of pairing up the words population and government? Essentially, it confirms that with the focus on the population not only the technologies of power changed, but also the model of government did. The government appeared as something different than a technology of power, at least as a frame for exercising it. Precisely, in the framework of sovereignty the model of reference for the exercise of power was the family, which raises this central question: How can the spirit of the head of the family be incorporated into the management of the state, that is, the economy, the wellbeing of all?

The essential element in the prince’s pedagogy is the government of the family, which one precisely calls economy...How can the economy be introduced, that is, how can one manage properly the individuals, goods and wealth, as one can do it in the family, as a good father of family who knows how to manage his wife, his children, his servants and to make prosper the family’s fortune?<sup>8</sup>

This model of the family as a reference for the rule of the sovereign became questioned with the appearance of the population as the target of government. Being constructed as a governmental object, the population comprises several phenomena which surpass the familial model. How does a “good father of family” manage large epidemics? Especially, how can one integrate the spiral of work and the richness brought by the regulation of flows? Furthermore, how can one situate the old interdicts in a family logic? The family is no longer the model of approach

of the population but a simple segment of it. For this reason, it becomes a means, a relay likely helping to control it (in the field of sexuality, demography, consumption...).

At that moment, the family appears like an element inside the population and like a fundamental relay to control it... The family is no longer a model, but rather, it is a privileged segment because, when one wants to obtain something of the population in terms of sexual behavior, demography, or consumption, one needs to pass it through the family<sup>9</sup>

This analysis of the shift from the family as a model to a relay of the government is not new<sup>10</sup>. However, Michel Foucault extends it theoretically by creating and defining the concept of governmentality in opposition to the family model associated with sovereignty. For him, governmentality is “a complex form of power which has the population as its target, the political economic as its discipline and the security mechanisms as its techniques”<sup>11</sup>. From there, his course would take a completely different direction than the one he had announced. Instead of focusing, as envisaged, on the mutation of the techniques of power no longer targeting the territory but the population, the course was centered entirely on this new concept of governmentality and dedicated to show: 1) How the idea of government was born; 2) how this idea was introduced to the State under the cover of the model known as the *Raison d'Etat*, which appeared in the 16<sup>th</sup> century, and finally, 3) how this idea “conquered” the State thanks to the political economy in the 18<sup>th</sup> century, which constituted an accomplished form of “*governmentalization of the State*”.

Where did the idea of government appear? It did not appear in Greece, where the king steered the city like a ship, but without being concerned about its inhabitants. Rather, it emerged among the Hebrews, who looked after their population, not their territory. They conceived their people as a herd in movement, on which the herdsman had to look over, taking care of each sheep.

Who is the shepherd? Are those whose power burst in the eyes of men such as sovereigns, Gods, or Greek Gods who appear essentially for the gleam? Not at all. The shepherd “watches over”. He watches over his herd intending to protect it from anything harmful, from anything bad. He is going to make sure that things turn out to be the best for each animal of the flock. The concern of the shepherd is directed towards the others, never towards himself<sup>12</sup>.

The idea of government passes to the Christian culture and organizes its life in such a way that one can consider the religious wars as linked to this issue. It goes as well for the history of the Church, which can be interpreted as being organized entirely around the answers provided for counter-behaviors (or for resistances, if preferred) such as the asceticism, the communities, the mysticism, the return to the usury, the scatological belief... During this medieval period, the sovereign rules like a father leading his family, or like the superior of a convent leading his people towards the eternal happiness.

After the religion wars, the first discontinuity appeared with the idea of providing the sovereign with a supplement of power to command his subjects. This supple-

ment would originate from the idea of the *Res publica* (public matters) understood as the stabilization of the State, and thus, the source of the model of the *Raison d'Etat*. With the *raison d'Etat*, the purpose of the government is no longer the heavenly happiness, but the State itself. But, what does then the word *d'Etat* mean? Sometimes it indicates a domain, sometimes a jurisdiction, sometimes a living condition (a statute), and sometimes the quality of a thing which...remains in the state, that is, immobile. Foucault argued that the sovereign Republic is nothing other than a territory, a group of rules, a group of individuals qualified by their statutes and living in the greatest stability.

The sovereign is no longer defined in relation to the salvation of the herd and the final happiness of each sheep after its passage over this world. Rather, it is defined in relation to the State". "The purpose of the *raison d'Etat* is the State itself. If something like perfection, well-being or happiness truly exists, it will never be other than the State itself. There is not a final day... but only a united and final temporal organization<sup>13</sup>.

Consequently, instead of following divine mandates, the sovereign rules with laws in order to preserve the State, to increase its force, its wealth, and hence, its population within its territory, which he defends vis-à-vis the other sovereigns.

It is against the model of the *Raison d'Etat* that liberalism will emphasize its superiority as a new governmental rationality. Foucault finds there the question of the population that had made his prior argument stumble and that he can integrate now with more confidence thanks to this detour via the history of the government. By considering this first form of governmentalization of the State, namely the *raison d'Etat*, it is possible to explain what changes in relation to the population from one regime of government to another. Within the framework of the *raison d'Etat*, what it counts is the quantity of the population. The population is an absolute commodity, a countable richness one should watch over because the wealth of the sovereign depends on its number, its work and its docility. Therefore, the goal of the security forces is taking care of the population by regulating its health, its production and its circulation. Mercantilism, the economic theory of the *Raison d'Etat*, requires that "*each country has the largest population possible, that its population is put to work entirely, and that wages are as low as possible, so that one can then sell abroad and ensure the import of gold*"<sup>14</sup>. On the contrary, within the framework of the political economy, the population is no longer a matter of numbers, but rather, it is a substance whose optimum number varies according to the evolution of wages, employment and prices. This substance cannot be regulated. However, it is controlled according to the extant resources, which depend on the development of trade between individuals as well as countries. It is more convenient to focus on the interactions between men than to command their actions, to lead their conduits, that is, to govern and not to regulate.

For the economists, the number of the population is not a value in itself... One needs enough population to produce a lot. But one does not need too

much of it, so that the wages are not too low and people want to work and can support the prices with their consumption<sup>15</sup>.

The “progress” governmentality made by passing from the *raison d’Etat* to liberalism consists on providing a reflection about the governmental practices. To govern is no longer to reign, to affirm a power, but to recognize that the truth is told elsewhere than in the center of the State, a truth—that of the market—which in any case invites to conceive action not in terms of the imposition of a will, but of the search for neither too much nor too little. The intelligence of liberalism as a form of government lies entirely on this pragmatism, on this search for what it is convenient to do (agenda) and what it is not (non agenda)<sup>16</sup>. The intervention of governmentality should be limited, but this limit would not be only one negative form.

In the field delimited by the concern of respecting natural processes, would appear a domain of lawful intervention...It would no longer be necessary to regulate, but to manage<sup>17</sup>.

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For the political economy, the aim of the governmental reason is not the State anymore, or its wealth—like in the model of the *raison d’Etat*—but the society, its economic progress. Its role is no longer to restrain a liberty, expression of the fundamental bad nature of men, but to control it, and for this reason, to prohibit it, if necessary, through restrictions. It is a liberty which is produced and to be built. This construction takes place through interventions of the State, not by its pure and simple withdrawal. But how far can and should go this interventionism without risking becoming its opposite, a concealed or declared anti-liberalism? This question is the starting point of the neoliberal reflection, whose origin and reasoning Mr. Foucault analyzes and restores in the following course of 1979 entitled “The birth of bio-politics”.

The increasing role of the State—frequent in all democracies though disparate in their demonstrations—causes the emergence of a neoliberal reflection which reached its pinnacle in the 20th century from the 30s to the 60s. The idea that this tendency needs to be contained, or even, reversed preoccupies liberal economists obsessively. Even if Keynes is, in his own way, a liberal, or at least, a thinker hostile to socialism, the fortune of his theories worries pure liberals, because they potentially position the State in the direction of the market instead of only producing it. This neoliberal fear, though, relies mostly on the abuses of democracy, and the emergence of Nazism and of Stalinism. What relationship does exist between a doctrine such as Keynesianism—which is overall liberal—and these monstrous figures of power? Only one but of importance: the increasing power of the state. According to the neoliberals, the fact that Nazism destroyed the internal State would prove only that it cannot face the demand of nationalization without falling apart... and that—contrarily to what one has believed—it does not constitute a rampart against the irrationalities associated with capitalism.

Neoliberals want to take up the challenge posited by what Max Weber named “the irrational rationality of capitalism”. But, as Michel Foucault shows, they

intend to do it in opposition to Marxists. During the 30s, Marxists in Germany gathered in the famous Frankfurt School led by Horkheimer and Adorno. They looked for a social rationality whose development would terminate with the economic irrationality of capitalism. At the same time, neoliberals gathered in another German city, Freiburg, and published in a journal entitled “Ordo”. Among them, there were many economists who, for some, fueled the bearer reflection of the German Federal Republic after the war, and for others, they inspired the neoliberal school of Chicago organized around Milton Friedman. What they have in common is not proposing a corrective social rationality of capitalism’s economic irrationality, but rather, they propose an economic rationality able to cancel its social irrationality.

And history has caused, adds Michel Foucault, that in 1968 the last disciples of the Frankfurt school collided against the police of a government inspired by the Freiburg School. Thus, they were distributed on both sides of the barricade, because such was the double, and at the same time, parallel, crossed and antagonist destiny of webberianism in Germany<sup>18</sup>.

The “ordo-liberals” wondered about the weakness of the traditional liberal thought which forces the economy to undergo an increasing pressure for state interventionism. They found this flaw in its “naïve” confidence in the virtues of the laissez-faire, that is, in the illusion of the market as a natural phenomenon which one should limit oneself to respect. This naturalist naivety makes the State intervene to deal with the problems and needs that the market cannot solve or satisfy. Treating the market as a natural entity turns it into the culprit of all that does not work and forces the “nature” of needs to play against the “nature” of the market. In short, it gradually disqualifies the latter in the name of the former. Because of the market, then, the State must intervene to compensate for the insufficiencies and to limit the excesses in the register of exchanges. But by so doing, the State is positioned against the market. Neoliberals argue this is a double mistake. In the market it is not important the principle of more or less satisfactory exchanges, but rather, the one of more or less effective competition. Exchange rejects equality

in this sort of primitive and fictitious situation to which liberal economists of the 18th century committed... Essentially, the formula of the market lies elsewhere: It lies in competition. What counts, then, is not equality, but rather, it is inequality.<sup>19</sup>

Competition is not a natural phenomenon but a formal mechanism, a way of making play inequalities effectively and leaving none of them sure and in dominion of their position. Therefore, the role of the State is not to intervene because of the market, but for the market, so that it is always maintained and the principle of the equal inequality renders its effect<sup>20</sup>. Competition is not a fact of nature.

It owes its effects to the essence it holds...Competition, is an eidon, a principle of formalization... It is to some extent a formal game between inequalities.<sup>21</sup>

What are the consequences of a theorization of competition in terms of governmental rationality? How does the role of the State change? In this framework, the man of exchange, needs and consumption is replaced by the man of competition, business and production. It implies, then, encouraging anything that shares the spirit of the enterprise and relies on men as entrepreneurs of economic activities as well as of themselves—salaried workers exploit their own human capital—, as members of a collective regarded like an enterprise of co-owners taking care of maintaining and increasing the value of their goods. What happens to the social—this compensation of the economic—and the injustices generated by its irrationality? It is no longer intended as a remedy against the vices of competition and to reduce inequalities. Rather, it serves only to maintain each individual within those inequalities, so that individuals are retained in the register of the equal inequality which allows competition. Thus, there is not exclusion a priori ... In short, social policy is no longer a means for counteracting the economic, but one supporting the logic of competition.

#### THE SOVEREIGNTY WAY AGAINST THE UTILITY WAY: THE EXAMPLE OF THE REFERENDUM ON THE PROJECT OF THE EUROPEAN CONSTITUTION

In his analysis of the birth of liberalism and its revival in the mid 20th Century, Foucault contributed to a better understanding of both by framing them within the question of the art of government or “governmentality”, Foucault’s neologism invented for the occasion. Created at the end of the 70s, this lecture is still surprising because of its singularity linking methodically liberalism and politics instead of distinguishing or opposing them as we use to do it in France. This is precisely why in France we can comment on a recent topic marked foremost by a confrontation between the supporters of politics, the role of the State, national sovereignty, and of a European social model of which France would provide the archetype, and the advocates of liberalism, the aforementioned national sovereignty and the famous social model within the framework of globalization, at the time of a project of European constitution which defied both with the pretext of their best protection or/and the advancement of modernity. This does not imply, though, that Michel Foucault’s analysis had allowed deciding this debate in advance<sup>22</sup>. However, it makes possible to clarify the assumptions of the forces involved.

What happens to public law when the political economy embraces an internal principle of voluntary self-limitation? How can this self-limitation be established legally? From this question, Foucault makes a distinction which allows understanding a substantial difference in the attitudes about liberalism that, according to us, seems to include those which had been unfolded during the recent referendum in France. According to him, two systems of thought were forged to answer this question and perpetuated until now with uneven luck<sup>23</sup>.

The first system consists on renewing the foundations of law like in the *Raison d’Etat*. Then, the law was used to contain the excesses of the *Raison d’Etat* by relying “on the natural or original rights inherent to any individual” and to define, thus, the absolute rights. From there, one could determine what depended on the

sovereignty's sphere, and hence, on the government's jurisdiction by the effect of a legitimate concession. Likewise, it was determined what did not appertain to it, which Foucault called the judicial-deductive way and assimilated to that of the French revolution and Rousseau.

This approach departs from the individual, constructs the sovereign and finally defines governmentality. It is a way of setting, of entering the game by an ideal resumption of the social reality, the State, the sovereign, the government, the problem of legitimacy and the inalienability of rights.<sup>24</sup>

It is the way of sovereignty... but whereof insists on underlining, with a perceptible mischievousness, its retroactive nature—"reactionary", Foucault said—coming very close to insulting the fathers of the nation.

The second system does not focus on the right of the governed, but on the governmental practices and on the kinds of limits needed according to its objectives. It returns to a conception of the Law, not as the effect of the sovereign's will...or of the sovereign people's, but of a transaction between the legitimate sphere of the individuals' intervention and that of the public power. The Law is not the result of a cession or a division, but of a compromise, a common interest of both parts. Finally and foremost, it brings into play a conception of the individuals' freedom which is not as much juridical in essence as it takes into account the independence of the governed. "*The limit of government's competence will be defined by the boundaries of the governmental intervention's utility*"<sup>25</sup>. Of course, this is the way of the utility, the English utilitarianism and Bentham's, understood as the way of asking every time the following question to every government: what you do, is it useful? Within which limits? When does it become harmful? Evidently, it is not the revolutionary way, the way of sovereignty but that of the utility.

Foucault asserts that between these two ways, the juridical-deductive of sovereignty and that of utility, there is heterogeneity and coexistence throughout history even if this coexistence sees the elements of the second taking it away:

In the two systems, there is one which has been strong and other which, on the contrary, has regressed. The one which has been maintained, namely the "radical" English-like way, had tried to define the legal limitation of the public power in terms of governmental utility... Ultimately, utility will be the greatest criterion for creating the limits of the public power in an age where the utility problem increasingly covers all the traditional problems of the law.<sup>26</sup>

Now, putting aside Foucault's text, one may add that this progressive supremacy of the utility way over that of sovereignty throughout the 19th and the 20th century can be observed both in France and Great Britain. However, its dominance appears more clearly in France where it is confronted with a strong expression of the juridical-deductive way. It really only managed to establish itself as the way of sovereignty appears at an impasse. Its introduction—which cannot be done like the English utilitarianism for obvious reasons of national pride—then will justify resorting to a specific theorization. The impasse of the sovereignty way started in

France during the 1848 revolution when it was put face to face the partisans of a minimum State and those of a maximum State around the question of the right to work. And one sees well how, at the end of the 19th century, the solidarity doctrines inspired by Emile Durkheim constituted the French justification for the acceptance of the utility way because it subjects the State and its intervention to the question of its utility for society more than to its sovereign base. According to this doctrine, thus, the State must proceed to favor the solidarity of the society, but only that. It must know how to compensate for the shortcomings of the market in the protection of the population, but to restrain itself from going beyond the social and making the bed to the socialism understood like an alternative to the market. In France, the art of not too much, nor too little as a form of governmentality in the name of utility found a more methodical formulation than in the majority of other European countries—the United Kingdom included—since it mobilized a knowledge different to that of the political economy (i.e., sociology) and another terminology, that of solidarity<sup>27</sup>.

The utility way carries this art everywhere in Europe, including in France, the land of the sovereignty way. Still, one should consider that the latter was never disavowed in its ideological preeminence. Not even has been socialism—at least democratic—, considered by many as the major form of sovereignty's achievement. The idea that a socialist governmentality is inconsistent and that it can lead only to an administrative government, updating, one may say, the *Raison d'Etat*, or shamefully endowing liberalism (Guy Mollet-like) takes only little consideration to this perennality of the sovereignty way which remains minimally lived like the alternative against the “excesses” of liberalism. In his course, though, Michel Foucault insists greatly on the absence of a governmental rationality suitable for socialism.

Precisely, the sovereignty way seems to have been a useful recourse against the dangers of liberalism at the time of the last referendum. The powerful refusal of liberalism, in the French left at least, obviously testifies a resurgence of the sovereignty way. To provide a clear example of this, it is enough to recapture the three points around which the two ways can be distinguished and to apply them to the partisans of yes and no in the referendum. The utility way focuses on the governmental exercise, on the question of its desirable extent. It puts into action the mechanisms of compromise between what concerns the public and the individual's spheres. By freedom, it understands the effective independence of people. One finds these three characteristics in the arguments of the partisans of yes. The project of the constitution originates within the European government in response to the difficulties emerging from its scope, and thus, it argues about the utility of adopting a constitutional regulation which improves its governability. This is the first criterion, the starting point of the legislative concern. It originates in the interior of the governmentality, not from the sovereign will of the European citizens. Secondly, the project of constitution also returns to the utility way since it relies on an art of compromise. The term compromise is essential to the development of the project. It refers to the common rules and traditions of each country without forcing anyone beyond possible, for example, in terms of its social protection

regime. And if in this respect there was a problem, it emerged more from fear of abusing the rule than from a problem of compromising like in the Polish mason affair. Finally, freedom is not as much juridical, a commodity which one yields or not, as a reality, the independence of people doing what they want according to their civil traditions, for example, regarding abortion.

As for the partisans of no, they methodically reproduced all the characteristics of the sovereignty way. For them, it was not about departing from the government and its problems but from people's constitutive rights. In their eyes, the first defect of this constitution was that it did not emanate from a Constituent Assembly, elected by the inhabitants of each country to decide the form of the collective sovereignty they would endow themselves with. For them, there was no way they would accept a law made from a compromise and not from the expression of their will. It should be collective and total or not to be at all. There was no chance they would yield their will unless the project was in agreement with their requirements. The discussion of each article of law and, a fortiori, of the former treaties they were asked to ratify reached passionate pinnacles as if it was about remaking the world and not about adapting to it as well as possible. As for the juridical conception of freedom, this discussion engaged with universal rights and duties incompatible with the maintenance of people's relative singularity in the domain of habits. In short, the partisans of no behaved as if the project of European constitution consisted in re-enacting the "social contract" against the *Raison d'Etat*.

#### FOR A LECTURE OF THE THIRD WAY

Liberalism goes hand in hand with progressive "techniques" in terms of governmentality in front of which the sovereignty way seems "retroactive" and the recourse to the State a manner of returning insidiously to the "*Raison d'Etat*". Does it mean that liberalism and, a fortiori, neoliberalism only raise reactive attitudes and gain partisans by making them lose the societies to which they belong? The question concerns particularly to neoliberalism and the role it plays in globalization. Does the political dilemma limit itself to choosing between adhesion to "ultra-liberalism"—the preferred name given by the *souverainists* and the extreme left to the neoliberal doctrines—or a reactionary attitude, antedated, incapable of offering an effective grasp on governmental practices? Between this retroactive way, precious to the traditional left, and that of neoliberalism, there is a middle way, precisely, the third way represented in its time by Bill Clinton and adapted to Europe by Tony Blair. But this famous third way is nothing more, as we have said often in France, that a copy hardly improved of neoliberalism, a recovery of the old liberal theories in their original hardness before the state had intervened to compensate for its misdeeds. It is on relation to this that the Foucauldian analysis can help the French political thinking to come off its impasse, because it demonstrates that neoliberalism is anything by the resumption of old liberal theories, as it shifts decisively the role of the state and of the exchange. This makes possible to tackle from a different perspective the question on the contents of the political option represented by the third way and to compare it advantageously with

the solidarity philosophy of progress which serves as doctrine in the French left after more than a century.

Foucault's analysis of neoliberalism aims at countering the erroneous ideas about it and the relation between the economy and the social. For Foucault, among those erroneous assertions about neoliberalism, one would need to place first the ones for which neoliberalism represents a reactivation of old liberal theories in their original hardness. It is an important misinterpretation because the problem which neoliberals confront is no longer introducing a space free of regulation so that "laissez-faire" can take place, but creating the conditions of a competition without which the market is only a vain word. However, creating competition requires that the State not only allows laissez-faire practices, but also that it generates an adequate framework for them. To illustrate what neoliberals understand by the term "framework", he provides the example of the emergence of the common agrarian policy, which in 2005 does not lack flavor for us. In a 1952 text, Eucken, one of the most recognized neoliberals from the Freiburg school, explains all the reasons why German agriculture, as other European nations, has never integrated completely to a market economy: because of custom barriers and all kinds of protections rendered necessary due to their unequal degree of technical advance and also because of a manifest overpopulation. Thus, it is necessary to work on each one of those points, which implies intervening to facilitate migrations from the countryside towards the city, placing sophisticated equipment at people's disposal as well as the formation necessary for its use, transforming the juridical regime of exploitations and promoting their extent. In other words, the State must act on a level, not directly economic, but social in the broad sense of the term, to render competition possible. The fact that, afterwards, the common agricultural policy became more a system of subsidy to avoid competition than a means of social transformation to support it, however, does not remove the spirit of the initial approach. This implies that the government does not have to intervene as much on the effects of the market—through wellbeing policies—as on the society so that it can be controlled by the market.

Undoubtedly, it is possible to create a competitive capacity. But for how long? As the example of the common agricultural policy shows, there is no guaranteed duration for this capacity. It would be even assured to disappear in the long term according to Schumpeter, who with regret prophesied the advent of socialism as competition ineluctably causes monopolistic situations. Those situations justify the State's intervention as people's needs require to be satisfied by avoiding the hardness resulting from any situation in which the private supplier of the goods they need has absolute hegemony. According to Foucault, all the interest of the second time of the neoliberal reasoning is placed there. Neoliberals argue that if one wants to avoid the State's tendency to absorb the economic process, one needs to correct the initial error which provides its force. Which error? The one consisting in making prevail the man of exchange, the consumer, over the entrepreneur. The *homo economicus* of neoliberalism is an entrepreneur, even an entrepreneur of himself. Wages are generated by an entrepreneur whose capital is himself and who, then, has to maintain this human capital.

The *homo economicus* of traditional liberals was the man of exchange. He placed himself as a partner of another man during the exchange. On the contrary, given that the *homo economicus* of neoliberalism is an entrepreneur of himself, he has only competitors. Even consumption becomes an activity of enterprise according to which the consumer undertakes the production of his own satisfaction. Hence, the opposition between production and consumption, between the active character of the former and the passive, alienated, of the latter does not have sense. Denouncing the consumer society or the spectacle's society is to be mistaken about this epoch, to pretend that the man of neoliberalism is a man of exchange and consumption when he is first and foremost an entrepreneur. It is the problem of redistribution, of the incomes gap what creates men as consumers. On the contrary, the "politics of society" turns a man into an entrepreneur, somebody who is situated in a game and works to increase his success within a system in which inequalities are necessary and as much effective and stimulating as the large gaps are known.

However, neoliberals argue, there is a limit to the game of inequalities, namely, the limit of exclusion. One must do everything to prevent that some are not completely excluded from this game so it does not lose its sense and its credibility. Therefore, one needs to take care of those who are in the limits of this game so they can return to it. To maintain everyone in the game is increasing its dynamics and, thus, is a dimension of the politics of society. Much more than one charitable concern, the struggle against exclusion was initially, in the theoretical plan, an economic concern, impelled by the neoliberals<sup>28</sup>. Overall, though, it is important to stay in the game to remain a *homo economicus* according to neoliberals, that is, an entrepreneur, somebody eminently governable and different from its liberal predecessor, the man of exchange, who one had better let adjust himself "naturally". He is governable because he governs himself. He governs himself according to economic laws and one can take action on the environment in order to modify his conduits. With this purpose, one can establish "the conduct of conducts" because as entrepreneur of his life he is autonomous and, for this reason, one can make it responsible.

It was important restoring this analysis of neoliberalism to see that the third way is not completely what one has said, but a means of passing between the Caudine Forks of the old left and the new liberalism. One can appreciate its triple plan for the role of the State, the relation between the economic and the social, and finally, the form of government.

The question of the role of the State is a dimension which associates closely the third way to neoliberalism. For instance, it clearly rejects everything that the French left keeps maintaining like a domain of the state: nationalizations, public services set up as clergeries of the State, etc. However, it does not mean that the third way wishes to reduce the State to a figurative role. It behaves as a declared advocate of "the politics of society" according to the neoliberal expression being used to name the interventionism intended to bring any social activity to the competition regime. In this, there is an acknowledged reason which is the negotiable benefit of this type of politics in a universe where globalization determines a

nation's wealth and employment according to its competitiveness in any given sector. Laissez-faire and nationalizations are no longer deciding on this matter!

Neoliberalism only wants intervention at the service of competition. It neglects the social and condemns it even by accepting social policy only to fight against exclusion, under the condition, though, that it does not aim at reducing inequalities. Is not in the social field where one can blame the third way of a blind conformism? It seems obvious, for example, that the English government concentrates more its efforts against poverty than on the reduction of inequalities. Hardly installed, it has created a division for fighting against social exclusion and a relatively weak minimum wage, but it did nothing to directly increase workers' purchasing power or to protect legally their employment. It has not created many subsidized jobs, nor tried to boost the economy by consumption, that is, by increasing workers' purchasing power according to Keynesian recipes that have assured the support of the French left. Resigning to the canonical formulas of the social is not worth, though, abandoning the social. Rather, it implies a change in the nature of the relation between the economic and the social. Within the framework of the traditional Welfare state and, in agreement with the Keynesian theory, the relation between the economic and the social develops according to a spiraled scheme. The wealth development attained by the economic allows financing the social. In return, by increasing the income levels, the social allows maintaining or increasing the production as a consequence of the increase in the demand. This scheme has showed its limits on its two levels: the social deductions and the economic revival by the consumption. The first level can damage the capacity of investment if the dispensed benefits are massively deducted on behalf of the social. Sooner or later, this weakening of the investment capacity ends up affecting employment. In the framework of a global economy, the disadvantage of the second level can be the increasing consumption...of products coming from other countries. Does it imply then a cold disposal of the social? Rather, it implies the replacement of the Keynesian spiral model by a model of reciprocal but direct action between the economic and the social, not assembled by the virtuous dream of a progressive link between both: the philosophy of history has yielded the place to globalization much more uncertain of its effects in the period. In the spatial plan, strategy replaces dialectic. There will be winner and losers of whom one will take care later if the situation allows it. In fact, there is a first movement going from the social towards the economic and consisting in financing, on behalf of the social, the competitiveness of workers through education and training, as well as by launching the fight against unemployment. Also, there is a second movement going from the economic towards the social which ends up submitting the latter to a requirement of profitability of the investments carried out. This requirement is exemplified by the emphasis put particularly on prevention rather than on improving areas such as health, employment and retirement. This profitability minimally takes the form of the transparency requirement in the control and the outcomes of social policies, which the pure reasoning in terms of acquired rights renders difficult.

Regarding the third point, the one about governmentality, one sees easily which aspects of the neoliberal precepts irritate the traditional extreme left. Does not

talking about autonomy and responsibility benefit individualism, that is, those individuals with better incomes and make the poor responsible for overcoming this condition? Undoubtedly, the advocates of the third way value autonomy and individual responsibility as eloquently as neoliberals. They see them as means to counteract the augment in services, which can increase absurdly if one remains in the current logic of automatic compensation for all the real problems we are brought to feel sorry. For them, though, they are only one means among many others. However, there is one mean which characterizes more directly this political current insofar as it constitutes as much an alternative to individualism as to the old left: it is the one which emphasizes the collective and political dimension of the prevention of damages. That is to say the one which stresses the notion of community action (in France one should state “collective” to avoid any misunderstandings of this expression, even if it is not an accurate translation). But as much as neoliberalism intends to lead “politics of society”, the third way aims at rebuilding “a political society”.

Translated by Vivianna Pitton

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#### NOTES

- <sup>1</sup> Michel Foucault has discussed the issue of government for two years in his courses at the Collège de France in 1978 and 1979. Later, he has devoted himself to the history of subjectivity in the *The Care of the Self and The Use of Pleasure* which appeared in 1984, the year of his death.
- <sup>2</sup> The mode of governmentality studies was first started in Great Britain and the U.S. by Colin Gordon, Graham Burchell and Peter Miller’s book *The Foucault Effect: Studies in Governmentality*. Chicago: University Press (1991). It was retaken by Mitchell Dean in *Governmentality: Power and Rule in Modern Society*. London: Sage publications (1999) and it was followed in Germany due to Thomas Lemke’s impulse in *Neoliberalism, Staat und Selbstecht...* (2000).
- <sup>3</sup> Two colloquia on the subject have been held in France during the 20th anniversary of Foucault’s death: one at the MSH and the other at the IEP in Paris. The latter has been published: Meyet, S., Neves, M. C. & Ribemont, T. (2005). *Trouvailles avec Foucault*. L’Harmattan.
- <sup>4</sup> Michel Foucault. *Sécurité, Pouvoir, Population*. Seuil 2004 and *Naissance de La Bio-Politique*. Seuil 2004.
- <sup>5</sup> This can roughly be translated: “from the glare of tortures to the tenderness of sorrows.”
- <sup>6</sup> “[...] from the right to death to the control over life.”
- <sup>7</sup> M. Foucault. “Securite, Territoire, Population”. Gallimard. Seuil 2004. P. 77-78.
- <sup>8</sup> Idem, p. 98.
- <sup>9</sup> Idem, p. 108.
- <sup>10</sup> This idea is reflected in Jacques Donzelot’s , *La Police des Familles* published a year later, in 1977. Chapter IV: “From a Government of Families to a Government by the Family”.
- <sup>11</sup> idem, p. 111.
- <sup>12</sup> idem, p. 133.
- <sup>13</sup> idem, p. 265.
- <sup>14</sup> idem, p. 345.
- <sup>15</sup> idem, p. 353.

- <sup>16</sup> The expression on the agenda, so precious for politicians, appeared with the English utilitarianism, explains M. Foucault, when Bentham distinguished what needed to be done (from a liberal point of view), namely agenda, and what did not, that is, non agenda.
- <sup>17</sup> idem, p. 360.
- <sup>18</sup> In "The Birth of Biopolitics", p. 110.
- <sup>19</sup> idem, p. 122.
- <sup>20</sup> By using this strange formula of "equal inequality" Foucault refers to this neoliberal idea according to which we all need to endure situations of relative inequality and that this differential does not condemn the market, but makes it work...under the condition that anybody is persistently excluded of the game.
- <sup>21</sup> idem, p. 124.
- <sup>22</sup> The Foucauldian diaspora has right, left and extreme left-wing supporters. still, one needs to highlight that the most notorious among the latter, Antonio Negri, has requested to vote in favor of the European constitution project, because of hatred towards the national echelon, which hinders an awareness of the reality of "the empire", and to engage with the struggles on this supreme level. by so doing, then, he reinforced the beliefs of those supporting the sovereign nation and the French-like European social model...
- <sup>23</sup> This analysis appears in the second volume of both courses, page 39 and the following ones.
- <sup>24</sup> idem, p. 41.
- <sup>25</sup> idem, p. 42.
- <sup>26</sup> idem, p. 45.
- <sup>27</sup> For this analysis, see J. Donzelot (1984) "The Invention of the Social. Essay on the Decline of Political Passions". Fayard: Seuil Point Essais. One notices, for example, that the issue of not too much, not too little in politics, recently promoted by Tony Blair and the Third Way between the old left and Thatcher's neoliberalism has been supported as well by a renowned sociologist: Anthony Giddens.
- <sup>28</sup> It is sufficient to think about the precedence of Lionel Stoléru's book (Defeating Poverty in Rich Countries. Paris, 1974) adherent to the American neoliberal policy about the relative debates on exclusion emerging at the end of the 80s to agree upon this precedence.