Book Review

Pacifying the Homeland: Intelligence Fusion and Mass Supervision. **Brendan McQuade.** 2019. Oakland: University of California Press. 304 pages, ISBN 978-0-5202-9975-7 Paperback ($29.95)

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In the 1970s, deindustrialization and the collapse of welfare states in the capitalist core signaled a new wave of ruthless globalization. The succeeding era saw a striking increase in the dispossessed and the pauperized—globally, billions of "surplus" peoples were no longer needed as workers; their redundancy made them expendable. Much attention has rightfully been paid to the way that mass incarceration developed as a state strategy to "warehouse" growing surplus populations and otherwise deal with the attendant "violent, wrenching social transformations" (4). In *Pacifying the Homeland*, Brendan McQuade shows us how a complementary set of arrangements, which he calls mass supervision, emerged simultaneously to manage these "problem populations," as "intensive surveillance, intelligence gathering, and policing…help[ed] transform entire communities into open-air prisons" (5). He examines mass supervision by investigating *intelligence fusion centers*, or interagency intelligence centers established in the wake of 9/11 throughout the United States to improve intelligence sharing across municipal, state, and federal levels. At these centers, analysts across agencies mine data sources and "fuse" them together to create "intelligence." Conducting over 80 interviews and collecting hundreds of primary source documents, McQuade did extensive field work at two of the seventy-nine U.S. Department of Homeland Security-recognized fusion

centers: the New Jersey Regional Operations Intelligence Center (ROIC) and the New York State Intelligence Center (NYSIC).

McQuade draws from critical security studies to conceptualize the project of intelligence fusion as "pacification" or the "systematic fabrication of capitalist forms of order" (10). Capitalism, defined by volatility and change, creates constant insecurity—most notably, through the "fundamental structural precariousness of capitalist social relations" in which "the silent compulsion of the market…privatizes the means of subsistence and inscribes 'insecurity' into commodified social relations." Capitalism must be "secured" in the face of these risks, and "security" thus becomes a "euphemism" for the "political work of organizing and maintaining" capitalist relations, "even in the context of the most absurd inequalities" (10).

Thus, as the subject of mass supervision has gained more prominence in recent years, much of the discourse falls into what McQuade dubs the "prose of pacification," which rests on "assumptions of risk and mutual hostility that define social problems and therefore shape social realities" (12). Using the language of security alters the "perception of what the problems are" and orients "action within a likely range of responses" (12). In short, security discourses "do not describe reality as much as they help restructure it through the redefinition or erasure of class struggle." (14). Even critical discourse often amounts to productive engagement with intelligence fusion by shifting the terrain of debate onto how surveillance should be run, rather than attempting to explain it. By naming the prose of pacification as a problem and by centering it as a subject of his study—as a moment in which "security" is not just described, but as one which contributes to its production—McQuade is able to get to the heart of the project of mass supervision.

The book first examines the ways that the institutionalization of intelligence fusion has transformed the state. He reviews how intelligence fusion centers operate, detailing the precise ways in which their goal—of uninterrupted information sharing—is stymied by the "workfarist emphasis on structural competitiveness and the punitive measures that produced mass incarceration" (72). In other words, he demonstrates how the same transformations producing the surplus populations being policed and surveilled are also transforming the state's apparatuses of policing and surveillance. One key element has been the rise of "intelligence-led policing," characterized by warrant sweeps, compliance checks, chronic-offender initiatives, and saturation patrols. He demonstrates how "chronic unemployment and deepening austerity…reduces incarceration and increases reliance on less labor-intensive forms of policing" (91). Thus, intelligence fusion allows for the reduction of prison populations without a change in the punitive character of the penal system.

Next, *Pacifying the Homeland* explores the multiple and varied ways fusion centers and intelligence-led policing regulate surplus populations beyond incarceration and thereby reproduce the capitalist social order. McQuade demonstrates that, just as COINTELPRO was a strategy of political policing produced by—and producing—the "*herrenvolk*-welfare state" of the mid-twentieth century, the political policing done through mass supervision is a product of workfare-carceral state of recent decades. The decentralization and structural competitiveness that characterize the institutionalization of fusion centers means that overdrawing parallels between

today's political policing and COINTELPRO may "attribute too much coherence to the state and too much unity to elites," noting instead that "political struggles continually shape and reshape the character of state power. The nature of political policing in the United States today is the outcome of struggles" (114). This includes struggles *within* the state, as competition between agencies has increased and compelled them "to fight for their own financial and organizational well-being" (128). Such ad-hoc strategies and internal competition not only shapes the nature of policing but also makes "political processes more indeterminate" and repression harder to fight (128). Finally, McQuade turns to how intelligence-led policing is used to criminalize the "moral economies of poverty," or the "survival strategies of those struggling at the bottom of the crushing inequalities that define capitalist societies" (140). Vagabondism and the drug economy are the main focuses, and he demonstrates how these police projects attempt to reorganize social reproduction on terms that do not challenge the state or capital. In turn, such policing targets swaths of the surplus population that are "warehoused" in hyper-ghettoized communities, segregated away by race and class. By disrupting moral economies of poverty, "these efforts continually (re)produce capitalist social relations by subsuming threatening forms of labor within the criminal legal system, enforcing legal subjectivities, and constructing administratively legible market relations" (141).

Pacifying the Homeland is an incredible contribution, and it should be eagerly read by a wide swath of scholars and organizers. It proves particularly interesting for world-systems analysts, not only for its rich theoretical dissection of capitalism and the state, but also for its sophisticated methodology. McQuade explicitly draws on methodological pillars of world-systems analysis— such as Hopkins (1982) and McMichael (1990)—to conduct his analysis. For example: while one of his examined fusion centers, ROIC, produces intelligence that is in high demand, the other, NYSIC, struggles to compete with other state agencies' local intelligence services. A simpler comparison "would present a false picture, where [ROIC] is a model and [NYSIC] is a laggard" (43). But by incorporating these instances into broader social dynamics—i.e., by understanding the fusion centers in New York and New Jersey as interrelated moments in the unfolding process of mass supervision—McQuade is instead able to reveal the variegated institutional means through which mass surveillance is created. In other words, McQuade rejects narrow comparisons that define the systemic totality out of existence—thus avoiding the pitfalls of other analysts who see variegated outcomes across space and time as signs of intelligence failure, instead of as a "baked in" characteristic of decentralized planning and intra-state competitiveness (42). His methodology thus allows intelligence fusion to be considered "as both a constitutive component of a state-form and a dynamic variable in ongoing processes of state-formation" (44).

In the end, *Pacifying the Homeland* uncovers the origins and trajectory of police power in the United States by investigating the forms it takes in the twenty-first century. McQuade demonstrates how the state's pacification projects have managed poverty, reproduced the working class, and transformed state institutions over time. Examining the crisis of the welfare state through to the consolidation of the "workfare-carceral state," he traces mass supervision—as a parallel to mass incarceration—through its uneven development and institutionalization. Throughout the twenty-first century, as war, crisis, and inequality define our time, mass surveillance has become

a central strategy used to maintain the capitalist order. By highlighting the unevenness and internal contestation that comprises state power and its strategies of security, McQuade puts to rest the idea that the state can be simply seized or smashed. But, despite such challenges, perhaps McQuade's core contribution is in widening the analytical vision of those interested in the project of abolition: without tackling mass supervision, any "break with mass incarceration is only in form, not in spirit" (110).

References

Hopkins, Terence. 1982. "World-Systems Analysis: Methodological Issues," Pp. 134-158 in *World-Systems Analysis: Theory and Methodology*, edited by Terrence Hopkins and Immanuel Wallerstein. Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage.

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