

Foucault Studies

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EDITORIAL

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We are very pleased to present *Foucault Studies 15*, which includes a special issue on “Foucault and Religion,” guest edited by John McSweeney (Independent Researcher based in Cork, Ireland). The special issue reexamines Foucault’s thinking in connection with the contemporary interrogation of the complex relations of religion and reason that was opened up by, on the one hand, Jacques Derrida’s notion of the ‘return of religion,’ and, on the other hand, the materialist conception of religion proposed by Alain Badiou, Slavoj Žižek and others. McSweeney further elaborates on the topic of the special issue in his introduction, in which he also presents the individual contributions to the issue by Matthew Chrulaw (University of New South Wales, Australia), Corey McCall (Elmira College, US), Jeremy Carrette (University of Kent, UK) and himself.

Foucault Studies 15 also includes a conversation with the author of *Michel Foucault’s Force of Flight* and editor of *Michel Foucault and Theology: The Politics of Religious Experience*, James Bernauer (Boston College, US). Conducted by Edward McGushin (Stonehill College, US), the interview covers Bernauer’s personal and intellectual trajectory, influenced by religious vocation and Foucault’s work. Important stops on the way are: The confrontation with the Cold War and communism; the challenge of Nazism and totalitarianism; the relationship to Christianity, Catholicism and the Jesuits; the experience of sexuality, homosexuality and the human body; personalism, religious and spiritual experience. The conversation connects to the special issue on religion, as it combines Bernauer’s more personal take on the themes of religion, spirituality, sexuality, ethics and personalism with a discussion of Foucault’s approach to these issues and the experience of reading Foucault.

In addition, *Foucault Studies 15* includes three non-themed articles, starting with “The Crossroads of Power: Michel Foucault and the US/Mexico Border Wall” by Thomas Nail (University of Denver, US). In the article, Nail draws on the work of Michel Foucault in order to analyze the constellation of political strategies and power at the border wall between US and Mexico. He argues that at least three distinct types of power are at work here: the sovereign exclusion of illegal life, the disciplinary detention of surveilled life, and the biopolitical circulation of migratory life. By analyzing the crossroads of power particular to the US/Mexico border wall

along Foucauldian lines, the article expands the existing literature on Foucault. At the same time, the article moves border studies beyond the critique of sovereign power and toward an analysis of the deployment of co-existing and intersecting strategies of power.

Drawing on Foucault's lectures in 1982-83 *Le Gouvernement de soi et des autres*, the article "Philosophical *Parrêsia* and Transpolitical Freedom," by Ottavio Marzocca (Università degli Studi di Bari "Aldo Moro," Italy), investigates the role of *parrêsia* in ancient and modern politics and philosophy. The article highlights that ancient philosophy regenerated the practice of *parrêsia* following the crisis into which the courageous freedom of speech had fallen in the Greek polis. Confronting the democratic mortification of *parrêsia*, Socratic and Platonic philosophy recognized the need to regenerate the courage for truth and reconnect it to politics as a task to speak the truth not about power, but as related to power, in a sort of face to face relationship with it, or in intersection with it. The resistance is translated by the Cynics into a conflictual relationship of defiance and derision. After a long period of disuse due to the predominance of theology and pastoral power, philosophical *parrêsia* re-emerges in modernity, when philosophy is able to re-establish a transversal relationship with the government of men. To prove this point, Foucault discusses various texts by Kant on the Enlightenment and the Revolution at the beginning of his 1982-83 lectures. In modernity, however, philosophical truth-telling needs to face new opponents, such as scholasticism, the predominance of economic 'true speech,' liberal hegemony and global media coverage.

Finally, Laura Hengehold (Case Western Reserve University, US) in her article, "Between Bodies and Pleasures: A Territory Without A Domain" makes a case for focusing on an implicit relationship between Foucault's genealogical efforts to free Western cultures from a *scientia sexualis* that oppresses sexual minorities and Kant's writings on aesthetic judgment, teleological judgment, and anthropology. Despite Kant's apparent general disregard of pleasure and his expressed disdain for sensuality, sexuality, and especially homosexuality, Kant develops a concept of non-teleological pleasure in *The Critique of the Power of Judgment* and subsequent writings. This concept of an aesthetic pleasure without a specific domain may provide grounds for queer thinkers to resist conceiving sexuality and death either as natural forces closely linked to the (dys)functioning of biological organisms or as mere objects, as it has been common since Kant's first and second critique and post-Kantian philosophical anthropology and in biological medicine since the end of the eighteenth and the beginning of the nineteenth centuries. In addition, the concept may make room for reflective judgment and diversity in lieu of determining judgments. This reconfiguration forms the subtext of much of Foucault's intellectual trajectory, including his archeology of the medical and human sciences and his later efforts to find a genealogy rather than a biology behind Western discourses on sex.

We are also pleased to include a workshop-report in our Toolbox section. The title Toolbox relates to Foucault's claim that his books should serve as "a kind of tool-box others can rummage through to find a tool they can use however they wish in their own area."¹ Accordingly,

¹ Michel Foucault, *Dits et écrits*, Vol. 2 (Paris, Gallimard, 1994), 523.

the Toolbox section is strongly dedicated to the process of *using* Foucault. It can, for example, include commentaries, columns about methodological issues, interviews about on-going research, or, as in this issue, a report prepared by Ricky Wichum (Albert-Ludwigs-Universität Freiburg, Germany) from an interdisciplinary workshop on *Security Dispositifs. Technology—Space—Event* that was held at Freiburg, Germany, in May 2012. Analyzing security as a dispositive in the notion of Foucault's thinking, the workshop was concerned with the question: in the present demand for security, how do specific problematizations of risks and threats connect to certain forms of knowledge, practices, technologies, and affects, to create (un-)stable assemblages of (in-)security that even amplify each other?

We encourage our readers to submit similar or other items for our Toolbox section, as well as of course, articles, proposals for special issues, interviews, review essay and book reviews. On our website www.foucault-studies.com we list a number of books that we would like to have reviewed, and we encourage potential reviewers to contact us, if they are interested in reviewing one of the listed books, or, any other book that would be of interest to the journal's readers. In this issue, we include eight book reviews on a range of titles relating to Foucauldian thought.

Note: In the interview with Michel Foucault "Considerations on Marxism, Phenomenology and Power" which was published in the latest issue of *Foucault Studies*, there is a passage where Foucault refers to "Book 1" and "Book 2" of Marx' *Capital* (*Foucault Studies*, No. 14, September 2012, 100-101) and this might be confusing to Anglophone readers. The reason why this is confusing is that the Joseph Roy translation of *Capital* into French (Paris: Éditions Sociales) breaks Volume I into two books. The second book begins with what in English (New York: Penguin) is "Part 4: The Production of Relative Surplus-Value." The French Book 2 continues to the end of *Capital* volume 1 (on the genesis of capitalism and "primitive accumulation.") Most English readers, especially those less familiar with Marx, would read "Book 2" as simply meaning *Capital* "Volume 2," since the English translation breaks *Capital* Volume 1 into "parts" and "chapters" but not "books." So when Foucault is invoking "Book 1" and "Book 2," he is referring to the first book and the second book of Volume 1 of *Capital*. We would like to thank one of our readers, Stephen Shapiro, for pointing that out.

Finally, we would like to welcome a new member of our editorial group, Marius Gudmand-Høyer, who is Assistant Professor at Copenhagen Business School, Denmark, working on a project concerned with the problematization of the human subject within contemporary psychopathology and psychiatry. Together with Editor-in-Chief Sverre Raffnsøe, he has co-authored a monograph on Foucault (published in Danish in 2008 and German in 2010, and on its way to be published in English by Palgrave MacMillan), and he will join the editorial group in the role of Review Editor liaising with Alan Rosenberg.

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