

Der Band ist insofern nicht mehr und nicht weniger als ein Service, der einen einfachen Zugang zu einigen zentralen Ansätzen und Arbeiten in diesem weiten und heterogenen Forschungsfeld ermöglicht. In diesem Sinne handelt es sich um eine hilfreiche Textsammlung. Wer sich jenseits der deutschen Risiko-Ikone Ulrich Beck mit dem Thema beschäftigen will, hat entweder die Möglichkeit, sich durch unzählige *Journals* zu arbeiten, um die entsprechenden Schlüsseltexte zu finden, oder aber diese mit einem Preis von 250 US-Dollar eher als Verleihvariante konzipierte Textsammlung zur Hand zu nehmen. Was in den Themen Risiko, Vorsorge, Unsicherheit, Kontrolle und vor allem Regierung (governmentality) theoretisch und empirisch noch steckt, wird sich allerdings erst anhand der Publikationen der nächsten Jahre erweisen lassen und bleibt auch nach der mit diesem Band vorliegenden Übersicht offen. **Robert Feustel/Mathias Rodatz**

Sally Engle Merry: Human Rights and Gender Violence. Translating International Law into Local Justice. Chicago: The University of Chicago Press 2006.

UN-Menschenrechtsdokumente fordern von ihren LeserInnen einige Geduld: Sie sind oft abstrakt, sprachlich sperrig und redundant formuliert. Ihr Geltungsanspruch ist universal und ihre politische Bedeutung liegt v.a. in der Legitimität internationalen Konsenses und der daraus resultierenden Wirksamkeit politischen Drucks. Die Staaten, die Menschenrechte garantieren sollen, sowie nationale und lokale Menschenrechtsgruppen sind hingegen konfrontiert mit komplexen lokalen Realitäten und Fällen von Menschenrechtsverletzungen, die in spezifischer Weise durch Ungleichverteilungen von Ressourcen und Macht geprägt sind. Vielfältige soziale Kategorien, wie Rasse, soziale Klasse, Gender und ethnische Zugehörigkeiten, politische und ökonomische Verhältnisse sowie Glaubens- und Wertesysteme spielen dabei eine Rolle. Die Wechselbeziehungen zwischen universalen Normen und spezifischen lokalen Strukturen bzw. Kulturen sind dementsprechend spannungsreich und es stellt sich die Frage, welche Rolle lokales Wissen bei der Produktion von Menschenrechtsnormen spielt und was diese Normen lokal bewirken bzw. wie sie wirken.

Sally Engle Merry untersucht in ihrem Buch *Human Rights and Gender Violence* wie – d.h. durch welche Akteure, Institutionen, Diskurse und Prozesse – die Räume, in denen transnationales Recht geschaffen wird und lokale Räume, für die es geschaffen wird, miteinander verbunden sind. Am Beispiel der internationalen Menschenrechtsbewegung gegen Gewalt in Geschlechterverhältnissen (gender violence) beschreibt sie einerseits, wie in transnationalen Diskursen an den Standorten der UN neue Bedeutungskategorien entstehen (Gewalt an Frauen als Menschenrechtsverletzung und eine Form der Diskriminierung) und andererseits, wie diese Bedeutungen weltweit von Staaten sowie nationalen und lokalen AktivistInnen aufgegriffen und in soziale Praktiken übersetzt werden, um spezifische Situationen zu beschreiben und Menschenrechtsverletzungen zu bekämpfen.

Ergebnis ihrer Feldforschungen, die sie im Zeitraum von 1999 bis 2004 durchführte, ist eine ethnographische Studie, deren Ort der Untersuchung keine territorial abgrenzbare Einheit darstellt – Merry beschreibt ihr Vorgehen als „deterritorialiserte Ethnographie“ – sondern in der sie die LeserInnen mitnimmt in drei soziale Räume, innerhalb derer Menschenrechtsnormen geschaffen und ihre Umsetzungen verhandelt werden.

Sie beginnt mit dem transnationalen Raum der UN und führt ihre LeserInnen zu Debatten und Anhörungen, auf internationale Konferenzen und Treffen von UN-Kommissionen, bei denen UN-, Regierungs- und NGO-VertreterInnen aus aller Welt zusammentreffen und wo transnational konsensfähige Menschenrechtsnormen produziert und in ihrer Implementierung verfolgt und kommentiert werden (Kap. 2). Am Beispiel der *Convention on the Elimination of all forms of Discrimination Against Women* (CEDAW) gewährt Merry detaillierte Einblicke, wie in diesem Raum ein gemeinsames kulturelles Verständnis von persönlicher Autonomie, Sicherheit und gleichen Rechten entsteht (Kap.3), das als UN-Konvention universelle Geltung beansprucht, jedoch in der Praxis nicht selten mit lokalen Kulturen in Konflikt gerät.

Insbesondere in diesem ersten Teil des Buches wird Merrys im Hintergrund immer präsente Frage bedeutsam, ob die Verbreitung universeller Menschenrechte als westlicher Kulturimperialismus gesehen werden muss. Dabei arbeitet sie die Parallelen zum essentialistischen Kulturbegriff der einstigen Kolonialmächte Europas und Nordamerikas heraus und zeigt, dass auch im UN-Diskurs Kultur tendenziell als monolithisch, rückständig und traditionell verstanden und als Gegensatz zur scheinbar kulturlosen, zivilisierten Moderne konzipiert wird. Merry ist es ein Anliegen zu zeigen, dass die Art und Weise der Konzeptionalisierung von Kultur in einflussreichen Settings wie der UN hochpolitische Implikationen hat. An unterschiedlichen Beispielen stellt sie dar, wie der Kulturbegriff die Vorstellungen der Möglichkeiten sozialen Wandels und letztlich das Policymaking prägt: So wird Kultur im essentialistischen Sinne entweder als grundsätzlich förderlich oder hinderlich für die Umsetzung von Menschenrechtsstandards betrachtet und dementsprechend im Ganzen gewürdigt oder abgelehnt. Demgegenüber ermöglicht ein Verständnis von Kultur als offen, in sich hybrid und widersprüchlich eine komplexere Vorstellung der Interaktionsmöglichkeiten zwischen lokaler und transnationaler Kultur.

Eine derartige Auffassung von Kultur, so zeigt Merry, ist insbesondere in den beiden folgenden von ihr untersuchten Räumen zu finden, innerhalb derer Menschenrechtsideen lokal übersetzt werden. Im Gegensatz zu den Debatten auf UN-Ebene wird Kultur hier meist als Set von Ressourcen betrachtet, die eingesetzt werden können, um Menschenrechtsideen an lokale Kontexte anschlussfähig zu machen.

Zunächst beschreibt Merry den Raum, in dem globale Menschenrechtsdiskurse Teil sozialer Bewegungen werden (Kap. 5). Sie führt ihre LeserInnen an sehr verschiedene Orte (nach Delhi, Peking und Hongkong sowie auf Hawaii und die Fidschi-Inseln) und zeigt am Beispiel von Rechtslobbying und Sozialarbeit, wie dort jeweils durch lokale AktivistInnen transnationale in lokale Diskurse und Praktiken übersetzt werden. An allen fünf untersuchten Orten findet sie erstaunlich ähnliche Muster vor – ein Ergebnis, das sie als Hinweis dafür interpretiert, dass die Kernideen der Menschenrechte in den Implementierungsprozessen nicht nivelliert werden. Besonders aufschlussreich ist in diesem Zusammenhang Merrys Untersuchung der Rolle lokaler AktivistInnen, die als eine Art Mittler zwischen Sprache und Inhalten des UN-Rechts und der Umgangssprache fungieren, in der Menschen ihre Alltagssituationen rahmen. Das Buch macht hier deutlich, dass und wie Menschenrechte durch ihren universellen Anspruch und internationale Legitimierung lokalen AktivistInnen neue Deutungsmöglichkeiten für lokale Probleme wie Gewalt in Geschlechterverhältnissen eröffnen und einen neuen politischen Raum für Reformen schaffen.

In ihrem vorletzten und empirisch anschaulichsten Kapitel (Kap. 6) analysiert Merry auf Grundlage zweier Fallstudien die Veränderungen, die sich durch Menschenrechtsdiskurse und -aktivismus im Selbstverständnis derer ergeben, die den Schutz der Menschenrechte in Anspruch nehmen, und vertieft damit die Einsichten in die komplexen Prozesse

des lokalen Wirkens und Adaptierens transnationaler Menschenrechtsnormen. Dies stellt vielleicht das eindrucklichste und im Kontext der Menschenrechtsliteratur bisher wenig beachtete Thema des Buches dar. Merry führt die LeserInnen nach Hawaii und Hongkong, in den dritten, örtlich stärker begrenzten Raum zwischen lokalen AktivistInnen und Opfern von Menschenrechtsverletzungen bzw. von Gewalt gegen Frauen. Den Prozess, in dem lokale Subjekte sich selbst als Menschenrechtssubjekte interpretieren lernen, beschreibt sie als kontingent, widersprüchlich und als individuell riskant. Alte Subjektivitäten, z.B. als Mütter, Ehefrauen und Familienangehörige, die von ihren Verwandten schlecht behandelt werden, geraten in Konflikt mit neuen Selbstverständnissen als (Menschen-)Rechtssubjekte und Klägerinnen gegenüber den Tätern. Diese neuen Selbstbilder werden oft erst einmal versuchsweise im Prozess lokaler politischer Kämpfe angenommen, bisweilen parallel zu alten Subjektivitäten ausprobiert und nicht selten auch wieder verworfen, wenn sich die Opportunitätskosten als zu hoch erweisen. Recht, so wird auch hier deutlich, bietet für die von Gewalt im Geschlechterverhältnis betroffenen Frauen *eine* Möglichkeit, Gewaltsituationen in neuen Begriffen zu rahmen – andere Möglichkeiten bleiben jedoch daneben bestehen. Und es sind insbesondere staatliche Akteure, die – indem sie Menschenrechtsforderungen ernst nehmen – (Menschen-)Rechtssubjekte wesentlich schaffen.

Merry gelingt es in ihrem Buch sehr facettenreich, das Panorama einer transnationalen Bewegung und ihrer Kämpfe gegen Gewalt in Geschlechterverhältnissen zu skizzieren, die in unterschiedlichen Arenen geführt werden; von transnationalen Menschenrechtsdiskussionen an den Standorten der UN bis hin zu den individuellen Subjektivierungsprozessen der von Gewalt betroffenen Frauen. Diese Bewegung zeigt in ihrem Selbstverständnis, ihrer Sprache und ihren Praktiken an den untersuchten Orten erstaunliche Ähnlichkeiten. Und dennoch, so macht Merry deutlich, werden Menschenrechte nicht im Sinne eines westlichen Kulturimperialismus den Ländern des globalen Südens aufoktroiert, sondern international im Konsens beschlossen, lokal übersetzt und, wenn auch nicht konfliktfrei, angenommen. Sally Engle Merrys methodischer Ansatz einer „deterritorialiserten Ethnographie“ fordert dabei die gängigen Erwartungen an ethnographische Feldforschung als dichte Beschreibung weniger Fälle heraus. Dabei entsteht jedoch bisweilen der Eindruck, dass Merry zu viele Schauplätze gleichzeitig aufmacht, so dass die Struktur des Textes, die Schärfe der Argumentation sowie die Eindringlichkeit der Darstellung darunter leiden. Neben dem gelungenen Gesamteindruck sind die stärksten Momente des Buches eindeutig jene, in denen Merry einen oder zwei Fälle herausgreift und so das kontingente und spannungsreiche Zusammenspiel lokaler und globaler Deutungsmuster und Praktiken exemplarisch beschreibt. **Ulrike Froböse/Connie Stitz**

Jonathan Simon: Governing Through Crime: How the War on Crime Transformed American Democracy and Created a Culture of Fear. Oxford: Oxford University Press 2007.

Fear is ubiquitous in family life, though, as Jonathan Simon is arguing in his *Governing through Crime*, fear of the spouse has been replaced in the US by fear of the monstrous stranger without – or within – the household. This has had dramatic repercussions on the forms of self-governance that have dominated middle-class lifestyles in the 20th century. The (suburban) family guards against threats from without through its retreat to

gated communities; its consumption of private security services, technologies and expertise; its displacing itself in “safe” SUV vehicles that place it far from the madding crowds. But the family is also guarding against threats from within through unprecedented surveillance and control of children. Families monitor children through the purchase of home drug testing kits, home surveillance technology, and if all else fails, by sending adolescents to “boot camps” to help them sort themselves out.

Parents are compelled to invest heavily in disciplinary technologies. If children were found to engage in criminal acts, the effects of the resulting exclusion can be devastating to the entire family who risk to lose public housing, eligibility for college loans or private insurance. But monitoring of children is not confined to private spaces: children are also subject to surveillance technologies in their schools, where norm enforcement by teachers has been superseded by private security companies intervening against disruptive students in classrooms, children being subjected to mandatory drug tests, metal detectors, and searches, being barred from leaving during school hours, subject to in-school detentions and disbarred from school if their behaviour is found wanting. Thus, American children are ubiquitously being reframed as a population of potential victims (of attacks by fellow classmates, of child abusers, of drug peddlers) and potential perpetrators (drug dealers, vandals or bullies). The pervasive, and palpitating, fear of crime has meant that punishment and policing have become one – if not *the* – dominant mode of private and public socialisation (210).

Jonathan Simon shows in this book that the victim-perpetrator rhetoric has become pervasive in the past three decades, and he uses the family as one locus in which these changes are most visible. His other examples are prisons and the workplace. In the wake of a demise of worker representation and the hopes for affirmative action, the moralisation of social relations – and thus their depoliticisation – have the advantage of re-creating an useful scheme to vet the good from the bad: good people are victims, bad people are perpetrators. Good people are taxpayers, bad people receive – and probably abuse – welfare. So Americans are potential victims of crime in a two-fold manner. Firstly, they are victims as taxpayers; that is, victims of “the high costs of welfare for poor, minority, urban residents – the same communities blamed for crime” (109). And secondly, they are potential victims of violent crimes perpetrated by male members of those same populations. This implies that while the victim has become the new idealized subject of much political action, this new subject is racialized and gendered. For victims are white, suburban and middle-class, and are contrasted to a popular catalogue of “monsters” who are not. The standard image of criminals is of gang members, drug kingpins, violent crime recidivists and sex offenders. Upper class, or white, perpetrators of environmental or white-collar crime are not demonized in the same way. And as the victim is the fulcrum of legal change, any attempts to occasion change necessitate a self-presentation of the lobby group as potential victims of crimes – by co-workers, employers, customers, etc.

The racialization of the perpetrator has a long history. As the former education Secretary William Bennett facetiously said in a radio interview in September 2005, “if you wanted to reduce crime, you could, if that were your sole purpose, you could abort every black baby in this country, and your crime rate would go down.” According to Simon, indeed, there is a correlation between the diminution of low-skilled work, the dire living conditions and poor opportunities in some neglected urban areas and criminogenic behaviour; these conditions are only further exacerbated by the penal system into which so many African American men disappear for so long. Thus, there is a double racialization process: first, African Americans often live in neglected urban areas in social conditions

that (according to Simon) are more likely to lead to criminal behaviour. Second, as the possibility of exercising discretion in arresting, prosecuting, and punishing a person is often used to the *detriment* of African American men, these are more likely than other citizens to spend a segment of their life in jails or prisons, where “prisonization” occurs, that is, its inhabitants learn a macho prison culture that will not help towards integration into working life afterwards. But this in turn means that Simon unwittingly admits that the racialization of the perpetrator/victim distinction is not entirely unfounded. What he quite rightly – though this is not novel – points out is that the *conditions* under which a segment of the populations lives lead to greater crime rates.

What could be added to this are details not of the causes, but of the *effects* of classifications of populations into ethnic groups. Anthropologists have shown that widespread assumptions about “the other” produce behaviours at a micro-level that when compounded can have striking impacts on a global scale. Thus, a recent ethnographic study of taxi drivers profiling their customers (Diego Gambetta and Heather Hamill, *Streetwise: How Taxi Drivers establish their Customers’ Trustworthiness*) shows how taxi drivers know that their lives may depend on the right sort of prejudice. New York taxi drivers face a very high likelihood of being killed. They have established a set of rules concerning the *prima facie* trustworthiness of customers: women are safer than men, adults safer than teenagers, individuals safer than groups, well-dressed people more so than scruffy ones, known passengers preferred to strangers, calm people safer than agitated ones. And “white” people are deemed safer than “black” people. These judgments as individual judgments are still sexist, ageist, and racist, among other things, but within the rights of the security-conscious taxi driver. They merely lead to micro-level decisions concerning which passengers can safely be picked up, and who is better avoided. On a compounded scale, such individual judgments are aggregated to a system that is racist.

Private life has thus taking on a new form, dominated by logics of security, by a continual attendance to and fear of crime, by constant vigilance against victimisation, and by a privatised and moralised fear of Black men. This “ecology of fear” (a term coined by Mike Davis) has political and institutional ramifications.

On the one hand, the ecology of fear has taken up some issues of 1970s liberal politics, as Simon can show. The increased state intervention in the family, for example, is a direct result of successful feminist politics. Feminists had worked for decades in the 1960s and 1970s to establish stricter prosecuting and sentencing guidelines for spousal abuse – and were successful. Many US states have since implemented mandatory arrests for any accusations of domestic abuse; specialist prosecutors are to investigate the defendant’s history; specialist courts see no other cases; and some legislatures have put mandatory jail terms for first offences into practice. Women’s claims of domestic violence are taken seriously in an unprecedented manner. But as this attention to women’s issues has occurred within a cultural change of “governing through crime,” in which violent crime come to be seen *the* threat to personal safety (to the virtual exclusion of older fears of social insecurity, distributive injustice, environmental threats, violent social and political change, unemployment, overpopulation, retreat of the state, famine and war), the resulting changes in the institutional logics have served to exacerbate some of the problems feminists were concerned with to begin with. Not only have families changed their ways of governing themselves and their younger members, their consumption and living habits, their range of motion, willingness to engage with strangers, and general mobility. But this has served to decrease the range of options for women caught in the system of mandatory rules. The clear priority of criminal victimization over other kinds of risks or social inequities has meant that “virtually any increase in security for the public, no matter how

small or speculative, suffices to justify virtually any increase in risk for criminal offenders” (196).

In an era in which crime in general, and violent crime in particular, has been falling, more people are incarcerated for longer sentences, in harsher conditions, with less likelihood of being paroled and greater likelihood of being barred from exercising their civil rights, as well as from college loans and public housing. Prisons have in short become “waste management systems,” overcrowded, boring, unsafe, unhygienic and with little regard to the people incapacitated through them. And that is just the way they are meant to be. After two hundred years of humanitarian reforms of the penal system, populist politics have turned prisons into holding pens, especially for ethnic minority males. These populist politics show a weariness of “experts” who are seen to “privilege the criminal” and of a judicial system “unwilling to protect the people,” have stressed a “simple system of rules” that eliminate the possibility of anyone exercising their discretion in managing criminals. The success of this new is measured not in terms of recidivism rates, deterrence of crime, or production of any other social good, but (in keeping with the logics of the new penology) in terms of the efficiency of the system in removing people from the streets, or, in the words of California governor George Deukmejian, removing “an additional 52,000 convicted felons from neighbourhoods to send them to state prison” (158). This populist logic has been embraced by governors, presidents, lawmakers and courts, who have implemented 3-strikes laws, zero tolerance, an incarceration binge and a general vulnerability of all sectors of society to a crime control mentality that leaves no room for more measured perspectives on the characteristics of security. And this is what Simon deplores in this book, pleading for a return of another politics, another style of family and school life, a new social movement “ready to break the hold of crime on American governance” (282).

Governing through crime does not focus on the lives of the poor, huddled masses either within the penal system or without it that fears the criminal – this he has done previously. In fact, the narratives offered in this book are not altogether new or surprising, but Simon has put together an unremitting wealth of detail concerning institutional, cultural and private life-world changes. Some of the editing has been inattentive (quite a few references are missing from the bibliography), sometimes the tone is a little moralising, some of the arguments could have benefited from more pith, but all in all this is a fascinating perspective on the new American order. **Rebecca Pates**

Jennifer Wood/Clifford Shearing: Imagining Security. Col-lompton, UK: Willan Publishing 2007.

“*How should security be governed at the beginning of the twenty-first century?*” (1) This is the question that Jennifer Wood and Clifford Shearing seek to answer in *Imagining Security*. They thus follow an explicitly political agenda, built on an analysis that relies on an account of ‘nodal governance’ – a concept that the authors have developed over recent years. Although much of what they present does not seem to be especially new or even groundbreaking at first sight, and although there is good reason to criticize several inconsistencies in the structure of their argument, the application of a ‘nodal governance perspective’ presents a fresh and surprisingly viable approach to analyzing governance processes in ways that take the empirical role of state agencies in governance

seriously, while avoiding methodological state-centricism. Also, it leads to some thought-provoking, albeit controversial proposals regarding the governance of security, mainly because it takes the authors' own assumptions seriously and does not rely on state authorities to ensure democratic mechanisms in the field of production of security.

In the first three chapters, the authors develop the concept of 'nodal governance' and apply this perspective in a review of literature in different fields of security discourses and security governance. The last two chapters consist of "*an explicitly normative discussion of how a nodal governance perspective might inform efforts to enhance the power of weak actors [...] in reshaping the security field towards possibly new and different ends, both in instrumental and normative terms*" (96). Thus the analytical first half of the book serves as the basis for the development of the normative program.

In developing their concept of 'nodal governance', Wood and Shearing begin from the observation that, especially in the field of security, it is not only state authorities but a wide array of different non-state actors that engage in the governance of security, be it at the local, national or international level (3).

However, Wood and Shearing are skeptical of accounts which see this tendency towards a privatization of security issues as a pure effect of a neoliberal project that follows a program of 'responsibilization' (David Garland) and 'ruling at a distance' (Bruno Latour), and within which 'the state' delegates the 'rowing' (i.e., the realization of certain tasks) but stays with the 'steering' competences (i.e. the formulation of political programs); rather, they see processes of mutual 'enrolment,' in which state and non-state actors are structurally equal in principle. "*Today, ways of imagining and realizing security governance in the business sector as well as the 'third sector' (e.g. community groupings, non-governmental organizations) shape and influence the thinking of state institutions and vice versa. This is the essence of nodal governance.*" (13) Thus, they claim, the picture of security from a nodal governance account is more ambiguous than a perspective informed by a critical account of neoliberalism would suggest: "*What one has in practice is not a single model of governance, but a complex of hybrid arrangements and practices in which different mentalities of governance as well as very different sets of institutional arrangements coexist*" (21).

The idea of enrolment goes back to a concept Wood and Shearing borrow from Bruno Latour: an actor is powerful only to the degree to which she is able to enlist others in order to carry out her projects.¹ This is possible only by alignment and persuasion (which might include the use of pressure or force, but cannot be built exclusively on coercion nor is coercion a necessary component), and entails a process of 'translation': while carrying out their tasks, the enrolled actors 'translate' their part in the governance project according to their own goals and logics of operation – which, more likely than not, changes the nature of the whole process. Governance, from this perspective, becomes the art of alignment. Powerful actors manage to impose their logics onto those they enroll, and/or they manage to enroll a large number of others, thus forming governing nodes: "*Nodes are sites of knowledge, capacity and resources that function as governance auspices or providers. These sites are often institutional (expressed in an organizational form), but can also be located within informal groupings*" (27).

1 Latour, B. (1986) The powers of association. In: Law, J. (ed.), Power, action, and belief. A new sociology of knowledge? London: Routledge.

The strength of the nodal governance perspective lies in this combination of a broad but clear concept of governance, on the one hand, and a conceptual openness that avoids *a priori* assumptions about where governing nodes are to be found, on the other hand. It easily avoids methodological state-centricism, and neither does it assume *a priori* that certain other forces (money/the business sector) are the ‘real powers’ behind the scene, ruling the world. Rather, it remains an empirical question where governing nodes lie and who or which groups are part of them and dominate them.

Following this conceptual outline (backed up by some empirical examples), the reader might expect an application of the approach. This expectation is only partially fulfilled in the rest of the book. The second chapter concentrates on a classical discourse analysis of various waves of thinking in policing at the level of communities. The authors show that different waves of thinking in the field of policing have influenced each other and, over time, have been combined in several ways. Wood and Shearing then go on to jump to another plane: that of *practices* of nodal governance. Here, they don’t make their analysis explicit, but simply claim (as those working with a ‘governmentality approach’ generally do) that what they have shown for “waves of thinking” (i.e. at the level of thought, or concepts) translates into actual governing arrangements and practices. More exactly, the authors state that throughout all of these waves, at least since the middle of the twentieth century, police agencies have attempted to establish partnerships with others – be it with community groups, individual residents, other public authorities or private for-profit actors – and that the governance of security increasingly has become a field of nodal governance, while police have made sure to remain the central player. A more detailed description of such nodal arrangements would have strengthened the argument considerably.

Another field of security discourses that, according to the authors, have a strong nodal governance character and have been heavily influenced by non-state actors (both non-profit and business-oriented) are human security approaches. “A *human security approach seeks to decentre the state as referent object while examining security threats that arise from nodes and networks of people and activities that defy traditional state boundaries. From this standpoint, coercive capacity exercised by or on behalf of states is simply one among a plethora of capacities required in securing people.*” (63–64)

Departing from this assumption, an examination of human security discourses (and governing nodes and networks arranged through and around such approaches) makes perfect sense in the context of a nodal governance account. Unfortunately, in dealing with this the authors become somewhat inconsistent with regard to their first object of examination, community security. While with respect to the latter they concentrate on *discourses* and *mentalities* of governing crime and (almost casually) the governing nodes and networks that emerge out of that, when it comes to human security the authors repeatedly leave this plane and talk about what they perceive as the actual threats to human security. These threats, the argument goes, arise from actors that are organized in networks and de-centered nodes have thus a polycentric, network-like structure. Wood and Shearing refer here to very different threats, from terrorist networks over Kaldor’s ‘new wars,’ to the private provision of military services, human rights violations in Argentina and post-Apartheid South Africa, and economic want (while in the context of community policing it seems to be taken for granted that the imagined threats are more or less of the same nature for all waves of policing discourses). Accordingly, they describe reactions and strategies that aim at these diverse perceptions of human security threats. This is logical considering the broadened meaning of ‘security’ in human security discourses, but it also leaves the impression that the choice of subjects that are discussed here is quite arbi-

trary. A good example is in the chapter on community security, where the nodal governance account is applied in a fairly superficial way, without taking full advantage of its conceptual strengths. Rather, the accounts on human security seem primarily to serve the purpose of proving that the heterogeneous and decentralized security threats call for polycentric governance structures that need not necessarily be dominated, or even exclusively carried out, by actors of the international state system. The examples suggest that local knowledge as well as political, democratically organized participation of citizen groups are an adequate and at the same time effective means of dealing with issues of crime and (in-)security.

The basic assumption is therefore that nodal, polycentric governance arrangements carry the potential for new solutions to old problems of imbalance in power relations and representations, and that a nodal account of governance helps to better detect ways and strategies for weak actors who want to influence and shape governance practices. Wood and Shearing can make this assumption precisely because they have a more optimistic view on de-centered governance and ruling-at-a-distance than many critics of so-called neoliberal governance strategies: At least theoretically, their conception of power (as based on enrolment) and governance (as polycentric and concentrated in nodes) allows weak non-state actors to assume an active role in governing security and shaping policies in this field. This becomes especially clear when they talk about their research on Community Peace Centres in South Africa – community groups that engage in security issues: *“As the police have sought to enrol the Peace Committees, the latter have, in turn, used their power to enrol the police in furtherance of their governance objectives. [...] The Community Peace Centre project is not simply a neo-liberal partnership where the police are ‘responsibilizing’ community members to do their bidding”* (102 f.).

Building heavily on the work of John Braithwaite and complementing this with examples from their own empirical research, Wood and Shearing go on to propose a number of principles which might be summed up as the idea that ‘weak actors’ should concentrate on their abilities and assets (local or otherwise specific knowledge, manpower, persuasive power) and organize themselves in existing nodes of governance or – even better – build their own nodes. Thus, according to Wood and Shearing, they gain bargaining power, are able to set agendas, and form policies, i.e. to take a ‘steering’ position.

The question of how weak actors gain greater bargaining power has to be separated from the question of how this bargaining, or the attempts to influence governance projects, is to be regulated in a way that assures compliance with certain ‘democratic values’ (which the authors take for granted as something most people agree on, without specifying further the contents of such values). In contrast to many writers concerned with issues of social justice and political equality, Wood and Shearing do not blindly confide in ‘the state’ as the appropriate instance to assure such democratic rules. They do not postulate *a priori* *“that the best or exclusive way to respond to the problems we have identified is to create better Leviathans either at state or supra-state levels [...] there may well be other, and perhaps better, ways of creating both effective and democratic governance”* (99).

Accordingly, their answer to the problem of ‘governing governance’ rests in a hybrid mix of checks and balances (115). In chapter 5, they present some possible strategies, which they take from control mechanisms in public and private policing, and show that a traditional perspective limited to questions of (legal and political) accountability fails to see a whole range of other technologies of regulating governance, including licensing (both in the commercial sense and in the sense of a political ‘branding,’ as done in human rights or ecological campaigns), contracts, rules for insurance markets and self-

governance, generally based on a ‘marketization’ of security goods, which needs to be shaped in a way that that these markets produce socially just results. If this is successful, it presents what Wood and Shearing call “smart regulation” (136) and which they see happening in several fields where actors from the ‘third sector’ such as human rights activists, ecological non-profit-organizations or poor neighborhood groups manage (via shaping public discourses) to shape the behavior of corporations or public administrations.

In other words: the authors, like so many others, pin their hopes on actors based in civil society. In their view, non-state nodes “*possess or have the potential to possess the requisite knowledge, capacities and resources to monitor, and even to create, normative standards that guide them in their mix of governance functions. The virtue of the global civil society perspective, which we see in action with human rights NGOs, is its emphasis on local actors and their situated knowledge of regulatory nodes and networks. In simple terms, what seems to matter in the design of optimal regimes for the governance of governance is the right mix of ‘upwards’, ‘downwards’ and ‘horizontal’ processes (Scott 2000) that links up the activities of state and non-state nodes in ways that compensate for the weaknesses of each process on its own (see Goodin 2003²)*” (142).

The *really* interesting point would be: what would these governance designs look like? From what the authors have presented, it is clear that the answer to this question always has to be tailor-made to a specific situation. Wood and Shearing give some examples, or tentative answers, and generally demand that “appropriately deliberative structures” be implemented to allow for equitable and open articulation of normative goals. This is the logical consequence of the approach, but unsatisfying for the reader. The problem lies in the clash of the nodal governance perspective and the global analyzes of security discourses Wood and Shearing present: the very account of nodal governance argues that it doesn’t make sense to draw global pictures and look for global solutions. If they had followed their own thinking in this point, Wood and Shearing would have stuck to some concrete examples, analyzing them in detail and taking lessons from it, and would not have tried to draw the big picture – developing the argument in this way may very likely have served their purpose better than the sometimes arbitrary looking accounts on human security and communal policing discourses they give in ‘Imagining Security,’ which do not make full use of the potential the nodal perspective on governance processes provides. **Anne Dölemeyer**

2 Goodin, R.E. (2003) Democratic accountability: the distinctiveness of the third sector. In: European Journal of Sociology 44(3): 359–396.