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# Nothing to Fear but Fear: Governmentality and the Biopolitical Production of Terror[1]

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Moving beyond the political framework of both Hobbes and Schmitt that privileges a centralization of power as a way of dealing with the fear of violent death, this article turns to Foucault's discourses of war, power over life, and governmentality to illuminate the contemporary reproductive potential of fear in exercises of preservation of life in society. The decentralization of fear and power in governmentalized modernity encourages various public agents/agencies to mobilize the specter of danger, threat, insecurity, or enmity to normalize populations. This article reflects on the effects of this (re)productive mobilization of fear and emphasizes the proliferation of *dispositifs* of terror that engender a fear of not being able to live one's normal life.

Whereas late-modern societies thought they had conjured away the specter of a state-of-nature-like violence, recent events have reminded people in developed, rich and supposedly danger-free (often Western) nations that physical harm and material destruction can hit anyone, anywhere, at any moment. Since the attacks of 9/11 (New York and Washington, DC), 3/11 (Madrid), and 7/7 (London), people in the West have realized that they are living ''the terrifying experience of heteronomous, vulnerable populations overwhelmed by forces they neither control nor truly understand, horrified by their undefendability and obsessed with the security of their borders'' (Bauman 2006:96). An important part of this apparent accentuation of fear has been the perception that today's enemy, envisioned as an amalgamation of forces often referred to as terrorism and potentially present everywhere (Cavarero 2009), is an enemy like no other in history. The acts of 9/11, 3/11, and 7/7, among others, have radicalized the idea that the enemy is beyond any form of restraint, located in a domain where it no longer obeys any political rationality. In 2005, George W. Bush sought to capture the ''novelty'' of this danger by claiming that this terrorizing enemy is ''as brutal an enemy as we've ever faced. They're unconstrained by any notion of our common humanity, or by the rules of warfare'' (Bush 2005).

If one of the main arguments for the justification of the modern state (since Hobbes in particular) has been the ability of the sovereign state to defend the

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property and basic rights of individuals (starting with their right to be free from harm), a crucial question, possibly rendered more urgent by events of the past decade, must be asked: what happens to practices of sovereignty and state power when the fear of the enemy borders on the absolute? The Hobbesian solution to create a sovereign power with a primary capacity to offer protection from violence necessitates a concentration or centralization of fear. This fear resides in the very persona of the sovereign. Yet, as Hobbes' state of nature was supposed to demonstrate, when fear escapes the sovereign domain and instead is disseminated throughout the members of the social compact, absolute terror and the specter of total annihilation easily can return. Such a fear of catastrophic terror is not only a fear of potential physical harm or possible violent death. This fear is also crucial to the maintenance or replacement of political institutions as it allows those who mobilize its specter periodically to call into question practices that have accompanied the development of the modern state, possibly since its inception. For example, over the past two decades, the eliding of traditional political geographical boundaries, deterritorializing flows associated with nomadic groups (sometimes bands of warriors or so-called terror networks) no longer under the control of state apparatuses, or the observation of a growing global disorder more akin to generalized civil war conditions may have reinforced the sentiment among modern Western political leaders (and sometimes their subjects too) that a transfer of responsibility and power from the sovereign to some of its order-enforcing or risk-managing agents (police forces, the military, immigration officers, and so on) is required. Although these phenomena are not very new, the recent resurgence of a discourse of totalizing fear in the wake of 9/11 and the Global War on Terror has led critical political theorists to notice the multiplication of all sorts of executive and decisionistic measures and policies. Still, many of these measures and policies have not always been the result of a sovereign decision on the exception (as Carl Schmitt would have argued), but rather of techniques and tactics deployed by various public agents/agencies and designed to recapture security, order, and the law (Butler 2004; Brown 2006; Paye 2007).

Thomas Hobbes' famous solution to what he perceived to be the danger of civil disorder was to create a power that could centralize all individual fears and all the methods devised by individuals to react to such fears. The arbitrary, executive, and policing force of the one and undisputed sovereign (in which all individual subjects would finally recognize security and well-being) could become the guarantee that the natural danger of violent death would be done away with, even if that meant that organized violence against other sovereigns and their populations had to be undertaken to preserve the domestic compact. This compact for Hobbes was nonetheless predicated on the very condition of possibility of a latent state of nature whose re-actualization would be taken to be what can restructure political order. Hobbes thus became a paradigmatic figure for subsequent theories and models of centralization of state power based upon the premise of an always possible virtual fear or danger.

In the twentieth century, Hobbes' model of centralized power would be revisited by Schmitt's own founding of the state on the sovereign's prerogative to mobilize a condition of exception. For Schmitt, the legal and constitutional order of the modern state must have the capacity to cast itself out through an act or decision of the executive, but also potentially through the actions of policing or soldiering agents, during a period necessary to defeat a deadly enemy. At first glance, Schmitt's sovereign decision on the exception appears to be the logical continuation of Hobbes' desire to preserve the domestic compact and to allow society to thrive through mechanisms that can ensure control over fear/danger.

The first part of this essay briefly reviews how Hobbes and Schmitt organized their thoughts with a view toward perpetuating techniques of centralization of fear in modern politics. Today, the Hobbesian mechanism of fear concentration

and the Schmittian condition of sovereign exception often look like they have been generalized to global politics. Instances of war against and destruction of enemies proliferate across the globe in the hope that such antagonistic and supposedly exceptional operations will make ''us'' free from fear (Hardt and Negri 2004). Of course, one must recognize that the Global War on Terror has been a convenient excuse for Western states, as it has allowed them to execute openly the kind of boundless violence in the name of an eradication of danger that, for centuries, they practiced with proficiency against the non-West. In the West, a typical response to the threat of so-called dangerous enemies has consisted in re-injecting in the sovereign state a capacity to institutionalize fear at any moment by having recourse to war and warriors (Debrix 2008; Barder and Debrix 2009).

But in this article, we also wish to move past Hobbes' and Schmitt's solutions to the ''fear production'' dilemma by introducing some of Michel Foucault's analyses, particularly those on governmentality (Foucault 1990, 2003, 2007). Foucault allows us to identify an additional dimension in the relationship between fear and modern power. To be sure, Foucault's concept of power is radically different from that introduced by Hobbes and expanded upon by Schmitt. As is now well-known, Foucault stresses a non-essentialist and relational concept of power that further allows him to map out a non-sovereign centered potential for disciplinization and normalization. At the same time, a less debated aspect of Foucault's concept of power is its connection to practices and discourses of war. Foucault's micro-histories of Western discourses of war, battles, and racialized antagonistic violence suggest that fear (and the power relations that flow from its production) is actually not something that the modern state and its agents ever want to do away with or be free from. Rather, fear is what must be produced and reproduced by governmental agents in order to establish the control, supervision, or enhancement of the social body through multiple mechanisms of measurement, calculation, improvement, and preservation of life. Thus, Foucault intimates, fear must be made productive and reproductive of society, not only to allow the sovereign state to mobilize death, terror, or endless destruction through a recourse to war and warriors, but also to enable life—or a certain conception of what it means to have live bodies in society—to thrive.

It is indeed through a series of governmentalized techniques or procedures of maintenance of life that, in the modern age, fear has been made ''beneficial'' to society by, first, operating at the level of individual docile bodies (through disciplinary mechanisms) and later, around the turn of the nineteenth century, working on the population in its entirety (through methods of rational regulation). Thus, one could argue that by the time Schmitt (in the twentieth century) seeks to revisit Hobbes' model of sovereignty (as a system of power premised upon a concentration of fear), a generalized biopolitics of fear has already been put to good, efficient, and ''positive'' uses in the modern state, through the disciplining and normalizing efforts of various governmental agents that may or may not directly serve the interests of the central sovereign/executive power.

As agencies, arrangements, or assemblages of surveillance and regulation of bodies and the population disseminate their effects throughout the body politic, governmentality displaces authority and power away from the centralized sovereign (Butler 2004:65; Neal 2008). More than a politics of sovereign exceptionality, it is a *biopolitics of fear* enacted by way of governmentality that is operative and that, in a way, disables the state's central monopoly on power. This pluralization of fear and power in governmentalized modernity further encourages all sorts of public agents/agencies to mobilize the specter of danger, threat, insecurity, and enmity. Far from mastering the conditions of production and reproduction of fear (as Hobbes, Schmitt, or even some contemporary proponents of a return to sovereign exceptionalism would have it), the sovereign is actually made to depend upon a wide array of decentralized ''executive,'' sometimes public, and

generally administrative procedures and mechanisms (or *dispositifs*, as Foucault would call them) that bear the mantle of social order and security. A Foucault-inspired analysis of the way fear is rendered productive in modernity (or a biopolitics of fear) performs a break in contemporary critical analyses that have suggested that Schmittian theories of sovereignty are best suited to explain the return to a politics of fear today. Indeed, contemporary discourses on fear and terror (and on the wars that bear terror's name) make sense precisely because they reflect a political and discursive context in which multiple governmentalized agencies proliferate power-effects, control-effects, security-effects and, ultimately, terror-effects throughout society.

When biopolitical agents/agencies of fear production—police forces, the military, immigration and customs officers, airport security services, but also some educators, some doctors and scientists, some legal and constitutional experts, or some administrators of public bureaucracies—become the loci of enunciation of techniques of governmentalized power, the likelihood of unlimited violence and the prospect of a generalized condition of terror are no longer what must be cast away. Rather, a shift is taking place whereby these deplorable conditions are now what must be expected, accepted, and anticipated by populations whose lives are said to be constantly threatened and, as such, must become the objects of sustained normalization or heightened regulation. In the last section of this essay, we discuss this reversal in the productive mobilization of fear (from a fear of violent death to a fear of letting the ''wrong'' people live and, consequently, of not being able to allow the safe and regulated populations to enjoy ''normal'' lives), and we examine some possible meanings and consequences of this expanded governmentalizing yet terrorizing condition for life itself.

## Hobbes, Schmitt, and the Centralization of Fear

In the Hobbesian model of power, fear is presented as an inescapable condition of physical violence (and moral/mental angst too) (Robin 2004:31), and it imposes a singular obligation on the sovereign: to protect the members of the social compact. To some, this obligation to protect rights-bearing individual subjects marks Hobbes as the first modern political thinker (Strauss 1984). From this perspective, the (Hobbesian) state of nature is a crucial starting point for any modern political thought that seeks to empower a distinctly ''artificial'' unity, or what for Hobbes becomes the modern sovereign. In *Human Nature*, Hobbes offers an elaborate and systematic overview of what human nature is. Hobbes writes: ''Man's nature is the sum of his natural faculties and powers, as the faculties of nutrition, motion, generation, sense, reason, etc. For these powers we do unanimously call natural, and are contained in the definition of man, under these words, animal and rational'' (Hobbes 1999:22). Hobbes seeks to show that the first impulse toward human action in nature is rooted in a ''conception of external objects,'' one that ''causes appetite'' and by extension ''fear'' (Hobbes 1999:70). Thus, when Hobbes examines the implication of a will rooted in desire, appetite, and the concept of fear, what emerges is a fundamental ''*right of nature*: that every man may preserve his own life and limbs, with all the power he hath'' (Hobbes 1999:78–79).

Hobbes attempts to rationalize society on the basis of a new capacity to mitigate the worst form of fear that inevitably (he believes) occurs between men and of a likelihood of great physical harm resulting from human vainglory, competition, and diffidence. The state of nature as a state of war is one where ''there is in all men a will to do harm which derives from vainglory [*inanis gloria*] and over-valuation of his own strength'' (Hobbes 1998:26). This state of nature/war, famously characterized by Hobbes as ''solitary, poor, nasty, brutish, and short'' (Hobbes 1985:186), becomes the necessary platform for the legitimization of the

overarching power of the ''mortal god,'' or Leviathan, that appropriates the mutual fears among individuals and concentrates them to produce order and security. Hobbes further justifies this concentration of power/fear by arguing that the defense of the political realm against hostile outsiders necessitates ''*one Assembly* or *one man* who has the right to arm, muster and unite, on each occasion of danger or opportunity, as many citizens as the common defence shall require… as well as the right to make peace with the enemy when advantageous'' (Hobbes 1998:78–79). Of note here is the fact that fear—the fear of violent death in particular—always remains the currency of the political legitimacy and constituted rule of the sovereign, even after the social compact is created and allegedly stabilized. When Hobbes writes that ''the nature of war consisteth not in actual fighting, *but in the known disposition thereto*'' (Hobbes 1985:186), he articulates the belief that fear must remain the propelling force of any political system, perhaps at any stage of this system's life. But the fear Hobbes capitalizes on to legitimize Leviathan must also remain rooted in the virtuality of future threats against the polity. What can be called a virtual condition of fear (fear can return at any time because disorder remains virtually present) plays a key structuring role in the Hobbesian state. Hobbes emphasizes ''a tract of time, wherein the will to contend by Battell is sufficiently know: and therefore the notion of *Time*, is to be considered in the nature of Warre…'' (Hobbes 1985:186). What gives rise to the ''*known disposition thereto*'' reflects a concern not only with actual possibilities of violence, but also with the virtual intent of those who may pose a threat. Thus, Jef Huysmans has suggested that Hobbes relies upon an ''epistemological fear.'' Accordingly, ''insecurity does not follow from one's vulnerability as such. Rather, it follows from an uncertainty about which human relations are benign and which are dangerous'' (Huysmans 2006:53). As a result, the centralization of fear in the institution of the state is a necessary step for Hobbes because it serves as a prophylactic device against the overwhelming fear of virtually presented threats.

Despite the apparently durable constitution of this centralized system of power, the status ascribed by Hobbes to the state of war is never certain. Does Hobbes imagine the state of nature/war (and the threat of its recurrence, even after the institution of Leviathan) as a real possibility, as an ongoing danger to political life? Or is it mainly, as some have argued, a heuristic device (Williams 2005), contaminated by assumptions about human nature developed within an already present society, and thus designed to justify the sovereign's authority and its monopoly on violence? In other words, is the ''terror'' of the state of nature a concrete condition, one that any society can encounter or fall back into? Or are we to interpret Hobbes' political philosophy as a prime example of the type of fear production often mobilized by states and their leaders to maintain or reinforce sovereignty (a sort of always already anticipated, virtual, yet discursively present, state of exception)? These questions become more pertinent when we summon Schmitt's political theory and Schmitt's apparent desire to accentuate the terror supposedly found in the state of nature. For without a persistent sense of fear present in the minds and bodies of individual subjects, the awe-inspiring power of the state/sovereign may lose much of its apparent legitimacy. And the ultimate ability to make crucial executive decisions to safeguard the citizenry may no longer appear so justified.

By the time we get to Schmitt's revival of Hobbes' thought on the centralization of fear/power in the hands of the sovereign, the emphasis is clearly on sovereignty as the pinnacle of political order. Schmitt has been described as a paradigmatic figure in the twentieth century revival and perhaps radicalization of Hobbes' model of power (Strauss 1996:89–92; Strong 2005:xx). In part because of his perception of the political chaos that reigned during Germany's Weimar Republic in the 1920s, but also due to what he considers to be the negative

effects of liberalism (with, among other problems, liberalism's neutralization of political life) (Dyzenhaus 1999), Schmitt seeks to revive the terrifying specter of a return to the state of nature. He presents this fatal reversion as a situation that could only result in the demise of the state (Schmitt 2007). Schmitt's two main works at the time, *Political Theology* (2005) and *The Concept of the Political* (2007), attempt to reset the terms of the debate over the role of fear in power configurations by postulating two important principles: (i) sovereignty is the capacity to determine when an exceptional situation arises (Schmitt 2005:5); and (ii) the basis of the political lies in the ability of the sovereign to make a decision as to who the public friend and the public enemy are (Schmitt 2007:26–27). For Schmitt, any inquiry into the state must first reckon with the concept of the political and these two principles (Schmitt 2007:19–20). Moreover, like Hobbes, Schmitt insists on the fact that ''to the state as an essentially political entity belongs the *jus belli*, that is, the real possibility of deciding in a concrete situation upon the enemy and the ability to fight him with the power emanating from the entity'' (Schmitt 2007:45). But only when the sovereign state retains a central capacity to marshal authority, resources, and legitimacy does it have the ability to make such an essential decision. And only when the population retains a capacity *to fear* the consequences of a return to the state of war can the state truly be political.

Schmitt is interested in making use of Hobbes' fear (and his state of nature/war specter) to normalize a continuous mode of sovereign decisionism, a foundational decision on the exception that, in fact, necessitates a constant production of fear of physical harm and death within the state. Without such an unremitting anxiety, the rationale for abstracting any normative content out of the juridico-political order would disappear, and what Schmitt perceives as a form of partisanship (with respect to the determination of the legal substance of the political order) would take over the state and deprive it of its vitality. This is perhaps why there is always a need for Schmitt to think in terms of extreme cases, or to mobilize the figure of an absolute threat, or even to imagine what is in excess of the political (Derrida 1997:112–137). Such a way of thinking also seems to justify the deployment of political and juridical concepts that revolve around the idea of a decisionistic unity. What Schmitt dreads most is the impotence of the state. While Schmitt also realizes that there remains a dramatic possibility that the sovereign may end up exchanging the terror of the state of nature for a terror brought by war-mongering agents (Barder and Debrix 2009), his decisionistic model is in fact what is likely to lead to a state of affairs where a monstrous executive power, representing an unbounded will, takes over political life. This is the kind of scenario that, Slavoj Žižek argues, normalizes an ''abyssal act of violence'' (Žižek 1999:18), that is to say, a political action that is no longer restrained by any form of obligation to secure the individual subject and whose consequences for the state itself are no longer controllable (Weiler 1994:98–99). Schmitt's objective is to neutralize anything that could compete with the state's monopoly, not simply on violence, but also on the production of fear, terror, and ultimately death. In this fashion, Schmitt ends up conflating the sovereign decision to go to war and the always possible return to the state of war in the image of a Leviathan-turned-Monster of War for whom chaos or destructive violence and order/preservation of the state can become one and the same.

As some political chroniclers have argued, the image of this sovereign monster has had a tendency to return in concrete political circumstances of late (Hardt and Negri 2004). A normalization of terror, violence, and fearful life is often the outcome of many of this sovereign's actions and decisions. And contemporary critical studies have been tempted by this analysis, particularly in the context of the US-led war on terror (Smith 2004; Coker 2007; Münkler 2007). By contrast, Foucault's writings suggest that a careful understanding of the way mechanisms

of normalization operate requires one to de-emphasize the central role given to the sovereign in political designs. It is toward these Foucaultian considerations and their implications for a governmental approach to fear production that we now turn.

## Foucault and the Biopolitical Production of Fear

Despite Schmitt's radicalization of Hobbes' thought, Hobbes and Schmitt share an important perspective. For both Hobbes and Schmitt, sovereign power is rooted in the constant possibility that the state will decide to take away life. This ability to take away life or to put to death is presented as a functional mechanism that establishes a clear distinction between the state/sovereign on the one hand and society/the citizenry on the other. This juridico-political framework is constructed as a continuous system of monopoly of force that enables the singularity of the sovereign decision to be ready for operationalization and, in some cases, for the deployment of centralized violence and terror (even when the sovereign claims to use force to protect the rights of the citizens). The always present possibility of violence is what defines modern sovereignty's legitimacy. This powerful configuration also makes fear the currency of the modern juridico-political order.

But within this modality of power lies another potentiality too, one that cannot be reduced to a juridical rule or to the preservation of the legal order (even by way of a decision on the exception). Foucault's early work on disciplinary power (1979) points to the way disciplines invest political, social, and economic institutions and procedures beyond the immediate gaze of the sovereign. The disciplines' modalities of micro-power and meticulous control of bodies, tied to a series of knowledges (medical, penal, pedagogical, and so on), appear to present a rupture from the Hobbesian/Schmittian attempt at placing the will and force of the sovereign (and, often, the fear of such a will or force) at the heart of mechanisms of political order. Foucault distances himself from the Hobbesian view on power (and presents instead a relational perspective, as we suggested above) when he argues that ''[p]ower must… be analyzed as something that circulates… [since it] is never localized here or there.'' Foucault adds: ''Power passes through individuals. It is not applied to them'' (Foucault 2003:29). Thus, whereas Hobbes stresses the virtuality or, at least, the future-oriented potential of war as a central factor in the legitimization of the state, Foucault's genealogies of (bio)power navigate through actual historical wars and war accounts that gave rise to (as he puts it) ''historico-political discourses'' of racial struggles (Foucault 2003:207–208). This contrast with Hobbes found in Foucault's genealogies of sovereign power is important because of Foucault's emphasis on revealing the ''historical contents that have been buried or masked in functional coherences or formal systematizations'' (2009:7). In other words, as Foucault clarifies at the beginning of ''*Society Must Be Defended*,'' genealogies are meant to be ''an insurrection against the centralizing power-effects that are bound up with the institutionalization and workings of any scientific discourse'' (Foucault 2003:9). As a result, Foucault brings to light what Hobbes' model of centralized power/fear suppressed: the real life battles that gave rise to the law, states and nations, and the vast array of modern apparatuses of government. For Hobbes, the emergence of Leviathan is tied to ''the political use that was being made in political struggles of a certain historical knowledge pertaining to wars, invasions, pillage, dispossessions, confiscations, robbery, exaction, and the effects of all these feats of battle'' (Foucault 2003:98).

Thus, when Foucault addresses sovereignty and the formation of modern state apparatuses, he breaks from the Hobbesian conception of sovereign power and introduces the notion of biopower instead (Foucault 1990). With biopower, the

point of reference is no longer the forceful, centralized, or awe-inspiring rule of the sovereign. It is also not just the patchwork of bounded sites (the asylum, the hospital, the prison, the school, the factory, etc.) that characterize disciplinary power, as Foucault first understood it (Foucault 1965, 1979). Rather, the object of biopower is the population of a given territory in its entirety, and the main preoccupation of this power is the population's proper governance. This shift from a centralized sovereign model of hierarchical power to one that conceptualizes relational techniques of governmentalized biopower has been described by Foucault as a transition from a power that defined itself by way of ''the right to *take* life or *let* live'' to one that seeks ''to *foster* life or *disallow* it to the point of death'' (Foucault 1990:136–138). The emergence of biopower as a primary governing logic (around the eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries) is also intended to give rise to a new form of knowledge about the social body. Rather than being overtly concerned with contingent events such as reacting to an epidemic, targeting particular ''natural'' abnormalities, or fending off local disorders, biopower focuses on ''what might be broadly called endemics, or in other words, the form, nature, extension, duration, and intensity of the illness of the population'' (Foucault 2003:243). These ''endemics'' are more or less durable features of a population, a species, or even a race. They are said to be responsible for a series of social factors that can impact negatively the vitality or health of an entire population.

This passage from a fear of immediate death at the moment of the always possible catastrophic event or of the sovereign's reaction to it to a concern with maximizing conditions that can foster life in society reveals a transformation in the political utility of death in modern power designs. With biopower, death becomes ''something permanent, something that slips into life, perpetually gnaws at it, diminishes it and weakens it'' (Foucault 2003:244). While the termination of individual lives is an inevitable feature of natural life, in both biological and political discourses death now becomes a matter of mortality, something that counts at the level of the entire population (Foucault 2003:248). With the notion of mortality (and its social, economic, political, but also biological connections to the overall vitality of the social body), regulatory norms emerge. Their purpose is to ensure that a social equilibrium can be maintained or can compensate for fluctuations that are still bound to arise from time to time.

What Foucault (2003:246) calls ''security mechanisms'' can be understood in the context of this biopolitical organization, normalization, and maximization of the conditions of proper governance of life in society. The implementation of security mechanisms or safety procedures throughout the social (and the multiplication of agencies in charge of operating them) revolves around the idea of not only investing individual bodies (as the disciplines did), but also of optimizing the health or labor of a population (Foucault 2003:248). In this sense, the rise of biopower for Foucault also points to the growing difficulty for the centralized sovereign to master all the novel political configurations, economic situations, and sociophysiological contingencies of life that emerge in the wake of the Industrial Revolution and as a result of the population growths of the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries in Western Europe (or what regimes of biopower will redefine as matters of ''demographics'') (Foucault 2003:249).

In the last chapter of *Society Must Be Defended*, Foucault tries to introduce some implications of this turn toward biopolitics and security mechanisms. One important implication is that the function of state power appears to change from one that is in charge of establishing a legal order over a particular political territory to one that consists in delineating a succession of governmental procedures, techniques, and strategies that can actively regulate a population. But if state power as centralized violent force or coercion is indeed re-imagined, redesigned, or redistributed throughout biopolitical arrangements, (bio)power's relation to

fear may need to be revisited too. If and (if so) how such a power over life relates to the modern production of fear, and whether, by seeking to optimize the living conditions of a population, biopolitics can or even is meant to remove fear once and for all now emerge as crucial questions. Or, to present the dilemma of biopower somewhat differently, how a biopolitics of fear may still be needed for the production of a new modality of power becomes a key problematic.

Although never directly asked by Foucault, these questions are nevertheless prompted by his reflections. If fear plays a part in biopolitical designs (something Foucault implies), it can no longer be to prevent a transgression of the juridico-political order maintained by a central sovereign. Rather, it would have to be to preserve or enhance the life-efficiency of a given population. Thus, a new productivity of fear/terror seems to accompany the deployment of regimes of biopolitical governance (in the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries in particular, and possibly up until today). This productivity of fear and its connection to biopolitics make sense, Foucault suggests, if we take into account the way race comes into play in practices and discourses of power in the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries. Foucault argues that, around that time, Western European discourses of racial antagonism—found not just in biological studies but also in war declarations, political treatises, or nationalist pamphlets—start to introduce a knowledge that seeks to provide criteria regarding who can live and who, on the contrary, can die. This biopolitical discourse of race and racial enmity (a precursor to the idea of representing the enemy as a racial other) hopes to dismantle any understanding of the human species as a biological continuum, and it strives to impose hierarchical divisions based on categorical racial differences. Geopolitically, this discourse and subsequent practice of biopolitical racism attempt to re-territorialize the globe along the lines of such racial profiles and differences, a process that helps to ''naturalize'' the Western colonization projects of the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries. Foucault concludes that this biopolitical racism changes the ''relationship between my life and the death of the other [in] that it is not a military or warlike relationship of confrontation, but a biological-type relationship'' (Foucault 2003:255).

The normalized but supposedly ''secure'' society (''secure'' from the racial other, and with normal living conditions that are not those of the other) that is created by what Mitchell Dean has called an ''enwrapping of the modern state'' by biopower (Dean 1996:211) relies a great deal on representations and operations of biological racism. In many ways, this generalized yet intricate racial discourse of normalization (of the inside) and of antagonism (of the outside) does not just work through a differentiation between races, but also through all sorts of marginal forms of conduct, such as criminality, madness, underclass habits, and so on (Foucault 2003:257). Thus, the normalization of the inside (the population, society) and the antagonism of the outside (the racial other, the enemy) increasingly become blurred. The ways the state and its agents start to conceive of relations with ''other races'' or with various forms of ''counter-conducts'' become similar and undistinguishable. In all cases, it is a relation of permanent hostility (or, perhaps, ''endemic enmity'') that is being implemented and that demands a productive disposition on the part of the population vis-à-vis antagonism, enemy-construction, and moral and physical confrontation (Foucault 2007:191–226). As Foucault puts it, ''[f]rom this point onward, war… is not simply a matter of destroying a political adversary, but of destroying the enemy race, of destroying that [sort] of biological threat that those people over there represent to our race'' (Foucault 2003:257).

The nexus biopolitics-race-war highlighted by Foucault allows us to re-conceptualize the relationship between power and fear in modernity (particularly from the nineteenth century onwards). Instead of asking how the sovereign can

manage to keep dangers and fears in check, a more pressing question is to identify the extent to which biopolitical techniques and mechanisms of government are indicative of a productive fear of not being able to live one's normal, regulated, or optimized life as a member of the public, population, or society. What the perspective on biopower and the desire to preserve or even regenerate one's own race also suggest is the possibility that various decentralized agents/agencies of government will need to make efficient use of fear (once again, a fear of not being able to live one's normal life as part of a given population). These governmentalized agents and agencies can have recourse to violent techniques or brutal force to protect a certain society. But, more often than not, they will only need to rely on ''benign'' calculated, rationalized, and calibrated safety measures or security mechanisms that supposedly leave no physical marks on individual bodies since they operate at the more abstract level of the organization, normalization, and optimization of the body politic.

With the emergence of those agents/agencies of government and their constant efforts to regenerate the population through a generalized sense of fear of not being able to live one's own life in an era when racial others or unproductive counter-conducts abound, we enter the realm of what Foucault refers to as governmentality. For Foucault, governmentality represents the moment in configurations of power when methods of scientific, disciplinary, and knowledge-based rationality and procedures of government come together to organize social life, often ''through a range of formally nonpolitical knowledges and institutions'' (Brown 2006:79). The ''governmentalization of the state'' (Brown 2006:80) implies that this government by institutions and knowledges can pluralize the supposedly centralized sites of sovereign/state power. With governmentality, the origin of the law is less relevant to social and political designs (and to power's applications) since this particular modality of government is ''not a matter of imposing laws on men, but rather of disposing things, that is to say, to employ tactics rather than laws, and if need be to use laws themselves as tactics'' (Foucault 1991:95). It is indeed through techniques and tactics of management and by way of organizational and procedural *dispositifs* that governmentality takes charge of a population, fosters its vital conditions (by trying to control endemic social ''illnesses''), and ''orchestrates the conduct of the body individual, the body social, and the body politic'' (Brown 2006:81). The ''conduct of conduct'' within the realm of biopolitics is the main objective of governmentality's social, economic, and political, but also cultural, religious, and educational agents and agencies. In a context of governmentalized power, the biopolitical production of fear is the result of a series of scare tactics or terror *dispositifs* put to ''good'' social effects by agents/agencies of government.

The Foucaultian concept of *dispositif* (often translated as ''apparatus'' in English) is particularly useful to this analysis of biopolitics and fear. *Dispositifs*, Nikolas Rose explains, are ''machines for government'' (Rose 1996:38). They are complex apparatuses made up of various economic components, political unities, discursive elements, and bits of sociocultural information that come together for strategic reasons (Agamben 2009:3), not to create normative structures or to maintain legal orders, but to produce power as governance effects. As Giorgio Agamben has noted, *dispositifs* demonstrate a ''capacity to capture, orient, determine, intercept, model, control, or secure the gestures, behaviors, opinions, or discourses of living beings,'' often with a view toward achieving some level of subjectification (Agamben 2009:14). Moreover, the strategic or tactical work of *dispositifs* is more likely to be justified (by agents of government) when public discourses about ''urgent needs'' proliferate since *dispositifs* or apparatuses can ''obtain an effect that is more or less immediate'' (Agamben 2009:8). Thus, the power of *dispositifs* has to do with the operational and regulating strengths they inject into governmentality. *Dispositifs* can also be thought of as ''lines of forces''

that seek to relate various points in society without any necessary preexisting commonality, connectivity, or associative logic (Deleuze 2006:340). To the extent that it makes sense to use the phrase ''agents or agencies of governmentality'' (as we do in this article), those agents/agencies and their tactics of regulation, normalization, and optimization of life can be seen as layers, collections, or assemblages of various *dispositifs*. *Dispositifs* are indeed machines *for* government (but not *of* government) whose regularities of conduct nonetheless owe very little to the possible existence of a centralized power or to the traditional model of sovereignty.

If fear is one of these regularities generated by *dispositifs* of or for government (if fear becomes a terror *dispositif*), fear cannot be the outcome anymore of what the sovereign wishes to contain, control, or localize in some place (in the state of nature, in the executive decision of the sovereign, in the persona of the king, in the constitution). Rather, a biopolitical production of fear implies that a multitude of agents *for* government are in the business of deploying a range of techniques, procedures, and tactics that strive to realize control over or regulation of the population's everyday conduct from all sorts of points, positions, or perspectives and through various relations/lines of force. It is everywhere throughout society that we find security mechanisms or safety arrangements that are constantly at work mobilizing fear/terror. In the last section of this article, we reflect on some of the meanings of this analytical approach to the governmentality of fear in contemporary settings of social terror.

## Scare Tactics, Terror *Dispositifs*, and the Emergence of Life

In a recent essay, Didier Bigo turns to Foucault's notion of *dispositif* to situate post-9/11 (in)security practices within the general field of governmentalized power. For populations, the production of (in)security generally amounts to making use of situations, events, or contingencies that can result in individual bodies being made incapable of or in fact prevented from enjoying their normal life or expected living conditions. What Bigo (2006:123) calls the ''management of unease'' is one form the biopolitical production of fear takes in contemporary society (after 9/11, above all), both within and across nation-state borders (Huysmans 2006; Minca 2006; Bigo 2007; Vaughan-Williams 2008). This production of unease or, to put it differently, the governmentalization of insecurity in contemporary society, highlights the omnipresence of decentralized political operations through terror *dispositifs* or scare tactics.

To make sense of contemporary *dispositifs* of fear/unease within a generalized condition of governmentalized insecurity, Bigo revisits Jeremy Bentham's famous panoptic regime of surveillance (discussed by Foucault in *Discipline and Punish*) (Foucault 1979:195–228) and comes up with a new concept, the ''Banopticon.'' This ''Banopticon'' operates not just by means of disciplinary omnivoyance over coerced bodies, but also by way of normalized exclusion (or *ban*) of targeted individuals and groups. Some of these targets are marked as racially other or as representing exemplary counter-conducts and, as such, become dangerous enemies for the population. But many banned individuals and groups are not characterized a priori as abnormal, criminal, delinquent, inimical, or even terrorist. Under a ''banoptic'' regime, anybody can become the object of banning micro-gazes or micro-surveillance tactics mobilized by all sorts of apparatuses involved in the population's security or well-being. For Bigo, the ''Banopticon'' intervenes at the juncture of governmental rationality and power's capacity to remove the rule of law in times of emergency. This *dispositif* of terror and management of unease is also supposed to anticipate the ''future potential behavior'' of individuals and groups and to normalize ''the non-excluded through [a] production of normative imperatives'' (Bigo 2006:134).

Bigo's (2002, 2006) analyses of unease are intriguing, although one may suspect that they still privilege a unidirectional perspective on governmentality and fear. Fear here is managed at the governmental level (through terror *dispositifs*), and it then seeps into the public sphere through a relentless process of normalization. But, unwittingly perhaps, a vertical structure of power is reproduced by this ''banoptic'' system of governance *and* exception. As suggested above, any ''banoptic'' exercise implies that a condition of exception or a state of emergency has been deployed. More crucially, what is absent from Bigo's interesting reflections on governmentality and unease is an elaboration of how the live but banned bodies of the population, under ''banoptic'' conditions, internalize or, rather, are encouraged to make their own a fear of not being able to live according to normal or expected conditions. A critical concern about contemporary regimes of governmentality is not just why individuals and groups in society fear not being able to live their normal life. It is also how the myriad apparatuses through which rationalities of government are rendered visible and effective manage to make fear/terror the population's own problem, that is to say, how they produce fear/terror as an everyday social reality that populations must own and become responsible for.

Asking how the productivity of fear by way of agents/agencies of governmentalized terror is realized means questioning the ways in which a biopolitics of fear, unease, or insecurity takes place *and* reproduces itself across space and over time. It means wondering how the governmentality of fear develops today the conditions of production of its eventual reproduction. Whether we think about this management of unease or fear—and the methods through which it is kept active—in terms of special sites or exceptional events (Guantanamo's Camp Delta after 9/11), or as a matter of everyday occurrence in public places or through mundane activities (commuting to work via the London Underground transit system in the aftermath of the July 7, 2005 attacks),[2] exploring how bodies are mobilized to provide their own responses to the governmental management of fear/terror in the particular time-scapes of (bio)power is crucial to assessing the resilience of contemporary regimes of power, force, and violence.

Here, Dean's analysis can be useful. Dean writes that ''[o]ur present is one in which we are enjoined to take care and responsibility *for our own lives, health, happiness, sexuality, and financial security*'' (Dean 1996:211; emphasis added). The governmentality of fear, unease, or insecurity demands that subjects/bodies act upon themselves first and foremost. To borrow Dean's language, it is one's own ''enfolding'' of governmental authority, the application of *dispositifs* of fear and security by oneself and onto oneself, that becomes the best guarantee that regimes of governmentalized terror will remain effective. This individualization, embodiment, or perhaps incarnation of ''banoptic'' techniques is a preferred disposition of contemporary fear (re)production today (Paye 2007:245). It is by means of such a capillarized, localized, and disseminated, but also maximizing, totalizing, and regimenting, operation that the quotidian biopolitics of terror is best maintained.

If insecurity or unease is the problem, and if fear/terror *dispositifs* are the answer, governmental agents/agencies must ensure that the conduct responsible for the alleged irregularity or abnormality is done away with (before it turns into an endemic). But, more importantly, these terror *dispositifs* upon which governmental agents rely must also make certain that bodies are actively recruited in the maintenance of these regimes of governance. Thus, individuals and collectivities must self-rationalize, self-normalize, self-securitize, and indeed self-terrorize.

[2]We are referring to the killing by the British police of Brazilian electrician Jean-Charles de Menezes in the London Underground in July 2005 while on his way to work. For an excellent study of this shooting and its connection to biopower, see Vaughan-Williams (2007).

They must be mobilized and they must mobilize themselves against the possibility that their own conduct (perhaps their thought too) will be what leads to society's overall sense of insecurity, and consequently will be responsible for the entire population's ''ill health.''

A telling example of this self-mobilization and self-anticipation against one's own conduct can be found in the way Western states (or, rather, their governmental agencies) along with some transnational organizations (the World Health Organization, the United Nations) have asked populations to preemptively take care of their health, hygiene, and everyday routines in the context of the ongoing A/H1N1 or ''swine flu'' pandemic. In this recent case of popular health scare, as with many other instances of spreading epidemics over the past decade (SARS, the H5N1 ''bird flu,'' but also AIDS before), individuals and groups are asked to be the first layers of securitization by turning their bodies (or those of family members, neighbors, coworkers, etc.) into primordial sites of analysis and scrutiny from where not only the disease but, just as importantly, the fear about what might happen with the disease will be monitored. With the ''swine flu,'' a constant questioning of one's body movements and symptomatic features, but also of one's daily habits, becomes an automatic (and autoimmune) measure against the endemic fear. Individual and collective bodies become the most vital *dispositifs* of containment of the pandemic and of the terror that inevitably will spread. This management or governance of the ''swine flu'' and its scare (the disease and its terror are inseparable from the moment a pandemic discourse is launched) is said to require constant self-checking (Do I have a fever? Is my cough a sign that I have been infected? Did I remember to wash my hands after riding the bus or the subway?). But it also demands what can be called self-carceralization measures (we must stay home for several days if we feel sick; we must wear protective masks if we venture outside and have a runny nose; we must close entire schools for as long as necessary if we suspect that children in the community have the flu). In the end, it is a full-blown biopolitics of self-terror that sets in whereby people must allow themselves to be quarantined, must accept being placed in hospital isolation, and must even be willing not to be treated if pharmaceutical companies fail to produce enough vaccines for everyone. As the A/H1N1 pandemic preemption regime reveals, individual and collective bodies must always be prepared to immerse themselves into disciplinary and regulatory procedures, into security mechanisms, and into governmental tactics. In fact, they must act as *dispositifs* of fear governance themselves. This means that bodies become the required lines of forces that connect the possible localized symptoms to the global pandemic and its terror.

From this perspective on how bodies in societies of unease enable regimes of biopolitical terror and are themselves the product of operations of governmentalized fear, no return to a centralized model of power is necessary to make sense of the terror embedded in contemporary regimes of government. Rather, as the ''swine flu'' case shows, it is the horizontality, the capillarity, and the propagation of carceral effects across space and through time that authenticates this (self) imposition of governmental power and force. But what this system of reproduction of self-governmentalized scare tactics and biopolitical (in)security calls for, however, is the beginning of a different understanding of life, or of what life means. Indeed, it is not enough anymore to think of life as docile or regulated. It may also not be sufficient to think of today's living bodies as abandoned beings (Agamben 1998) caught in a state of sovereign exception. Rather, the self-rationalizing, self-securitizing, and self-terrorizing bodies that act, react, and interact in coordination with agents/agencies of government and are found at the heart of societies of fear production are more likely to represent what Mick Dillon has called ''emergent life'' (Dillon 2007).

For Dillon, emergent life is found in societies ''governed by terror [and] in the process of trying to bring terror within the orbit of their political rationalities and governmental technologies'' (Dillon 2007:8). Emergent life can be understood as a constant potential for adaptation in biopolitical terror apparatuses. As Dillon clarifies, ''[e]mergent means that they [living things] are capable of moving out of phase with themselves and becoming other than what they were'' (Dillon 2007:14). The ''living things'' (as Dillon puts it) that populate emergent life have no choice but to rely on pure contingency. This means that they can and, in fact, have to redefine themselves incessantly inside the machineries of government. Yet, because terror *dispositifs* and security mechanisms are conditions that allow it to thrive, emergent life moves about but always remains on the *qui vive*, on the look-out. As we saw above, it is a life that endlessly needs to watch itself and monitor its own movements so that it can anticipate dangers or, at least, so that it can fear today what is sure to be tomorrow's terror.

Dillon intimates that it is through the production, maintenance, and care of emergent living things that terror, unease, or insecurity is governed, that is to say, placed within the domain of the biopolitical promotion of life. Indeed, what emergent bodies enable through their constant ''terror watch'' is the perpetuation of regimes of governmental fear and terror. As Dillon puts it, ''the more effort that is put into governing terror, the more terror comes to govern the governors'' (Dillon 2007:8). Emergent life in states, societies, populations, or races steered by security mechanisms, fear tactics, or ''banoptic'' regimes ensures that contemporary terror (no matter what form it takes—terrorism, total warfare, pandemics, natural catastrophes—and no matter which enemy or danger is targeted) will *not* be removed from the social compact but, instead, will remain as the main political modality of government.

Among other things, what Dillon's thought on emergent living reveals is that it may be time to push Foucault's thought on the biopolitical production of fear further, perhaps beyond its own biopolitical limits. For when we speak in terms of a biopolitical productivity of fear today (as we did above), what we are really describing is the production of *a fear of fear itself*, or of *a fear of being fearful*. Docile and normalized bodies of biopower and governmentality are not only afraid of not being able to live their normal life, as we intimated above. They are also emergent living things that *fear being afraid* of living a life that has fear/terror as its main vital impulse. As we saw with the ''swine flu,'' emergent lives fear being afraid not so much of the spreading disease and its social and physiological effects. Rather, they fear the terror that, for them, the disease comes to represent. By treating the pandemic (or the weather catastrophe, or the terrorist attack) no longer as a possible natural or man-made disaster, but as terror itself (i.e., to say, as that which envelops one in fear) (Cavarero 2009:5), emergent living things deprive themselves of any possible solution or actual preventive measure that might tackle the problem (Whitehall 2009). Instead, the main way for emergent living things of dealing with the impending source of doom is simply to fear more and more or, as we argued above, to proliferate self-monitoring and self-carceralizing techniques that can only confirm that they have good reasons to remain fearful.

For emergent lives today, there is indeed nothing to fear but fear. But, ironically, such a fear of fear is also what energizes emergent living bodies into expecting and eventually accepting the terror and the insecurities that govern their daily conducts. This redoubled fear prompts emergent living things to be mobile/mobilized in an effort not so much to be prepared for the next disaster, but rather to be ready to fear the next catastrophic terror. Thus, unlike Foucault's disciplined or normalized bodies who passively fall prey to governmental techniques, emergent living things today actively and energetically partake of the reproduction of (their) scare tactics and (their) terror *dispositifs*. While this

argument is not to be interpreted to suggest that they give their full consent to the power of biopolitical regimes of fear production (indeed, consent, free-will, or individual choice—actual or coerced—plays no part in this system of governance, and this is one of its main differences from the Hobbesian model), its implication is nonetheless that emergent lives are not excluded from what terrorizes them. This point also suggests that, as Dillon implies, emergent life is incapable of thinking of itself as separate from mechanisms and *dispositifs* of fear management.

In a Foucaultian fashion, we could conclude that, under emergent living conditions, mobility, adaptability, and contingency are the traps of the contemporary biopolitical order that emergent bodies fall into. But we also have to recognize that they fall into those traps because they never cease to set them up for themselves. In today's governmentalized configurations of ongoing (in)security, life gets fused and confused with fear. Together, as one, they form the prime objects of government and biopower. Terrifyingly, as this condition of governmentality of fear takes charge of (emergent) life, the terror of terror, the fear of fear, or the insecurity of insecurity become ''our'' best guarantees that human bodies—adaptative, uncertain, vulnerable, yet also active and mobilized—will retain a semblance of social meaning and purpose.

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