

## Abstract

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This dissertation analyses the Swedish State's Official Reports (SOU) on the security and intelligence services. The analysis, which constitutes Part III of the thesis, deals above all with reports from 1968–1990. The aim of my dissertation is to examine a number of problems that recur in these reports. In order to outline them, I follow two line of inquiry: the relationships and tensions between secret and public in Western European thought, mainly in connection with surveillance (Part II), and the concept of *raison d'état*, its origins, development and translation into sovereignty doctrines (Part I). I concentrate on the paradoxical tension between preserving and expanding, which are part of the concept, on the principle of self-defence and on the exceptions that sovereignty feeds on. My account starts with Niccolò Machiavelli and Francesco Guicciardini during the Florentine sixteenth century. The reason is not only due to the lack of contemporary research on the concept of reason of state. A number of problems discussed in connection with the emergence of the modern states have become to a certain extent institutionalized self-evident truths – it may be argued that in several respects the security and intelligence services have a number of functions attributed earlier to the sovereign. While the issues are very old, they are also new. The sovereign power is also inherent in constantly ongoing trials of strength and therefore this must be understood in relationship to further processes of normalization and exclusion in the nation states, but also in relationship to globalization processes. Further, it is not by now a question of preserving principalities or early modern republics, but of a nation defined by a democratic form of government. The idea of reason of state, just as the doctrine of sovereignty, finds itself in a tense relationship with the modern public sphere and democracy, and also to the universal human rights institutionalized within the nation. By deploying these historical issues in my reading of the reports I attempt to show how we find ourselves in the middle of history; how history is active, and to some extent dominant, in the contemporary understanding of the complex of problems that encompass these institutions.

*Raison d'état*, sovereignty, public/secret, surveillance, security and intelligence service, SOU, T. Hobbes, C. Schmitt, J. Bentham, H. Arendt, M. Foucault.