



Questions of security: A framework for research

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Abstract

Scholars have noted that we are increasingly being governed in the name of security, in literature that usually treats security as an entity in need of a theory. This article begins by noting that ‘security’ does not need theories, but rather questions that can generate concrete analyses. Three sets of questions are elaborated here. The first concerns the logics of security projects. The second set raises questions of scale and jurisdiction. Finally, governance projects are distinguished by the techniques used. This set of questions about security—which, this article argues, always need to be posed in relation to specific security projects—is a theoretically significant revision of the governmentality literature’s distinction between rationalities and technologies of governance.

Keywords

governmentality, jurisdiction, scale, security

Many scholars have noted that we are increasingly being governed through security or in the name of security. Most of this literature pursues normative and political questions, however, and in so doing treats ‘security’ as a singular, if polysemic, entity. The present contribution draws loosely on Nietzsche and Foucault to shift the theoretical debate onto a different, non-normative terrain. After a brief discussion of the methodological problem of elaborating dynamic analytical frameworks, three sets of questions are offered as a framework for future studies. The first deals with the logics of security projects. The second set of questions is concerned with understanding the scale (both temporal and spatial) of security projects and the jurisdictional arrangements that organize security governance. Questions of scale and jurisdiction are grouped together as questions about the scope of projects. Finally, projects are distinguished not only by their logic and scope but also by the techniques used. The threefold classification of questions about security—which, this article argues, always need to be posed in relation to specific security

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projects, not about security as such—is a theoretically significant revision of the governmentality literature's by now traditional distinction between rationalities and technologies of governance.

The term 'security' is now doing a great deal of work in a wide variety of fields. UN programmes that formerly targeted underdevelopment now target 'human security', and the direct aid provided by charitable organizations to those formerly known as starving now goes under the banner of 'food security'.¹ The rise of the Internet, on its part, has led to the rise of a new industry—computer security—while on public streets and in spaces such as malls and airports, state agencies and private security personnel utilize a growing variety of technologies to monitor and safeguard all manner of spaces and activities.

While security experts and products have proliferated, the development of new professions and new commodities has by no means meant that ordinary people simply turn security over to experts or to machines. Neighbours, teachers, parents, bank tellers, air travellers and numerous other groups are constantly exhorted to watch for security breaches or risks and do their part. Security is thus both a rapidly expanding professional/expert project and a looming feature of everyday life, as many observers have noted, often with alarm (Dillon, 1996; Ericson, 2007; Wood and Shearing, 2007; Neocleous, 2008; Zedner, 2009).

A key preliminary conceptual point is that while security projects include defence and protection, governing under the banner of security is not merely defensive. While many security projects do indeed involve defensively securing an entity (a home, a computer, a park, a family) taken as existing prior to its being governed under the banner of security, some security projects create new spheres or fields of governance. 'Safer sex' campaigns did not invent the HIV virus, but insofar as they incite citizens to re-vision sexual activity as a field of risk, such campaigns do much more than protect existing bodies. Similarly, as urban dwellers install alarm systems in their automobiles and their homes and buy expensive locks for their bicycles, only to find that thieves, like computer hackers, are one step ahead of the security industry, the whole experience of urban living takes on a new meaning. As Hobbes (1968 [1651]: 184–5), the original philosopher of security, noted long ago, if one assumes that human beings are roughly equal in reasoning powers and in desires—the fundamental assumption of modernity—it follows that simply erecting a moat or taking other one-time measures to defend an existing space will not create security. Therefore, the project of achieving security takes the form of an ever-rising spiral.

In addition to the fact that new threats to security develop in tandem with new techniques of security, the security project is fraught with contradictions. First of all, it is obvious that different security projects, even those within the same general field, often clash with one another. But of more relevance to social theory is the fact that security projects often exhibit internal contradictions. Storing information in a computer rather than on pieces of paper guards against some risks but creates new sources of insecurity; NGOs that provide food security to civil war refugees may unwittingly further the perpetuation of the very conflict that created the refugees; and the rise of professional policing, a key modern apparatus of security, has created new insecurities, such as being racially profiled or being shot by a Taser.

Projects that seek to increase security are thus inherently unstable and contradictory, whether the contradictions arise internally or among different projects with conflicting

aims (or with the same aims but working at different temporal or spatial scales). Contrary to the image of a well-defended castle that home security and computer security experts often use, threats do not always come from a defined outside; and citizens are in the position of having to guard not only against newly discovered risks but also against the undesired side-effects of security measures that (as is the case with governance projects generally) generate unintended effects. Ulrich Beck's well-known thesis about the ways in which technologies designed to ensure security by governing nature end up creating new risks (Beck, 1992) can be seen as but one example of a broader problem, and one that, contrary to Beck's thesis, is not unique to technologically sophisticated societies, since the internal contradictions of security governance are apparent in all manner of everyday, Hobbes-style governance processes.

The contradictory unintended effects of security projects have been addressed by the huge and diverse literature on risk and risk management developed by a variety of theorists (Douglas and Wildavsky, 1982; Beck, 1992, 1999; O'Malley, 2004). But explicitly shifting the ground upon which social theory debates take place from risk to security can help to move theory forward—especially, I shall argue, if we think about security not as a thing, concept or condition but rather as an umbrella term under which one can see a multiplicity of governance processes that are dynamic and internally contradictory. Much of the theoretical literature on security (e.g. Zedner, 2009) notes the polysemy of the term 'security'. However, posing normative questions about the provision of security, as in the ever-popular debates about whether we should have more freedom and less security, necessarily treat security as a single (if ambiguous) entity. Zedner's book begins by exploring the very different meanings that 'security' has had over time and across disciplines, but, tellingly, it still treats security as a single if fuzzy entity. The last sentence of the book reads: 'The human need for security should not be permitted to defeat itself' (Zedner, 2009: 235).

This article is sympathetic to Zedner's nuanced take on the normative questions of citizen security and state security, and is also sympathetic to the 'critical security studies' literature (e.g. Neocleous, 2008), but, taking up the firmly nominalistic standpoint that is shared by the Nietzschean tradition and by pragmatism, it begins by noting that it may be grammatically correct to use the term 'security' as a noun that is the subject of a sentence, but that it is dangerous to go on to the assumption that security actually exists, even as a fuzzy concept. William James (1987 [1901]: 32) remarked, in relation to the effort to define 'government', that:

the man who knows governments most completely is he who troubles himself least about a definition which shall give their essence. Enjoying an intimate acquaintance with all their particularities in turn, he would naturally regard an abstract conception in which these were unified as a thing more misleading than enlightening.

Along these lines, just as James argued that all we can know about God are the multiple 'varieties of religious experience', so too, I will argue that all that we can know about security is what people do in its name, and that therefore our focus should be on practices of governance that in fact appeal to 'security'. Thus, what we need are not theories of security in general but rather an open-ended, content-neutral framework for undertaking

the kinds of empirical studies of security governance that will then tell us what ‘security’ means, in practice.

This article presents one such framework, in two parts. The first part—outlined in the following section—uses the insights about the inherent instability of security projects that have already been noted by theorists from Hobbes to Ulrich Beck to argue for a dynamic approach to the study of governance projects, one that seeks to understand movements and contradictions rather than provide static definitions. The second and more substantial part lays out three sets of questions that can usefully be posed about any of the multifarious ‘varieties of security experience’ that exist in our world. These three sets of questions—about the logic, the scope and the techniques of each security project—draw on Foucaultian governmentality studies but represent a significant theoretical innovation. While distinguishing ‘logic’ from ‘techniques’ is a by now conventional move in Foucaultian studies (see Rose and Miller, 1992; Dean, 1999; Rose et al., 2006), here we suggest that ‘scope’ is an equally important, independent dimension of governance—and one that is particularly crucial in the study of policing and other legal mechanisms. The scope of each security project needs to be in turn broken down by differentiating ‘scale’ from ‘jurisdiction’, in addition, since the currently fashionable literature on law and space pays insufficient attention to non-geographic jurisdictional divides (Valverde, 2009). In addition, another theoretical move that seeks to compensate for the current interest in questions of space is the inclusion of temporal scales within the analysis of scope. Temporality is a dimension often neglected in today’s sociology. In keeping with suggestions made but not fully elaborated in Saskia Sassen’s (2006) recent analysis of shifts in governance assemblages, the framework here does not privilege either space (and geography) or time (and history), but rather presents them as categories that always require analysis, even though in particular situations one may in fact play a much more important role than the other. While the substantive focus of this article is today’s array of security projects, then, the theoretical/methodological suggestions made here (in particular, about including scope as an analytic dimension alongside techniques and rationalities) should be useful to studies of governance more generally.

Dialectics of security: dynamic conceptual tools

Well before Ulrich Beck’s work on risk, numerous scholars, and for that matter practitioners, had noted that the constantly renewed effort to increase or maintain or guarantee one or more types of security for a certain entity or group will always be at odds not only with projects furthering other kinds of security for other entities or groups, but even with itself. First of all, the entity that is being secured might turn out to be more internally contradictory than previously thought—as when organizations (such as military or police) designed to protect turn out to be themselves a threat to the population being protected. Second, even well-defined entities have multiple security agendas that can be at odds with one another: border control checks targeting politically risky visitors and immigrants may well have the effect of dismantling previously existing systems for monitoring illegal or stolen goods, for example.

Third, and most significant from the point of view of social theory, security processes are inherently dynamic, and thus require a dynamic analysis. The specific form that

dynamism takes is often dialectical—not necessarily in the neat and tidy Hegelian meaning of the term, but in the more open-ended, less teleological sense of a move that ends up undermining itself by its very success.² At the everyday level we see this in the upward spiral of home security measures: inventions that promise to guard against a currently existing danger (say, a security light) become redundant as burglars too exercise their talent for innovation, which then necessitates investing in yet more sophisticated and expensive security measures (e.g. motion detectors), and so on.

At the level of aggregate data and expert predictions, addressing perceived security needs also often resembles a spiralling process rather than an achieved condition. Numerous scholars have noted that what used to be called ‘dangerousness’ is now often treated as a matter of risk factors, with risk factors having by now become almost independent of the human beings who embody the risks (Castel, 1991; Ewald, 1991; O’Malley, 2004; Harcourt, 2007). Governing populations through risk factors, however, is as liable to undermining itself as the everyday business of keeping your computer or your home safe. The calculations of the risk assessment specialists laid out in two-dimensional charts and graphs conceal the fact that, unlike stars in outer space, human beings react actively and often reflexively to the representations that are generated about them and about those they govern. In particular, the risk classifications that initially develop as objective representations of reality, once disseminated, can affect the conduct of the governing authorities in such a way as to ‘ratchet up’ the whole mechanism—as Bernard Harcourt (2007) has shown in his careful analysis of the recursive effects of risk governance in criminal justice. If a particular group has high risk scores, its members will be subject to more policing, which will mean that more illegal substances or criminal acts are discovered, which will mean they will be more likely to go to prison, which will then ratchet up the risk score—and so on. This is not unique to criminal justice. Risk classifications, like other security techniques, themselves become part of the world even if they were initially presented as pictures of it. As ‘risky’ individuals are subject to increasing levels of surveillance and control, both them and the authorities continue to respond recursively to the classification, not only after the fact but even proactively—whether the ‘profiling’ is achieved through traditional stereotypes of risk or by technical risk assessments.

A recursive effect of security governance that is not usually mentioned in discussions of profiling is the way in which authorities sometimes actively anticipate resistance before they even devise governing measures. In the United States, anticipating and preemptively defusing possible charges of racism is one important feature of many governing innovations; subjecting Black offenders to heightened control simply on the basis of race is now no longer politically possible, and that may well be a reason for the popularity of apparently race-neutral risk assessments. But charges of racism are by no means the only grassroots response that forms part of the initial calculations of the authorities. Security governance is always reflexive, always evolving—not only through feedback and adjustment, as systems theorists pointed out long ago, but also in proactive anticipation of opposition. As Pat O’Malley (1996; see also Santos, 1977) has pointed out, it is not useful to contrast ‘governance’ to ‘resistance’, as if authorities always led and the governed always responded, given that authorities’ governing activities, even when put forward with flourish as new initiatives, are often in fact responses to actual or

anticipated action on the part of the governed. Since the risk management of people and their 'risk factors' has certain often unpredictable (and often site-specific) recursive and/or reflexive effects, a static analysis of security mechanisms targeting human behaviour is bound to be inadequate.

A dynamic analysis is also important in the study of the governance of spaces. Spaces obviously do not themselves respond to being governed, but the crime prevention literature amply demonstrates that, while broken windows do not necessarily lead to crime (Harcourt, 2001), nevertheless, if spaces are designated, formally or informally, as dangerous, people will tend to avoid them, which in turn makes them more neglected and more dangerous-looking. There is a 'ratcheting up' dynamic in the governance of spatial security as well as in criminal justice profiling.

A useful analysis of the multifarious mechanisms of security that dominate our lives will thus have to itself be as dynamic as possible. Only a framework that is itself dynamic, one that features relationships and movements rather than static categories, can capture the fact that once a person, group, activity or space comes to be governed under the banner of 'security', the governance process will change the status quo, often with recursive effects.

The recursive effects mentioned thus far fall into three groups. First, we have the spiralling movement characterizing the perpetual stand-off between those seeking a specific kind of security and those seeking to undermine it, the game by which each security invention is quickly followed by an equally inventive means of defeating it. This movement characterizes both everyday citizen security (at the level of computers, cars, and homes) and military and anti-terrorist measures. Second, as critical scholars have pointed out, risk profiling (racial or not, regarding humans or not) does not merely represent a reality, but acts as a self-fulfilling prophecy, and is thus self-reinforcing. (Whether there is a 'tipping point' at which the expansive logic of profiling blows up or defeats itself is an interesting question, but one that is empirical, not theoretical.) Finally, a different, less visible movement is that which can be called anticipatory reflexive governance—captured in Pat O'Malley's (1996) description of how Australian authorities dealing with aboriginal peoples included potential resistance in their initial governing projects (an insight corroborated by much of the 'legal pluralism' literature, incidentally, though criminologists and other analysts of security rarely draw on those resources).

No doubt there are other dynamics, other kinds of movements, which can be identified as one examines the ongoing, never-achieved process of security provision. The point here is not to attempt a comprehensive description, since any such attempt would result in nothing more than yet another typology (that is, a static, fixed description of possible movements). The aim here is very different, namely, to stimulate concrete analyses that are alive to unexpected combinations of governance techniques and are open to the possibility of new, as yet undescribed governance moves.

Having established that a dynamic perspective could be more useful than the more traditional sociological project of defining and categorizing, and having given some examples of the kinds of dynamics that are commonly found in many security projects, we can now move on to suggesting ways of asking specific questions of and about security mechanisms. We will again avoid positing any entity or concept 'security', and will instead identify questions that can be usefully asked of any of the myriad security

projects—using ‘security projects’ nominalistically—that we see around us. Reflecting on existing studies of security, crime control and legal and quasi-legal governance (my own along with those by numerous other scholars), it seems to me that there are three sets of questions that can be posed in order to generate useful analyses. These have to do with logic, scope and technique.

Dimensions of security governance: logic, scope, techniques

Three sets of questions, it seems to me, can be usefully posed in regard to all manner of security projects. One set of questions asks about the *logic* of the project—with ‘logic’ here including the rationale, the objectives, the *telos*, what some would call the discourse, and also the ethical justifications. The second set of questions concerns the scale of the project and the jurisdiction(s), formal or informal, that it claims and/or by which it operates. Questions of scale and jurisdiction (which often overlap) can be grouped together under the more general term ‘*scope*’. Finally, security projects can also be distinguished by examining the (human and non-human) techniques of governance that they use. Documenting and analysing *techniques* independently from the other dimensions is important because while certain logics (say, the logic of asserting sovereign control over a territory) have certain affinities with particular techniques (say, physical inspections of bodies that enter the territory), the choice of logic does not absolutely determine which techniques will be used. Techniques are often borrowed creatively in an ad hoc manner, and so they need to be studied separately rather than being relegated to the extra-theoretical realm of ‘implementation’.³

Readers familiar with the governmentality literature might have noticed similarities between my three sets of questions about security projects and the distinction between ‘rationalities’ and ‘technologies’ that is routinely used in such studies, usually following Rose and Miller (1992: 175, emphases added):

Problematics of government may be analyzed, first of all, in terms of their *political rationalities*, the changing discursive fields ... the moral justifications for particular ways of exercising power by diverse authorities, notions of the appropriate forms, objects and limits of politics, and conceptions of the proper distribution of such tasks among secular, spiritual, military and familial sectors. But, we suggest, problematics of government should also be analyzed in terms of their *governmental technologies*, the complex of mundane programmes, calculations, techniques, apparatuses, documents and procedures through which authorities seek to embody and give effect to governmental ambitions.

The rationalities/technologies framework has been very fruitful for researchers studying security provision as well as those in numerous other fields, from finance through social work to medicine (Dean, 1999; Rose et al., 2006). But I am suggesting that ‘scope’ should be considered as a separate, third dimension of analysis, for two reasons. One is that the governmentality literature, by and large, has concentrated on analysing the effects on *human beings* of different kinds of exercises of power—but in doing so it somewhat neglected analysing the governance of objects, material processes and what Actor Network Theory calls hybrids (Latour, 2005). It has also largely neglected analysing legal mechanisms, and when analysing legal mechanisms little attention has been

paid (by and large) to the difference that jurisdiction makes (Valverde, 2009). 'Law' has been often treated as a single apparatus whose (juridical) logic can easily be contrasted to that of normalization and discipline (e.g. Ewald, 1990). Since so much of what happens today in the name of security is not primarily concerned with the Hobbesian problematic of sovereign control over human subjects, but consists instead of rearranging objects and re-shaping spaces, and since questions of legitimate authority and jurisdiction—which are at least at one level questions of law—plague not only supra-state projects of national security and terrorism prevention but also such mundane questions as the use of private security guards to replace police, paying particular attention to the spatial, temporal and jurisdictional scope of security projects makes sense.

Questions about the logic of security projects

An old historical debate showing that different logics of security can be found under the same umbrella term is that featuring Locke and other advocates of limited and accountable government arguing against the absolutist view of security. As Foucault's posthumously published lectures on security remind us, *sûreté* and *securité* are not different names for the same project: the Hobbesian logic of *sûreté* is such that citizens gain security only through the strength of the many-headed sovereign Leviathan, whereas the Lockean perspective sees citizen security as being potentially threatened by *sûreté* (Foucault, 2004: 67). Today, social security and food security go under the banner of *securité* in the francophone world—whereas the word *sûreté* connotes the heavy hand of the state (as in *Sûreté du Québec*, a police force). The distinction between these two logics is visible outside the French-speaking world—even if the words are not available, one can still distinguish mechanisms that enact citizen or social security from those that enact a Hobbesian logic whereby the stronger the Leviathan, the more secure the citizens.

How can we then move on to analyse the relationship or relationships linking these two (and possibly other) logics of security? And in particular, how can we explain the fact that no liberal legal regime, however transformed by rights law and rights discourse, has eliminated the Hobbesian logic of *sûreté* completely? While the argument between Hobbes and Locke was settled centuries ago at the level of law and political representation in favour of Locke, at the level of practical mechanisms to promote safety and security both logics are still clearly visible, and not just since the 11 September attacks. The rise of justiciable rights within states and at the international level does not necessarily bring about a quantitative decrease in sovereignty. What liberal legality demands is not the elimination of sovereign coercion, but rather that exercises of the kind of power invoked by the term *sûreté* be accompanied by some justification that attempts to explain the coexistence of contradictory political logics of security.

In her important work on security, Lucia Zedner has noted that while punishment is highly restricted and regulated, security is not seen as requiring justification and regulation (Zedner, 2003); but this, it seems to me, is somewhat of an exaggeration. It may be true that no legal document is waved at travellers' faces when they are asked to undergo physical inspection at the airport; but a large amount of cultural and political work has to be done on a daily basis to wave the spectre of terrorism very vigorously before travellers, since only a threat perceived as extremely serious will in a liberal legal system be

seen as sufficient to trigger the use of *sûreté* measures. (And in any case, legal consent is implicitly obtained by means of the apparently liberal warning that ‘You need not submit to security measures if you choose not to board the airplane’.) Thus, while it is undoubtedly true that such campaigns as ‘the war on terror’ have given the old Hobbesian logic of *sûreté* a wider field of operation than was the case a decade or so ago, it does not necessarily follow that rights claims or liberal logics of citizen security are being eclipsed, in general. Legal pluralism studies have shown that the spread of modern state law does not necessarily bring about a decline or disappearance of ‘native’ or other alternative systems of law, and some keen readers of Foucault have noticed that neither discipline nor governmentality necessarily displace sovereignty or police: ‘more of both’ is a distinct possibility, in both cases (Baker, 1994; Napoli, 2003). The study of security assemblages needs to eschew a priori assumptions that construct different security projects as mutually exclusive just because they have different logics. The relations among different logics are complex, unpredictable and site-specific: an increase in the popularity or reach of one logic does not necessarily bring about a decline in another logic.

That zero-sum models of governance are not only simplistic but downright inaccurate is a theoretical insight corroborated by examining shifting relations between liberal legality and the sort of non-liberal ‘biopolitical’ measures that treat citizens not as individuals with rights but as molecular elements in a larger unit (human resources; populations). As Foucault noted a long time ago, the logic of liberal legality can coexist with coercive measures as long as these measures are justified not as the exercise of absolutist sovereign prerogative but rather as protective measures to further the health of the ‘population’. Both ‘negative’ biopolitical projects, such as sterilization of the ‘unfit’, and ‘positive’ ones such as vaccination and public health, successfully developed in liberal states as well as absolutist states from the mid-19th century onward (Foucault, 1980, 2003). Projects that seek either to secure the health of the whole population (e.g. social security, public health) or to maximize the health of a privileged population (e.g. racially differentiated population control measures) are not only compatible with liberal legal regimes but in fact integral to modern liberal states (see Stoler, 1995). Negative biopolitical projects, such as the removal of certain populations to another state or behind bars, are compatible with liberal legality because they are envisaged not as the ancient sovereign right to kill or exile disloyal subjects—that ‘right of life and death’ is indeed incompatible with Lockean legality—but rather as prophylactic measures to defend the health of the nation:

[W]ars are no longer waged in the name of a sovereign that must be defended; they are waged on behalf of the existence of everyone ... [biopolitical] power is situated and exercised at the level of life, the species, the race, and the large-scale phenomenon of population.

(Foucault, 1980: 137)

Hobbesian sovereignty, Lockean liberal legality and biopolitical security are three important logics of security that can be discerned (usually not in ‘pure’ form) amid the array of actually existing security assemblages that we have today. No doubt other observers could plausibly identify other logics, or reclassify and rename the ones highlighted here; but the purpose of this article is not to offer a static categorical conceptualization that would claim to identify and name all the important logics of security, but

rather to show, by reference to a few logics that have already been identified by others, how a dynamic analysis of particular mechanisms of security might proceed. It is the method used here that matters; the substantive categories are simply examples. And for that reason, the key question is not whether there are three or more logics visible in today's security projects, but rather the more methodological question of how best to imagine the shifting relations among heterogeneous (and sometimes incommensurable) logics.

Along these lines, if we accept that the zero-sum model is inaccurate, and thus acknowledge that the rise of a new logic of security does not necessarily bring about a decrease in the use of an older logic, then the question facing anyone studying actually existing practices of security will be: how do projects with different logics coexist? How does the rise of one logic affect mechanisms using or presupposing different logics?

This is where the question of the scope of security projects becomes crucial. If Hobbesian, Lockean and biopolitical security measures can all coexist in the bosom of a single state or even a single state agency, without people becoming noticeably upset at the resulting incoherence of the system, it seems to me that the major reason for this oddly peaceful coexistence of contradictory logics is that different projects operate at different scales and/or across different jurisdictions (functional as well as territorial jurisdictions).⁴ Let us thus move to the second major part of our framework for asking questions about security projects, namely, scope.

The scope of security projects: jurisdiction and scale

The scope of each project can be analysed along three dimensions: temporal scale, spatial scale and jurisdiction (including informal as well as legal jurisdictions). Let us take each dimension in turn.

Temporal scale. While some security measures have built-in temporal scales (say, a private security guard who works every night to guard a building), in many cases the temporal scale is not inherent in the particular technique but rather depends on how the particular technique is used. For example, if I loan my 13-year-old daughter my cell phone when she goes out with her friends, that may increase her safety, but only for that afternoon. No doubt she will soon be asking for her own cell phone, and if we agree to get her one, the temporality of the cell phone technique will obviously be longer. However, temporality is not merely a matter of quantity. It is also qualitative. Calling home once lost or fearful has a reactive temporality. Taking a self-defence course, by contrast, is a security measure that is both longer range and less reactive.

Temporal scale matters a great deal in practice because a measure that is rational and effective if one takes a particular security temporality as one's perspective may well undermine security needs that exist at another temporality. Commenting on the contradictions of state-enabled globalization, Saskia Sassen (2006: 384) notes that the instant, electronic temporality that is typical of global financial interactions clashes with the much more ponderous temporality of government institutions: 'the temporal order of public bureaucracies is, in principle, subject to often slow-moving governmental processes of adherence to rules and subject to public accountability via legislatures and judiciaries'. A similar temporal scale-shift problem plagues state-level social security

projects. For instance, a food bank is an appropriate response to (daily) hunger needs, but it is clearly inappropriate and even counterproductive in relation to longer-term poverty and inequality. International NGOs too have to manage constantly the conflicts between shorter-term relief and longer-term human and food security provision. The well-documented experience of aid providers who feel torn between conflicting scales, and who wonder how much short-term food aid can be given before the longer-term economic recovery and state-building plans are undermined, suggest that when making a choice among different possible security projects, one needs to be very aware of the limitations of the chosen scale.

Temporal scale is usually taken for granted rather than explicitly articulated in the provision of security. For example, airport security is designed merely to secure airplanes while in flight; hence, physical searches of people and baggage seem justified and natural even if they involve serious breaches of privacy, since these searches are seen as appropriate means of detecting weapons or bombs that would pose an immediate threat. By contrast, psychological inquiries into passengers' more long-range propensity to become dangerous would not be seen as appropriate in that setting. The task of airport security is not to prevent terrorism or to identify criminal personalities, but only to secure that day's flights.

Two questions that can usefully be posed about the temporal scope of security techniques emerge from these reflections. First of all, what kind of temporality—qualitative as well as quantitative—is built into or presupposed in each concrete instance? Second, do all the security measures that are part of the assemblage being studied work in harmony, in regard to temporal scale, or are there structural conflicts? After all, we have seen that techniques that are likely to be effective at one temporal scale are often incommensurable with (and possibly in conflict with) techniques that work at a different pace and over a different period of time. And since temporal scale is often taken for granted and rendered almost invisible, these structural conflicts may only become apparent if problems arise.

Spatial scale. Let us begin by noting how shifts in spatial scale can be crucial in determining the choice of security mechanisms. In regard to the risk of theft and burglary, the private security guard who is concerned to protect only one building will be likely to displace disorderly people to the next block. The spatial scale that is built into the private security guard's job is what makes the choice of method rational and appropriate. By contrast, a mayor or a chief of police, seeing the whole city as the appropriate territory to be secured, is not satisfied to know that criminals and undesirables are being moved from one building to another, from one block to another. More long-term measures will seem natural and appropriate. Whether the longer-term measures consist of arresting a lot of people or establishing soup kitchens and youth recreation programmes is a question whose answer will depend on the political ideology of the city authorities, but the point is that both the mayor and the chief of police work at the scale of the city. The security guard, by contrast, does not.

Different authorities tend to take their own spatial scale for granted as the appropriate one, and to denounce measures that make sense at another scale but not at theirs. For example, measures that protect the nation as a whole against rising crime rates—better social welfare, support for marginal families, neighbourhood watch programmes—will

do little or nothing to reassure the shopkeeper worried about theft by shoplifters, and may well be regarded as wrong-headed wastes of taxpayers' money.

Just as temporal scale was shown to be qualitative as well as quantitative, so too spatial scale is more than a matter of how much territory is included. Different spheres of life—metaphorical spaces—have their own rules, and thus have unique security needs. That families are supposed to be governed differently from states, that children are not to be governed as if they were adults, that night-time leisure spaces have different standards of order than daytime workplaces ... the myriad assumptions about order and disorder that authorities make and that we all make in our everyday life all have a spatial dimension that needs to be understood if we are going to analyse the governance of security.

That shifts in spatial scale affect more than the quantity of territory being governed is also evident if one takes even a brief look at the growing industry of local crime prevention, whose rationalities rely heavily on what has come to be called 'broken-windows' criminology (Harcourt, 2001). Arguments about litter and broken windows and their relationship to social disorder, lack of cohesion and crime are plausible only at the micro-local level. Whether one believes that disorder causes crime or not, the 'broken windows' debate assumes that the proper scale is the micro-local one: signs of physical disorder are always counted at the level of the block or the street, and are not aggregated at a national scale. Nationally, other factors are deemed to be more relevant to understanding crime—poverty, unemployment, shifting demographics, migration, legal changes and so on. Broken-windows criminology wisely restricts its claims to the micro-local; if shifted to the scale of the nation state, claims about cleanliness as next to crimelessness would lose their persuasiveness.

The temporal and spatial scales built into or constituted by particular projects of security governance thus require specific analysis. When comparing different security projects it is important to pay attention to the difference that scale (both temporal and spatial) makes, since measures that seem appropriate at one temporal or spatial scale do not necessarily translate across scales.

Scales, however, are not mutually exclusive. Instead of asking whether governance is shifting from one scale to another (say, from the national to the supranational), a question that presupposes a zero-sum game, it is more appropriate to undertake to analyse current trends in the relationships among scales—what Neil Brenner (2004: 3; see also Sassen, 2006) calls 'a wide-ranging recalibration of scalar hierarchies and interscalar relations'. To understand how it is that multiple scales can easily coexist in the same place and time, it is useful to reflect on the work of jurisdiction.

Jurisdiction: the governance of governance. Shifts in the spatial scale at which security is imagined or governed may correspond to jurisdictional lines: but this is by no means necessary. A central state governs not only the territory of the whole state but also particular spaces, small or large, that are for legal reasons imbued with state-ness: a harbour or an airport may be physically and economically local/municipal but may be run by the central state as a sovereign state space. There are also particular activities and even particular substances (alcohol, tobacco and firearms, in the USA) that have come to be governed by supralocal state bodies, often for highly contingent reasons. Similarly, people under 18 are generally subject to different modes of legal governance regardless

of spatial or temporal scales—‘youth criminal justice’ is a jurisdiction that is neither spatially nor temporally specific.

The proliferation of overlapping jurisdictions has certainly been noted by ordinary citizens and by scholars, especially in the literature on globalization and supranational governance. A particularly sophisticated discussion of overlapping jurisdictions is that provided by Saskia Sassen (2006), who notes that it is unhelpful to ask whether supranational jurisdictions now have more power than national ones since what has often happened is that existing state capacities have been deployed in the service of global or at least transnational agendas. The existence of a large number of institutions exercising completely heterogeneous modes of governance, in ways that cannot be reduced to divisions of race, gender, class or territory, underlines the need to develop new tools to analyse the usually peaceful coexistence not only of different jurisdictions, but, more importantly from the sociological point of view, of contradictory logics of governance.

If various state jurisdictions, from customs inspections to juvenile justice to public health, have developed styles of governance that are not co-ordinated or even compatible with one another, the matter of overlapping jurisdictions is complicated by the simultaneous proliferation of other, non-state jurisdictions. Religious organizations have their own jurisdictions and issue their own rules, whether or not the decisions of church bodies are formally backed by state power; parents have certain powers to organize households and discipline children that are inherent in their parental status rather than on territory, and that are complicated by the fact that many families have informal but strong rules whereby certain matters are the mother’s jurisdiction and others are the father’s; university administrators have a certain jurisdiction over students and a different one over faculty members; the delivery of health and social services is also governed in part through professional associations that run a private legal system, including a system of private punishment; and so forth.

If one takes the term jurisdiction in this broad sense, so as to include customary law and the private law of powerful institutions as well as formal state law, jurisdiction is nothing less than the governance of governance. It is a complex mechanism of great antiquity and very amorphous shape that cannot be subsumed under ‘scale’. Jurisdiction is generally dismissed as a merely legal, highly technical matter even by legal scholars, and it is completely overlooked by political or social theorists, probably because legal scholars have not brought it to their attention (McVeigh, 2007). The game of jurisdiction is by no means invisible, since ordinary citizens are aware of at least some fights about jurisdiction from media reports and from their own experience. But these fights, often dismissed as political in the narrow sense, are not seen as relevant to theorizing either governance or citizenship.

A crucial element in the theoretical invisibilization of jurisdiction and its work is that jurisdiction is only noticed at all when there are disputes. The evening news might carry a report about a spat among politicians over who should fund public transportation or who should clean up a brownfield site. But such disputes concern merely the specific content of jurisdiction. The everyday, largely silent workings of the machine of jurisdiction itself have been almost completely naturalized in most nation states. Potholes seem to be ‘naturally’ local; immigration—even in countries where the vast majority of immigrants choose cities—seems to be ‘naturally’ a central state responsibility; and so on.

Understanding the largely successful naturalization of the complex game of jurisdiction is crucial if one is going to analyse successfully security projects—not only because we need to know who has the legitimate power to govern this or that entity or problem, but also, and more importantly from the theoretical point of view, because determining *who* governs (which is what most legal fights about jurisdiction seek to do) tends to determine *how* things or people will be governed. The link between the *who* and the *how* of governance is not completely fixed. A central state agency might well surprise everyone by governing a person or problem not ‘like a state’ (Scott, 1998) but rather in an individualized and pastoral manner. But there are affinity relationships linking jurisdictions (and scales, which are not completely separable from jurisdictions) to modes of governance. For example, informal mediation by local elders—the kind of legal governance that avoids formulating rules and that actually uses rather than rejects the personal experience of the adjudicator—typically happens in highly localized contexts in which the adjudicators, who are rarely full-time professionals, know the disputing parties.

Given the affinities linking jurisdiction/scale and mode of governance, it is thus not surprising to discover that security problems come to be governed differently if responsibility for them (jurisdiction) is shifted. To give but one example: when the physical safety of married women came to be re-visualized as a matter of state law, arrests and prosecutions appeared as the answer to the problem of abusive husbands, whereas in earlier situations, in which extended families were the relevant authorities, informal pressure on the husband appeared as the logical solution.

Jurisdictional divides tend to insulate different governing machines from one another (Santos, 1987). Of course jurisdictions existing within a single state are not completely impermeable to one another: for example, in recent years many courts have pushed municipalities to treat their citizens as rights bearers, even though municipal jurisdiction has traditionally dealt more in property regulation, privileges and licences than in individual rights. And sometimes inventive people suggest borrowing the logic of one jurisdiction and applying it in another—as John Braithwaite (2000) has famously done in his explorations of how corporate governance mechanisms could be usefully applied within other realms, especially criminal justice. Nevertheless, despite certain cross-jurisdictional trends in governance, and despite some active dismantling of jurisdictional divides, jurisdictions still have their own governing traditions and governing styles. To that extent, disputes about jurisdiction, which in the formal legal arena are usually framed as questions about who governs what space, end up also determining how issues—such as certain security problems—come to be governed.

In analysing the scope of security projects, then, temporal scale, spatial scale and jurisdiction all need to be dealt with separately. Such a three-step analysis will reveal how certain way of governing have come to be taken for granted as appropriate for certain problems or across certain spaces.

Techniques of security

As mentioned earlier, there are certain clear affinities linking rationalities, jurisdictions and techniques. James Scott’s (1998) famous study of modernizing projects of governance, *Seeing Like a State*, demonstrates that certain ways of seeing space and seeing humans

developed in the 18th century and after were associated with certain rationalities (efficiency, homogeneity, calculability) that were in turn promoted through the use of particular techniques (counting, measuring, reducing to a quasi-quantitative abstract denominator). If spaces and human groups were to be 'improved' and rendered more efficient, they needed to be first homogenized, so that they could be regarded as adequately visualized by being turned into countable units.

Scott's analysis, however, does not explore the reflexivity of governance. It also (and not coincidentally) tends to reinforce the zero-sum model, since the assumption that modernizing expert-led projects drive out other knowledges and other ways of governing is implicit throughout the book. A more dynamic (and even, dare one say this, dialectical) analysis of the relation between techniques (of seeing and of governing) and rationalities and jurisdictions is thus needed. While it is true that both state and non-state jurisdictions have recently devised security projects that rely on and reinforce 'seeing like a state', nevertheless, today's large state bureaucracies contain many features that do not particularly further efficiency and top-down planning; and this is no mere oversight. The rise of privacy legislation and of legal avenues for challenging administrative decisions under the banner of rights are but two of the developments that need to be taken into account when analysing today's state security projects. The provision of citizen security—especially at the local and familial level—is not simply turned over to seeing-like-a-state experts, even in wealthy jurisdictions that can afford expensive law enforcement, and even in right-wing jurisdictions that foster law-and-order projects. Alternative dispute resolution, restorative justice, diversion programmes and selectively 'turning a blind eye' (e.g. in relation to the policing of prostitution or drug possession) are all flourishing—even in jurisdictions, such as American ones, in which the coercive power of the criminal law has not decreased (Braithwaite, 2000; Wood and Shearing, 2007).

In general, just as different logics of security provision can coexist and flourish, since an increase in one by no means necessitates a decline in other logics, so too the array of techniques actually used at any given time for a specific purpose cannot be predicted in advance. Capital punishment, to name one state security technique that has been thoroughly documented and theorized, does not necessarily serve the same purpose or follow the same logic in all of the jurisdictions in which it is used. And its popularity or otherwise is not hard wired to any specific logic of security—American states that still have the death penalty may abolish it soon because it, and the numerous appeals required, costs taxpayers too much, a consideration that was not in Foucault's mind when he wrote his famous analysis of the political meaning of execution in the mid-1970s, just before the fiscal crisis of the State came to the fore.

Thus, while there are affinities linking techniques to governing systems and logics, the choice of technique is not hard wired either to the governing logic or to the scale and/or jurisdiction of the project. In studying the techniques that are being used in particular contexts empirically, however, it will also be important to note that techniques too can have reflexive or feedback effects on the governing projects. A technique such as the statistical calculation of the prevalence of a certain risk in various subpopulations will tend to encourage certain ways of seeing the people who make up the populations, as has been amply documented: but if criminological experts begin to use brain scans to examine offenders' brains, rather than doing risk assessments and comparing scores, no doubt

that will tend to encourage explanations of criminality that are neurological rather than actuarial-demographic.

In general, techniques used in security projects can have constitutive effects that may or may not be in accord with the logic of the security project in question. A dynamic analysis of the implementation of security projects, and of the reflexive adjustment of logics, jurisdictions and techniques in the wake of implementation, is the kind of empirical project that would give us a truly accurate, dynamic picture of how we are now being governed through projects that might all appeal to security but which differ so much as to make generalizations impossible.

Example: managing everyday municipal order

To demonstrate briefly how the framework just outlined could help to analyse the findings from empirical research projects concerning security and order maintenance, I will draw on a research project I have carried out on municipal by-law enforcement and conflict management. This involved attending community meetings on a variety of highly local issues, systematic ride-alongs with municipal inspectors (about 120 hours spread over three summers), and interviews with managers, city councillors and other stakeholders (see Valverde, 2008 for some initial findings).

The call for a dynamic analysis is reflected in the fact that instead of trying to categorize different styles of by-law enforcement in a static manner, I tried to concentrate on relationships, and specifically on how these relationships changed (often within a short time). In several cases, citizens initially upset with other citizens soon came to focus their anger not on the dog owners or the condo developers or the stripper-bar operator who had been the original source of anger but rather on the actual or supposed bureaucrats (always referred to under the collective noun ‘the city’, as if there were no city departments with conflicting agendas) who had allegedly either allowed things that should not have been allowed or had not properly informed and consulted with local residents. City councillors, unfortunately, often fuelled the populist suspicion of ‘the city’ in such a way as to reap electoral political advantage. A typology of regulatory styles—perhaps along the lines suggested by Braithwaite (2000) and colleagues—would not be without interest, but in the end it would not tell us much about the highly unstable relationships that make up citizenship at the local level.

Secondly, questions about logic, scope and techniques are also proving useful in analysing the findings. In terms of logic, it is clear that one of the reasons why citizens are constantly suspicious of ‘city hall’ is that the logic of certain city departments—planning and transportation, in particular—is simply not in sympathy with the very different, highly local and highly embodied, logic of neighbourhood association membership. Efficiency is the highest value for transportation planners. But when residents become involved in discussions about parking on their street, for example, they presuppose different values and rationalities—personal convenience, personal likes and dislikes and aesthetics. Whether the city’s aggregate transportation capacity is working efficiently is not an interesting question for them, at least during conversations about some local issue.

As suggested in the framework outlined earlier, the second set of questions—about scope—helps us to understand why and how the different logics of urban citizenship are

kept firmly on their separate tracks. The scale presupposed by the middle-aged or elderly neighbours who show up at community meetings or who call city hall to complain is qualitatively as well as quantitatively different from the scale of city planning, and the differences in scale are temporal as well as spatial. 'I have lived on this street for 30 years' is a typical introductory sentence at these encounters. The spatial scale inherent in speaking from personal experience about a tiny part of the city—usually, a single block—combines with a temporal scale that can be described as 'nostalgic' to form a spatio-temporal unit that is simply impervious to the forward-looking, expert-produced demands for rationality and efficiency that are made at the scale of the city or the region. The planners have a professional preference for living in the future, not the past, and the subject of their future is not a single house containing concrete, actual people—rather, the subject of their project is a whole city, envisaged through fancy computer-generated images of rationality, cleanliness and the kind of buildings favoured by today's architectural critics. The badly dressed old lady with the strong Indian accent and the working-class Anglo widower who built his own home 40 years earlier—who were the two most eloquent speakers at one of many planning-law hearings I attended—were seeing and imagining the city at another scale altogether. These concrete individuals are rarely interested in using democratic consultation mechanisms to exercise jurisdiction over the city as such, tending to participate only in micro-local issues.

Given these sharp differences in temporal and spatial scale and in jurisdiction, it is not surprising that the techniques used by various stakeholders to convey their desires and to attempt to influence the governance of everyday order differ a great deal. The lady who says, 'I have lived on this street for 30 years' is using a narrative technique that can be very powerful at one scale and within some jurisdictions (zoning appeals, especially)—but which will be useless at the level of a court of appeal case concerning the city's official plan. At that level, other techniques and other knowledge formats, generally of expert provenance, will be authoritative and effective.

We can thus see that applying the framework developed here helps to shed light on key elements of the process by which citizens, municipal officials and other actors work together or not together, more often than not in a dysfunctional manner, to manage questions of order and disorder. While some of the interactions between municipal officials and citizens are smooth and productive, especially at the scale of front-door individual interaction, many other such interactions—especially at community meetings—can only be described as a dialogue of the deaf. If one asks questions about the logic, the scope and the techniques used by various parties, one can better understand the dynamics of the governance process—and perhaps eventually suggest some procedural changes that may help create the conditions for a better, more rational and more democratic use of the city's legal powers.

Conclusion

If security has indeed become a 'keyword' of the early 21st century, it is imperative that we reflect on how to study 'it' and theorize 'it'. The article opened with a Nietzsche-inspired argument to the effect that it is unproductive to think about 'security', with 'security' used as a noun as if it designated an entity, and that it is instead more useful to

turn our attention to the myriad security projects and mechanisms that can in fact be empirically studied.

The study of particular security projects can usefully proceed by asking three sets of related questions. First one needs to ask about the logic of a particular security project, without making any a priori epochal assumptions about our whole age being dominated by one or another overarching logic. To claim that we live in an age of sovereignty and coercion is no more true or false, as a general matter, as to claim that we live in an age of neoliberalism and individual choice. Different logics of governance can and do coexist, even within a single space and in respect to the same group of people. And in asking how heterogeneous and sometimes incommensurable logics can and do coexist, turning to the question of scope proves fruitful. Spatial scale, temporal scale and jurisdiction all work to differentiate and insulate different security projects from one another. Thus, these three elements of the scope of security projects deserve much more in-depth analysis than they have thus far received. Finally, while existing studies have indeed paid much attention to security techniques (e.g. surveillance technologies), the relationship between techniques and the other elements of the architecture of security projects (logic and scope) have not been well articulated. Security techniques have a certain constitutive effect on governance, but they are by no means all-powerful. And security techniques have certain affinities with particular logics, but the link between logics and techniques is not hard wired, since the governance of security is too flexible, creative and unpredictable to be adequately captured by any static classification. By asking questions of specific security projects and security mechanisms, questions that I have suggested can usefully proceed in three steps, it may be possible to begin to understand, in a dynamic manner, how various mechanisms of governance are shaping and reshaping themselves—and shaping and reshaping our lives in the process.

Notes

1. A high-level taskforce on food security has been recently set up by the UN; see UN.org/issues/food/taskforce (consulted 21 April 2009).
2. The term 'dialectic' has fallen out of use, partly because of the decline of Marxism and partly because Foucault and Deleuze, whose writings have greatly influenced the work of critical writers on security, were both allergic to dialectical reasoning, for reasons that need not detain us here but were arguably specific to their own time and place. If we set aside the anti-dialectical prejudices of the post-Althusserian generation of social theorists, however, we may see that many current empirical studies of the contradictions of security projects do in fact reveal dynamics that are more or less dialectical (though in the sense of 'negative dialectics' (Adorno, 1973), not in the grand Hegelian sense).
3. For example, Foucault's (1977) *Discipline and Punish* famously explained how techniques developed in monasteries for purposes of organizing and maximizing piety (the single-bed cell, the clock) were appropriated for the very different purpose of disciplining offenders in penitentiaries.
4. When trying to explain how liberal legality and coercive biopolitics could exist within a single state, Foucault (2003: 256) argued that racism is the crucial element that allows these two logics to coexist. While in no way denying that racism differentiates populations such as certain methods of governance seem 'naturally' suited to some that would not be regarded as appropriate for other subpopulations, I think the question has to be posed at a more general level, since racism cannot account for all instances of coexisting contradictory logics.

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