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Graduate Program in Theory and Criticism
A thesis submitted in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the degree in Master of Arts
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SECURING POPULATIONS:
FOUCAULT AND THE CARTOGRAPHY OF NATURAL BODIES

(Thesis Format: Monograph)

By

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Graduate Program at the Centre
for the Study of Theory and Criticism

A thesis submitted in partial
fulfillment of the requirements for
the degree of Master of Arts

The School of Graduate and Postdoctoral Studies
The University of Western Ontario
London, Ontario, Canada

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Abstract

The concept of biopolitics tends towards universal applicability and thus analytical impotency. By examining Foucault's lecture seminars that address this concept directly and indirectly, this project aims to delimit its coordinates for future use. To do so, I begin by looking at the way biopolitical discourses on the population constituted liberal governmentality in the eighteenth century. This analysis will be supplemented by a cartography of the surfaces on which biopolitics emerges before and within liberalism, affecting its formation. I will therefore map out the formation of two objects that characterize modern biopower: the 'natural' body of the individual and the 'natural' body of the population. This will open up the problem of normalization and the constitution of a regime of truth run through with relations of power. Counter-posed to the disciplines, the *dispositif* of security will be shown to produce normalizing effects at the level of probable events, congealing them into realities of their own. The naturalness of the population will be normalized as such a reality constituting biopolitics as a politics of the chance event of life.

Keywords

Foucault, biopolitics, probability, normalization, disciplines, power-knowledge, regime of truth, discourse, governmentality, *dispositif*.

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Table of Contents

Introduction: Context and Proceeding	1
Part 1: War, Law and Biopolitical Governmentality	
1.1 Introduction.....	9
1.2 Bare Life, Bare Death War.....	12
1.3 War, Biopolitics and Security.....	24
1.4 Discourses of War and Governmentality.....	32
1.5 Conclusion.....	42
Part 2: Mapping Normalizations	
2. General Aims and Objectives.....	45
3. Anatomicopolitics and Biopolitics.....	54
4. The 'Nature' of the Disciplines.....	65
4.2 The Technically 'Natural' Body.....	67
4.3 Normation as Penitential Enclosure.....	78
5. Police: Sovereignty and Tactical Normation.....	83
6. Biopolitics of the Population.....	92
6.2 Force of Multiplicity, Population of Forces.....	94
6.3 Normalization and the Emergence of the 'Natural' Population.....	106
7. Life, Death, and the Birth of Eugenics.....	118
Concluding Remarks	129
Works Cited	136
Curriculum Vita	141

List of Abbreviations

Because this monograph is centred on Foucault's work and comprises of a large amount of textual exegesis, it has become apparent that simplifying these references would be useful. While all other citations will remain consistent among themselves, references to Foucault's writings will use abbreviations inside the parentheses. They are as follows:

AK – *The Archeology of Knowledge*

BB – *The Birth of Biopolitics: Lectures at the Collège de France, 1978-1979*

BC – *The Birth of the Clinic: An Archeology of Medical Perception*

DP – *Discipline and Punish: The Birth of the Prison*

HS – *The History of Sexuality: Volume 1*

NGH – "Nietzsche, Genealogy, History"

QM – "Questions of Method"

STP – *Security, Territory, Population: Lectures at the Collège de France, 1977-1978*

SMD – *Society Must Be Defended: Lectures at the Collège de France, 1975-1976*

SP – "The Subject and Power"

TP – "Truth and Power"

WC – "What is Critique"

Introduction: Context and Proceeding

For many commentators on Foucault's lectures during the 1970's, there is a problem that seems irresolvable. Especially in the two lecture seminars known as *Security, Territory Population* and *The Birth of Biopolitics*, Foucault begins by announcing that biopolitics will be the primary object of inquiry, but never seems to follow through. Instead he turns his attention towards the development of what he calls governmentality as a way into the problems posed by biopolitics. He writes:

I thought I could do a course on biopolitics this year. I will try to show how the central core of all the problems that I am presently trying to identify is what is called population. Consequently, this is the basis on which something like biopolitics could be formed. But it seems to me that the analysis of biopolitics can only get underway when we have understood the general regime of governmental reason I have talked about. (BB 21-22)

Thus at the centre of the problem of a governmental reason, "the level of reflection in the practise of government and on the practise of government" (BB 2), is the figure of the population around which biopolitics gains its consistency. Although this relationship has been analysed by many contemporary scholars,¹ Foucault never actually manages to bring together his analyses of governmentality with his discussions of the population with any specificity. Moreover, biopolitics was identified in numerous texts but never given the critical analysis to adequately define its conceptual coordinates. Instead biopolitics, whatever this might be,

¹ See Mitchell Dean, *Governmentality: Power and Rule in Modern Society*; Majia Holmer Nadesan, *Governmentality, Biopower and Everyday Life*; Julian Reid and Michael Dillon, *The Liberal Way of War: Killing to Make Life Live*.

seems to haunt Foucault's lectures, and beyond them, as a spectral force within contemporary political discourse.

Indeed, one may speculate on the reasons for the sudden explosion of interest in biopolitics given its general lack of definition. Perhaps it is as simple as the facility with which the very name of the concept can be manipulated and deployed in a range of heterogeneous disciplines that examine the human body, its representation, its capture, its production, distribution, consumption. It is no doubt true that politics has always been concerned with the ways that individuals have lived their lives, the manner in which they interact, and certainly their bodies. But perhaps biopolitics is much more and much less than this.

Much of the popularity can likely be attributed to the uses made of this concept in Hardt and Negri's *Empire*, as well as Giorgio Agamben's *Homo Sacer: Sovereign Power and Bare Life*. However divergent the interpretations, whether as a post-Marxist concept of living productivity, or as the referent of the sovereign decision present in the ontological projects of the West stretching back to Aristotle, both of these employ creative practises in the development of the concept beyond Foucault's work. In these works the spectre has been given life, a body with contours, and a productive vitality which can be operationalized in a multiplicity of manners. Part of the purpose of this thesis is to provide a perspective on these philosophical elaborations by returning to Foucault's original work on the subject which has, to be sure, only recently become available to English audiences. My intention is to provide an interpretation of the concept which not only problematizes current theoretical projects, but opens up to possible uses in the field of governmentality.

With over thirty years of research on the topic it may indeed seem presumptuous to offer a new perspective on it. This project however aims to take up some of the abandoned directions and theoretical gestures in Foucault's work which have been largely ignored in contemporary literature. It will take Foucault as an experimental thinker, putting forward ideas that are not fully developed or operational, analyzing them, expanding them, abandoning them without formal rejection. It is as Deleuze describes Foucault in his article on the *dispositif*: "It is always in a crisis that Foucault discovers new dimensions, new lines. Great thinkers are somewhat seismic; they do not evolve but proceed by means of crisis, in fits and starts" (Deleuze, "Dispositif" 159). What this means is that there are theoretical possibilities buried in those very moments when Foucault seems to change track all of a sudden and, readjusting his coordinates, leaves behind problems that remain unresolved. One such example, which will be the focus of this project, is that of the *dispositif* of security, outlined in the lectures, *Security, Territory, Population*. As Didier Bigo points out, a close knit group of scholars laboured over the original recordings of the lectures for many years before the transcriptions and translations were ever published. The common consensus among them was that this particular seminar was disorganized, incoherent and unfocussed. He writes: "For a large majority of 'these initiates', the 1977 course appeared as a 'weak' one. ...In view of this narrow group of followers, still 30 years later, this course is marginal and embarrassing" (Bigo 94). The connections between *Discipline and Punish* and the study of governmentality seemed almost as unclear as the sudden break in its fourth lecture in which he leaps from the security *dispositif* to the study of the art of government.² Rather than reading this fracture as a justification to reject a failed

² Bigo also points out that many theorists of governmentality, such as Nickolas Rose, have actively sought to separate security from governmentality. In a sense, the opposite approach will be taken here: although

attempt, this project will aim at unravelling the problems that were being addressed in the analysis of the *dispositif* of security. This will, I hope, provide the basis for a reassessment of the concept of biopolitics and its functioning within governmentality, as well as offer a link between governmentality and the disciplinary *dispositif*.

This project will consist of two parts. The first will examine the way that governmentality takes up the population as a discursive object and operates biopolitics as a space of veridiction in which it acquires the capacity to judge the development of its own conducting techniques for the conduct of the population. In doing so, the discussion will illustrate the problematization of war and law in liberal governmentality as a way to make an analytical division between the deployment of biopolitics in liberalism and biopolitics itself. It must be stressed that this division does not imply that biopolitics can be formally separated from liberalism since it will be argued that liberalism as a critique of government is only possible because of biopolitics (Dean 133). However, in order to understand the specificity of the power-knowledge relations implicated in biopolitics and thus liberalism, biopolitics must undergo its own genealogical mapping. Thus part one will function to situate the problems of law and war within the spaces of truth of liberal governmentality so that part two can focus on the specificity of biopolitics.

While part one focuses mainly on the work of Foucaultian commentators from a more political theory based perspective, part two will be a close exegetical reading of Foucault's *Security, Territory, Population* from a theoretical and at times philosophical perspective. Part

governmentality will remain in view throughout, security will be the primary focus of the analysis.

two will argue that the specificity of biopolitics, in distinction to anatomo-politics, is the manner in which it forms the field of objects within which it operates a complex set of strategies. This was without a doubt already apparent in Foucault's *History of Sexuality*. There, Foucault identified normalization as that *process* by which the population came to designate a field of objects that were pertinent to governmental calculation. Processes of normalization, it was argued, were the expressions of an emerging biopower that reorganized the functioning of power around living beings, rather than around established juridical systems. What was left out of that analysis, however, was the distinction between the processes of normalization that characterize these two poles of political truth. In the early lectures of *Security, Territory, Population*, Foucault returns to this problem of normalization and then leaves it to the wayside. There he makes the distinction between disciplinary normation and the normalization of security which will be taken up here. Contrary to Francois Ewald's position that processes of normalization should be kept distinct from the anatomo-politics and biopolitics (as well as, for him, its other expressions in industrial standardization and insurance technologies), in order to keep it as a unified as a system of permanent reflection on differences between objects for their utility (Ewald, "Norms" 141), I will be arguing that there is not one but many systems of normalization. These cannot be separated from the *dispositifs* within which different politics of truth gain their technological coordinates. Consequently anatomo-politics and biopolitics will be distinguished on the basis of their radically opposing systems of normalization and thus the specificity of the relations that give rise to their respective fields of objects. For the anatomo-politics, the disciplinary *dispositif* will affect a process of normalization that carves out the soul as the truth producing element in the 'natural' body of the individual. Inversely, the biopolitical *dispositif* of security will carve out the 'natural' body

of the population as the multiplicity of living individuals which produce the truth around which the population can be normalized. Disciplinary normalization imprisons the body of the individual through the individualization of the soul; whereas securitized normalization never ceases to expand the body of the multiplicity so that the population can be individualized. As a final distinguishing factor, it can be said that the disciplinary norm aims to enclose the body to extract its productivity, reduce it to docility, and thus make it useful; whereas the norm of security operates at the level of the aleatory and contingent forces within a multiplicity – not in order to make use of them, for they will always escape relations of usefulness – but in order to integrate their mere probability into an economic calculation of reality that continually re-organizes itself on their basis.

These two processes of normalization will, therefore, create a general framework for part two. But this project aims to go further than this. It also aims to examine the set of relations between planes of discourse and techniques of power that gave rise to the specificity of these normalizations and their respective objects of power-knowledge: the ‘natural’ body of the individual and the ‘natural’ body of the population. I will be attempting to map out the formation of the two aforementioned objects of biopower as singularities that establish distinctions between their differing regimes of truth. If the expression of a regime of truth within economic, political or social structures is a process of normalization, then the analytics of power were already concerned with problematizations of truth in *Discipline and Punish*. Bentham’s panopticon, it must be recalled, was significant in that work because it signalled the moment when disciplinary normalization was crystallized into a reflection on itself as truth. Thus a methodological argument will be presented throughout the course of the proceeding that attempts to bring together problems of truth and event, with an analytics of power strategies.

Only by doing so, can different regimes of normalization be distinguished in terms of the *dispositifs* which engender the formation of singularities that open up their new fields of objects.

The objective of this thesis therefore, is to come to a more precise understanding of biopolitics by mapping out the formation of the object around which it is constituted. By doing so, the power-knowledge relations that operate within governmentality can be given greater clarity: as a grid of intelligibility, the security *dispositif* illuminates that which is in excess of the 'conduct of conduct'. This excess brings to light the fundamentally reactive struggle of all governmental utility by exposing the normalization which forms its horizon of acceptability.

Part 1

Law, War and Biopolitical Governmentality

1.1 Introduction

For many contemporary thinkers of biopolitics, the problem of war is posed not simply as an entry point to the concept, but as the internal core, sometimes even as an ontological principle, around which a power over life circulates and gains consistency. For example Julian Reid begins his article, “Life Struggles: War, Discipline and Biopolitics in the Thought of Michel Foucault” with the following assertion: “For Michel Foucault the problem of war is the problem of political modernity par excellence. He broached the problem of war while gradually extending his analysis of power from disciplinary to biopolitical regimes and the phenomenon of governmentality” (Reid 65). In Reid’s reading, Foucault is primarily a thinker of war and his analyses of power can all be fit into his famous reformulation of Clausewitz’s principle: “So: Politics is the continuation of war by other means” (SMD 48). The problem with understanding all relations of force in terms of war is that the dynamic productivity of the molecular struggles that manifest in larger, more general but always multiple strategies, becomes fixed within a single grid. The subtlety of Foucault’s analytical models of genealogy and strategy is obscured by a more ‘radical’ position in which, for Reid’s understanding of biopolitics in particular, “War becomes the *source* that accounts for the forms of life that generate power relations, rather than being the *source of influence* [for Reid, disciplinary power] by proxy through military institutions and discourses which wield power over the life of individuated bodies” (Reid 78). Biopolitics here is reduced to an immanent regulatory mechanism that divides up a living multiplicity expressly in terms of military objectives and is opposed to disciplinary power which arranges these divisions into tactics centred on the individuated natural body (Reid 72). Aside from the problematic dualities that Reid sets up “between

discipline/biopower, individual/population, tactics/strategy” (Reid 72) as a way to integrate biopolitics into the disciplinary regime (which will be fleshed out in detail in part two), the primary problem here is that war is deployed as a monistic totality into which all relations of force are inscribed. This is opposed to the concept of the *dispositif* which, rather than appropriating empirical contents and giving them form, expresses a complex process of formation through the perpetually variable, discontinuous, break downs and inequalities of force relations. The intelligibility of a *dispositif* is therefore always immanent to the specificity of technologies through which knowledge is worked on and carved out in a historically specific economy of power.³ Foucault himself points out that this interpretation is too reductive and simplistic right before he cites Clausewitz:

Can war really provide a valid analysis of power relations, and can it act as a matrix for techniques of domination? You might say to me that we cannot, from the outset, confuse power relations with relations of way. Of course not. I am simply taking an extreme case to the extent that war can be regarded as the point of maximum tension, or as force relations laid bare. (SMD 46)

In this way Foucault wants to claim war as a critical apparatus for understanding the confrontation between a historico-political discourse on society and a philosophico-juridical discourse of the state (SMD 49). The discourse of war in this sense is inextricably tied to the critique of juridical law against which, as is well known, he had developed his analytics of power. He does not want to claim that war is an all-encompassing grid of intelligibility for power relations: it is simply a grid that makes intelligible the historico-political discourse that had been putting war to use in political struggles long before

³ See especially: Gilles Deleuze “What Is an Apparatus?”; Stephen Legg, “Assemblage/apparatus: using Deleuze and Foucault”; and Foucault’s SMD, HS, DP.

Clausewitz inverted it (SMD 49). Moreover, as a grid of intelligibility for this particular discursive tradition, in no way is it the ‘source’ of force relations *tout court*: the point is that there is no source of power, nor a *logos* of power, into which peace has been inscribed as a codification of war.

This general relation between biopolitics, law and war is the subject of the following chapter. The objective is to analyze the *way* in which war is integrated into biopolitics as a discursive reflection on techniques of government. Leaving the formation of the natural body of the population in the *dispositif* of security to part two, I will attempt to understand how biopolitical *discourses on the population* have been able to codify war, through techniques such as law, as a struggle for human life. In short, war is coded as peace through an interface of useful techniques of government. Biopolitics will be shown to operate within a discursive regime in which the truth of the juridical subject of right is shifted to the biological register of a living multiplicity that produces its own truth, its own nature. The population as object-subject of governmentality will therefore be the locus of truth formation at the nexus of the juridico-philosophical and the historico-political discourses in liberalism. The species emerges at this juncture becoming invested with war and simultaneously becoming an object for juridical rights theory by being that which founds liberal valuations of truth in terms of the utility of health, longevity, circulations and exchange. In order to clarify this position, I will first examine Agamben’s ontological arguments which situate power as a force existing at the limit of a legal order and war as the expression of this power in excess of the law; then we will turn to the work of Michael Dillon and Julien Reid and attempt to establish that the relation between biopolitics and war is a problem of governmentality; finally we will turn to Foucault’s distinction between the

historico-political and juridico-philosophical discourses and look at their transformations at the level of liberal governmentality with the emergence of a biopolitics of the population.

1.2 Bare Life, Bare Death

Agamben's theory of biopolitics is unique in that it focuses primarily on the problem of sovereignty. Indeed, it certainly comes up against Foucault's formulation of biopolitics in which modernity is not characterized by the sovereign "right to take life or let live" (HS 136) but rather by the "power to foster life and disallow it to the point of death" (HS 138). On this point, some commentators, such as Mika Ojakangas, have even suggested that Foucault and Agamben's theories of biopolitics cannot be put into dialogue (Ojakangas 2005). This will not be the position taken here, nor will we critique Agamben's work on the grounds that it doesn't conform to Foucault's analytics.⁴ Agamben's critique of modern biopolitics hinges on the idea that the specific characteristic of modern democracy is that it expresses an ontological situation of permanent and generalized war in which, "everything is possible" for political decision makers. Techniques of government for Agamben are 'constituted' powers and are designated as 'fictive' or metaphysical. This is in distinction to the ontological constituent power of bare life on which constituted power depends for its existence. The modality of capture that constitutes an order is the state of exception in

⁴ It is however quite disconcerting that Agamben argues against Foucault's formulation of biopolitics on the grounds that life was already an object of political concern in ancient Greece. He puts far too much weight on Foucault's statement that, "For millennia, man remained what he was for Aristotle: a living animal with the additional capacity for a political existence; modern man is an animal whose politics places his existence in question" (HS 143). By doing so, he simplifies biopolitics to a slogan that necessitates 'correction' and 'completion'. In addition to this, Agamben argues that Foucault's analytics of power is based on a dichotomy between subjectivizing technologies and political techniques, but can't articulate the relationship between the two. He takes this reading from the essay entitled, "The Subject and Power" to make this dichotomy. However at no point in that essay does Foucault actually frame his work in such simplistic terms. The essay is merely aimed at showing how the analytics of power operates a counter-strategy which discloses the way in which individuals are subjectivized by power relations and thus that "there is no relationship of power without the means of escape or flight" (SP 225), embedded in it. See *Homo Sacer* 1-12.

which the two blur together in a topological zone of indistinction as the sovereign *nomos*. In modernity, biopolitics has ceased to consist in the constitutive exclusion of bare life, but has become a permanent state of exception in which life and law, war and peace cease to be distinguishable from one another: bare life is left exposed to the arbitrariness of political decision. This is the ontological relationship between political sovereignty and life in which war mediates between the two as a kind of vanishing point. In a quasi-polemical way, the attempt will be made to free biopolitics from an ontological situation that goes back to the Greeks. I argue that this has the dual effect of neutralizing the historico-discursive potency of biopolitics and of reducing political resistance to a line of flight that amounts to an ontological affirmation of total passivity in the face of an increasingly unmasked liberal warfare.

First a very schematic introduction to Agamben's concept of the state of exception is necessary. Agamben begins from the definition of sovereignty given by Carl Schmitt in his *Political Theology*: "Sovereign is he who decides on the exception. Only this definition can do justice to a borderline concept" (Schmitt 5). Implicit in Schmitt's definition is, contrary to what it appears to be, a decentring of the concept of sovereignty: the sovereign is he who decides on the exception, but the exception defines the structure and locale of sovereignty. In this way the decision is not merely the will of the sovereign in regards to the exception, but is the inscription of a locale that is always moving, always escaping and which fundamentally always exceeds the law. The locale of sovereignty is the state of exception. Hence, Schmitt writes that, "The rule proves nothing; *the exception proves everything*: It confirms not only the rule but also its existence, which derives only from the exception. In the exception the power of real life breaks through the crust of a mechanism that has become torpid by repetition" (Schmitt 15). For Schmitt the problem is that the

exception as an aleatory ‘other’ power, defines the locale of sovereignty and simultaneously is the sovereign himself who must decide on this exception by which he is constituted in the rule of law. Hence Schmitt writes that there is a fundamental paradox in law: “The exception reveals most clearly the essence of the state’s authority. The decision parts here from the legal norm, and (to formulate it paradoxically) authority proves that to produce law it need not be based on law” (Schmitt 13).

Agamben takes up this paradox with the intention of showing that insofar as law is a constituted power based on the sovereign exception, this constituent other is precisely the biopolitical embodiment of pure potentiality⁵ which he names bare life. This can be simplified in the following way: law is an ordered system of prescriptions and prohibitions which is constituted not by a normative structure, but by its own suspension; this suspension of law is always a potentiality contained within the law that, ontologically speaking, founds the law on its potential not to be; for Agamben, this im-potentiality⁶ is the bare life which is therefore bound up and included within the law precisely insofar as it is

⁵ For a discussion on the ontological concept of pure potentiality see *Homo Sacer*, “Potentiality and Law”, especially section 3.3 on Aristotle’s *Metaphysics*. There he argues that sovereignty has an ontological structure already explained by Aristotle, in which im-potentiality is banned from potentiality in its self-gifting, and thereby becomes actualized as pure potentiality. “Potentiality (in its double appearance as potentiality to and as potentiality not to) is that through which Being finds itself sovereignly, which is to say, without anything preceding or determining it (*superiorem non recognoscens*) other than its own ability not to be. ... Sovereignty is always double because Being, as potentiality, suspends itself, maintaining itself in order to realize itself as absolute actuality (which thus presupposes nothing other than its own potentiality)” (Agamben, *Homo Sacer* 46-47).

⁶ This is relevant to the extent that Heidegger, to whom Agamben seems to owe most of his interpretation of Aristotle, employs this abundance in his discussion of being-toward-death. In her book entitled *Time and Death*, Carol White makes the claim that when Heidegger attaches the “im” to possibility (or rather, the ‘Un’ to *Unmöglichkeit*), “he is playing on the fact that this prefix can mean ‘excessive amount’ as well as ‘not.’” As an etymological comparison White argues that we must consider, “the German words ‘*Unmasse*’ and ‘*Unsumme*,’ both of which do not mean ‘nothing’, but an enormous number or vast quantity” (88). And indeed the ‘im’ is italicized in many instances in *Being and Time*, emphasizing its importance for possibility. What this implies for the concept of death is that, as the very possibility of the impossibility of existence, is equivalent to the *surplus* of the being of the being *Dasein* – about which it is fundamentally concerned as *Dasein*. The concept of bare life, in which both life and death become indistinct, could equally well have been called bare death.

excluded, that is, banned from it; thus, this ‘relation of ban’ is a capture of that which exceeds the law by inscribing it on its extreme limit; this limit is what Agamben calls a ‘topological zone of indistinction’, that is, a threshold on which law and its fundamental excess pass in and out of one another (Agamben, *Homo Sacer* 37); sovereignty is precisely this space of exception in which bare life is captured by the law through its suspension and serves the law as the referent of its power, the force of its application (*Homo Sacer* 36-38). In this way, the decision on the state of exception is not conditioned by the will of the sovereign, but is the process by which bare life is inscribed in the law as its constituent force; by which it gains a reference to something outside of it and thus a field of applicability (25-26). For ontology, the applicability of law is subordinated to the ban of im-potentiality, the ban of bare life, through which the sovereign exception establishes itself as *nomos*: “The matchless potentiality of the *nomos*, its originary ‘force of law’, is that it holds life in its ban by abandoning it” (29). Sovereignty is inextricably tied up with biopolitics because it has the production of bare life as its primary objective, in order to ground itself on its own abandonment – even if this ground is its own im-potency, or rather, *especially* because of its own im-potency.

For Agamben’s argument, biopolitics is therefore an ontological condition⁷ which dates back to Pindar’s principle that, “the sovereign *nomos* is the principle that, joining law and violence, threatens them with indistinction” (31). Insofar as Agamben agrees with Nancy’s

⁷ Antonio Negri has heavily criticized Agamben for his conclusion that biopolitics is reducible to an ontology that has characterized Western politics since the Greeks. In “Giorgio Agamben: The Discreet Taste of the Dialectic” Negri writes: “Agamben begins to define the notion [of biopolitics] by excluding all productive qualities and flattening it onto the ontological dimension. In other words, biopolitics is turned into a permanent *dispositif* of metaphysics. Agamben insists that since classical antiquity, it has been impossible to distinguish life from politics. Already with Aristotle, the concept of life is given an ethical and political configuration. The neutralization of the concept of biopolitics could not have been carried out more radically” (Negri 122).

position that, “the entire history of the West as the ‘time of abandonment’” (*Homo Sacer* 58), he seeks to assert that from a biopolitical standpoint, where traditionally sovereignty was grounded by the ban on the unbound potency of bare life (as im-potency in relation to the law) to found a juridico-political human sphere, modernity is characterized by a sovereignty that is obsessed with bare life to the point of abandoning itself to it. The topological relation remains the same, but rather than being a decisive threshold through which the sovereign right of death managed life, this state of exception, “has transgressed its spatiotemporal boundaries and now, overflowing outside them, is starting to coincide with the normal order, in which everything again becomes possible” (38). Sovereignty then no longer rules over the state of exception; the state of exception rules over sovereignty and the bare life of all citizen-subjects is thrown into question. Hence the radical negativity of Agamben’s biopolitics: if the bare life of all citizen-subjects is the primary object produced, analyzed and manipulated by political decision (and governmental techniques are reduced to political decisions), then it is no longer a question of obedience to a sovereign, but an obedience to the rule of bare life constantly thrown up against its own bare death.⁸ And the sovereign decision, governed by the rule of bare life in the permanent state of exception, now more than ever, kills without ever sacrificing for its sovereignty. Hence in modernity, for Agamben, all individuals have been banned to the extrajudicial space of the sovereign exception as *homo sacer*.

⁸ Benjamin Noys has an interesting reading concerning the relationship between life and death in Agamben and Foucault. He argues that Foucault thought death to be the one escape from relations of power even in biopolitics and opposes this to Agamben’s theory of bare life: “Therefore Agamben links together Foucault’s enquiries on biopolitics with his own work on sovereignty to argue that power leaves us completely exposed to death, and that this exposure is ‘built in’ to political identity today” (Noys 41). In the following chapter I will return to the problem of life and death in biopolitics and argue that Foucault’s position on death takes a decisive turn when he elaborates the security *dispositif* in which his biopolitics is strategically situated. For more, see Noys’ *The Culture of Death*.

This can serve as a preliminary survey of Agamben's general problematic. Now, the argument here is that the ontological permanent state of exception - for which Agamben deploys the concentration camp as its 'figure', as the *nomos* of modernity and thereby linking together multiple totalitarianisms and liberal democracies in a unified historico-political destiny - functions in his text as a deployment of an infinitely multiple real war that has been drawn closer and closer to political practices. Indeed, the operator of this codification of war is precisely the decision on the exception which for Agamben designates the potentiality of all citizens as *homo sacer*. The most important text for this argument is Agamben's later *State of Exception*. There, he again takes up the two part argument in which, "*Homo sacer* is unsacrificeable, yet he may nevertheless be killed by anyone" (*Homo Sacer* 113), and that, "If today there is no longer any one clear figure of the sacred man, it is perhaps because we are all virtually *homines sacri*" (115). But when he takes it up again he no longer requires the camp to explain the permanent state of exception. Instead he looks at the history of the deployment of the state of exception in various historical instances and under the auspices of different names: martial law, state of emergency, *état de siege* or state of siege (Agamben, *Exception* 4). But Agamben quickly notes that these other names imply a connection to a "state of war that has been historically decisive and is present to this day" (*Exception* 4), and because of this they should be understood as "political or fictitious" (*Exception* 4) states of exceptional law. "The state of exception," he qualifies, "is not a special *kind* of law (like the law of war); rather, insofar as it is a suspension of the juridical order itself, it defines law's threshold or limit concept" (*Exception* 4, my emphasis). There is then a decisive split between an ontological constituent power and the ontic techniques of government that deploy the state of exception politically, within a constituted institutional framework. By doing so he resituates his

argument in the context of a global civil war that is ‘unsanctioned’ to the extent that it is constituted not by a sovereign decision but by the imperative danger presented by the abandonment of bare life. The ‘fictive’, or ‘political’ state of exception is merely an attempt by governments to situate their sovereignty in a position of authority: it argues that the state guarantees peace under all circumstances, whereas in fact a permanent and distributed war always already runs through these very techniques of government constituting the potency of their decision. Schmitt’s theory of political sovereignty no doubt falls into this general category. When Agamben then provides a history of the deployment of these political states of emergency, his intention is to show how, as a repeated technique of government, these have functioned historically to bring the real state of exception closer and closer to an actual mode of governance.⁹ Among the states he cites, Agamben makes it clear that the United States is a particularly useful example of this attempt to push actual practises of government into a position of permanent war on the social body, codified through the decision on exceptional cases:

President Bush’s decision to refer to himself constantly as the ‘Commander in Chief of the Army’ after September 11, 2001, must be considered in the context of this presidential claim to sovereign powers in emergency situations. If, as we have seen, the assumption of this title entails a direct reference to the state of exception, then Bush is trying to produce a situation in which the emergency becomes the rule, and the very distinction between peace and war (and between foreign and civil war) becomes impossible. (*Exception 22*)

⁹ Andrew W. Neal’s “Goodbye War on Terror? Foucault and Butler on Discourses of Law, War and Exceptionalism” makes an argument similar to the one being made here insofar as he critiques Agamben for his disregard of local ontologies of historico-political discourses by developing an overarching ontology of the exception. In a certain way, Agamben’s *State of Exception* seems to offer an attempt to integrate debates on the exception in political theory into his ontology. Nevertheless, it seems more like a nod or even a wink than an actual argument: these are simply squeezed into the ontological situation of bare life as ‘supporting evidence’ after the theory has been put forward.

This blurring of the distinction between war and peace is crucial for Agamben's critique of the biopolitical situation that the United States exemplifies. Citing the USA Patriot Act, he argues that the clause which "allowed the attorney general to 'take into custody' any alien suspected of activities that endangered 'the national security of the United States'" (*Exception 3*), was first of all not an expansion of legal jurisdiction but the expression of the camp as *nomos* of the earth in which its particular character presents itself as a zone of indistinction between military operations and legal mechanisms. Even more important than this Act, was the military decree ordered only seventeen days later:

The immediately biopolitical significance of the state of exception as the original structure in which law encompasses living beings by means of its own suspension emerges clearly in the 'military order' issued by the president of the United States on November 13, 2001, which authorized the 'indefinite detention' and trial by 'military commissions' (not to be confused with the military tribunals provided for by the law of war) of noncitizens suspected of involvement in terrorist activities. (*Exception 3*)

In particular, this has been deployed for 'enemy combatants' who have been captured in war and brought to the camp at Guantánamo Bay under the clause that they are a threat to national security. These detainees are not considered prisoners of war as defined by the Geneva Convention, nor as prisoners subject to constitutional rights (nor even, effectively, 'human rights'). Thus, in Guantánamo Bay, "bare life reaches its maximum indeterminacy" (*Exception 4*), because as, "simply 'detainees,' they are the object of a de facto rule, of a detention that is indefinite not only in the temporal sense but in its very nature as well, since it is entirely removed from the law and juridical oversight" (*Exception 3-4*).

In this way the camp as *nomos* orders the living according the respective levels of risk which they present to the national security of the state. Peace emerges in this way as a codification of a war that is no longer between identifiable nations but between the

possibility of a security threat posed potentially by all individuals – not simply aliens but also citizens hiding out in ‘sleeper cells’. Along with the war-peace dualism, the foreign-civil too is pushed into indistinction. In this context, transformations at the level of military strategy in terms of network centric warfare are important. As Hardt and Negri have argued in their *Multitude*, American command and control strategies of “high-intensity police actions” were operative in Vietnam and Latin America and constituted a significant shift from classical understandings of wars between the armies of nations (Hardt and Negri 38-39). But these have been replaced by asymmetrical network warfare that can approach enemies who do not have a center of command or a frontier to fight (Hardt and Negri 52). Warfare in this way expands from a localized battlefield through to the whole social body as a permanent site of potential enemy combatants dispersed as potential threats to national security. The infamous War on Terror, whose name has now been altered to suit the needs of the rhetoricians of war (Hardt and Negri 13), inversely codifies democratic society as peaceful by declaring it to be a permanent state of dispersed, unlocalizable war.

This state of permanent and generalized war is without a doubt one of the problems that contemporary political theory must come to terms with. However the point is that these developments in techniques of government, constitute a discursive codification of war within governmentality, rather than an ontological exceptionalism. Law is merely one technical code among others which, for contemporary governmentality, has become inflected with discourses of exceptionalism that make it a reality. Arguing with Butler, Neal writes that she,

argues that the practice of indefinite detention is not an exception in itself, but rather the repeated act which serves to performatively constitute exceptionalism as a legitimate and normalized form of government. ‘Indefinite detention’ does not signify an exceptional circumstance, but, rather, the means

by which the exceptional becomes established as a naturalized norm.’ (Neal 48; also, Butler 67)

And this is the fundamental problem with the attempt to show that biopolitics is tied up with a permanent state of exception: power is given back to sovereignty, or rather, *power never ceased to be sovereign power* but the locale of sovereignty has simply shifted into a modality which purports to govern the manner in which traditional sovereignty can function ontically. The human may be dead for Agamben, but it nevertheless reproduces human agency through its own authorship of an ontological theory of sovereign exceptionalism. Indeed this is precisely the significance of Agamben’s topological space of exception: the topology remains ontologically the same as an indifferent production of difference, but the forms of life that are produced on it are subject to infinite historico-political modifications (Noys 34). The question for Agamben then is the following: how does *power* gain a hold on the living being? Or, how does power gain hold on reality? The answer he gives is that power is always pure potentiality; power is always sovereign indistinction, or, power is always abandoned bare life; in short, power as constituent power is ontologically sovereign (Agamben, *Homo Sacer* 44). As bare life fades into bare death in modern biopolitics, Agamben attempts to cut the link between power and knowledge that Foucault worked so hard to establish, in order to designate an exceptional politics in which power can be non-relational. Importantly for the argument here, the attempt to cut this link seems to establish a new relation with an eschatological figure of power severed from all orders of knowledge.

This is precisely why Foucault consistently refused to develop an ontology of power, because power itself only exists as the effects of “divisions, inequalities and disequilibriums which occur,” between techniques and fields of knowledge as, “the internal

conditions of these differentiations” (HS 94). Power cannot be theorized in itself – it cannot be reduced to ‘difference’ although it nonetheless effects differentiations – because it is always undergoing multiple modifications, variations, compositions in its interactions with techniques, practices, and fields of knowledge.¹⁰ It cannot be understood as a codification of war through law, or as the essential absence which the law requires for its application. If biopolitics is to be understood and made operational it is necessary to specify the strategies of power that effect the formation of specific fields of objects with their own reality. This means that one must first of all not begin with an ontology of power and then apply that to a contemporary political situation. Rather, biopolitics must be understood to be constituted by a very specific and always changing *dispositif* of power through which discursive practices and governmental techniques operate a complex process of codification of the real. For liberal governmentality, as we will see in the following, this codification produces the naturalness of the population as an objective reality which functions as a regime of veridiction that codifies a range of militant struggles as a problem of biological life. Biopolitics makes these codifications possible for liberal discourse, while at the same time operating within a *dispositif* of power that, as such, must be separated from war in order for it to gain any critical potency on the objects that it carves out as realities.

¹⁰ It is useful to point out that Foucault problematized the mode of historical analysis that begins with a theory and then deduces historical practices from this. Insofar as Agamben refers to the State repeatedly throughout *Homo Sacer* in order to situate his ontology within a historico-political horizon of resistance, Foucault’s comments on history and the State are particularly prescient: “There is no question of deducing this set of practices from a supposed essence of the state in and for itself. We must refrain from this kind of analysis first of all because, quite simply, history is not a deductive science, and secondly, for another no doubt more important and serious reason: the state does not have an essence. The state is not a universal nor in itself an autonomous source of power [...] The state is nothing else but the mobile effect of a regime of multiple governmentalities” (BB 77).

Hence Agamben's almost scornful tone when he writes that Foucault does not explain the point of intersection of "political techniques" and "technologies of the self": "Yet the point at which these two faces of power converge remains strangely unclear in Foucault's work, so much so that it has even been claimed that Foucault would have consistently refused to elaborate a unitary theory of power" (Agamben, *Homo Sacer* 5). Of course Foucault himself makes it clear that a *theory* of power would contradict the *analytical* model that he proposes by looking at power relations (HS 92, 93-102; SMD 27-34). But for Agamben, this gap disrupts Foucault's project:¹¹ there seems to be a 'vanishing point' between this opposition of techniques, which Agamben glosses as "juridico-institutional and the biopolitical models of power" (Agamben, *Homo Sacer* 6), in which the explanation of the way power has gained a hold on the living body is non-existent. By determining this 'vanishing point', Agamben aims to deconstruct Foucault's analytics through a phenomenology of sovereignty as the pure potentiality of power. In the final analysis, what Agamben succeeds in doing is theorizing an ontology of 'power' in which sovereignty necessarily plays the part of a principle of individuation for the "biopolitical body". But for Foucault, power is not ontological strictly speaking even if technologies, dispositifs and strategies, "induce a whole series of effects in the real (which isn't of course the same as saying that they take the place of the real)" (QM 253). Critiquing Foucault in this way, Agamben writes that, "[i]t can even be said that the production of a biopolitical body is the original activity of sovereign power" (*Homo Sacer* 6), because power is theorized as pure potentiality, bare life, the sovereign exception, that is to say, it has a specific structure and

¹¹ This is a wild simplification of Foucault, which does not correspond to any formal duality in his work. It is important to mention it to the extent that it corresponds exactly to Agamben's project.

its structure designates the non-relational event of being (*Homo Sacer* 24-25). But by doing so, Agamben effectively forces himself into a bind from which the only lines of flight offered up as weapons are those that are entirely bound up with the functioning of sovereignty as a technique of government. Insofar as all citizens of modern liberal democracy have their bare life exposed as *homo sacer in potentia*: “Sacredness is a line of flight,” Agamben argues, that is, “still present in contemporary, a line that is as such moving into zones increasingly vast and dark, to the point of ultimately coinciding with the biological life itself of citizens” (*Homo Sacer* 115). But if sacredness is a line of flight that can be weaponized against exceptionalism only insofar as the exception is the rule, *homo sacer*, our heroic liberator, appears to be nothing more than the figuration of a warrior condemned to death who no longer has anything to lose – not even his life. *Homo sacer* forever remains bound up with the power of sovereignty even if this sovereignty has, in modernity, been made immanent to it – in the sovereign decision death always hangs in the balance.

1.3 War, Biopolitics and Security

In the work of Michael Dillon and Julian Reid the discursive integration of war and biopolitics is a central concern. Through their work I will attempt to draw out two related elements: first, working definitions of biopolitics and security which they have elaborated from Foucault’s lectures from 1976 to 1979 in combination with contemporary complexity theory and the biological sciences; second, we will critique their readings at the intersection and essential contiguity that they identify between biopolitics and war in order to begin to specify biopolitics as a problem of governmentality. The interesting thing about their work, especially in their essay “Global Liberal Governance: Biopolitics, Security and War”, is

that insofar as biopolitics is inextricably entwined with war, they are linked on a single discursive plateau that has existed since the emergence of biopolitics in the nineteenth century.

In their paper “Global Liberal Governance: Biopolitics, Security and War”, Dillon and Reid argue that ‘population’ is an ecological concept that defines and is defined by the ‘fitness landscape’ within which it is located. The fitness landscape is a concept that has been developed in the biological sciences and taken up by complexity theorists in order to understand the emergence of the *capacity* for organisms, or other complex systems, to evolve.¹² The capacity to evolve is defined here as a “critical threshold of connectivity” (Dillon and Reid 43) on which a chaotic multiplicity of heterogeneous forces spontaneously composes itself as a mutation within a given population. These thresholds emerge and disintegrate on the basis of the field of multiple interactions that they themselves constitute and modify. Explaining this concept for biopolitics, they write:

Fitness landscapes are thus the multidimensional terrains on which organisms are said to operate, or the ecologies within which they function. But, how you define a landscape also has the effect of defining a ‘population’. For a population is that set of organisms which is a ‘set’ precisely because it is located on or within and is seen to respond to defining features of a specified landscape. ... For thinkers like Kauffman, ‘fitness’ becomes measured less in terms of simple survival than in terms of the capacity to achieve a ‘poised state’ near the boundary between order and chaos, a state which optimises ‘evolvability’. (43-44)

For Dillon and Reid this kind of ‘evolvability’ is crucial for biopolitical discourse because it serves to situate life in a zone that cannot be defined conceptually once and for all: life is

¹² For more on fitness landscapes and complexity theory see Stuart Kauffman’s *At Home in the Universe: The Search for the Laws of Complexity*.

continuously assembling and decomposing itself in multiple relations with the milieu of its existence. For biopolitics this means that if an order or set of laws of emergence could be discovered within this perpetual variability, the relations between living beings and their environment could be modified in such a way that life could be codified. Their use of complexity theory therefore takes on a critical angle. This is to pose the question of modalities of relations, that is, “the mode of relating and the effecting of different principles of formation” (54). “The complexity sciences,” they write,

appear to insist fundamentally upon the ‘anteriority of radical relationality.’ Radical qualifies ‘relationality’ in the following manner: nothing is without being in relation, and everything is conceived, in its very being, in terms and in virtue of relationality. (53-54)

In their view, and developing along the lines that Foucault charted out in the early lectures of *Security, Territory, Population*, security is a *dispositif* which does not codify individual bodies in terms of a Norm, but it deploys a set of observational mechanisms in which the patterns of relations between a population of organisms and its milieu become visible in their spontaneous auto-generation. In short, through this *dispositif* codes can be extracted from the organization of a multiplicity in which the ‘true nature’ of a population becomes visible for different kinds of governmental intervention (55). Dillon and Reid describe this as the principle which makes biopolitics possible, giving it a self-generated truth around which a discourse can gain a hold, as well as a specificity distinct from legal or disciplinary apparatuses insofar as it conditions them:

The project of securitising, to steal but refashion a term coined elsewhere, is concerned with making life accessible to different social technologies: where technology refers broadly to complex techniques and relations of power established in the course of conceiving government as the administration and ordering of life rather than the politics of free people. (52)

This is precisely why they emphasize Deleuze's point about codifying the modulation of relations in societies of control (Deleuze "Control" 5). Security is concerned with making the information generated in autonomous systems into codes so that it can be taken up in governmentality and redeployed in governmental techniques and practices. But implicit in this is that when security codifies a body of information, it modifies the reality of the bodies that are at stake in it. Politically this means that practices and techniques of government actually succeed in modifying populations without setting up any restrictions or limits to their movement:

Informational bodies-in-relation, bodies-in-formation, do not come pre-formed but pre-coded. Once you have cracked the operation of code, the formation of bodies becomes a function of the informational strategies required for devising networks of a preferred sort. Prospectively it is not a question of the bodies we have, individual or collective, but of the bodies we may prefer to have. (Dillon and Reid 57)

Several conclusions can be drawn from this, not the least of which is that political resistance cannot be formulated in terms of an ontology of the exception. While Dillon and Reid do argue that this information and code constitute a "new type of causality" (54) in which biopolitics acquires an ontological matrix in which code appears as bare life, (56) renunciation of relationality as such is inconsequential: resistance to governmentality must operate at the level of the codification of relations, "especially by probing and exploiting its [the networked codification's] weaknesses" (61). For if "biopolitical bodies-in-formation" are governed through the security of their intrinsic code, these becomings are "necessarily also a becoming-dangerous" (57) in which the problematization of network stability is a presupposition of its code. Insofar as becoming-secured always implies a becoming-insecure, Deleuze's comments on Foucault seem especially relevant: "the final word on

power is that *resistance always comes first*” (Deleuze, *Foucault* 89, original emphasis). The proliferation of contagion and decay always accompanies and underwrites the proliferation of life just as resistance and counter-struggle conditions the intensity of a smoothly functioning network.

How then is the problem of war connected to biopolitics? For the article in question, war and biopolitics operate along the same continuum insofar as they have both been fundamentally modified by the digital and molecular revolutions (Dillon and Reid 50). Through these movements in computer and life sciences, information became strategically operational, making it possible to manipulate and design milieus of existence through the architectures of information networks. “The problematic here become those concerned with identifying and manipulating the generative principles of formation and the codified ways in which self-orchestrating informationally ordered networks come into existence and operate” (51). War is informationalized and codified into complex networks through which a minimum of miscalculation can be ensured. Moreover, reality itself can be modified at the level of discursive practices of military strategy insofar as there is a consistent attempt to re-present the raw information of a complex strategic situation through a process of de-codifying its self-generative principles and recoding them in a manner that purports to be real. Bringing together network-centric warfare and biopolitics into the same Deleuzian mode of regulative control, Dillon and Reid suggest that in liberalism and neo-liberalism, strategy itself has become a life science which guarantees the security of a population – whether of civilians or soldiers (65).

In a later article that takes up Foucault’s arguments in *Society Must be Defended* Dillon goes further and suggests that, keeping at a discursive level, liberalism gains its internal consistency through biopolitics when the “*logos* of peace is systematically inscribed within

the *logos* of war through discourses of security”¹³ (Dillon 171). The key element here, and which also informs the whole purpose of the paper just examined, is that discourse operates a set of limitations for possible statements. For Dillon, these limitations operate biopolitics as a metaphysics that doesn’t recognize its own mutability. Heidegger’s onto-theological arguments, to which Dillon is extremely sensitive,¹⁴ become interpreted as onto-political – a point that we have already seen in Agamben’s work on Schmitt and the ‘fictive’ state of exception in liberal juridical discourse. By disclosing the truth of the population as a self-generating multiplicity, security works to establish a terrain on which liberal techniques of government can gain a hold and, effectively, ground themselves in the truth of the species: “What is enunciated at the level of ontopolitical necessity – the reality that species existence revolves around survival and that that life must first be secured if it is to be promoted – is also inscribed at the level of rule through the operation of biopolitical governmentality” (171).

In line with the objectives of this chapter, he makes it clear that this does not mean that war ontologically grounds the liberal order. Rather, “It is an historical argument. That is how political modernity, the discursive practices and structures of the modern state and of liberal governance in particular, emerged, he [Foucault] says” (176). Thus the rationalities

¹³ In line with Foucault’s concept of security, Dillon argues that security operates a codification of the information made available in population statistics so that its processes can be maintained in their ‘nature’. Security secures the naturalness of the population *for* governmentality insofar as this object is inherently insecure. In this way, security can be distinguished from present day national security issues since although these are based on a permanent state of insecurity they are comprised of a reflection on techniques concerned with the protection of the sovereign State against an aggressor internally or externally. As Didier Bigo notes: “The idea of the state as a protective force, a primary consideration for classical realists and liberals in international relations theory, does not appear [in Foucault], except perhaps as a simple claim of sovereignty. In taking this stance, Michel Foucault is then refusing to associate security with the exception, with survival, with the prospect of war, with ‘external’ security” (Bigo 106).

¹⁴ See Michael Dillon’s *Politics of Security: Towards a Political Philosophy of Continental Thought*.

of liberal governmentality in which certain techniques become pertinent and acceptable to achieve certain ends, are invested in what Foucault has designated as the historico-political discourse. And this investment arranges an ontological schema in which the metaphysics of sovereignty dissolves into historicism, while opening discourse to a level of permanent struggle and battle into which government can enact a recodification of this same sovereignty – now in terms of the human species. Liberal biopolitics for Dillon, operates a production of life that necessarily requires internal mechanisms that designate pathological elements within this life: this mechanism is no longer the arbitrary sovereign decision, but is instead the deployment of the truth inherent in the naturalness of the population. Security then operates a codification of life through instruments of statistics and political arithmetic, which make the true ‘nature’ of the population intelligible to governmentality (Dillon 178). For Dillon, security opens up the onto-political ground of liberalism as the life and death of the human species itself, “through the biopolitical enunciation of the real as species existence (political rationality) and its micro-political practices (governmental technologies)” (178). Working at the level of governmentality, liberalism codifies peace in terms of a permanent historical war within which the life of the species is permanently under threat of its own interactions with its milieu of existence. Epidemic, starvation, poverty, crime exist within the milieu of the population as the necessity of contingent processes which must be constantly governed through various techniques that demarcate risk factors and degrees of dangerousness.¹⁵

¹⁵ Racism enters here as an explanatory principle for specific kinds of degeneracy around which peace can be codified. As Foucault writes, racism, “is primarily a way of introducing a break into the domain of life that is under power’s control: the break between what must live and what must die.” (SMD 254)

What is crucial to take out of this is a division between an analytics of power and Foucault's turn towards governmentality. Dillon's reading focuses on the discursive reflection on practices of government into which war is integrated as discourse that allows liberalism to escape the art of government of monarchical sovereignty. It does so by resituating its locus of truth formation from the sovereign authority of the king to the living body of the population which generates its own truth autonomously. This will be the functional requirement of liberalism's turn toward a market based social economy in which market truth is generated by the interests of a population of consumers in their daily circulations, exchanges, productions (BB 60-65). However, due to the manner in which liberal governmentality grounds itself onto-politically, a new sovereignty of life, which has often been racially charged, replaces the old monarchy. Dillon notes that the specificity of this new sovereignty was identified by Foucault through racism: "He [Foucault] recognizes that it is not simply a matter of belonging to a kind of pre-established racial entity but the generic biologized notion of 'a unitary living plurality'" (Dillon 2008, 179; SMD 258). In this way, Dillon leaves out the development of the *dispositif* of security which makes this locus of truth formation possible, looking instead at its discursive effects and therefore its integration into a governmentality of war. For our purposes, this constitutes one way in which the relation between governmentality and biopolitics can be made intelligible, but it does not address the formation of objective reality that makes this discursive relation possible. *Dispositifs* are historically contingent arrangements of power relations, organized through technologies and practices, which enact disequilibriums, inequalities and ruptures that in turn make possible spaces of truth formation for governmentality. And this is precisely the point: contrary to Reid's paper cited at the outset, the analytics of power in which *dispositifs* are made intelligible, does not work with war strictly speaking even if it

uses the rhetoric of strategies and tactics to illustrate the organized disorganization of *dispositifs*.¹⁶ If relations of force could be understood as relations of war in all cases one would again be locked into a semiotics of infinitely interpretable relations. Relations of force are never predetermined by any positivity even if they function within discourse as cuts and slippages that affect the real of truth formation. If we have as our overall goal to understand the way in which biopolitics becomes possible in liberal governmentality, it will be necessary to analyze the specificity of the *dispositif* of security in which the naturalness of the population is first carved out as a reality pertinent to government. Security must therefore be ‘purified’ of the narrative of war if it is to be understood as the *dispositif* which makes possible the codification of war in liberalism – while always recognizing that in the formation of a regime of truth, the techniques deployed will perpetually reorganize power in novel ways.

1.4 Discourses of War and Governmentality

In order to trace out the discursive codifications of war in biopolitics, we must turn to *Society Must be Defended*. There, Foucault attempted to explain the way in which the liberal State, for he had not yet worked out the concept of governmentality (although it will be applied herein), gained a strategic advantage over monarchical sovereignty through the simultaneous integration of two countervailing discourses on war. Prior to this development, the one problematized the truth formation of the other: juridico-philosophical discourse situated truth in the expulsion of war to the frontiers of the state, and of

¹⁶ It is interesting to note that Reid’s article, in which he argues that war is the source of power relations, is published in the same collection of essays as Dillon’s excellent article “Security, Race and War”. See *Foucault on Politics, Security and War*.

knowledge more generally, by means of established sovereign law; whereas the historico-political discourse understood truth to be the multiple effects, or the emergent properties, of a permanent underlying war, that was nonetheless real, even if it was codified in law by the historical victors. For liberalism, population emerges as the discursive object which makes it possible to invest law with the truth of socio-biological normalization rather than the positive action of the sovereign; and it simultaneously resituates the discourse of war-against-sovereignty in a biological struggle for the human species and thus the struggle for the values equal to the truth of human life and prosperity. Population is, in short, a space of veridiction which governs liberal rationality of government through a process of normalization in which law, medical police, economic policy, etc., gain their legitimacy as techniques of government.

Foucault makes a distinction between philosophico-juridical discourse and historico-political discourse on the basis of their interpretations of war. For the former, politics begins in the moment that war is “expelled to the limits of the State” (SMD 49) and peace can be sanctioned through the boundary stones of the sovereign territory. A famous example of this discourse is Hobbes, whose influence on Carl Schmitt is inestimable,¹⁷ and who proposed the contract as a means to establish a unified social body against the ever present threat of war. As Foucault explains, the contract between rational individuals operates as a theatre of wills and representations, in which each individual represents their right to kill, but wills their own personal security by handing over this representation to the sovereign. Thus the sovereign is doubled in a representation of all the individuals bound

¹⁷ See Carl Schmitt’s *The Leviathan in the State Theory of Thomas Hobbes*, as well as *Political Theology: Four Essays on the Concept of Sovereignty*, especially pp. 2, 33-34, 47-48, 52.

together in contract, and as the embodiment of the right to kill which he now holds in excess of himself as the grounding of his sovereign power. This right to kill is what defines the truth of the sovereign (HS 136). The state of war is therefore represented by sovereignty in the centre of the political space as precisely that excess which founds the state and that through which the frontiers of peace can be defended (SMD 91-96). Moreover, the state of war is not a real war, but a static backdrop on which a theatrics of representation could be played out in order to conceal the historical reality of conquest and struggle persisting behind the stage. “Basically, it is as though, far from being the theorist of the relationship between war and political power, Hobbes wanted to eliminate the historical reality of war, as though he wanted to eliminate the genesis of sovereignty” (SMD 97). For Hobbes and the juridico-philosophical discourse more generally, the objective is to separate war from sovereignty and to show that sovereignty arises naturally in every multitude that desires peace. It is a historical necessity that is established not by conquest but by the natural right of monarchical rule. In short, the strategic objective is to establish an a-historical universal discourse that deactivates the “real struggles that go on in the laws and institutions that apparently regulate power” (SMD 98).

Foucault argues that a counter-discourse runs underneath the universality of the juridico-philosophical and actually constitutes the latter by operating counter-narratives. The historico-political discursive continuum therefore argues, in a very general sense, that the established political and juridical institutions are nothing but the effect of struggles for power in a long history of real war. War is deployed within this discourse as a grid of intelligibility that makes sense of history and, by transforming it into a narrative of

struggles, decentres truth and distributes it through the multiplicity of force relations.¹⁸ As an example of one of these discourses, Foucault offers us the aristocrat Boullainvilliers who was commissioned to abridge and explain the massive report that was ordered by Louis XIV on every aspect of the state of France. It was intended for his heir and grandson, the duc de Bourgogne, to provide him with the knowledge of the state that was necessary for ruling well¹⁹ (SMD 127-26). What is particular about Boullainvilliers is that he acknowledges the way in which historical narratives function to establish the legitimacy or truth-value of a particular administration. He thereby enacts a recoding of the seemingly neutral or objective information, to suit his position within a disenfranchised nobility. Foucault writes about this important feature of his text as, “a protest against the fact that the king’s knowledge of his subjects has been completely colonized, occupied, prescribed, and defined by the State’s knowledge about the State” (SMD 128). Moreover Foucault explains that, “the real target of all the historians connected to the nobiliary reaction is the mechanism of power-knowledge that had bound the administrative apparatus to State absolutism since the seventeenth century” (SMD 129). Thus Boullainvilliers attempted to break the circle established between knowledge production and administration of monarchical power which had operated an exclusion of the nobility’s political importance.

¹⁸ It should become immediately clear at this point how Foucault’s analytics of power does not deploy war as a grid of intelligibility: the dissociation of relations of power from their expression in institutions and truth discourses, does not aim to narrate a truer, if concealed, story, it does not operate within the domain of meaning strictly speaking. The de-activation of strategies through the genealogical method opens up history to the specific grids of intelligibility that operated during a specific period of history to produce objects and meaningful discourse. Analyzing relations of power-knowledge is always an analysis of the outside of meaning, outside even of the acceptability of systems of statements and the production of truth.

¹⁹ Although Foucault doesn’t mention it here, the idea that knowledge of all things concerning the state was the precondition for ruling and even the very existence of the state, was part of a regime of truth that conditioned the acceptability of a specific art of government which he would later refer to as *raison d’État*. See *Security, Territory, Population*, lectures 9 through 13.

“What is required is therefore a counter-knowledge” (SMD 130), which took up juridical knowledge in the context of its historical development and thereby cut through the image of monarchical absolutism exposing it to its own history, “which reflects back at him [the king], in the form of right, all the usurpations the king has committed against his nobility” (SMD 130-31). What this amounted to was a rewriting of history and a recolonization of monarchical knowledge, as a weapon which could be deployed in a counter-discourse. But importantly, Boullainvilliers’ rupture in the continuity of state authority does not escape the circularity of knowledge and signification: it works at the level of signs to effect recodifications and deactivations of the acceptability of the truth of the state. Foucault summarizes the historico-political discourse through Boullainvilliers, as follows:

He succeeds in writing the history of France because he constantly traces the connecting thread that, behind the battle and behind the invasion, brings into being the military institution and, going beyond the military institution, all the country’s institutions and its whole economy [...] It is this formidable generalization of war, as opposed to what it still meant for the historians of the seventeenth century, that gives Boullainvilliers the important dimension I am trying to show you. (SMD 160)

Boullainvilliers moreover, “reveals war to be a sort of permanent state that exists between groups, fronts, tactical units as they in some sense civilise one another, come into conflict with, or on the contrary, form alliances. There are no more multiple and stable great masses, but there is a multiple war” (SMD 162). Through the grid of this multiple war Boullainvilliers transforms the relationship of force into a, “historical object that someone other than the sovereign – something like a nation (like the aristocracy or, at a later stage, the bourgeoisie) – can locate and determine within its own history” (SMD 162). Historical discourse itself emerges, for Foucault, at the point when society is divided against the state. Boullainvilliers re-writes and recodes the accepted knowledge in a new narrative, as a kind

of tactical semiotics, to determine a more ‘truthful’ history that situates itself in a circular relation and continuity with the knowledge of the state (SMD 130). In short, the historico-political discourse which Foucault himself is a part of, is first established through this recognition of a permanent, albeit pacified, multiple and dynamic war.

In the final lecture of *Society Must be Defended*, Foucault introduces the concept of population as the effect of a convergence of these two discursive modalities in liberalism. By means of an intersection between the historico-political struggles of nationalism, and the development of statistical sciences which calculated, “the ratio of births to deaths, the rate of reproduction, the fertility of the population” (SMD 243), for useful social interventions, discourses of war were recoded through the medicalized sciences of life. As Foucault shows, the emergence of population with its own naturalness, its own internal regulation, its own living existence was the effect of a problematization of an art of government that considered population as a source of wealth and strength for the sovereign state (STP). In this way the masses were linked together in a ‘biological continuum’ called ‘species’ legitimated by science and delimited as an object for political intervention. Becoming biological, narratives of national warfare turned racism into an objective biological phenomenon: “racism makes it possible to establish a relationship between my life and the death of the other that is not a military or warlike relationship of confrontation, but a biological-type relationship” (SMD 255). Warfare did not disappear, but was codified in the health of the species: “the death of the bad race, of the inferior race (or degenerate, or the abnormal) is something that will make life in general healthier: healthier and purer” (SMD 255). And the statistical population was precisely the epistemic object through which life emerged in its truth: a metaphysic of biopolitics became that through which the

life of the species could be governed insofar as it designated the very limits of political reasoning on practices and techniques.

Equally though, population was integrated into philosophico-juridical discourses at the level of governmental practice. It is not that population became a legal figure, but that population came to constitute the law: it signified a displacement of law, “a phase of juridical regression” (HS 144). in which the law showed itself to be one governmental technique among others that was regulated by the population itself. As Mitchell Dean has noted, this movement is tied up with a normalization of jurisprudence in which “the laws still partake of a juridical system of law, i.e. law as an instrument of sovereignty, [but] their function is to set and maintain norms for the regulation of conduct” (Dean 142). The subject of rights whose obedience was the condition of his life, became *human* with desires, needs, health, wealth, poverty, that could express its conduct for government through the norms of the population. Inversely, the population could thus be conducted through a studied knowledge of normal conduct to which techniques such as juridical law could be applied at a distance from individual bodies in order to attain specific forms of normalization at the population level. For liberal governmentality, biopolitics of the population makes possible the dissociation of juridical sovereignty (and thus the right of death as the highest expression of law) from the legal order, so that this order maintains itself through a ‘natural’ economy of desires, pleasures, needs of subsistence, etcetera, with its own internal processes of normalization that can be affected only by leaving it function on its own. This is a new foundation for juridico-philosophical discourses in which the universality of law, becomes rather, the universality of normalization immanent to the population itself. Population must always be let alone in order for it to produce the effects

which condition the governmental techniques that can operate within it to conduct it. Legislation and policy as techniques of government, therefore gain a new site for the verification of their acceptability and applicability – one that is no longer located in the sovereign decision. When speaking of the ‘nature’ of the market, Foucault explicitly refers to a “juridification of the world” in the context of a space of free competition that develops a “site of veridiction” for governmentality (BB 56).

It is in this sense that the production of freedom must be understood as a technique of government that makes this conduct of conduct possible for governmentality.²⁰ As Foucault has noted, liberal freedom “entails at its heart a productive/destructive relationship with freedom” (BB 64). Freedom must be fostered for the system to function, but insofar as it is free to exceed the limits of the norm, it also, “entails the establishment of limitations, controls, forms of coercion, and obligations relying on threats” (BB 64). As Thomas Lemke has noted, “In the very same process of the production of freedom, liberalism also endangers the freedom it constitutes. It is precisely the ‘free play of forces’ inside liberal forms of government that threatens these liberties and necessitates new interventions to ‘protect’ and ‘stabilize’ them” (Lemke 46). If security makes visible and intelligible the natural fluctuations of the population, governmentality designates those levels of dangerousness and risk within the population that must be reduced without

²⁰ Liberal freedom for Foucault is a “consumer freedom” and the production of the conditions necessary for free consumption is one of the primary objectives of liberalism. “Liberalism formulates simply the following: I am going to produce what you need to be free.” (BB 63) In addition, this means that liberal freedom is tied up the concept of a free society with the free market: “There is a basic identification of individual freedom and a free society with the freedom of the market. It is this identification which allows these thinkers to offer both a means of political legitimation and a principle that would ensure both civil cohesion and future prosperity.” (Dean 71)

eliminating them²¹ (BB 63). Due to the fundamental relation between liberal freedom and the living body of the population, freedom also functions as an indicator of the behavioural norms expressed by identifiable populations who then put the life of the greater population body at risk. Historically jurisprudence was therefore able to establish a set of relations between behaviours and the species in which these deviancies could be linked back to racial or criminal typologies, as in Cesare Lombroso and Paul Broca, (Hacking 174) or equally, to the effects that behaviours had on the health of the population itself, let alone the stability of society as a juridical order (SMD 245). With biopolitics disciplinary technologies were integrated into an overall normalization of society which, “in covering the whole surface that lies between the organic and the biological, between the body and the population” (SMD 253), reformulated the whole problem of the law in terms of a codification of the processes immanent to the life of the species.

To offer an example, we can cite Foucault’s reading of Kant’s “On the Guarantee of Perpetual Peace.” One of the characteristics of the free market is that it expands outwards from national boundaries to the globe. Foucault remarks that Kant’s essay on perpetual peace presents Nature as a process which organizes an economic system, an eco-system, that stabilizes the organic world. For society however, human interests come into perpetual conflict and often result in the destruction of order, which at the political level is expressed

²¹ François Ewald has noted that this paradoxical relationship appears especially articulated the Foucauldian concept of ‘risk’ which he has taken up in terms of insurance and the welfare state. Ewald understands risk as a potential threat or danger that does not exist in ‘reality’ but nonetheless constitutes reality and makes possible insurance. He writes: “In insurance, risk refers neither to a specific occurrence nor to a kind of event that might take place but instead to a way of treating certain events that might happen to a particular group of individuals (a population). Nothing in itself is a risk - risks have no real existence. By an inverse logic, anything can be a risk-everything depends on the way the danger is analyzed and the potential event is evaluated” (Ewald, “Norms” 142).

in war. If an economic system, based on a network of mutual obligations and relations of exchange, could be established for the social order, universal peace could unfold across the globe. Foucault argues that for Kant, “Nature intended the entire world, the whole of its surface, to be given over to the economic activity of production and exchange” (BB 57). International and civil law would then be ‘naturalized’ by an economic normalization that integrates geography and climate into the habits and inclinations of free individuals. “Perpetual peace is guaranteed by nature and this guarantee is manifested in the population of the entire world and in the commercial relationships stretching across the whole world” (BB 58). The military-diplomatic apparatus of *raison d’État* would thus be integrated into a commercial globalization that unceasingly establishes new relationships between states, commercial enterprises and markets based on mutual insecurity.²² If the juridical treaty of the Peace of Westphalia overcoded an underlying war for the establishment of sovereign states, then liberalism as naturalism (BB 61) constituted a movement towards a biopolitical normalization of the relationships between law and war.

If biopolitics is limited to this regulation of the population through the normalizing processes internal to it, liberal governmentality becomes possible because it makes use of this as a critical apparatus for its own techniques. Mitchell Dean makes explicit the intrinsic tension between the two:

At one level, liberalism is a version of bio-politics; at another, it exists in a kind of permanent tension with bio-political imperatives. It is the idea of a government of the population and the imperatives that are derived from such an idea that both unites liberalism and bio-politics and makes liberalism a critique of the unlimited operation of bio-political imperatives. (Dean 133)

²² See *Security, Territory, Population* lecture eleven, “22 March, 1978” for an explanation of this *dispositif*.

For Dean, this mode of liberal critique distinguishes liberalism from social democracy, but for our purposes here the point is that liberalism must be understood as a particular way of taking up biopolitics as a politics of truth. The population makes it possible to develop a kind of scientific positivism of the state in which power functions through a set of technical supports and indicators within normalized life. The discursive polarity between the juridico-philosophical and historico-political become intertwined in a process of normalization that codifies the level of existence which had traditionally escaped these two discourses: “We are, then, in a power that has taken control of both the body and life or that has, if you like, *taken control of life in general*” (SMD 253, my emphasis). If the play between sovereignty and war has been recodified in liberal techniques of government, this is not to say that war remains the exclusive grid of intelligibility for political relations. Rather, war becomes merely one among the economic, social, legal, medical, police, scientific, etcetera, which are all at play in the various discursive deployments of biopolitics in liberalism. The question of biopolitics then must be the following: how is it that life has been codified for discourse in the way that it has? This question, to which we will return in part two, involves an analysis of the force relations which are captured and deployed within the *dispositifs* that make possible normalizing processes at the discursive level. In the following we will look at one of the ways in which war has been taken up in biopolitical studies as the primary grid of liberal intelligibility.

1.5 Conclusion

In the course of this chapter it has been argued that the problem of war is primarily a problem for governmentality. The population is taken up within governmentality by means of the *dispositif* of security which opens it to its nature. Biopolitics operates within liberal

governmentality as the codification of this nature as a space of truth formation in which techniques of government can be assessed for their applicability: the regulation of the population is, more than anything, a regulation of possible governmental techniques. The naturalness of the population is an internal limitation of governmentality and simultaneously that through which war is codified in liberalism. By looking at Agamben it was possible to establish the necessity of a discursive approach to liberal government that takes account of the strategic decodings and recodings that operates power relationships that are neither bound up with sovereignty, nor ontological strictly speaking. Dillon and Reid's work on the complexity sciences probed contemporary developments of this codification of war and made it possible to specify role of security in this light. Dillon's reading of Foucault allows us to set up for the following chapter by making it clear that the problem of war is integrated into governmentality by means of biopolitical discourse. Foucault provided the manner in which a rationality of government could codify discourses on war and sovereignty by displacing the spaces of truth which permitted both to function against one another. In liberal governmentality, both war and law have become techniques whose conditions of applicability are generated not by any universal sovereignty or universal war, but by the specificity of the expressive functions of the naturalness of the population. To be sure, the population is not the only discursive object that has 'a nature' around which governmentality becomes possible: the market is no less important in this regard. In the analysis of biopolitics, the market shows itself to function in a manner parallel to that of the population – as the integration of naturalness into an economic institution. Thus insofar as this naturalness is an objective reality for governmentality which must be accounted for, it is necessary now to shift the level of analysis toward the specificity of this object and to look at its formation *for* biopolitics.

Part 2

Mapping Normalizations

2. General Aims and Objectives

It is now essential that we turn toward the problematic that underlies Foucault's biopolitical governmentality: the formation of the naturalness of the population. Governmentality will not be eliminated from the discussion that follows, but will be put in parentheses so that we can focus on the formation of this object as an event in the history of liberal governmentality. Taking from Thomas Lemke's suggestions, we will examine biopolitics and anatomo-politics along three basic lines: first, as a field of knowledge that renders, "the reality of life understandable and calculable, so that it can be shaped and transformed" (Lemke, *Foucault* 177); second, as a problem of the regime of truth from which relations of power cannot be separated and which asks the question, "of how power strategies mobilize knowledge about life" (177); finally, processes of subjectivization in which the population on the one hand, and the individual on the other, are individuated as objects of intervention and subjects with 'natures' that speak (177-78). The following will make five general arguments, not in any distinguishable order, but throughout the whole text:

1. Biopolitics is distinct from anatomo-politics because of the *manner* in which their respective *dispositifs* are deployed in fields of knowledge and carve out objects according to the manner of their deployment.
2. This manner of deployment can be analyzed by means of the specificity of the norm that is produced and made operational in the disciplinary *dispositif* and the security *dispositif* respectively, as codifications of life.

3. Processes of normalization enact a codification of life, so that this life becomes intelligible as an object of power-knowledge on the basis of the interstitial relations between techniques deployed and the fields of knowledge in which they operate, making possible interventions specific to the relations established there. The two objects whose formation will be analyzed are: the ‘natural’ body of the individual and the ‘natural’ body of the population.
4. The specificity of anatomo-politics is that the normation which it operates and is operative in it, functions to codify the differential elements constitutive of individual bodies so that they can be made docile, efficient and useful. The soul as an excess of the ‘natural’ body, will *effect* an imprisonment in which the body first becomes visible.
5. The specificity of biopolitics is that the normalization which it operates and is operative in it, functions within the differential elements constitutive of multiplicities not to codify their excess and contain them, but to ‘decode’ the multiplicity and recode it at a higher level on the basis of its own differential variability. The multiplicity as a ‘natural’ body in excess of the population, will *effect* its own visibility at the population level not in order to *make* this body less dangerous or more useful but to operate the dangerous and useful elements in it.

Since the distinction between two forms of normalization will act as a framework, it is necessary to examine how we will be using this term in relation to the *dispositif*, the regime of truth or veridiction, strategies of power, fields of knowledge, etcetera. First of all, normalization here has nothing to do with the play between the norm and the exception in

juridical theory. For Foucault, one of the main consequences of, “bio-power was the growing importance assumed by the action of the norm, at the expense of the juridical system of the law” (HS 144). And as Francois Ewald has argued, this ‘juridical regression’ is linked to the emergence of a jurisprudence that functions within a relative and mobile normative order that is in itself extra-judicial (Ewald, “Norms” 153). If with the rise of biopower, “law operates more and more as a norm,” this implies that law has become a technique within a general process of normalization that permits governmentality to function as a critique of its own rationality. The significance of biopower is therefore bound up with the rising dominance of processes of normalization.

In the course of the following chapters we will make clear the conceptual distinctions between the norm, normalization and normativity. Each of these will be specified in terms of the heterogeneous regimes of truth which are arranged by power-knowledge relations. One important counter-point to the objectives herein, is the work of one of Foucault’s former students, François Ewald. For Ewald, the norm, processes of normalization and the normative orders which these engender, are not distinguishable on the basis of the strategies of power which arrange them. He calls for a distinction between disciplinary power and its norms, arguing that the norm is that which functionalizes power by creating a surface of communication between technologies (141). By doing so, he unifies the disciplinary *dispositif* and the insurance *dispositif* (which in its deployment of statistics, probability and risk can be made roughly equivalent to Foucault’s security *dispositif*) within a generalized ‘normative order’ that characterizes the biopower of modernity (141). But by subordinating the *dispositifs* of power to that which makes them function, he neutralizes the critical potency inherent in the analysis of processes of normalization. Resistance to the normalizing processes of ‘making useful’ and ‘standardization’, is

reduced to the production of alternative norms. The heterogeneous processes of normalization are therefore subsumed into the homogeneity of a generalized ‘normative order’ (153).

Genealogy will be crucial for critiquing this view. In this respect it makes intelligible a set of relations which contributed to the birth of a singularity and thus, in this case, the event by which a particular process of normalization could establish itself as the coordinates of a field of truth. In describing the method by which he will pursue a genealogy of the modern state, Foucault expresses this in relation to the disciplines:

Taking the point of view of the disciplines involved refusing to give oneself a ready-made object, be it mental illness, delinquency or sexuality. It involved not seeking to measure institutions, practises, and knowledges in terms of the criteria and norms of an already given object. Instead, it involved grasping the movement by which a field of truth with objects of knowledge was constituted through these mobile technologies. (STP 118)

In other words, the genealogical method opens to the ‘outside’ of institutions, practises, and normative concepts more generally. It aims its gaze at the complex network of force relations in their “immediate effects of divisions, inequalities, and disequilibriums” and “the internal conditions of these differentiations” (HS 94) that are organized by the technologies and instruments of a *dispositif*.²³ Genealogy shows these networks to be comprised of points of resistance and lines of flight that can be weaponized against the order. It is by means of these constant slippages, breakdowns, fissures, resistances, that a

²³ Taking from Foucault, De Certeau has also deployed the concepts of strategy and tactic. For De Certeau, strategies are constituted spatialities in which the other becomes visible as an outside – an object, a client, an enemy, an adversary. Tactics on the other hand are constituent fragments of decisional slippages and therefore have an immediate relation of dependence to temporality as the cut or fracture out of which opportunities for securing dominance emerge. Although this is a different usage than in Foucault’s work, it is nonetheless interesting to keep it in mind as a development and specification of a (intentionally) vague set of concepts.

given *dispositif* can carve up the real and establish the positive conditions for the emergence of objects of knowledge (HS 96-97). Foucault, of course, says it best:

Are there no great radical ruptures, massive binary divisions, then? Occasionally, yes. But more often one is dealing with mobile and transitory points of resistance, producing cleavages in a society that shift about, fracturing unities and effecting regroupings, furrowing across individuals themselves, cutting them up and remolding them, marking off irreducible regions in them, in their bodies and minds. (HS 96)

In this process of unmasking, institutions and their objects tend to ‘disappear’ at the analytical level, serving instead as sign posts for the power relations which govern the systems of truth in which they themselves are invested and made possible. It is a kind of material unconscious in which strategies and tactics operate an entire machinery, not so much ‘behind’ the institution, but at the interstices where it exceeds and escapes itself.

In this context, normalization functions as an instrument which constitutes a plurality of objects of knowledge by arranging a regime of truth in which it finds its own existence. It is an effect of the very relations of power which it serves to constitute and in which it operates a plurality of rules of functioning for this power. If one were to describe a *dispositif* therefore, it is essential that one describe the specificity of the normalization within which it gains its particular consistency as an observable arrangement of techniques of power. In short, an analysis of techniques of normalization makes visible the outer limits of a regime of truth, that is, the cracks and fissures in which force relations are immanent. This is therefore to make visible the threshold on which an event such as the

constitution of a new object of power-knowledge can be analyzed and a reversal of force relations can be mapped out.²⁴

The problem is thus: how does one make an argument for the specific relations that govern the formation of an object, when these relations operate on the surface of discourse and at the same time in strategies of power. In *Discipline and Punish* for example, the analytics of power is not so much concerned with the level of discourse but how relations of power-knowledge carve out the subject as a subject, the objects that can be known by the subject, the relations that a subject can have with these objects. Foucault argues that,

We should admit that power produces knowledge (and not simply by encouraging it because it serves power or by applying it because it is useful); that power and knowledge directly imply one another; that there is no power relation without the correlative constitution of a field of knowledge, nor any knowledge that does not presuppose and constitute at the same time power relations. These ‘power-knowledge relations’ are to be analyzed, therefore, not on the basis of a subject of knowledge who is or is not free in relation to the power system, but, on the contrary, the subject who knows, the objects to be known and the modalities of knowledge must be regarded as so many effects of these fundamental implications of power-knowledge and their historical transformations. (DP 28)

But the critique levelled here is that in order to make intelligible the formation of an object of power-knowledge it is necessary to look at the intersection of discourse and power; or in another way, the symbiotic relation between a system of differentiation specific to a regime of truth (the rarity of statement) and its constitutive strategic arrangement of

²⁴ Foucault refers to the event of truth in these terms in his essay, “Nietzsche, Genealogy, History”: “‘Effective history’, however, deals with events in terms of their most unique characteristics, their most acute manifestations. An event, consequently, is not a decision, a treaty, a reign, or a battle, but *the reversal of a relationship of forces, the usurpation of power, the appropriation of a vocabulary turned against those who had once used it, a domination that grows feeble, poisons itself, grows slack, the entry of a masked ‘other.’* The forces operating in history do not obey destiny or regulative mechanisms but the luck of the battle. They do not manifest the successive forms of a primordial intention and their attention is not that of a conclusion, *for they always appear through the singular randomness of events*” (NGH 361).

techniques of power. The ‘natural’ body could only be carved out by techniques of power within a system of differentiation, of rules of dispersion, for discourse. It is this ‘between’ of power-knowledge, which simultaneously recognizes their inseparability, that this project will work through. It means taking seriously Foucault’s comments on the method of *événementialisation*:

The question would instead would be: how can the indivisibility of knowledge and power in the context of interactions and multiple strategies induce both singularities, fixed according to their conditions of acceptability, and a field of possible, of openings, indecisions, reversals and possible dislocations which make them fragile, temporary, and which turn these effects into events, nothing more, nothing less than events. (WC 278)

The object is formed on a multiplicity of surfaces each differentiating different characteristics, linking up with comparative elements, arranging dispersions in which the emergence becomes intelligible. Hence the real difficulty is attempting to describe connections between the level of strategy and the level of the positivity.

In order to do this, I have taken a set of analytical concepts from the “Formation of Objects” chapter in Foucault’s *Archeology of Knowledge*, collectively referred to as planes of differentiation for object formation. These describe divisions, dispersions, disjunctions and connections between elements on a discursive surface limited only by the rarity of the statement. In that work however, these planes lack the technical assemblages which arrange differential forces into strategies and, within these strategies, actually effect further planes of division and differentiation that carve out objects for deployment in competing strategies. Hence as we will see below, the *dispositif* of security is actually the effect of a reconfiguration of a set of problems that had blocked up the technique of police within constituted fields of knowledge of the sovereign *raison d’État*. The emergence of the

consistency of this new *dispositif*, deeply connected to the emergence of the naturalness of the population, was made possible within a regime of truth that it would eventually overthrow with the techniques that were originally operative in it, but deployed now in a new way: mathematical probability and the statistical archive were among its most important of technological expropriations. I will therefore be rereading *Discipline and Punish* and *Security, Territory, Population* in terms of archeological concepts which will serve to establish the ways that spaces of truth formation have interacted with the fluidity of strategies. This will make it possible to distinguish between anatomo-politics and biopolitics in terms of the regimes of truth and the strategies that run through them and delimit their coordinates for governmental practice. In other words, they will be differentiated on the basis of the specific processes of normalization that make life visible, intelligible, and manipulable in modernity.

As a way to orient the reader, this will be the layout of the following chapters:

Chapter 3 – An initial but cursory distinction will be made between anatomo-politics and biopolitics in terms of the specificity of the body endowed with ‘naturalness’

Chapter 4 – A close analysis of the formation of the ‘natural’ human body in disciplinary *dispositif* and comprising two parts:

4.1 – The technical and strategic constitution of the planes of differentiation in the disciplines

4.2 – The process of normation operative in the disciplines

Chapter 5 – An examination of the technique of police and *raison d’État*, especially in terms of the techniques deployed there that will be taken up and reconfigured to suit the security *dispositif*

Chapter 6 – A close analysis of the formation of the ‘natural’ body of the population in the security dispositif and comprising two parts:

6.1 – The technical and strategic constitution of the planes of differentiation in security

6.2 – The process of normalization operative in security and its specificity with regard to normation

Chapter 7 – The naturalness of the population as a site of truth formation in which eugenics becomes possible as the late ‘material’ expression a space of reflection on truth and falsity for governmentality of the species, in a manner corresponding to Bentham’s panopticon in the disciplinary society.

3. Anatomicopolitics and Biopolitics

In the first volume of *The History of Sexuality* Foucault makes a crucial distinction between two dominant organizations of modern power relations. On the one hand there is disciplinary power, which he characterized as, “an anatomicopolitics of the human body” (HS 139), and on the other, a set of interventions on the “species body” and regulatory controls which he characterizes as, “a biopolitics of the population” (HS 139). The importance of this distinction for the analysis of power relations cannot be underestimated: they are not reducible to one another, nor do they operate in the same domain. There has been much confusion in the critical literature on Foucault when it comes to deciding what is and what is not to be considered within the domain of biopolitics. To be sure, with one and same gesture Foucault makes this distinction and blurs the lines between the terms: “The disciplines of the body and the regulations of the population constituted the two poles around which the organization of *power over life* was deployed” (HS 139). In this way ‘power over life’, summed up in the concept of biopower, seems to conflate the two strategic configurations into a single unified organization rather than as a bipolarity.

Indeed this confusion is amplified by the way in which sovereignty is seemingly counterposed to biopolitics in Foucault’s famous and, according to popular consensus, definitive formulation: “One might say that the ancient right to *take* life or *let* live was replaced by a power to *foster* life or *disallow* it to the point of death” (HS 138). Thus the sovereign ‘right of death’ seems to emerge as a kind of dialectical antithesis to the biopolitical ‘power over life’. It is well known however that Foucault was *not* a dialectical thinker: rather than being antithetical concepts, they are merely two polarities. The notion of sovereign right is deployed by Foucault as an effect in the *dispositif* of sovereignty and it

is opposed to biopolitics, as an effect of the *dispositif* of security. In *Society Must be Defended*, the lecture seminar that preceded the publication of *The History of Sexuality*, Foucault writes that the two are to be construed as polar opposites in terms of their management of life as excess: “at the opposite extreme, you no longer have a sovereign right that is in excess of biopower, but a biopower that is in excess of sovereign right” (SMD 253-54). This transformation concerns the way in which practices of government can be made possible during specific historical periods. There is no formal opposition between the two whereby the one is liable to switch into the other in a given state of emergency; they simply operate within different epistemic regimes of truth formation. This is complicated however by the fact that the biopolitics does not exclude the exercise of sovereign right and, as will be shown in the following, its emergence occurs during the eighteenth century when sovereignty was still the primary concern of political and economic thought. Biopolitics emerges within a reconfiguration of power relations in which sovereign right nonetheless still exists, but operates according to a whole different set of rules and practices.

By concluding the *History of Sexuality* with the opposition of sovereign right and the power over life, Foucault aims to solidify the critique that he waged all along: namely, that the juridical conceptualization of power in terms of prohibition and transgression fundamentally misunderstands the nature of power. He suggests that a possible reason for the acceptance of power in terms of the representations of Law, is due to the fact that, “In Western societies since the Middle Ages, the exercise of power has always been formulated in terms of law” (HS 87). This is merely a representation however: “The history of the monarchy went hand in hand with the covering up of the facts and procedures of power by juridico-political discourse” (HS 88). Foucault has therefore shown that prohibition did not

constitute the strategies and tactics of power during the Middle Ages, when the Roman law codes were being reinterpreted to suit the needs of the developing monarchies. This is exemplified in the research put forward in *Society Must be Defended*, and further specified in his studies on pastoral power:

The Christian pastorate is, rather, a form of power that, taking the problem of salvation in its general set of themes, inserts into this global, general relationship an entire economy and technique of the circulation, transfer, and reversal of merits, and this is its fundamental point. Similarly with regard to the law, Christianity, the Christian pastorate, is not simply the instrument of the acceptance or generalization of the law, but rather, through an oblique relationship to the law, as it were, it establishes a kind of exhaustive, total, and permanent relationship of individual obedience (STP 183).

Law existed, but power always functions outside of the law.²⁵ Obedience to Law was rather one effect of a complex arrangement of techniques and practices at the molecular level. Pastoral power made possible the relationship of obedience that was demanded by the truth value of law; the law did not make obedient subjects. It is significant that there has been so much work on the relation between biopolitics and the sovereign decision during the last twenty years. Even in cases such as Agamben's where he is allegedly attempting to destroy the anthropological machine of the de-cision, (Agamben, *The Open* 77) he seems to revert to a theory of power which is not diffuse but centred in such institutions as the 'State' and a unified structure of the event as 'state of exception.' "In political thought and analysis," Foucault writes, "we still have not cut off the head of the king" (HS 88-89). And biopolitics is merely one more head that must be put to the guillotine.

²⁵ In this sense it also functions outside of regimes of veridiction, or truth formation, but nonetheless affects transformations in the real.

Now the problem at hand is to give the general coordinates of the discussion that will follow. There are thus two elements that Foucault situates within the ‘power over life’ or, biopower: the anatomo-politics of the individual and the biopolitics of the population. The fundamental problem in the following work will be to distinguish the way in which the overall strategy that constitutes biopolitics is radically different from the strategy of anatomo-politics. By doing so, I do not wish to prove that the disciplinary *dispositif* has become inconsequential, for it remains the case that disciplinary techniques will continue to be deployed for a long time to come. The notion of a normalizing society will therefore be problematized and offer an overall framework for understanding how the *dispositif* of security constitutes a field of knowledge in which biopolitics was established. In Kafkaesque style Foucault explains what he had understood as the swarming of the disciplines from out of their institutional enclosures to society as a whole:

The ideal point of penalty today would be an indefinite discipline: an interrogation without end, an investigation that would be extended, without limit to a meticulous and ever more analytical observation, a judgement that would at the same time be the constitution of a file that was never closed, the calculated leniency of a penalty that would be interlaced with the ruthless curiosity of an examination, a procedure that would be at the same time the permanent measure of a gap in relation to an inaccessible norm and the asymptotic movement that strives to meet infinity. (DP 227)

This formulation of a society of normalization was critiqued in Deleuze’s famous “Postscript on the Societies of Control”. There he argues that the model of disciplinary enclosure, of modulation within enclosure, of discontinuous productivity, passing from one stage to the next, has been thrown into crisis by a transformation at the level of information exchange (Deleuze, “Control” 3-4). A new *process* of codification characterizes the present in which individuals are not individuated in their bodies. Rather it effects a

deterritorialization of the body with numbers and market speculation, in order to reterritorialize as a multiplicity in-formation, that is, as consumers that naturally make up the flux of a market based political-economy. The masses have become populations and markets. “The numerical language of control,” writes Deleuze, “is made of codes that mark access to information, or reject it. We no longer find ourselves dealing with the mass/individual pair. Individuals have become ‘*dividuals*,’ and masses, samples, data, markets, or ‘*banks*’” (5). In other words, control for Deleuze signifies the deployment of a regime of power which operates in excess of the enclosure: the individual is divided up, distributed, and shared in a continuous network of perpetually modifying codes operating at the level of the multiplicity and its own processes.

In this respect Deleuze says that Foucault himself, “was actually one of the first to say that we are already moving away from disciplinary societies, we have already left them behind” (Deleuze, “Control and Becoming” 174). Even in *Society Must be Defended*, the course which follows the publication of *Discipline and Punish*, Foucault had already begun to rethink the disciplinary society in terms of the problem of power over life, that seem to presage Deleuze’s critique. The term that Foucault uses is not control however, but regulation. Not in the sense of the imposition of an enclosed space which must be filled up by the population, but as a regularization of the population which intersects “orthogonally” with the norm of the disciplinary body. He writes:

In more general terms still, we can say that there is one element that will circulate between the disciplinary and the regulatory, which will also be applied to body and population alike, which will make it possible to control both the disciplinary order of the body and the aleatory events that occur in the biological multiplicity. The element that circulates between the two is the norm. The norm is something that can be applied to both a body one wishes to discipline and a population one wishes to regularize. The normalizing society, is therefore not, under these conditions, a sort of generalized disciplinary society whose

disciplinary institutions have swarmed and finally taken over everything – that, I think, is no more than a first and inadequate interpretation of a normalizing society. (SMD 252)

However the Deleuzian connection goes deeper than this: in the lectures of the following year Foucault will modify this initial correction of the disciplinary society. This constant process of revision and correction of his own thought characterized Foucault through to the end of his life. Whereas in the passage just quoted, Foucault seems to suggest that there is a uniform norm that straightens out the abnormal elements in the population and the individual body equally, in *Security, Territory, Population*, Foucault identifies an entirely new process of normalization that is characteristic of the population as an object and subject of government. The problem is still the same, that is, “how techniques of normalization develop from and below a system of law, in its margins and maybe even against it” (STP 56), but this new normalization does not operate on the basis of an accumulation of forces in the Norm, on the basis of the normal/abnormal duality, to establish empty, enclosed disciplinary spaces. Foucault refers to this latter as a process of *normation*, seemingly denoting an etymological connection between the disciplinary Norm and Law as ideal Forms to be achieved (STP 57). Normalization in this new *dispositif* operates therefore on the basis of a normal distribution whose differential relativity defines the norm as “an interplay of differential normalities” (STP 63). The normal is a consistent regularity in a given population. Regulation of a population, in short, operates *inside* a multiplicity, where the multiplicity is defined as a field of exteriority within which normalization *normalizes* the establishable, or acceptable relations of force on this field. It is in this way that Deleuze’s concept of a ‘society of control’ functions in line with Foucault’s reformulated idea of a “normalizing society”.

To be sure, Foucault is not immediately concerned with an entire regime of control, but with normalization and its deployment within the processes of a multiplicity of living beings. This regularizing normalization is operated by an arrangement of techniques and instruments which are collectively designated by Foucault as the *dispositif* of security. Security in turn, secures the ‘naturalness’ of the population, just as discipline disciplines the ‘natural’ body of the individual (STP 70). The problem of life is therefore transformed: what we will examine, and what I will argue, is that both operate different codifications of life that make life intelligible in two very different ways.²⁶ Instead it will remain within the field of power and assert that power over life is fundamentally concerned with the specificity of the codifications of life which make possible transformations at the level of truth formation and strategy.

This take on life is radically different from those put forward by Agamben and Esposito. It was shown in part one that Agamben’s concept of bare life, which Esposito takes up, although in a different way, is constructed on the basis of an ontological interpretation of the sovereign state of exception. Foucault of course never develops concepts of this sort, nor did he require such elements to ‘complete’ his analysis of modernity. The phenomenological basis of Agamben’s theory of biopolitics perhaps necessitates the radical negativity formulated in bare life, but given the nature of Foucault’s

²⁶ It is no secret that Foucault was heavily influenced by Canguilhem’s theory of the normal and pathological, in which biological life has a normativity internal to itself, while there is another normativity that is imposed on individuals and populations. As Catherine Mills has aptly pointed out, it could be argued that Foucault’s disciplinary *dispositif* was an attempt to think through these terms at the level of the “regulatory effectiveness of power to describe the historical modes of incorporation and corporealization of the norm, while also insisting on the possibilities for dis-incorporating any particular norm or set of norms” (Mills 183). However it could be suggested that Foucault’s reconceptualization of normalization constituted a return to Canguilhem, but through an analysis, again, of techniques and mechanisms through which power operates on and carves out a field of knowledge. This paper will not attempt to enter into this dialogue, but it is helpful to keep this in mind.

genealogical analytics, in which what is of concern are the interstitial deployments of instruments and techniques of power, a concept of ‘life itself’, or ‘natural life’, or ‘bare life’, does not offer anything constructive. This is crucial: the concept of life as a technical term was not elaborated with any specificity in Foucault’s work. Rather, life is used in a somewhat colloquial manner to designate the field of everyday existence in a ‘natural’ environment with all of the political technologies that penetrate it, invest it, and make it speak. The problem of life, for Foucault, is never its conceptual definition strictly speaking, but rather the ways in which it became possible to define and delimit life as an object of knowledge, as a concept to be deployed in discourse, as moral principle, etc. It is, in short a problem of the norm: life must be understood in terms of the specificity of its codification peculiar to the *dispositif* of power which takes hold of it. This immediately speaks to the great misinterpretations of Foucault posited by Roberto Esposito in his work on biopolitics, *Bios: Biopolitics and Philosophy* (Esposito 13-44). It is a rather silly endeavor to trace out the relation between politics and life, if one’s goal is to contribute to the legacy left by Foucault, when of course, life and politics, life and history, have always been in relation with one another (Esposito 29-32). However what is new in modernity is a shift in the loci of truth production which makes possible the enunciative capacity of the ‘natural’ body of the individual on the one hand, and the ‘natural’ body of the population on the other. Without confusing the differing projects of archeology and genealogy, when dealing with the missing definition of ‘life’, it is helpful to refer to a comment from *The Archeology of Knowledge*: “Behind the completed system, what is discovered by the analysis of formations is not the bubbling source of life itself, life in an as yet uncaptured state; it is an immense density of systematicities, a tight group of multiple relations” (AK 76). It is this group of relations, with its strategies and tactics, which give rise to the

possibility of defining 'life' as an object of knowledge and instrument of power as a relay in a network of systematicities that serves to subjugate it, manipulate it and put it to use, or dispose of it.

This requires us to make several methodological comments. The reading of Foucault enacted here involves looking at strategies and tactics in relation to the constitution of regimes of truth. On the one hand, this means taking up Foucault's work on the disciplinary *dispositif* in light of his later clarifications on the truth-event in the lectures and interviews. On the other, it means using the model that he employs for analyzing the disciplines to clarify the *dispositif* of security and its constitution of a new domain of knowledge. Above, it was observed that the reason for counter-posing the sovereign right of death to a power over life, was to clarify the radical shift in emphasis from a juridical analysis of power in terms of legitimacy and repression, to an analysis of the strategies and tactics which invest reality with a microphysics of power. Rather than looking at traditional theorists such as Carl Schmitt, Hans Kelsen or, more recently Jürgen Habermas, for guidance on the nature of politico-juridical normativity, Foucault opens up a new possibility for political thought: "that of ascertaining the possibility of constituting a new politics of truth" (TP 317). This means looking at the ways in which various instruments and mechanisms organize a strategic field which carves up reality into fields of knowledge that have their own positive conditions of acceptability for statements (WC 276-77). These designate what can be said or not said; what within discourse can be designated as true or false and made function as true or false; how a particular arrangement of technologies arrange power in such a way that specific individuals, groups, or institutions are accorded the right to speak, the status to speak. In short, a politics of truth is a "nominalist critique" that examines the tightly wound arrangement, or regime, of discursive possibilities in

which an event of truth can be shown to have emerged at a particular dis-juncture in power relations (TP 316; also, Lemke, *Foucault* 62-66). Truth for Foucault, truth operates at the level of discourse only insofar as discourse is run through with relations of power.

Summarizing the nature of truth in his work Foucault writes:

‘Truth’ is to be understood as a system of ordered procedures for the production, regulation, distribution, circulation, and operation of statements.
 ‘Truth is linked in a circular relation with systems of power that produce and sustain it, and to effects of power which it induces and which extend it – a ‘regime’ of truth. (TP 316)

In this light, politics emerges not on any ideological, superstructural, or juridico-institutional level, but rather as the particular arrangement of a network of power insofar as power governs and is governed by the production of truth. Hence Foucault’s turn toward what he calls an ‘*événementialisation*’ which is not a fundamental reversal or ‘turn’ in his body of work, but rather a reorientation that brings together his genealogical analyses of power relations and his earlier local ontologies of sense (WC 275-78). Politics becomes a specific strategically organized discursive constellation in which truth is governed by and governs a network of power within which it emerges as a singularity. Genealogy, strategy and archeology can be differentiated from one another on the basis of the level on which they operate an intelligibility: relations of force, arrangements of techniques, or positivities. But each of these levels operate contemporaneously sliding into one another, shifting positions, and producing effects of power-knowledge that perpetually reconfigures the relations between them: “These three dimensions, by their very simultaneity, should allow us to recoup whatever positivities there are, that is, those conditions which make acceptable a singularity whose intelligibility is established by identifying interactions and strategies within which it is integrated” (WC 277). Hence the reason that in the following, there will

be a strange integration of planes of discursive differentiation and *dispositifs* of power in which “we have perpetual mobility, essential fragility or rather the complex interplay between what replicates the same process and what transforms it” (WC 277). We will examine arrangements of techniques which makes possible the truth event as a singularity, as an effect, and which is reciprocally conditioned by it as an ordering of acceptable statements and power relations.

Now, this brings us back to the problem at hand, namely the distinction and relations between an anatomo-politics of the body and a biopolitics of the population. This is, to be sure, an enormous task which, due to its very nature, cannot be *completed*. In an effort to be concise, we will limit the distinction to one particular element that surfaces in both, albeit in different ways and, more specifically, within different regimes of truth. This latter point is crucial to the distinction and speaks to Foucault’s emphasis on the nature of the truth event: “But the important thing is to avoid trying to do for the event what was previously done with the concept of structure [...]The problem is at once to distinguish among events, to differentiate the networks and levels to which they belong, and to reconstitute the lines along which they are connected and engender one another” (TP 304).

The element towards which we must now fix our gaze is the emergence of the object known as the ‘natural’ body of the individual and the ‘natural’ body of the population through their different forms of normalization. Because both of these objects of knowledge constitute the supposed ‘life’ of their respective figures, differentiating them will specify the particularity of biopolitical strategy. The normalization effected by the techniques deployed in their respective *dispositifs* constitutes the field of knowledge that makes possible their respective emergence as object and subject of political calculation.

4. The 'Nature' of the Disciplines

In order to enter into the problem of normalization, we must first turn to Foucault's *Archeology of Knowledge*. In the chapter entitled "The Formation of Objects", Foucault argues that the problem of the formation of objects concerns an excess which is neither the silence of a constitutive ground, nor a factor of language, logic, or semantics. The problem is rather, "to define these objects without reference to the ground, the foundation of things, but by relating them to the body of rules that enable them to form as objects of a discourse and thus constitute the conditions of their historical appearance" (AK 48). These rules of object formation are immanent to the relations between the three 'planes of differentiation': they are the 'outside'; the positive conditions of emergence; the "field of exteriority" that "enables it [the object] to appear, to juxtapose itself with other objects, to situate itself in relation to them, to define its difference, its irreducibility, and even perhaps its heterogeneity" (AK 45). Indeed, Foucault writes that, "they are, in a sense, at the limit of discourse: they offer it objects of which it can speak, or rather (for this image of offering presupposes that objects are formed independently of discourse), they determine the group of relations that discourse must establish in order to speak of this or that object, in order to deal with them, name them, analyse them, classify them, explain them, etc." (AK 46). At this limit, discourse as a practice is the primary concern, which is to say, if one is to analyze the formation of objects it is absolutely necessary to study the power relations that adhere to, administer, break down, distribute, combine the practices themselves.²⁷ This means that

²⁷ Moreover, because we are concerned with a genealogy of the power relations which made specific objects of knowledge possible for an anatomo-politics and a biopolitics respectively, this analysis will differ from those that Foucault himself performed, to the extent that he rarely made explicit his continued reliance on his theory of discourse when discussing the development of strategies and tactics of power.

in a genealogical analysis one must, in a certain sense, even move outside of the discursive relations to the level of power relations. As Deleuze writes in his work on Foucault:

So the greatest problem for Foucault would be to uncover the nature of these peculiar features presupposed by the statement. But *The Archeology of Knowledge* stops at this point and does not attempt to deal with a problem that surpasses the limits of ‘knowledge’. Foucault’s readers become aware of the fact that we are entering into a new domain, that of power and its relation to knowledge (Deleuze, *Foucault* 12).

So we are left with two primary levels of analysis once again: that of discursive practise and that of the strategies which are immanent to these practises as, paradoxically, their relations of exteriority (HS 94).

On what we can call the archeological level therefore, it is first necessary to examine the three planes of differentiation operative in the formation of objects since, as it will be argued, Foucault deploys these planes in his genealogies. The three planes are: surfaces of emergence, authorities of delimitation, and grids of specification (AK 41-42). Regardless of the brevity with which Foucault describes these concepts in *The Archeology*, they are in fact not easy to identify.²⁸ Moreover, in Foucault’s account these concepts operate at the level of discourse without consideration for the complex networks of power in which all knowledge is invested. What will be attempted in the following is a reconfiguration of these key concepts for the analysis of object formation, by taking a step back to the regime of power that makes possible each plane of differentiation and their specific relations for strategic deployment at the level of discourse. Each plane will be introduced and a

²⁸ Problematically Foucault does not go into great detail about these concepts and has left many commentators simply reiterating Foucault’s own examples of each plane in lieu of actual explanations. (See Alan Sheridan’s *Michel Foucault: the Will to Truth*; and Gary Gutting’s *Michel Foucault’s Archeology of Scientific Reasoning*) Faced with this vagueness, this section will attempt to define the functional contours of these concepts.

definition will be attempted on the basis of Foucault's description. However for each plane this definition will take on a decidedly different form because its specificity will be defined not by practices but by the *dispositif* of power that makes them possible and the reciprocal effects which they produce in these power relations. The problem around which these planes turn is the status of truth in a given regime of power: how can a truth be designated, observed, recorded, verified in relation to that which is considered false? What effects does the emergence of a particular regime of truth have on the formation of objects? Which is to say, what singularities manifest themselves in the order of power-knowledge which make possible a specific object of analysis at a specific moment in time.²⁹ The following will alternate between three excurses on the methodological concepts that are being reappropriated and the applications of these concepts to Foucault's *Discipline and Punish*.

4.2 The Technically 'Natural' Body

As Foucault explains, once one has identified an object or field of objects, one "must map the first surfaces of their emergence: show *where* these individual differences, which, according to the degrees of rationalization, conceptual codes, and types of theory, *will be accorded the status* of disease, alienation, anomaly, dementia, neurosis or psychosis, degeneration, etc., may emerge, and then be designated and analyzed" (AK 41, my emphasis). So, surfaces of emergence can be observed in the loci of difference from out of which it is possible to designate an object that is important for a specific field of research. Now, Foucault identifies several surfaces which were crucial to the formation of objects for nineteenth century psychopathology: "In the case of nineteenth century psychopathology,

²⁹ The following will open up the method that will then be employed to understand the specificity of the security *dispositif*.

they were probably *constituted* by the family, the immediate social group, the work situation, the religious community” (AK 41). The crucial point here that has created numerous confusions even in the work of Foucault scholars such as Alan Sheridan (96) and geographer Mathew Hannah (93), is that these communal spaces *constituted* surfaces of emergence, but they themselves are not surfaces of emergence. Alternatively, one could not say that the hospital or the prison were surfaces of emergence for delinquency: this would be to attribute a causal function to the molar bodies that are themselves a *function* of a particular surface of emergence; which is to say, that which permits specific objects to appear at their peripheries in specific periods. However Foucault offers another hint in the brackets which follow this list:

“(which are all normative, which are all susceptible to deviation, which all have a margin of tolerance and a threshold beyond which exclusion is demanded, which all have a mode of designation and a mode of rejecting madness, which all transfer to medicine if not the responsibility for treatment and cure, at least the burden of explanation).” (AK 41)

He thus designates these social bodies in terms of the thresholds of tolerance, exclusion, marginalization and normalization. What does this signify? Precisely that surfaces of emergence actually constitute the *formation of these bodies* in their breaks and ruptures with them, which in turn effect a constitutive visibility on the bodies in question. This is to say that surfaces of emergence are the differential elements operative in these bodies, effecting threshold processes for the ‘discovery’ of new objects. In another way, we could say that the primary problems of surfaces of emergence are the specific normativities which are governed by the plays of differential forces within bodies, and which permits these very bodies to become visible and therefore to reproduce the effects of these normalizing processes throughout society. There is a further implication here which goes unsaid in *The*

Archeology, but which is taken up with an acute specificity in *Discipline and Punish*: surfaces of emergence effect and are the effect of relations of power outside of discursive formations. The family, the work situation and the religious community are all bodies that function in regimes of power: they are constituted by these regimes but are also instruments with their own mechanisms that effect modifications of their dominant regimes of power particularly, though not exclusively, in the production of objects *pertinent* to particular strategic formations. Understanding the concept of surfaces of emergence in this way opens up a very real connection between the archeological analysis of discursive formations and the genealogical mapping of the strategic relations that produce possible objects of knowledge and invest them in a network of power relations.

In the chapter entitled “Docile Bodies” Foucault identifies four surfaces of emergence on which, “a ‘political anatomy’, which was also a ‘mechanics of power’, was being born; it [the political anatomy] defined how one may have a hold over others’ bodies, not only so that they may do what one wishes, but so that they may operate as one wishes, with the techniques, the speed and the efficiency that one determines” (DP 138). These surfaces are listed at the conclusion of the chapter as four characteristics that individuate the disciplinary body: it is cellular, organic, genetic and combinatory. Each of these surfaces operates on the basis of a particular technology which organizes and manages the production of truth on the body: the ‘art of distributions’ spatializes the body into distinct atomic units whose forces can be made visible in a cellular manner; the control and codification of activity, gesture, movement, temporalizes the cellular differentiations of the body so that a micro-physics of the act can be analyzed and extracted in its organic vitality; by serializing the gestures of the segmented body, a new temporality of duration opens up the infinite extraction of forces in a linear, genetic manner; finally, the combinatory surface

of differentiation is operated and operates within a tactical technology of power which composes the forces of the molecularized body into a useful and docile individual (DP 167). Now the interaction that is illustrated in this mapping, is one in which the surfaces of emergence are not *really* distinct from the techniques that operate them. Instead the surfaces of emergence are effects immanent to the dispersions and ruptures constituted by disciplinary techniques, which is to say, they are singularities. “We have to establish a network which accounts for the singularity as an effect” (WC 276). These effects also induce a certain responsiveness in the techniques, which in turn must continuously adapt. Indeed, the surfaces of emergence are the differential elements that escape the overcoding of political technologies and as such, guide the manner in which the technologies themselves produce specific these same effects of power as specific regimes of visibility and novel domains of knowledge. Writing on the relationship between knowledge and power, which we are attempting to specify at present in a kind of gloss on Foucault, Foucault writes, “that power and knowledge directly imply one another; that there is no power relation without the correlative constitution of a field of knowledge, nor any knowledge that does not presuppose and constitute at the same time power relations” (DP 27). There is an interplay and symbiosis between technologies of power, which are organized into tactical assemblages within a strategic field such as the disciplinary, and the differential surfaces that the techniques attempt to channel but which they can never totalize: pure totalization would be equivalent to death, that region in which the expression of sovereign power attains its summit in the spectacle of the scaffold. Death is always the limit of disciplinary power; the disciplines are conditioned on its escape³⁰ (HS 138). The

³⁰ This point will be clarified when the relation of death and the Norm will be examined.

body must be a living body: a multiplicity of surfaces (cellular, organic, genetic and combinatory) that become productive in their engagement with strategically organized techniques of power precisely by their escape from these very techniques. The surfaces of emergence are spacings, displacements, and gaps that differentiate objects pertinent to a strategy that aims to break down the body and its movements, into minute details and then reconstruct it for productive ends.

The second plane that we must describe is called the ‘grids of specification’ for objects. Foucault writes: “these are the systems according to which the different ‘kinds of madness’ are divided, contrasted, related, regrouped, classified, derived from one another as objects of psychiatric discourse” (AK 42). Due to the examples that Foucault offers as illustrations of such grids, one may be tempted to simply redeploy them in a genealogy: “in the nineteenth century, these grids of differentiation were: the soul, as a group of hierarchized, related, and more or less interpenetrable faculties; the body, as a three-dimensional volume of organs linked together by network of dependence and communication” (AK 42). Thus we can say that grids of specification offer the classificatory principles that permit object formation. However one must again question the applicability of this concept in relation to power, since it would appear that this concept works within a system of discursive regularity but not at the level of strategies. Instead, it may be possible to identify the way that these grids manifest themselves, not in a causal manner, but through an interplay of techniques which are invested in producing and reproducing discontinuities between forces and knowledge. On the basis of a set of instruments and techniques aimed at breaking the body down into the minutiae of its gestures, movements and potencies, the grids of specification become visible as codified differentiations. The time-table, architectural constructions, the correlation of the body

and objects, the distribution of individuals in hierarchies and ranking systems are all examples of disciplinary technologies that produce a grid in which the body, its temporality, and its forces can be codified. As Foucault writes:

All these serializations formed a permanent grid: confusion was eliminated: that is to say, production was divided up and the labour process was articulated, on the one hand, according to its stages or elementary operations, and, on the other hand, according to the individuals, the particular bodies, that carried it out: each variable of this force – strength, promptness, skill, constancy – would be observed, and therefore characterized, assessed, computed and related to the individual who was its particular agent. Thus, spread out in a perfectly legible way over the whole series of individual bodies, the work force may be analyzed in individual units. (DP 145)

What Foucault observes is that a series of techniques were deployed with their stated objective being the production of passive bodies in heterogeneous and potentially dangerous spaces. The body is spatialized in a discursive grid that codifies these multiple divisions and differentiations making the body intelligible, in a very specific way. The body ceases to be a thick, solid mass, and emerges as a series of intelligible – and technologically manipulable – units that can, moreover, be re-combined in tactical formations by means of procedures of normalization. The body shows itself to be constructed and mobile, flexible and resistant, in each of its individuated segments. Along with surfaces of emergence and authorities of delimitation, the grid makes it possible to break down a molar body into a molecular multiplicity of forces in which truth finds its sites of emergence.

Finally we arrive at the last plane of differentiation. Returning again to the *Archeology of Knowledge*, Foucault gives the example, again for psychopathology, of medicine as an ‘authority of delimitation’. For his purposes in that book this example makes sense: medicine has an institutional body possessing its own rules for knowledge production,

practises, governance, political orientation, etcetera, and is also invested in the influence of other institutional authorities such as law, religious authority, academic authority, etcetera (AK 41-42). There the authorities of delimitation were considered in terms of the political, legal and economic apparatuses that ran alongside local discursivities influencing and influenced by their discursive practises. The medical gaze in *Birth of the Clinic* was, for example, constituted by a set of relations between police and medicine whereby the physician attains a certain sovereign authority over the pathological bodies in society (BC 26). If we want to take this concept and examine its usage in an analysis of disciplinary power though, we need to come at it from a different direction and ask a different question: how are authorities of delimitation accorded the power to delimit the acceptability of objects of knowledge? How are domains of knowledge affected by the codification of authority? How are these authorities distributed and made to function within a given strategy? These questions effect a distribution of delimitative authority and almost neutralize it as a concept. What one finds in the disciplines is that ‘authority’ itself is distributed throughout a whole complex network of techniques and differential forces.

Examples of this distribution can be found in the political technologies of hierarchical surveillance and normalizing judgement. These are not, to be sure, the authorities of delimitation themselves, but the techniques in which authority is distributed. This is to say, authority can be distributed through a complex hierarchy of enclosures in which each subordinate individual is managed by an upper level, and every upper level is simultaneously managed by the lower levels through a continuous surveillance and graduated authority: “Their visibility assures the hold of the power that is exercised over them. It is the fact of being constantly seen, of being able always to be seen, that maintains the disciplined individual in his subjection” (DP 187). It is within this model of perpetual

observation, that power gains a hold on the gaps and spacings between bodies, individuals, groups, institutions, etc., in order to invest them with the authority of delimitation. “In the perfect camp, all power would be exercised through exact observations; each gaze would form a part of the overall functioning of power” (DP 171). Hierarchy is a technique that orders the disequilibrium of forces into a dispersed series of subordinations in which authority is, in a sense, immanent (although always perceived outside the space of enclosure). Like the surfaces of emergence, the strategic arrangement of authorities of delimitation is a network, integrated into the latter, that is distributed across the body of the individual, forcing the body to speak ‘in truth’. Writing about the technique of hierarchical observation in relation to the power which it functionalizes, Foucault writes that:

It was also organized as a multiple, automatic and anonymous power; for although surveillance rests on individuals, its functioning is that of a network of relations from top to bottom, but also to a certain extent from bottom to top and laterally; this network ‘holds’ the whole together and traverses it in its entirety with effects of power that derive from one another: supervisors perpetually supervised. (DP 177)

The plane of authority extends everywhere and yet is never perceived in its authority. The living body as an object of knowledge could only become possible when these techniques of observation and judgement operated a functional set of disequilibriums between individuals and between individuals and their organic, living bodies. Authorities of delimitation are the sites of truth formation, or verification, in which a discursive object gains acceptability on account of its strategic usefulness – within a process of normalization. The techniques of normalizing judgement and the examination have been left out of this exposition for the moment simply because the purpose was to show how

authority is distributed and not what constitutes this authority in its distribution. We will return to this problem below.

In this way we can observe how the planes of differentiation of discourse are made possible by a play of force relations: the body resists its integration into a technological apparatus and, perpetually escaping the mechanisms which grasp it, produces specific truth effects in the order of knowledge. For the disciplinary *dispositif*, the techniques that were deployed aimed to produce politically docile individuals and economically useful bodies (DP 25-26). With his characteristically powerful prose Foucault writes, “In short, it dissociates power from the body; on the one hand, it turns it into an ‘aptitude’, a ‘capacity’, which it seeks to increase; on the other hand, it reverses the course of energy, the power that might result from it, and turns it into a relation of strict subjection” (DP 138). As they performed their operations within institutional settings, these planes emerged into discursive practice as sites of truth formation on the human body: the anatomy began to speak, and its speech was precisely that of subjugation, domination and coercion. Indeed no norm is possible until the body’s silent mass begins to scream, to resist, to break down, and collapse. In the interplay of knowledge production and the relations of power at the micro-physical level, the living body first appears.

This new object is the natural body, the bearer of forces and the seat of duration; it is the body susceptible to specified operations, which have their order, their stages, their internal conditions, their constituent elements. In becoming the target for new mechanisms of power, the body is offered up to new forms of knowledge. It is the body of exercise, rather than of speculative physics; a body manipulated by authority, rather than imbued with animal spirits; a body of useful training and not of rational mechanics, but one in which by virtue of that very fact a number of natural requirements and functional constraints are beginning to emerge. (DP 155)

And what emerges from out of the impenetrable darkness of the human body is a subtle vibration, an echo reverberating from the living past: the shining life of the soul. Like the population in the analysis that will follow, the soul is discovered as an object through which the ‘natural’ body of ‘man’ can be made intelligible and deployed as a function of normation. “A ‘soul’, writes Foucault, “inhabits and *brings him to existence*, which is itself a factor in the mastery that power exercises over the body” (DP 30). However the soul is more than a simple factor in the mastery of the body, it is an existential support and limitation for it, “The soul is the *effect* and *instrument* of a political anatomy; the soul is the prison of the body” (DP 30). It emerges as a field of intelligibility as an effect of the codified differentiations of the human body. But it is equally true that through the soul, processes of normation gain a hold on the body; it is through the soul that the norm as Norm, can be established. Which is to say, it is the soul as a new object and subject of politico-economic strategy through which a broad range of technologies can operate a system of perpetual penalty which over time carves out the ‘naturalness’ of the human body. By means of the techniques of normalization (hierarchical observation, normalizing judgement and the examination) a multiplicity of truths are extracted from the body in which it ceases to be a solid mass or an object of speculative mechanics but rather a natural body with a history of failures, successes, slippages, crises (DP 155). The disciplinary regime of truth is characterized by the discovery of this living fire within the body: a fire which makes possible the norm as both a singular truth-effect and an instrument in the production of power-knowledge centred on the natural body. An anatomo-politics of the body was born.

This brings up a particular point which must be addressed. In “Nietzsche, Genealogy, History” Foucault defines the event as a reversal of a power relation: “An event,

consequently, is not a decision, a treaty, a reign, or a battle, but the reversal of a relationship of forces, the usurpation of power, the appropriation of a vocabulary turned against those who had once used it, a domination that grows feeble, poisons itself, grows slack, the entry of a masked ‘other’” (NGH 361). Perhaps then it is possible to designate an event in the history of the disciplines that is its “most acute manifestation” (NGH 361). Foucault himself argues that the primary event of the disciplines was the inversion of the relations of domination that were prevalent in the sovereign *dispositif* where individualization ascended the social strata reaching the summit of sovereignty:

In a disciplinary regime, on the other hand, individualization is ‘descending’: as power becomes more anonymous and more functional, those on whom it is exercised tend to be more strongly individualized; it is exercised by surveillance rather than ceremonies, by observation rather than commemorative accounts, by comparative measures that have the ‘norm’ as reference rather than genealogies giving ancestors as points of reference; by ‘gaps’ rather than by deeds. (DP 193)

There is no doubt that this constituted an unprecedented usurpation of power, and the history of this event has been presented to us in the genealogy of power relations constitutive of the disciplines. However there may be another event, hiding itself at the core of the disciplines, underneath the permanent visibility of the *normalized body*. We have even been describing it all along: the event by which the body, hooked up to a vast network of machines and prescriptions, was given life for a brief instant and, opening its burning eyes for the first time, struck an expansive constellation of observers with a lightning flash of fear, hostility and perhaps even hatred. “I had worked for nearly two years, for the sole purpose of infusing life into an inanimate body. ...but now that I had finished, the beauty of the dream vanished, and breathless horror and disgust filled my heart” (Shelley 42). The sun of a great ideal had blinded Dr. Frankenstein and finally, as

his monster awoke and he stared into its “dull yellow eyes”, he saw not merely what he had created but the very horror of shattered idealisms. “When those muscles and joints were rendered capable of motion, it became a thing such as even Dante could not have conceived” (Shelley 43). The event that seems to characterize the disciplinary *dispositif* more than anything is the discovery that the human body lives: it has its own internal constraints, its own orders, its own chaotic multiplicity. Foucault seems to agree on this point when he writes that, “The historical moment of the disciplines was the moment when an art of the human body was born, which was directed not only at the growth of its skills, nor at the intensification of its subjection, but at the formation of a relation that in the mechanism itself makes it more obedient as it becomes more useful and conversely” (DP 138). Normation in this sense is precisely the process of codification by which this body was discovered in the naturalness of its mobile, flexible, manipulable forces because they were bound up in machinic shackles and put to work. The life forces of the body were integrated into a general economy of power, accumulated into a reserve of normality by means of a proliferation of techniques and reinvested into the fields of knowledge differentiated by this same process. This vision of excess is nothing but the singular rupture of object formation in a discourse which made possible the development of a restricted economy in which this object could be invested with a technological apparatus for its coercion and utility. This indeed seems to be the characteristic event of the disciplines: the usurpation of the fires burning in the natural body for a strategy deployed to mask it and the deployment of a tactical normalization to put it to work in the idealism of the Norm. One may go so far as to assert that this event exceeds that of the overturning of the summit of sovereignty, insofar as it is this event which provided the disciplines with forces adequate to the insurrection.

4.3 Normation as Penitential Enclosure

The problem now is to provide an adequate definition of the Norm insofar as it gains its contours in the interplay between planes of differentiation and techniques of power, that is, at the interstices of power-knowledge. Foucault identifies three techniques which produce normalizing effects on the body: hierarchical observation, or, continuous surveillance; normalizing judgement; and the examination in which the latter two were combined and sustained by a field of documentation. These techniques operate a complex process of individualization through a perpetual penalty in which the body of each individual appears in a multiplicity of molecular details, distributions, classifications, comparisons, ranks and orderings that operate around a seemingly pre-formed norm (DP 192). It is through the perpetual penalty of the disciplines that the planes of differentiation and their techniques are put to work on the individual so that the naturalness of the body emerges as one object among (and with) others that are made intelligible:

It refers individual actions to a whole that is at once a field of comparison, a space of differentiation and the principle of a rule to be followed. It differentiates individuals from one another, in terms of the following overall rule: that the rule be made to function as a minimal threshold, as an average to be respected or as an optimum towards which one must move. It measures in quantitative terms and hierarchizes in terms of value the abilities, the level, the *'nature'* of individuals. It introduces, through this 'value-giving' measure, the constraint of a conformity that must be achieved. Lastly, it traces the limit that will define difference in relation to all other differences, the external frontier of the abnormal. ...In short, it normalizes. (DP 183)

In what will follow the specificity of the plays of decodification and recodification of the individual body will be explained with reference to the operationalization of the Norm in perpetual penalty.

When discussing the specificity of disciplinary normalization in *Security, Territory, Population*, Foucault goes so far as to say that discipline develops a model of the normality to which each individual must conform; an empty, formal space which must be filled:

Disciplinary normalization consists first of all in positing a model, an optimal model that is constructed in terms of a certain result, and the operation of disciplinary normalization consists in trying to get people, movements, and actions to conform to this model, the normal being precisely that which can conform to this norm, and the abnormal that which is incapable of conforming to the norm. ...That is, there is an originally prescriptive character of the norm and the determination and the identification of the normal and the abnormal *becomes possible in relation to this posited norm.* (STP 57)

This norm however, which is prescribed and to which all must aspire to but will inevitably fail to achieve, is actually an effect of the disciplinary regime of power. Even more than this, it is a truth-effect: the truth of the individual emerges into visibility in the moment that the slightest deviation from the norm is observed. The very idea of correcting behaviour operates on the basis of a norm which is itself an effect of the failure to achieve it: “It was a question both of making the slightest departures from correct behaviour subject to punishment, and of giving a punitive function to the apparently indifferent elements of the disciplinary apparatus” (DP 178). This includes the ‘intentional’ deviation which is a concern for the analysis of the soul, but also the incapability of the body as a genetic, organic, cellular, combination of forces, to achieve it. Hence around a perpetual failure and a perpetually corrective penalty, the planes of differentiation begin to carve out the natural body as an intelligible object with its own domain of knowledge. The minutiae of gestures, actions, movements, of the body, even including the metabolism and digestion, became visible in the truth of the individual: “Through this micro-economy of a perpetual penalty *operates a differentiation* that is not one of acts, but of the individuals themselves,

of their nature, their potentialities, their value. By assessing acts with precision, discipline judges individuals ‘*in truth*’; the penalty that it implements is integrated into the cycle of knowledge of individuals” (DP 181, my emphasis). The truth of each individual, of their particular individuation, emerges as a result of a very particular play of difference in the disciplinary regime.

These techniques open up the body to its truth, only insofar as it *cannot* achieve the norm. This is not to say that the norm could not be achieved as one end-point in a ranking system or graduated hierarchy, but that the norm has an ‘otherworldly’ structure. That is, the abnormal and normal signify the emergence of the natural body as a milieu of possible intervention, of training, of correction, of failure in relation to a norm that is, in a nuanced respect, imposed from the outside. In the disciplines, procedures of normalization are arranged around an ideal, empty form which operates in the soul organizing the body towards a unified outside. Foucault speaks of the prison’s failure to correct its inmates in precisely this manner, since what it produces, as the architectural expression of the norm, is not an actual normal individuality but an abnormal, delinquent individuality: “If this is the case, the prison, apparently ‘failing’, does not miss its target; on the contrary, it reaches it, in so far as it gives rise to one particular form of illegality in the midst of others, which it is able to isolate, to place in full light and to organize as a relatively enclosed by penetrable milieu” (DP 276). Though they are ‘outside the law’ the disciplines signify the multiplication and molecularization of a sovereignty which is made invisible so that the body can live on the scaffold without being put to death: endlessly incapable of achieving the sovereign norm, it thereby appears in its ‘truth’ as the abnormal – but fully contained and useful – body.

It is in this way that one can understand why Foucault decides to alter the name given to the process of normalization in the disciplinary regime. For although this process offers up the dynamism of the 'natural body' of the individual as an object of knowledge, the process of normalization, which is tactical in nature, is rather the attempt to mold the reality and truth of the body to an ideal, albeit 'natural', form. Foucault gives this process the name normation because in the relation of the 'normal' to the 'norm' it is not the 'normal' individual that defines the norm, rather it is the norm that defines the normal. "That is," he writes in *Security, Territory, Population*, "there is an originally prescriptive character of the norm and the determination and the identification of the normal and the abnormal becomes possible in relation to this posited norm" (STP 57). The planes of differentiation define the differential normality of the body in its living vitality, but the norm is extracted from a distribution of these differences and deployed against this vitality to achieve an ideal, tactically useful body.

This decodifying-recodifying process, encompassed under the name normation, is what carves out the natural body of the individual and makes it politically and economically useful. With normalization the living body can be integrated into a division of labour, a police or military force, because it can be known in its precise details. Health, productivity, safety, begin to arrange a political strategy called the anatomo-politics, on the basis of an immanent Norm that is produced and imposed through diverse mechanisms that segment reality into its molecular details and thereby build up a normal reality.

5. Police: Sovereignty and Tactical Normation

One of the key features of Foucault's analysis in *Security, Territory, Population* is that the genealogy no longer concerns the individual body, but that of the state. The genealogy begun there attempted to make intelligible a historically localized regime of truth which Foucault calls an 'art of governing' insofar as this makes possible the state as a "regulatory idea" (STP 286) in political strategy. This is not to say that he left the disciplinary *dispositif* behind, but that it was taken up from a different vantage point: police in the sixteenth and seventeenth century. In the following, we will examine the specific function that police is given in the art of government called *raison d'État* in order to situate the disciplinary *dispositif* as a set of techniques and mechanisms that functioned within this regime of truth. Of course historically the disciplines outlived this regime, but their technological constitution was tightly bound up with it, submitting them to a significant crisis in the mid-eighteenth century. By doing so it will be possible to schematically designate the coordinates of a political strategy that would come to characterise the biopolitical modernity into which we have been thrown.

As Foucault explains, the concept of 'police' in the seventeenth century consisted of a very specific set of functions and objectives within what he calls *raison d'État*. In a word, *raison d'État* was a theory of governing well, an 'art of government', which situated the power of sovereignty in a domain of knowledge that constituted the "essence" of the state. It was through this general domain of knowledge that specific localized knowledges could be carved out and deployed as mechanisms and instruments for the 'self-preservation' of the state (STP 257). It was therefore a practice by means of which the sovereign could govern in such a way as to avoid the always imminent social upheaval that was referred to

as *coup d'État*. Formally, the *coup d'État* is similar to what Carl Schmitt describes in his work *Political Theology*, when he writes that, “What characterizes an exception is principally unlimited authority, which means the suspension of the entire existing order. In such a situation it is clear that the state remains, whereas law recedes” (Schmitt 12). However where Schmitt makes the argument, taking from the baroque theorists of sovereignty, that the decision on the state of exception is the fundamental locale of sovereignty, Foucault argues that sovereignty is constituted by a regime of truth within which it gains the possibility of its *own existence and that of the decision*. The decision and the exception are set aside: they are remnants of a juridico-theological theory of sovereignty that required a self-constituting ground. This is radically different from the practises, techniques and the discursive rarity of statements that make up a regime of truth. Thus Foucault argues that, “in the first place,” the *coup d'État* in the seventeenth century, “is a suspension of, a temporary departure from, laws and legality. The *coup d'État* goes beyond ordinary law” (STP 261). And going beyond law, it is an extraordinary act against the normal legal structure, but it is nonetheless no more than an act: “is it an exception with regard to *raison d'État*? Absolutely not, because, and I think this is an essential point to note, *raison d'État* and a system of legality or legitimacy are not in any way homogenous” (STP 261). *Raison d'État* is always already outside the law, and its switch into the volcanic manifestation of *coup d'État* has nothing to do with a legal exception, but rather the “state’s salvation” as nothing more nor less than a state: “In any case, *raison d'État* is fundamental with regard to these laws, but it makes use of them in its usual functioning precisely because it deems them necessary or *useful*. However, there will be times when *raison d'État* can longer make use of these laws and due to a pressing and urgent event must of necessity free itself of them” (STP 262, my emphasis). The law is merely an instrument

for *raison d'État*, and neither is constitutive of the one or the other: thus their heterogeneity.³¹ The talk of salvation does not involve eschatology however: “The end of *raison d'État* is the state itself, and if there is something like perfection, happiness, or felicity, it will only ever be the perfection, happiness, or felicity of the state itself” (STP 258). In the end *raison d'État*, in its fundamental contiguity with *coup d'État*, is a field of knowledges and practises always already outside the law, in which the state weaves its own internal constitution that assures nothing but its own existence, its own truth.³²

This seeming digression is fundamental to what we are about to say about police, since police in this context is, as we shall see, radically different from the police forces that are deployed in our contemporary liberal nation-state. First of all, police in the seventeenth century is not immediately concerned with law, but with the techniques that conducted the proper circulation of subjects within a territory. Law was merely one technique among others that included the health, security, wealth, employment, commerce, production,

³¹ The study of the *raison d'État* constitutes a significant shift in Foucault's work whereby sovereignty is separated from its traditional position as the founding principle of the law. This is illustrated in the contrast between the disciplines and sovereignty in *Society Must be Defended*: “I think that the process that has made possible the discourses of the human sciences is the juxtaposition of, the confrontation between, two mechanisms and two types of discourse that are absolutely heterogeneous: on the one hand, the organization of right around sovereignty, and on the other the mechanics of the coercions exercised by the disciplines” (SMD 38). Sovereignty as such ceases to be an issue for Foucault and instead he becomes concerned with the reasoning that makes possible the governing of a territory and which provides the constitutive forces of a state – for sovereignty.

³² It is interesting to note that in this context, where Foucault is quite explicitly in dialogue with Carl Schmitt, although without actually citing him, he refers to the development of a new kind of tragedy during this period. Although he does not cite him, Walter Benjamin comes immediately to mind, since it was in his extremely important work, *The Origin of German Tragic Drama*, where he critiques Schmitt's modernization of the baroque theory of sovereignty by examining the development of the baroque mourning play. Within that work, see especially pages 57 to 100 in which he produces a kind of political anthropology of the baroque mourning play as a way to situate it in its specific historical circumstances. In a particularly Benjaminian moment Foucault explains: “In the seventeenth century, at the end of the wars of religion – ... – a new historical perspective opens up of indefinite governmentality and the permanence of states that will have neither final aim nor term, a discontinuous set of states appears doomed to a history without hope since it has no term...” And further on: “State, *raison d'État*, necessity, and risky *coups d'État* will form the new tragic horizon of politics and history” (STP 266).

resources, etcetera, which organized these circulations into a complex fabric of interactivity. The successful weaving of this socio-economic fabric was recognized in the ‘splendor’ of the state (STP 314). As Foucault explains, “Police must ensure the state’s splendor” (STP 313), where splendor refers to, “Both the visible beauty of the order and the brilliant, radiating manifestation of a force” (STP 314). The growth of the constitutive forces of the state therefore became possible when the whole sphere of social life came to constitute a domain of power-knowledge (STP 326). In this way the utility of policing would be discovered in the possibility of improving the lives of subjects: the happiness of the populace was nothing more than a tactical assemblage of forces that constituted the power of sovereignty³³ (STP 326-27). Police was inserted at the level of circulation characteristic of the developing urbanism in such a way that this happiness, this “felicity”, this surplus energy, was regulated, channelled, conducted, coerced and in the end “converted into forces of the state” (STP 327). As Foucault explains,

with police there is a circle that starts from the state as a power of rational and calculated intervention on individuals and comes back to the state as a growing set of forces, or forces to be developed, passing through the life of individuals, which will now be precious to the state simply as life. ...That is to say, this circle, with all that this implies, means that police must succeed in linking together the state’s strength and individual felicity. This felicity, as the individual’s better than just living, must in some way be drawn on and constituted into state utility: making men’s happiness the state’s utility, making men’s happiness the very strength of the state. (STP 327)

³³ This is the way in which police serves to produce what can be called class divisions. When the felicity of “more than just living” is fed into the constitutive forces of the state, populations in higher socio-economic or politically advantageous positions constitute a greater degree of forces for the state. Their prosperity is thus the prosperity of the state, their health is thus the health of the state because they contribute more to the order and security of the state. A structure of subjugation and domination unfolds within the social field by means of the policing of happiness.

The state, in short, is only possible on the basis of a set of practices and technical knowledges that collect information about individuals in their every detail and which seeks to regulate these details by channelling their circulations in a manner that is tactically useful for the state. Police operates at the ‘state’ level to break down multiplicities into individualities and then reassembles their forces into functional mechanisms that are constitutive of the state.

We are thus prepared to make a first advance toward one of the distinctions that we are concerned with. Police operates at the interstices of a *dispositif* of sovereignty and of discipline. On the one hand, because its primary strategic objective is to arrange tactical assemblages of forces to constitute and increase the forces of the state, it appears as the extension of sovereignty into the social field. “In other words,” says Foucault, “police is the direct governmentality of the sovereign qua sovereign. Or again, let’s say that police is the permanent *coup d’État*” (STP 339). It is the set of political technologies by which *raison d’État* intervenes on the subjects over which it rules, constituting itself “in terms of the principles of its own rationality, without having to mold or model itself on the otherwise given rules of justice” (STP 339). On the other hand, police as a technique in the art of government for sovereignty, operates on the basis the disciplines, while at the same time governing their space of acceptability and encouraging them into a dominant position. In the end this will mean a transformation of the processes of individualization in the redistribution of power-knowledge throughout society in a regime of perpetual penalty. For the present analysis this transformation is somewhat inconsequential – at least from the perspective of the sovereign excess of power manifested on the scaffold. What is pertinent however is that police functions thus within the regime of normation that we have already described, and operates this disciplinary regime for the benefit of sovereignty. It is thus

concerned with conducting, regulating, limiting and dominating every activity, every relationship, every movement in the daily lives of human beings. This is not to say that police is biopolitical in the sense that will be argued for here: the birth of biopolitics constitutes an expropriation of certain technical instruments and their redeployment of their concomitant force relations that existed up to that time. The distinction that can be reiterated here is that police imposes *restrictions* on the living: it imposes the norm and all of its disciplinary techniques on the multitude to individuate, control, and make them *useful*. Only by being deployed within a disciplinary regime of power-knowledge can police arrange and constitute the forces of the state, since those very forces are accessible only in the normal as a codification of the differential element constitutive of all human activity. “The objective of police is therefore control of and responsibility for men’s activity insofar as this activity constitutes a *differential element* in the development of the state’s forces” (STP 322, my emphasis). So, police functions as the direct intervention of the sovereign, outside of law, by gaining access to the activity of individuals through disciplinary technologies of power. It is only by means of the discovery of the ‘natural’ body as a composition of forces which can be broken down and reconstituted through the normation of activity, that police was able to recompose these forces into hierarchical formations, relay networks and tactical compositions for the splendor of state sovereignty.

The police had at its disposal a number of instruments and mechanisms by which it extracted knowledge and conditioned the circulation of multiplicities. Foucault offers us several examples, one of which is statistics: “Thus a principle is needed for deciphering a state’s constitutive forces. For each state, one’s own and the others, one needs to know the population, the army, the natural resources, the production, the commerce, and the monetary circulation – all the elements that are in fact provided by the science or domain of

knowledge, statistics, which is founded and developed at this time” (STP 315). Statistics first makes possible a field of knowledge that extends beyond the traditional domains of territorial sovereignty, towards problems of health, environment and international economic-political balances. Knowledge of the forces of other states could be compared with domestic ones – which was always the primary object (STP 315). Indeed in its early development the objective of statistics was first of all, as its etymology suggests, the collection of data for the state: “Statistics is the state’s knowledge of the state, understood as the state’s knowledge both of itself and also of other states” (STP 315). In this way the early statistics of the seventeenth century, were simultaneously expansive and restrictive: thought was opened up to all of the elements that affect the multitudes but which cannot be controlled by legal mechanisms; while at the same time, the knowledge accumulated was invested in a centripetal system of power which always circled back to the welfare and power of the state. The *raison d’État* as the art of government specific to the seventeenth century, deployed the police as a political technology which aimed to secure this centripetal circulation for the composition of the constitutive forces of the state: health, wealth, commercial circulation, discontent, natural disasters, etcetera, that is, the objects opened up by the domain of statistics (STP 315). Statistics carved up the reality of the state; made legible its virtualities such as sedition, riot, scarcity and mass disease; opened its urban nooks and crannies to light; cleared out the urban ‘miasmas’ and dispersed pathogenic factors; finally, it organized a whole new state topography for logistical and tactical mapping.

At the intersection of police and statistics a new field of objects was constituted. The relations established between objects on this field would eventually prove to illustrate the limitations of the centripetal power constitutive of disciplinary normation at the level of

state governmentality. These objects all centered around the developing phenomena of urbanization. First of all, there was the *population* understood on a purely quantitative basis as the inhabitants of a territory. The importance of this object was that it was thought that the greater number of inhabitants meant greater accumulation of wealth and military strength, insofar as this increase was correlated with the coordination of their forces (STP 323). Second, a greater number of individuals implied the expansion of agricultural policy, in which the police of *grain* was essential for ensuring the subsistence of life (STP 324). Third, an influx of subjects into urban centres necessitated a concern for *health* which would come to guide the principles of a medical police (STP 324-25). Fourth, a focus on the growth of forces required the limitation of idleness therefore making *professions* an object of police regulation (STP 325). Finally *circulation* itself, which effectively encompassed the latter objects, and had its own problems for political and economic stability: “But by ‘circulation’ we should understand not only this material network that allows the circulation of goods and possibly of men, but also the circulation itself, that is to say, the set of regulations, constraints, and limits, or the facilities and encouragements that will allow the circulation of men and things in the kingdom and possibly beyond its borders” (STP 325).

So, we can establish that the problem of police was primarily a problem of circulations in one form or another: of their regulation, limitation, encouragement, coercion, in short, the disciplinarization of circulation (STP 340). Moreover circulation was understood in the context of the town as the nexus of a series of problems concerned with political and economic instabilities that manifested the ‘nature’ of these circulations. This naturalness of the living subjects, was made to function in a multiplicity of ways that prevented possible manifestations of scarcity, of mass disease, of political upheaval. In short, the life of the

state was always in question in the art of government of *raison d'État* and this life, this artificial nature, was precisely the site of its own rational constitution (STP 349). Focussed on the prevention of its own death and the death of its inhabitants, *raison d'État* arranged its governmentality around a limit that was itself a virtuality. In a manner that seems to contradict Foucault's early formulation of the specificity of biopolitics, *raison d'État*, like the disciplines, seems to situate death at the limit of its power: "death is power's limit, the moment that escapes it; death becomes the most secret aspect of existence, the most private" (HS 138). This is to be considered however, only at the level of the circulations of masses and not in terms of spectacular function of death in punishment that existed into the latter half eighteenth century (DP 48-50). In what will follow, we will examine a transformation at the level of governmentality whereby death will no longer be the limit of power, but will be the very condition for power's exercise.³⁴ This integration of death will be the very condition of a new kind of normalization which attempts to reduce the whole element of lived reality to a numerical plane on which it can be represented. This event will be situated within the problem of scarcity and the problem of epidemic in which an 'element of reality' will first become visible within mechanisms of power. The integration of death into the circulation and flux of life will inaugurate a new *dispositif*, a new arrangement of power-knowledge, which will function around a new object: the 'naturalness' specific to the population.

³⁴ In Catherine Mill's article "Biopolitics, Liberal Eugenics and Nihilism", she comments on the relation between death and biopolitics in the first volume of *The History of Sexuality*. It is interesting to note that she offers this explanation as a correction, without taking account of the fact that Foucault corrects himself on this point throughout *Security, Territory, Population*. This is especially pertinent given the fact that her article is primarily concerned with the problem of normalization in Foucault's work. See endnote 22 in that text.

6. Biopolitics of the Population

With this in mind, we will turn our attention to the emergence of the ‘naturalness’ of the population as an object of power-knowledge, and the primary object of what Foucault has called biopolitics. This means examining the *dispositif* of security as the strategic deployment of technologies of power. The constant interaction between the security and the available fields of knowledge, especially within the *raison d’État*, carved out a new field of knowledge with a process of normalization specific to it (STP 79). In order to explain the discursive formation of the population-object, we will take the route that was laid down above when we looked at the disciplines. This means looking at the regime of truth in which certain techniques of power bring together a set of relations that makes possible the formation of an object of knowledge as a singularity and a new field of reality. Once again this does not mean identifying causal relations or structures, but rather isolating the truth-effects that engender singular relations between the planes of differentiation and the networks of power which operate them to make specific forms of individuation possible during specific historical periods (WIC 277). This method is concerned with the manner in which certain objects become intelligible, acceptable and therefore operational in a strategic configuration that deploys them to achieve tactical objectives. Thus he asks the question around which the following analysis will turn:

How can the indivisibility of knowledge and power in the context of interactions and multiple strategies induce both singularities, fixed according to their conditions of acceptability, and a field of possibilities, or openings, indecisions, reversals and possible dislocations which make them fragile, temporary, and which turn these effects into events, nothing more, nothing less than events? (WIC 278)

Now it will be immediately noticed, as it undoubtedly was with our examination of the ‘natural’ body, that the attempt to write a history of this sort seems so expansive that it would touch on the impossible. Hence the reason that Foucault always clarifies the schematism and generality of his histories, and why for the purpose of this chapter there has been such a consistent focus on the specific objects being described. This allows us to focus in on a very specific element in Foucault’s work around which a new interpretation can be done. Generally speaking then, we have been looking at the ‘natural’ body of the individual and the ‘natural’ body of the population in order to make a clear demarcation between the two and attempt to define the operational context of biopolitics in its distinction from anatomo-politics. In the following I will aim to elucidate the general field of intelligibility which, through “a constant interplay between techniques of power and their object gradually carved out in reality, as a field of reality, population and its specific phenomena” (STP 79).

In *Security, Territory, Population*, Foucault argues that the relation of police to the scarcity-scourge and the epidemic constituted one of the main problems out of which biopolitics emerged. With the technique of free circulation of grain, encompassed under the name *laissez-faire*, and the techniques of inoculation, both scarcity and the epidemic were reduced from socio-political catastrophes to permanent underlying modalities of organization. These constituted serious breaks with the technique of police because they did not impose limits to circulation with a royal ‘No’, but developed technologies that could say ‘Yes’ and affirm that circulations must operate in their own elements: the element of inevitability, of givenness, of excess, that is, what Foucault refers to as the ‘element of reality’. Although these techniques remained marginal in terms of practice, even into the nineteenth century, they made possible a specific set of power relations

within an existent field of objects which would eventually come to constitute an entire politics of truth for reflection on governmental practice. The notion of a natural population, whose intelligibility was conditioned by the *dispositif* of power called security, was one of these spaces in which truth emerged in an autonomous manner, heterogeneous to governmental techniques. The question is: how did the element of reality, that is, the ‘naturalness’ of the population, emerge as an object of power-knowledge and effect a fundamental transformation of the positive conditions of truth formation in the field of reality which it opened to intelligibility?

6.2 Force of Multiplicity, Populations of Forces

Taking this as our starting point, we will turn toward the planes of differentiation for discursive objects. Now, as we showed in the examination of the planes and their relations to techniques of power in the disciplinary *dispositif*, normation was a codification of the natural forces of the human body effected by and effecting, the soul. Thus the surfaces of emergence are precisely those surfaces on which a dispersion of elements makes possible the appearance of specific objects as singularities. For security Foucault identifies three: the continuous variability of material elements at play in a multiplicity; the free play of the desires of a multiplicity of individuals; and the consistency or repetition of phenomena designated as aleatory (STP 74). These were made possible by a set of instruments encompassed under the broad category of statistics. As we noted above, statistics was one of the main instruments that carved out for police a field of knowledge that made it possible to conduct circulations and compose the forces of variable individualities into tactics that served to constitute the power of the state. Thus within the genealogy of the state, the disciplines could be resituated within a system of police that attempted to

decompose and recompose a multiplicity as a collection of conductible individualities. The arrangement of the *dispositif* of disciplinary power was, in short, blocked up by an epistemic limit on thinking – here, a problem of only thinking circulation in terms of the limits of an enclosed space. For example the police of grain, into which mercantilism and cameralism could be situated, functioned within the specificity of an art of government arranged around and made possible by the regime of truth established by *raison d'État* (STP 102). Within this art of government, economy was understood as a system aimed at the increase of wealth in the sovereign territory. This was thought to require regulations on the production, circulation and exchange of grain on the national market. But this often gave rise to scarcity on a massive scale because with prices kept low enough for everyone to buy grain, the surplus grain on the market meant the peasants couldn't break even, and in the following season, even with a minimal profit, there was a chance that the limited amount of grain sown could fail due to climatic irregularities or other aleatory circumstances (STP 33). Such events frequently escalated into violent revolts against the local government: “So, the politics of the lowest possible price exposes one to the risk of shortages at every moment, and so to precisely the scourge it sought to avoid” (STP 33). Statistics were being used to develop these “anti-scarcity” economic policies, but the way in which the variables were made intelligible for policy makers centred on the territorial sovereign. Thus a whole range of variables became the focus of police intervention for the benefit of a sovereign who governs “men in their relationships, bonds and complex involvements with things like wealth, resources, means of subsistence, and of course, the territory with its borders qualities, climate, dryness, fertility, and so on” (STP 96). Even more than this, statistics made available knowledge that included things such as customs, ways of acting and thinking, and especially with “men in their relationships with things

like accidents, misfortunes, famine, epidemics, and death” (STP 96). A whole new set of correlations began to appear with the “science of the state” (STP 101) in which these techniques, over the course of their deployment in police, began to carve a field of knowledge of ‘men and things’ that opened up to an unaccounted for excess. This is to say, the objects on which, towards which and through which the police operate their techniques begin to manifest their own excess; their own speeds and slownesses, degrees of intensity; their own autonomous reality. The apparatus of police engendered the escape of precisely that which it was attempting to capture through preventative techniques: not the least of which was undoubtedly the catastrophic eruption of mass morbidity and death.

Thus an inversion was effected: the strength, wealth, resources that were arranged to constitute the forces of the state, constituted its opposite. Wealth was squandered; strength was wasted; natural resources were lost. Mass epidemic slaughtered populations; scarcity motivated starving populations to revolt and riot; huge sums of money and resources slipped away through imprecise calculations on the basis of a range of unaccounted for external variables. For Bataille this would prove his thesis of general economy in which: “A surplus must be dissipated through deficit operations: the final dissipation cannot fail to carry out the movement that animates terrestrial energy” (Bataille 22). In no way are we attempting to prove that a cosmic movement is here shown to be grounded in material and historical relations. But the perspective introduced is crucial: for it is precisely this excess of contingent, luxurious factors in constant variability and ever proliferating difference that is opened up as a new field of knowledge by means of statistical technology in the *dispositif* of security. Security makes excess visible as an economic reality *for* governmental interventions. It is in this way that statistics makes possible police: it operates a whole field of objects on the basis of their inherent excess with respect to the

strategy of police. And, through a continual interaction between the techniques and their objects, statistics makes possible a reversal of perspective in which a surplus that opens onto a new field of objects will become intelligible and have profound effects in the domain of police. The constitution of this new domain of knowledge is the event by which power gained a hold on precisely that which it could not capture, by inverting its relations of normativity so that the excess is submitted to, rather than *imprisoned*.

This is why it is important to explain the *dispositif* of security: this *dispositif* is an arrangement of techniques and instruments through which power can become operative on the basis of specific tactics and an overall strategy of normalization. It is concerned with the capture of a field of forces that can be put to work. The capture of these forces in security will modify the way that objects of knowledge can emerge as realities of their own – distinct from the disciplinary. In the eighteenth century, the *dispositif* of security will first become possible on the basis of a set of relations taken from the regime of truth constituted in part by the *raison d'État*.

It may seem as though we have strayed far from our starting point which dictated that we look at the planes of differentiation which constituted the object of power-knowledge which concerns us, namely, the naturalness of the population. But this is not the case. For when Foucault cites three possible surfaces on which this naturalness first appears, he has the aforementioned transformation in mind. The continuous variability of a multiplicity, our first surface of emergence, already appeared in police, but it appeared as a proliferation of difference that needed to be contained. The art of government within which it appeared was organized around the prevention of phenomena perceived as threats to the health of the state (STP 68-69). It was a threat that encroached from outside the territoriality of obedient subjects.

With the deployment of statistics, power relations became centrifugal rather than centripetal. The interactions between individuals and the milieu of their existence could therefore be made visible and intelligible: correlations emerged as objects of knowledge invested with power. The unpredictability inherent in the continuously variable interactions could thus be enveloped by discursive modalities that established series of objects, their circulations and the events which they seemed to engender. “An indefinite series of mobile elements,” Foucault explains, which could thereby quantify, “circulation, χ number of carts, χ number of passers-by, χ number of thieves, χ number of miasmas, and so on. An indefinite series of events that will occur: so many boats will berth, so many carts will arrive, and so on. And equally an indefinite number of series of accumulating units: how many inhabitants, how many houses, and so on” (STP 20). The variability in which security will begin to take hold with the statistical series, makes intelligible a proliferation of difference on the ‘inside’ insofar as there is no more outside. Which is to say, the security *dispositif* grafts itself onto a field of exteriority on which seemingly fortuitous relations can be established in the element of their immanent variability.

When Louis-Paul Abeille, whom Foucault takes to be representative of “a pivotal position in the economic thought of that time” (STP 35), that is, of the physiocrats and *économistes* during the mid to late-eighteenth century, therefore asserts that scarcity is a ‘chimera’, he is asserting that there is no external threat imposing itself on the economy. The economy has no interiority: it should be understood instead as a field of exteriority – its excess being thus integrated into its activity – on which certain very real material and discursive relations come into play in a multiplicity that manifest specific effects at a higher level. He identifies this envelopment of multiplicity as the population. Abeille argues that the subsistence of a given population is not actually threatened by scarcity for,

if that were the case, “the population would quite simply die” (STP 38). The actual subsistence of a population is a matter of the reality or, “history of grain from the moment it is put in the ground, with what this implies in terms of work, time passed, and fields sown – of cost, consequently” (STP 36). Rather than a fundamental lack causing mass starvation, reality in fact lacks nothing; artifice imposed a lack to begin with. The land, climate, modes of production, forms of domination, and economic relations of exchange, circulation and accumulation all factor into this reality in perpetual interaction with itself (STP 21). The population, in its original conceptualization in terms of the increase of state strength or alternatively as a response to effects of desertification (STP 67), begins to transform into a “datum that depends on a series of variables” (STP 71), whose ever-proliferating differences slowly become a surface on which its specific individuality could be carved out. It is there that the relations between scarcity and abundance, dearness and cheapness, appear in the flux of reality as *natural* phenomena (STP 37). Thus variability carves out its own limits in terms of mobility, of means of subsistence, and of the forms of conduct and counter-conduct prevalent at a given moment in time. The *dispositif* of security works within this field of knowledge by grafting its techniques not to the limit, but to the fluctuations that give rise to these limits. At these interstices of power-knowledge, the surface of variability itself was made visible. It invests the differential forces of this variability with power relations that do not aim to control its effects, but to follow the course of their trajectories, their degrees of intensity, their speeds and slowness, in short, the flux of multiplicity. On Abeille’s work in which only the vaguest contours of this surface begin to appear, and still within the art of government called *raison d’État*, Foucault writes:

Abeille, the physiocrats, and the economic theorists of the eighteenth century, tried to arrive at a *dispositif* for arranging things so that, by connecting up with the very reality of these fluctuations, and by establishing a series of connections with other elements of reality, the phenomenon is gradually cancelled out, without it being prevented or losing any of its reality. (STP 37)

This brings us to the second surface of emergence which Foucault identifies as the free play of desire.³⁵ In his later lectures on neo-liberal governmentality, he will describe the freedom of consumption (and of course, consumption as production) as a technique that is deployed in liberalism to produce specific effects (BB 61). However techniques are not equivalent to surfaces of emergence which are epistemic plateaus on which techniques of power, as we have seen, operate certain effects in discourse. Beginning then with the technique, we can quote Foucault in *The Birth of Biopolitics*: “You can see that what characterizes this new art of government I have spoken about would be much more a naturalism than liberalism, inasmuch as the freedom that the Physiocrats and Adam Smith talk about is much more the spontaneity, the internal and intrinsic mechanics of processes than a juridical freedom of the individual recognized as such” (BB 61). What is given free play is simply the everyday activities of individuals in which certain flows of desire can be made visible for knowledge. The consumer freedom of a market based economy provides an element in which interest becomes visible. That is, as De Certeau has explained, consumption is a kind of production in which what is produced is not the products but the ‘ways of using’ and of interacting with the products and elements in a given economic system (De Certeau XIII). There is always a certain profit derived from consumption, and

³⁵ It is unclear why Foucault chooses the word desire in this circumstance since he seems to regard it more or less as the simple play of interests in individuals. There doesn’t seem to be any indication of a psychoanalytic or a Deleuzo-Guattarian influence here.

this profit governs the normal *rules* of interest based exchange. From the perspective of consumption, the multiplicity becomes a raw data set for statistics in which information on the circulations between individuals and their milieus can be collected and serialized in tables and distributions. There is no reliance on the atomistic and ideological ‘free liberal subject’, rather, even in the earliest developments of liberalism in the mid eighteenth century, the figure of the multiplicity and its particular ecology, is already present in the market as ‘nature’ (BB 63). So, “desire is the pursuit of the individual’s interest” (STP 73), and this interest is an effect and a technique that is produced by the consumption that characterizes everyday existence.

Now desire, as an expression of individual self interest, produces collective effects when it can be objectified. That is to say, desire only becomes a pertinent technique in governmentality when it can be given free play in a multiplicity of individuals. In this vein, Foucault asserts that, “this desire is such that, if one gives it free play, and *on condition that it is given free play*, all things considered, within a certain limit and thanks to a number of relationships and connections, it will produce the general interest of the population” (STP 73). Indeed, the very condition on which the *dispositif* of security can gain access to this element of free play is an affirmation of desire: “the problem is how they can say yes; it is how to say yes to this desire” (STP 73). And paradoxically, as with the whole strategic arrangement which we are describing, saying ‘yes’ makes it possible to bring this surplus into a whole complex set of power relations. Power no longer dictates the necessary; it no longer says no: it says yes and affirms that which it seeks to bring under its domain.

As a technique of the governmentality that liberalism would eventually engender, affirmation made it possible to capture a multiplicity of forces through the centrifugal

expansion of its knowledge. It resituated the state in an open space in which the containment of ‘too much government’ would dissolve the element around which government became possible. This constituent element was precisely the free play of desire as a surface of emergence. As a point of clarification for this surface, the later technique of liberal freedom is interesting: “Liberalism is not acceptance of freedom; it proposes to manufacture it constantly, to arouse it and produce it, with, of course, the system of constraints and the problems of cost raised by this production” (BB 65). The point is that this play of desire individuates the multiplicity not as a collection of individuals, but as a perpetual clash of forces and flux, of difference, which establishes a set of relations that no longer press up against a territorializing ‘no’, but proliferate and communicate in an autonomous and rational manner. It is an issue, once again, of a certain internal logic that operates a continuous variability in a multiplicity of individuals. A ‘natural’ element, whose flows could be mapped out by statistics, and thereby open up a space in which a *given* multiplicity can be shown to have its own objective reality.

The final surface of emergence which Foucault describes is the consistency of aleatory phenomena; the consistency of chance occurrences and accidents. This is again possible on the basis of statistical calculations: the development of the variable series and the distribution of these series over a period of time opens up a domain of naturalness to its own temporality. The future no longer bears down on individuals as fate or *fortuna*³⁶ (STP 31): at the collective level and over time, events can be spaced out in a regularity that, while not diminishing the individual experience, sets this experience into a larger

³⁶ For more on *fortuna* see: Michael Dillon, “Lethal Freedom: Divine Violence and the Machiavellian Moment”, *Theory and Event* 11 (2), 2008.

context of finitude. Graunt's 'political arithmetic' of mortality rates was crucial in this regard:

This was the great discovery of the Englishman Graunt at the end of the seventeenth century, who, precisely with reference to mortality tables, not only managed to establish that there was a constant number of deaths every year in a town, but also that there was a constant proportion of different accidents, however varied, that produce this death. The same proportion of people die from consumption, the same proportion from fevers, or from the kidney stone, gout, or jaundice. (STP 74)

Thus death, the natural element *par excellence*, always bearing down from an uncertain future, could be integrated into the very fabric of everyday life. It became recognized as a necessary component of vital existence, the function of growth and the mutability of life. Chance and accident no longer operated outside, but were transgressed and thereby integrated into a play of differentiation conditioned, as it were, by a "calculus of probabilities" (STP 59).

It is in this way that variolisation and vaccination are particularly interesting: without actually fitting into the medical reasoning at the time, they operated a dual integration of the aleatory into medical practice and the understanding of morbidity and death. The key insight that the statistical sciences provided for medicine was that the application of a small quantity of controlled infection actually provoked a cure for diseases on the individual and the collective level (STP 59). By inducing localized negative effects the catastrophic epidemic-event could be neutralized or, in the line with the security *dispositif*, normalized in order to alleviate the possibility of a crisis of contagion with its concomitant rates of mass mortality. Thus, "we have then a third surface of emergence for the naturalness of the population" (STP 74), in the consistency of the aleatory, which

individuates this naturalness in terms of a temporality that integrates the finitude of humankind into the fabric of its existence.

Now along with the dispersions effected on these surfaces there are two other planes of differentiation. The first that we will examine is the grids of specification. Naturalness gains its specificity in four notions that divide it up, making it analyzable and open to governmental intervention: the first, in which variables and populations of variables are individualized into *cases* and these cases are integrated into an open series which can be distributed across a smooth mathematical space to produce a curve; *risk*, in which various milieus could be determined on the basis of these curves, in relation to various individuals, behaviours, lifestyles, making visible of manifestations of contagion (taken in a broad sense) inherent in a multiplicity such as, for medicine, locales of disease, or for penalty, locales of theft, murder, etc.; *danger*, the third, differentiates the cases and their risk analysis in terms of degrees of intensity, of high or low risk populations and/or milieus; and finally, the *crisis* which designates a, “phenomena of sudden worsening, acceleration, and increase of the disease” (STP 61), that does not necessarily imply a concept of epidemic, but is based solely on a relative differential of speed and slowness in temporal phenomena (STP 60-61). These notions of crisis, danger, risk and case are deployed as instruments of security which make visible and rational the variable, yet consistent, internal logics specific to the phenomena of the population. They are techniques whose deployment in a multiplicity, make intelligible a differentiating grid consisting of: the relative spacing of phenomena; the relative affectivity of contagion in correlations between individuals, techniques and polyvalent spaces; the determination of zones with peculiar degrees of intensity of contagion; and speeds relative to these spaces, their affectivity and intensity. This grid of intelligibility is an epistemic effect, or rather, a singularity, that

breaks through an epistemological threshold and opens a field of knowledge. It is made possible by the work of statistical techniques operating at the level of multiplicity for the intelligibility of the multiplicity. Between this grid of differentiation and the techniques operative in it, the flux of a reality specific to the multiplicity is individuated. It shows itself to have a 'nature' that cannot be blocked up, contained or controlled, but which can be intervened upon by means of practices dictated by the 'nature' of the multiplicity itself.

The final plane of differentiation is perhaps the most crucial to our investigation insofar as on it, a radically different kind of normalization shows its effects. This plane is referred to in the *Archeology of Knowledge* as the plane of authorities of delimitation. Now as we saw with the disciplinary *dispositif*, the differentiations affected on this plane were conditioned by a certain regime of epistemological acceptability that was distributed between individuals, between institutions and individuals, and between individuals and themselves. In this way the positive conditions of truth operated in a dispersion of elements in a manner that was hierarchically distributed. In security the authorities of delimitation function according to a very different set of relations in which a measure of dispersion is established. This technique is what Foucault has called the 'bandwidth of acceptability' (STP 6). This bandwidth can only be established on the basis of a dispersion of cases through which a curve can be drawn. The bandwidth of acceptability designates the threshold of acceptable levels of deviancy from the normal curve, beyond which a dangerous or risk laden element could become a crisis. Thus the bandwidth of acceptability is a technique that operates a space of dispersion in which natural phenomena can be authorized as a field of objects for strategic differentiation and technical deployment within an epistemic positivity.

6.3 Normalization and the Emergence of the 'Natural' Body

As with the disciplinary body, the techniques that operate these planes of differentiation effect codifications on them which make it possible to capture and invest a field of force relations. By doing so, objects gain their contours as tactical compositions within a generalized strategy which induces effects in the positive conditions of object formation as singularities. In order to properly determine the event by which the population was endowed with a natural body that made it a pertinent object of political, economic and medical intervention, it is necessary to analyze the process of codification, that is, normalization.

Security first of all, aims to *secure* a variable normality in which the naturalness of the population will emerge into visibility. Following Foucault's indications, we can make this distinction clear by looking at the integration of procedures of inoculation in eighteenth century medicine, as a tactic of normalization. We have already pointed out that the primary problem of their technical integration into medical practice was that, "the success of variolisation and vaccination were unthinkable in the terms of medical rationality of this time" (STP 58). This may have been due in part to a misunderstanding of the "problem of the agent of their [the disease's] transmission" (BC 23), which is to say, contagion. However in terms of eighteenth century medical perception this was a non-issue since what was important was that the epidemic was situated in an expansive field of affective circumstances decipherable by the techniques of mathematical statistics. "It is a purely mathematical problem of the threshold: the sporadic disease is merely a submarginal epidemic" (BC 23). One of the great shifts of perception that took place in eighteenth century medicine was precisely this expansiveness of the open statistical series: "What

now constituted the unity of the medical gaze was not the circle of knowledge in which it was achieved but that open, infinite, moving totality, ceaselessly displaced and enriched by time, whose course it began but would never be able to stop – by this time a clinical recording of the infinite, variable series of events” (BC 29). Now in *The Birth of the Clinic*, Foucault aims to map out a transformation in medical perception that deployed this technique of the open, variable statistical series, and thereby resituated medicine at the collective level of “a history, a geography, a state” (BC 29), as a domain of intervention for police. Crucially, Foucault does not change his view on this point in *Security, Territory, Population*. What changes however is that medical perception itself is no longer the object of analysis: it is rather the way in which the security *dispositif* takes up this epistemological vantage point as a discursive field and deploys a set of techniques within it that transform the relations that constitute its objects. This is the same problem that Foucault examines with Abeille’s text on the chimerical scarcity-scurge: the intelligibility of the scarcity-event is conditional on the statistical quantification of a multiplicity as a multiplicity of differential forces (STP 36-37). What occurs therefore is a transformation at the level of power relations: inoculation cannot be rationalized within medical discourse, but it can be rationalized by the deployment of a technique that secures a field of differential forces as an objective element of reality. A rationalization made possible by a technique of normalization. This general framework was provided by statistics as a calculus of probabilities: a temporality of the open series, of continual transformation, of mathematically rationalizable event frequencies (STP 19, 59). This mathematical framework was an, “agent of their integration within the currently acceptable and accepted fields of rationality” (STP 59). Thus techniques from an extraneous domain of knowledge (along with the specificity of their relations to this knowledge as abstract formal

mathematics) were taken up and integrated into the field of medical practice, thereby setting in motion a subtle transformation in the way that power functioned within it. We can see moreover, that this mathematical reasoning provided medical practice in the eighteenth century with a set of techniques that made intelligible more than just the openness and variability of medical topographies, climatologies, networks of causal relations and connexion: it carved out an element of reality differentiated by a process of normalization in which a variable normality constituted its own flexible logic, its own differential element; an authority of delimitation immanent to variability itself (STP 63). This normalization was an event constitutive not only of a new arrangement of power, but also of a regime of truth in which the naturalness of the population became operational as a bandwidth of acceptability. Acceptability as judgement could thus be split in two: for practices concerning the intervention on the population as a biological, living species on the one hand, and as the judgements concerning the 'actions' of the population on the other. It was, in short, constitutive of the techniques and strategies which would come to characterize a biopolitics of the population.

The specificity of this normalization must now be examined. Doing so will make intelligible the interactions between the different planes of object formation on the discursive level and their interaction with the forces composed by this normalization. Discussing mortality and morbidity rates relative to smallpox³⁷, Foucault elaborates on the

³⁷ The translation of the word 'smallpox' fails to bring out the association that Foucault was attempting to bring out in regards to variolisation. In French, as is noted in a footnote on page 62, smallpox is referred to as 'la petite vérole', literally the 'little variola'. Hence there is a specific emphasis on variolisation in reference to smallpox, although it remains unclear whether there is actually an etymological link between the words.

mathematical threshold of normality, the surpassing of which indicates the emergence of epidemic phenomena:

What does the apparatus that appears with variolisation and vaccination consist in? It is not the division between those who are sick and those who are not sick. It takes all who are sick and all who are not as a whole, that is to say, in short, the population, and it identifies the coefficient of probable morbidity, or probable mortality, in this population, that is to say the normal expectation in the population of being affected by the disease. In this way it was established – and on this point all the statistics in the eighteenth century agree – that the rate of mortality from smallpox was 1 in 7.782. Thus we get the idea of a ‘normal’ morbidity or mortality. (STP 62)

The first proposition is therefore that there will always be a certain amount of smallpox in the population: the point however is to regularize this quantity so that it doesn’t proliferate into a crisis that affects the population as a whole. The acceptable amount of smallpox correlates with statistics that identify normal levels of morbidity and death. Or in our other example, the acceptable amount of hoarding, of imports and exports, and rates of production that regularize price fluctuations on the market (STP 37). And this brings up the second problem of disengaging, “different normalities in relation to each other” (STP 62). These normalities are therefore differentiated according to the grids that we laid out above in terms of the techniques of case, risk, danger and crisis. Thus, “one will get the ‘normal’ distribution; of cases of and deaths due to smallpox for every age, in each region, town, and different areas of the town, and in terms of different occupations” (STP 62). The cases are distributed across a graph on which a curve maps out a general consistency based on their relative differences. This is the curve of a normal distribution:³⁸ its normal

³⁸ As it will be pointed out in the proceeding chapter, the ‘normal distribution’ as a statistical concept has a history of its own. Francis Galton will be shown to be the culmination of this particular statistical thinking the normal. However, the point is not the actual statistical concepts used but the way in which statistics

being relative to the specificity of cases and zones of risk or danger, which is to say, relative to the deviations from the normal curve. Hence although smallpox is pathogenic in relation to the health of a normal population, it has a normality of its own that can be situated in relation to the normal curves of health, abundance, or mortality which can only be made intelligible on the basis of their relativity. Techniques of inoculation deployed a controlled deviancy into the population and in this way attempted to bring the overall rate of disease circulation within an acceptable range (STP 62). Prevention is thus, in a sense, reinvented: it was no longer a matter of enclosing pathological and contagious phenomena in disciplinary spaces so that the individual body could be properly treated in its individuality; with the security *dispositif* prevention is enacted ‘inside’ the phenomenon itself, which of course has no outside, by identifying deviancies furthest from the normal curve and bringing them in line with it by deploying the disease itself. In other words, the aleatory became a fundamental feature of the regulatory. The normal curve can be seen as an envelopment of multiplicity: a folding of the *real* flux of the differential normalities onto itself in which the doubling effects a space of truth whose perimeters are governed by acceptability. “It is at this level of the interplay of differential normalities, their separation out and bringing into line with each other, that – this is not yet epidemiology, the medicine of epidemics – the medicine of prevention will act” (STP 63). And with this, a new

approaches its objects and quantifies the logic of their objectivity. It would be interesting to do a formal study about the later transformations of statistics in the twentieth century, to see whether there are any fundamental modifications at this level. When Foucault turns to governmentality, he leaves behind this problem and turns to the ways in which this objectivity is taken up within government for its critique.

political subjectivity began to emerge: the population as an acceptable distribution of normalities.

After elaborating the statistical side of inoculation techniques, and pointing these out as expressions of a real transformation at the level of power relations and of the positive conditions of statement, Foucault delivers this explanation of normalization:

We have then a system that is, I believe, exactly the opposite of the one we have seen with the disciplines. In the disciplines one started from a norm, and it was in relation to the training carried out with reference to the norm that the normal could be distinguished from the abnormal. Here instead, we have a plotting of the normal and the abnormal, of different curves of normality, and the operation of normalization consists in establishing an interplay between these different distributions of normality and [in] acting to bring the most unfavourable in line with the more favorable. So we have here something that starts from the normal and makes use of certain distributions considered to be, if you like, more normal than the others, or at any rate more favorable than the others. These distributions will serve as the norm. *The norm is an interplay of differential normalities.* The normal comes first and the norm is deduced from it, or the norm is fixed and plays its operational role on the basis of this study of normalities. So, I would say that what is involved here is no longer normation, but rather normalization in the strict sense. (STP 63)

A fundamental problem is therefore at stake in the security *dispositif*. We can still maintain that the norm in the disciplinary *dispositif* is a reality, indeed, it is a singularity around which a whole reality takes shape. But this disciplinary real is constituted by a system of differentiation that holds difference in reserve: it incessantly extracts and accumulates the forces of the body by means of a vast set of techniques and mechanisms which individuate *properly* docile and productive bodies insofar as they are ‘natural’. The Norm is the profit reaped from the body of the individual: hence it frames³⁹ the body

³⁹ Although it cannot be attempted here, it would be interesting to look at Foucault’s disciplinary *dispositif* and Heidegger’s essence of technology together. There is perhaps an implicit critique of Heidegger’s thinking

according to the dictates of its reason, constructing an economy of scarcity in which, paradoxically, *there is never enough force*. Always too much and too little: a superabundance of force in the multiplicity, which always leaks out of police containment; and a scarcity in the individual body on which techniques continue to plumb the depths of its molecular composition for more resources. The disciplinary Norm is an ideal form which individuates bodies so that they can fill its empty, artificial space. It subjectivizes the individual as an objective individual within a hierarchy of differences. If the disciplines deploy the Norm to flatten out the ascending individualization of sovereignty, there is nonetheless a correlation between the two: both operate on the basis of an Other that accumulates the forces of the body to increase the strength of this Other.

On the other hand, the norm in security is not *constituted by* a composition of differential elements, but is the element *in which* an interplay of differential forces occurs. This means that the norm does not accumulate forces outside the body to individuate it in terms of a prescribed form, but rather operates *within* a field of forces that is always already inoperative, to individuate the forms that these forces can potentially take. In other words, the norm is not derivative of a particular molar body, but constitutive of the possibility of establish-able relations between forces in a multiplicity. Operating at the level of disciplinary surplus, security deterritorializes the individual and reterritorializes it in a multiplicity for the normalized political subjectivity called population. By referring to this field of forces as ‘always already inoperative’, I am attempting to elucidate the radical

in Foucault’s work on power relations in which Foucault finds a mode of resistance not in the waiting, but in an active engagement with techniques at the level of their crude materiality.

differential relativity that is established between elements at this level: the field of forces, which could alternatively be rendered as multiplicity, is neither functional nor workable until they are composed by a set of techniques that normalizes them as a population. The individual, with its sexuality, its family, its debt, its health, its public authority or pauperism, becomes a mere relay in an open statistical series.

The genealogy of the population allows Foucault to ‘step outside’ and analyze the techniques of power which compose the forces to express it as a real object and subject in a field of exteriority. In the case of the security *dispositif* this inoperative field of force differentials is the element into which its techniques are grafted, not to coerce the multiplicity, but to make it intelligible *as a singularity*. Foucault writes: “Intelligibility in history would perhaps lie in something that we could call the constitution or composition of effects. How are overall, cumulative effects composed? How is nature constituted as an overall effect?” (STP 239) And we can now answer: the naturalness of the population is constituted as an intelligible reality by means of the statistical instruments developed in the eighteenth century as part of the *dispositif* of security. The naturalness of the population is the effect of the composition of differential forces specific to the normalization characteristic of security. Nature is not given a value, but produces the value in which practices, techniques and interventions become operable on this same nature. This value is the folding of normalization into itself and is referred to by Foucault as the bandwidth of acceptability. It is a functional dispersion of elements around the mean: “Dispersion is important to the measurer: if all the measurements cluster about the mean, we think of the average as *reliable*” (Hacking 106). Within this bandwidth of acceptable deviation from the normal curve, which already operates at a level that exceeds coercive intervention, the truth of the norm emerges as that element towards which unacceptable deviancies must be

drawn (STP 6). It is a technique of normalization which when taken up in governmentality intervenes on the naturalness of the population without disrupting its own self-regulating processes. By modifying circulations, imposing regulations, laws, codes, and even coercing individuals at the individual level governmentality can effect modifications at an entirely different level of force relations.

Taking a pointer from Bataille's general economy we can perhaps clarify this problem:

As soon as we want to act reasonably we have to consider the utility of our actions; utility implies an advantage, a maintenance or growth. Now, if it is necessary to respond to exuberance, it is no doubt possible to use it for growth. But the problem raised precludes this. Supposing there is no longer any growth possible, what is to be done with the seething energy that remains? To waste it is obviously not to use it. And yet, what we have is a draining-away, a pure and simple loss, which occurs in any case: From the first, the excess energy, if it cannot be used for growth, is lost. Moreover, in no way can this inevitable loss be accounted useful. It is only a matter of an acceptable loss, preferable to another that is regarded as unacceptable: a question of acceptability, not utility. (*Accursed Share*, 30-31)

At the threshold of utility, the naturalness of the population emerges as an irrational loss until it can be made intelligible in the field that is proper to it: only at that point can the excess be acceptably lost. Acceptability is a singularity immanent to the 'nature' of the population, but insofar as acceptability is an epistemic notion, it opens up this infinitely variable element to techniques for intervention on this surface. Acceptability, that is, the normalization characteristic of security, makes possible techniques that act on individuals at a distance: it constitutes a space of truth in which interventions can be judged to be suited to the nature of the problem being addressed. These techniques may indeed include interventions such as those we have seen in police, but their object is precisely this naturalness itself which will dissolve if coerced. Hence Foucault writes that, "security is a

way of making the old armatures of law and discipline function in addition to the specific mechanisms of security” (STP 10). An inversion of excess: the whole operative machinery which dominates and makes the individual productive, is fit into the security *dispositif* as its instrumental arrangement. Utility itself emerges as a system which is produced by its own excess, its own uselessness over which it can never gain a sovereign status. It is merely the envelopment of the radical variability of nature which *makes sense* of it.

Indeed this is the significance of the population as an object ‘pertinent’ to governmentality. Foucault explains that,

We will have an absolutely fundamental caesura between a level that is pertinent for the government’s economic-political action, and this is the level of the population, and a different level, which will be that of the series, the multiplicity of individuals, who will not be pertinent, or rather who will only be pertinent to the extent that, properly managed, maintained, and encouraged, it will make possible what one wants to obtain at the level that is pertinent. The multiplicity of individuals is no longer pertinent, the population is. (STP 42)

Population gains its pertinence for government because it makes visible the differential fields of the multiplicity so that it can effect a recodification on the basis of an immanent normalization made intelligible in the visibility of subjective ‘actions’ of the population. In a sense it provides a legible discursive surface on which these ‘actions’ or, rather, effects within the multiplicity of individuals, appears for governmental reflection. Moreover, when Foucault refers to the instrumentalization of the multiplicity he is speaking from the vantage point of a developing governmentality that has an interest in the variable effects of this multiplicity. The argument presented here, and which is, I argue, at the core of Foucault’s description of the security *dispositif*, is this: the utilitarianism that characterizes the liberal governmentality that will develop out of this confrontation with

the multiplicity as multiplicity, with reality as reality, is an attempt to rationalize the fundamental valuelessness, uselessness, meaninglessness of the ‘system’ of differential relations within which security gains a hold. Taking from Deleuze, we could perhaps say that security makes the deterritorializing plane of difference visible and by doing so, opens it to a governmental reterritorialization that preserves its consistency in the population as object and subject of political practice, while overcoding it with practices and techniques that make it functional.

It is in this way that population makes it possible to effect a cancellation of phenomena that threaten the stability of the state, or the health of the population. In *Society Must be Defended* he explains that security, “is a technology which aims to establish a sort of homeostasis, not by training individuals, but by achieving an overall equilibrium that protects the security of the whole from internal dangers”⁴⁰ (STP 249). Scarcity, for example, is a chimera precisely because, “when it existed, far from being a reality, a natural reality as it were, it was no more than the aberrant result of a number of artificial measures that were themselves aberrant” (STP 41). These were the artifices of a police of grain in mercantilism and cameralism. When the principle of *laissez-faire*, of freedom of production, circulation and exchange of grain, is introduced at the level of the multiplicity, the general uncertainty of outcomes creates the conditions of a ‘natural’

⁴⁰ Note that this passage has been used many times to justify the interpretation of security as a threshold mechanism operative in the military strategic of liberalism. This interpretation, voiced in different ways by Julian Reid (2008), Sven Oritiz (2011), Esposito (2008) and others, fails to grasp the radical distinction between a juridico-political sovereignty and the *dispositif* of security. It functions on the pretense that the peace of liberalism can be ‘called off’ for a state of exception in the moment that the security *dispositif* registers a series of aberrant phenomena. The point here has been to show that while it can function in this way in terms of liberal governmentality, this is not the primary objective of the *dispositif* which, as for all *dispositifs*, is concerned rather with the formation of objects of power-knowledge, in this case for ‘securing’ the naturalness of the population for governmentality.

stabilization. There is in a sense, a transformation of the very conception of scarcity: for police, the problem was always that resources were scarce and political-economy (before it was named as such, to be sure) had to work within this perpetual scarcity; but security blasts open this artifice of scarcity, and makes visible the superabundance of resources against which the artifice struggles. Scarcity reappears in *laissez-faire* economics as a limit case or, as a limited number of cases. This means however that, “for a whole series of people, in a whole series of markets, there was some scarcity, some dearness, some difficulty in buying wheat, and consequently some hunger, and it may well be that some people die of hunger after all” (STP 42). But it is only by recognizing and working with the extreme cases, that a general distribution can balance itself on the basis of a normal differential curve. It is the same in the case of inoculation: a certain amount of illness must be recognized, or rather, in this case, deployed, to effect a cancellation of the phenomena at the general level of the population. “The function of security,” writes Foucault,

is to rely on details that are not valued as good or evil in themselves, that are taken to be necessary, inevitable processes, as natural processes in the broad sense, and it relies on these details, which are what they are, but which are not considered to be pertinent in themselves, in order to obtain something that is considered to be pertinent in itself because situated at the level of the population. (STP 45)

7. Life, Death and the Birth of Eugenics

There is another, perhaps more pernicious, significance attributed to the population. Security makes two movements which are tightly bound up with one another: first, by working at the level of the ‘natural’ mechanism in the population, security operates a transformation by which death is no longer situated at the limit of a life, but is rather contained within life as the very expression of life’s anonymity, its lack of purpose or identity; second, life emerges as an element that can be modified at the biological-species level because the milieu of subsistence is that through which death affects life. Beginning with the first problem, we must recognize straight away that this is in contradiction to Foucault’s early formulations of biopolitics. In *Society Must be Defended* he makes a distinction between the mortality of the population and the death of the individual in which the latter always escapes from the network of power. He writes,

Now that power is decreasingly the power of the right to take life, and increasingly the right to intervene to make live, or once power begins to intervene mainly at this level in order to improve life by eliminating accidents, the random element, and deficiencies, death becomes, insofar as it is the end of life, the term, the limit, or the end of power too. Death is outside the power relationship. Death is beyond the reach of power, and power has a grip on it only in general, overall, or in statistical terms. Power has no control over death, but it can control mortality. (STP 248)

In this passage Foucault links death to the sovereign power of the sword which in modernity, as we have shown, has undergone a profound transformation. Sticking by this definition however would be to do injustice to Foucault’s thought: perhaps if the relations between power and the knowledge of life have been so profoundly altered, then death too has undergone a transformation? The argument that has been made throughout the course of this investigation functions on the basis of a constant reappraisal and reflection by

Foucault on his own work. Thus it is my assertion that the position of death in relations of power is fundamentally shifted in the security *dispositif* because of the way that normalization operates in the field of the living. Death, while nonetheless remaining the private domain of a phenomenological being-toward-death, is fully integrated into the complex mechanisms that ‘make live’ and ‘improve life’. The normalization that makes visible the vitality of a natural body in the population can only produce a norm that is “an interplay of differential normalities” (STP 63) if death is equally visible – precisely as this escape. The escape of death from the relations of disciplinary power is the necessary element in which the radical contingency of the multiplicity can be normalized as a population. Undoubtedly, mortality should be made distinct from death, since mortality is one of the objects which is produced by statistics. But this does not preclude the fact that death is, in a sense, a relay or instrument for mortality rates: it is the detail that undergoes a deterritorialization so that it can be instrumentalized to produce effects in the population. It seems telling that Agamben, even though he takes a decidedly different stance towards the problem of death, has emphasized the importance the words spoken by the biologist, Peter Mendewar. Agamben writes: “This means that today – as is implicit in Peter Medawar’s observation that ‘in biology, discussions on the meaning of the words ‘life’ and ‘death’ are signs of a low level conversation’ – life and death are not properly scientific concepts but rather political concepts” (*Homo Sacer* 164). He follows this with a phrase that is entirely contradictory to the enterprise undertaken here: “...which as such acquire a political meaning precisely only through a decision,” (164) but this does not eliminate the importance of the scientific status of life and death, which need not have achieved the level of discourse and reflection in the eighteenth century. No distinction can be made between the two: a power over life will always be a power over death. This is not necessarily a

thanato-politics, but closer to what Achille Mbembe has called a necropolitics of the living dead (Mbembe 2003). It is my assertion that with security, death is in fact given a birth of its own. And in becoming visible, it becomes productive precisely because it is pure consumption, pure unproductivity, pure escape. Biopolitics may well 'ignore' death because it focuses on the improvement and production of the life of the population, but death is nonetheless present in this life even if it undergoes a dramatic shift of emphasis and becomes a factor of contagion, decay, putrefaction or pollution. Death in other words is an element of indefinite differentiation and that endlessly proliferates the forms of life in the population. As such, it is the very condition of the normalization of life and that which is normalized to the greatest extent – in terms of this life.

What follows from this, is the possibility of 'making live' in a way that is different from the making of life that characterized police in *raison d'État*. The natural body of the population, based on the abundance of resources for subsistence and the freedom of the individuals who must live, is shown to be subject to the environmental milieu in which it lives. The species itself undergoes mutations on the basis of living conditions, climate, circulations of imports and exports and the flows of desire that permeate a given multiplicity of individuals. Now in *Society Must be Defended* Foucault refers to biopower frequently in terms of the species body of the population: biopower is the series of processes that address the "biological continuum" of the species (SMD 255). In *Security, Territory, Population*, he only makes a few short references to the species (STP 1, 20, 21, 369, 370), and seems to switch from the biological register to one of political-economy in which the 'naturalness' of the population became important with the physiocrats. The two are not co-extensive, but they are intimately related: the naturalness described by statistical techniques in the eighteenth century open the way for the biological sciences to incorporate

the thought of a life that is modifiable and that evolves, but also degenerates, decays and dies out. Hence Foucault writes of security that:

We have a set of elements that, on one side, are immersed within the general regime of living beings and that, on another side, offer a surface on which authoritarian, but reflected and calculated transformations can get a hold. The dimension in which the population is immersed amongst other living beings appears and is sanctioned when, for the first time, men are no longer called ‘mankind (*le genre humain*)’ and begin to be called ‘the human species (*l’espèce humaine*)’. With the emergence of mankind as a species, within a field of the definition of all living species, we can say that man appears in the first form of his integration with biology. (STP 75)

There is an obvious connection here to be made with *The Order of Things*, but this is not the place to make that argument.⁴¹ For now, what we must keep fixed on is the connection between naturalness of population and the human species without remarking on the transformations at the level of concept formation. This connection is particularly interesting because it illustrates one of the nineteenth and twentieth century’s greatest problems: eugenics.

Particularly interesting in this respect, and simultaneously offering a much needed clarification of what was just described as normalization, is that the first scientist to actually elaborate and specify the autonomous nature of statistical laws, was a eugenicist by the name of Sir Francis Galton (Hacking 186). Galton has become famous for his devotion to quantitative analysis, going so far as to suggest that boredom, beauty, and even

⁴¹ At the close of the lecture, “25 January 1978” in *Security, Territory, Population*, Foucault brings together the analysis of the population and its previous analyses of the conceptual formation of the human sciences in *The Order of Things*. Without having the space to address this here, I will simply quote Foucault as a suggestion for future research: “Hence the theme of man, and the ‘human sciences’ that analyze him as a living being, working individual, and speaking subject, should be understood on the basis of the emergence of population as the correlate of power and the object of knowledge. After all, man, as he is thought and defined by the so-called human sciences of the nineteenth century, is nothing other than the figure of the population” (STP 79).

prayer could be quantified (Gould 75). His focus on quantitative measurement belied a fundamental belief in the hereditary transfer of not only the anatomical composition of the physical body but of intelligence and social behaviours. Gould explains: “Quantification was Galton’s god, and a strong belief in the inheritance of nearly everything he could measure stood at the right hand. Galton believed that even the most socially embedded behaviours had strong innate components” (Gould 75). In 1869 he wrote a book entitled *Hereditary Genius*, in which his goal was to examine the conditions that give rise to extraordinary and exceptional individuals. Therein he argued that one of the leading causes for these ‘deviancies’ was inherited, genetic material: “that a man’s natural abilities are derived by inheritance, under exactly the same limitations as are the form and physical features of the whole organic world” (Galton *Hereditary* 1). In this work he employed a statistical model originally developed by astronomers and geologists to determine the mean of a series of measurements of one phenomena, but yielding different results. The mean would be the closest approximation to the truth of the phenomena and was established on the basis of measurement ‘errors’ (Galton, *Hereditary* XI). This was called the ‘law of frequency error’ and it became very important for Galton because of its appropriation and application to social phenomena by the statistician, Quetelet.

Quetelet deployed the model along the lines of its original concept: to determine the averages towards which various manifest phenomena and even physical traits are naturally drawn. Writing in the mid-nineteenth century, Quetelet was one of the first theorists who attempted to apply the Gaussian law of the mean, the ‘law of frequency error’, to political,

social and moral problems⁴² (Coven 2). By doing so he arrived at the concept of the *homme moyen* as the outcome of a bell curve in which physical variations cluster around a “true average” (Canguilhem 162). This true average, the natural density of the mean, was made possible by considering all of the ‘petty influences’ that, as if with the flip of a coin, cause various orders of dispersions. As Hacking has noted, Quetelet actually did apply the early probability theory of the coin toss, filtered through the ‘law of frequency of error’, to bring together influences of mortality rates, birth rates, climates, cultural and social milieus, economic distributions, etcetera, so that a range of independent causes, both natural and conventional, could produce the mean as reality, as a nature (Hacking 111-12). Victoria Coven writes, “The average man fell at the mean and any insignificant variation around this was felt to be ‘natural’” (Coven 2). The *homme moyen* for Quetelet was the most natural, the most ‘true’; those who deviated from the truth of this normal curve, needed to be brought back towards it by modifying the contingencies that condition these deviations. Of course, it would not take long to extend the average man to the species as a whole, which he did in his work on crimes, quoted here from Coven’s excellent article on him: “He believed that ‘If the *average* man were ascertained for one nation, he could represent the type of that nation. If he could be ascertained according to the mass of men, he would represent the type of human species altogether’” (Coven 2). Thus the *homme*

⁴² He was, however, preceded by a large number of earlier theorists, some of which we have pointed out, who used statistics and probabilities in a manner that had not developed its formal theoretical supports. To say that the physiocrats, for example, operated a transformation of techniques of power is not to say that they had actually developed a theory of the normal distribution, but that in their methods this remained to a certain extent implicit. It was, in Deleuze’s terminology, an expression of content and not yet an expression of form, in the same way that the disciplines developed long before they were integrated into the expression of form in Bentham’s panopticon. We can’t forget though, that the binomial distribution, the bell curve that would eventually be named the normal distribution, was already discovered in mathematics as early as 1708 with De Moivre (Hacking 106).

moyen, not yet referred to as the normal, but nonetheless as the ‘natural’ and true, made it possible to analyze broader social phenomena in terms of their internally constituted organization. The mean was the *truth* of the population and, as Ian Hacking writes, the collective forces that were made visible, “were nevertheless described by a new kind of law of collective phenomena, a law endowed with its own ‘reality’. Quetelet had made the mean of a population as ‘real’ as the position of an island or a star” (Hacking 177). Thus the mean was a distinctly physical, objective reality: the average man was not just the shorthand for a statistical average.⁴³ Quetelet referred to this new science as social physics since its basis was the integration of the biological and the social mean on which Ian Hacking writes:

Where before one thought of a people in terms of its culture or its geography or its language or its rulers or its religion, Quetelet introduced a new objectively measurable conception of a people. A race would be characterized by its measurements of physical and moral qualities, summed up in the average man of the race. This is half of the beginning of eugenics, the other half being the reflection that one can introduce social policies that will either preserve or alter the average qualities of a race. In short, the average man led to both a new kind of information about populations and a new conception of how to control them. (Hacking 108)

Thus the ‘naturalness’ of the population became an objective reality that could be analyzed and observed in terms of the statistics of the physical attributes of each individual and the conditions of their birth, their milieu of existence, the moral framework of society. It had a hard, material foundation; the organic body of the individual understood through

⁴³ ‘Objective reality’ has a specificity here that is made clear by Ewald’s comments on Quetelet: “The average man, then, is not an individual whose place in society is indeterminate or uncertain; rather, he is society itself as it sees itself objectified in the mirror of probability and statistics. There is not a trace of realism in Quetelet’s account of the average man” (Ewald, “Norms” 145-46). As it is for Foucault, the reality of the population, its ‘naturalness’, does not ‘actually’ exist, but it nonetheless has a reality as an object that can be discussed, deliberated and deployed in discourse.

statistical techniques could be modified at the level of population. Contrary to Hacking's reading, this was not necessarily the development of a form of external control imposed on the population through its objectification as a statistical average. Rather, as Ewald has noted, the theory of the *homme moyen* constituted the discovery of a regulatory movement internal to the population, "that makes it possible to understand a population with respect only to itself, and without recourse to some external defining factor" (Ewald, "Norms" 146). Control itself underwent a transformation: the norm was made immanent to the dispersion of normalities, their relative causal contexts, in which it emerged as a natural truth. Control in other words, entered the level of everyday relations that were establishable in a multiplicity of individuals and the codification of these contingencies took the form of normalization as a ceaseless and forever expansive process. The deployment of an internal regulatory mechanism called security.

Thus a novel codification was enacted at the interstices of the biological and social collectivities, the species and the population. However it must be recognized that this overcoding of wildly contingent and dynamic phenomena, had already been underway since the mid-eighteenth century. What Quetelet performs, in a manner analogous to Bentham's reflection on the panoptic prison, is an operation at the level of discursive practice: he expresses a new statement in which a novel form of normalization becomes a codified object that can, not simply be deployed in practise, but also reflected upon. When speaking about the market as a space of truth formation, Foucault identifies this criterion of reflection as that which manifests a discursive transformation (BB 59). Quetelet's work exists at the nexus of a whole complex arrangement of power and discursive practises, when it finally becomes possible to speak a *truth* about the *dispositif* in which a regime of

truth begins to gain its contours as an object of reflection. And what needed to be *secured* in this *dispositif* was nothing less than the truth of the living nature of the population.

Hence the problem of eugenics with which Sir Francis Galton was so concerned. Galton, as we have mentioned, was heavily influenced by the work of Quetelet. Because his primary concern was heredity and specifically, the heredity of exceptional individuals, Galton did not glorify the ‘truth’ of the mean. In fact, “He saw that reversion towards mediocrity was a mathematical consequence of the Normal curve” (Hacking 186). In *Natural Inheritance*, Galton referred to this reversion as regression: a fundamental shift that would open up the doors for anthropometry and criminal anthropology to found themselves on objective, value-neutral science. With regression, Galton made it clear that Quetelet’s use of independent and petty influences was not substantial enough: it did not explain the influences themselves, which is to say, it did not provide statistical laws with their own autonomous regularity. In 1877, Galton presented a lecture entitled *Typical Laws of Heredity*, in which he argued that the normal curve must be understood as exponentially productive, rather than a truth to be attained. The difference, he wrote, was the binomial law of error which Quetelet used, in which error is the ‘No’ of a duality between ‘Yes’ and ‘No’. Galton writes: “Quetelet, apparently from habit rather than theory, always adopted the binomial law of error, basing his tables on a binomial of high power. It is absolutely necessary to the theory of the present paper to get rid of binomial limitations and to consider the law of deviation or error in its exponential form” (Galton “Laws of Heredity” 289). In this respect, as Hacking has argued, Galton’s significant contribution to the statistical sciences was to show that the law of frequency of error engendered its own explanatory principle in the theory of regression (Hacking 186). Galton’s gaze was aimed at the deviations from the mean, rather than at the mean itself, and his argument was that

hereditary traits themselves follow the logic of frequency error: they themselves constitute a Normal curve which affect the biological reality of each individual, and are simultaneously affected by the milieu in which a population exists. Rather than relying exclusively on a host of independent causal elements that negatively define the rule, Galton introduced hereditary material into the equation and thereby transformed the Normal curve into an expression of the mediocre status of the species (Hacking 185). Normalization was, all of a sudden it seems, given the expression that it had deserved since the early deployment of the *dispositif* of security in the mid-eighteenth century.⁴⁴

Taking from Hacking's work, who was undoubtedly influenced by Foucault, does not offer us a cut and dry argument of the modern episteme. But unknowingly it seems, he provides us with an analysis that can be read into the context of Foucault's work on the security *dispositif*, in which Quetelet and the later Galton, stand as the first thinkers to express concisely the fundamental problem of contemporary political, economic and social thought as one of biopolitical normalization. It would have been possible to bring up other thinkers such as Durkheim whose, "1888 connection between suicide, birth rate and

⁴⁴ For Hacking's argument, Galton represents the first historical instance of a reflection on the 'taming of chance'. He can make this argument because the method that he uses stays on a purely discursive plane, although not in Foucault's sense. Hacking was concerned with what he calls 'styles of reasoning' or, 'research mentalities', terms which he takes from A.C. Crombie (Hacking 6). But this method of archival analysis relies on the sentences and propositions alongside their institutional sites, to determine the space "in which various possibilities for truth-or-falsehood could already be formulated" (Hacking 8). In defining the sentence he writes: "Sentences have two powers. They are eternal, and they are uttered at a moment. They are anonymous, and yet they are spoken by flesh and blood" (Hacking 8). In other words they are material objects inscribed in institutions, and also words uttered in a particular combination by a speaker at a given place and time (Hacking 8). It is not my objective to critique this method here: there is an adequate critique in Foucault's *The Archeology of Knowledge*.⁴⁴ But in brief, styles of reasoning do not take account of the ontological event of statements, their fundamental rarity in relation to the superfluity of language. As such Hacking's method does not get past the problem of meaning and sign systems by incorporating sentences into materiality and institutions modes of inscription. He never claims to either: there is never any mention of rules for discursive formations or the spaces of differentiation of objects. Even more, the institutions themselves are never thrown into question.

happiness was of a piece with most biopolitics of the past two centuries” (Hacking 172). But Durkheim’s division of the normal and pathological in *The Rules of Sociological Method*, still conformed to earlier medical definitions taken from Broussais through Comte. The normal was simultaneously an average and what is ‘right’, and the pathological was simply a function of this: a moralization of normalization (Hacking 168). It was, in short, a deployment of disciplinary normation within a statistical framework. With Galton and Quetelet the normal was radically different: it was a flexible mean governed by a measurement of dispersion, or deviation. To make the comparison: “Durkheim called deviation from the norm pathological, while Galton saw excellence at one extreme of the Normal distribution” (Hacking 169). The operation that they carried out, with Galton being an extension of Quetelet’s thought, was not simply to alter the style of reasoning with the novelty of normalization. It was rather, to bring an event that had already taken place over a hundred years prior, into the level of acceptable reflection and thereby designating the regime of truth already established. Eugenics as Galton understood it, was simply one expression of this event and the space of acceptability that it had long since established. The naturalness of the population could finally be designated as a site of truth in which interventions could be deployed to improve the species: normalization could finally attain the simultaneity of the biological and social elements, at the interstices of life and death. Operating in this space, life is necessarily the object around which all political calculation turns into biopolitics.

Concluding Remarks

It remains to be seen how the normalization characteristic of security can be deployed to understand contemporary phenomena. In lieu of a summary-type conclusion, the following will consist of a number of possible applications of the theory that has been elaborated here. This will solidify the practical aspect of this thesis which, due to space constraints, has been left to the wayside. It will also offer an opportunity to expand the practical import of biopolitics beyond the applications suggested by Paul Rabinow and Nikolas Rose in their clarification of the concept of biopolitics. To be sure, they make it clear that biopolitics should not be limited to issues of race, population and reproduction and genomic medical projects and that these are merely suggestions within their fields of research (Rabinow and Rose 204). For my part I would like to suggest that analyzing contemporary biopolitics need not be limited to problems of medicine or biology. If the *dispositif* of security opens the population to a field of probabilities that constitutes its reality through the calculation of aleatory phenomena, it may be possible to extend the analysis of biopolitical normalization to the deployment of market in liberal governmentality. In liberalism, the market becomes politicized as an object and subject of governmental reflection which is always in excess of itself. Insofar as the market is a site of veridiction through which government can reflect upon the utility of its practices, the economy begins to gain its contours as ‘a nature’ (BB 56-57). The naturalness of the market, which was already understood by the physiocrats, is an object whose formation was constituted by the relations of power-knowledge arranged by the *dispositif* of security. For liberalism, populations considered as markets is one form in which biopolitics can be analyzed.

1. Neo-liberal Normalization

For contemporary theory, one important aspect of biopolitics is *homo œconomicus* in neo-liberalism. In Foucault's analysis of American neo-liberalism, all domains of life can be analyzed through a grid of economic activity (BB 243). The idea of human capital for example, situates the mother's investment in her child, as a rate of probable return through the profit that the child will make as an economically viable adult. It is at once, 'psychical' profit in the satisfaction of good work, and economic in the support the child will offer the mother in old age (BB 244). The idea here is that the subject is *understood* in neo-liberalism within an economic network or grid of intelligibility as *homo œconomicus*. "That is to say, any conduct which responds systematically to modifications in the variables of the environment, in other words, any conduct, as Becker says, which 'accepts reality' must be susceptible to economic analysis" (BB 269). In this way, where classical liberalism needed to let the naturalness of the market work autonomously in order to produce effects for the critique of governmental practice, neo-liberalism deploys *homo œconomicus* as a grid for the governability of *laissez-faire*. Thus where we looked at eugenics in the security *dispositif* as the culmination of a biological normalization, we now have its extension into economic policy. Foucault doesn't hide this fact, but emphasizes its relevance in Gary Becker's economic analysis of crime, which, "basically consists in taking up Beccaria's and Bentham's utilitarian filter again while as far as possible trying to avoid the series of slippages which took us from *homo œconomicus* [of eighteenth century utilitarianism] to *homo legalis*, to *homo penalis*, and finally to *homo criminalis*" (BB 250). If the neo-liberal subject is *homo œconomicus*, who becomes such by a rational acceptance of reality and its variability, one can perceive the shift in the theory of governmentality. With neo-liberalism,

like the eugenics projects of the eighteenth century, it is fully recognized that populations can be manipulated by means of specific modifications in the environment, where the environment includes economic relations, policy decisions, legislation, resource management and, most importantly, the terrain of probabilities. If normalization reaches its apex at the moment when it can be reflected upon and idealized as a modality of utility, then it has perhaps reached that stage in neo-liberalism, where probability is understood to constitute the subject's rationalization of itself.

2. Biopolitics of Debt

As a suggestion for further research, it may be possible to look at the way debt is reconfigured in liberalism as a biopolitical problem. The first implication of biopolitical debt is that it must reconfigure the Nietzschean debtor-creditor relationship. In the *On the Genealogy of Morals*, Nietzsche stated that, “the major moral concept *Schuld* [guilt] has its origin in the very material concept of *Schulden* [debts]” (Nietzsche 62-63). By making this connection, Nietzsche argues that an ontological nihilism structures existence as a being-in-debt to God in which, the cruelty of the creditor acquiring payment, is reformulated in a self-flagellating Christian morality for the guilt of being. A relation of infinite debt, in which the individual is constantly cutting herself open, vivisectioning her conscience, ‘making good’ to the creditor, inscribes the body in its moral particularity – for us, in its utility and productivity. Arguing that Foucault takes up this idea in his 1971 Collège de France seminar, Deleuze cites Greek tyrannies as an example of the way the circulation of wealth actually produces the conditions of infinite debt: “in certain Greek tyrannies, the tax on aristocrats and the distribution of money to the poor are a means of bringing money back to the rich and a means of remarkably widening the regime of debts, making it even stronger”

(Deleuze *Anti-Oedipus* 197). We have already observed this structure in the police of *raison d'État*. There, circulations were encouraged and interwoven with one another in order to constitute the splendor of the sovereign state. The people were held in a relation of infinite debt to the sovereign power that gave them life and encouraged its felicity: “There is always a monotheism,” Deleuze writes, “on the horizon of despotism: the debt becomes a debt of existence, a debt of the existence of the subjects themselves” (*Anti-Oedipus* 197).

It is instructive in this regard that the physiocrats advocated an ‘enlightened despotism’ (BB 61). Their theories of the agro-economic scarcity problem were thus tied up with the *raison d'État* for sovereign rule. But as we have shown, the development of the concept of the naturalness of the population, constituted a fundamental transformation in the operation of power and the conditions supporting an art of government. With the reversal of sovereign excess in biopolitics, the organization of debt is fundamentally altered. The debtor can no longer be considered as a being ‘in debt’, because this would imply a sovereign to which this debt is owed. In the disciplines, one always paid one’s debt to the Norm (which had as its condition of existence in the very impossibility of settling with it), but with security the individual debt is severed from this relation and subsequently sutured to the reality of the population. The individualized, subjectivized debtor, who nonetheless still exists in the modern credit system, is made inconsequential at this level: his subjectivity is serialized in a distribution of risk levels, of (im)possible repayments. Formally what is done away with is the connection between guilt and debt, so that debt becomes one manner in which individuals are linked up as relays for the population. Or in another way, debt has been integrated into the functioning of the market as a kind of vaccination policy for continual economic growth. Just as scarcity was a chimera for Abeille, debt is a chimera that functions within a bandwidth of acceptability which, at the

level of the market population, conditions the successful growth of the economy. Debt becomes one category of risk among others, which restructures the ways that individuals live their lives by continuously decoding and recoding the realities in which they live.

Ewald argues along these lines we he writes that the deployment of risk to describe populations, milieus, activities, habits, etc. produces and governs the realities in which these individuals live, without disciplining them. For insurance technology risk,

designates neither an event nor a general kind of event occurring in reality (the unfortunate kind), but a specific mode of treatment of certain events capable of happening to a group of individuals – or, more precisely, to values or capitals possessed by or represented by a collectivity of individuals: that is to say, a population. Nothing is a risk in itself; there is no risk in reality. But on the other hand, anything can be a risk; it all depends on how one analyzes danger, considers the event [...] As a technology of risk, insurance is first and foremost a schema of rationality, a way of breaking down, rearranging, ordering certain elements of reality (Ewald, “Insurance and Risk” 199).

Like the biopolitics of insurance, biopolitical debt is constituted by the calculus of probabilities in the *dispositif* of security. The *dispositif* of security arranges the disequilibriums and subjugations of power through the calculation of probable risks so that the nature of a population is normalized as a coherent subjectivity. Security operates within the technique of debt in a paradoxical manner: it is not a calculation of the probability of a repayment, or the relative risk undertaken by a creditor, but rather the probability of risks involved with going into debt. It is a step over the threshold of disciplinary practices of containment and a problem once again of the accident, the aleatory. The probability of *going into debt* is a risk that one must assume if one wants to live well, or accumulate wealth in excess of that. In neo-liberal normalization, it is the condition of ‘accepting reality’ and thus subjecting oneself to the modifications of that reality. Which is to say, that at the individual level one’s reality is appears self-made insofar as responsibility must

be taken for the assumed risk. But the risks that one assumes are entirely beyond the one's control: the individual is therefore recoded at the level of the population in which acceptable risks are inscribed. The *risk of going into debt* is therefore a functionalization of the natural processes of the population and thus, the market.

One effect of this is a perception of the necessity of debt for life. Disciplinary effects of being 'in debt' still remain, but they are recoded and normalized in a general calculation of the *optimization* of being in debt, for life. Integrated into the functioning of the market, debt is simultaneously done away with and reinforced. Done away with, insofar as at the level of the population there is always an abundance of capital in circulation, and reinforced insofar as there is a necessary amount individuals in debt that eliminate its overall effects. Debt is a way of accounting for the loss of useful capital; the draining away of resources. One of the ways in which the biopolitical power over life functions, is by the normalization of debt for life within a market economy.

* * *

The point in all this is to understand how normalization functions, what are the limits that it establishes for thinking, and how are these arranged in relations of power-knowledge. Analysing the distinction between the *dispositif* of security and the disciplinary *dispositif* allows us to better understand the way in which biopolitics functions within and without liberal governmentality. A government need not be liberal or neo-liberal in order to work within a biopolitical regime of truth. Biopolitics is rather an approach to the phenomena that are recognized on the basis of their uncontainability and their in-utility. There is no doubt however that liberalism has incorporated biopolitics into its very centre

in such a way that in its late developments, it has actually incorporated the modification of the self-constituted space of the market into its calculus of the human subject. The disciplinary body has therefore made a triumphant return, but with a fundamental shift in its mechanics: the natural body of the disciplines is now distributed in unceasing continuity, in permanent serialized modulations without end, in spaces without walls that perpetually expand, in objective realities constructed on the basis of probabilities. This latter has been reformulated as a technique and a subject of technique, *for* the natural body of the population. Together, we are presented with a diagram of their relations and a map of their respective formations in the field of biopolitics. Security, in short, opens up a process of normalization in which biopolitics gains its consistency around a life conceived as an accident. It no doubt has a reality, but its reality is constructed by a normalization of probable events which can be calculated *ad infinitum*. Biopolitical normalization is therefore possible only insofar as life perpetually escapes all *dispositifs* of enclosure and serializes these escapes for its capture. But because this capture is one of probability and its object is the aleatory, the escape of life is constantly restructuring the coordinates of biopolitics. Simply put, in the biopolitics of the population, 'life itself' is made up of normalized chance.

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