Postcolonial Studies After Foucault:
Discourse, Discipline, Biopower, and Governmentality as Travelling Concepts

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1. Introduction: Postcolonial Studies After Foucault

In 2007, data from the *ISI Web of Science* singled out Michel Foucault as the most cited author in the humanities. Whether in Literature, History, Anthropology, or almost any other discipline in the Humanities, the name of Foucault at times appears ubiquitous – a situation that is unlikely to change soon, given the continued generation of posthumous publications.[1] The relatively younger field of Postcolonial Studies forms no exception in this regard: champions and critics of Foucault alike have argued that his work has played a seminal role in the production of analyses of (de)colonization. Ann Laura Stoler has claimed that 'no single analytic framework has saturated the field of colonial studies so completely over the last decade as that of Foucault' (1995: 1). Similarly, Timothy Brennan has argued that 'the greatest influence, theoretically speaking, on the postcolonial tendency of the mid-1980s to the mid-1990s has been that of Foucault' (2006: 103). It is this effect of Foucault's work on Postcolonial Studies that forms the subject of this study.

In contrast to the starting points Stoler and Brennan imply, a more logical place to begin this analysis would be Edward Said's *Orientalism*, published as early as 1978. *Orientalism* was not only the first attempt to bring the work of Foucault to bear on processes of colonization, it was also one of the first major texts to take Foucault's work seriously and to render it visible in the Anglophone world. That should alert us to the fact that it is not just that Foucault's 'influence' saturates the humanities, including Postcolonial Studies; rather, one may argue that Postcolonial Studies has actively contributed to the popularity of Foucault's work. Breaking free of a model that posits Postcolonial Studies as a passive recipient of 'saturation' or 'influence,' the present study hopes to do justice to the intricate interrelations between Foucault and Postcolonial Studies.

By focusing on the concepts of 'discourse,' 'discipline,' 'biopower,' and 'governmentality,' the following chapters will analyze how and why postcolonial scholars have appropriated and transformed a Foucauldian vocabulary in their efforts to conceptualize colonialism. These four concepts are not only central to Foucault's work, they have also played an important role in the work of some key figures in postcolonial studies. It is this role we need to understand in order to make sense of the postcolonial interest in Foucault.

[1] Starting with *Society Must Be Defended* in 2003, eight of the lecture series Foucault delivered yearly at the Collège de France have now been translated and published in English. The earliest lectures, from 1970 to 1973, have not been translated yet.

In seeking to analyze the interrelations between Foucault's work and Postcolonial Studies, the focus of this undertaking lies not so much on the interrelations *per se*, as on the consequences of these interrelations for our understanding of Postcolonial Studies. However, if this description suggests a field called 'Postcolonial Studies' as a solid setting for this project, this impression is false. In fact, a closer look at the opening paragraphs of this text already reveals the difficulty in locating the referent of 'Postcolonial Studies.' Even though *Orientalism* never makes use of the term 'postcolonial,' it is not uncommon to consider Said's publication as the constitutive event of Postcolonial Studies.[2] Another star of Postcolonial Studies, Gayatri Chakravorty Spivak, even explicitly criticizes the label, only to be subsumed under it after all.[3] The question of who is in and who is out of Postcolonial Studies is, from the outset, a fraught one. Timothy Brennan has observed that

> In spite of being clearly marked (if not segregated) within individual academic departments, postcolonial studies is a porous entity rather than a discrete field. It arose in the form of a political metaphorics rather than a bordered space, either "field" or "discipline". In disciplines like history and anthropology, postcolonial studies came into being under other names and without any claim to being a distinct subspecialty or field, as it did in English departments. (quoted in Loomba et al. 2005: 3)

Thus, it is not only that certain texts have been considered part of Postcolonial Studies although they reject the label and its implications, but also that there are texts that do not contain such a rejection, and yet are not considered part of Postcolonial Studies in spite of their thematic similarities. The point for the current project is not so much to engage in a delimitation of the field, but rather to emphasize the artificiality of attempts to delineate this field and to lay bare the unstable locus from which it speaks.

Unfortunately, the term 'postcolonialism' is not a viable alternative: although its grammatical singularity suggests an identifiable and relatively coherent politics, the diversity of material and ideas subsumed under the category of postcolonialism hardly warrants such use.

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[2] See e.g. Sharpe 2000: 112; Schwarz 2000: 11.

[3] See Spivak, Gayatri Chakravorty. 1999. *A Critique of Postcolonial Reason*. Cambridge: Harvard UP. In the opening paragraph of the preface, Spivak warns that 'a certain postcolonial subject' has been 'appropriating the Native Informant's position' (ix), hinting at the privileged position postcolonial academics enjoy, as well as the structure that produces this privilege.

The label 'postcolonial theory,' laying aside the fact that the texts under consideration are hardly ever purely theoretical, contains the same unwarranted suggestion of a singular theoretical framework. Poststructuralist, Marxist, and psychoanalytical elements have all played a role at some point and appear in different combinations in different texts.

However, significant though this diversity may be, one should not overstate the ruptures and fault lines either. There is no denying that in its material production, 'Postcolonial Studies' exists as an interlinking ensemble of texts, generating in the process not only a plethora of introductions to the subject, but also a certain canon of hallmark texts. In order to mark this ambiguity between on the one hand a theoretical, methodological and political plurality, and a relatively established set of texts on the other hand, this study will henceforth use the non-capitalized term 'postcolonial studies,' to denote quite literally studies that are 'postcolonial.' The term thus combines the suggestion of a discrete field called 'Postcolonial Studies' with the grammatical plurality of postcolonial studies.

Having recast 'Postcolonial Studies' as postcolonial studies, the task at hand is to determine the meaning of the adjective 'postcolonial.' In keeping with Elleke Boehmer, the non-hyphenated form will be used in a non-chronological sense, to denote studies that 'critically or subversively scrutinize [...] the colonial relationship' (2005: 3). Although Boehmer focuses on literature, her formulation of the postcolonial as 'symbolic overhaul, a reshaping of dominant meaning' (3) is equally apt for a characterization of postcolonial studies as a set of scholarly texts. The point of postcolonial studies as a problem-space is not so much to provide the correct account of what colonialism is and was, but to focus on the categories that made possible such a supposedly neutral account in the first place. In that sense, postcolonial scholarly texts share with postcolonial literature the task of scrutinizing the categories and concepts that structure ways of thinking and acting.

Thus, if the present study aims to focus on – and contribute to – what it calls 'postcolonial studies,' this simply means that it deals with scholarly critiques of colonialism which aim to scrutinize the colonial relationship. In this respect, postcolonial studies is comprised of texts from various disciplines, as well as profoundly interdisciplinary work. It also encompasses various substrands, such as the work of the Subaltern Studies collective, colonial discourse analysis, and postcolonial literary criticism and theory. In its minimalism, this revised notion of postcolonial studies is more attuned to the complexity of converging and diverging texts,

frameworks, and disciplines than conceptions that attempt to delimit an artificial field. It thus not only problematizes the field from which it speaks, but also provides a more secure starting point.

As Stoler and Brennan's comments indicate, the number of postcolonial studies drawing on the work of Foucault has rapidly increased since the publication of *Orientalism*, leading to a veritable boom in the 80s and 90s. Speaking about the 90s, Neil Lazarus has argued that 'it is *Foucault's* name that one is likely to see cited talismanically in postcolonial criticism these days' (1999: 11, emphasis in original). And yet, that such an intensive engagement should have taken place is by no means natural. Robert Young has concluded that 'Foucault's work displays a virtual absence of explicit discussions of colonialism or race' (2001: 395). Although this claim needs to be revised in light of the recent publications of Foucault's lectures at the Collège de France, in which race appears as a category of analysis, it remains indisputable that discussions of colonialism hardly ever figure in Foucault's work.

For some, this absence is indicative of a larger problem. Ania Loomba, author of the authoritative introduction *Colonialism/Postcolonialism*, asserts that 'Foucault's own theories are Euro-centric in their focus, and of limited use in understanding colonial societies' (2005: 49). That may be true of Foucault's work as such, but it is exactly in this 'use' that the flexibility of theory and the potential to negotiate can be found. In other words, what Loomba offers is a postcolonial assessment of Foucault's work, but it is not an assessment of the potential effects Foucault's work may have had on postcolonial studies.

At the time of writing, such an assessment turns out to be hard to find. Certainly, a great deal has been written about Edward Said's appropriation of Foucauldian ideas, the gist of which is often that *Orientalism* is either not Foucauldian enough, or too Foucauldian.[4] Even if one managed to strip these critiques of their normative implications, the problem remains that Said's work, seminal though it may be, represents only one part of postcolonial studies.

One of the few commentators to look at the relations between Foucault's work and postcolonial studies beyond the work of Said has been Robert Young, who devotes a chapter of his authoritative *Postcolonialism: An Historical Introduction* (2001) to Foucault. Young argues that the key to many postcolonial theoretical problems lies in Foucault's *The Archaeology of Knowledge*, a book that 'has never been seriously considered by postcolonial theorists' (394). Convincing though this argument may be, it ultimately rehashes the old suspicion that

[4] These comments will be looked at in more detail in section 3.1.

postcolonial readings of Foucault's body of work are theoretically incomplete or unsound. Not only is this presupposition of a 'correct' Foucault highly problematic, it also renders postcolonial studies subordinate to Foucauldian ideas. Moreover, it focuses exclusively on the concept of discourse – Foucault's later work falls outside the scope of Young's chapter. Similarly, Robert Nichols's essay "Postcolonial Studies and the Discourse of Foucault" (2010), in spite of its claim to provide a 'survey of the use and interpretation of Foucault's work in the field of postcolonial studies' (111), also focuses on discourse only. Moreover, it fails to look beyond the postcolonial Holy Trinity of Said, Spivak, and Bhabha.

However, this is not to say that postcolonial studies has been entirely unreflexive about its relationship to Foucault's work – to the contrary, the following chapters will demonstrate that almost every single postcolonial study that draws on the work of Foucault has reflected on the manner in which it departs from Foucault's thought. Rather, what remains generally unclear is the question of whether these reflections connect, whether they form specific patterns, and, if they do, what these patterns and connections tell us about the interrelations between Foucault and postcolonial studies as such.

Surprising though this relative silence about Foucault's role in postcolonial studies may be, it is perhaps not entirely incidental. The task of relating postcolonial studies to Foucault is complicated from the start by the fact that Foucault's work does not provide a single, stable theoretical framework. Rather than cover up this fact by positing parts of Foucault's work as the whole, as Robert Nichols' survey attempts, this project accepts as a basic premise that the work of Foucault itself does not necessarily provide a fixed and identifiable starting point. Rather, it aims to be open to the possibility that the name of the author unifies a discontinuous set of texts – not so much because Foucault advocates such a position in *The Archaeology of Knowledge* and the current project supports this anti-subjectivist approach, but for the much more basic reason that a single glance at his work reveals that there are significant differences between his individual texts. Although this stance seems to run counter to Mark Kelly's claim, developed in *The Political Philosophy of Michel Foucault* (2009), that Foucault produces a more or less coherent political philosophy (3), this is not necessarily so. Neither does this stance necessarily side with *Foucault 2.0* (2006), in which Paras emphasizes the incoherencies in Foucault's oeuvre. As Kelly's own sympathetic assessment of *Foucault 2.0* demonstrates (3), the question of whether one emphasizes either continuity or discontinuity is mainly one of perspective. The

perspective here should be clear by now: we need to keep open the possibility that different postcolonial studies draw on different 'Foucaults.'

Foucault himself, in an uncharacteristic move, has provided a narrative that defends the continuity of his oeuvre. In an essay called "The Subject and Power," he retrospectively organized his trajectory around the subject, asserting that '[his] objective [...] has been to create a history of the different modes by which, in our culture, human beings are made subjects' (Foucault 2002: 326). In this history, Foucault focuses on three modes of objectification that produce subjects. In his early work, he discusses the objectifying effects of science, moving on later to what he terms 'dividing practices': categories such as madness or criminality divide the subject internally or externally. The final mode of objectification comes to the fore in his later work, where Foucault illustrates through an analysis of sexuality how human beings turn themselves into subjects. Certainly, this is a narrative that has gained currency, but one must not forget that Foucault may have had a stake in salvaging his earlier work.

Rather than buy into these narrativizations that obfuscate the cracks, frictions and ruptures in intellectual production, this project aims to break them down to the atomic level. It is the central premise of this endeavour that in order to understand the interrelations between Foucault's work and postcolonial studies, it is imperative to break down oeuvres, texts, and frameworks to the level of concepts. It is in Foucault's use of a number of concepts that one notices minor variations and changes in focus. As Stoler has put it, the components of his analyses 'appear with different conceptual weight in different projects and with a function that is never quite the same' (1995: xi). By focusing on these conceptual variations and relations, this project hopes to do justice to the complex conceptual activity Stoler describes.

Moreover, concepts are not only subject to change within Foucault's oeuvre, but also when they travel to different contexts. Much in the spirit of Mieke Bal's *Travelling Concepts*, an emphasis on the interrelations between Foucault and postcolonial studies must inevitably acknowledge that

> concepts are not fixed. They travel - between disciplines, between individual scholars, between historical periods, and between geographically dispersed academic communities. Between disciplines, their meaning, reach, and operational value differ. These processes of differing need to be assessed before, during, and after each 'trip'. (2002: 24)

In short: when a concept travels, it changes. The next chapter will deal at greater length with some of the implications of this deceptively obvious statement; for now, what matters is that it is not so much theories that travel, as Edward Said would have it (1983: 226-47), but concepts. This is especially salient in the context of postcolonial studies, where scholars have been 'drawing on the conceptual apparatus more than engaging the historical content of [Foucault's] analysis' (Stoler 1995: 2). Thus, it seems fair to assume that there will not only be variations in Foucault's use of concepts, but also in the postcolonial studies that adopt them.

The task of attending to these variations becomes all the more urgent considering the role of concepts in Foucault's work. As Kelly rightly points out, 'Foucault's conceptual activity is about trying to invent new ways of thinking precisely as opposed to *discovering* deep truths' (2009: 130, emphasis in original). Indeed, it is the conceptual apparatus that governs forms of analysis and critique and enables scholars to think in ways hitherto unavailable, foreclosing at the same time other pathways.

Having redefined Postcolonial Studies as postcolonial studies, and Foucault's theoretical framework as a potentially fluid set of relations between certain concepts, we can now understand the highly specific movement that forms the object of this study as a recontextualization of Foucauldian concepts[5] into postcolonial studies. It focuses on the appearance of concepts in postcolonial studies that had been developed or redefined in one or more of Foucault's texts.

This explains the first meaning of the preposition 'after' in *Postcolonial Studies after Foucault*: it suggests that Foucault's work has served as a model for certain postcolonial studies. Indeed, many of the postcolonial texts discussed in the chapters to come explicitly acknowledge Foucault as a source of inspiration, whose work makes visible things that we would not see if it were not for him, and whose scholarship deserves to be emulated. And yet, it is not the mystifying categories of inspiration and influence that form the focus here – this study aims to steer clear of psychologistic explanations altogether. Rather, the crux of the matter is a focus on structural similarities in the meaning, function, and effects of concepts and their interrelations. It is this combination of explicit references to Foucault with one or more structural similarities, rather than influence, that justifies the preposition 'after.'

[5] Needless to say, the phrase 'Foucauldian concepts' should not be understood as implying ownership or monopoly. It merely serves as shorthand for 'concepts Foucault often used.'

But 'after,' in its temporal sense, can also be used to signal a break. This second meaning is equally appropriate, given that postcolonial studies never merely apply a Foucauldian model. Rather, they tend to voice explicit concerns about elements in Foucault's work they hold to be problematic. The task at hand, then, is to detect whether these explicit disagreements form patterns, whether they are of a conceptual nature, and whether and how they may be remedied. Besides these explicit concerns, there are also other forms of discontinuity that are at the same time more basic and more compelling. Regardless of whether a postcolonial study frames itself as a Foucauldian study proper or as a more critical engagement with Foucault's work, the simple fact that certain concepts have been recontextualized implies an inescapable discontinuity. There can be no doubt that concepts designed to provide a diagnosis of psychiatric power, the penal system, or the apparatus of sexuality are subject to significant change when they are made to operate in an analysis of colonial relations. These changes can take place at the level of meaning, when a definition of a concept is altered, but they can also appear in the work a concept performs, and in its relation to other concepts. Throughout the next chapters, the extent and the significance of these changes will become evident; for now, the assertion to remember is that when a concept is being recontextualized from Foucault's work into postcolonial studies, it *changes.*

Here again, the formulation is deliberately ambiguous: to say that a concept changes does not only refer to the fact that the meaning or function of a concept changes in the process of recontextualization, but it can also be read as an elliptical transitive construction: the changed concept changes something else. As a central unit for scholarly activity, it governs ways of thinking and determines which elements come into focus and which ones are left out. In anticipation of a more precise definition in the next chapter, one could say that the concept, in the process of recontextualization, radically affects its destination context. Thus, Foucauldian concepts do not merely travel to postcolonial studies, they actively reshape them.

At bottom, this process of change amounts to a mutual transformation of concepts and contexts. It leads directly to the central question of how this process of mutual transformation configures the relationship between certain Foucauldian concepts and postcolonial studies. The next chapters will attempt to analyze this process of transformation in four concepts in particular: discourse, discipline, biopower, and governmentality. Obviously, this choice involves a selection: it would have been possible to focus on the concepts of the subject, space, power, knowledge, and many others – all of which will appear at a later point. And yet, the discussions in

the chapters to come will demonstrate that this decision is not altogether arbitrary: the concepts of discourse, discipline, biopower, and governmentality have been picked up and critiqued by postcolonial studies *as* concepts, viz. as tools for scholarly activity that need to be defined and redefined rather than as signifiers whose meaning is taken for granted. Moreover, they have often been at the center of conceptual clusters, constituting the linchpin of conceptual activity, both in Foucault's texts as well as in the postcolonial studies on which this project focuses. Given this centrality in conceptual configurations, evidenced in the next chapters, it seems fair to accord to them the same central role in an analysis of the interrelations between Foucault and postcolonial studies.

By focusing on the recontextualization of Foucauldian concepts into postcolonial studies, this study hopes to fulfil three principal aims. The first two of these aims correspond to the two ways in which we have understood the earlier claim that 'concepts change,' the third is situated at an altogether different level and relates to the recontextualization of concepts in a more general way.

First of all, a focus on the changes concepts undergo in the recontextualization from Foucault's work into postcolonial studies will make it possible to highlight the ways in which postcolonial scholars have needed to go beyond Foucault in order to analyze colonial relations. The postcolonial contributions discussed in the following chapters implicitly and explicitly point to blindspots in Foucault's work, to remnants of Eurocentrism, internal contradictions, historical inaccuracies and conceptual problems. In their attempts to work, at least in part, with Foucauldian terminology, their critical approach often provides a more informed critique of Foucault's work than a wholesale dismissal would. Moreover, many of these postcolonial studies, in their so-called 'applications,' actually contain the remedy for the problems they diagnose. Thus, bringing together this set of postcolonial studies not only provides us with a set of texts in which certain patterns of criticism of Foucault's work may be traced, it also contains guidelines for the production of archaeologies and genealogies more in tune with the complexities of the colonial past and present.

Second, an emphasis on the changes concepts effect in their new context can reveal the implications of postcolonial engagements with Foucault for postcolonial thinking at large. Each of the four concepts considered here directs our attention towards particular phenomena and away from others – that much is clear. However, what is generally less clear is the question of whether

and how these concepts, as well as the results they generate, relate to each other, theoretically, methodologically, or politically. Even in the individual chapters, the point will therefore be to find out whether the continuities and discontinuities between the work different concepts perform link up to form a larger pattern. In other words, the purpose is to find out whether there has been something in postcolonial studies like a 'Foucault effect': a specific focus and approach related to Foucault's work. If there has been, it is high time to identify it. Rather than taking Stoler's 'single analytical framework' for granted (1995: 1), we need to ask throughout the individual chapters and concepts whether they really constitute a single Foucauldian framework, and if they do, what the effect of its transformation in postcolonial studies might be for analyses of colonial relations.

Third, taking a step back from the specifics of the relationship between Foucault's concepts and postcolonial studies, the present endeavour can be read as a series of case studies on the recontextualization of concepts. Not only does it present concrete examples of concepts that vacillate in their meanings, functions, and effects, it also discusses cases where these minor conceptual variations may have a large impact on the context that appropriates them. But these case studies do not only illustrate the process of recontextualization; taken together, they may also provide sufficient material to rethink the relationship between concepts and theoretical frameworks – not in a technical sense, but in the priority we accord to them. In this as well as in other contexts, it may be helpful to consider the possibility that theoretical paradigms do not have the durability our attention to them suggests. Similarly, the relationship between models and applications may need to be reconsidered. Here again, one cannot take for granted that frameworks and concepts are simply being applied in other contexts; rather, the so-called application is always already a transformation. And even this formulation may sound too harmonious, given that this transformation is not the transformation of an original, but a transformation of an already fragmentary and partial interpretation. What the next chapters make abundantly clear in this respect is that in the recontextualization of concepts, there is plenty of room for manoeuvre and negotiation. Finally, the approach presented in Chapter 2, although conceived for an analysis of the interrelations between Foucault and postcolonial studies only, may contain valuable methodological clues for other studies that focus on a recontextualization of concepts.

In order to achieve these aims, this project draws on several established approaches, including discourse analysis, *Begriffsgeschichte*, and different theories and methods clustering around the concept of intertextuality. Because the next chapter will deal with the similarities and points of friction between this enterprise and other approaches, it suffices for now to say that none of these approaches on its own presents a sufficient point of departure. However, from the theoretical assumption that a recontextualization of a concept constitutes a mutual transformation of concept and context, one can derive a step by step method to disentangle this process.

In anticipation of a more substantial discussion later on, the foundations of this approach are worth mentioning already. Given the analytical imprecision of the term 'context,' the actual analysis of each concept will start from a three-tier model, in which the general notion of context is split into the narrower categories of cotext and context proper. This leaves us with a contextual, a cotextual, and a conceptual level. The relevant texts from Foucault, as well as the postcolonial texts in which the Foucauldian concept reappears, will all be analyzed on these three levels. The contextual analysis has as its primary objective the situating of the text in scholarly traditions, theoretical strands of thought, disciplines, institutions, and debates. This will be accomplished through an analysis of intertextual references. The cotextual analysis will then determine the position of the concept in question in the text itself. Moreover, it will focus on the position of the Foucauldian concept with respect to other concepts, situating the concept in the larger conceptual architecture the text constructs. In conclusion, the conceptual analysis focuses on how a concept has been defined, how its use partially or completely enacts that definition, and the question of which specific phenomena are highlighted or obfuscated in the process. In practice, the separations between these levels are not as neat as presented in this section, and the three-tier model inevitably leaves certain blindspots. Thus, the next chapter will not only elaborate this basic schema, but also discusses its ramifications.

Taken together, the interconnections between the contextual, cotextual, and conceptual levels can provide answers to three kinds of questions. The first is the question of meaning: how is a concept defined? Has its meaning been changed? Does it have multiple meanings? Are these meanings consistent or contradictory? What does the concept refer to? What does it exclude? How does its meaning relate to that of other concepts? Second, there is the question of function: what task does the concept perform? What is its role in the text? What is its role in relation to

other concepts? Third, there is the question of effect: how does the meaning and function of a concept affect the cotext and context? Does it change the focus of the text, and if yes, how? What are the consequences for the different approaches in postcolonial studies? What are the implications for Foucault's work? Does it reconfigure the relationship between Foucault and postcolonial studies? The task for Chapter 2 will be to translate these questions into applicable categories of analysis.

In this long list of questions, there is one issue that is conspicuously absent. Stripped of all its covers, that question would be a very simple one: is this postcolonial engagement with Foucault's work a good or a bad thing for postcolonial thinking? In fact, the question itself is already problematic: it takes for granted the existence of a single, unified 'Foucault effect' in postcolonial studies. Whether the postcolonial interest in Foucault has really resulted in a more or less Foucauldian approach to colonialism, however, remains to be seen, and the following chapters will go a long way towards dismantling such an easy assumption. In other words, before we can even begin to judge the role of Foucault in postcolonial studies, we must take into account the extent to which different postcolonial appropriations have developed Foucault's work in different, often contradictory, directions.

Indeed, it is the central thesis of this project that there is no such thing as an unproblematic Foucault effect in postcolonial studies. Because of the discontinuities in Foucault's work, the diversity in the porous entity called postcolonial studies, and the inevitable processes of transformation involved in the recontextualization of concepts, there is no theoretical, methodological, or conceptual unity within the segment of postcolonial studies that has drawn on the work of Foucault. Rather, what we find is a tightly-knit intertextual web in which a Foucauldian critique competes with other approaches and concepts, and struggles to establish itself as the dominant theoretical framework. A conceptual architecture Edward Said developed in *Orientalism* often continues to absorb and reroute Foucauldian concepts, even in the work of those postcolonial scholars who ostensibly write against Said's framework. The result is a crucial tension between Foucault's conceptualization of power as an ensemble of technologies and strategies, and a Saidian focus on power understood as authority.

This working thesis will be developed throughout the next six chapters. After a presentation of the theoretical framework and method underlying this project in Chapter 2, the concepts of

discourse, discipline, biopower, and governmentality will each be discussed in separate chapters. The order of the chapters is consistent with the chronological order in which these concepts have gained prominence in Foucault's work.

The internal structure of chapters 3 to 6, in which the actual concepts will be analyzed, is identical. Each of these chapters will start by analyzing the Foucauldian text(s) in which the concept under discussion is most prominent, or, when possible, with the text that the postcolonial transformation explicitly refers to as a source. It then moves on to consider two postcolonial texts which have transformed that concept. Each of these texts will be analyzed in terms of the three levels outlined above, viz. the contextual, the cotextual, and the conceptual, rounded off in one conclusion for the whole chapter.

Whereas the selection of texts from Foucault follows almost automatically from the references in the postcolonial texts, the selection of the latter is less straightforward. In order to be part of this corpus, texts had to comply with three criteria. First, they had to qualify as postcolonial studies in the sense outlined above. Second, they had to contain an explicit reference to Foucault, given that certain concepts, of which 'discourse' would be the most notorious, tempt us to presuppose Foucault as a source of inspiration in spite of the fact that he does not have a monopoly on the concept. Third, the works included had to draw on and mobilize one of the four concepts considered here. Still, these criteria are not always neatly applicable, and other, more pragmatic reasons have also played an important role. Databases, bibliographies, and catalogues already impose a filter: we cannot analyze what we cannot even find. The question of language also plays a determining role in this selection: non-Anglophone texts have generally been left out. There can be no doubt that a comparative study between different languages would yield interesting results, but that would be another project in its own right.[6] In the case of some other appropriations, the extent to which they actually work with one of the four concepts at hand is

[6] One can think here of the Hispanophone and Francophone appropriations of Foucault. As for the former, one interesting volume is *Foucault and Latin America* (2002), a collection of essays organized around the concepts of discourse, government, subjectivity, and sexuality. For the Francophone world, the relative absence of postcolonial appropriations, besides the work of Mbembe is striking. In both cases, it is worth keeping in mind that the field of postcolonial studies itself may be inextricably intertwined with English Literature as a discipline, and the study of Commonwealth Literature in particular. Moreover, in his discussion of postcolonialism, Graham Huggan notes that 'English is, almost exclusively, the language of this critical industry (...)' (2001: 4). In that sense, any comparative analysis would have to take into account that postcolonial studies as a scholarly field does not necessarily have an equivalent in non-Anglophone research cultures.

debatable. This applies, amongst others, to V.Y. Mudimbe's authoritative *The Invention of Africa* (1988), or the work of John and Jean Comaroff. Other notable exclusions are Emma Perez's *The Decolonial Imaginary* (1999), Bruce Knauft's "Foucault meets New Guinea" (1994), and David Arnold's "Touching the Body" (1988). In the case of Mudimbe, it seems that his work does not so much relate to the concept of discourse as to 'episteme.' As far as the Comaroffs, Perez, Knauft, and Arnold are concerned, their texts tend to work with the concept of power in a general way, rather than the specifics of discipline, biopower, or governmentality in focus here.

Eventually, this selection produced a corpus with five texts from Foucault, and eight postcolonial transformations. In Chapter 3, the transformation of the concept of discourse will be analyzed in two of the usual suspects. The first is Edward Said, whose *Orientalism* (1978) presents an inescapable starting point – and not only in the chronological sense. Second, two essays of Homi Bhabha will be inspected, viz. "The Other Question" and "Of Mimicry and Man" (1994). The main text in which Foucault develops his concept of discourse is *The Archaeology of Knowledge* (1972). However, whether there is anything archaeological in the work of Said and Bhabha remains to be seen. A specific point of interest in this chapter will be the tension between, on the one hand Said's focus on identity and authority, and Foucault's focus on the structure of knowledge, on the other.

In Chapter 4, Foucault's *Discipline and Punish* takes us from archaeology to genealogy. In *Colonising Egypt* (1991), Mitchell transforms the concept of discipline in such a way that it produces important implications for the problematic relation between archaeological and genealogical approaches. One central issue here will be the way in which Mitchell develops Foucault's conceptualization of power, but ultimately subordinates it to a concept of authority. Martha Kaplan takes an altogether different route, stressing the remnants of Eurocentrism in Foucault's concept of discipline. Her essay "Panopticon in Poona" (1995), drawing on Foucault's work while criticizing it, presents a nuanced critique, especially in the light of Spivak's "Can the Subaltern Speak?" (1994), which is also discussed in this chapter. Through Kaplan and Spivak, these sections aim to provide insight into Foucault's purported Eurocentrism and the implications for postcolonial thought.

The next concept, biopower, continues in certain ways the work of the concept of discipline, but does not necessarily perpetuate its problems. Developed by Foucault in both *The History of Sexuality, vol. 1*, and *Society Must be Defended*, the concept of biopower has been

transformed in Ann Laura Stoler's *Race and the Education of Desire* (1995). Here again we will note the subordination of Foucault's concepts to the concept of authority. Achille Mbembe effects an even more marked transformation in his essay "Necropolitics" (2003), in which the confrontation between Foucault and Agamben makes for an explosive yet productive cocktail. Moreover, Mbembe's emphasis on technologies of colonial power will be read as a counterpoint to the focus on authority noted above.

Before a concluding chapter returns to the question of a Foucault effect in postcolonial studies, chapter 6 will further develop this distinction between a conceptualization of power as authority and power as an ensemble of technologies and strategies. Only the latter corresponds to the notion of governmentality Foucault developed in his lectures on the topic. Through a reading of David Scott's "Colonial Governmentality" (1995), this chapter will demonstrate that the postcolonial obsession with authority is not absolute. James Duncan's *In the Shadows of the Tropics* (2007) serves finally as an illustration of the fact that the conceptualizations of power as authority and power as activity can be combined into a single analysis of colonial power.

2. Reading Concepts in Contexts

2. 1. The Concept of Concept

What has travelled from the work of Foucault to postcolonial studies consists not so much of ideas, knowledge, or theory, but rather scholarly concepts. Postcolonial scholars have invariably incorporated one or more Foucauldian concepts into their own work, without necessarily incorporating the political intentions, epistemological limitations, or theoretical foundations that informed Foucault's use of them. If the current project focuses on travelling concepts, this is not primarily a question of perspective, but rather the direct result of the finding that the postcolonial engagement with Foucault's work is in this sense conceptual: at stake is the use of specific concepts, their definitions, and their relevance in other contexts.

The broad strokes of how one can understand this postcolonial engagement with Foucault have been sketched on various occasions. One of the founding works of postcolonial studies, *The Empire Writes Back* (1989), claims that 'it is possible to argue that postcolonial discourse may appropriate what it requires from European theory' (166). For Ashcroft, Griffiths, and Tiffin, this process of appropriation is not just a process of selection, but an ideological operation that challenges and subverts norms and values. Correspondingly, postcolonial appropriations of Foucauldian concepts can be understood as a challenge to the Eurocentric bias his work displays.[7] The goal of such an appropriation, to borrow Dipesh Chakrabarty's phrase, is to 'provincialize Europe' (2000). From such a perspective, the postcolonial engagement with Foucault appears as one part of a larger struggle to decolonize the humanities from within,[8] and to point out the Eurocentric and universalist assumptions in scholarly concepts.

Although such an impetus is an irreducible part of the intertextual web in focus, I want to argue that the transfer of Foucauldian concepts to postcolonial studies cannot be grasped in terms of appropriation alone. As the previous chapter has shown, neither Foucault's oeuvre nor the field of postcolonial studies should be understood as homogeneous entities. The implication is that we cannot limit ourselves to the broad narrative of how concepts travel from one group of texts to another, but that we must also take into account the minute conceptual movements within oeuvres, within fields, texts, and chapters. Concepts do not only travel between

[7] For a discussion of what it can mean to claim that something is Eurocentric, see chapter 4.

[8] This perspective corresponds to what Sergio Costa categorizes as a 'mild postcolonial program': 'Dabei geht es um eine Kritik, die weder die Wissenschaft ablehnt noch nach Ersatzwissensformen sucht, sondern versucht, eine Umgestaltung der Wissenschaft zu bewirken.' (2011: 46)

continents, decades, disciplines, and academic communities, but also between different subsections of the same volume, and even between sentences.

In this respect, this study differs from Mieke Bal's *Travelling Concepts*. While her focus on concepts and their transformations presents a useful starting point for analyzing the manner in which concepts travel from Foucault to postcolonial studies, it may be less attuned to the minute movements that occur even within single texts. This is a logical outcome of her desire to promote concepts as the methodological basis for interdisciplinarity in the humanities (5): although Bal discusses various kinds of travel, it is the transformation of concepts between disciplines and academic communities that dominates the argument. Such a programmatic aspect is absent here: the present study does not focus on concepts because they facilitate meaningful interdisciplinarity, but simply because the engagement of postcolonial studies with Foucault has been focused on specific concepts. The task for this chapter is therefore to develop a theoretical framework and approach that can account for both the migration of concepts from Foucault to postcolonial studies, as well as between and within the individual texts. While this first section aims to provide a theoretical framework to conceptualize concepts and their transformations, section 2.2 will translate the theoretical framework into a workable method.

Before we can even begin to understand what happens when a concept travels, we need a working definition for the term 'concept' itself. That such a definition is by no means self-evident becomes visible in Bal's first chapter, which opens with the following entry from the *Longman Dictionary of the English Language*:

> Concept
> - something conceived in the mind; a thought, notion
> - a general idea covering many similar things derived from study of particular instances
>
> synonyms: see IDEA (22)

In terms of a semiotic triangle consisting of a signifier, a signified, and a referent, concepts in this sense fulfill a role similar to signifieds. However, this is not quite the definition with which Bal then proceeds to work: instead, she understand concepts as 'shorthand theories' (23) or 'miniature theories' (22). Neither of these two definitions fully covers the focus of this study. As for the *Longman Dictionary* definition, it is absolutely crucial to point out that ideas, thoughts, or

signifieds as such are not necessarily the travellers that we will be inspecting: to simply presuppose that ideas have travelled from Foucault to postcolonial studies would prematurely foreclose the possibility that postcolonial scholars have used signifiers commonly associated with Foucault in combination with completely different signifieds. With respect to Bal's definition of concepts as 'shorthand theories,' something similar can be argued: the assumption that the travelling of certain signifiers is accompanied by the travelling of certain theoretical frameworks, which are negotiated or transformed in the process, cannot be substantiated prior to analysis.

From the above, it follows that an analysis of the postcolonial engagement with Foucault requires a consistent differentiation between signifiers, signifieds, and referents. A concept will not be understood as a signified as such, but as the semiotic triangle of signifier, signified, and referent. Accordingly, the phrase 'travelling concepts' will be appropriated to refer to the transformations that occur when a concept moves from one context into another, along the different levels of signifiers, signifieds, and referents. This leaves us with three potential variables in the process of travel: the signifier changes when a new word is used in the old sense to refer to the same referent, the signified changes when the same word is used with a new meaning, and the referent can change when the same word with the same meaning is used to refer to a new object.

Still, Bal's idea of concepts as 'shorthand theories' can serve as a useful reminder that the triangles described above do not appear in isolation. As Bödeker has pointed out, 'from the outset, a concept exists within a theoretical constellation or conceptual diagram. A single concept can hardly be understood without reference to other concepts' (1998: 55). In this respect, concepts do not differ from other signs, which are also understood to be relational. However, in the case of academic concepts, there seems to be an extra dimension: in what Mieke Bal calls 'the standard view of the methodological status of concepts' (23), there is a consensus that concepts 'need to be explicit, clear, and defined' (22). In other words, scholarly texts try to arrest or freeze the relations between signifiers and signifieds in the process of building a specific vocabulary or conceptual apparatus. The three variables outlined above are therefore not at all contingent: their transformations are constrained by other concepts, other texts, traditions, disciplinary structures, and research cultures.

This implies that concepts are designed, used, or transformed in a specific context, without which one cannot understand their meanings and functions. The notion of context, however, is a slippery one: when insufficiently defined, it refers to anything except the concept

itself, ranging from the sentence in which a concept appears to an institution, or the neoliberal economy of knowledge. It can thus include textual as well as non-textual elements. Following up on the work that has been done during the past decade around the notion of intertextuality, this project aims to, if not undo, at least suspend the distinction between the textual and the non-textual by taking into account the non-textual insofar as it manifests in the textual. The point here is not so much to make grand theoretical claims about the text and whether it has an outside or not, but rather to lay bare the methodological choice to understand 'context' as a set of interlinking texts. Consider the following provisional definition of intertextuality by Norman Fairclough:

> The intertextuality of a text is the presence within it of elements of other texts (and therefore potentially other voices than the author's own) which may be related to (dialogued with, assumed, rejected, etc.) in various ways (see *dialogicity*). The most common and pervasive form of intertextuality is *reported speech* (including reported writing and thought), though there are others (including irony). Reported speech may or may not be attributed to specific voices, and speech (writing, thought) can be reported in various forms, including direct (reproduction of actual words used) and indirect report (summary). (2003: 218-219, emphasis in original)

Not only is it the case that the postcolonial texts we will be looking at quote extensively from Foucault and from each other, the use of concepts itself can be understood as the presence of an element from another text that is akin to the shortest possible instance of reported speech. Indeed, if scholarly texts negotiate concepts, the concept itself is the intertextual element *par excellence*.

In that sense, concepts are not free-floating signifiers, but elements that carry with them the contexts in which they have been used. What Bakhtin has argued about words in general applies a fortiori to travelling concepts:

> The word in language is half someone else's. It becomes "one's own" only when the speaker populates it with his own intention, his own accent, when he appropriates the word, adapting it to his own semantic and expressive intention. (…) And not all words for just anyone submit equally easily to this appropriation, to this seizure and transformation into private property: many words stubbornly resist, others remain

> alien, sound foreign in the mouth of the one who appropriated them; they cannot be assimilated into his context and fall out of it; it is as if they put themselves in quotation marks against the will of the speaker. Language is not a neutral medium that passes freely and easily into the private property of the speaker's intentions; it is populated – overpopulated – with the intentions of others. Expropriating it, forcing it to submit to one's own intentions and accents, is a difficult and complicated process. (293)

This considerably complicates an understanding of the postcolonial engagement with Foucault as an appropriation that simply subverts a Eurocentric bias: scholarly concepts may be especially hard to sever from their context, as they only take on meaning in a larger conceptual apparatus or theoretical framework.

However, the reverse is also true: because their meanings and functions depends on the context in which concepts operate, the recontextualization of a concept is bound to affect those meanings and functions. Again, thinking of speech in general, Bakhtin has argued 'that the speech of another, once enclosed in a context, is - no matter how accurately transmitted - always subject to certain semantic changes' (1981: 340). Because meanings and functions of concepts are context-dependent, there can be no such thing as a simple transfer of a concept. An element of transformation is inevitable: changes can be semantic, as Bakthin points out, but there can also be a change in function, or a combination of the two.

An important consequence of understanding scholarly concepts as intertextual elements is that the crisis of meaning discussed in theories of intertextuality bears directly on the status of concepts. Given that the question of the meaning of concepts is one of the central tenets of this project, it is worth going into the issue of how different theories of intertextuality offer a different perspective on meaning. Indeed, the concept of intertextuality is itself a concept that has appeared in different theoretical constellations, traditions, and contexts. As Graham Allen puts it, 'that poststructuralist critics employ the term intertextuality to disrupt notions of meaning, whilst structuralist critics employ the same term to locate and even fix literary meaning, is proof enough of its flexibility as concept' (2000: 4). Similarly, Heinrich Plett has made a distinction between 'progressives' and 'traditionalists' (1991: 3), with the former using the term intertextuality to overthrow traditional notions of stable meaning, and the latter drawing on the notion of intertextuality to analyze specific techniques, including quotation, allusion, parody, etc. Naturally, the classifications are not as neat as Allen and Plett make them out to be, and our

current analysis of concepts as intertextual elements coincides with neither of these categories. In drawing on the conceptual arsenal of intertextuality to analyze a set of texts with obvious intertextual links, this project has little in common with the revolutionary intentions of the 'progressives.' But that does not imply that it continues to promote a traditional understanding of fixed and stable meaning that can be traced through intertextual references. Quite the opposite, Bakhtin's discussion of the process of appropriation has made it clear that the meaning of concepts is neither stable nor unified.

This fragmentation of meaning can be identified through Bakhtin's concept of hybridity. In "Discourse in the Novel," Bakhtin defines a hybrid construction as

> an utterance that belongs, by its grammatical [syntactic] and compositional markers, to a single speaker, but that actually contains mixed within it two utterances, two speech manners, two styles, two "languages", two semantic and axiological belief systems. We repeat, there is no formal - compositional and syntactic - boundary between these utterances, styles, languages, belief systems; the division of voices and languages takes place within the limits of a single syntactic whole, often within the limits of a simple sentence. It frequently happens that even one and the same word will belong simultaneously to two languages, two belief systems that intersect in a hybrid construction - and, consequently, the word has two contradictory meanings, two accents (...). (1981: 304-305)

The implications for the analysis of concepts are clear: concepts as intertextual elements both carry with them the meaning they have taken on in previous contexts, as well as the meaning they acquire in their target context. In that sense, they are hybrid concepts. Moreover, there is no reason why this process should be limited to two layers that come together: every time a concept appears in a new context, a new layer of meaning negotiates the previous composite construction. The opposite is equally possible: concepts can shed layers of meaning when their intertextual character is no longer recognized or actualized. By way of example, one can think here of Foucault's concept of biopolitics. Although it originally appeared at the beginning of the 20th century with a quite different meaning, it is now commonly attributed to Foucault (cf. Lemke 2011a: 9), with new layers still being added in the work of philosophers such as Agamben, Esposito, and Hardt & Negri. However, if the metaphor of layers suggests a process of subtraction and addition, this demands correction: conceptual layers of meaning do not simply add up, but

can also compete with each other, contradict each other, or transform each other. Because they are not necessarily compatible, they present cracks and ruptures, and open up indeterminacies that follow directly from the recontextualization of a concept.

To trace these layers and to note the potential frictions between them are undeniably interpretative acts, and with the question of meaning, a hermeneutic dimension comes into play. Although one could argue that the following of intertextual traces results in an analysis that is primarily descriptive, the boundaries between a description and an 'inscription' are not always clear-cut, given that the question of what is in a text and what is outside of it is not always easy to answer. The notion of implicit content problematizes such a distinction:

> Surprisingly, on the face of it, the contrast between presence and absence from texts is not a sharp one. In addition to (significant) absences from a text, what is 'in' a text may be explicit or implicit. Two categories of implicit content which have received extensive discussion are presupposition and implicature (Levinson 1983). The implicit content of a text is a sort of halfway house between presence and absence. (Fairclough 1995: 5)

Scholarly texts and concepts are no exception, and the fact that people often need training to be able to read and understand them illustrates the enormous amount of presupposed knowledge. At bottom, this can again be seen as a form of intertextuality: concepts presuppose the knowledge of other texts, fields, disciplines, and traditions, and to trace these presuppositions is an interpretative act. Implicatures are equally important here: in order to understand the meanings and functions of concepts, it will be imperative to reconstruct the conceptual architectures of specific texts. Because a text hardly ever lays bare its conceptual architecture, such a reconstruction needs to build on implied content.

If the ground covered so far has focused on the issue of how concepts as intertextual devices are profoundly affected in their meanings and functions by the contexts in which they operate, this still leaves us with the task of looking at the inverse operation: concepts are not only transformed by their context, they also transform the context. Rather than meanings and functions, at stake here are the effects concepts can have on their destination context. As Lakoff and Johnson have put it, 'our concepts structure what we perceive, how we get around in the world, and how we relate to other people. Our conceptual system thus plays a central role in defining our everyday realities' (2003: 3). The relevance for scholarly concepts is clear: they too

structure perception, by making visible or producing certain phenomena while obfuscating others.

In that sense, conceptual architectures can be understood as what Nelson Goodman describes in the eponymous volume as 'ways of worldmaking' (1978). As Nünning & Nünning have paraphrased, ways of worldmaking 'serve to construct or indeed make the worlds that we regard as reality or as the real world by imposing form and order upon a chaotic reality' (2010: 9). To avoid confusion, it is worth highlighting that it is concepts that make worlds, not subjects. This distinction matters, because, as the above discussion of intertextuality has shown, the meaning of a concept is not to be understood as the expression of an individual intention, but as the result of its position within an intertextual web. This is not to say that individual agents cannot change the meanings and functions of a concept – as the following chapters will demonstrate, they have done exactly that – but rather that the specific outcome supersedes the control of the writing subject. With this caveat in mind, it is easy to see how a conceptual apparatus is not just a toolkit, but a highly normative and ideological device. A comparison of the different worlds concepts create allows us to explore the insights they may yield or the pathways they may foreclose, as well as to examine whether the perspectives they offer provide a critical approach to colonial or postcolonial power.

2.2. Methodological Orientation: Analyzing Travelling Concepts in Three Steps

From the theoretical excursus above, it follows that the analysis of the postcolonial engagement with Foucauldian concepts requires an approach that can account for the minute, mutual transformations of concepts and contexts in a specific corpus of texts. Although the notion of intertextuality has proven its value in providing a starting point for a theorization of travelling concepts, it offers comparatively little in the way of methodological guidelines for the analysis of specific concepts. One of the models one might turn to in order to fill this gap is the German field of 'Begriffsgeschichte,' which revolves entirely around the analysis of specific concepts.[9] It shares with this project its focus on meanings and functions of concepts, as well as the changes they undergo. Moreover, 'Begriffsgeschichte' also opens up the question of effect, given that it conceives of language as an instance without which reality cannot be understood (cf. Koselleck

[9] For a very short introduction to what 'Begriffsgeschichte' is and does, written by one of the founding members of the field, see Koselleck, Reinhart. 2006. *Begriffsgeschichten*. Frankfurt am Main: Suhrkamp, pp. 99-102.

2006: 99). One particularly relevant version of writing 'Begriffsgeschichte' is the *Reallexicon der deutschen Literaturwissenschaft*, with its systematic distinction between 'Wortgeschichte,' 'Begriffsgeschichte,' and 'Sachgeschichte.' This corresponds roughly to the history of a signifier, signified, and referent respectively, and dovetails with the current necessity to distinguish carefully between these three levels in the postcolonial engagement with Foucault.

However, there is a crucial difference between 'Begriffsgeschichte' and the analysis of concepts as intertextual elements that relates to the object of study. Although the object is in both cases a concept in context, 'Begriffsgeschichte' is a conceptual history in the sense that it focuses not only on the history of concepts, but also on the concepts that have structured social history. Such a concern with history not only leads to a wider scope, but also to a different way of describing change:

> The programmatic statements about *Begriffsgeschichte*, share with social history the tendency to see history as a field of impersonal processes, in which humans are almost passive vehicles. Conceptual change is a process, the locutions characteristically used to describe its dynamics are natural metaphors: 'flow, processes, phenomenon, structure', rather than being driven by identifiable agents. (Hampsher-Monk 1998: 49)

In the changes that occur in the postcolonial engagement with Foucault, however, the agents are clearly identifiable, and the texts in which these transformations are visible are not necessarily exemplary of a broader historical process. Although the following chapters arrange postcolonial transformations chronologically, the analysis is hardly a conceptual history in the sense outlined above, but rather a tracing of transformations as they unfold within an identifiable intertextual web.

In order to do justice to this intertextuality of travelling concepts, the following chapters will approach Foucauldian concepts in three basic steps. Each text will be analyzed in terms of the context it invokes, the cotext it provides the concept with, and the concept itself. This corresponds to the interplay of concepts and contexts discussed in section 2.1, with the slight modification that what was previously referred to as the context of a concept has now been divided for the sake of clarity into the cotext of a concept (meaning the text in which a concept appears) and the context proper.

The first, contextual analysis aims to position the text in relation to other texts by charting the intertextual traces. At its most basic level, this simply means tracking quotations, paraphrases and references to other texts, and determining their function. However, this can only be a first step, and it does not always lead very far. Particularly in the case of Foucault, references to other specific texts are extremely rare. In an afterword to Foucault's *Society Must Be Defended* lectures, Alessandro Fontana and Mauro Bertani note that 'it is difficult, if not impossible, to know which books Foucault is referring to, either directly or indirectly' (286), and that 'he was not fond of debates with individual authors' (287). This considerably complicates the task of contextualizing his work, to the point where a reconstruction of this context seems impossible. Still, by attending to intertextual traces in a broader sense, one can at least position texts in relation to other groups of texts. Even if the text is void of all references, it can still react against something, and if it does, the argument presupposes its antagonist. Something similar can be argued about the contribution texts claim to make: a contribution per definition is a contribution to something else, which can be a discipline, field, research community, tradition, or culture. By attending to these implicit invocations, both Foucauldian and postcolonial texts can be understood in terms of what they build on, negotiate, or react against.

The cotextual analysis aims to position the concept within the text. This is to be done on a formal and a functional level. The formal level looks at quantity (the absolute number of times the concept appears in the text), frequency (the number of times the concept appears in relation to the length of the text), and the distribution (the frequency within different sections of the text) of a concept. This is the syntagmatic dimension of a concept: its position within a conceptual system.[10] The term 'conceptual architecture' will be used to refer to a more or less stable set of links between concepts as they crystallize in the process of interpretation. That this is a hermeneutic process rather than a simple abstraction will become evident from the fact that sometimes different conceptual architectures can be reconstructed from the same text. This is an opportunity rather than a problem, because it is in this process that the different meanings, functions, and effects of concepts become visible.

Finally, the conceptual analysis looks at how contexts and cotexts produce a concept with particular effects. A first step in this process is usually to locate the definitional meaning of the

[10] I have borrowed this distinction between the syntagmatic and paradigmatic dimension of a concept from "Lost or Found in Translation? The risks and Promises of Conceptual Transfer," a lecture delivered by Nünning and Hallet at a 2009 conference entitled *The Transnational Study of Culture: Lost or Found in Translation*.

concept, and to compare it with its meanings as they unfold when the concept is used rather than defined. Besides its denotation, this includes connotations and associations. The focus lies on the paradigmatic dimension of a concept, its relation to other concepts *in absentia* (synonyms, hyponyms, hyperonyms, antonyms) as well as the collocations in which a concept finds itself. The idea of layered meaning as presented above reveals its usefulness here: oftentimes the meaning of the concept cannot be reduced to one single, stable meaning, and different conceptual architectures within the same text create different functions for different layers of meaning. It is the task of the conceptual analysis to lay bare the different layers, and to spell out how they interact. Once these different meanings and functions have been charted, we can turn to the question of effects: what are the normative implications for analyses of colonialism that draw on said concept? Which layers dominate, and which elements of colonial power dominate the picture? This is a critical part of the analysis, and its ground from which to conduct critique is in a sense the context we set out with. Indeed, it is only in relation to other conceptualizations that we can evaluate which parts of the picture have been lost, added, or modified. Loss or gain are not absolutes, but relations to a previous text, a previous analysis of power, or a previous picture of colonialism.

While the steps outlined above can render visible the meanings, functions, and effects of Foucauldian concepts in postcolonial studies, there are also elements they cannot possibly shed light on, and which are worth acknowledging. The crux of the matter is that these steps work with finished texts and interpretations of them, leaving out the material and institutional contexts of production and reception. These are aspects Johannes Angermüller's *Nach dem Strukturalismus: Theoriediskurs und intellektuelles Feld in Frankreich* (2007) and Graham Huggan's *The Postcolonial Exotic* have focused on, providing a sociology of knowledge and a Bourdieuan perspective on the production of theory in France, and the phenomenon of postcolonial theory and literature respectively. However, there is a tension, related to the question of meaning, between these sociological approaches and the main questions this project seeks to answer. While this aspect is central to the understanding of travelling concepts aimed at throughout the following chapters, neither Angermüller nor Huggan explains how the institutional-material context relates to the meaning of individual texts and concepts, and Angermüller even characterizes his 'formal-qualitative' discourse analysis as an approach that

seeks to bracket interpretation (cf. 104), making it a difficult fit with the hermeneutic impetus of this project.

As long as these methodological restrictions are acknowledged and kept in mind, the absence of attempts to explain concepts out of the larger social, material, and institutional context even helps to problematize some of the pervasive misunderstandings that have followed from explanations that start from the social context and take it to determine the meanings, functions, and effects of individual concepts. The example of the value accorded to the events of 1968 can clarify this. It has now become somewhat of a commonplace to identify

> a shift in political-cum-intellectual climate in France over this time with the tail-off of post-1968 radicalism, and a concomitant shift in Foucault's own interest, from looking at the nefarious social power effects in the prison system and the constitution of modern sexuality, to less insidious interpersonal and governmental relations, first in the development of modern governmental techniques, and then in ancient ethical practices (Kelly 2009: 59).

As the following chapters will illustrate, however, there is very little textual evidence to support such a narrative, and the extent to which this social context determines the effects of some of his concepts is very much open to debate. Again, the point here is not so much to ignore this context altogether, as to bracket it until the minute conceptual transformations that follow from an intertextual dynamic have revealed themselves. Only then can we cease to think of concepts as passive, pre-determined tools, and begin to approach them as actors of their own.

3. Discourse

When Michel Foucault died on June 25, 1984, the concept of discourse was at its apex. Invading both the social sciences and the humanities, 'discourse babble' (Henriques et al., 1984: 105) proliferated in as diverse a set of fields as anthropology, psychology, linguistics, feminist theory, sociology and many others. In spite of its 'extravagant vagueness' (ibid.), or perhaps owing to this vagueness, the notion of discourse has become virtually omnipresent in the study of culture.

As far as this imprecision is concerned, Sara Mills goes as far as to suggest that the concept 'has perhaps the widest range of possible significations of any term in literary and cultural theory, and yet it is often the term within theoretical texts which is least defined' (1997: 1). In *Discourse*, Mills attempts to clarify the use of the term by focusing 'on how Michel Foucault's ideas on discourse have been integrated into various disciplines in different ways' (10). In doing so, she faces a triple challenge: not only are there differences between the disciplines as such, but disciplines are also divided internally in their use of Foucault. Finally, Foucault's body of work itself does not present a consistent definition of discourse either: between the different books, articles and interviews, its meaning shifts considerably.

Laudable as Mills's attempt may be, it is already compromised from the outset. For to write a book on the use of the concept of discourse, and to confine oneself subsequently to the appropriations of Foucault's notion, in effect posits Foucault's work as the starting point of all contemporary meanings of the concept. However, 'discourse' as a theoretical term was not simply born on October 15, 1926, and its use is by no means restricted to Foucault. In an extremely convincing archaeology of the concept, R. Keith Sawyer takes issue with the automatic association of the concept of discourse with Foucault (2002), which is so pervasive in Anglo-American cultural studies. Sawyer concludes that 'if one is to attribute the broad usage of the term 'discourse,' it should either be attributed to British cultural studies collectively, to Lacan, or to the French Marxist discourse analysts working in the 1960s and 1970s' (450). It was only in the 1980s that the concept began to be linked exclusively to Foucault.

Whereas the general (mis)understanding of the history of 'discourse' is beyond the scope of this project, its history within postcolonial studies certainly is a central concern here. Unfortunately, the field of postcolonial theory does not seem to form an exception in this regard: Ashcroft, Griffiths, and Tiffin unambiguously attribute the concept of discourse to Foucault in their *Post-Colonial Studies: The Key Concepts* (1998: 70). Even more problematically, their entry

on ‘colonial discourse’ weaves the concept of discourse, Foucault’s oeuvre, and Said’s *Orientalism* into a coherent narrative, drawing a straight line from Foucault to colonial discourse analysis, an important constituent of postcolonial studies (41-43). At bottom, this narrative illegitimately combines ideas from different and at times incongruent Foucauldian texts and posits this strange amalgam as the origin of the equally generalizing category of colonial discourse analysis.

Through the analysis of specific texts and those texts only, this chapter aims to problematize this narrative. Edward Said’s 1978 *Orientalism* presents itself as a logical starting point, as this seminal study of Europe and its Oriental Other marked the entry of Foucault’s ideas into what would post hoc become known as postcolonial studies. Because Said describes *Orientalism* as being indebted to the theory of discourse Foucault outlines in *The Archaeology of Knowledge* and *Discipline and Punish*, the task at hand will be to shed light on these two works before we move on to an analysis of *Orientalism*.

The second portion of this chapter will consist of a reading of two essays written by Homi Bhabha, viz. *The Other Question* and *Of Mimicry and Man*. Both texts have been published in *The Location of Culture* (1994) and weave another strand into the intertextual web between Foucault and Said. Moreover, they propose a highly original and yet deeply problematic transformation of the concept of discourse.

3.1. Foucault and *Orientalism*: A Controversial Relationship

When Edward Said published his landmark *Orientalism* in 1978, the adjective ‘post-colonial’ was generally used by historians to designate the period after colonization. Although Said himself did not use the term and cannot be held responsible for any of its later ideological, political, and theoretical implications, he is nevertheless regarded as one of the founding fathers of postcolonial studies. In his historical introduction to postcolonialism, Robert Young claims that ‘it was Edward Said’s critique in *Orientalism* (1978) of the cultural politics of academic knowledge (...) that effectively founded postcolonial studies as an academic discipline’ (2001: 383).

Trying to account for the success of *Orientalism*, one could say that Said’s analysis of Orientalism as a discursive formation that creates and regulates the Orient, enabled an academic critique of Eurocentrism, colonialism, and imperialism. His scrutiny of the complex relations between knowledge, power, language, and representation brought questions of Western

hegemony right into the heart of the humanities at a moment when poststructuralist thinkers had been trying to provoke a radical decentring of the Western sovereign Subject.

However, it seems that this explanation only covers one side of the coin. Influential though *Orientalism* may have been, it has been criticized extensively, not least by reviewers sympathetic to the overall argument. The proliferation of critical comments on *Orientalism*'s theoretical underpinnings has led Young to say that 'you could argue that postcolonial studies has actually defined itself as an academic discipline through the range of objections, reworkings and counter-arguments that have been marshalled in such great variety against Said's work' (384).

The list of *Orientalism's* theoretical problems is long and all too well known.[11] As many of them have a direct bearing on the relationship between Foucault's work and *Orientalism*, we cannot but rehearse some of them briefly – if only to diagnose their common roots later on. First of all, there is a tension in *Orientalism* between the idea of a *mis*representation, and the idea of a discourse that creates its object. If orientalist discourse created the Orient, how can it misrepresent it unless one reintroduces some kind of real Orient (Clifford 1988: 260, Young 1990: 130)? Second, as O'Hanlon and Washbrook have pointed out, the dedication to social change can be read as incompatible with the poststructuralist impetus of the book. Said is trying to 'ride two horses at once' (1992: 167). Third, Ahmad wonders how it is at all possible to combine Foucault's anti-humanist work with the celebration of humanist values in *Orientalism* (Ahmad 1992: 168). Said indeed refuses to give up the notion of a true knowledge in a way that seems hard to reconcile with Foucault's emphasis on the construction of truth. Fourth, the idea of a discourse that spans the entire West and that is somehow present from Aeschylus until the present comes dangerously close to assuming a homogeneous and static Occident (Clifford: 267, on the absence of German Orientalism; Ahmad: 166, on Said's ahistoricism). Fifth, Said emphasizes the importance of the individual in Orientalist discourse. However, this contradicts the main thesis: if Orientalism is a discursive formation that regulates what can be said about the Orient, how does that fit with individuals who make significant changes to the system (Clifford: 269, Young 1990: 134)? Finally, *Orientalism* manifestly lacks a theory of agency and resistance. If Orientalism is as totalizing a system as Said portrays it, from what position can one speak against it? How did Said manage to escape its clutches (Young 1990: 137)?

[11] For a more elaborate discussion of these issues, see e.g. Clifford 1988, Young 1990, Young 2001, Childs; Weber; Williams 2006, Varisco 2007.

Remarkably, these six critiques all adhere to the same structure: underlying all of them is the idea that Said will have to make a choice between a Foucauldian approach and an alternative in order to achieve consistency. Thus, six choices are staged: between discourse as a self-referential structure of signs or as representation, between relativism or social activism, between anti-humanism or humanism, between the history of discontinuity or the teleology of imperialism, between discursive confinement or the creative potential of the individual, and between the omnipresence of power and the hope of resistance.

Many of these oppositions are misleading, reductive and programmatic, and yet, they provide the structure for an equally programmatic debate. Neil Lazarus has questioned the value of criticisms which attack *Orientalism* because 'it falls short of Foucauldian orthodoxy' (2005: 115) – a pertinent remark, and a missed opportunity, because the efforts to appropriate *Orientalism* as a materialist rather than Foucauldian critique may be equally debilitating. Thus, Timothy Brennan argues that 'in spite of a Foucauldian patina, both the method and the substance of the book are adamantly opposed to the French thinker's views' (2000: 579). According to Brennan, 'when one sees *Orientalism* in its proper time and place, it becomes clear that its central construct is not discourse but institution' (582). One can only guess what such a 'proper time and place' may be, but it seems that Brennan's interpretation is trying to force *Orientalism* into yet another orthodoxy: a materialist framework that ranks institutional components of power over the discursive. On the other side of the spectrum, Valerie Kennedy states that *Orientalism* is 'unimaginable without Foucault's concepts of discourse and of discursive formations, his discussions of the relationships between power and knowledge, and his view that representations are always influenced by the systems of power in which they are located' (2001: 25). Are Brennan and Kennedy making the choices Said refused to make? Are there two *Orientalisms*? These are questions worth keeping in mind until the analysis of the concept of discourse proposes some modest answers.

In summary, to try and posit *Orientalism* somewhere between 'very Foucauldian' and 'not Foucauldian at all,' or between 'too Foucauldian' and 'not Foucauldian enough' reads Said's work through the lens of something external to itself and thereby inevitably reduces it. But there is a second problem inherent in such an approach. As stated above, *Orientalism* refers to *The Archaeology of Knowledge* and *Discipline and Punish* as the sources of its concept of discourse. Between the publication of these two major works, six years passed – as Sawyer points out, this

constituted 'the longest pause between books of [Foucault's] career' (441) – during which Foucault moved away from structuralism. 'Do not ask me to remain the same' (19), Foucault warned in *The Archaeology of Knowledge*, and he certainly did not. If one insists on asking 'how Foucauldian *Orientalism* really is,' which Foucault are we talking about? As far as the concept of discourse is concerned, the answer to the question of whether there are multiple Foucaults must be a resounding yes.

3.2. Foucault and Discourse: Archaeologies of Knowledge

If Foucault has ever developed a fully-fledged theory of discourse, *The Archaeology of Knowledge* is the place to find it. Originally published in 1969 as *L'Archéologie du savoir*, the book aims to provide the tools that enable us to analyze the structure of knowledge. The English translation of the title is slightly ambiguous: knowledge can either refer to 'savoir,' which is the general field of knowledge, or to 'connaissance,' which refers to a specific, localized subset of 'savoir.' It is the former that draws Foucault's interest. However, for contemporary readers of *The Archaeology of Knowledge*, there is a much more alarming issue, illustrated by the authoritative 2002 Routledge edition. The cover text argues that 'The purpose of *The Archaeology of Knowledge* is to suggest how rhetoric can be studied and understood in its relationship with power and knowledge.' The statement is not exactly surprising, at first sight: it is not hard to read the early Foucault through the lens of the power-knowledge connection. Thus, *Madness and Civilization* exposes psychiatry as a corpus of knowledge that holds power over madmen, *The Birth of the Clinic* analyzes power in the doctor-patient relationship, and *The Archaeology of Knowledge* spells out and enhances his earlier methods. Tempting though this narrative may be, it is a post-hoc imposition: the power-knowledge connection only came to the fore after the publication of *The Archaeology of Knowledge*, and if the word 'power' figures in it at all, it is certainly not as a theoretical concept. This tendency to conflate Foucault's different texts signals the difficulty for contemporary readers to contextualize each work. The following section will attend to this question of contextualization, first as far as *The Archaeology of Knowledge* is concerned, and then with regard to *Discipline and Punish*.

3.2.1. Context: A Structuralist Approach to Knowledge

One of the things that seem to have become progressively unclear is the position of Foucault between the different academic disciplines. His work has become a reference point in disciplines ranging from philosophy over sociology to psychology, and a source of inspiration for the broad field of cultural studies. Yet the introduction to *The Archaeology* leaves no room for interpretation as to where his real concerns were situated at that point: the discipline of history. Foucault is not content to merely add to the field, but rather intervenes in order to change it radically. He distinguishes between, on the one hand, 'history proper' and 'the history of ideas, the history of science, the history of philosophy, the history of thought, and the history of literature' on the other (4). It is the second group that concerns Foucault the most, with the history of ideas being 'a discipline then enjoying a period of intellectual fashion' (Sawyer 2002: 436).

Why was Foucault especially interested in the history of ideas? More than anything else, it was because his intervention into the field of history is conceived of as an attack on the idea of a sovereign subject that somehow controls history. It is exactly in this history of ideas that the illusion of a sovereign subject proves most recalcitrant (13). If history proper needs to relinquish the idea that the multitude of events can be turned into a continuous chain, the history of ideas needs to rid itself of the idea of a subject that forms the principle of continuity in the field of knowledge. Thus, the possibility of a history that 'draws all phenomena around a single centre' disappears (11). Foucault's archaeological method is therefore a method to write history without the subject as its foundation.

The removal of the subject as the foundation of history also implies the death of the knowing subject: indeed, the principle of continuity is the continuity of an interpreting subject. The foreclosure of the subject in archaeology is also then a way of bypassing hermeneutics and of developing a method of analysis that does not rely on interpretation.

Clearly, Foucault realizes that he is not the first to begin such an endeavour. At this point, two major groups of intertextual references come into play: references to some of his contemporary French thinkers (4-5), and references to Foucault's earlier work (16). The attempt to undermine the myth of the subject that masters a continuous history is what unites them.

Thus, Gaston Bachelard's notion of epistemological thresholds arrests the continuous development of knowledge, Georges Canguilhem illustrates the discontinuities in the existence of concepts and the contingent nature of the present ordering of the past, Martial Guéroult's concept of architectonic unities provides an alternative to a transcendental unity, and Michel Serres analyzes the history of sciences as a series of synchronic cuts.

In the *History of Structuralism: The Rising Sign, 1945-1966*, François Dosse establishes a line from Bachelard over Canguilhem to Serres, concluding that the latter was 'doubtless the first philosopher to have defined a comprehensive and explicitly structuralist program in philosophy, as early as 1961' (89). In combination with the reference to Althusser's structural Marxism, which emphasizes the discontinuities in the process of a science revealing its ideological past (5), and a mention of literary analysis, which purportedly prefers the structure of a given text over the continuity of tradition (5), it is obvious that Foucault is hinting at the value of structuralism in the search for histories of discontinuity.

However, Foucault does not make the above references in order to add his name to the list or to subscribe to this emerging tradition. Foucault is reluctant to use the label 'structuralism' to describe these challenges to classical historiography (12). The fact that his archaeology is at best an atypical structuralism may well have fuelled his dislike of the term. Certainly, the idea of autonomous rules governing the production of knowledge is strongly reminiscent of the Saussurean idea of autonomous rules governing the production of language. But, if structuralism tends to propose as its object of analysis a certain deep structure, *The Archaeology* vehemently opposes this idea of depth. The comparison Sawyer sets up between Foucault's archaeological method and Chomsky's transformational grammar is extremely helpful in this respect (439, table 1). Indeed, whereas Chomsky established an opposition between performance as a surface, and competence as a deep structure, making this deep structure the object of his analysis, Foucault does something very different. The emphasis in *The Archaeology of Knowledge* on the concept of discourse is an emphasis on language in use, thereby giving rise to what Sawyer calls 'a structuralism of practice' (440).

The second group of intertextual references consists of Foucault's remarks on his previously published books, viz. *Madness and Civilization*, *The Birth of the Clinic* and *The Order of Things* (16). He claims that 'it was time that they were given greater coherence' (16) and that *The Archaeology* 'is the result' (16). The relevant point for this chapter is that none of these earlier works used discourse as a concept. Although the word 'discourse' occurs on some occasions, it

does not deviate from what Sawyer calls the 'standard usage' of the word: it 'refers to a unit of language larger than a sentence' (434). Moreover, 'language' and 'discourse' seem to be used as quasi-interchangeable categories in these early works.

Thus, the concept of discourse *The Archaeology of Knowledge* advances does not derive directly from structuralist sources, nor from any of Foucault's preceding works: although the book obviously intervenes in a particular debate, the theory of discourse it proposes was something quite new. Perhaps this accounts for some of the difficulties readers have faced in trying to make sense of *The Archaeology of Knowledge*: because Foucault aimed to stress the originality of his approach, he tried to decontextualize his own work as much as possible. A case in point is his furtive reference to 'myths, kinship systems, languages, sexuality, or desire' (15), refusing at the same time to even mention the names of Lévi-Strauss or Lacan. Even more flagrantly, Foucault discusses 'the speech act referred to by the English analysts' (93), desperately avoiding the names of Austin and Searle. Whether Foucault deliberately adopted this strategy in order to claim a 'blank space' (18) for himself is debatable, but it seems fair to conclude this contextual analysis with the observation that the form of *The Archaeology of Knowledge* is such that it resists contextualization.

If the above analysis revealed that *The Archaeology* gave birth to a new concept of discourse, a quick glance at Foucault's next book, *Discipline and Punish*, reveals that the theory was short-lived. The central role accorded to discourse disappears here and on those few occasions where it is actually used, it has been stripped of its technical sense. A second major difference is that unlike *The Archaeology*, *Discipline and Punish* immediately applies the method it proposes. More accurately, it can be argued that *Discipline and Punish* develops its method through its objects of analysis, to the point where method and application become virtually inseparable.

Consequently, *Discipline and Punish* is not a theoretical exploration of either discourse, knowledge, or power as such, but a sharp analysis of the transformations of the penal systems in modern Western societies. Foucault poignantly challenges the idea that the evolution from the horrifying techniques of torture and the gory public executions of the 18th century to the meticulously planned carceral system of the 19th and 20th century was an evolution from barbarity to humanity. Rather, this evolution illustrates the rise of a new form of power, viz. discipline. Disciplinary forms of power, which manifested themselves in the penal system but

found their way to schools, hospitals, and armies, produced a form of individuality that enabled bodies to perform their tasks in modern society.

Bearing in mind the earlier findings about *The Archaeology* as an intervention in the field of history, *Discipline and Punish* seems to be similar in this respect. Thus, the opening chapter 'The Body of the Condemned' presents the book as 'a correlative history of the modern soul and of a new power to judge' (23), 'a common history of power relations and object relations' (24), and 'a history of the body' (25). However, there is a marked difference: *Discipline and Punish* is a 'history of the present' (31). Whereas the archaeological method was content to stick to the description of discursive formations and their discontinuities, this new approach relinquishes this positivism in order to enable the expression of meaningful statements about the lives we live. Briefly put: the analyst no longer aspires to a position outside of history.

This impossibility of making meaningful statements was not the only problem facing the archaeological approach. A second issue was the idea of discourse as an autonomous system: if discursive formations are characterized by rules, we end up with the strange notion of 'regularities which regulate themselves' (Dreyfus & Rabinow 1982: 84). As Foucault's reasons for abandoning the archaeological method fall outside of the scope of this chapter,[12] it suffices to say that they have had important effects: the move away from structuralism, the abandonment of discourse, and the creation of a very different approach altogether. If *The Archaeology of Knowledge* still referred to structuralist thinkers and Foucault's earlier work, intertextual references to secondary sources are even rarer in *Discipline and Punish*. One of the few exceptions is the reference to Durkheim (23) and Rusche & Kirchheimer (24), but the link is thematic rather than theoretical or methodological. Thus, Foucault pushes the strategy of decontextualization to its limits in order to underscore the originality of his new approach. The cotextual analysis will shed more light on the discrepancies between the old archaeological method and the genealogical alternative.

[12] For a more detailed discussion, see Part I, Chapter 4 "The methodological failures of Archaeology" (79-100) in Dreyfus, H.L.; Rabinow, P. 1982. *Michel Foucault: Beyond Structuralism and Hermeneutics*. New York: Harvester Wheatsheaf.

3.2.2. Cotext: Knowledge and its Relation to Power

Before digging into the meanings and uses of the concept of discourse, an analysis of how the concept relates to other concepts in *The Archaeology of Knowledge* and *Discipline and Punish* will illustrate how the position of discourse is fundamentally different in their respective conceptual architectures. In anticipation of the conceptual analysis in 3.2.3, a provisional working definition of discourse as either 'the general domain of all statements' or 'an individualizable group of statements' will do (*AK* 90).

As far as *The Archaeology* is concerned, this notion of **discourse**[13] provides a logical starting point. A first issue to be tackled is the relation to its **objects**. The crux of the matter here is that the archaeological theory of discourse is not a theory of representation: it severs the link between signs and their supposed material correlates. Rather than these material objects, what is at stake are discursive objects: as soon as discourse is created, a discursive object is created that is in a sense the material object in the process of being named, defined, designated, demarcated, measured, qualified, etc. (*AK* 102-103).

Besides the exclusion of non-discursive objects, non-discursive practices are equally 'explicitly excluded from consideration' (Sawyer: 441). This is not because Foucault considers them irrelevant, subordinate to discourse, or non-existent, but because their effects can be traced in the analysis of discourse itself. He tries to salvage his claim that discourse can be analyzed as an autonomous system by admitting that non-discursive factors, such as desire, have an important role to play, but that neither

> the relation of discourse to desire, nor the processes of its appropriation, nor its role among non-discursive practices is extrinsic to its unity, its characterization, and the laws of its formation. They are not disturbing elements which, superposing themselves upon its pure, neutral, atemporal, silent form, suppress its true voice and emit in its place a travestied discourse, but, on the contrary, its formative elements. (76)

Succinctly put, these external factors do not corrupt discourse, but create it. This brings us to the real concern of *The Archaeology*: it was not designed to replace a theory of language with a theory of discourse, but to provide insight into the status of **knowledge**. Given that 'knowledge is

[13] In all cotextual sections, the concepts that are central to the conceptual architecture of the analysed text will be printed in **bold**.

that of which one can speak in a discursive practice' (201) and that discursive practices form a self-referential system rather than a reflection of a material reality, the distinction between true and false knowledge recedes from view. Thus, the above quotation also means that, whereas desire could be understood as an external influence that corrupts the truth of knowledge, the archaeological approach reads it as constitutive of knowledge – a point worth keeping in mind in the analysis of Said's *Orientalism*.

A second major point about the place of knowledge in *The Archaeology* is that it is inextricably linked to discourse: 'there is no knowledge without a particular discursive practice; and any discursive practice may be defined by the knowledge that it forms' (201). This inverts the commonsensical order: the act of speaking/writing in a sense precedes knowledge. It is in this context that Foucault brings in the concept of the **historical *a priori***, 'defined as the group of rules that characterize a discursive practice' (144). More concretely, the archaeological approach presupposes that there are certain rules that govern what can be said within a particular discourse. These are 'a priori' because they prestructure what can be said, but they are 'historical' because they are far from universal. To the contrary, it is the task of the archaeologist to illustrate how discontinuities in these sets of rules account for discontinuities in the **archive**, meaning '*the general system of the formation and transformation of statements*' (146, emphasis in original). Thus, the general domain of statements is broken up into discontinuous units. The discrepancies between certain disciplines with regard to which statements can be made are a case in point, but disciplines themselves also show discontinuous patterns, e.g. the break effected by the emergence of genetics within biology.

Thus, the task of **archaeology** is to analyze this archive, to isolate different discourses, to describe the rules that give rise to different kinds of knowledge, thereby replacing the idea of scientific progress with the discontinuities between different systems, and the idea of the subject as the source of knowledge with the notion of rules that govern knowledge production.

Repeating this exercise with *Discipline and Punish*, a wholly different conceptual architecture presents itself. Two main concepts take over the central role discourse used to have: power and knowledge. **Power**, which was largely absent in *The Archaeology*, mainly manifests itself in the book as disciplinary power: a complex system of power relations that creates individuals and compels them to take up their role in society. As Foucault's concept of power will be discussed

more extensively in a separate chapter, at this point it suffices to say that clusters of power relations have the ability to move societies in particular directions.

Knowledge, on the other hand, is the collection of things held to be true within a society or a subset of it, plus the ensuing techniques and skills held to be effective. In Western societies, there has been 'a whole tradition that allows us to imagine that knowledge can exist only where the power relations are suspended' (27). This tradition holds that knowledge needs to be shielded off from power to avoid its corruption.

One could therefore assume that when Foucault claims that 'power-knowledge relations are to be analysed' (27), he aims to study the way in which power corrupts knowledge. Yet, this is emphatically not the case. Consider the following passage:

> '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' (27)

To conclude that Foucault argues that knowledge is always corrupted by power would be a mistake for two interdependent reasons. A first objection is obvious: if knowledge is by definition corrupted, there is no such thing as true knowledge. If there is no true knowledge, power cannot corrupt it. The second reason is less obvious, and yet it is hard to overstate its importance: power and knowledge do not affect each other because they are essentially the same thing. This is not to repeat the Baconian aphorism that knowledge is power, but rather, that it is more helpful to see power and knowledge as a single concept than as two interrelated notions.

Thus, what is really central is the concept of **power-knowledge** (27): the shocking claim in *Discipline and Punish* is not that techniques serving the power to punish derive from the human sciences, nor that the human sciences provided the instruments for the penal system, nor even that both processes mutually reinforced each other. The point Foucault tries to make is that disciplinary power and the human sciences share the same root. The epistemological mutation taking place in history where the human being becomes an object is the enabling moment for both disciplinary power and the human sciences: the human being becomes 'effect and object of power,' 'effect and object of knowledge' (192). It is the objectification that forms the power-knowledge nexus.

This nexus led to the political investment of the **body**: 'the body is also directly involved in a political field' (25). The body as an object of knowledge and power stands in 'complex reciprocal relations' (25) with economic use and the laws of production, violence, ideology, psychical and material force, institutions, and the state apparatus (26). A second consequence of this investment is the production of the **soul**:

> 'It would be wrong to say that the soul is an illusion, or an ideological effect. On the contrary, it exists, it has a reality, it is produced permanently around, on, within the body by the functioning of a power that is exercised on those punished – and, in a more general way, on those one supervises, trains and corrects, over madmen, children at home and at school, the colonized, over those who are stuck at a machine and supervised for the rest of their lives.' (29)

With the soul as a product of power-knowledge, the theme of an attack on the sovereign subject returns: the notions of 'psyche, subjectivity, personality, consciousness, etc.' have been built on the reality-reference of the soul (29-30). Thus, subjectivity returns in *Discipline and Punish* as a product of power, whereas *The Archaeology* had tried to remove the subject from analysis altogether.

As illustrated above, archaeological analysis tried to achieve this removal of the subject through an insistence on discourse. In *Discipline and Punish*, however, **discourse** has been relegated to the periphery. The word has lost its technical sense. Consider for instance the following quotation:

> 'The great empirical knowledge that covered the things of the world and transcribed them into the ordering of an indefinite discourse that observes, describes and establishes the 'facts' (...) had its operating model no doubt in the Inquisition (...).' (226)

Whereas in *The Archaeology* discourse theoretically precedes knowledge, here the order has been inverted again: discourse is simply the formulation of the knowledge that inspired it. Consequently, the conceptual architecture in which the concept of discourse finds itself is fundamentally different. In summary, the analysis of knowledge through discursive formations called archaeology has been replaced with a **genealogy** of the subject: the analysis of how power

and knowledge give rise to specific forms of subjectivity, taking into account both discursive and non-discursive practices.

3.2.3. Concept: Discourse as the Structure of Knowledge

Now that the relationships between the concept of discourse and the other concepts in both *The Archaeology* and *Discipline and Punish* have been clarified, the time has come to look into the concept of discourse itself. For if the previous section proposed a working definition of the concept, it did not fully work out the distinction it proposed between a technical and a non-technical sense of the word. This non-technical sense coincides with what Sawyer calls '*standard usage,*' when '*discourse* refers to a unit of language larger than a sentence' (434, emphasis in original). Hardly a definition, this notion of standard usage tries to capture the many meanings of the word 'discourse' by finding their common root: a dialogue, a treatise, an article, and a lecture are all units of language larger than a sentence. The first instances of 'discourse' in *The Archaeology* refer to this standard usage, with phrases like 'the discourse of the historian' (10, twice), 'his (...) discourse' (14), or 'the discourse of one man' (24). Thus, discourse is something which one can possess.

However, this use quickly becomes overshadowed when Foucault goes on to argue that 'discourse must (...) be (...) treated as and when it *occurs*' (28, my emphasis). The verb is intransitive and in those rare cases where its subject is animate, the action is generally not intentional.[14] Thus, discourse is no longer something a sovereign subject possesses, but an autonomous system. Ultimately, this is the very opposite of the standard usage described above. These definitions do not compete in *The Archaeology*: the former is only used to get to the latter. Thus, although Foucault scattered tentative definitions of the concept throughout the text, he does not provide these definitions with a 'full meaning' (131) until page 131: 'We shall call discourse a group of statements in so far as they belong to the same discursive formation.' Note that this is only a definition for 'discourse' as a count noun; the mass noun apparently retains its definition as 'the general domain of all statements' (90).

[14] Although the translation differs considerably from the original French, this verb transmits this non-intentional and intransitive aspect of the action well. The original reads: 'Il ne faut pas renvoyer le discours à la lointaine présence de l'origine ; il faut le traiter dans le jeu de son *instance*.' (1969 : 37, my emphasis)

The reason why it takes *The Archaeology* so long to come to its final definition is that it needs to develop the concepts of 'statement' and 'discursive formation' first. A discursive formation is already defined on page 41:

> Whenever one can describe, between a number of statements, such a system of dispersion, whenever, between objects, types of statement, concepts, or thematic choices, one can define a regularity (an order, correlations, positions and functionings, transformations), we will say, for the sake of convenience, that we are dealing with a *discursive formation* (...). (41)

'Statement' also needs to be defined, because it neither coincides with a series of signs, a proposition, nor a sentence:

> We will call *statement* the modality of existence proper to that [or any] group of signs: a modality that allows it to be something more than a series of traces, something more than a succession of marks on a substance, something more than a mere object made by a human being; a modality that allows it to be in relation with a domain of objects, to prescribe a definite position to any possible subject, to be situated among other verbal performances, and to be endowed with a repeatable materiality. (120)

The point of combining these two definitions in the claim that a discourse is a group of statements belonging to the same discursive formation is to break up the traditional unities such as the book, the oeuvre, and the discipline, and to replace them with a system that explains why certain statements can be made in certain discursive practices, but not in others. It also points towards the creation of knowledge in discontinuous units, governed by certain rules of formation that are not imposed upon discourse, but that are present from the outset.

In short, the notion of discourse in *The Archaeology of Knowledge* aims to analyze knowledge as a discontinuous field in which various structures can be isolated. The task of the archaeologist is to detect the rules that govern the production of discourse and knowledge. If, as in *Discipline and Punish*, the idea of rules that govern discourse disappears, the whole concept of discourse as *The Archaeology* proposes it loses its value entirely. As far as this evolution from archaeology to genealogy is concerned, Dreyfus & Rabinow claim that 'archaeology, while it still plays an important role, is subordinated to genealogy' (103). Yet, given the drastic changes

between *The Archaeology of Knowledge* and *Discipline and Punish*, one may well wonder whether archaeology has a place within genealogy at all. As the analysis of the concept of discourse has shown, archaeology and genealogy are irreconcilable without serious modifications.

3.3. *Orientalism* and Discourse: Exit Knowledge, Enter Identity; Exit Power, Enter Authority

3.3.1. Context: Between Marxism and Literary Studies

Whereas Foucault at times deliberately downplayed the context in which his work was set, the introduction of *Orientalism* renders Said's position very explicit, both within academia as well as in the broader realities of ordinary life. First and foremost, his work is of course a critique of Orientalism, defined in three ways: Orientalism is, first of all, the activity of the Orientalist; secondly, a 'style of thought based upon an ontological and epistemological distinction made between "the Orient" and (most of the time) "the Occident"' (2). Thirdly, it is 'a discourse,' 'as described by [Michel Foucault] in *The Archaeology of Knowledge* and in *Discipline and Punish*' (3). If this threefold definition spans both Orientalism as a discipline and as a frame of mind affecting the average European, something similar can be said about Said's critique of it: 'the nexus of knowledge and power creating "the Oriental" and in a sense obliterating him as a human being is therefore not for me an exclusively academic matter' (27). Said claims to write for an audience ranging from 'students of literature' (24) to the 'formerly colonized people' (25). This activist impetus is coupled with a strong 'personal dimension' (25).

Thus, the project differs from the archaeological method before Said can even begin to apply it: unlike the archaeological Foucault, Said does not intend to provide a descriptive, positivist account. As has been pointed out above, the impossibility of archaeology to go beyond a simple relativism was one of the reasons for the transition from archaeology to genealogy. But Said's account of Orientalism is not a pure genealogy either, as it maintains the idea of discourse as a structure. As a more detailed account of the theoretical underpinnings will be provided in section 3.3.2., the relevant point for this contextual analysis is that *Orientalism* does not present itself as a pure application of a Foucauldian method. Not only does Said claim to deviate from Foucault as far as the status of the individual is concerned (23),[15] he also sees the need to

[15] The question of whether this supposed deviation is a significant methodological choice, or simply a misunderstanding of Foucault's work, will be dealt with later on.

combine Foucault's notion of discourse with Gramsci's concept of hegemony (7) and lists Foucault's name together with Antonio Gramsci and Raymond Williams (14). In short, Said presents his method as a combination of very heterogeneous elements.

Approaching the issue negatively, this ideosyncracy of *Orientalism* also expresses Said's discontent with the methods available to him. The root of the problem for Said is the difficulty in connecting culture and imperialism. Marxist approaches easily end up subordinating the realm of culture and ideas to imperial domination 'mechanically and deterministically' (12), whereas 'literary studies in general' (13) clings to the idea that 'a literary scholar and a philosopher, for example, are trained in literature and philosophy respectively, not in politics or ideological analysis' (14). Neither does the history of ideas offer a valid alternative, because it overlooks the connections between ideas and their material effects (cf. 23). The following section will have a closer look at how Said aims to solve this problem. Can the concept of discourse provide the missing link between the ideal and the material?

3.3.2. Cotext: A Double Conceptual Architecture

To reconstruct a conceptual architecture of *Orientalism* is by no means an easy task. With the debate in mind as to the degree of 'Foucauldianness,' summarily sketched in section 3.1., *Orientalism* indeed seems to be vacillating between two different structures. The core of the problem resides in the relations between the concepts of discourse, power and knowledge. From the signifiers 'discourse,' 'power,' and 'knowledge,' *Orientalism* constructs two architectures in which these concepts possess different signifieds. This section will illustrate how these three signifiers can be combined to form two radically different conceptual architectures.

The previous sections have sought to emphasize the importance of understanding power and knowledge in *Discipline and Punish* as a single concept, but this is not the line of argument Said consistently follows. Instead, he sets up a conflict between knowledge and power. Consider for instance the following quotation:

> I doubt that it is controversial, for example, to say that an Englishman in India or Egypt in the later nineteenth century took an interest in those countries that was never far from their status in his mind as British colonies. To say this may seem quite different from

> saying that all academic knowledge about India and Egypt is somehow tinged and impressed with, violated by, the gross political fact – and yet *that is what I am saying* in this study of Orientalism. (11, emphasis in original)

If academic knowledge is 'tinged,' 'impressed,' or 'violated' by colonial power, power and knowledge may be interdependent, but certainly not coincident. **Knowledge** is distorted from the outside. Thus the possibility of true knowledge is never at issue and Said retains the possibility of contrasting a mendacious discipline like Orientalism with knowledge that 'genuinely seemed to be advancing' (63). Moreover, whereas Foucault understood knowledge as a set of discursive formations with a particular truth-effect, thus separating it from other discursive formations like literature or myth, these distinctions remain undiscussed in *Orientalism*. At times it seems that Said is not so much interested in knowledge as such, but in any discursive articulation of **identity** – a concept Foucault simply did not use. Indeed, Said 'tries to show that European culture gained in strength and identity by setting itself off against the Orient as a sort of surrogate self' (3). What *Orientalism* discusses as knowledge includes 'elaborate theories, epics, novels, social descriptions, and political accounts' (2), which, taken together, support 'the idea of European identity as a superior one' (7). More than just knowledge, it is identity that is at stake.

Power, the other half of the power-knowledge cluster, assumes many different shapes. Thus, Said distinguishes between 'power political,' 'power intellectual,' 'power cultural,' and 'power moral' (12). These forms of power 'exist in an uneven exchange' with **discourse** (12). Thus, discourse itself is not a power-knowledge unit, but merely a supposed representation of an object. This representation is to be situated on a scale between two opposed forces: raw power and pure knowledge. Orientalist discourse, on this scale, is on the side of power: the scholarship of Orientalism is 'based finally on power and not really on disinterested objectivity' (148). But what this power, for Said, exactly is remains unclear. Consider the following two quotations:

> 'The discourse of Orientalism and what made it possible – in Napoleon's case, a West far more powerful militarily than the Orient – (...).' (95)
>
> 'The scientist, the scholar, the missionary, the trader, or the soldier was in, or thought about, the Orient because he *could be there*, or could think about it, with very little resistance on the Orient's part.' (7, emphasis in original)

It seems here that power is not something *Orientalism* analyzes or explains, but something it takes for granted. Rather than the consequence of a particular subject-object relationship, as in a Foucauldian architecture, it appears more akin to military and logistical power. What *Orientalism* explains, then, is not power per se, but **authority**:

> There is nothing mysterious or natural about authority. It is formed, irradiated, disseminated; it is instrumental, it is persuasive; it has status, it establishes canons of taste and value; it is virtually indistinguishable from certain ideas it dignifies as true, and from traditions, perceptions, and judgements it forms, transmits, reproduces. Above all, authority can, indeed must, be analyzed. (19-20)

Authority in this case is the capacity to represent the relationship between the West and the Orient in such a way that the West is able not only to know the Orient, but also to decide what is best for it. Rather than the manipulation of the objects of power, what Said describes is the process that legitimizes the use of military power. The question this first possible conceptual architecture aims to answer, therefore, is how the fiction of European superiority, inspired by a will to power, manages to mask itself as truth.

With Orientalism as an expression of a Western will to power, the notion of gaze loses its relevance for Said: 'gifted pilgrims like Nerval and Flaubert preferred Lane's descriptions to what their eyes and minds showed them immediately' (177). Other concepts, however, quickly take its place: with the new-found distinction between true and interested knowledge, the possibility of an **individual** that makes its own choices returns. In practice, however, Orientalism is cast as so authoritative that 'no one writing, thinking, or acting on the Orient could do so without taking account of the limitations on thought and action imposed by Orientalism' (3). Said's description of Marx is enlightening in this respect:

> That Marx was still able to sense some fellow feeling, to identify even a little with poor Asia, suggests that something happened before the labels took over, before he was dispatched to Goethe as a source of wisdom on the Orient. It is as if the individual mind (Marx's, in this case) could find a precollective, preofficial individuality in Asia – find and even give in to its pressures upon his emotions, feelings, senses – only to give it up when he confronted a more formidable censor in the very vocabulary he found himself forced to employ. (155)

What Said is essentially saying is that Marx was not an Orientalist until something outside himself took over. In that sense, Said reinstalls an opposition between the individual and the social, which is exactly what Foucault set out to avoid: *Discipline and Punish* had located individuality as a product of disciplinary power, not as its antagonist.

This return of individuality poses a problem that is more significant than a mere theoretical lapse or an intrusion of empiricism upon Foucault's theory. Quite to the contrary, the individual has a foundational role in this conceptual architecture: it prepares the ground for the concept of **hegemony**. Said refers to Gramsci's claim that hegemony is the domination of certain ideas through 'consent' (7), an idea which accords a role to the individual that does not fit in with either archaeology or genealogy.

Of course, there is no reason why Said should stay true to Foucault's method. After all, the advantages of this second conceptual architecture are considerable: it allows an analysis of the treacherousness of representation, without discarding the possibility of a more objective knowledge. Moreover, in retaining a notion of reality, it opens up a path for resistance: the discrepancy between reality and Orientalist representation can undermine domination.

Nevertheless, this first model fails to provide a sound base for the most ambitious of *Orientalism's* claims, viz. that Orientalist discourse played an active and foundational role in the Western domination of the Orient. Indeed, Said argues that 'the Orient needed first to be known, then invaded and possessed' (92). Similarly, he emphasizes that 'knowledge of subject races or Orientals is what makes their management easy and profitable; knowledge gives power, more power requires more knowledge, and so on in an increasingly profitable dialectic of information and control' (36). As Young points out, this 'implies that the misrepresentation nevertheless worked effectively when it encountered the reality which it distorted' (2001: 400). In other words, the problem with this architecture is that it leaves unexplained the question of how false knowledge can give rise to this 'dialectic of information and control.' Unless we resort to a second conceptual model, this effectiveness cannot be accounted for.

With the same signifiers, a second constellation can be constructed. If a representation is, as Said argues, 'eo ipso implicated, intertwined, embedded, interwoven with a great many other things besides the "truth," which is itself a representation' (272), then the very possibility of a 'true knowledge' ceases to exist. Indeed, **knowledge** is then a fact of **discourse**: it is 'embedded first in

the language and then in the culture, institutions, and political ambience of the representer' (272). As this discursive knowledge ceases to be a representation of the truth, it is inextricably tied up with questions of **power**: representation is no longer the re-presentation in discourse of something that is 'out there,' but the creation of a discursive **object**. As the analysis of the role of objects in *The Archaeology of Knowledge* has shown, this discursive object is a material object in the process of being named, defined, designated, demarcated, measured, qualified, etc. Combining this insight with the stress *Discipline and Punish* places on power, one can read Orientalist discourse as a **power-knowledge** nexus: it is a discourse that *works* on its object. Thus, the suggestion made in 3.2.2 to think of power-knowledge as a single concept finds its realization here, where the concept of discourse ties knowledge and power together.

Still, one may wonder how it is possible to combine the notion of autonomous discourse as one finds it in *The Archaeology* with some of the non-discursive practices emphasized in *Discipline and Punish*. More concretely, how can Said privilege discourse as his object of analysis while making regular references to the importance of the **gaze**? It is my contention that although Said refers to the Benthamite Panopticon (e.g. 127), which is one of the principal themes of *Discipline and Punish*, his concept of the gaze owes more to Foucault's early work than to *Discipline and Punish* itself. Perhaps the only way to make sense of this odd combination of discourse and the gaze is to claim that both of them share the same structure, if, as Foucault put it in *The Birth of the Clinic*, there is something like 'the spoken structure of the perceived' (xii).

Ironically, it is Said's reference to the book Foucault wrote to move away from structuralism that forces us into this conclusion, but it also appears that *Orientalism*, in any case, never took much trouble to avoid a connection to structuralism anyway. Thus, Said regularly speaks of the 'structure of Orientalism' (e.g. 6, 43) and plays with the term in Chapter 2, 'Orientalist Structures and Restructures' (111-198). It is not hard to see the value of this approach: the concept of discourse indeed bridges the gap between ideas and material reality. Indeed, by emphasizing how discursive structures are already situated from the start, this approach does away with the opposition between the ideal and the material and gives rise to the study of the materiality of discourse instead.

Looking back at the analysis of the introduction offered in section 3.3.1, however, the question arises as to whether this conceptual architecture is really the book Said intended to write. After all, this liberal application of Foucault's quasi-structuralist method presents considerable problems in this context. Not only is there the obvious problem of a lack of agency

and the impossibility of resistance, the elimination of truth also forecloses the option of contrasting orientalist representation with a more neutral version. Moreover, one would still need to locate the matrix that gives rise to the power-knowledge cluster. Whereas *Discipline and Punish* located this matrix in the appearance of Man as an object of knowledge and power, *Orientalism* is simply silent on this issue. To assume that one can simply transplant this argument into *Orientalism* would be erroneous: for Foucault, the objectification of Man gives rise to the human sciences as a whole, whereas Said argues that Orientalism is in a 'retrogressive position when compared with the other human sciences' (261). One might argue that Said offers an alternative under the form of 'positional superiority' (7), or that the binary opposition between Self and Other forms this matrix, but such an argument moves far beyond the actual text.

Although the conceptual architecture presented above is mobilized in *Orientalism*, it is also contradicted at several points. If Orientalism is a discursive regularity, with rules that govern the production of knowledge, what is the point of stressing 'the determining imprint of individual writers,' as Said does (23)? A second obvious contradiction is that Said does not consistently accept the consequences of the impossibility of truth. As Young points out, his approach 'implies an ideology-versus-reality distinction, or signifier-signified distinction, which Foucault's analyses explicitly reject' (2001: 399). Thus, Said speaks of Orientalism that 'pressed ideological myths into service, even as knowledge seemed genuinely to be advancing' (63). This does not differ from what Clifford already pointed out in 1988 (269). But what both Young and Clifford fail to acknowledge is that this is not a mere contradiction within Said's approach. Neither is it a straightforward combination of Foucault's theories with the commonsensical idea that there is a reality 'out there'. The crux of the matter is that *Orientalism* harbours two methods, each approach an uncanny double of the other.

Putting these architectures together, Said attempts to make two different claims: that knowledge of the Orient creates the authority to wield power over the Orient, and that knowledge is an active agent in the subjection and manipulation of the actual Orient (and is thus a form of power). In doing so, he superimposes two incompatible architectures, assisted by the fact that both constellations are formed with the concepts of discourse, power, and knowledge. For ease of reference, this chapter will henceforth call the first architecture 'instrumentalist,' hinting at

the fact that it presents knowledge as an instrument of power, and the second 'Foucauldian,' because it clings to the Foucauldian idea of a power internal to knowledge.

3.3.3. Concept: Double Trouble

The question that needs to be addressed in this final section is how the doubling of the conceptual architecture affects the concept of discourse itself. In the instrumentalist architecture, discourse is not autonomous at all: it is corrupted by a power external to itself. Power ceases to be an effect of Orientalist discourse and becomes its precondition. Rather than contributing actively and directly to the subjection of the Orient, discourse merely legitimizes and authorizes power. In this constellation, the concept of discourse does not cancel the opposition between the ideal and the material – it is situated on the ideological side of the divide. Orientalism, then, is the ideology that legitimates Western domination. It does not only restrict itself to the production of (false) scholarly knowledge, but also invades other discursive formations: travel writing, poetry, the media, and, any other type of statement that contributes to 'the idea of European identity as a superior one' (7). Ultimately, it explains the question of how discourse creates authority, rather than the power relationship within discourse.

In the Foucauldian architecture, by contrast, the concept of discourse effectively avoids the opposition between the ideal and the material. It is understood as a power-knowledge cluster. Thus, 'discourse' forms a structure that creates and affects its objects. Based on the analyses above, one can argue that this concept weds the autonomy of discourse proposed in *The Archaeology* to the emphasis on power-knowledge that forms the core of *Discipline and Punish*. It is this amalgam that forms the concept Said refers to whenever he seeks to drive home the point that knowledge plays a foundational role in the subjection of the Orient. Rather than discourse as authority, it presents discourse as power-knowledge. The Foucauldian model, descriptive as it is, can account for the effects, functions, and methods of discourse, but never for what legitimizes its actions. Rather than discourse as authority, it presents discourse as power-knowledge.

In combination with Young's earlier observation that this second model fails to account for the effectiveness of discourse, the argument comes full-circle again: the Foucauldian architecture explains the effects of discourse, but fails to pinpoint the motives that engender it,

or the authority that legitimizes it, whereas the instrumentalist architecture sheds light on this authority, but cannot possibly understand the actual mechanisms of subjection.

Taking a step back from this technical analysis, I believe that these two concepts of discourse are broadly indicative of two conflicting impulses in *Orientalism*. First of all, there is the tendency to critically engage Foucault's notion of discourse on its own terms: however hard Brennan may deny it (2000: 579), a substantial part of *Orientalism* hinges on Foucault's work. However, at times there appears to be a tendency to use the term discourse for reasons that have less to do with the value of Foucault's work than with the problems encountered in different approaches. As the contextual analysis in 3.3.1 has shown, Said took issue with Marxist models which approached culture deterministically. As Sawyer puts it, ''Culture' generally refers to a realm of ideas, concepts and symbols; the term implies that this realm can be distinguished from material realities and concrete social practices' (448). Similarly, the term 'ideology' implies 'a radical separation between a realm of ideas and material and social reality' (449). This is the problem that the more or less Foucauldian conceptualization of discourse had solved, but by doubling its architecture, *Orientalism* ends up in double trouble.

To say that both the Foucauldian and the instrumental architecture can be traced in *Orientalism* is one thing, to find out which one has gained the upper hand is another altogether. The discussions in the chapters to come will shed further light on how the distinction between the two approaches continues to stir up trouble in postcolonial studies – not only in relation to the concept of discourse, but also in relation to divergent notions of power and knowledge.

In conclusion, let us rehearse briefly the absolutely crucial ways in which *Orientalism* doubles the meaning of each of these terms. In the case of discourse, this involves the discrepancy between an autonomous system and a system of representation. When it comes to power, this can either be understood as a particular subject-object relationship or as the authority that legitimates acts of colonialism. Finally, 'knowledge' can be understood as that same subject-object relationship Foucault characterizes, or as a larger set of statements that ultimately supports notions of identity.

The importance of these three reconceptualizations can hardly be overstated: as the following chapters will show, Foucault will continue to move towards actual technologies of power, whereas postcolonial studies focus heavily on authority and identity – two concepts

Foucault never used. For now, the task at hand is to find out how this tension plays out in the work of Homi Bhabha.

3.4. Bhabha and Discourse: Further Down the Psychosocial Road

3.4.1. Context: Poststructuralism Meets Psychoanalysis

Having located this split in Said's conceptual architecture, one might wonder where the value of these theoretical reflections lies. After all, in spite of its theoretical weaknesses, *Orientalism's* attack on Western ethnocentrism was largely unambiguous and its exposure of the role of knowledge in processes of colonization left little room for misunderstanding. However, only in Homi Bhabha's work and the fiery reactions it provokes does this split attain its full significance. It is this complex intertextual web between Foucault, Said, and Bhabha that we now turn to.

As a postcolonial theorist, Bhabha has been extremely prolific: his essays have challenged the notion of fixed identities, promoted the concept of cultural hybridity, and proposed an original account of the encounter between colonizer and colonized. Moreover, he has engaged the notions of multiculturalism, of the nation and of cultural rights, establishing himself as a virtually inescapable beacon for postcolonial studies.

Rather than attend to Bhabha's multiple references to Foucault and Said, scattered throughout his extensive oeuvre, this section will focus on his appropriation of the concept of discourse as developed in two specific texts: "The Other Question" and "Of Mimicry and Man." Although both texts have taken their final authoritative shape in *The Location of Culture* (1994), earlier versions of these texts were published soon after the arrival of *Orientalism*, in 1983 and 1984 respectively.[16]

In anticipation of a more profound analysis of Bhabha's theory of discourse, a brief exploration of the main arguments propounded in these two essays will allow us to situate them in the larger context they evoke. "The Other Question: Stereotype, Discrimination and the Discourse of Colonialism" presents a revision of the concept of stereotype. The stereotype, Bhabha argues, as a primary instance of colonial discourse, does not have the degree of stability it is usually attributed. It vacillates between the fixity of an alleged essence, and the change that

[16] Bhabha, H. 1983. "Difference, Discrimination and the Discourse of Colonialism" IN Barker, F.; Hulme, P.; Iversen, M.; Loxley, D. *The Politics of Theory: Proceedings of the Essex Conference on the Sociology of Literature, July 1982*. Colchester: University of Essex. pp. 194-211.
Bhabha, H. 1984."Of Mimicry and Man: the Ambivalence of Colonial Discourse." *October*, 28:1, 125-133.

inevitably occurs in a different enunciative context. On a psychic level, the stereotype is a confrontation of the recognition of difference and its disavowal, of narcissism and aggressivity. Although the stereotype thus reveals colonial anxieties, it is this instability which makes it effective as a strategy of control: its ambivalence allows it to contain the contradictions that run through the representation of the colonized: 'The black is both savage (cannibal) and yet the most obedient and dignified of servants (the bearer of food); he is the embodiment of rampant sexuality and yet innocent as a child (...)' (82).

This ambivalence is not unique to the stereotype: it is a feature of colonial discourse in general, as "Of Mimicry and Man: The Ambivalence of Colonial Discourse" proceeds to explain. Mimicry, in Bhabha's appropriation of a Bakhtinian concept, is the desire of the colonizer to create a colonial subject that is almost the same as the colonizer, but not quite. This colonial strategy creates colonial subjects which, due to their similarity, can be known and controlled, but, due to their difference, legitimate the continued presence of the colonizer as surveillant. This production of subjects that are almost the same, but not quite, can easily turn into a menace, a resistant subjectivity, when the subject is almost completely other, but not quite. As an instance of colonial discourse, the Bible can be seen as an illustration of how the play of sameness and otherness resists and undermines colonial discourse: although the colonized gladly obtain a copy (sameness), they reportedly use the Bible as wrapping paper (otherness).[17] Thus, the displacement of colonial discourse subverts it and creates potential for resistance.

The question of how exactly Bhabha locates this ambivalence in colonial discourse will be dealt with in detail below. For now, what matters is that Bhabha follows up on Said's attempt to analyze the ensemble of Western writings on the colonized as a discourse. Thus, a 1984 version of "The Other Question" acknowledges Said's great influence, because *Orientalism* offers a 'profound meditation on the myths of western power and knowledge which confine the colonized and dispossessed to a half-life of misrepresentation and migration' (149).

That being said, Bhabha's acceptance of *Orientalism* is far from uncritical: if the earlier reading of *Orientalism* located a crucial split between colonial texts as representations that justify colonialism, or colonial texts as a discourse that plays an active role in processes of colonization, Bhabha clearly tends towards the latter:

[17] Bhabha briefly mentions this example in the final lines of "Of Mimicry and Man", but elaborates on it in Bhabha, H. 1994. "Signs Taken for Wonders" IN: *The Location of Culture*. London: Routledge. pp. 102-122.

> However, having introduced the concept of 'discourse' [Said] does not face up to the problems it creates for an instrumentalist notion of power/knowledge that he seems to require. This problem is summed up by his ready acceptance of the view that, 'Representations are formations, or as Roland Barthes has said of all the operations of language, they are deformations.' (72)

The word 'deformation' is what bothers Bhabha in this formulation: it implies an outside influence perturbing an accurate representation and sets up a conflict between knowledge and power, rather than embracing the Foucauldian approach in which knowledge and power at times coincide. Bearing in mind the two conceptual architectures traced in *Orientalism*, it becomes apparent that Bhabha builds on the Foucauldian rather than the instrumentalist framework. Dissolving the possibility of unproblematic knowledge, he also dispenses with the enlightened subject that came with Said's humanist impetus.

However, to argue that Bhabha continues to work along the lines of Foucault and the Foucauldian interpretation of Said would be extremely reductive. As a notorious eclectic, Bhabha deployed this model only in conflictual opposition to other approaches, both literary and theoretical. Although the final version of these two essays acknowledge these influences only sparingly, an earlier version states that "The Other Question" is 'indebted to traditions of post-structuralist and psychoanalytic theory, especially in their feminist formulation' (OQ 1986: 149). This invocation of feminist theory is surprising, to say the least: for all Bhabha's talk of race and sexuality as 'modes of differentiation, realized as multiple, cross-cutting determinations, polymorphous and perverse' (OQ 1994: 67), Young rightly observes that 'Bhabha's model nowhere broaches the question of a gendered colonial subject' (1990: 154). Moreover, the occasional reference to Kristeva aside, it is the names of Foucault and Derrida that are ubiquitous in these essays. Interestingly, in contrast to these theorists, Bhabha does adopt the label 'poststructuralist' to describe this heterogeneous ensemble. Poster's provisional definition of what poststructuralism is might prove helpful here:

> Poststructuralist writers, especially Michel Foucault, reevaluate the nature of the subject of theory and the theoretical subject, basing the reevaluation in large part on new ways of conceptualizing language. Poststructuralists question the easy assumption that the theoretical subject can generate a discourse that represents the real, unmasks domination in the real, without himself/herself introducing new forms of domination.

> Poststructuralists criticize the assumption of much of modern thought that theoretical discourse is a direct expression of a truth in the theorist's mind, that this truth in some way captures historical reality, and that the question of freedom entails the appropriation of this truth by historical agents and their subsequent action to actualize it. Poststructuralists point to various ways in which language materially affects the relation of the theorist to his or her discourse and the ways in which the social field is composed of linguistic phenomena – Foucault's discourse/practice, Baudrillard's code, Derrida's *écriture*, Lyotard's phrases and *le différend*. (1989: 3-4)

This definition dovetails neatly with the theory of discourse Bhabha develops, and particularly with his attention to the discursive structure of the social. As such, Bhabha's work and the category of poststructuralism provide a point of attack for those who consider the emphasis on linguistic phenomena within postcolonial studies to be excessive. Before diving into a more technical analysis of the extent to which Bhabha's work constitutes an example of excessive textualism, however, it is crucial to note how Bhabha combines this poststructuralist impetus with concepts derived from psychoanalysis. Thus, if one labels his theory of discourse 'poststructuralist,' this poststructuralism is always already affected by psychoanalytic categories, developed in dialogue with Freud, Lacan, and Fanon.

The main concept that ties Bhabha to Freud, Lacan and Fanon is that of the 'mirror stage,' a term coined by Lacan as an addition to Freud's account of the formation of the ego.[18] It refers to the moment when a baby senses a contrast between its own lack of coordination and the image of itself as a whole in the mirror. While attracted to this image, the child also perceives this image as a rival. The tension between this narcissism and aggression is resolved in the moment of primary identification when the child perceives this image as its own.

Two additions Lacan made are crucial for both Fanon and Bhabha's appropriation of the concept. First, this moment of identification does result in a stable identity. As Sarup puts it, 'the subject will never be truly 'himself' or 'herself'. The child sees itself in the mirror, but the image is

[18] Lacan introduced the term at the Fourteenth International Psychoanalytical Congress in 1936. For an English translation of his paper, see "The Mirror Stage as Formative of the Function of the I" in Lacan, J. 1977. *Ecrits: A Selection*. London: Tavistock. pp 1-7. For a description of how Lacan's concept of the mirror stage changed throughout his work, see Evans, D. 1996. *An Introductory Dictionary of Lacanian Psychoanalysis*. London: Routledge. pp. 114-116.

reversed' (1992: 65). Identification therefore ceases to be a phase in life and becomes rather a continual process.

Second, the image the subject identifies with need not be reflected in a real mirror. Evans explains that 'even when there is no real mirror, the baby sees its behaviour reflected in the imitative gestures of an adult or another child; these imitative gestures enable the other person to function as a specular image' (190). The connection between the idea of the specular image and theories of colonial discourse can be established through a common focus on power: indeed, the specular image has a specific yet ambiguous power effect, brought together in Lacan's concept of 'captation.' Captation plays on the meanings of 'captivation' and 'capture,' thus referring to both 'the fascinating, seductive power of the image' and 'the more sinister power of the image to imprison the subject in a disabling fixation' (Evans 1996: 20).

It is exactly this power Fanon experiments with in *Black Skin, White Masks*. This 1952 publication presents what Gates has called 'the originary irruption of Lacan into colonial discourse theory' (1991: 461). Fanon asserts that 'when one has grasped the mechanism described by Lacan, one can have no further doubt that the real other for the white man is and will continue to be the black man' (161). Because the other is 'perceived on the level of the body image, absolutely as the not-self,' the black man as a specular image blocks identification. For the black man, however, the specular image is colour-neutral, thus admitting identification of blacks with whites and the ensuing ambivalent feelings of admiration and rivalry.

Although Fanon's invocation of Lacan has clearly inspired "The Other Question" and "Of Mimicry and Man," Bhabha's acceptance of Fanon's idea is not unqualified: in his foreword to *Black Skin, White Masks*, Bhabha insists that this other should not be seen as an opposed presence, a fixed counterpoint, but rather as the negation of identity (xviii). In the words of Gates, 'he wants Fanon to mean Lacan rather than, say, Jean-Paul Sartre' (461).

If earlier it became apparent that Bhabha's Said is the Foucauldian rather than the instrumentalist Said, one can now conclude that Bhabha's Fanon is a Lacanian Fanon. Given the association of Foucault's theory of discourse with structuralism discussed earlier, and Sarup's contention that 'one of the things Lacan has done is to reinterpret Freud in the light of structuralist and post-structuralist theories of discourse' (10), this goes a long way towards explaining how Bhabha manages to combine these highly divergent intertexts: he refracts both Said and Fanon through the lens of (post)structuralist theories.

Nevertheless, one may still question the compatibility of psychoanalysis with both Foucault's work and colonial discourse theory. There are certainly crucial convergences between Foucault's archaeological method and Lacanian psychoanalysis, especially when it comes to the status of the subject. Both Lacan and Foucault undercut the possibility of a sovereign subject and redefine it as an effect of language. As a consequence, reality ceases to be an unproblematic given and becomes something that is discursively constructed. Finally, the symbolic in Lacan and the discursive in Foucault have in common that they are both linguistic dimensions, to be analyzed as autonomous realms. Evans's assertion that for Lacan 'the symbolic order is completely autonomous: it is not a superstructure determined by biology or genetics' (202) equally applies to the discursive order Foucault traces in *The Archaeology of Knowledge*.

Still, aside from the obvious discrepancies between interests and emphases, there are two major points where Foucault's work and psychoanalytic theory clash. As argued in the earlier discussion of *The Archaeology*, Foucault opposed the idea of a subject that interprets discourse and discovers hidden meaning. Thus, if the aim of psychoanalytic treatment is, as Evans summarizes it, 'to lead the analysand to recognize the truth about his desire' (36), this betrays the hermeneutic impetus Foucault sought to avoid at all costs. Yet, in "The Function and Field of Speech and Language in Psychoanalysis," Lacan introduces a 'renewed technique of interpretation' that was surprisingly similar to Foucault's reading method, emphasizing the formal features of discourse and the need to read the analysand's discourse as a sequence of signifiers (Lacan 1977: 82).

The second problem hinges on the link between power and desire. The crux of the matter resides in the first volume of Foucault's *The History of Sexuality*, which chapter 5 will deal with in more detail. For now, what matters is that Foucault took issue with a theorization of power as primarily repressive, stressing the productivity of power instead: even desire was conceptualized as a product of power. This stands in stark opposition to the Freudian idea of power, assuming the shape of the law, which represses desire. However, two nuances are called for here. First, Lacan revised this relationship between power and desire considerably by creating an interconnection rather than an opposition: while the law imposes limitations on desire, the law also produces desire. According to Evans, 'desire is essentially the desire to transgress, and for there to be transgression it is first necessary for there to be prohibition' (99). It appears thus that the issue does not consist of the discrepancy between power as either productive or repressive, but rather the tendency to equate power with the law. This brings us to the second

nuance: although it is certainly the case that the *History of Sexuality* attempted to break free from a conceptualization of power as law, this is less evident in *The Archaeology of Knowledge*: in fact, one may even argue that Foucault's notion of rules fulfils a similar function. As Bhabha's work presents a mixture of both archaeological and genealogical elements, this tension stands unresolved and the friction between Foucauldian and psychoanalytical elements remains.

The tension between Foucault and psychoanalysis is not the only faultline running through "The Other Question" and "Of Mimicry and Man." The confrontation between psychoanalysis and the postcolonial is perhaps even more questionable. There is of course Deleuze and Guattari's famous objection, voiced in *Anti-Oedipus*, that the universalization of the Oedipal drama constitutes a 'colonialism pursued by other means' (1977: 170). Second, as Gilman's *Freud, Race and Gender* (1993) demonstrates, psychoanalysis as a practice has served colonial interests. It has operated as an instrument of normalization and is intimately connected to the bourgeoisie. As Loomba phrases the question, 'is it at all possible, then, to use psychoanalytic paradigms to think productively about colonial relations, or are they too bound up with colonialist ways of ordering culture and biology' (2005: 127)?

Summing up, at least three potentially conflicting contexts can be found in "The Other Question" and "Of Mimicry and Man": the Foucauldian, the psychoanalytic, and the postcolonial. The heterogeneity of these positions has led Ahmad to denounce Bhabha's work as a 'theoretical mélange which randomly invokes Lévi-Strauss in one phrase, Foucault in another, Lacan in yet another' (1992: 68). The task at hand is to find out how Bhabha's conceptual architecture houses these highly divergent positions.

3.4.2. Cotext: Exit Knowledge, Enter Intersubjectivity

To construct a conceptual architecture of "The Other Question" is more than ever a violation of the text. Indeed, as Huddart puts it, Bhabha's essays 'are not coherent mosaics in which all the pieces fit together harmoniously: their pieces often have jagged edges. They are mixed critical texts that use concepts or quotations in a patchwork critical form' (2006: 14). This section aims to strike a balance between attending to these slippages and arresting a more stable framework, even if the latter activity runs against the spirit of Bhabha's work.

In order to comprehend the structure Bhabha outlines, an analysis contrasting it with *Orientalism* may be of use. As one recalls, *Orientalism* contained two distinct claims: Orientalism as a discourse performed a crucial role in the actual process of colonization, and Orientalism as a representation legitimated the colonization of the Orient. Each of these claims had its issues: the first failed to locate a matrix that could explain how orientalist discourse worked upon its object, and the second depended on the possibility of true knowledge. Bhabha, although fully conscious of these problems, combines both claims anyway:

> The objective of colonial discourse is to construe the colonized as a population of degenerate types on the basis of racial origin, in order to justify conquest and to establish systems of administration and instruction. (1994: 70)

His solution is twofold: after dropping the architecture we referred to earlier as instrumentalist, he reintroduces this legitimizing function of representation as one of multiple functions of discourse, and finds in Fanon's work the key to the effect of colonial discourse on the colonized.

Architecturally, this means that he takes as his starting point discourse as an instance of **power-knowledge**. Bhabha thus follows up on Said's combination of Foucauldian archaeology with the power-knowledge concept. This combination, left incomplete by Said, allows Bhabha to understand statements as not just an ideological construction that represent their objects in an interested way to achieve specific effects, but as entities that create and affect their objects – by dividing, measuring, naming, and conceptualizing them, or any other activity that confirms them in their **objecthood**. Although the logic of objecthood was implicit in *Orientalism*, especially in its references to Foucault's *Discipline and Punish*, it was not developed into anything more than the constatation that Orientals were named as such and were described as lazy and unreliable.

Unsatisfied, Bhabha finds inspiration in the work of Frantz Fanon, whose description of the epidermal schema directed analysis toward the role of **skin** colour in processes of colonization. It is 'skin, as a signifier of discrimination' which 'must be produced or processed as visible' (Bhabha 1994: 79). In other words, this production of knowledge is played out in 'those regimes of visibility and discursivity' where the skin is the object of the gaze and discourse. This move enables him to explain what Said could not – in Young's words, 'how the representation articulates with the actual' (1990: 142).

Taking a step back, it appears that Bhabha's theory of discourse is the result of Said's half-hearted combination of *The Archaeology of Knowledge* and *Discipline and Punish*, complemented with Fanon's epidermal schema, and the idea of power-knowledge as the foundation of the whole. When it comes to the status of the **subject**, however, the picture gets more blurry. Both in Foucault and Said, the subject, an effect of discourse, is not staged in its plurality. Bhabha has two main objections that complicate their notions of subjectivity. First, Bhabha argues, positing the subject as the subject of a homogeneous discourse has a misleading unifying effect: 'the terms in which Said's Orientalism is unified – the intentionality and unidirectionality of colonial power – also unify the subject of colonial enunciation' (1994: 72). Contra Said, Bhabha will argue that the inherent, internal ambivalence of colonial discourse splits the colonial subject internally. Moreover – and this is the second objection – the subject can also be split *between* different discourses, as becomes evident in Bhabha's description of the colonial subject as 'primordially fixed and yet triply split between the incongruent knowledges of body, race, ancestors' (80). Thus, as opposed to Said's account of a single knowledge, viz. Orientalism, which projects a single subject and a single object, a multitude of conflicting knowledges come into play, shaping conflicting subject-positions.

As soon as Bhabha takes this path, he turns away from Foucault's early work. The main concern of *The Archaeology of Knowledge* was to analyze the structure of knowledge, its functions, and its effects. Although it pays attention to the subject positions knowledge project, the question of who could occupy a certain subject position would constitute a logical contradiction: only after discourse does the individual even come into existence. As a result, Foucault's archaeological method is blatantly unequipped for an analysis of relations *between* subjects, or **intersubjectivity**, since the only relationship it would admit was that between subject and object. Peter Dews notes in Foucault a refusal to acknowledge 'the reciprocity specific to the social domain' (1987: 198). Foucault's approach, as well as Said's interpretation of it, therefore devolves easily into a reductive one-way analysis, which explains some of the criticism *Orientalism* has received for lacking a notion of resistance. An earlier version of "The Other Question" notes that 'there is always, in Said, the suggestion that colonial power and discourse is possessed entirely by the colonizer, which is an historical and theoretical simplification' (OQ 1986: 158). That Bhabha's theory of resistance is not unblemished either will be discussed later on. For now, what matters is that Bhabha complements this subject-object relation with a model in which subjectivity is the result of a two-way process.

Foucault's failure 'to register the fact that socialization, the formation of subjects, depends upon a mutual recognition of subjects, however distorted' stands in stark contrast to Lacan's notion of the mirror stage (Dews 1987: 198). Indeed, for Lacan discourse is an intersubjective process in which 'the allocution of the subject entails an allocutor' (1977: 49). But this reciprocity is not only discursive, it is visual too: 'in the objectification of the scopic drive there is always the threatened return of the look' (Bhabha 1994: 81). Consequently, the subject is always already the object, and vice versa.

A similar process takes place in the mirror stage referred to earlier, where the subject comes into being through its specular image. In a colonial context, it is the stereotyped Other that is the specular image. The **stereotype** therefore demonstrates the ambivalence located in the identification with the specular image: the fascination for the wholeness of the Other and the aggressivity that comes with the sense of rivalry. By arguing that the stereotype – as an instance of discourse – offers a primary point of identification for both colonizer and colonized, Bhabha links image and discourse, the imaginary and the discursive.

But how does he do this? The realm of the image, what Lacan calls the **imaginary**, is 'always already structured by the symbolic order' (Evans 1996: 83). It thus 'involves a linguistic dimension. Whereas the signifier is the foundation of the symbolic order, the signified and signification are part of the imaginary order' (83). Thus, if the previous paragraphs have explained why Bhabha needed to go beyond Foucault, here lies the key to the connection he establishes between Foucault and Lacan: the linguistic structure shared by Lacan's symbolic and imaginary orders and Foucault's discursive level enables Bhabha to move back and forth between them.

3.4.3. Concept: Discourse as the Structure of Intersubjective Relations

Having explored the manner in which Bhabha constructs a bridge between discourse theory and psychoanalysis, the next step involves taking a closer look at how Bhabha transforms the concepts of discourse used by Foucault and Said.

The previous sections should have made it abundantly clear that Bhabha, like Foucault, takes the notion of discourse to task for a lot more than mere (mis)representation. *Orientalism*, on the other hand, did not consistently do so, and occasionally invokes a contrastive reading of representation and reality. If *Orientalism* lacks a theory of resistance, at least it provides a space

for an author to expose Orientalism as misrepresentation. The poststructuralist problematization of truth, however, forecloses this path and renders an alternative notion of resistance all the more urgent.

In *The Archaeology of Knowledge*, for reasons that will be illuminated below, the concept of resistance is totally absent, leaving Bhabha no other option than to integrate one himself. Although the strategies of resistance he describes seem to be quite diverse, they all hinge on his linguistic model of discourse. Huddart, in a sympathetic assessment of Bhabha's work, argues that:

> his work stresses and extends the agency of colonized peoples, whose participation in resistance to colonialism has often been underplayed when it does not fit our usual expectations of violent anti-colonial opposition: importantly, he develops a linguistic model of this agency. (2006: 3)

Discourse, in Bhabha's linguistic model, is fundamentally unstable, in at least three different, yet interrelated, ways. First of all, discourse is unstable because it consists of a chain of signifiers, along which meaning is continually deferred. A second source of instability resides in the intersubjective nature of discourse: the enunciation already depends on an Other to acknowledge it. Finally, Bhabha's introduction of the concept of mimicry in a colonial context will have an important discursive component that undermines the authority of colonial discourse. As a strategy of colonial domination, mimicry:

> is the desire for a reformed, recognizable Other, *as a subject of a difference that is almost the same, but not quite*. Which is to say, that the discourse of mimicry is constructed around an *ambivalence*; in order to be effective, mimicry must continually produce its slippage, its excess, its difference. (Bhabha 1994: 86)

This quotation, moving from re-formation and re-cognition to difference, suggests the mechanism that renders discourse unstable and provides the colonized with a means of resistance: the play of repetition and difference, brought together in 'the Derridean idea of iteration' (Huddart 2006: 17). In combination with Foucault's concept of the statement, this leads Bhabha to observe that:

> 'Despite the schemata of use and application that constitute a field of stabilization for the statement, any change in the statement's condition of use and reinvestment, any alteration in its field of experience or verification, or indeed any difference in the problems to be solved, can lead to the emergence of a new statement: the difference of the same.' (1994: 22)

Against the stability Foucault described in *The Archaeology of Knowledge*, Bhabha posits not only the subverting effect of the Other in the enunciative situation, but also the potential of the colonial Other to repeat and thereby transform colonial discourse.

This theory of resistance is, to say the least, idiosyncratic: in spite of Huddart's claim that Bhabha 'extends the agency of colonized peoples' (3), resistance is framed as an effect of colonial discourse. Loomba points out that for Bhabha 'resistance is a condition produced by the dominant discourse itself' (2005: 149), thus recentring this so-called agency completely around the colonizer. Moreover, one can object that this alleged instability of colonial discourse did not prevent it from playing a role in any number of atrocities and injustices. In a less than kind review, Benita Parry laments that 'theoretical moves directed at erasing inscriptions of inequality and conflict in the material colonial world are evident in Bhabha's disdain for that anti-colonialist tradition which perceived the struggle in terms that were antagonistic rather than agonistic' (2004: 63). In other words, in Bhabha's work a delocalized and dehistoricized theory of resistance supplants the violent histories of anti-colonial resistance.

Rather than to rehash the allegations Parry makes so convincingly in *Postcolonial Studies: A Materialist Critique*, the crux of the matter for the purposes of this chapter is to find out how these problems relate to Foucault's concept of discourse. In order to do so, a preliminary question needs to be answered: why did the early Foucault not have a concept of resistance? In *Discipline and Punish*, as the next chapter will discuss, the absence of resistance is striking. However, in *The Archaeology of Knowledge*, where Foucault proposes his theory of discourse, the absence of resistance makes more sense: leaving the notion of power untouched, he focuses on how one can speak 'in the true,' how knowledge is constructed and formalized. His approach was essentially positivist: the object of study is the set of rules that govern a particular body of

knowledge. This is not to be confused with a general theory of discourse. As Rabinow & Dreyfus aptly put it in their discussion of Foucault's early work:

> The discursive practices are distinguished from the speech acts of everyday life. Foucault is interested only in what we will call *serious* speech acts: what experts say when they are speaking as experts. And he furthermore restricts his analyses to the serious speech acts in those "dubious" disciplines which have come to be called the human sciences. (1982: xx)

The importance of this point can hardly be overstated: Foucault's interest was in those discourses which had Man as both subject and object of knowledge. This takes us to the root of the problem in Bhabha's theory of discourse, which goes back to Said's distinction between latent and manifest Orientalism. Bhabha picks up on this division and paraphrases it as a polarity between 'on the one hand, a topic of learning, discovery, practice; on the other, it is the site of dreams, images, fantasies, myths, obsessions and requirements' (1994: 71). It is obvious that this goes far beyond the domain Foucault outlined: his problematization of knowledge does not conflate it with myth – to the contrary, it is his specification of its enunciative modalities that sets it apart as a very specific corpus of statements.

Consequently, when Loomba claims that 'the meaning of 'discourse' shrinks to 'text,' and from there to 'literary text,' and from there to texts written in English because that is the corpus most familiar to the critics' (2005: 84), this might be misleading. If, rightly or wrongly one considers Foucault to be the source of the concept of discourse within postcolonial studies, one notes exactly the opposite: Bhabha broadens rather than shrinks it. He extends the Foucauldian terminology that was designed to perform an archaeology of knowledge to the analysis of film, poetry, novels, and the Bible, until it includes just about everything. Whereas Foucault coined the concept of discourse as a means to get to the specificity of knowledge, and knowledge only, Bhabha follows Said in expanding the functionality of the concept.

And there is more Said and Bhabha have in common: both of them attempt to deploy the work of Foucault in combination with a category the latter refrained from using: identity. If one understands identity as a discursive construct, and Foucault developed the concept of discourse, Foucault's work can be used to discuss identity – or so it seems. Said's undeveloped observation that the discourse of Orientalism depicted the Orient as 'a sort of surrogate and even

underground self' (3) leaves the door wide open for combining Foucault's concept of discourse with psychoanalytical approaches.

However, if Foucault's discussion of the subject-position as an effect of discourse suggests a concern with subjectivity as a psychosocial category, this deserves immediate correction. At the time Foucault developed his theory of discourse, he was interested in the subject only insofar as it constituted a category of analysis he sought to remove. In *Discipline and Punish*, the subject appears only insofar as it relates to an object in the structure of the human sciences. As the cotextual section indicated earlier, Bhabha moves back and forth between a Foucauldian and a Lacanian notion of the subject. In contrast to Foucault's notion of a historically produced subject, the Lacanian subject appears to be universal and ahistorical: Susan Van Zyl points out that 'there is nothing in Lacan that accounts in advance for how colonial Others are different from any others' (1998: 87-88). Loomba senses a similar problem in Bhabha's work:

> Thus, ironically, the split, ambivalent, hybrid colonial subject projected in his work is in fact curiously universal and homogeneous – that is to say he could exist anywhere in the colonial world. Hybridity seems to be a characteristic of his inner life (and I use the male pronoun purposely) but not of his positioning. He is internally split and agonistic, but undifferentiated by gender, class, or location. (150)

Playing with Evans's definition, it is my contention that the relation between Foucault's subject and Lacan's subject is one of identification, a process 'whereby one subject adopts as his own one or more attributes of another subject' (Evans 1996: 80). The specific subject-position Foucault describes merges with the universal Lacanian, which prevents Bhabha from attending to a local, specific subject, or, put in a more profane way, an actual individual who lives with the realities of colonial life.

These sections on Bhabha presented a long detour to get to Bhabha's transformations of the concept of discourse. However, the combination of the contextual, contextual, and conceptual illustrates both the way in which Bhabha has transformed the concept, as well as the effect of this transformation. As for the former, we have found that Bhabha uses the concept in connection to any set of statements rather than specific systems of knowledge. The result is the conflation of two concepts of subjectivity, with a universal Lacanian subject imposed upon the Foucauldian subject-effect.

3.5. Conclusion: Knowledge Versus Identity, Authority, Intersubjectivity

From the start, it has been the contention of this chapter that the circulation of the concept of discourse within postcolonial theory cannot be attributed unproblematically to Foucault. Yet, unless one bears in mind the goal of this chapter, its narrow focus may be misread as doing exactly that which it sought to challenge: the purpose has been to highlight the transformations of the concept of discourse in postcolonial theory, insofar as it is framed as being Foucauldian – never the transformations of the concept of discourse as such. In doing so, this chapter has cast Foucault's 'discourse' as an extremely specific, contingent concept. That this move may underplay the manifold ways in which Foucault's concept was always already embedded in intellectual debates of 1950's France, may very well be true.[19] This explains the relative absence of Althusser, Pêcheux, or Derrida. Neither does the chapter include the postcolonial theorists who have drawn on these alternative conceptualizations, such as Spivak or Ashcroft, Griffiths, and Tiffin.

Nevertheless, I believe that to approach Foucault's concept of discourse and the ensuing transformations in their specificity provides an extremely helpful strategic counterpoint to the tendency to conflate divergent conceptualizations under the header of 'colonial discourse.' Indeed, even if we confine ourselves to those theorists who explicitly link their concept of discourse to Foucault – in this case Said and Bhabha – ruptures and discontinuities immediately surface.

In Said and Bhabha's work, as in the reactions they provoke, one particular fault line running through postcolonial studies has revealed itself: the tension between a theory of discourse that conceptualizes discourse as an autonomous system, and the understanding of discourse as ideology that legitimates colonial action. This tension, which we also identified in the double architecture of *Orientalism*, radicalizes in Bhabha's preference for the former, and the overwhelming criticism directed against this choice.

Many of the above-mentioned flaws in Bhabha's work have been brought together under the banner of 'textualism.' Thus, Benita Parry's final assessment of Bhabha's work is that it offers

[19] For this entirely different approach, see Eribon, D. 1994. *Michel Foucault et ses Contemporains*. Paris: Fayard.

'the World according to the Word' (1994: 9). Dirlik, for his part, argues that 'increasingly from the 1990s, the postcolonial has dissipated into areas that had nothing to do with the colonial and rendered into a literary reading strategy rather than a social and political concept - largely under the influence of the likes of Bhabha' (2007: 99). This allegation demonstrates that the problem supersedes the work of Bhabha: the tendency to overemphasize the importance of signifying practices is said to be closely connected with literary studies as a disciplinary setting of postcolonial studies. Paul Gilroy asserts that 'textuality becomes a means (...) to enthrone the literary critic as mistress or master of the domain of creative human communication' (2000: 77).

Moreover, this prioritization of discourse has been denounced as a theoretical move that downplays the political potential in postcolonial studies. In *Wars of Position*, Timothy Brennan goes so far as to say that 'the practitioners of theory in the poststructuralist ascendant saw their task as burying dialectical thinking and the political energies – including the anti-colonial energies – that grew out of it' (2006: 10). Majid dismisses poststructuralist postcolonial theory as 'literary conceits and language games' (2008: 150), and McMurtry detests its 'dematerializing wordplays' (2008: 229). Contra poststructuralist theory, these critics underline the necessity of taking into account the material processes involved in colonization. Often influenced by historical materialism, the likes of Ahmad, Dirlik, Parry, Lazarus, Brennan, and many others have sought ways to integrate the cultural and the material through a revision of the concept of ideology in ways that at times come very close to Said's instrumentalist architecture. Interestingly, the accusation of textualism, which they level so readily at Bhabha, has never been directed against *Orientalism*: the fact that his concept of discourse at times becomes synomous with the notion of ideology allows Said's work to be recuperated as a more materialist approach. This explains why Timothy Brennan's "The Illusion of a Future" places so much weight on the differences between *Orientalism* and Foucault's work: he is wresting Said out of poststructuralism, downplaying the influence of Foucault in favour of Raymond Williams (569).

Brennan's contention that 'it is simply stunning that critics consider *Orientalism* Foucauldian' seems to be buttressed by Said's own comments after 1978, many of which have been published in *The World, the Text, and the Critic*. An almost hostile Said urges that 'we must not let Foucault get away (...) with letting us forget that history does not get made without work, intention, resistance, effort, or conflict, and that none of these things is silently absorbable into micronetworks of power' (245) – and this is only one attack out of a great many.

However, as the history of Said's comments on Foucault has been represented at length in Chuaqui: 2005 and Racevskis: 2005, they will not be repeated here. Rather, I would like to question the ability of this approach to shed any real light on the connection between *Orientalism* and Foucault's work. Said's vicious comments seem to tell us more about the politics of academic discussion than about the links between their theoretical frameworks: when Said refutes Foucault's work as dehistoricizing and lacking agency and resistance, this is strangely reminiscent of the criticism *Orientalism* has had to bear. Moreover, no matter how many times one denies the central role of Foucault in *Orientalism* post hoc, the earlier intertextual analysis clearly established the fact that this archaeological architecture can be traced in *Orientalism*. Therefore, it is my contention that the struggle over Said's legacy and the multiple attacks on Bhabha's work should be read in light of the larger conflict over the role of the textual versus the material.

Tragically, this opposition between the textual and the material was never there to begin with. As the earlier analysis of Foucault's concept of discourse has shown, it approaches discourse in its materiality. Any charge of textualism leveled against Foucault should therefore necessarily be more accurate than the mere allegation of ignoring the material, which is a gross misunderstanding of his archaeological method. Rather than sweeping these criticisms under the carpet, however, it has been my contention that they can be accounted for through the contrastive analysis of Foucault and Bhabha's work. The root of the problem is not textualism as such, but the very fact that Bhabha dislocates a particular subject-object relation revolving around the knowledge of Man and expands it into a theory of discourse which goes far beyond the category of knowledge, eventually subsuming psychosocial categories such as subjectivity and identity.

In this sense, Bhabha's concept of discourse has a lot in common with Said's. Both Said and Bhabha use Foucault's concept as an ancillary concept to analyze power as a psychosocial phenomenon that can be understood as consisting of relations of identity, subjectivity, and authority. Ultimately, what Bhabha and Said both present is an understanding of colonial power reduced to an authority that is based on identity. As the following chapters will illustrate, these notions of identity and authority will continue to appear alongside and in tension with Foucauldian concepts, resulting in conflicting conceptualizations of colonial power.

4. Discipline

Whereas the previous chapter had to begin with the conceptual confusion surrounding the notion of discourse, both the origin and meaning of 'discipline' as a concept appear considerably less muddled. As far as postcolonial studies is concerned, its use is virtually always attributed to Foucault. If other scholars have elaborated homophonous concepts, their work has not been acknowledged in the canonical postcolonial texts. Neither has 'discipline' achieved the same currency as 'discourse': there is no equivalent of 'discourse babble' whatsoever, in postcolonial studies or elsewhere.

This disparity in status between the two concepts is reflected in the source material of this chapter: whereas the work of Said and Bhabha has been reviewed extensively, the names of Timothy Mitchell and Martha Kaplan do not necessarily figure in introductions to postcolonial studies.[20] One of the key tasks of this chapter will therefore be to determine whether the relative peripherality of the concept of discipline in postcolonial studies is due to an inherent conceptual problem. This will be effected through an analysis of both Mitchell's *Colonising Egypt* and Kaplan's "Panopticon in Poona," in relation to Foucault's *Discipline and Punish*.

However, before we turn to *Discipline and Punish*, there is another way in which this chapter as well as the next two differ from Chapter 3 – a difference that hinges on the notion of power. Looking back at *Orientalism* and "The Other Question," it becomes apparent that the power to colonize, and the power over the colonized, was intimately connected to the concept of discourse in Said's and Bhabha's analysis. For Bhabha, the ambivalence of discourse created both the power effect and a corresponding instability. In Said's double architecture, power was either the effect of a discourse, or an undefined force that instrumentalized discursive knowledge.

It is my contention that both the reduction of power to an effect of discourse and the invocation of a concept of power without a proper definition are detrimental to any critical analysis of colonialism. To the extent that postcolonial studies seeks to understand colonial domination, racialization, and the shaping of subject positions, the question of power is a central one. The postcolonial engagement with the concept of discipline, though limited, foregrounds the necessity of taking the question of power beyond the realm of discourse.

[20] Ania Loomba's *Colonialism/Postcolonialism*, one of the most comprehensive and authoritative introductions available, does not mention either Mitchell or Kaplan. Still, one should not overstate this: both Mitchell and Kaplan have been cited regularly – if they had not, their work would have escaped the search parameters of this project.

Although this demand to move beyond discourse may seem to echo the criticism levelled at Bhabha discussed and redirected in the previous chapter, it is at most tangentially related to the accusation of textualism. Whereas the label of textualism implies an opposition between the textual and the material, urging us to move beyond discourse in order to take into account the power of material conditions, the concept of discipline challenges the reduction of power to discourse in a very different way: not through an opposition between the discursive and the material, but through an awareness of the heterogeneity of its modes of operation. Thus, the conceptual implication that also differentiates this chapter from the previous one is the refusal to reduce the notion of power to some other level, whether discursive or material. Instead, to put the concept of discipline to work is to try and determine specific technologies of power that may be articulated discursively, but may also derive from various spatial and temporal configurations. Understood in this light, *Discipline and Punish* is not Foucault's compensation for an undervaluation of power in *The Archaeology of Knowledge*, but an entirely new approach in its own right.

4.1. Foucault and Discipline: Reconceptualizing Power

4.1.1. Context: From Archaeology to Genealogy

In the six years that passed between the publication of *The Archaeology of Knowledge* and *Discipline and Punish*, Foucault moved from his archaeological method to genealogy. Although the differences between these approaches have been touched on in Chapter 2, a more systematic exploration[21] of their relationship will prove valuable in situating the texts of Mitchell and Kaplan – not because they emulate a genealogical model, but because they experiment with the boundaries of Foucault's approach.

Genealogy, to a certain extent, is the continuation of Foucault's anti-subjectivist project: if *The Archaeology of Knowledge* emphasized that the subject is not the source of knowledge, *Discipline and Punish* emphasizes how it is also not the possessor of power. The 'anti' in anti-subjectivism thus refers both to an attack on the illusion of an autonomous subject, and to a rejection of the subject as a methodologically sound starting point.

[21] Needless to say, this exploration is still far from exhaustive: it singles out those characteristics of genealogy required for a better understanding of Mitchell and Kaplan. For more details, I refer again to Dreyfus, H.L.; Rabinow, P. 1982. *Michel Foucault: Beyond Structuralism and Hermeneutics*. New York: Harvester Wheatsheaf, in particular Chapter 5 – "Interpretive Analytics".

Apart from that, genealogy differs from archaeology in a great many ways. The task of the archaeologist was to isolate the rules that govern discursive practices. The descriptive character of its approach supposedly enabled archaeology to 'slip free of institutional, theoretical, and even epistemic bonds' (Rabinow & Dreyfus 102). The genealogist, however, realizes that this position is untenable: if s/he aims to diagnose and grasp the significance of social practices, s/he does so from within. This involvement explains Foucault's claim that he is writing 'the history of the present' (*D&P* 31): genealogy is a form of history that attempts to explain the coming into being of the multiple relationships between power, knowledge, and the body in modern society.

Obviously, this history of the present differs from other forms of historiography – at least in theory. In a moment of lyricism, Rabinow & Dreyfus assert that

> Genealogy opposes itself to traditional historical method; its aim is to "record the singularity of events outside of monotonous finality" (*NGH* 139). For the genealogist there are no fixed essences, no underlying laws, no metaphysical finalities. Genealogy seeks out discontinuities where others found continuous development. It finds recurrences and play where others found progress and seriousness. It records the past of mankind to unmask the solemn hymns of progress. Genealogy avoids the search for depth. Instead, it seeks the surfaces of events, small details, minor shifts, and subtle contours. (106)

The extent to which all of this is applicable to *Discipline and Punish* is highly debatable. Does Foucault not establish a line of increasing individualization, rather than a collection of discontinuities? Does he not interpret the prison as a model of objectification, rather than to stick to the surface of events? Does he not describe an entire disciplinary society, rather than focus on small details? As the analysis of Martha Kaplan's "Panopticon in Poona" will demonstrate, these questions are far from rhetorical.

For now, though, contrasting Foucault's genealogy with both the work of Max Weber and the long tradition of Marxism might provide some clarity. According to Rabinow & Dreyfus, 'Foucault does differentiate himself from Weber methodologically'[22] (132). They locate the difference in the status of acts of interpretation:

[22] Rabinow & Dreyfus's formulation is slightly misleading, for, as Kelly reminds us (36), Foucault admitted that he did not know the work of Max Weber when he was writing *Discipline and Punish*.

> Weber's ideal type is a device which retrospectively brings together a variety of historical considerations, so as to highlight the "essence" of the historical object being studied, for example, Calvinism, capitalism, wordly asceticism. It is the ideal type which brings disparate phenomena into a meaningful model from which the historian can explain them. Foucault maintains that his approach differs in that he is interested in isolating "explicit programs" like the Panopticon, which functioned as actual programs of action and reform. There is nothing hidden about them; they are not invented by the historian to bring together an explanation. (132)

Thus, after the archaeological phase, Foucault acknowledges the inevitability of interpretation, but refuses to treat it as the uncovering of hidden meaning. After all, he maintains the groundlessness of interpretation, thereby rejecting the truth-claims of 'Weberian science' (Rabinow & Dreyfus 166), but reasserts its usefulness in a method with 'a central place for pragmatic concern' (166). This tension between the arbitrariness of interpretation and the guidance of pragmatic concerns stands unresolved. However, it does point to the fact that Foucault, unlike Weber, intended to start from specific technologies of power rather than a larger interpretive grid.

Helpful though this contrast with Weber may be, the context Foucault invokes in *Discipline and Punish* is much larger. By insisting on the common matrix of power and knowledge, he repudiates 'a whole tradition that allows us to imagine that knowledge can exist only where the power relations are suspended' (27). A Marxist tradition as Foucault perceived it is perhaps the most obvious example of a method that presupposes the externality of knowledge and power, for as Kelly reminds us 'in Foucault's intellectual milieu in the early 1970s, what did loom large was (...) Marxism' (2009: 37). Besides the ideology problem, broached in the previous chapter, Foucault also takes issue with a Marxist approach that analyzes power as 'the 'privilege,' acquired or preserved, of the dominant class' (26): power is not something to be possessed. Neither should it be reduced to class relations or institutions (27).[23] This is not to say that Marx figures solely as an antagonist: the disciplinary organization of the workhouse discussed by

[23] The point of this section is to illustrate how Foucault carves out his method in relation to implied others. This should not be confused with an analysis of actual relations between Foucault's work and (the heterogeneous tradition of) Marxism, which falls outside the scope of this chapter.

Foucault testifies to the key role of mechanisms of discipline in a capitalist mode of production.[24] The difference between a Foucauldian genealogy and a Marxist approach has less to do with the importance they accord to the structure of capitalism than with their respective conceptualizations of power.

As an alternative to both Weber and Marx, Foucault provides some suggestions on how to approach power. Mark Kelly has extrapolated five of these methodological suggestions, but frames them as 'characteristics of power' (2009: 37). Given that the concept of power itself is contested, it may be more useful to understand the sum of Foucault's propositions about power as a specific approach to power, rather than a theorization of what power really is. Modifying Kelly's list accordingly, it appears that *Discipline and Punish* aims to analyze power as:

> 1. [impersonal or subjectless], (...) not guided by the will of individual subjects (DP 26 (...))
> 2. [relational], (...) always a case of power *relations* between people, as opposed to a quantum possessed by people (DP 27 (...))
> 3. [decentred], (...) not concentrated on a single individual or class (DP 27 (...))
> 4. [multidirectional], not [flowing] only from the more to the less powerful, but rather "[coming] from below," even if it is nevertheless "nonegalitarian" (DP 27 (...))
> 5. [strategic], [having] a dynamic of its own, [being] "intentional" (DP 26 (...)) (Kelly 2009: 37-38)

A sixth characteristic can be added to this list: contrary to Kelly's belief that the productive dimension of power only comes to the fore in Foucault's later work (cf. 38), the intention to read power as productive rather than merely repressive is already present in *Discipline and Punish* and should be added to this list. Not only does Foucault stress the 'possible positive effects' of punitive mechanisms (23), he also focuses on the soul as a product of disciplinary power – an idea that will turn out to be crucial in *Colonising Egypt*. Together, these six guidelines make it possible to study what Foucault calls the microphysics of power. With this phrase, he refers to the analysis of concrete techniques and technologies of power working on the body. It is these

[24] In a lecture called "*Re-reading Discipline and Punish,*" delivered at the Radical Foucault Conference (September 2011, Centre for Cultural Studies Research, University of East London), Stephen Shapiro and Anne Schwan questioned the tendency in the Anglophone world to see Foucault and Marx as antagonists. Shapiro pointed to Rabinow's selection of Foucault's essential work, which leaves out those pieces where Foucault spoke more highly of Marx.

techniques and technologies as they appear in the penal apparatus that form the starting point of Foucault's microphysics of discipline.

4.1.2. Cotext: Three Rationalities of Power

In terms of conceptual architecture, the contrast between three major concepts constitutes the crux of *Discipline and Punish*: torture, punishment, and discipline. They point to three different regimes of penality, and more generally to three different rationalities of power. The relationship between them is one of 'historical transformation' (209): although these rationalities face each other in the second half of the eighteenth century, 'in the end it was the third that was adopted': discipline (131). But in order to understand the latter, one must understand 'torture' and 'punishment.'

'Torture', in this context, is a translation of the French 'supplice,' which refers specifically 'to the public torture and execution of criminals that provided one of the most popular spectacles of eighteenth-century France' (Translator's Note, ix). It is closely connected to the concept of **sovereignty**, which denotes a configuration of power in which torture is the dominant penal technique.

Although the notion of sovereignty is not as elaborated in *Discipline and Punish* as it would be in *The History of Sexuality*, one can still extrapolate six principal characteristics – characteristics that the next section will contrast with the concept of discipline. First of all, Foucault's notion of sovereignty describes a historical situation in which power is centered around the body of the king. He is a 'material and physical presence,' and the origin of a 'force that he himself deploys or transmits to some few others' (208).

Second, the concept of sovereignty connects relations of power to the law: 'the force of the law is the force of the prince' (47). Every crime is an attack on the sovereign, since 'the law represents the will of the sovereign' (47). In the practice of torture, 'the tortured body is first inscribed in the legal ceremonial that must produce, open for all to see, the truth of the crime' (35). The physical violence used to extract confessions is thus not an individual transgression, but a legal technique that grounds the power of the sovereign in the realm of truth.

Third, torture as punishment operated by way of example: it needed to 'show the crime and at the same time to show the sovereign power that mastered it' (93). Indeed, executions

were necessarily carried out in public as ceremonial displays of monarchic power over the offender, and were highly ritualized.

As a fourth and fifth characteristic, the excessive and discontinuous nature of sovereign penality stands out. To instil terror in the spectators, 'the punishment is carried out in such a way as to give a spectacle not of measure, but of imbalance and excess' (49). Consequently, the exercise of sovereign power is discontinuous and irregular (130): it is concentrated in brief outbursts of violence.

Finally, power marked the body physically, through dismemberment or branding: torture acted immediately on the body of the offender. Sovereign power took the body as its major target of penal repression (8).

This violence of torture, inflicted on the body, created a space for reformers who advocated a more humane approach. Reforming jurists introduced the idea of **punishment** as 'a procedure for requalifying individuals as subjects, as juridical subjects; it uses not marks, but signs, coded sets of representations, which would be given the most rapid circulation and the most general acceptance possible by citizens witnessing the scene of punishment' (130-1). But opposed to all narratives of increasing humanization, Foucault observes that penal systems have not lost their hold on the body. Rather, the reforms signal a change in the status of the body: 'if one intervenes upon it to imprison it, or to make it work, it is in order to deprive the individual of a liberty that is regarded both as a right and as property' (11). Thus, the body functions as an intermediary.

In Foucault's account, these techniques of torture and punishment have been overtaken by what he calls **discipline**. He illustrates a historical transformation from a sovereign rationale of power operating through torture to a society in which discipline replaces these more primitive techniques. What he describes is 'the gradual extension of the mechanisms of discipline throughout the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries, their spread throughout the whole social body, the formation of what might be called in general the disciplinary society' (209). Thus, disciplinary technology would become the dominant mode of power. But what is this discipline, and how does it work?

4.1.3. Concept: Is Discipline a Totalizing Concept?

Discipline, as a general technology of power, is best understood in its most condensed form: panopticism. This concept, which will be central in Kaplan's text, refers to the structuring principles of the panopticon, a model for a prison designed by Jeremy Bentham. The idea is familiar by now: an annular building divided into cells holds the inmates, and a tower in the center which can accommodate a supervisor. The windows are arranged in such a way that the inmates can be seen at all times, but they cannot know for sure whether they are being watched or not.

Visibility is thus a central disciplinary mechanism, and it involves much more than passively being watched:

> He who is subjected to a field of visibility, and who knows it, assumes responsibility for the constraints of power; he makes them play spontaneously upon himself; he inscribes in himself the power relation in which he simultaneously plays both roles; he becomes the principle of his own subjection. (*DP* 202-3)

Given that Said's *Orientalism* refers on multiple occasions to the gaze of the Orientalist, relating it to the idea of panopticism, it is important to spell out the difference again between the status of the gaze in panopticism and in Orientalism. Said, apparently unaware of this difference, describes a continuity between the visible and the sayable (127). But as Rey Chow reminds us in "Postcolonial Visibilities," visibility in *Discipline and Punish* 'should be understood as a realm that has become irreducible to the order of articulation that is words, statements and the sayable' (2010: 65). In short, disciplinary techniques cannot be grasped in terms of discourse alone, as the visibility Foucault describes is primarily a spatial technique.

The sovereign model of power cannot account for disciplinary techniques either. A comparison of disciplinary panopticism to the six characteristics of sovereignty extrapolated before makes this abundantly clear. First of all, in disciplinary power the figure of the king is no longer the center. As Foucault puts it, 'the right to punish has been shifted from the vengeance of the sovereign to the defence of society' (90). In the panopticon, this anonymity is reflected in the status of the supervisor: the illusion of his presence is enough to create the power dynamic (201).

Second, disciplinary power does not aim to enforce the law, but a norm. The operations of differentiation, hierarchization, homogenization, and exclusion all revolve around a split between the normal and the abnormal. The disciplinary gaze is a normalizing gaze (183).

A third, related point is the visibility of punishment: it is no longer staged as an example of what happens to those who challenge the sovereign, but takes place in an isolated place away from the public. The appearance of a scientifico-legal complex contributes to a specialization of punishment that moves it out of the realm of the general public. This complex consists of 'psychiatric or psychological experts, magistrates concerned with the implementation of sentences, educationalists, [and] members of the prison service' (21), all of which create the frame of normalization referred to above. Evidently, the analysis of disciplinary power does not only need to be repositioned in relation to the law, but also to the state.

Fourth and fifth, disciplinary power does not display its strength as sovereignty did. Rather, it tends to hide, very much like the supervisor in the tower who cannot be seen. Ceremonies and rituals have lost their purpose now that 'power has its principle not so much in a person as in a certain concerted distribution of bodies, surfaces, lights, gazes' (202). It follows that this distribution generates a certain continuity of power: 'surveillance is permanent in its effects, even if it is discontinuous in its action' (201).

Finally, the purpose of power relations that work on the body is not to mark them, but to turn them into docile bodies, bodies 'that may be subjected, used, transformed and improved' (136). Rather than the signifying elements of the body, what is at stake is 'the economy, the efficiency of movements, their internal organization' (137). This grip on the body is a grip that attends to the particularities of the individual, that 'explores it, breaks it down and rearranges it' (138). Power thus not merely destroys bodies in order to subject others to its will, but works directly on them to bring them in line with the norm.

Importantly, this grip on the body is only one among many processes of individualization in disciplinary technologies of power. As discussed at length in the previous chapter, the common root of disciplinary power and knowledge is that they take Man as their object. This objecthood is the root of individualization. In the context of penality, this creates a situation in which 'a whole corpus of individualizing knowledge was being organized that took as its field of reference not so much the crime committed (at least in isolation), but the potentiality of danger that lies hidden in an individual and which is manifested in his observed everyday conduct' (126). Thus, when

Foucault claims that 'discipline 'makes' individuals' (170), he points to the individualizing effect of power-knowledge.

This individualization does not limit itself to an investment of the body: it produces the modern 'soul' (29). This soul is neither an ideological construct nor an illusion, but rather a reality reference projected by power-knowledge. This reality reference forms the basis of concepts like psyche, subjectivity, personality, and consciousness (29), and for sciences such as psychology, psychiatry and pedagogy. At bottom, this means that the human sciences, the prison system and disciplinary technologies in general share a common base: they are all produced from the power-knowledge cluster that takes Man as its object, viz. discipline.

If the above has attempted to formulate something like a tentative definition, its imprecision also hints at one of the major problems with the concept of discipline. As the contextual section has pointed out, Foucault claimed to analyze specific technologies rather than general principles of societies. But if discipline is not only the dominant mode of power in prisons, but also in military, medical, educational, and industrial institutions (314 n1), one may wonder whether this system is not total after all. Moreover, Foucault argues in a footnote that he could also have taken examples from 'colonization, slavery and child rearing' (314 n1). He even claims that disciplinary technologies have created the 'Man of modern humanism' (141) and the human sciences in general, which seems to confirm an interpretation of discipline as a ubiquitous power relation.

In *Foucault's Discipline*, John S. Ransom reacts to this problem of a totalizing concept by arguing that:

> No doubt a distinction should be made between the goals and dreams of these reformers and their capacity to give effect to them. Failure to make such a distinction – and Foucault's writing sometimes encourages such a lapse – dupes us into reading *Discipline and Punish* as the description of a fully realized and inescapable disciplinary society. (33)

Although this distinction certainly needs to be made, one may wonder whether this 'lapse' is not more than a misreading that follows from Foucault's rhetoric. In short, the problem may be conceptual: the limits to discipline's expansion are undefined. The crux of the matter is then to determine the value of the concept in the analysis of that other project of expansion,

colonisation, and to take account of what processes of colonisation tell us about discipline and its boundaries.

4.2. Mitchell and Discipline: Disciplinary Power as the Power of Modernity

4.2.1. Context: Understanding Modernity

Timothy Mitchell's *Colonising Egypt* (1988) is not about the colonisation of Egypt, whatever its title may say. Rather, it focuses on a historical process that started much earlier: long before the British army marched into Egypt and colonized it, the notion of structure had invaded the country. Rather than loose ensembles of men and things, suddenly it was structures that were perceived and installed everywhere, Mitchell's argument goes. The clearest example of this process is no doubt the Egyptian army, which transformed from a formless and chaotic group of men into an ordered war machine. The new army, with its coordination, arrangement, and distribution of men, created 'the effect of an apparatus apart from the men themselves' (xii). In other words, it is the discipline of the army that creates the idea of 'a structure independent of the men who composed it' (xii). In making this point the central thesis of his work, Mitchell does not stop at Foucault's description of the microphysics of power, but proceeds to explain how this microphysics produces its metaphysical counterpart.

The way Mitchell links the microphysical and the metaphysical becomes quite clear in his analysis of the representation of Cairo at the 1889 World Exhibition in Paris. Just as the discipline of the army produces the meta-physical effect of an apparatus that is more than the sum of its elements, the careful coordination of the objects on exhibit and their spatial distribution produces a meta-physical effect: the idea of a representation of an Oriental city.

According to Mitchell, this metaphysical idea of structure and order deriving from disciplinary processes such as coordination and distribution pervaded social life as a whole. Appreciating the visibility or legibility of representation in the exhibition, visitors who actually went to visit Cairo were in for a disappointment. Because 'they took representation to be a universal condition' (22), European visitors expected Egyptian cities to have the same kind of legibility and order. But these cities had not been built according to a plan or structure that precedes its elements; it was not built as the representation of something else. Visitors were confronted with the impossibility of grasping what they saw, because it had not been laid out for them like the 'reality' the exhibition had represented – in short, they found 'disorder.'

Trying to grasp reality as representation, Europeans found it hard to represent Egyptian society at all, 'since the Middle East had not yet been organised representationally' (29). To overcome this frustration, 'Egypt was to be ordered up as something object-like. In other words it was to be made picture-like and legible, rendered available to political and economic calculation' (33). Official colonization was soon to follow.

Keeping the above in mind, how is the subject of *Colonising Egypt* not the colonisation of Egypt? As Mitchell himself emphasizes, 'while focussing on events in Egypt in the latter part of the nineteenth century, its argument is addressed to the place of colonialism in the critique of modernity' (ix). Yapp's criticism that 'it is difficult to discern what distinguishes the representations of Egypt from that of other phenomena' (1039) misses the mark entirely: Mitchell is looking into the reasons that made the very idea of representation possible, as opposed to the 'content' of representation. More to the point, Segal argues that 'in Mitchell's subtle analysis, colonizing and modernizing are aspects of a single historical phenomenon' (389). It is my contention that Mitchell even subordinates the question of colonialism to modernity: the split between things and their representation, between the material and the conceptual is not just what made colonialism possible, but also the defining feature 'for understanding the peculiarity of capitalist modernity' (xii). The singularity of capitalist modernity is what is really at stake in Mitchell's work.

4.2.2. Cotext: Foucault's Microphysics Meet Derrida's Metaphysics

An emphasis on modernity as a single system obviously implies the existence of something **pre-modern**. Mitchell's claim that Western society was organized representationally hinges on Pierre Bourdieu's 'ethnography of the Kabyle house' (167), which concluded that the houses of Kabyle people were not constructed according to a structure that stands apart from its elements. Given that the Kabyle people are actually Algerian, rather than Egyptian, Rivlin is right to point out that this 'seems quite irrelevant to Egypt without further documentary evidence' (361). This may well be a symptom of a larger problem: this broad distinction between modern and pre-modern societies can quickly lapse into a homogenizing division. Mitchell seems well aware of the difficulty in setting up such a binary:

> I run the risk of setting up this other as the very opposite of ourselves. Such an opposite, moreover, would appear inevitably as a self-contained totality, and its encounter with the modern West would appear, again inevitably, as its rupturing and disintegration. (...) Such consequences, though perhaps inevitable, are undesired and unintended. (49)

As long as one acknowledges these dangers, they need not detract from the argument. Still, this issue appears to be linked to the difficulty in *Discipline and Punish* outlined above of determining the boundaries of the disciplinary society. Like the modern implies the pre-modern, or the West implies the non-West (32), the disciplinary implies the non-disciplinary: each binary suggests a homogeneity on either side of the divide that is insufficiently supported by evidence. This problem will be elaborated in the discussion of Kaplan's "Panopticon in Poona." But before doing so, the task at hand is to determine how Mitchell introduces the metaphysical into Foucault's discussion of microphysics.

In its attempt to pinpoint the peculiarity of capitalist modernity, *Colonising Egypt* draws on Derrida's explanation of how meaning and the idea of the **metaphysical** are produced. In a highly condensed account, Mitchell recalls the importance of difference and repetition in the constitution of meaning:

> Meaning arises, then, because the word is always a repetition, in a double sense. It is a repetition in the sense of something non-original, something that occurs by modifying or differing from an other; and a repetition in the sense of the-same-again. Meaning is an effect of this paradoxical quality of sameness and difference, whereby a word always happens to be just the same only different. (145)

This play of difference, Mitchell proceeds, is visible in the way Arabic as a language functions. European languages, by contrast, have suppressed this mechanism and produce instead a metaphysical effect: the idea that beyond the physical realm of the sign, there exists something else. One of the most obvious manifestations of this belief is the Saussurean division of the sign into a signifier, which constitutes the material element, and the signified, which belongs to the realm of the conceptual. Not only does Mitchell's comparison of European languages and Arabic show that this dualism is not fundamental to language as such, it also suggests that this division of the material and the conceptual is highly contingent.This is the key to the question of the

peculiarity of capitalist modernity: the idea of organizing the world according to a material/conceptual dualism exists only in capitalist modernity – or so Mitchell argues.

The contingency of this dualism does not make its effects any less real: it ultimately creates the political **authority** that legitimizes colonialism. As soon as one breaks loose from the idea that meaning resides in words themselves, one is bound to conceive of language as a semantic structure that is more than the sum of its words. The signifier now comes to signify something else, it re-presents something.

This is where the concept of the author steps in: the idea that is being represented, if not contained in the words itself, must have originated in the mind of the author. Thus, as opposed to the material element, 'the conceptual element is prior, closer to the original thought being communicated, to the author, to the origin' (144). Indeed, texts are believed to represent the intention of an author, and in that sense they produce 'authority.' They are the material that functions as the vehicle for intentions and truth originating with an author. This author, in turn, consists of a body that forms the vehicle through which the mind communicates. Clearly, both language and the body here are thought of in dualistic terms.

It is this dualism that underlies the production of the political authority that legitimizes colonialism:

> Just as meaning does not exist in the 'material' of the words themselves, but seems to belong to a separate mental or conceptual realm that words only ever re-present, political authority would now exist apart as something metaphysical, which in the material world is only ever re-presented. (154)

At bottom, this means that politics is thought of as physical or material action that represents the ideal realm of an authority: bodies and armies move under the authority of a non-mechanical, non-physical, and invisible power separate from themselves. In a colonial context, 'colonial authority appears as this unseen, yet 'none the less real', metaphysical power' (159). Thus, the dualism of the material and the conceptual is not what bestows authority upon the colonizer, but that which makes possible the very idea of a metaphysical form of power like authority.

Importantly, Mitchell does not emphasize this dualism to deconstruct meaning and authority. Rather, he uses it exactly to demonstrate how they come into being. The crux of the matter lies in the hierarchy of the material and the conceptual: the latter has been considered 'an order of meaning or truth existing somehow before and behind what would now be thought of as mere 'things in themselves'' (178). Political authority vests itself in this order of truth, as an order that is 'seemingly prior and superior' to the realm of the material (179). Thus, colonial authority represents itself as profoundly metaphysical.

4.2.3. Concept: A Non-Subjective Approach to Colonial Power

Needless to say, this emphasis on the metaphysical contrasts sharply with the efforts of *Discipline and Punish* to work around it. Indeed, Foucault had tried to write a history of penal practice without recourse to the metaphysical myths of progress and humanity. In doing so, he leaves open the question of how these notions have gained the currency they have.

Nevertheless, there is one immediate connection to the metaphysical in *Discipline and Punish*: the idea of the soul. As explained in section 4.1.3, the disciplinary concentration on the body produced the idea of a soul as a reality reference. Although Foucault merely posited this production of the soul, the psyche, and the mind without elaborating on it, this still provides the key to Mitchell's connection between the metaphysical and the microphysical. As we have seen, modernity puts forward the idea of a body that is a vehicle of the mind. In that sense, it conceives of the conceptual as being prior to the material. Rather than reversing this hierarchy, Mitchell aims to demonstrate the origin of this division. Much like Foucault located the division between the body and the soul as a product of disciplinary mechanisms, Mitchell reads the broader division between the material and the conceptual as a product of discipline.

Indeed, disciplinary power creates a dualism: practices of arrangement and distribution give rise to the idea of an order or structure that exists independently of its elements. Just as the concentration of power on the body leads to the reality reference of the soul, the disciplining of soldiers creates the idea of an ordered army, the spatial arrangement of houses produces notions of urban planning, the distribution of words projects an author, and the actions of men project the idea of politics.

On a more abstract level, it is in the processes of the arranging, distributing and dividing of that which one now refers to as the material that the material is somehow doubled,

complemented with the idea of an order that is considered prior to the material. Ultimately, this explains not only how the metaphysical realm comes into being, but also the peculiarity of capitalist modernity sought by Mitchell.

Having explained how Mitchell connects the rise of the metaphysical to Foucault's microphysics of discipline, it is imperative to stress the ways in which *Colonising Egypt* goes beyond Foucault in order to explain the authority power proceeds with – a question Foucault did not pick up. The authority that accompanies disciplinary power hinges on this metaphysical realm:

> The world divided into two realms that I have been describing in these pages is a world where political power, however microphysical in its methods, operates always so as to appear as something set apart from the real world, affecting a certain metaphysical authority. (159-160)

This dual logic of disciplinary power helps to account for the rapid spread of disciplinary techniques. Mitchell attempts to explain this in relation to education: the microphysical technology is what made education possible (e.g. through the production of classroom discipline), but 'the creation of this metaphysical realm was what made the education of the individual suddenly imperative' (94). If one replaces 'education' with 'colonization' in this quotation, the crucial role of the metaphysical in colonialism becomes abundantly clear.

Although Mitchell makes this advance over Foucault explicit, referring to it as a 'consequence of disciplinary power (...) that Michel Foucault does not discuss' (xi-xii), he remains silent on the implications of the metaphysical for Foucault's own work. However, these implications are not at all inconsequential. As we have seen, *Discipline and Punish* describes the rise of disciplinary mechanisms forming a disciplinary society. This process, as Kelly's fifth extrapolation has shown, has a dynamic of its own: it is strategic in nature. However, unless one invokes a figure (either a person or a state) that desires control, there is no reason why the strategy of disciplinary power should be what it is, nor why it should spread through the whole social fabric, and by extension, the world. This invocation would mean nothing less than a return to the paradigm of sovereignty, which was exactly what Foucault set out to avoid.

Confronted with the problem of the directionality of power, Foucault would attempt to formulate a solution in *The History of Sexuality*. In a somewhat mystifying phrase, he proposes that power be studied as 'intentional but non-subjective' (94). What Foucault means is that

> the rationale of power is characterized by tactics that are often quite explicit at the restricted level where they are inscribed (the local cynicism of power), tactics which, becoming connected to one another, attracting and propagating one another, but finding their base of support and their conditions elsewhere, end by forming comprehensive systems: the logic is perfectly clear, the aims decipherable, and yet it is often the case that no one is there to have invented them (...). (95)

This notion is acceptable as a solution to the general problem of directionality: it explains how individual power relations can coalesce and develop in a certain direction.

However, it hardly begins to explain why power develops in the specific direction it takes. The Nietzschean emphasis on the role of chance and accident in the course of history surely plays an important part in Foucault's decision not to pursue these questions any further, but this lacuna seems particularly unfortunate in the postcolonial context. Given that postcolonial critiques have gone to great lengths to demonstrate that colonialism is not an accident in the history of modernity,[25] it seems insufficient for any genealogy of colonialism to take this contingency for granted.

Unwittingly, *Colonising Egypt* provides a theoretically sound alternative. It anticipates the spread of discipline by showing that disciplinary techniques are 'by nature colonising in method' (x). As should be sufficiently clear by now, disciplinary power produces a metaphysical idea of order that is by the terms of its own logic superior to disorder. Consequently, 'the colonising process was to introduce the kind of order now found lacking' (xv). Thus, Mitchell's combination of the microphysical and the metaphysical leads to the conclusion that colonisation is a direct consequence of the coming into being of disciplinary techniques – without lapsing back into the sovereign paradigm or losing explicative value.

[25] The Latin-American Decoloniality Project is probably the clearest proponent of such a position. See for instance Mignolo, W. D. 2012. *The Darker Side of Western Modernity: Global Futures, Decolonial Options*. Durham: Duke UP.

Apart from the problem of directionality, there is a second way in which *Colonising Egypt* can be read as enhancing our understanding of Foucault's work. It provides a welcome contextualization of the results that can be achieved with Foucault's archaeological method. The discussion of the relationship between archaeology and structuralism, presented earlier in 3.2.1, achieves its full relevance here: *Colonising Egypt* can be read as a challenge to structuralism.

Before we take a closer look at the implications of *Colonising Egypt* for structuralist thought, it may be helpful to consider what *Discipline and Punish* can and cannot tell us about structuralism. In what appears as an offhand remark, Rabinow & Dreyfus argue that they 'are reading *Discipline and Punish* broadly as a genealogy of structuralist discourse and associated practices' (155). The clue to this reading is their observation that the disciplinary techniques of arrangement, distribution and coordination impose structure in a way that is reminiscent of the attempt of structuralism to read their objects of study as structures. However, this is a strong claim, and Rabinow & Dreyfus provide scant supporting evidence. Rereading *Discipline and Punish* with this claim in mind does very little to warrant the notion that Foucault had tried to make this point: the book in no way states that the idea of structure is produced by disciplinary power.

Colonising Egypt, by contrast, reserves a central place for the question of structure. As we have seen, it argues that one should not take for granted the idea of a structure that is prior to its elements: the distinction between the structure and its elements is itself already the product of power. Thus, Morsy's claim that Mitchell falls back on structuralist analysis could not be further from the truth[26]: *Colonising Egypt* constitutes a radical challenge to structuralism's potential to analyze power relations.

But what does that mean for Foucault's archaeological method? Rabinow & Dreyfus's interpretation of *Discipline and Punish* as a critique of structuralism hinges on the tendency of structuralism to think in terms of 'universal principles' (155). Given that *The Archaeology of Knowledge* argues in terms of historical rather than universal a priori, they are implicitly dragging archaeology out of the line of fire. But there is no reason why the universality of the principles should be the defining criterion for deciding whether this challenge to structuralism applies to

[26] Morsy 1990 : 'Non point qu'il séduise nécessairement avec son pesant arsenal conceptuel, faisant appel à l'analyse structuraliste, à des modèles théoriques comme le schéma type du village kabyle, jadis proposé par le sociologue Bourdieu, ou à la définition moderne du 'discours' avec force références à ces intellectuels français que sont Derrida ou Michel Foucault.' (320)

archaeology: the decisive question is whether it maintains this distinction between elements and a prior structure.

At first sight, archaeology does not conceive of the rules that govern discourse as a structure in the sense that Mitchell uses it, namely as something that is 'separate from the 'content' distributed within it' (79). Rather, as became clear in section 3.2, Foucault's approach was essentially descriptive: its object of study was the discursive formation in its materiality, not the general principle that preceded it. Still, one may wonder how the notion of rules that govern discursive practice, as well as the concept of the historical a priori, can ever be purely descriptive: the idea of a structure that is prior to its content seems to run through Foucault's archaeology as well. In that sense, Foucault's early work seems fully embedded in disciplinary power, rendering it inadequate as a tool to expose this power.

This constatation, however, opens the door to a combination of the archaeological approach and the kind of genealogy Mitchell proposes. In order to understand Mitchell's contribution, one needs to go back to Foucault's *The Order of Things*, which, significantly, had been published originally as *Les Mots et les choses*. In this book, Foucault the archaeologist could demonstrate the epistemological split between words and their referents, but because the positivity of his method refused to establish causal links, he failed to explain the genesis of this split. Mitchell's contention that disciplinary power produces this dualism fills this gap and provides archaeological findings with a genealogical explanation.

These advances over Foucault possess immediate relevance for the study of colonialism. When Mitchell demonstrates how disciplinary power creates the dualism that constitutes the working principle of European languages, emphasizing that Arabic works differently, he is demonstrating how disciplinary power is operative in the workings of discourse. This move establishes a strong connection between Foucault's analyses of discourse and epistemes, and those of power – a connection that is simply not present in Foucault's own work. More importantly, it makes it possible to employ the conceptual arsenal discussed in the previous chapter in the analysis of colonial power without encountering the problems Said and Bhabha ran into.

Indeed, this revised concept of discipline has important ramifications for the texts discussed earlier. First, the claim that the dualism of the conceptual and the material is produced by disciplinary power implies that it is insufficient to point to the falsity of representation, as *Orientalism* did in its instrumentalist architecture. Because it maintains the distinction between

reality and representation, this framework does not supersede the dualism disciplinary power created.

Second, the archaeological architecture we detected in *Orientalism* is not sufficient either: to stress the inevitable interestedness of representation is not necessarily to suspend the distinction between reality and representation, as long as one does not raise the question of whether the act of representation itself is by definition colonialist.

Third, it is theoretically unsound to locate power in particular subject-object relations, when it was actually power itself that produced the very distinction between the subject and the object. Consequently, the efforts of the archaeological Said and Foucault to locate power in the objectness of the represented misses the larger point of how one came to think in terms of objects and subjects. Something similar can be argued about Homi Bhabha's emphasis on the problems on the level of subjectivity. As the previous chapter has argued, he followed Lacan in drawing a parallel between language and subject-constitution. Besides the problem of universality that has been discussed already, there is the larger issue that this approach does not address the question of how the distinction between subject and object has gained currency – both in experience and language.

Obviously, a focus on the foundational role of disciplinary power does not invalidate Said and Bhabha's work. Rather, it places their concern with the question of the oppression of colonial subjects in a broader perspective on the peculiarity of modern power, a power that does much more than oppress.

The consequences of this new approach to power are apparently hard to grasp, as some of the reviews of *Colonising Egypt* indicate. Merry's review is a case in point, claiming that Mitchell focuses on 'the ideological aspects of domination, examining power as it operates through the restructuring of consciousness' (912). This is a blatant misunderstanding of Mitchell's work: *Colonising Egypt* focuses on the power that makes it possible even to use concepts like ideology and consciousness in the first place. The rise of disciplinary power in both its microphysical and metaphysical forms precedes the legitimization of colonization: it is only after the coming into being of the dualism Mitchell analyzes that one can begin to question the categories of which Mitchell allegedly makes use.

Similarly, Cantori, claiming to have found 'conceptual problems' (403), objects to Mitchell's account by arguing that Egypt adopted disciplinary power 'voluntarily' before the

British came (404). This observation is not a serious objection, for two reasons. First of all, as Gran observes, the ruling class 'found it strategic to Europeanize itself and to remove the feature that made it an 'other' for Europeans' (218). Cantori fails to acknowledge this class stratification, homogenizing Egypt in the process. A second reason why Cantori's objection misses the mark completely lies in his insistence on the 'voluntary' nature of accepting disciplinary power. In categorizing this acceptance as voluntary, he assumes the existence of a collective Egyptian Subject that makes decisions. What Mitchell tried to show was that the idea of this subject is itself already the manifestation of disciplinary power.

At bottom, the problem here is a conflict between two contrasting concepts of power. For Cantori, power denotes first and foremost the ability to make choices, hence his insistence on the voluntary nature of the adoption of disciplinary techniques. Mitchell's essay "Everyday Metaphors of Power" is helpful here: it observes that everyday metaphors of power tend to think of power as either persuading or coercing. In the case of persuasion, its target is the mind; when it is coercive, its point of application is the body (545). Underlying both metaphors is the concept of power one can also find in Cantori's account: power as the ability to choose.

As should be amply clear by now, the concept of power *Colonising Egypt* puts forward is different from both persuasion and consent, and works neither on the mind nor the body – it produces, rather, that very distinction. The importance of this non-subjective approach to power can hardly be overstated: we have now cut off the head of the king in the analysis of colonialism. Colonialism is no longer about the movement of armies, commanded by a sovereign, but about the rise and spread of systems of power.

And yet, the greatest virtue of *Colonising Egypt* might well be its greatest weakness. If one posits the disciplinary production of the microphysical and the metaphysical as the crux of capitalist modernity through a contrastive approach that considers only a handful of Arabic sources, this effectively recenters global complexities around the concept of discipline. Indeed, how can a single concept provide a sufficient analysis of a multitude of power relations? It is to these questions that Kaplan turns.

4.3. Kaplan and Discipline: Is the Concept Eurocentric?

4.3.1. Context: Discipline in India

Martha Kaplan's 1995 "Panopticon in Poona: Essay on Foucault and Colonialism," published in the journal *Cultural Anthropology*, attempts to determine the potential and limitations of Foucault's work for an anthropological analysis of colonialism. In this "Essay on Foucault and Colonialism" there is, however, a certain slippage masked in the transition from the title to the subtitle: the name of Foucault, used so casually in the text to imply an identifiable theoretical framework, involves a lot more than his work on Bentham's panopticon. Analogously, Poona, a city in Maharashtra, West India, is only one locus in a world shaped by colonialism. This transition, disavowed in the text, lays bare Kaplan's main tactic: implication.

In short, the main implication of "Panopticon in Poona" is that the work of Foucault may perpetuate in certain ways a colonialist line of thought. Referring to Foucault's account of discipline as the dominant power formation of the modern West, she concludes somewhat hesitantly that 'the story of a "modern" difference may turn out to be just another story' (95). This hesitation springs perhaps from the realization that a relatively short essay exploring the workings of disciplinary power in Poona is insufficient to make such grand claims about the relation between Foucault and colonialism as such. In that sense, "Panopticon in Poona" reads more like an elaboration of its opening questions than an answer to them:

> Is Foucault correct that the modern European state and its discourse arises in a European historical trajectory from kingdoms to states, from power over death to power over life? Or is Foucault reading as real a European imagination of its own difference from its past and from the colonized other? Is he reading as real history a version of difference that arises and is made to seem real in the course of colonial projects like that of Mountstuart Elphinstone? (86)

These questions and the critique they imply are reminiscent of an earlier questioning of Foucault's usefulness for postcolonial studies. And indeed, it is not long before Kaplan mentions that 'others have cautioned that Foucault's analysis itself reinscribes the West as subject' (90),

hinting at Spivak's infamous "Can the Subaltern Speak?"[27] In doing so, Kaplan joins a long list of academics who have accused Foucault of Eurocentrism. The following sections will analyze the terms of this critique.

But before delving into the question of Eurocentrism, we must not forget that Kaplan also puts her name on the list of those who have found Foucault's exploration of the relation between knowledge and power useful: only the second half of "Panopticon in Poona" is dedicated to a critique of Foucault, the first half attempts to work with Foucault's concepts of discipline and panopticism.

Kaplan's analysis, inspired by *Discipline and Punish*, focuses on the writings of Mountstuart Elphinstone. This Scottish statesman and historian was appointed "Sole Commissioner for the Territories Conquered from the Paishwa" after the British conquest in 1818. In his writings, he reflected on the question of efficient and profitable governance: his purpose was above all to ensure the maximization of revenue. However, Kaplan proceeds, Elphinstone has also been "lauded as a champion (...) of Maharashtrian custom and institutions' (87), based on his great interest in the local population. Through questionnaires and censuses, Elphinstone inquired into Maharashtrian culture. This has led scholars to the conclusion, paraphrased by Kaplan, that 'Elphinstone's utilitarian interests, instantiated in the reading of Bentham, warred with his romantic desire to maintain Maratha institutions and ways of government' (87). Thus, the maximization of profit and the study of culture are perceived as conflicting impetuses. Kaplan, for her part, refuses to take this contradiction at face value, suspecting instead that Elphinstone's interest in local culture betrays the link between power and knowledge Foucault described in *Discipline and Punish*. She argues that 'attention to "custom" in colonial contexts has been an exercise of power' (88). This power is a disciplinary power, as 'the questionnaire turns the people of Maharashtra into objects of scrutiny, like inmates of a panopticon' (88). The connection between Elphinstone and panopticism is significant, even in practice: he built several panopticons in India. Importantly, the construction of panopticons did not only affect 'criminals': 'even as the colonial scrutiny created "criminal tribes" and constructed Maharashtran abnormality, the scrutiny took place in the service of defining and controlling the normal' (89). Thus, Elphinstone's tactics of governance constituted an individualizing, disciplinary

[27] Spivak, G. C. 1994 (1988). "Can the Subaltern Speak?" IN: Williams, P.; Chrisman, L. Colonial Discourse and Post-Colonial Theory. A Reader. Harlow: Pearson Education.

regime to keep the colonized subjects in check. Like Mitchell, Kaplan reserves a central place for disciplinary power in the colonization process.

4.3.2. Cotext: Against a Binary Architecture

If Kaplan's emphasis on the use of disciplinary techniques in the production of docile bodies is largely consistent with Foucault's and Mitchell's account, a less harmonious picture appears when one compares their conceptual architectures.

Looking back at the cotextual analysis of *Discipline and Punish*, presented in section 4.1.2, disicpline had as its most immediate antagonist the concept of sovereignty. 'Sovereignty' referred to a form of power in which torture was the dominant penal technique, a technique that sought to put on display the strength of the sovereign through excessive rituals. As section 4.1.3 proceeded to demonstrate, sovereign power stood in opposition to disciplinary power in a number of fundamental ways.

Similarly, Mitchell's *Colonising Egypt* sets up an antagonist to disciplinary power, albeit after a detour. Given that disciplinary power for Mitchell constitutes the peculiarity of capitalist modernity, he implies the pre-modern as the non-disciplinary. The discussion of the Kabyle houses earlier has already exposed the problem of constructing a homogenizing binary of the modern and the pre-modern, coinciding with the disciplinary and the non-disciplinary. Thus, it seems that both Foucault and Mitchell establish their account of discipline through its negation.

By contrast, Kaplan raises serious questions as to the validity of defining the disciplinary through negation. Her argument is framed as a critique of Foucault's binary, but there is no reason why it should not equally apply to Mitchell. It consists of a double movement, problematizing both the Europeanness of discipline, and the discipline of Europeans. Or, reformulating the argument in Mitchell's vocabulary: the Britishness of modernity, and the modernity of the British.

First, Kaplan argues that there is nothing 'European' about the link between knowledge and power. Focusing on the Peshwa rulers of Maharashtra, she points out that the Peshwa administration collected records on land arrangements and taxation, down to the level of the individual. Like Elphinstone, but long before the British came to Poona, they installed this system to increase the revenue of taxation. All information was kept in archives: 'panopticists extraordinaire, not an action or transaction – including, for example, marriage – seems to have

taken place in Maharashtra without the bureaucracy of the Peshwa knowing and taxing' (90). They kept censuses and created spatial divisions in neighborhoods to coordinate the taxing, all of which are techniques highly reminiscent of the disciplinary technologies Foucault describes. Moreover, their attempts to collect information did much more than maximize revenue:

> The Peshwa's information-gathering may have begun in order to keep a check on the tax gatherers to whom the power to tax had been "farmed." But to monitor those very intermediaries, the Peshwa needed, and created, a system of censusing that brought the inquiry of the state directly into the commercial and agricultural lives of individuals. Elphinstone's archives are in many ways the continuant of this local project. What then of Foucault's assumptions as to the European "modernity" of panopticism? (92)

Kaplan's question is tendentious, given that *Discipline and Punish* never claims panopticism is exclusively European, nor does it equate discipline and modernity (unlike Mitchell does). Nevertheless, the point of Kaplan's interrogation is quite clear: locating disciplinary technologies in space and time may be a more daunting task than Foucault and Mitchell suspect.

Second, "Panopticon in Poona" also raises the question of how 'modern' the British of Elphinstone's time actually were. Kaplan stresses that Elphinstone's techniques of information-gathering were highly inefficient and rudimentary, exemplified in his attempts to estimate the population through the total salt consumption (92). This kind of information-gathering, Kaplan argues, seems far removed from the meticulous approaches outlined in *Discipline and Punish.* However, this argument is perhaps a bit misleading: the efficiency of disciplinary procedures Foucault describes is not measured by the accuracy of the information amassed, but rather by the degree of individualization accomplished.

More to the point, Kaplan highlights the sovereign elements in this presumably disciplinary regime. Against Foucault's historical narrative of a transformation from sovereign to disciplinary power, Kaplan insists on the predilection of the British for rituals of rule: splendid titles, the Union Jack, trumpets, and cannons all assist the British in displaying sovereign strength (93). This leads Kaplan to conclude that 'at the very least, *spectacle* and *capillary action*, *ritual* and *panopticon*, coexist as technologies of power throughout the entire history of the colonial British' (93, emphasis in original). Again, the spatial and temporal separation of sovereignty and discipline is problematized.

In sum, Kaplan questions both the temporal trajectory and spatial location of discipline in Foucault's account, as well as Mitchell's story of modernization through a scrutiny of the binaries that underlie their work. Although the evidence she produces to sever the links between discipline, on the one hand, and Europe or modernity, on the other is nowhere nearly sufficient for a total revision, it presents a useful warning against the dangers of totalizing readings of modernity and discipline.

4.3.3. Concept: Discipline, Eurocentrism, Resistance

If one takes seriously Kaplan's reservations, what are the ramifications for the concept of discipline as a tool for analysis? Is the concept itself so flawed as to render dangerous any analysis that deploys it? "Panopticon in Poona" does not provide a conclusive answer, but suggests an alternative reading of 'discipline' that changes its ontological status. In Kaplan's formulation:

> Is it a history of a real difference of technologies of power? Or is it an *imagined* history of temporal, civilizational difference, imagined in a colonial project insistent on the creation of difference to establish power? (90)

In other words, Kaplan shifts the status of the concept from an alleged description of reality to an imagined history. This formulation is not exactly helpful, given that Foucault's genealogy worked to undo this easy distinction of reality and imagination. Nevertheless, the real problem can be reconstructed from Kaplan's questions: the crux of the matter is that Foucault took for granted a tradition of thought that enabled him to outline a disciplinary society that is roughly coextensive with Europe from the 18th century onwards. Foucault's invocation of sovereignty as an antagonist through which he constructs 'discipline' negatively can then be read as an operation to construct 'Europe.'

This creation of difference is structurally similar to what Said described in *Orientalism*: the construction of the Self through the oriental Other. This difference then serves to establish and maintain the superiority of a European Self. Although it is hard to see how Foucault frames Europe as superior, he certainly does not question Europe as a valid, 'different' category, either. It leads Kaplan to conclude that 'we need to be more sceptical regarding claims about "modern"

difference and see in them simply the effective – but challengeable – self-flattery of another among the series of history's momentarily dominant and powerful cultural cohorts' (95).

This conclusion is reminiscent of Spivak criticism's of Foucault in "Can the Subaltern Speak?" – an essay Kaplan quotes approvingly (90). Because of the overlap between Kaplan and Spivak's argument, the rest of this section will draw on Spivak's work to provide a more thorough assessment of Kaplan's suggestive criticism.

Briefly put, the territory shared by "Panopticon in Poona" and its more famous accomplice consists of the suspicion that Foucault creates a new story of Europe. However, if one expects Spivak's famous essay to yield a plethora of responses to its criticism of Foucault, one is in for a disappointment.[28] How is it possible that a frontal assault on a central source of inspiration for postcolonial studies was apparently largely ignored? Beside the complexity of Spivak's critique, at least three factors can explain this relative silence.

First, the dramatic ending of "Can the Subaltern Speak?" has diverted the attention away from its theoretical opening. Based on the fate of Bhuvaneswari Bhaduri, a young Indian woman involved in the struggle for independence, Spivak argues that the poor women of the South are doubly occluded. Bhuvaneswari, who committed suicide while menstruating to dispel rumours about illicit love and ensuing pregnancy, could not get her message out and her death was recuperated within a patriarchal and racist discourse. It follows, for Spivak, that 'the subaltern cannot speak' (104). Spivak's revision of the essay, published a decade later as part of *A Critique of Postcolonial Reason*, admits that 'it was an inadvisable remark' (308). Inadvisable, because it gave rise to a debate with Benita Parry, who accused Spivak of 'deliberate deafness to the native voice where it can be heard' (1987: 39). This controversy certainly received more attention than Spivak's technical reading of Foucault.[29]

A second reason why critical reception has not responded to her criticism of Foucault is perhaps that, despite its lengthy discussion of Foucault and Deleuze, Spivak's real focus lies elsewhere. Indeed, her essay is an intervention into the work of the Subaltern Studies group, a collective of South-Asian scholars. Inspired by amongst others Foucault, their efforts can be read

[28] One of the recent exceptions is Robinson, A.; Tormey, S. "Living in Smooth Space: Deleuze, Postcolonialism and the Subaltern" IN Bignall, S.; Patton, P. 2010. *Deleuze and the Postcolonial*. Edinburgh: UP. This essay deals with and refutes Spivak's criticism of Foucault and Deleuze. However, its desperate conviction to salvage Deleuze from any accusation Spivak levels seriously compromises its value.

[29] Loomba's discussion of "Can the Subaltern Speak?" is a case in point. Loomba, Ania. 2005. *Colonialism/Postcolonialism*. New York: Routledge, pp. 192-204.

as attempts to reconstruct peasant consciousness. Thus, although Spivak frames her argument as a critique of Foucault, it is much more a critique of his legacy than of his original contributions.

Finally, Spivak does not deal with any of Foucault's major works. In fact, her criticism hinges on a very short conversation between Foucault and Deleuze, printed as "Intellectuals and Power" in *Language, Counter-Memory, Practice*. She justifies this unusual choice by stating that she has 'chosen this friendly exchange between two activist philosophers of history because it undoes the opposition between authoritative theoretical production and the unguarded practice of conversation, enabling one to glimpse the track of ideology' (66). Taking issue with this approach, Warren Montag paraphrases her as suggesting 'that what Foucault utters in apparently "unguarded" moments can only reveal a truth kept carefully hidden under a veil of appearance; such a procedure of reading resolves the apparent contradiction to restore Foucault's work to the bad totality that it has always been' (4). Thus, Spivak does exactly what she accuses Foucault of: she restores the author as an absolute subject. More importantly, her engagement with the interview avoids dealing with the core of Foucault's work, a factor that may have rendered a response less urgent.

Given that both Kaplan and Spivak's claim that Foucault reconstructs Europe or the West has hardly met any response, the task at hand is to determine its pertinence for any postcolonial analysis that deploys the concept of discipline. Is the concept inherently Eurocentric? And what are the consequences for Mitchell's appropriation of 'discipline' in *Colonising Egypt*? In order to provide some tentative answers, it will be helpful to break down Kaplan and Spivak's large claim into four parts.

The first and most clear-cut part of their critique is that what Foucault produces in *Discipline and Punish* is a self-contained history of Europe. This is an argument Mitchell had already made:

> Foucault's analyses are focussed on France and northern Europe. Perhaps this focus has tended to obscure the colonising nature of disciplinary power. Yet the panopticon, the model institution whose geometric order and generalised surveillance serve as a motif for this kind of power, was a colonial invention. The panoptic principle was devised on Europe's colonial frontier with the Ottoman Empire, and examples of the panopticon were built for the most part not in northern Europe, but in places like colonial India. (35)

The problem, in other words, is not so much that Foucault focuses on northern Europe, but rather that he largely ignores the way in which colonial encounters shaped the Europe he describes. There can be no quarrel here: on those rare occasions where *Discipline and Punish* mentions the colonies, it mentions them to give examples of disciplinary technologies, not as sites that played a foundational role in the genealogy of disciplinary power. The historical evidence Mitchell and Kaplan produce proves that this is not a minor omission: their insistence on the colonies as the 'laboratory of modernity' (Rabinow 1989: 289) seems entirely appropriate; a rewriting of Foucault's genealogy of discipline seems most desirable. What is less clear, however, is the extent to which this affects the concept of discipline as such: the structural problems in Foucault's genealogies have not prevented Mitchell and Kaplan from using 'discipline' as a fruitful tool for analysis. It seems that their use of the concept works to save *Discipline and Punish* more than *Discipline and Punish* corrupts their work.

A second point of criticism, especially to be found in Spivak, is that Foucault restores the transparent subject rather than problematizing it. She bases her claim on Foucault's active role in the Groupe d'Information sur les Prisons (GIP), a group Foucault co-founded in order to expose the questionable role of the prison system in society. For Spivak, however, the group's attempt to give voice to the prisoners is a stumbling block:

> Foucault articulates another corollary of the disavowal of the role of ideology in reproducing the social relations of production: an unquestioned valorization of the oppressed as subject, the 'object being', as Deleuze admiringly remarks, 'to establish conditions where the prisoners themselves would be able to speak'. Foucault adds that 'the masses *know* perfectly well, clearly'- once again the thematic of being undeceived – 'they know far better than [the intellectual] and they certainly say it very well' (FD, pp. 206, 207). What happens to the critique of the sovereign subject in these pronouncements? (69)

The point Spivak makes is that Foucault's naive attempt to give voice to the prisoners overlooks the way in which their voice, like that of Bhuvaneswari Bhaduri, will be inscribed in the dominant discourse. In fact, it is always already moderated by the intellectual – an authentic voice, consciousness, or subject cannot be retrieved.

While this is certainly a valid critique of the GIP, its relevance for *Discipline and Punish* remains unclear: at no point does *Discipline and Punish* pretend to have access to the

consciousness of the imprisoned, nor to any other consciousness. With the exception of *Madness and Civilization*, where the early Foucault naively invoked unreason as a counterpoint to society's normalization, this point can be extended to all his major works. When it comes to Foucault's legacy, Mitchell and Kaplan do not make this mistake either: there is no invocation of an oppressed consciousness whatsoever. As we have seen, Mitchell's concept of discipline even worked against a naïve invocation of consciousness, arguing instead that the notion of consciousness itself is a product of disciplinary power. It therefore seems safe to say that discipline as a concept does not encourage a European subject to speak for the colonial subject.

A third point is very much related: apart from reintroducing the subject, Spivak argues, Foucault also reintroduces the Subject. Discipline, in her reading, has as 'an irreducible methodological presupposition' (74), a Subject that controls power and imbues it with a certain rationale. She capitalizes this Subject to distinguish it from an individual subject, but the two share their illusion of autonomy and reason. Her accusation, then, is that Foucault reinstalls a certain rationale presiding over the directionality of power in Europe:

> Because of the power in the word 'power', Foucault admits to using the 'metaphor of the point which progressively irradiates its surroundings'. Such slips become the rule rather than the exception in less careful hands. And that radiating point, animating an effectively heliocentric discourse, fills the empty place of the agent with the historical sun of theory, the Subject of Europe. (69)

But does Foucault really reinstall a European Subject presiding over disciplinary power? It seems not: Foucault never capitalized power or the subject. It would have been inconsistent with his notion of power, because he was interested in power relations rather than power as a monolithic whole – or so the story goes. Ransom, a staunch defender of Foucault, is one of those who propagate this narrative:

> Second, it seems a mistake to think of Foucault as writing about *the* power-knowledge regime. For as long as Foucault's readers see him as describing a closed universe of a single kind of power à la the Frankfurt School, for that long will he be completely misunderstood. Examples of this kind of reading can be cited without end and stretch from the beginning of Foucault's critical reception to the present. (119)

Ransom would probably add "Can the Subaltern Speak?" to this long list of misreadings, but perhaps one should wonder instead why the list is so long: it is my contention that it is not a misreading at all. Although Ransom's interpretation is consistent with Foucault's own claims in *The History of Sexuality,* there is no denying that *Discipline and Punish* comes dangerously close to 'describing a closed universe of a single kind of power.' If Foucault discusses what he describes as 'the gradual extension of the mechanisms of discipline throughout the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries, their spread throughout the whole social body, the formation of what might be called in general the disciplinary society' (209), how are we not to interpret this as a closed universe of a single kind of power?

However, the fact that Foucault seems to describe discipline as a monolithic cluster of power relations after all does not mean that Spivak is right either. In fact, her claim that discipline has as an 'irreducible methodological presupposition' (74) a Subject that controls it overlooks the central feature of Foucault's approach to power. As section 4.2.3 has pointed out, Foucault describes power as 'intentional but non-subjective' (74): it is the play of coalescing power relations that produces the specific rationale of disciplinary power, rather than the sovereign subject. Just as the panopticon does not necessarily need the presence of a guard to function, there is no overseer of the disciplinary society. Thus, Foucault does not install a 'Subject of Europe' either: although the increasing individualization is the outcome of the (possibly contradictory) intentions of agents, this outcome of their actions is unknown to themselves. Thus, if Foucault's Europe is going somewhere, it does not know where. The concept of discipline does not reintroduce Europe as a sovereign subject.

Fourth and finally, there is Kaplan's assertion that Foucault is creating just another version of European difference, which then buttresses claims of European superiority. Although *Discipline and Punish* actually undercuts such claims to superiority by dismantling the story of a more 'human' penal regime, it indeed fails to question the analytical value of the notion of 'Europe.' Nevertheless, Foucault never explicitly linked the concept of discipline to Europe. Therefore, as the case of Mitchell proves, it is not hard to dislodge the concept from Foucault's European framework. What one needs to be wary of is thus not so much the notion of discipline itself as the assumption that it is coextensive with 'Europe.' In making 'discipline' coextensive with 'modernity,' Mitchell certainly avoids this trap of Eurocentrism.

And yet, for Kaplan, this appears to be not quite good enough. Aware of contributions like Mitchell's, which have substituted 'modernity' for 'Europe,' she still warns that theories that

'postulate modernity as a universal, rather than European, stage' (94) save Foucault's temporal trajectory and again establish difference through negation, in relation to the pre-modern. This seems a fair critique: as Mitchell's sloppy invocation of the Kabyle houses demonstrates, *Colonising Egypt* indeed introduces a questionable binary between the modern and the pre-modern.

Still, one may wonder which is more detrimental: establishing too rigid a binary distinction between the modern and the pre-modern, or abandoning the search for modernity's specificity altogether. Clearly, Kaplan is equally unprepared to do the latter – in fact, when she reads Elphinstone 'as an exemplar of a British colonial project,' focusing on 'culturally specific' and 'historically and culturally particular' forms of rule (94), her essay works hard to introduce another mode of difference. In an attempt to justify this manoeuvre, Kaplan states she 'would like to recognize a kind of difference – cultural difference – that does not require temporal ranking of any sort' (94-95).

How are we to understand this idea of 'temporal ranking'? It is my contention that, rather than a merely temporal ranking, Kaplan hints at a normative ranking disguised as temporal: the idea that certain cultures are more 'advanced' is what Kaplan takes issue with. Again, one cannot help but think back to Foucault's role in dispelling the notion of progress in his account of penality. The concept of discipline played a key role in problematizing this notion of progress and advancement.

In sum, only the first of these four points of criticism is pertinent to *Discipline and Punish*: although the work produces a self-contained version of European history, it does not let a European subject speak for the colonial subject, it does not reintroduce a European Subject, and it does not create a version of European/modern difference that justifies colonial rule. Moreover, as *Colonising Egypt* demonstrates, this first point can be – and has been – addressed through an emphasis on the formation of disciplinary techniques in the colonial encounter. Therefore, it is my contention that there is nothing about the concept of discipline that renders it necessarily unfit for postcolonial analysis.

Does that mean, then, that Foucault's concept of discipline is not Eurocentric? Such an argument would certainly run counter to received wisdom in postcolonial studies. Indeed, for many scholars there can be no doubt that Foucault's work is entirely Eurocentric. In a sweeping

conclusion, Loomba states that 'Foucault's own theories are Euro-centric in their focus, and of limited use in understanding colonial societies' (49). If Loomba has the self-contained history of *Discipline and Punish* in mind, her observation is entirely justified. Moreover, the following chapter will show how Foucault's *History of Sexuality* contains the same crucial flaw. So many theorists have preceded or followed Loomba in her assessment that she seems merely to be stating the obvious. And yet, there is something troubling about this critique: on closer inspection, the unified charge of Eurocentrism against Foucault disintegrates into a muddled collection of loose and at times incompatible accusations.

At bottom, the problem is that different theorists, apparently speaking in unison, have different notions of Eurocentrism. A brief exploration of the discussion around Foucault yields at least three different definitions, on top of the versions Kaplan and Spivak have produced. A first, very common definition is used by Rey Chow, who apllies the label of Eurocentrism because 'Foucault has paid scant attention to cultures and histories of the formerly colonised, non-European world' (2010: 64). In relation to discipline, she asks:

> if the multifarious social, ideological coercions accompanying Europe's arrival at modern rationalism can be demonstrated by Foucault in such copious detail, is not his relative silence on how such coercions were exercised in Europe's colonies, during exactly the same period when the institutions he studied became consolidated within Europe, indefensible? (2010: 64)

If that were the problem, it would not be as indefensible as Chow seems to think. Indeed, Clifford *has* defended Foucault's silence on the colonies, referring to his position as 'scrupulously ethnocentric' (1988: 264). In Clifford's reading, Foucault takes care to avoid references to a world outside Europe because it would be methodologically unsound to contrast this to the West. In other words, it is perfectly acceptable to be silent on matters which one feels unqualified to comment on. This seems an acceptable defense against the charge of Eurocentrism, provided one accepts Chow's definition. The problem, however, is that Chow's definition overlooks the extent to which the idea of Europe is already a product of the colonial encounter. Consequently, her definition, as well as Clifford's response, both reproduce the self-contained notion of Europe one also finds in *Discipline and Punish*.

A second definition of Eurocentrism is implicit in Timothy Brennan's denunciation of Foucault's work. The problem for Brennan is not so much that Foucault ignored the non-

European, but rather that he 'universalized the experiences of his own targeted identity in *Discipline and Punish*' (2006: 13). Although Foucault fails to locate the boundaries of the 'disciplinary society' he describes, it is hard to see how anyone could read *Discipline and Punish* as describing a universal condition, given Foucault's insistence on locating disciplinary techniques in space and time.

A third notion of Eurocentrism can be found in Edward Said's work. In his discussion of Foucault in "Criticism Between Culture and System," Said claims that Foucault 'seems unaware of the extent to which the ideas of discourse and discipline are assertively European' (222). Whether Said's claim that discipline is 'assertively European' refers to a positionality left mysterious or constitutes a lapse into essentialism is irrelevant here; what matters is that it runs counter to Kaplan's assertion that there is nothing particularly European about disciplinary techniques. Whereas Kaplan and Said at first sight seem to be voicing the same criticism, they are actually making opposite claims.

Thus, if earlier this section has broken down Kaplan and Spivak's arguments into four parts, and insisted on the multiplicity of the apparently simple charge of Eurocentrism, this is not a defensive gesture to divide the critique until the parts become invisible, but rather an attempt to determine which points of criticism bear directly on discipline as a concept. If one insists on using the label in spite of the above, one could conclude that although *Discipline and Punish* is Eurocentric in producing a self-contained version of European history, Mitchell and Kaplan effectively dislodge the concept of discipline from its Eurocentric context.

Whereas the above has demonstrated that Mitchell and Kaplan's work wards off the threat of Eurocentrism present in *Discipline and Punish*, the remainder of this section will focus on another way in which the spectre of Foucault haunts their work. The contours of this problem have already been sketched out in the earlier observation that, in spite of of Ransom's claim, *Discipline and Punish* does present a monolithic account of power: Foucault depicts a society in which disciplinary power is ubiquitous. What, then, is the place of resistance in relation to the concept of discipline? Why was it absent from the conceptual architectures presented above?

In a sense, Foucault has always been criticized for failing to provide an account of resistance. It is an immediate consequence of that other perennial complaint, namely that Foucault's relativist approach lacks a normative framework. As one of many to make this claim, Habermas has argued that '[Foucault] contrasts his critique of power with the 'analysis of truth'

in such a fashion that the former becomes deprived of the normative yardsticks that it would have to borrow from the latter' (108). In relation to *Discipline and Punish*, Michael Walzer concludes from this lack of normative framework that 'the powerful evocation of the disciplinary system gives way to an antidisciplinarian politics that is mostly rhetoric and posturing' (65). The implication here is that because Foucault does not have a set of norms on which to build his work, he cannot advocate resistance. However, when postcolonial critics have repeated this accusation of a lack of resistance, this was not a repetition of the charges of relativism and nihilism. In fact, the whole discussion of Foucault versus Habermas has been largely ignored in postcolonial studies. In line with this, I would argue that it is an absolute non-issue for analyses of the (post)colonial: whenever postcolonial theorists have drawn on Foucault's work, they have done so within the framework of their own set of norms and values. To put it somewhat bluntly: they were largely in agreement that colonialism was undesirable.

Rather, when postcolonial theorists bemoan the lack of a theory of resistance in Foucault, they do not mean that a normative framework is lacking, but that the concepts and tools for an actual analysis of practices of resistance are missing. One does not need to look far in order to find postcolonial texts that denounce this lack: *Colonising Egypt* and "Panopticon in Poona" both point out that Foucault failed to provide such an account. Mitchell's observations are worth quoting at some length here:

> One should not overstate the coherence of these technologies, as Foucault sometimes does. Disciplines can break down, counteract one another, or overreach. They offer spaces for manoeuver and resistance, and can be turned to counter-hegemonic purposes. (...) At the same time, in abandoning the image of colonial power as simply a coercive central authority, one should also question the traditional figure of resistance as a subject who stands outside this power and refuses its demands. Colonial subjects and their modes of resistance are formed *within* the organisational terrain of the colonial state, rather than some wholly exterior social space. (xi)

Importantly, although Mitchell faults Foucault for underplaying the potential of resistance, by refusing to locate resistance as external to power, he nevertheless suggests a notion of resistance that dovetails with both Foucault's concept of power and his vague suggestions of the nature of resistance in *The History of Sexuality* (95-96). Analogously, Kaplan insists on the necessity of introducing a concept of resistance into a Foucauldian approach. Like Mitchell, she suggests

locating resistance *within* power relations rather than outside. Taking Gandhi as an example, she demonstrates how his actions subverted disciplinary power by turning the power of the gaze against the coloniser (93). Using the surveillance the British had installed to control him, Gandhi made sure his words and actions were visible to the public. This is structurally similar to an example Mitchell gives: the disciplinary training colonial subjects received in prisons and barracks could be deployed to anti-colonial ends (xi).

Whereas Mitchell's and Kaplan's criticism of Foucault is immediately followed by a proposal to remedy this hiatus, Edward Said has been less forgiving. In "The Imagination of Power," Said ascribes to Foucault a 'pessimistic view' and a 'singular lack of interest in the force of effective resistance to it' (1986: 151). This leads Said to conclude that Foucault's 'interest in domination was critical but not finally as contestatory, or as oppositional as on the surface it seems to be' (152) – a harsh assessment. One could object that Said conflates the levels of resistance as object of analysis and resistance as a practice of the theorist, but the point remains: Foucault did not provide analyses of resistance. Unlike Mitchell and Kaplan, who opted to complement Foucault's work with suggestions towards a compatible concept of resistance, Said would abandon a Foucauldian approach altogether.

If there is a text where Said's criticism applies most, it must be *Discipline and Punish*. Foucault's grim description of disciplinary society leaves little room for manoeuvring; and yet, some would insist that Said's repudiation is the result of a misreading. The quotation from Ransom presented earlier is a case in point: stressing that *Discipline and Punish* does not describe a monolithic form of power, he claims that a potential for resistance is obvious in the internal contradictions between power relations. The common failure to acknowledge this part of Foucault's work is subsequently ascribed to 'Foucault's writing' (33). The problem, for Ransom, is not conceptual, but rhetorical.

In fact, there is only one small passage in *Discipline and Punish* that warrants such a thesis: Foucault argues at some point that power relations 'are not univocal; they define innumerable points of confrontation, focuses of instability, each of which has its own risks of conflict, of struggles, and of an at least temporary inversion of the power relations' (27). However, this is only one sentence in an entire book that suggests that discipline is monolithic after all. In *The History of Sexuality*, something similar occurs: Foucault's famous assertion that

'where there is power, there is resistance' (95) has come to serve as an alibi for the neglect of resistant practices.

A strategy diverging from Ransom's can be found in *The Political Philosophy of Michel Foucault* (2009). Rather than insisting that readers have merely overlooked resistance in Foucault's work, Kelly admits that Foucault has hardly produced any analyses of resistance (105). However, Kelly proceeds to present a coherent account of resistance, 'extrapolating from and expanding upon Foucault's writings' (105). Starting from the passage in *The History of Sexuality*, he proposes a definition of resistance as 'an adaptive response to power, which therefore varies according to the power it opposes' (108). This resistance can take place on two levels:

> The inevitable resistance to power at the personal level is what we might call micro-resistance. Just as the intentionality behind micro-power, the action upon our actions, has no regular relation to how micro-power fits into an overall strategy of power, even if our resistance is successful at the local level, there is no guarantee that it will therefore constitute resistance at the macro-level. (109)

This division into two levels corresponds to Foucault's division of tactics and strategies: whereas tactics, and resistance on the micro-level, are intentional actions taken by the subject, strategies and macro-level resistance are played out on the level where power relations coalesce into something like discipline. Kelly subsequently dedicates one chapter to resistance, taking the form of critique on the macro-level, and one chapter to ethics as a form of micro-level resistance. It is beyond the scope of this section to evaluate Kelly's ambitious extrapolation. It rather serves as proof that a Foucauldian approach is not necessarily incompatible with a focus on resistance. Applying Kelly's proposal to *Discipline and Punish*, it is not hard to imagine how the text itself is a critique of, and resistance to, disciplinary power. Thus, it seems fair to say that, like in the discussion of Foucault's Eurocentrism, there is no insurmountable conceptual problem here.

Nevertheless, whereas the problem of Eurocentrism was immediately remedied in Mitchell's and Kaplan's work, the problem of resistance appears to be more stubborn. Mitchell's observation that discipline is not a coherent power bloc appears in the preface to the paperback, but not in the original edition. Similarly, Kaplan's remark about Gandhi's resistance to disciplinary power appears somewhere near the end of the essay, completely overshadowed by the analysis of the construction of European difference. One cannot help but feel that this is structurally equivalent

to Foucault's practice: their work broaches the topic of resistance, but it is nowhere to be found in their actual analyses. There is real irony, then, in Kaplan's example about Gandhi turning the gaze of surveillance back upon the colonizer: as one learns from Michael Welch's article "Counterveillance" (2011), this is exactly the same strategy Foucault and the GIP used to critique the penal regime. To counter disciplinary power, they watched the watchers, holding prison officials accountable for their practices.

Unfortunately, it seems then that when it comes to the question of resistance, there is not much of a 'beyond Foucault' to be found in *Colonising Egypt* and "Panopticon in Poona." But the problem exceeds the boundaries of this chapter: Said's harsh assessment of Foucault certainly appears in a different light with *Orientalism* in mind. For whereas Said did not hesitate to add Gramsci in the mix, when it comes to the question of resistance he failed to overcome the limitations of Foucault's work. Thus, under the guise of a critique of Foucault, Said, Mitchell, and Kaplan all perpetuate the near-obfuscation of resistance. The question of how colonial subjects can resist disciplinary power therefore remains to be answered.

4.4. Conclusion: Beyond Monolithic Accounts of Power

In a compelling appropriation of the concept of discipline, *Colonising Egypt* complemented Foucault's microphysics of disciplinary power with a metaphysics of representation. Pinpointing the role of modernity as a cluster of disciplinary power relations in the process of colonisation, Mitchell deploys a Foucauldian approach to power to maximal effect: his non-subjective approach to disciplinary power cuts off the head of the king in analyses of colonialism. Moreover, his highly inventive coupling of microphysics and metaphysics even contains the clues to a successful linking of Foucault's archaeology and genealogy. In explaining how the microphysics of discipline creates a metaphysical authority, Mitchell ultimately uses discipline as an ancillary concept to develop a notion of authority. Interestingly, this is structurally similar to the findings of the previous chapter, with Said using the concept of discourse as an ancillary to conceptualize colonial authority as well.

However, the ease with which a concept designed for an analysis of the penal regime in France suddenly seemed to encompass the complexities of the whole world has rightly raised suspicion. Relating Kaplan and Spivak's claims about the ways in which Foucault reconstructs a version of the difference of Europe to the larger debate about the alleged Eurocentrism of

Foucauldian analyses, it has become apparent that *Discipline and Punish* contains a strong Eurocentric bias in the sense of constructing a self-contained history of a European disciplinary society. Here too the presence of Said can be felt, except this time it is Foucault himself who is accused of producing a self-other binary with his concept of discipline. However, reviewing Mitchell's and Kaplan's contributions, it has also become apparent that the concept of discipline can be, and has been, dislodged from its Eurocentrist context.

By contrast, the second problem Kaplan raises is more disturbing: the conceptual architecture of *Discipline and Punish* does not contain a concept of resistance to keep discipline as a category in check. Rather than addressing this, Kaplan and Mitchell actually perpetuate this problem by failing to complement the analysis of discipline with an attention to practices of resistance. Although proposals such as Kelly's demonstrate that an account of resistance is not a priori incompatible with a Foucauldian approach to power, in the postcolonial field this issue stands largely unresolved. One can only guess that, more than the hollowed out conceptual architectures one can extrapolate from Foucault's work, it is his actual analyses of power which inspire and provoke responses. The absence of pertinent analyses of resistance in *Discipline and Punish* thus left postcolonial studies with an incomplete image.

To close this chapter, it is perhaps instructive to take a brief look at *Questions of Modernity*, a volume edited by Mitchell and published in 2000, twelve years after the first publication of *Colonising Egypt*. In his own contribution, "The Stage of Modernity," Mitchell implicitly addresses the two problems this chapter has dealt with. Whereas *Colonising Egypt*, through its focus on disciplinary power as the root of the peculiarity of modernity, created a unified notion of modernity, "The Stage of Modernity" presents a more complex picture:

> Developments and forces external to any possible definition of the essence of capitalist modernity continually redirect, divert, mutate, and multiply the modernity they help constitute, depriving it of any essential principle, unique dynamic, or singular history. (2000: 12)

This principle of multiple modernities provides a useful corrective against the threats of Eurocentrism and the obfuscation of resistance. First, in relation to Kaplan's critique of interpretations that construct European or modern difference, it renders the search for an absolute difference pointless. Rather than setting up a binary between sovereignty and

discipline, Europe and its colonial other, or modernity and tradition, only to disavow it later, it acknowledges its strictly relational character.

Second, as for the issue of resistance, it presents a less monolithic image of modernity. The potential for resistance can be recognized in the continual reproduction of modernity. In a move that is reminiscent of Bhabha's notion of resistance, discussed in the previous chapter, Mitchell now emphasizes the 'displacement, deferral, and delay in the production of the modern,' where 'the non-West emerges as a place that makes possible the distance, the difference, and the time lag required for these forms of displacement' (23-24). This repetition as difference has an immediate consequence for the operational value of discipline as a concept: to exclude monolithic accounts, one requires not only the idea of multiple modernities, but also of multiple configurations of power. It is insufficient to stress the relational nature of power, as long as one remains stuck in a model where the relationality of concepts like discipline themselves is disavowed. The introduction of new concepts such as biopolitics and necropolitics in the next chapter could well be a step in that direction.

5. Biopolitics

As far as their general reception is concerned, there are striking similarities between the concepts of discourse and biopolitics. If the introduction to Chapter 3 claimed that 'discourse' has been a fashionable term, lacks a precise definition, and has been problematically attributed to Foucault, each of these three claims applies equally to 'biopolitics.'

First, as Lemke states in his 2011 introduction to the subject, 'the notion of biopolitics has recently become a buzzword,' 'used today in many different disciplines and discourses' (1). This echoes Paolo Virno's complaint that 'it is often, and enthusiastically, invoked in every kind of context' (2004: 81). To name but a few fields, the concept has appeared in cultural studies, international relations, political geography, critical security studies, and legal studies. Testimony to this frantic grappling with biopolitics, the year 2012 has seen the advent of two eponymous volumes: *Beyond Biopolitics: Essays on the Governance of Life and Death* (Clough; Willse: 2012) and *Beyond Biopolitics: Theory, Violence, and Horror in World Politics* (Debrix; Barder: 2012). In spite of what their titles signal, both volumes still take as their central focus the connections between politics and life, fuelling contemporary debates about the concept of biopolitics.

Second, most discussions of biopolitics simply assume Foucault as a starting point.[30] In fact, Foucault did not coin the concept of biopolitics himself. As the first two chapters of Lemke's *Biopolitics* make clear, the concept has a long and troubled history, appearing in texts that advocate a politics that takes life as its model, and a politics that takes life as its object. Foucault's intervention takes issue with both approaches, demonstrating instead the contingency of the perceived border between life and politics.

A final parallel to the manner in which the concept of discourse was received is to be found in the lack of an established definition of biopolitics, in spite of (or perhaps due to) its popularity. As Coleman & Grove emphasize, 'biopolitics should be approached as a site of fervent definitional struggle and disagreement' (2009: 504). Nevertheless, the literal meaning of the concept of biopolitics should be quite clear: 'it denotes a politics that deals with life' (Lemke 2011a: 2). Still, there are at least two factors that considerably complicate attempts to stabilize the concept. To begin with, Foucault's work has been taken up by a host of scholars, developing Foucault's conception in various, often contradictory directions. Here one might name Agamben,

[30] Coleman & Grove's otherwise excellent conceptual history is a case in point: 'biopolitics' is not a neologism 'coined by French political theorist Foucault' (489), but was used as early as the beginning of the 20th century by the Swedish political scientist Rudolf Kjellén (cf. Lemke 2011a: 9).

Hardt & Negri, Esposito, Rabinow and Rose. This has led Debrix & Barder to observe that 'biopolitics is characterized not so much by adherence to one Foucault-inspired model, but rather by a plurality of perspectives (...) that radiate, sometimes in very different directions, from an initial Foucaultian moment of analysis' (Debrix & Barder 2012: 15). Moreover, this 'initial Foucaultian moment' is not exactly stable either. Foucault's own approach has been characterized as 'an incitement to experiment rather than as a definition to be abided by' (Coleman & Grove: 490). Given that Foucault explicitly named the phenomena he wished to tackle, this point should not be overstated. Still, there are considerable differences between his treatment of biopolitics in *The History of Sexuality*, and the lectures at the Collège de France published as *Society Must Be Defended*; *Security, Territory, Population* and *The Birth of Biopolitics*.[31]

The prominence of these lectures in contemporary debates around biopolitics can hardly be overstated: Foucault's interest in security and the defense of society has found great resonance in our post 9/11 world.[32] Importantly, these lectures have only been translated and published in English as late as 2003, 2007, and 2008 respectively, almost twenty years after Foucault delivered them (in 1976, 1977-1978, and 1978-1979 respectively). In combination with the piecemeal translation of the work of Agamben and Esposito, one can not only understand why 'biopolitics' may have become a buzzword, but also why it should have taken so long to acquire currency.

In the postcolonial context, the concept of biopolitics was taken up by Ann Laura Stoler in 1995, with the publication of *Race and the Education of Desire*, long before anyone would have thought of 'biopolitics' as a buzzword. Her discussion of the *Society Must Be Defended* lectures, based on the original recordings,[33] may well have been the first serious engagement with this rediscovered material in the Anglophone world. In her analysis of the production of European colonial bourgeois order in the Dutch East Indies of the nineteenth and early twentieth century, she explores the potential and limitations of the notion of biopolitics. Combining and developing

[31] The following sections will illuminate some of these differences.
[32] e.g. *The Biopolitics of the War on Terror* (Julian Reid, 2006), *The Logics of Biopower and the War on Terror* (Elizabeth Dauphinee; Cristina Masters, 2007), and *Foucault in an Age of Terror* (Stephen Morton; Stephen Bygrave, 2008)
[33] Stoler 1995: viii.

elements from both *The History of Sexuality* and *Society Must Be Defended*, Stoler explores the connections between sexuality and race in the functioning of colonial power.

Innovative though this focus on biopolitics may be in some respects, Stoler's notion of power is highly reminiscent of earlier conceptions of power. A contrastive reading of Stoler's work against Mbembe's enables us to confront head-on an issue that had been looming over the past two chapters: the relationship between a Foucauldian notion of power and an understanding of power as authority. An exploration of the friction in Mbembe's "Necropolitics" between Agamben's and Foucault's notion of biopolitics, manifested in the tension between the law and the norm, provides us with the key to articulate a problem that remained implicit in the earlier discussions of Said, Bhabha, and Mitchell.

5.1. Foucault and Biopolitics: The Management of the Population

5.1.1. Context: *The History of Sexuality* and *Society Must Be Defended*

For the concept of biopolitics, the year 1976 was a crucial one. With both the publication of *The History of Sexuality, vol. I*, and the delivery of the *Society Must Be Defended* lectures, it witnessed Foucault's first attempts to diagnose contemporary configurations of power through the lens of biopolitics. Given that Foucault held his lectures at the same time as he was finalizing *The History of Sexuality*, it is not surprising that its last chapter, which introduces the concept, is virtually identical to the final lecture in the series.

And yet, the roads that lead up to these final observations are highly divergent. *The History of Sexuality, vol. I*[34] was originally conceived as the first volume in a series of six, outlining the plan for his future studies of the links between sexuality, knowledge, power, and subjectivity[35] - a project Foucault abandoned after 1976. This accounts perhaps for the suggestive nature of *The History of Sexuality*: each of the "four great strategic unities" it describes (103), viz. the hysterization of women's bodies, the pedagogization of children's sex, the socialization of procreative behaviour, and the psychiatrization of perverse pleasure (104-105) was to form the subject of a separate volume, to be written later on in his career.

Nevertheless, the main thesis of *The History of Sexuality* is relatively straightforward: the explosion of discourses on sexuality does not point to an increasing liberation from a repressive

[34] Although the 1978 translation into English was called *The History of Sexuality, vol I: An Introduction*, the original French subtitle is *La volonté de savoir*.
[35] See Stoler 1995: 21.

form of power, but rather to the increasing hold of power over life. Because this power is concerned with the continued optimization of life and the population, the apparatus of sexuality has a key role in its operations. In its investment in sexuality, power can be traced as productive rather than repressive.

The lectures at the Collège de France follow a different trajectory. Their starting point is not sexuality, but 17th century race war discourse: a historiographical discourse that posited a struggle in society between ruler and ruled. The prime example would be that of the Levellers, who described Norman monarchy in England as an act of war against the Saxon race. In what follows, Foucault outlines how what had initially functioned as a challenge to the legitimacy of the state was gradually adopted in its defense: the idea of a binary race war was transcribed into a statist discourse. Focusing on the theme of race war, it becomes the task of the state to protect its population. In the context of Darwinian discourse, this threat appears first and foremost as the backward, the degenerate, and the abnormal elements in society – the binary idea of race war turned inwards. The purification of society from these threats is what Foucault refers to as state racism. Biopolitics, then, is about the defense of the population against these threats.

In spite of their different trajectories, it is easy to see how both accounts might converge: the optimization of life can proceed through the elimination of biological threats. Thus, Foucault's analyses of the biopolitical in relation to sexuality and race war discourse are perfectly compatible. And how could they not be? Both *The History of Sexuality* and *Society Must Be Defended* continue to operate in the genealogical context created in *Discipline and Punish* (see 4.1.1). In other words, Foucault continues to produce anti-subjectivist histories of the present, focusing on specific technologies of power. Moreover, this notion of power has largely remained the same. As Kelly puts it:

> The difference in *Discipline and Punish* is that power is not spoken of in general, but rather only in relation to the disciplinary power that affects bodies. Nevertheless, almost without exception, the features Foucault discerns in that specific case, he later adopts as general "propositions" about power. (2009: 35)

These propositions about power in general are not to be misunderstood as a general theory of power. Rather, Foucault locates the analytics of biopower within the context of his earlier observations about disciplinary power.

Still, throughout *The History of Sexuality* and the lecture series, the contours of this context become much more well-defined than it had been in *Discipline and Punish*. His critique of hermeneutics is a case in point: if *Discipline and Punish* was already critical of the concept of interpretation, understood as the uncovering of a hidden truth, *The History of Sexuality* sharpens this critique by focusing on the power relations in the technique of the confession (66-67). The confession, where the subject is incited to speak in front of an expert who subsequently reveals the truth about that subject, is structurally similar to psychoanalysis in particular, and all interpretive sciences in general: 'part of the power of these interpretive sciences is that they claim to be able to reveal the truth about our psyches, our culture, our society – truths that can only be understood by expert interpreters' (Rabinow & Dreyfus: 180). In the process, the interpretive sciences are not external to power, but rather work as active agents in its deployment.

Obviously, hermeneutics is not the only antagonist of *The History of Sexuality*. In fact, Foucault dedicated the entire first part of the book to a description of a much larger problem: the repressive hypothesis, understood as the basic idea that power is primarily repressive. In the context of sexuality, Foucault's critique constitutes another frontal attack on psychoanalysis. As Stoler argues, 'it targeted Wilhelm Reich's and Herbert Marcuse's Freudian-Marxist celebration of sex as liberation from the repressive power of capitalism and its restrictive institutions' (1995: 22). This is no doubt true, but Foucault is also aiming at something much larger: the whole tradition of thinking about power in terms of negativity, a tradition Foucault exposes as 'deeply rooted in the history of the West' (83). He thus targets any discourse that conceives of power as 'reducible to lawmaking and enforcement,' which includes both classical liberal theories and Marxism (cf. McWhorter 2011: 78). In sum, the notion of biopolitics aims to wrest the study of power out of the juridico-discursive approach that focuses on the law, restrictions, taboos, and prohibitions.

Given that both *The History of Sexuality* and *Society Must Be Defended* discuss race and state racism at some point, the racial context in which Foucault was working seems absolutely crucial. Stoler points out that in the intellectual climate Foucault was working in, 'the concept of class and the sort of social transformations to which capitalism gave rise remained foundational in critical social and political theory; race and racial theory was not' (1995: 23). If occasional analyses of racism took place in this European context, they mainly focused on Nazism and its

legacy. Foucault is no exception here: in both *The History of Sexuality* and *Society Must Be Defended*, the prime example of state racism remains Nazism. The role of colonialism remains largely unexplored.

5.1.2. Cotext: Sovereign and Disciplinary Power

In order to understand the conceptual architectures of *The History of Sexuality* and *Society Must Be Defended*, it is instructive to look back at the architecture of *Discipline and Punish*: it defined the concept of discipline primarily through its antagonist, viz. sovereign power. A similar operation underpins Foucault's work from 1976, where the concept of biopolitics can only be understood in relation to sovereignty and discipline. Throughout this section and the next one, sovereignty, discipline, and biopolitics will be differentiated along four axes, implicit in Foucault's work: the chronology of these forms of power, their modes of operation, what they hinge upon, and their strategic goals.[36]

As far as chronology is concerned, the idea of **sovereign power** as Foucault understands it dates back as far as ancient Rome (*HoS* 135). It refers to the right of the sovereign to kill anyone who transgresses against his laws. Thus, the right to decide on life and death is actually the 'right to *take* life or *let* live' (italics in *HoS* 136, no italics in *SMBD* 241). Stoler has argued that this definition of sovereignty is 'idiosyncratic and only used to refer to its French absolutist form' (1995: 62). While it is no doubt idiosyncratic, this seems to me to have less to do with its French context as with the fact that Foucault largely ignores its uses in political science.[37] Brushing aside the likes of Bodin, Hobbes, Althusius, and Schmitt, Foucault argues that he 'would like to trace the transformation not at the level of political theory, but rather at the level of the mechanisms, techniques, and technologies of power' (*SMBD* 241).

This brings us to the second axis: in terms of these mechanisms, sovereign power's primary mode of operation was 'deduction (*prélèvement*)':

[36] For the idea of these axes providing a schematic outline of the relations between sovereignty, discipline, and biopower, this study is indebted to Jeffrey Nealon (2008: 45). Nevertheless, there are important differences between the table he draws and this section. Whereas Nealon attempts to grasp the whole of Foucault's work on power, the task here is to understand *The History of Sexuality* and *Society Must Be Defended*. As the next section will show, Nealon's interpretation of biopolitics as the production of 'autocontrol' only makes sense in the light of Foucault's work after 1976.

[37] For a discussion of the context Foucault ignores, see de Benoist, A. 1999. "What is Sovereignty?" *Telos*, vol. 116, pp. 99-118.

> a subtraction mechanism, a right to appropriate a portion of the wealth, a tax of products, goods and services, labor and blood, levied on the subjects. Power in this instance was essentially a right of seizure: of things, time, bodies, and ultimately life itself; it culminated in the privilege to seize hold of life in order to suppress it. (*HoS* 136)

Clearly, the concept of sovereignty does not serve as a cornerstone in a political theory of the state here, but as a name for an actual mechanism operating throughout the whole of society. In spite of this omnipresence, this power emanates from the sovereign as a clearly identifiable centre of power.

This form of power hinges upon the legal subject. The subjects of the sovereign matter only insofar as they are subjected, in the most absolutist scenario; or, in the contract model of sovereignty, as those who constitute the sovereign and delegate the power to him (*SMBD* 241). In both cases, the subject is a legal subject only, and presents the apparently given starting point for theories of sovereignty rather than a category political theory sets out to explain.

Finally, the strategic objective of sovereign power as described by Foucault is to maintain the power relation. What the sovereign requires from his subjects is obedience. The threat of death is the warning that the law, issued by the sovereign, needs to be abided. Death can take the form of a public execution, as in the opening pages of *Discipline and Punish*, where the spectacular destruction of the body of the offender instils the public with awe. Alternatively, as *The History of Sexuality* points out, the sovereign also has the right to wage war against those who challenge his power (135). For Foucault, sovereign power is therefore the power of a status quo.

Compared to sovereign power, **disciplinary power** is reportedly relatively young. Foucault traces its earliest manifestations back to the end of the 17th century, from which time it has gradually developed (*SMBD 242*). However, it would be wrong to present discipline as the successor or replacement of sovereignty; rather, the spread of disciplinary power turns sovereign power into one strategy of power among others (*HoS* 136). Thus, although Foucault describes a historical transformation, it is not necessarily entirely linear.

The mode of operation of this emerging disciplinary power was not deduction, but objectification. As the previous chapter has shown, discipline derives from the epistemological

discovery of Man as object of knowledge: Man can be watched, measured, ordered, and controlled. This process of objectification is what connects the penal regime to the scientific study of Man. As a result, power is no longer centralized in the sovereign, but spreads through an increasingly porous state apparatus, which Foucault refers to as the scientifico-legal complex (*D&P* 21).

Third, the formation of disciplinary power hinges upon the body. On top of its heterogeneous drives, forces, and energies, the idea of the individual is constructed. What is at stake in discipline is an anatomo-politics of the human body (*HoS* 139): an encroachment of politics on the body of the individual. The body as object can be monitored, measured, broken down, and rearranged for strategic purposes. In the process, it is thoroughly individualized.

Finally, the objective of disciplinary power is not to protect the status quo, but to increase the efficiency of bodies. This includes 'the optimization of its capabilities, the extortion of its forces, the parallel increase of its usefulness and its docility,' and 'its integration into systems of efficient and economic controls' (*HoS* 139). In the context of sexuality, discipline appears as an instrument to intensify the production and control of the individual. One can think for instance of the intensive observation of sexual behaviour, or the construction of dormitories in schools with maximum visibility in the war against masturbation. Thus, the apparatus of sexuality betrays the same will to knowledge and power as *Discipline and Punish* had uncovered in the penal regime. Discipline is not something Foucault leaves behind in *The History of Sexuality*, it is a fundamental part of his analysis of the apparatus of sexuality.

5.1.3. Concept: Biopolitics and its Racism

Before we start with the comparison of biopolitics to sovereignty and discipline, one potential source of confusion ought to be cleared up. In *The History of Sexuality* and *Society Must Be Defended*, Foucault seems to use the concepts of biopower and biopolitics at times as interchangeable.[38] One might suspect that he uses 'biopolitics' to refer to the entanglement of life and politics, and 'biopower' to the whole of the relations that emerge from this entanglement. Although this seems plausible in many cases, this hypothesis does not hold: *The*

[38] Lemke observes that 'Foucault not only employs the term "biopolitics"; he also sometimes uses the word "biopower", without neatly distinguishing the two notions.' (2011a: 34). In the publication of the lectures, one finds Foucault asking 'what does this new technology of power, this biopolitics, this biopower that is beginning to establish itself, involve?' (*SMBD* 243)

History of Sexuality refers to this 'political power' which 'had assigned itself the task of administering life' as consisting of 'two poles': anatomo-politics and biopolitics (139). Thus, one could argue that biopolitics is one of the two poles of biopower. For reasons of clarity, the rest of the chapter will therefore reserve the term 'biopower' for the ensemble of power relations developed in the two interlinked poles of anatomo-politics and biopolitics. Given that Foucault uses 'anatomo-politics' as a synonym for the notion of discipline outlined above, the task at hand here is to focus on the second pole, biopolitics. As with sovereignty and discipline, the concept will be analyzed in terms of chronology, mode of operation, what it hinges upon, and strategic objective.

After the emergence of discipline at the end of the 17th century, biopolitical technology would gradually spread into the second half of the 18th century (*SMBD* 242). Here again the new mode of power did not simply replace the former: 'it exists at a different level, on a different scale, (...) has a different bearing area, and makes use of very different instruments' (*SMBD* 242). Rather, Foucault understands biopolitics as complementary to discipline: both forms of power need to be situated in the context of industrialization and a demographic explosion, the challenges of which sovereign power was not equipped for (*SMBD* 249-250). Like discipline, biopolitics came into being as a strategic response to the historical changes of the 17th and 18th century.

This complementarity is obvious in the mode of operation of biopolitics: whereas discipline focused on Man as object, biopolitics expands on the notion of Man as subject. In the ritual of confession, where the speaking subject coincides with the subject of the statement, the subject is modified in the sense that it has spoken and learned the truth about itself (*HoS* 61-62). It is this mechanism that has been picked up in scientific discourse about sexuality: in what Foucault understands as an 'inducement to speak' (65), the subject is encouraged to produce the truth about its sexuality and itself in interrogations, questionnaires, reconstructions of memories and sessions of free association. Rather than the given legal subject of theories of sovereignty, we thus get a subject that is manufactured and enacted in the process of telling its truth.

Third, biopolitical technologies of power hinge neither upon the legal subject, nor upon the individual body, but rather upon what *The History of Sexuality* refers to as the 'species body' (139). Similarly, *Society Must Be Defended* speaks of 'man-as-species' (242):

> the new technology that is being established is addressed to a multiplicity of men, not to the extent that they are nothing more than their individual bodies, but to the extent that they form, on the contrary, a global mass that is affected by overall processes characteristic of birth, death, production, illness, and so on. (242-243)

To be entirely accurate, in disciplinary settings such as the army, multiplicities were already more than the sum of individual bodies. The difference is that in a biopolitical setup the multiplicity of bodies does not function as machine, but as living being.

Finally, the strategic objective of biopolitics is neither the protection of the status quo, nor an increase in the efficiency of the individual body. Rather, it aims at a regularization and optimization of the species. At the crossroads of biology and politics, it becomes the task of power to invest life and to foster the health and vitality of the population. As both *The History of Sexuality* and *Society Must Be Defended* emphasize, the sovereign power to 'take life or let live' has become the power to 'make live or let die' (*HoS* 138, *SMBD* 247). Foucault identifies this tendency as playing out in three domains: the ratio of births to deaths, biological disabilities, and the effects of the environment (*SMBD* 243-245). More specifically, this means that biopolitics includes issues and techniques as different as health insurance, personal hygiene, urban planning, birth control, car accidents, and the security of the population versus its enemies.

This biopolitics, however, hardly exists in isolation. The fact that it does not simply replace older technologies of power also implies that it can integrate, appropriate, or link up with sovereign and disciplinary elements. The rest of this section will discuss both its intersection with discipline and its recuperation of sovereign power.

As the discussion of biopolitics above has indicated, discipline and biopolitics are compatible strategies of power: the objectification of discipline dovetails with the subjectification of biopolitics, and the anatomo-politics of the body links up with a biopolitics of the species. Hence, for Foucault, the importance of the apparatus of sexuality: it provides the link between the discipline of the individual and the regulation of the population (*HoS* 145, *SMBD* 251-252). But there is a second way in which discipline and biopolitics interact: both strategies are essentially normalizing. Lemke's discussion of the role of the norm in Foucault's work is worth quoting here:

> In this context, the concept of the norm plays a key role. The ancient "power over life and death" operated on the basis of the binary legal code, whereas biopolitics marks a

> movement in which the "right" is more and more displaced by the "norm". The absolute right of the sovereign tends to be replaced by a relative logic of calculating, measuring, and comparing. (2011a: 38-39)

Two elements here will turn out to be crucial in the discussion of Stoler and Mbembe: one, that the norm has replaced the law; two, that the norm does not work as a binary. Both assertions require some qualification. First of all, the norm has only displaced the law in the sense that, as *The History of Sexuality* puts it, 'the law operates more and more as a norm' (144). This refers to nothing other than the evolution *Discipline and Punish* had already sketched in relation to the penal system. The second claim is less evident: is a concern with the normal and the abnormal not automatically binary? In Foucault's work, it certainly is not. The task of biopolitics is not to draw a line, but to effect 'distributions around the norm' (*HoS* 144). Indeed, this power 'has to qualify, measure, appraise, and hierarchize' (144), all of which are non-binary operations.

Biopolitics as a mode of power can also intersect with the old sovereign right to kill. As we recall, to put someone to death was the supreme manifestation of the power of the sovereign. In a biopolitical society, however, the state has set itself the task of protecting and optimizing the vitality of the population. Rather than function as the sign of power, 'death is outside the power relationship' (*SMBD* 248). And yet, Foucault argues, 'wars were never as bloody as they have been since the nineteenth century' (*HoS* 136). Clearly, the biopolitical focus on life has not done away with death. How, he wonders, 'can the power of death, the function of death, be exercised in a political system centered upon biopower?' (*SMBD* 254). It is this question that brings us to the notion of racism:

> What is in fact racism? It 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. The appearance within the biological continuum of the human race of races, the distinction among races, the hierarchy of races, the fact that certain races are described as good and that others, in contrast, are described as inferior: all this is a way of fragmenting the field of the biological that power controls. (*SMBD* 254-5)

In short, racism is that which enables the death-function in a biopolitical society through a division of the species.

It is easy to see how Foucault's conceptualization of racism can be reread in terms of the binary legal code he set out to critique: to say the least, the formulation 'the break between what must live and what must die' strongly suggests a binary distinction. And yet, Foucault quickly proceeds to argue that 'the first function of racism' is 'to fragment, to create caesuras' (255) – a plurality that follows from the operations of hierarchizing, measuring, and appraising. In these non-binary operations, race functions as a norm, not a law.

Importantly, this concept of race as norm has a historical meaning in *Society Must Be Defended* that differs considerably from its contemporary association with skin colour. Mary Beth Mader has argued that 'Foucault uses the terms 'race' and 'races' in multiple senses and in ways that are not always clear' (2011: 99). However, this seems to have less to do with Foucault's use of the term than with its own shiftiness. As McWhorter observes, 'application of the term *race*, much like application of the term *racism*, is frequently disputed and always has been' (2009: 42). Foucault's use of the concept 'is grounded in centuries of discourse where race had little to do with physical appearance' (Kelly 2004: 62). In the conflict between the Normans and Saxons, which, as section 5.1.1 pointed out, presented a starting point for the lectures, 'race is a matter of language, tradition, and custom' (McWhorter 2009: 59). Foucault subsequently outlines how this discourse has been transcribed into a biological notion of race and racism, with a key role for Darwinism: certain races can then be understood as more 'advanced' than others. But even in his description of biological racism, Foucault retains the older, more inclusive concept of race, in order to denounce racism as a racism against the abnormal, the degenerate, the sick, and the pathological – categories much broader than any contemporary understanding of racism. The biopolitical society must protect the vitality of its population against the debilitating influence of the abnormal, in order for evolution not to become degeneracy. From the very term itself, it is obvious that evolution-ism, and by extension biopower, does not operate in a binary mode. Again, it takes as its model not the law, but the norm.

Before we can finally come to the relevance of this distinction for Stoler's postcolonial work, there is one last question that needs to be answered. If the notion of state racism has answered the question of how the death-function can operate in a biopolitical society, one may still wonder why this biopolitics, intent on the optimization of life, would actually want to distribute death. The solution can again be found in Darwinian logic: 'the death of the other, the death of the bad race, of the inferior race (or the degenerate, or the abnormal) is something that

will make life in general healthier' (*SMBD* 255). Through this logic, biopolitical societies establish an immediate link between their focus on life and the sovereign right to kill.

Needless to say, Foucault's genealogy of racism differs greatly from other theories of racism. As Lemke summarizes,

> he conceives of racism neither as an ideological construct nor as an exceptional situation nor as a response to social crises. According to Foucault, racism is an expression of a schism within society that is provoked by the biopolitical idea of an ongoing and always incomplete cleansing of the social body. (2011a: 43-44)

Briefly put, state racism is a structural problem. As soon as a biopolitical state adopts an evolutionary logic, it becomes imperative to kill the threats to the population. The power of life and death coincide in the exercise of state racism.

5.2. Stoler and Biopolitics: Back to the Concept of Authority

5.2.1. Context: Foucault Meets Freud in Postcolonial Studies

Ann Laura Stoler's *Race and the Education of Desire* (1995) is a study of the creation of a European colonial bourgeois order in the nineteenth and early twentieth century in the Dutch East Indies. It focuses primarily on the question of 'how a cultivation of the European self (and specifically a Dutch bourgeois identity) was affirmed in the proliferating discourses around pedagogy, parenting, children's sexuality, servants, and tropical hygiene' (11). The links to Foucault's work of 1976 should be clear by now: the discourses Stoler lists all revolve around the optimization of life and the population, issues Foucault discussed under the rubric of biopolitics.

Given that Stoler devotes two large chapters to *The History of Sexuality* and *Society Must Be Defended*, these parallels are hardly surprising. Stoler's discussion probably constitutes the most thorough and sustained engagement with Foucault's work available in postcolonial studies to date. Not only does it draw on the conceptual apparatus of Foucault's work, it also takes up the historical content of his writings in a much more systematic way then either Said, Bhabha, Mitchell, or Kaplan had done.

And yet, *Race and the Education of Desire* also has a lot in common with the work of these scholars. Not only does Stoler acknowledge their work, she also firmly positions herself

within the intertextual web created in the interplay between Foucault and postcolonial studies. Thus, she makes references to Said (1, 126, 169, 174, 175), Bhabha (169), Mitchell (15), and Spivak (14, 98). The most conspicuous connection to this earlier work is probably the shared suspicion that Foucault's work propagates fundamentally Eurocentrist assumptions. For Stoler, this tendency is most visible in *The History of Sexuality*:

> (...) Europe's eighteenth- and nineteenth-century discourses on sexuality, like other cultural, political, or economic assertions, cannot be charted in Europe alone. In short-circuiting empire, Foucault's history of European sexuality misses key sites in the production of that discourse, discounts the practices that racialized bodies, and thus elides a field of knowledge that provided the contrasts for what a "healthy, vigorous, bourgeois body" was all about. (7)

This argument confirms what Mitchell and Kaplan had already claimed in relation to *Discipline and Punish*: Foucault's histories of certain technologies of power produce a self-contained version of Europe and overlook the extent to which these technologies have developed outside of Europe, and have even served to buttress this idea of Europe as a self-sufficient unity. Given that the previous chapter has dealt with this problem at length, it suffices to say that Stoler strips the concept of biopolitics of its Eurocentrist assumptions by rerouting the history of its technologies through the history of empire, in a way that is highly reminiscent of what Mitchell had done with the concept of discipline.

But Stoler's work does not only link up with the texts by Mitchell and Kaplan, it also reconsiders the work of Said and Bhabha in its efforts to shed light on the role of psychoanalytical concepts in postcolonial studies. Starting from the observation that Foucault's and Freud's positions on the relation between desire and the law are antithetical, she finds that postcolonial studies 'have had contradictory allegiances on the one hand, to a Foucauldian perspective on power, and on the other, to implicit Freudian assumptions about the psychodynamics of empire' (13). Indeed, many histories of colonialism have analyzed the colonial project as the release of the colonizer's sexual desire, sublimated in the colonies after its repression at home (173). The problem, for Stoler, is not so much that this runs directly counter to Foucault's rejection of the repressive hypothesis, but rather that it leaves this desire unexplained. In these Freudian accounts, desire is simply taken for granted as a biological and ahistorical given.

However, Stoler's misgivings about the role of Freud do not entail a straightforward rejection of every analysis of colonialism that somehow draws on Freud – rather, it is the lack of 'historical depth' with which she takes issue (170). Through the concept of desire, Foucault and Freud can even be brought together, Stoler argues: 'for Freud, sexual desire is a cause; for Foucault, an effect' (169). Clearly, as the approving references to *Orientalism* demonstrate, Stoler considers the work of Edward Said to be a fruitful combination of Foucauldian and Freudian elements. According to Stoler, 'Freud's notion of projection, of the Orient as the West's "surrogate self" is a crucial but buried part of [Said's] argument' (169). Although the architectures presented earlier in 3.3.2 demonstrate that this idea of projection is not a necessary component of Said's argument, Stoler is right to point out that the relationship between the Occident and the Orient as Said analyzes it can be read in terms of a construction of the Self through the Other. It is this dynamic of Self and Other that subsequently appears in the work of Bhabha, and ultimately, in Stoler's own work. The following sections will discuss the implications of this Self versus Other binary, and its relation to Foucault's and Stoler's concepts of biopolitics.

5.2.2. Cotext: Identity and Authority Revisited

In terms of conceptual architecture, *Race and the Education of Desire* introduces two concepts that were entirely absent in Foucault's work around 1976: 'identity' and 'authority.' Significantly, these are the same concepts that appeared in what we have referred to as the instrumentalist architecture of *Orientalism*. As we recall, both concepts were linked to Foucault's work on power-knowledge: 'power' was reductively understood as authority, and 'knowledge' was stretched from a particular subject-object relation to the broader realm of discourse in general, and all statements pertaining to identity in particular. Whereas Chapter 3 has focused on the friction between this approach and Foucault's archaeological method, this section aims to pinpoint the possible roles of the concepts of identity and authority in a genealogical approach.

As far as **identity** is concerned, one can now make sense of the earlier discussion about the role of Freud and psychoanalysis in postcolonial studies. Although Stoler does not make this explicit, she bases her work on that 'crucial but buried part of [Said's] argument', viz. 'Freud's notion of the projection, of the Orient as the West's "surrogate self"' (169). Stripped of its specific Orientalist context, what remains for Stoler is a notion of identity as an unstable relation between Self and Other.

Three features of this concept of identity are particularly relevant here. First of all, Stoler understands identity as relational: selves are formed through others. With this emphasis on relationality, Stoler claims to distance herself from 'Foucault's self-referential conception of bourgeois identity' (11-12). Quoting Foucault as stating that the initial deployment of sexuality of the bourgeoisie 'has to be seen as the self-affirmation of one class rather than the enslavement of another' (110), she concludes that Foucault overlooks the role of sexuality in the development of class distinctions. This conclusion is surprising, for at least two reasons. Even in the paragraph Stoler quotes, Foucault stresses the importance of technologies of sexuality in the process of protecting and isolating the bourgeois body from others to retain 'differential value' (*HoS* 123). Clearly, Foucault's focus on the bourgeoisie is not as self-contained as Stoler makes it out to be. Moreover, one may wonder how Foucault could ever propagate a 'self-referential conception of bourgeois identity' if his work does not even contain a notion of identity and consistently steers clear of questions of identity. His phrase 'affirmation of the self' should not be understood as referring to the affirmation of a bourgeois identity, but rather to the epistemological discovery of the self as a subject position. Here the earlier discussion of the technology of the confession finds it full relevance: the self is discovered as a source of truths and pleasures. Thus, whenever Foucault speaks of 'selves,' it is not identity that is at stake, but a specific form of subjectivity produced in local and historical technologies. Like Said and Bhabha, Stoler imposes a relational notion of identity upon the Foucauldian inquiry into subjectivity.

A second feature of Stoler's concept of identity is equally reminiscent of Said and Bhabha: colonialism constantly produces and reproduces identities. The typical structure is that of the dichotomy: acts of colonialism manufacture a clear distinction between colonizer and colonized, between the Occident and the Orient, between Self and Other. Colonial discourse, therefore, is replete with images of 'stereotypic Others' (146). These Others can be construed on racial, sexual, and/or class axes. Thus, Stoler speaks of 'racialized Others' (152), the 'sexualized Other' (178), and the 'racial and class Other' (141), all of which are continuously 'othered' in the process of colonialism.

Third, identity appears as fundamentally unstable. Although the continuous reproduction of the dichotomy between Self and Other produces real effects, identity is always threatened by the complexities of the colonial situation. In Stoler's analysis, this can be found not so much in the instability of the signifying system, as with Bhabha, but rather in the pressure put on this

divide by specific groups of subjects through problems of descent, race, or upbringing. European colonials are a case in point:

> If colonial enterprises were such secure bourgeois ventures, then why were European colonials so often viewed disparagingly from the metropole as *parvenus*, cultural incompetents, morally suspect, and indeed "fictive" Europeans, somehow distinct from the real thing? While many historians would agree that colonized European-educated intellectuals and those of mixed-racial origin were seen as "white but not quite," this was also true of a large segment of those classified as "fully" European. (102)

In other words, as soon as generations of Europeans started to live their entire lives in the colony, the notion of Europeanness needed to be renegotiated accordingly. European identity had to be adjusted continually to keep up with the complexity of the colonial situation.

This question of 'what it meant to be truly European' (8) and the discussions of identity were codified in the legal system: what was at at stake in these debates was the legal status of citizenship and nationality (107). It seems, then, that Stoler's concept of identity revolves around the notion of membership: *Race and the Education of Desire* focuses on categories, on how they have been constructed, policed, and negotiated. The primary modes of operation of the system Stoler describes are categorization and exclusion. Indeed, Stoler ends up denouncing nationalism and liberalism as 'politics of exclusion based on race' (131). But how does this exclusion mark the lives of those involved?

It is here that the concept of **authority** comes in. Like identity, it is a notion largely absent from Foucault's genealogies. In Said, Bhabha, Mitchell, and finally, Stoler, however, 'authority' is one of the absolutely crucial concepts. Moreover, their architectures (with the exception of Mitchell's) establish a direct link between identity and authority: it is the construction of identities in terms of a Self superior to the Other that gives rise to colonial authority. Summarized in light of this parallel, what *Race and the Education of Desire* provides is an analysis of the role of sexuality in the creation of a European identity and its ensuing authority. Stoler finds that

> In the name of British, French, and Dutch moralizing missions, colonial authority supposedly rested on the rigor with which its agents distinguished between desire and reason, native instinct and white self-discipline, native lust and white civility, native

> sensuality and white morality, subversive unproductive sexuality and productive patriotic sex. (179)

In short, colonial authority is based on a Manichean distinction between the European Self and the racial Other, articulated and protected in the realm of sexuality.

While this summary at least thematically links back to Foucault's work of 1976, it is hard to overlook the architectural differences. Rather than focus on identity and authority, *The History of Sexuality* attempted to outline a specific configuration of power, developed in relation to sovereign and disciplinary power. Neither of these appear to matter in *Race and the Education of Desire*, where 'power' often operates as a synonym for authority, rather than the strategical situations Foucault analyzed. How then, can the concept of biopower function in this economy?

5.2.3. Concept: Biopolitics at the Service of Colonial Authority

If colonial authority is what really constitutes the central focus of *Race and the Education of Desire*, the notion of biopolitics serves as an ancillary concept. The role of biopolitics in this new constellation is reduced to its contribution to the processes of identity formation and the ensuing production of authority. This is reflected in the quotation above: discussions of sexuality and reproduction in the East Indies take place as a function of European identity construction and authority. The surveillance of sexuality, the management of the population, and the assaying of life, which for Foucault coalesced in a biopolitical strategy aimed at an optimization of the population, appear in a new economy of identity and authority.

This revised function of the concept entails a corresponding change in meaning. Whereas for Foucault biopolitics referred to a strategic set of power relations, Stoler displaces the issue of power to the concept of authority. Biopolitics denotes not the power relations immanent in technologies of life and the population, but rather the set of practices that buttress power as authority. Thus, when Stoler speaks for instance of a '"biopolitical discourse" [that] targets internal dangers and excesses within the Dutch policy' (115), what she is interested in is not so much a power relation with that danger, but rather the function of that danger in the economy of identity and authority.

Stoler's concept of biopolitics reconceptualizes the Foucauldian notion in such a fashion that it appears better suited for an analysis of colonialism. The key advance here is that the link with identity presents an opportunity to determine how biopolitics creates and affects different subject-positions differently, a point Foucault never really developed. Whereas Foucault simply posited biopolitics as a subjectifying power, the extent to which these subject-positions differed in terms of race, gender, and class remained largely unclear.

As far as the first term of this triad is concerned, Foucault's treatment of race is more suggestive than specific. Although the rediscovery of the Collège de France lectures dispels claims that Foucault disregarded race, the fact that his treatment of race was primarily informed by the events in Nazi Germany should raise suspicion as to its practical relevance for postcolonial studies. Moreover, his understanding of racism as racism against the abnormal does not tell us much about colonial obsessions with racial taxonomies.

Something similar can be argued with respect to the category of class. Although Stoler's assertion that Foucault produces a self-referential version of the bourgeoisie appears unwarranted, there is no denying that Foucault's oblique treatment of class in *The History of Sexuality* is problematic. Suggestive though the idea of class struggle as a transcription of race war discourse may be, developed in the *Society Must Be Defended* lectures, it leaves unexplained the differentiating role of Empire in the production of class distinctions.

Considerations of gender, finally, are entirely absent in the lectures. It has led Stoler to conclude that 'the most glaring omission from Foucault's analysis is its non-gendered quality' (93). David Macey also notes that the lectures remain 'astonishingly blind' to gender (2008: 119). In *The History of Sexuality*, this absence is slightly less conspicuous, in part because of the introduction of the topic of the hysterization of women's bodies (104), to which Foucault intended to dedicate an entire volume later (cf. Stoler: 21). Still, the differentiating gendered structure of biopolitics remains insufficiently explored.

By contrast, Stoler fleshes out these categories and identifies how biopolitics disperses subject-positions along their axes, analysed in the local and historical context of the East Indies. Moreover, *Race and the Education of Desire* does not merely deploy these categories serially, but focuses on how they interact. Mapping the overlap of race, class, and gender, Stoler finds that 'Europeanness was not only class-specific but gender coded' (115). The practice of biopolitics thus appears as a particularly charged field in which the differentiating effects of race, gender, and class coincide in the production of European identity and colonial authority.

Although Stoler's reconceptualization of biopolitics makes up for the lack of systematic attention in Foucault's work to the differentiating effects of the apparatus of sexuality, one may wonder whether this architecture should be viewed as an advance over Foucault or rather as an entirely different approach, with in turn different blindspots. Looking back at our earlier discussion of biopolitics in *The History of Sexuality* and *Society Must Be Defended*, it becomes apparent that there are some fundamental discrepancies between Foucault's notion of biopolitics and Stoler's transformation of it. After exploring three of these discrepancies, the remainder of this section will focus on the question of how these discrepancies have gone unnoticed, and on what is lost in Stoler's appropriation of the concept.

The first of these discrepancies is the one that revealed itself in the discussion of Stoler's conceptual architecture: when Stoler speaks of power, what she means is authority. In other words, *Race and the Education of Desire* is not a study of a set of strategic power relations, but an analysis of how Europe legitimized colonialism. Although Foucault's early work was very much concerned with the question of how truth-effects arise, his 1976 work pays only limited attention to the question of authority. Certainly, the figures of the scientific expert and the pastor appear with the capacity to speak the truth of and to the self, but what is much more prominent than their authority is the power relationship established in the encounter between these figures and the subjects they interpret. Once these power relations coalesce, they form the strategic cluster Foucault refers to as biopower. It is a power aimed not at the creation of authority, but at the management of the individual and the population. This focus on the immanence of power relations in specific technologies, arguably the core of Foucault's approach to power, is replaced in Stoler with a focus on the metaphysical pretensions of colonialism.

A second, related point of friction relates to the concepts of the norm and the law. As the earlier discussion of Foucault's work has emphasized, he was writing against what he termed the juridico-discursive conception of power. In short, he argued that the law fails to provide a sound model for the operations of power, given that power is not primarily concerned with drawing the lines between the legitimate and the illegitimate. Stoler, however, appears to take issue with this approach:

> Colonial law was no marginal player in these constructions of difference, as Foucault's account would suggest. What Verena Martinez-Alier has noted for nineteenth-century

> Cuba holds for the Indies: legal codes and not norms alone determined a person's racial status "when his physical appearance was not an unambiguous guide." (47)

In other words, Stoler deems it unsound to stress the norm at the expense of the law because the legal element has been crucial in the formation of identities. Yet, a caveat is called for here: Foucault never suggested that the law ought to disappear from focus. Rather, what he claimed was that 'the law operates more and more as the norm' (*HoS* 144). Thus, what Foucault wanted to avoid was not the law itself, but the model of the law: a negative and binary conception of power. Instead, he proposes the norm as the instrument of power. As Nealon puts it, 'norms, to repeat the Foucaultian mantra, do no primarily "repress" anything, but rather introduce a heightened productivity into the disciplinary apparatus' (2008: 49). In a biopolitical mode, the norm adds to this heightened productivity a heightened vitality of the population. Unlike Stoler's law, the norm does not draw the line between the European and the non-European. Rather, it 'opens up a field of visibility that facilitates the construction of "multiple separations, individualizing distributions, an organization in depth of surveillance and control, and intensification and ramification of power"' (Debrix & Barder 2012: 100).

This takes us directly to a third discrepancy. As we have seen, the primary mode of operation of biopolitics is normalization. By contrast, Stoler's approach downplays the role of the norm and only mentions it insofar as it can provide the basis of an exclusion. Indeed, as noted in section 5.2.2, the processes of identity formation and the creation of authority for Stoler were based on criteria of racial and sexual exclusion. This focus on exclusion may well be incompatible with the Foucauldian notion of biopolitics. As Debrix & Barder point out,

> The norm thus includes as much as it excludes. It includes in an especially intensive fashion by focusing on non-forceful techniques of examination, discipline, and regularized accountability that ceaselessly intervene at the level of docile bodies. When Foucault turns his attention to sexuality and its capture within a modern biopolitics of normalization at the level of an entire population (as he explains in the *History of Sexuality*, Vol. 1), he then argues that the expansion of sexual discourse in the nineteenth century should not only be understood as an attempt to define the moral boundaries of sexual conduct in society. Rather, biopolitical normalization, in this case, acts as a modality of power that intensifies the visibility (and brings into focus) and

> shapes the expert understanding of various manifestations of sexualized conduct. (100-101)

The implication for Stoler should be clear: biopolitics is not concerned with the exclusion of the immoral in order to save the moral highground from which to conduct its colonial civilizing mission. That the creation and protection of authority plays out in the realm of sexuality may be true, but the extent to which the concept of biopolitics as a cluster of power relations helps to drive home that point is highly debatable if its primary mode of operation, viz. normalization, is the direct opposite of the exclusion Stoler describes.

This problem manifests clearly in Stoler's repeated use of the Self-Other dichotomy. Although there is a long tradition of reading this dichotomy into Foucault's work, to which Said and Bhabha have contributed, neither *The History of Sexuality* nor the *Society Must Be Defended* lectures used this terminology. It is my contention that the postcolonial tendency to analyze in terms of constructions of Self and Other is incompatible with Foucault's concept of biopolitics. Jeffrey T. Nealon is worth quoting at length here:

> In short, for Foucault *normalization is not a binary operation* of the kind familiar from deconstruction (normal/abnormal, included/excluded); rather, normativity names the functioning of a supple, sliding scale of examination or classification whose effect is to produce and consistently maintain the necessity of reevaluating (always *testing*) the practices of "the norm" and thereby consistently maintaining and refashioning the links between, for example, "life" and sexuality. (50-51, emphasis in original)

This runs directly counter to Stoler's account of a binary Self versus Other distinction. Biopower as Foucault understands it measures the population, calculates normal values and tries to manage life accordingly, all of which involves more complexity than a simple binary relation.

Summing up, Stoler's focus on identity and authority as a process of drawing a line between Self and Other is directly connected to the contradiction between law and norm, and between exclusion and normalization. But if these discrepancies are so fundamental, why did Stoler resort to the concept of biopolitics in the first place? And if Stoler's discussion of Foucault's work is so systematic and profound, how can this friction pass unnoticed?

Two major factor factors may have played a role in creating this confusion. First, there are elements in Foucault's work that can easily be read in terms of the Self-Other dichotomy. This mainly applies to the *Society Must Be Defended* lectures: Foucault's distinction between the normal and the abnormal at first sight functions like a binary division. Moreover, the manner in which Foucault traces racism back to the split society in race war discourse seems to confirm this reading. Nevertheless, this interpretation is incompatible with the role of the norm in a biopolitical society: contemporary racism transcribes the binary race war discourse into a state racism that affects distributions around the norm.

A second reason can be found in the connection with earlier postcolonial studies that have drawn on Foucault. As we have seen, the confusion between a Foucauldian understanding of power and the concept of authority dates back as far as *Orientalism*. The work of Bhabha and Mitchell in a way perpetuated this tendency by attempting to explain colonial authority through the conceptual apparatus Foucault designed for genealogies of power. Moreover, the tendency to combine Foucault with a Freudian relationship between Self and Other is another feature of Stoler's work that can be traced back to *Orientalism*. Thus, one can argue that the most significant structural similarities should not be sought between Stoler and Foucault's work, but between *Race and the Education of Desire* and *Orientalism*. Although Stoler, unlike Said, does take non-discursive practices into account, both works focus primarily on the role of the Self-Other dichotomy in the production of colonial authority. As one of the first interpretations of Foucault's work in the Anglophone world, *Orientalism* may well have been so influential that we cannot help but read Foucault's concept of power in relation to authority.

Naturally, to turn the notion of biopolitics into an ancillary concept for a Saidian focus on authority is in itself an unproblematic move. However, *Race and the Education of Desire* itself brings up certain issues it cannot properly explain on the basis of this Self-Other binary. Not surprisingly, these are exactly the issues Foucault had set out to explain when he coined his concept of biopolitics. The remainder of this section will focus on two of these problems.

The first issue relates to the notion of difference. As we all know, postcolonial studies in the wake of Said have generally challenged essentialist conceptions of the 'nature' of both colonizer and colonized. In combining the psychoanalytical idea of a Self that is formed through the Other with the linguistic observation that meaning is the result of the relations between signifiers, postcolonial studies from Said to Stoler have exposed the relational rather than

essential character of colonial identities. The crux of their work has been to show that the Western or European Self has been formed through the creation of the Other. The process of Othering, then, is something that can be observed and critiqued in colonial discourse and practice. But what if essentialism and relationality are not the only possible conceptions of difference?

In *Race and the Education of Desire*, Stoler misses the chance to explore one such conception of difference: a notion of identity based on environment. This discourse, of paramount importance in Foucault's understanding of biopolitics, is often hinted at in Stoler's work, but its relation to the Self-Other binary remains unclear. Consider the following passage:

> While Ritter's exclusion of all those born in the Indies from the category "European" was unusual, it belies an anxiety that was much more widely shared: that even for the European-born, the Indies was transformative of cultural essence, social disposition, and personhood itself. His Lamarckian distinction was rarely so explicitly expressed; namely, that "Europeanness" was not a fixed attribute, but one altered by environment, class contingent, and not secured by birth. (104)

As soon as one begins to think of Europeanness in relation to environment, the binary breaks down. Even if one proceeded by drawing a legal line between the European and the non-European subject, the discourse that informs and sustains this distinction conceives of difference as gradual rather than binary. Rather than see this as proof of the fact that European identity is unstable, as Stoler does, one can also understand this concern with environment as a central part of biopolitical power: it allows power to reorganize the space in which people live. In that sense, instability is not a threat to power, but its precondition.

Besides the notion of environment, at least one other notion prominent in *Race and the Education of Desire* does not fit in with the Self-Other paradigm: degeneracy. Stoler points out that discourses on European identity in the East Indies accord great value to the fitness of the population, which is continuously threatened by the natives and the environment:

> European children of the well-to-do were equally at risk of degeneration, of "metamorphosing into Javanese," if the proper habitus was not assured and certain social protocols were not met; if they played in the streets with Indo-European children, if they attended Indies schools that could not instil a proper Dutch "spirit," and most

> perniciously, if they enjoyed too much indulgence from their native nursemaids, and in general had too much intimacy with and knowledge of things Javanese. (112)

This notion of degeneracy establishes a biological continuum rather than a dichotomy, in which the line between the European and the Javanese is understood as blurred. To reduce discussions of degeneracy to matters of identity and authority obfuscates the way in which this discourse was enmeshed in a real biopolitical concern with the management of the population in biological terms. Rather than a ruse to create and maintain colonial authority, biopolitical practice worked to measure the population, to establish normal values, to distribute (in)security, to introduce hygiene, to monitor the circulation of subjects, and to increase the vitality of the population, or, in negative terms, to prevent its degeneration.

This brings us to a second problem of *Race and the Education of Desire*: if one focuses on power as authority, what happens to the technologies of power Foucault analyzed? Although Stoler explains how biopolitical discussions provided Europe with the authority to colonize, there is comparatively little to be found in *Race and the Education of Desire* about actual strategies of subjection in the East Indies. Foucault's focus on power relations immanent in biopolitical strategies attempted to analyze how the notion of the population came into being, how a normalizing power was established, and how the state and the scientifico-legal complex managed the population. For Foucault, these questions led to very specific phenomena: to name but a few, biopolitics incorporated health insurance, urban planning, public hygiene, demographics, birth control, mortality rates, and epidemiology. The questions Stoler's transformation of the concept of biopolitics raises, but leaves unanswered, relate to the role of these biopolitical technologies in the colonies. How does the management of the population in the colonies differ from that in Europe? How do colonial regimes attempt to keep populations in check? Was Vaughan right to argue contra Foucault that power in the colonies was primarily repressive after all (cf. 1991: 10)? In short, how do the technologies aimed at the optimization of the population play out in the colonial management of the population? It is to this question that Achille Mbembe's "Necropolitics" turns.

5.3. Mbembe and Necropolitics: Biopolitics and the Colonial Distribution of Death

5.3.1. Context: Thinking Foucault and Agamben in Tandem

In the corpus of postcolonial appropriations of Foucault, Achille Mbembe's essay "Necropolitics" might be considered the odd one out. Whereas Said, Bhabha, Mitchell, Kaplan and Stoler had their eyes on the colonial past, Mbembe takes us from the scrutiny of colonial history into contemporary configurations of power. Although the first publication of the essay in 2003 came too early to discuss the implications of the war on terror following 9/11, a reprint in the 2008 volume *Foucault in an Age of Terror* has framed "Necropolitics" as a contribution to 'an understanding of modern terror' (169). Testifying to its topicality, commentators like Puar (2007: 35), Dillon (2008: 169), and Debrix & Barder (2012: 11) have drawn on Mbembe's concept of necropolitics in order to describe the violence inherent in the contemporary apparatus of security and the war on terror.

However, Mbembe's essay also has important implications for our understanding of colonial power. Indeed, although Mbembe ends with observations about suicide bombers in contemporary Palestine (35), the essay works towards a historicization of technologies of death, an endeavour that reaches from the plantation system (21) to late modern colonial occupation (25) and the apartheid regime (26). What ties these disparate historical conditions together is a particular deployment of power aimed at the creation of the 'living dead' (40): people who can be killed without consequence because they are not considered to be fully human.

Mbembe develops his argument in relation to the concepts of sovereignty and biopolitics, combining Foucauldian elements with notions from Giorgio Agamben. Without thematizing the differences between these two thinkers, Mbembe simply contends that his approach 'builds on Michel Foucault's critique of the notion of sovereignty and its relation to war and biopower' as developed in *Society Must Be Defended*, while referring in the same footnote to Agamben's *Homo Sacer* (1998). In spite of the fact that *Homo Sacer* deals extensively with Foucault's work and also analyses the workings of biopolitics, the effort to think Foucault and Agamben in tandem may be more complicated than Mbembe makes it appear. Although 'biopolitics' can be understood as the conceptual link bridging their approaches, the differences in their conceptualizations are such that it remains to be seen whether the link is more substantial than the shared use of a signifier. The discrepancies between Foucault and Agamben have led Mika Ojakangas to speak of an 'impossible dialogue' (2005: 5). While it is outside the

scope and ambition of this chapter to fuel the 'heated controversy surrounding Agamben's appropriation of concepts from Foucault' (Bussolini 2010: 3),[39] the tensions that manifest within Mbembe's work certainly deserve our attention. In order to introduce Agamben's work on biopolitics as concisely as possible, this section will repeat the three-tiered contextual, cotextual, and conceptual approach in a minimal analysis of *Homo Sacer*.

On the contextual level, the introduction to *Homo Sacer* leaves little doubt as to its principle antagonist: references to Foucault, and *The History of Sexuality* in particular, abound. However, in spite of Agamben's bold assertion that Foucault's work on biopower will 'have to be corrected, or at least, completed' (9), *Homo Sacer* seems to operate in a different discursive field altogether. Whereas Foucault claimed that he sought to 'trace the transformation [of power relations] not at the level of political theory, but rather at the level of the mechanisms, techniques, and technologies of power' (*SMBD* 241), Agamben seems to be doing the exact opposite. Indeed, *Homo Sacer* is an intervention into the understanding of politics in a Western metaphysical tradition: Western politics is not the result of a friend/enemy opposition, but of man as a living being who, 'in language, separates and opposes himself to his own bare life and, at the same time, maintains himself in relation to that bare life in an inclusive exclusion' (8). This political tradition, which runs from Ancient Greece to the Third Reich and intensifies in the present, builds on Homo Sacer, the figure in archaic Roman law that could be killed without legal consequences, and is thus included in the legal system through exclusion. Agamben's provocative thesis is that 'in our age all citizens can be said, in a specific but extremely real sense, to appear virtually as *homines sacri*' (111).

In order to understand this thesis, Agamben's reconfiguration of the relationship between sovereignty and biopolitics is of paramount importance. As we have seen in the cotextual analysis of *The History of Sexuality* and *Society Must Be Defended*, Foucault defined biopolitics through the antagonist concept of sovereignty. What separated these concepts was not only a fundamentally different objective and strategy, but also a historical transition: sovereignty was the power of the sovereign to 'make die or let live,' whereas biopower was the modern decision to 'make live or let die.' In *Homo Sacer*, however, sovereignty is not just the backdrop against which biopower can be outlined. To the contrary, the sovereign right to kill is inextricably interwoven with the politics of life: the foundational gesture of sovereign power is the creation of a biopolitical body that can be killed. The sovereign thus appears as the mirrored

[39] For a sustained discussion, see a dedicated issue of *Foucault Studies*, No. 10, November 2010.

image of Homo Sacer: the sovereign can kill with impunity, Homo Sacer can be killed with impunity. The historical transformation Agamben describes is therefore not that from sovereign power to biopower, since '*the production of a biopolitical body is the original activity of sovereign power*' (6, emphasis in original). Instead, the transformation consists of the fact that whereas the exclusion of life that can be killed (bare life) used to operate as the foundational outside, bare life is now generalized: '"bare life," formerly on the margins of political existence, now increasingly shifts into the center of the political domain' (Lemke 2011: 56). The shift is such that Agamben understands the concentration camp as the 'biopolitical paradigm of the modern' (117), because of its intensified production of life that can be killed. Thus, the camp presents a concatenation of the sovereign power to kill and the biopolitical production of bare life.

These contextual and cotextual transformations have a profound impact on the meanings and functions of the concept of biopolitics. Two main discrepancies between Foucault's and Agamben's conceptualization will prove crucial in the discussion of Mbembe's "Necropolitics." First of all, Agamben's notion of biopower paradoxically focuses mainly on death. As Coleman & Grove sum up, 'when speaking of the generalization of the camp as the new biopolitical nomos of 20th-century modernity, Agamben suggests that biopolitics should be read in his work as thanatopolitics, which he says is when biopolitics plays out in an extreme form as a determination on the unworthiness or valuelessness of a particular life' (497). Needless to say, this focus on the value or non-value of life is highly reminiscent of the biopolitical assaying of life Foucault describes, and the concept of state racism as a split in a biological continuum clearly indicates that Foucault did not ignore the question of death in biopolitical regimes. However, there is a crucial difference in his conceptualization of the strategic objective of biopower: whereas Agamben focuses on bare life and its destruction as the foundation of politics, Foucault focused on biopower as a power intent on managing the population and supporting certain lives. This dimension completely disappears in *Homo Sacer*: biopolitics is now solely aimed at the production of bare life.

A second and related issue is that Foucault's focus on specific technologies of power brought together a number of particular historical phenomena in a biopolitical apparatus, ranging from demographics to birth control, hygiene and urban planning. In drawing on the model of the law, Agamben strips the concept of biopolitics of its explanatory value in the realm of technologies of normalization, focusing instead on the underpinnings of a Western metaphysical tradition.

Thomas Lemke's otherwise excellent discussion of biopolitics concludes from this second point that 'Agamben fails to recognize that biopolitics is essentially a political economy of life' (2011a: 60). In this 'impossible dialogue' (Ojakangas 2005), as well as in the reading of "Necropolitics," however, it is vital to remember the obvious fact that signifiers lack an essence: in the light of the above, it seems more appropriate to conclude that Foucault and Agamben, in spite of their use of the same signifier, set out to explain divergent issues with divergent approaches.

Much more than Agamben's failure to live up to Foucauldian orthodoxy, what is problematic is *Homo Sacer*'s way of dealing with difference. In the discussion of Ann Laura Stoler's work above, we have seen how an understanding of power as the production of a binary may well be incompatible with Foucault's emphasis on normalization. In working along the model of the law, Agamben proposes a similar binary. Lemke's description of this process is worth quoting at some length:

> (...) one notices that Agamben conceives of the "camp" not as a differentiated and differentiating continuum but simply as a "line" (1998, 122) that more or less unambiguously divides bare life and political existence. His attention is directed solely toward the establishment of a border – a border that he comprehends not as a tiered or graded zone but as a line without extension or dimension that reduces the question to an either-or. Within these parameters, he can no longer analyze how gradations and valuations within "bare life" emerge, how life can be qualified as "higher" or "lower," as "descending" or "ascending." These processes of differentiation evade him, for he is interested not so much in "life" as in its "bareness." (2011a: 59)

From a postcolonial point of view, such a rigid perspective seems especially worrisome. How can the dichotomy of politicized life versus bare life account for the complexity of the colonial situation? How can a model that uses the border as an analytical tool avoid reproducing those borders, in a less innocent geographical sense?

Before we proceed to the manner in which Mbembe grapples with these tensions, two caveats ought to be made. First of all, Agamben and Foucault are certainly not the only points of reference for "Necropolitics." Stephen Morton rightly emphasizes that 'Mbembe develops Fanon's observation about the constitutive role of violence in the political formation of the

European colony' (185). In light of the discussion of difference as the dialectic of Self and Other, it is crucial that Mbembe's invocation of Fanon differs markedly from Bhabha's: rather than the psychoanalytical aspect, what Mbembe values is Fanon's description of 'the spatialization of colonial occupation' (26). His discussion of the compartmentalization of space, the setting of internal frontiers, and the role of police stations and barracks is highly compatible with Foucault's focus on techniques and technologies of disciplining individuals and managing populations.

Second, Morton's observations about Fanon serve as a reminder that the discrepancies between Foucault and Agamben should also not be overstated: if Fanon wrote about the constitutive role of violence in the political formation of the colony, Foucault and Agamben discuss politics as inherently violent. What binds Fanon, Foucault, Agamben, and Mbembe together is that they all oppose the model of politics as the exercise of reason in the public sphere. The task at hand will be to see how Mbembe negotiates the tension between the various manifestations of this critique of the rational and autonomous sovereign subject.

5.3.2 Cotext: 'Sovereignty' and its Layers of Meaning

As hinted at in the contextual analysis, an attempt to reconstruct the conceptual architecture of "Necropolitics" will have to confront the multiple configurations of the relationship between two central concepts: sovereignty and biopower. Exactly how disorienting Mbembe's merging of Foucault and Agamben can be becomes painstakingly clear in the very first lines of the essay:

> This essay assumes that the ultimate expression of sovereignty resides, to a large degree, in the power and the capacity to dictate who may live and who must die. Hence, to kill or to allow to live constitute the limits of sovereignty, its fundamental attributes. To exercise sovereignty is to exercise control over mortality and to define life as the deployment and manifestation of power. One could summarize in the above terms what Michel Foucault meant by *biopower*: that domain of life over which power has taken control. (11-12, emphasis in original)

In this short passage, Mbembe superimposes at least three disparate conceptualizations of sovereignty: the traditional notion of sovereignty, Foucault's refusal of it, and Agamben's reconfiguration of Foucault. In the remainder of the essay, Mbembe adds a fourth layer and combines them all into a palimpsestic concept of sovereignty.

The first layer of meaning in Mbembe's discussion of sovereignty is invoked through its rejection: his claim that sovereignty is the capacity to decide who may live and who must die is fundamentally at odds with what the essay frames as 'privileged normative theories' of sovereignty (13). According to Mbembe, late-modern political criticism has propagated an understanding of sovereignty as 'the production of general norms by a body (the demos) made up of free and equal men and women' (13). This perspective thus presupposes full subjects who enter into a contract to constitute sovereignty. In this way, the sovereign subject is the foundation of the sovereign, given that this system 'rests on the belief that the subject is the master and the controlling author of his or her own meaning' (13). Politics, correspondingly, is the exercise of reason through these subjects. This traditional notion of the sovereign subject has a counterpart on the level of states. The sovereign state is a state that 'could recognize no authority above it within its own borders' (23). In this context, Mbembe mentions the 'Jus publicum Europaeum,' a European juridical order that postulated the juridical equality of all states. The equality of subjects thus finds it counterpart in the equality of sovereign states.

Such a conception of sovereignty has been criticized extensively, amongst others by Foucault: Mbembe's picking up on Foucault's understanding of sovereignty as the capacity to take life or let live shifts the focus away from sovereignty as the exercise of reason to the question of violence. Sovereignty comes to signify the power of the negative and the destructive, as exemplified in the gory introduction to *Discipline and Punish*. This approach to sovereignty as violence rather than reason serves Mbembe's purpose of exposing colonial violence against its legitimizing narrative of civilization.

However, for Foucault the concept of sovereignty is only a foil for developing his notion of biopower. As should be clear by now, Foucault sketches a historical development from sovereignty to biopower, with the nuance that biopower can incorporate sovereign elements. But if his critique of the sovereign subject revolves around the fact that a contract model of sovereignty presupposes the subject and is therefore incapable of accounting for its production, the Foucauldian emphasis on the subjectifying techniques of biopower leaves unanswered the question of the subject under sovereign power. In short, if sovereignty is the power of the negative, how could it possibly produce the subjects on which it works?

This is where the third layer comes in: Agamben's reconfiguration of Foucault. In *Society Must Be Defended*, Foucault had briefly raised the question of the contract, discussing the relationship between life and sovereignty. If, Foucault asks, individuals appoint a sovereign to

protect their lives, 'mustn't life remain outside the contract to the extent that it was the first, initial, and foundational reason for the contract itself' (241)? However, he is quick to dismiss this issue as 'a debate within political philosophy that we can leave on one side' (241). With Agamben, by contrast, the debate on life in political philosophy is absolutely central to an understanding of sovereignty. Political life only comes into being as the negation of unpolitical existence, or, in Agamben's formulation, bare life. As Oksala aptly summarizes, 'sovereignty, understood in this way, thus corresponds crucially to bare life. Bare life is the exception within the political order because it forms the zone outside the law and of political rights' (2010: 31). Although Mbembe does not use the term bare life, his comparable notion of 'animal life' fulfils the same role as a designation of life excepted from the political realm: 'in the eyes of the conqueror, *savage life* is just another form of *animal life*' (24, emphasis in original). Mbembe thus relocates Agamben's split between bare life and political existence to the boundary between colonized and colonizer.

Agamben's very spatial conceptualization of the state of exception plays a major role in this process. Following up on Carl Schmitt, Agamben and Mbembe refer to the sovereign as the one who decides on the state of exception, 'a temporal suspension of the law' (Mbembe 12). But whereas for Agamben the state of exception has ceased to be temporal and has increasingly become the norm, constituting the nomos of our contemporary situation, Mbembe does not conflate the state of exception and the normal juridical order. To the contrary, 'the colonies are the location par excellence where the controls and guarantees of juridical order can be suspended – the zone where the violence of the state of exception is deemed to operate in the service of "civilization"' (24). In this way, he maintains a 'distinction between, on the one hand, those parts of the globe available for colonial appropriation, and, on the other, Europe itself (where the *Jus Publicum* was to hold sway)' (23-24). The colony thus emerges as the locus where the sovereign capacity to take lives is not subject to any legal limitation. There is no sovereign subject establishing the contract, and there is no sovereign state protecting the lives of its subjects in the colony Mbembe depicts.

Mbembe's combination of Foucault's and Agamben's conceptualizations of sovereignty in this way effectively dismantles the traditional notion of sovereignty as the exercise of reason through autonomous subjects. However, Mbembe's approach also goes beyond the work of these two thinkers, adding in a sense a fourth and final layer of meaning: sovereignty as a figure of power that dissolves the distinction between state and non-state power. One could object that

positing such a dissolution is far from a novel gesture, and that it is exactly what Foucault attempted to achieve with the concept of governmentality. And yet, *Society Must Be Defended* discusses sovereignty primarily in relation to state racism and the figure of the king, thereby positing sovereignty as a centralized form of power. This is even more prominent in Agamben's work, with 'its concentration on state apparatuses and centralized forms of regulation' (Lemke 2011a: 61). The sovereign power operating in the colony as state of exception, however, is 'not necessarily state power' (Mbembe 16). In the colony, 'war is no longer waged between armies of two sovereign states. It is waged by armed groups acting behind the mask of the state against armed groups that have no state but control very distinct territories' (35). However, if Mbembe proposes a notion of sovereign power as decentralized, and thus defines it as the opposite of what Foucault had in mind, we may be approaching the limits of conceptual work. The next section will therefore check whether such contradictions are simply the result of a productive superimposition of various conceptualizations, or whether they might stem from a deeper conflict between analytically disparate rationales of power.

5.3.3. Concept: Is Biopolitics Necropolitics?

Necropolitics, the concept Mbembe coined to refer to 'the generalized instrumentalization of human existence and the material destruction of human bodies and populations' (14), is a clear appropriation of the Foucauldian notion of biopolitics. Unlike the postcolonial transformations of 'discourse' and 'discipline,' discussed in the previous chapters, this transformation is reflected in the signifier itself. Even though the general thrust of this appropriation is quite obvious, with a shift from politics as the fostering of life towards politics as the distribution of death, the actual relation between the concepts of necropolitics and biopolitics can still be read in two different ways, depending to a large extent on the role one assigns to either Agamben or Foucault in Mbembe's text, and their respective conceptualizations of sovereignty.

A possible first interpretation would be to maintain a strict separation, conceptually as well as analytically, between the politics of life and the politics of death. This is the path Mika Ojakangas has chosen in his reading of Foucault. Focusing on the inclusive nature of biopower, Ojakangas argues that '*the care of "all living"* is the foundation of biopower,' rather than 'bare life that is exposed to an unconditional threat of death' (6, emphasis in original). Biopower in this interpretation is a form of pastoral power that aims to take care of each and every member of

the flock. The result is an opposition between biopolitics and a politics of death. A similar separation informs the work of Rabinow and Rose, and their essay "Biopower Today" in particular. In a summary that sounds quite ironic in contemporary debates, they

> argue that, while exceptional forms of biopower, especially in conditions of absolutist dictatorship, and when combined with certain technical resources, can lead to a murderous 'thanatopolitics' – a politics of death – biopower in contemporary states takes a different form. (2006: 195)

While this wholesale claim about 'contemporary states' is in itself problematic enough in its generalization, the implicit opposition to 'absolutist dictatorship' as a thing of the distant past seems particularly worrisome. Their claim that such a politics of death is exceptional – an interesting choice of words – if anything seems to confirm Agamben's suspicion towards the myth of a temporal state of exception rather than to undercut it: Rabinow and Rose's wording sweeps under the carpet the fundamental violence in certain parts of the globe inflicted upon certain members of the population.

However, these interpretations of Foucault's work are not entirely unfounded. Although *Society Must Be Defended* does not present a picture of biopower as a politics of life that operates at great remove from the politics of death, Foucault does attribute genocidal violence to a combination of the sovereign right to kill and the biopolitical management of the population, rather than biopolitics as such (e.g. *SMBD* 260). Moreover, to his own question of whether the death function is inscribed in the workings of all states, Foucault answers somewhat hesitantly 'perhaps not' (261). This hesitation leaves the door open for an interpretation of the politics of life and the politics of death as two separate rationales of power. Applied to Mbembe, this interpretation would yield an analysis of Europe as the site of biopower, and the colony where necropower is operative – without any necessary or foundational connection between them.

Such a reading, however, is not very plausible, as it does not seem to correspond with Mbembe's Agamben-inflected reading of Foucault. Ignoring Foucault's hesitation, Mbembe contends that 'Foucault states clearly that the sovereign right to kill (*droit de glaive*) and the mechanisms of biopower are inscribed in the way all modern states function' (17). Although such a reading makes a stronger claim than the lectures seem to warrant, this interpretation seems to have become more current than Ojakangas's reading. And for good reason: against the claim that

biopower aims to take care of 'all living,' Dillon succinctly objects that 'life cannot be made, encouraged, or otherwise seduced, into living biopolitically unless other ways of living and other forms of life are extinguished' (2008: 168-9). The question Ojakangas precludes is the question of 'what it is to be a living thing' (Dillon 2005: 41). As soon as biopower includes 'all living,' a decision is made about what counts as life and what does not. Thus, the 'animal life' Mbembe speaks of is exposed to death even in a biopolitical system. 'Necropolitics,' Dillon concludes, 'is the 'letting die' required by the biopolitical injunction to 'make life'' (2008: 169). Biopolitics always already carries necropolitics with it.

Paradoxically, the realization that biopolitics and necropolitics are two sides of the same coin has often led to a focus on the lethal side only. As Dan Stone complains,

> the thrust of the literature on biopolitics – which focuses on identifying the "dark side" of modernity – overlooks the fact that biopolitics led not only to genocide, but also to advances in social welfare, public health, and family policy, even as the aims and vocabulary of welfare advocates and eugenicists were often indistinguishable. (2010: 168-9).

Debrix & Barder's statement that 'the object of biopower is death itself' (11) is a case in point: it completely ignores the biopolitical strategy of fostering life Foucault described. The same thing could be argued about the work of Agamben and Mbembe: focusing on the politics of death only, they do not expose the fundamental connections between necropolitics, biopolitics, and sovereignty, but rather conflate them until the three concepts become analytically indistinguishable. This allows Mbembe to speak of 'biopower, "that old sovereign right of death"' (17): the politics of life, the politics of death, and sovereignty have become interchangeable.

It is my contention that both the strict separation of sovereignty, biopolitics, and necropolitics as well as their conflation overlooks key aspects of the particular configuration of power hinted at by Mbembe. In spite of the conflation he effects, the characteristics Mbembe ascribes to necropolitics present sufficient ground to argue that necropolitics coincides neither with sovereignty nor with biopolitics.

First of all, as the previous sections have established, for Foucault the right of the sovereign to kill was centered around the figure of the king. In a necropolitical society, there is no such centre. As Mbembe puts it in relation to Africa: 'Urban militias, private armies, armies of

regional lords, private security firms, and state armies all claim the right to exercise violence or to kill' (32). Whom to shoot and when to shoot is left to the discretion of local military commanders, thus rendering each of them a local sovereign. Moreover, technological advances have made it possible for the necropolitical agent to strike without warning and vanish immediately (31). Necropolitical technology can thus be characterized in terms of a 'global mobility' (31) rather than a specific center.

Second, in a sovereign regime, the act of killing was meant to function as an example. The body of the person who was executed was a signifier, warning people not to transgress against the power of the king. But, in the necropolitical massacre, 'lifeless bodies are quickly reduced to the status of simple skeletons. Their morphology henceforth inscribes them in the register of undifferentiated generality: simple relics of an unburied pain, empty, meaningless corporalities' (35). Moreover, the power that is responsible for the killing does not want to be seen, hence the importance of 'stealth capabilities, unmanned aerial vehicles, and cyberintelligence' (30). This is not to say that death as example loses its function altogether, but rather that 'invisible killing is added to outright executions' (30).

Third, as the introductory pages of *Discipline and Punish* bring to mind, the sovereign act of killing aimed at a particular kind of excess: it was not enough to kill the perpetrator, the body needed to display the formidable strength of sovereign power. Necropolitical violence on the other hand practices targeted killing with laser-guided missiles. It need not necessarily be excessive – death can be sufficient. Obviously, Mbembe does not imply that killing is now 'clean': a technological revolution has even 'multiplied the capacity for destruction in unprecedented ways' (30). Rather, the crux of the matter is that the excess which used to be the strategic aim of sovereign power is now a side effect in the economy of warfare: the main point is to shut down the enemy's life-support system (31).

Fourth, the discontinuity of the public execution is replaced in a necropolitical regime with continuous surveillance, with, as Mbembe puts it, 'the eye acting as a weapon and vice versa' (28). The exercise of necropower thus has more in common with the continuous application of disciplinary power than with the bursts of sovereign vengeance. The result in the necropolitical society is that 'daily life is militarized' (30).

Finally, in Foucault's conceptualization sovereign power targeted the body, whereas necropolitical 'technologies of destruction are less concerned with inscribing bodies within disciplinary apparatuses as inscribing them, when the time comes, within the order of the

maximal economy now represented by the "massacre"' (34). Even in times of war, what is at stake is the 'management of the multitudes' (34). Like biopolitics, necropolitics thus operates at the level of the population.

If these five points demonstrate that a conceptual separation of sovereignty and necropolitics allows us to distinguish two strategies of power, something similar can be said about biopolitics and necropolitics. Although the last of these five points makes it tempting to equate biopolitics and necropolitics as the form of power that takes the population as its object, a conflation of the politics of life and death ignores the phenomenon Ojakangas focuses on: the biopolitical determination to optimize the population and to take care of 'all living.' As we have seen, the trouble with his approach is that it overlooks the violence inherent in deciding what counts as life. To read "Necropolitics" either as a transformation of Foucault's concept that relocates its essence from optimization to destruction, or as a supplement that posits necropolitics and biopolitics as free-standing rationales of power, misses Mbembe's (perhaps unwitting) solution to this debate: in exploring the colony and the colony only as the location of necropolitics, he acknowledges the violence inherent in the biopolitical assaying of life, without reducing this biopolitics to its death-function.

Read in this way, Mbembe effectively manages to go beyond both Foucault and Agamben: the concept of necropolitics explores a form of power that Foucault's Eurocentric account overlooked, and it presents Agamben's totalizing narrative with a much-needed differentiation and historicization. One might object to such a reading that Mbembe's differentiation is schematic, and his historicization insufficient: Jasbir Puar has referred to "Necropolitics" as a 'totalizing narrative' in its own right (33). And indeed, Mbembe's work has only partially freed itself from the binary divisions and generalizations Lemke found in Agamben's work. It is in this issue of dealing with difference that the problematic fusion of Foucault with Agamben returns to the surface. This is of course not to say that Foucault was the great theoretician of difference, and Agamben the one who ignores difference, with Mbembe vacillating between the two – such a summary would be too forgiving of Foucault's self-contained histories of Europe, and overly harsh on Agamben's account. After all, Agamben's claim that bare life used to form the constitutive outside of sovereign power demonstrates that some form of differentiation and historicization, however schematic it may be, underlies his conceptualization of biopolitics. It is this same binary division of bare life versus politicized existence, or animal life versus human life, that also appears in Mbembe's distinction between

necropolitics and biopolitics. “Necropolitics” thus relies to a certain extent on Agamben’s juridico-discursive model of power: by taking the law as its model, it draws ‘a line without extension or dimension that reduces the question to an either-or’ (Lemke 2011a: 59). In this sense, Mbembe’s notion of necropolitics inherits this binary conception of difference, as a line that separates animal life and political existence. This line is not the result of the analysis of power relations, but is dictated by an approach that takes a juridico-discursive theory as its starting point.

However, this tendency is countered by an equally present Foucauldian impetus to focus on technologies of power. The importance of this point can hardly be overstated: Mbembe’s characterization of necropolitics relies crucially on a discussion of technologies of destruction. The immediate effect is a historicization of power that is much more thorough than the juridico-discursive approach achieves. In his discussion of necropower, Mbembe points to the fact that ‘each stage of imperialism also involved certain key technologies (the gunboat, quinine, steamship lines, submarine telegraph cables, and colonial railroads)’ (25). In the contemporary stage, ‘a military-technological revolution [...] has multiplied the capacity for destruction in unprecedented ways’ (30). Thus, necropower has intensified into a situation where ‘smart bombs and bombs coated with depleted uranium (DU), high-tech stand-off weapons, electronic sensors, laser-guided missiles, cluster and asphyxiation bombs, stealth capabilities, unmanned aerial vehicles, and cyberintelligence’ ensure the death of the enemy (30). Necropolitics is not simply the ‘letting die’ implied in the imperative to ‘make live,’ but a whole technology of death.

This discrepancy between, on the one side, a politico-philosophical approach that takes a binary scheme as its starting point, and, on the other, a Foucauldian bottom-up approach that starts from a set of specific historical technologies, constitutes the key point of tension in contesting conceptualizations of biopolitics and necropolitics. In Mbembe’s text, this tension stands largely unresolved: biopolitics and necropolitics appear both as the automatic outcome of the ancient distinction between bare life and political existence, as well as the contingent coalescence of a distinct set of technologies. As the next section will stress, this split becomes yet more significant in the context of the earlier discussion of *Race and the Education of Desire*.

5.4. Conclusion: Enter Biopolitics, Exit Identity?

Reading Foucault in light of Stoler's and Mbembe's transformations of the concept of biopolitics, the most conspicuous issue is no doubt that *The History of Sexuality* and *Society Must Be Defended* analyze a form of difference on an ontological rather than an identitarian plane. The biopolitical aim to optimize the population and to foster life entails a decision about the ontological question of what counts as life and of who is deserving of biopolitical care. This evaluation of life is made possible through the production of a set of norms, measuring 'normal' demographical statistical values, occurrences of disease, starvation, etc. A complementary set of technologies emerges to relate the actual values to the normal values and to bring them in line with the norm or to pathologize elements of the population. Importantly, we have found such a power of normalization to effect distributions around the norm rather than invest in a binary separation of the normal and the abnormal.

On this last point, however, Ann Laura Stoler suggests the exact opposite. Deploying biopolitics as an ancillary concept, she understands biopolitical practices as an effort to create and maintain a dichotomy of Self and Other. Moreover, this dichotomy between the colonizer and the colonized is not consistently framed as ontological, but rather as identitarian: the dialectic of self and other creates the identity of the colonizer in such a way that he has authority over the colonized. At bottom, what this move implies is the partial integration of Foucault's concept into a Saidian economy of identity and authority.

As we have seen, such a framework overlooks two crucial elements. First of all, this binary conception of identity formation seems more akin to the model of the law than the norm: it draws a line rather than effect distributions around the norm. It thus not only neglects the process of normalization, but also fails to account for the notion of difference installed in the evolutionist thrust of biopolitical discourse, leaving the notion of degeneracy unexplained. A second and related problem is that Stoler only seems interested in biopolitical practices insofar as they pertain to identity formation and the creation of authority. In this way, *Race and the Education of Desire* neglects biopolitical practices as strategies of power aimed at the body of the individual and the population. In other words, whether biopolitical practices served the creation of authority or not, they constituted a direct intervention in the lives of the colonized: phenomena such as the introduction of systems of hygiene, the control of circulation, and

attempts to quarantine certain subjects cannot be characterized solely in terms of identity-as-authority.

On closer inspection, it seems that the key tension here is between the Foucauldian approach of analyzing certain technologies as they coalesce towards a certain strategy, and Stoler's effort to subsume these technologies under a Saidian scheme of Selves and Others. A similar source of friction has been detected in Mbembe's "Necropolitics," viz. between Foucault's bottom-up approach and Agamben's grappling with the binary of bare life and political existence. And yet, this similarity is far from absolute: whereas Stoler integrates the concept of biopolitics into the larger economy of identity, Mbembe's conceptual architecture does not prioritize either Foucault or Agamben, but rather merges their work without much thought to their compatibility. The outcome is a conceptualization of biopolitics and necropolitics that reproduces only the first of Stoler's problems. More specifically, Mbembe's reliance on Agamben's opposition between bare life and political existence is akin to Said and Stoler's notion of difference as a binary distinction, with the same reductive notion of power as the production of a division into two camps.

However, the issue of the binary is where the similarity between Stoler and Mbembe ends. Whereas Stoler identified the creation of a binary on the level of identity, Mbembe focuses on the level of ontology: not the difference between selves and others, but between properly human and animal life is the difference between colonizer and colonized. Second, whereas Stoler's focus on identity and authority led her to ignore the immediate impact of biopolitical practices on bodies and populations, Mbembe's attention to technologies of death transforms the Foucauldian impetus to highlight the role of technologies of power into a forceful reconsideration of colonial modalities of power. With technologies of death as the main subject of his essay, Mbembe takes seriously the idea of a form of power which takes the individual body and the species body as its point of application. The result is a study in which the notion of identity is almost totally absent (except for one brief excursus on page 27), focusing instead on the strategies, tactics, and techniques of colonial power. Naturally, Mbembe's account is incomplete, and an exclusive emphasis on the politics of death can only metonymically stand in for an analysis of colonial projects as such. Rather, the value of Mbembe's approach can be found in shifting the critique of power from the stories of legitimization power produces to its rationale and modes of operation. As the next chapter will indicate, Mbembe is not the only one who deemed such a shift necessary.

Before moving on, however, a final word on the work of Stoler may be helpful to illustrate the significance of the differences between Stoler's and Mbembe's appropriations of 'biopolitics.' If the opening paragraphs identified 'biopolitics' as a buzzword in the first decade of the 21st century, the impact of this period can most clearly be discerned in Stoler's second seminal volume, *Carnal Knowledge and Imperial Power* (2002, 2010). This is a collection of essays, mainly written during the nineties, and published in 2002, with a large degree of overlap with *Race and the Education of Desire*. In other words: here too one finds a focus on identitarian frames and their contribution to colonial authority. And yet, the new preface to the 2010 edition reframes these discussions in terms highly reminiscent of Mbembe's description of colonial power: rather than identity, authority, and nationalism, we read about 'regimes of living,' and 'sovereignty' (xx). Although this preface on its own hardly constitutes sufficient proof, taken together with the questions Mbembe raises, it indicates that postcolonial studies may have developed an interest in power that is no longer confined to identity-as-authority, and that the concept of biopolitics has had a key role to play in this process during the first decade of the 21st century.

6. Governmentality

Just as with 'discourse,' 'discipline,' and 'biopolitics,' 'governmentality' is not a signifier originating with Foucault. Thomas Lemke traces it back to the 1950s, when Roland Barthes coined the neologism 'to denote an ideological mechanism that presents the government as the origin of social relations' (2011b: 3). After Foucault stripped the concept of its semiological context in the 1970s, the concept has been used to refer to a particular rationale of power and government. From the 1990s onwards, a 'boom in studies of governmentality' has taken place, with scholars drawing on the concept in order to focus on 'transformations from welfarism to neo-liberal rationalities and technologies' (Lemke 2011b: 78). As the publication in the same year of both *Foucault, Governmentality and Critique* (Lemke 2011b) and *Governmentality* (eds. Bröckling, Krassmann, Lemke 2011) indicates, the notion of governmentality continues to draw interest in contemporary scholarship.

One volume that has played a major role in starting this boom is without a doubt *The Foucault Effect: Studies in Governmentality*. This 1991 publication opened up Foucault's work on governmentality to the Anglophone world by providing the first English translation of Foucault's lecture of February 1st, 1978. The source text of the English translation is not the manuscript Foucault used to deliver his lecture, but a transcription and translation of the lecture into Italian, leading to a double translation (cf. Gordon et al. 1991: 87). Moreover, the publication of this single lecture completely wrenches it out of its context: Foucault's lecture was part of a series of thirteen lectures he held in 1978 at the Collège de France. It was not until 2007 that the full series became available in English, published as *Security, Territory, Population*.

Both postcolonial appropriations on which this chapter focuses therefore rely on a decontextualized, transcribed, and doubly translated version of Foucault's work. The first appropriation is an essay by David Scott, aptly titled "Colonial Governmentality." It first appeared in a 1995 issue of *Social Text*, but was reprinted in Scott's *Refashioning Futures* (1999: 23-52) and in a 2005 volume called *Anthropologies of Modernity* (ed. Jonathan Xavier Inda). Scott's essay urges students of colonialism to analyze the rationale of modern colonial power, to spell out its goals, ambitions, and methods, or, in short, its project.[40] In his brief analysis of colonial power in

[40] In using this notion of a project to study colonial governmentality, Scott develops a perspective that is similar to Nicholas Thomas's in *Colonialism's Culture: Anthropology, Travel and Government* (1994). overlap with Scott and the fact that Scott's account is more systematic and has been reprinted a number of times, the present chapter will focus on Scott alone.Thomas's fourth chapter, "Colonial Governmentality

Ceylon, however, it becomes apparent that Scott's almost exclusive reliance on Foucault's decontextualized lecture yields a picture of colonial power that is as problematic as it is promising.

The second postcolonial appropriation, James Duncan's *In the Shadows of the Tropics* (2007), picks up where Scott left off, with a more substantial analysis of colonial power in 19th century Ceylon. A focus on the connections Duncan establishes between Foucault's famous lecture of February 1st, 1978, and other concepts and scholars will demonstrate how Duncan negotiates many of the problems that plagued Scott's work, as well as some of the other texts mentioned throughout the previous chapters. Indeed, *In the Shadows of the Tropics* is not only the last text to be subjected to analysis here, it is also the last of this intertextual web under study in a chronological sense. A major task of this chapter will therefore be to demonstrate how the intertextual web we have been discussing structures and affects Duncan's conceptualization of governmentality.

6.1. Foucault and Governmentality: Power as the Art of Government

6.1.1. Context: The *Security, Territory, Population* Lectures

By far the most effective way to contextualize Foucault's concept of governmentality is to take a closer look at the lectures in which it first emerged. Unlike Scott and Duncan, who could only rely on the doubly translated transcripts of a single lecture, we can place this lecture in the series of thirteen Foucault delivered between January and April 1978 at the Collège de France. In this series, published as *Security, Territory, Population*, Foucault develops a particular perspective on what he calls 'governmentality.' Claiming that the title of the series is misleading, Foucault explains that 'what [he] would really like to undertake is something that [he] would call a history of "governmentality"' (108). In anticipation of a more thorough discussion later on, we can understand 'governmentality' as referring to both the ensemble of practices and projects of power exercized over the population, as well as the pre-eminence of a conceptualization of power as the government of the population.

Whereas this aspect of the lectures has received a lot of attention in the wake of the publication of *The Foucault Effect*, what is generally less understood is that Foucault did not

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and Colonial Conversion" (105-142) is an interesting postcolonial appropriation of Foucault's concept of governmentality in its own right, but because of the

broach the topic of government until the fourth lecture. The salient concept in the first lectures is not 'governmentality,' but 'security.' Through the examples of disease spreading and grain scarcity, Foucault develops a contrast between sovereign technologies of power, disciplinary technologies, and technologies of security. In short, sovereign power is a power of prohibition, discipline is a power that prescribes a norm and attempts to bring individuals in line with it, whereas the apparatus of security derives the norm from what it posits as the reality of nature. Its task, then, is to regulate this reality, to regulate men as such an element of nature in the form of a population, and to manage this population in relation to its milieu. One crucial aspect of this notion of an effective reality is that the function of the state is limited to regulating the natural circulation of men and things, as opposed to prohibiting or structuring it.

This is where the idea of liberalism comes in. As Foucault points out:

> The game of liberalism – not interfering, allowing free movement, letting things follow their course; *laissez-faire, passer et aller* – basically and fundamentally means acting so that reality develops, goes its way, and follows its own course according to the laws, principles and mechanisms of reality itself. (48)

This strategy of liberalism thus installs a notion of freedom at the heart of government. In this way, freedom no longer appears as the absence of power, but as a crucial technique of power. According to Mitchell Dean, this line of thought forced Foucault to develop 'a new conceptual architecture of power' (2010: 58). Based on a later text from Foucault, "The Ethic of the Care of the Self as a Practice of Freedom," Dean identifies a shift from Foucault's earlier work that focused on domination to the focus on government as 'an intermediate region which is not purely one of either freedom or domination' (58). Claiming that 'in using the language of war, battle and struggle, genealogy found itself uncomfortably close to a position that tended to identify all forms of power with domination, and thus much like that of Adorno and Horkheimer,' Dean concludes that genealogy after *The History of Sexuality* and *Society Must Be Defended* found itself at an 'impasse' (58). He thus introduces a break between Foucault's work on biopower and that on governmentality.

However, it is my contention that there is no fundamental break between his approach to biopower and governmentality as presented in *Security, Territory, Population*. Martin Saar rightly observes that 'it is easy to see that Foucault does not think that the project of a history of

governmentality demands any major methodological innovation except a change of focus' (37). Not only is it so that the series freedom – government – domination Dean insists on only appears after the delivery of the lectures, it can also be argued that this tension between freedom and domination was always already implicit in Foucault's work and does not present a major innovation. This is the point Kelly makes in his discussion of Foucault's concept of power: although Foucault indeed introduced a distinction between freedom as a reversible, flexible relation of power, and domination as an ossified, irreversible power relation, the principle of reversibility 'was included in Foucault's thinking all along' (2009: 76). Indeed, even in *Discipline and Punish* and *The History of Sexuality*, where Foucault discussed seemingly stable clusters of power relations, he still insisted on (but never developed) the possibilities for the subject to resist or reverse the power relation. It seems, then, that the real difference between his work on biopower and his work on governmentality lies in his more balanced elaboration of both the structuring effects of power on the subject and the room for manoeuvering within and throughout that structure. An example can clarify this: if the biopolitical concern with the reproduction of the species developed through observation of a notion of normal (or, in the light of what was said about liberalism earlier, natural) sexuality, Foucault's conceptualization of biopower never precluded the possibility of subjects behaving abnormally – to the contrary, the ongoing process of normalization implies that there always have been so-called deviant subjects.

With the above example in mind, one can clearly see that the biopolitical management of the population Foucault described in 1976 is one of these ways in which technologies of security regulate the population as a natural given. Phenomena such as the interest in sexuality, the establishment of normal birth-mortality rates, and the rise of demographics are all means to uncover the natural principles underlying the population, and practices such as urban planning and hygiene campaigns are ways to regulate the population in order to optimize its prosperity within the parameters of the natural. This explains why Foucault started his first lecture by saying that in the lectures he wants to study biopower (1), but immediately abandons the term afterwards: the concept of security replaces or subsumes the idea of biopower. Obviously, the concepts of biopower and security do not overlap completely – the technologies of security Foucault describes include biopolitical techniques, but not all technologies of security have 'the function of modifying something in the biological destiny of the species' (10). Security is thus a concept that includes what Foucault had defined as biopower, but that also refers to a broader set of techniques to regulate the population.

Seen in this light, the break Dean claims to have identified certainly does not seem as fundamental as he makes it out to be. In fact, there appears to be a continuity between Foucault's conceptualizations of biopower, security and governmentality that only got broken up when the lecture on governmentality was divorced from the series and presented in isolation. In our reading of Scott and Duncan we will see how the respective severing or re-establishing of this link yields highly divergent results.

Before moving on, however, there are at least two other continuities between Foucault's work on governmentality and his earlier work that should not be overlooked. Looking back at the contextualizations of *The Archeology of Knowledge*, *Discipline and Punish*, *The History of Sexuality*, and *Society Must Be Defended* in the preceding chapters, two elements consistently appeared: Foucault's anti-subjectivist stance and his dissatisfaction with Marxism. One could argue that this new-found interest in the question of conduct implicitly rejects this anti-subjectivism, and that his concern with the state abandons his bottom-up approach to power and moves towards a Marxism, 'which was obsessed with state power, both with fighting the state as presently constituted and with seizing state power' (Kelly 2009: 61). One would be wrong on both counts. Although 'the concentration on government re-introduces the subject by implying some focus on the one who governs' (Kelly 2009: 62), the earlier explanation of power as intentional but non-subjective still applies here: the schemes and tactics devised to govern should not be confused with the overall outcome of these tactics. As far as the second issue is concerned, Foucault's turn toward the state is not a concession to Marxism that the state deserves the central role it has been ascribed, but rather an attempt to show that what is going on at the level of the state cannot be reduced to an 'expression of the all-important domination by class' (Kelly 2009: 62). What Marxism missed was a critique of projects and practices of government, which is exactly what the following sections will explore in more detail.

Whereas the discussion above has focused on Foucault's own work as context, there is of course also a world outside of his writings.[41] It has now become somewhat commonplace to identify

[41] Accompanying the Picador English edition of the lectures is a text from Michel Senellart, which focuses on their wider context. Senellart primarily discusses the comments Foucault made on political issues around the time he delivered the lectures, including Soviet dissidents, the Iranian revolution, and the case of Klaus Croissant, a lawyer for the RAF. However, apart from the fact that these issues seem to have concerned Foucault, Senellart does not offer much in the way of a substantial connection between Foucault's feelings about these events and the contents of the lectures. (369-401)

> a shift in political-cum-intellectual climate in France over this time with the tail-off of post-1968 radicalism, and a concomitant shift in Foucault's own interest, from looking at the nefarious social power effects in the prison system and the constitution of modern sexuality, to less insidious interpersonal and governmental relations, first in the development of modern governmental techniques, and then in ancient ethical practices (Kelly 2009: 59).

Although Foucault's rhetoric when talking about government no longer betrays the urgency with which he spoke about disciplinary and biopolitical relations of power, it is my contention that there is no fundamental difference in his conceptualization of power. For Foucault, it was always already the point that there is no difference between the power relation in the prison and the everyday interpersonal encounters in schools or hospitals. If anything, then, the move from a focus on privileged sites of power to a perspective on freedom as not the absence of power but its ultimate realization is more rather than less radical. It remains to be seen, however, how such a focus on freedom plays out in the analyses of colonial power.

6.1.2. Cotext: Sovereignty, Once More

Contrary to Dean's earlier claim, the continuities with Foucault's previous studies of power are also reflected in the conceptual architecture built around the notion of governmentality. As the chapters on discipline and biopower have demonstrated, Foucault developed these concepts through an opposition to the notion of sovereignty. In the case of governmentality, the mechanism is no different: the entire famous lecture of February 1st 1978 can be understood as the opposition between sovereignty and governmentality.[42]

However, Foucault's definition of **sovereignty** differs slightly from his previous conceptualizations. Given that Duncan will take up this opposition of sovereignty and government in his analysis of Ceylon, a brief glance at how Foucault constructs this opposition seems called for. In the lecture, Foucault does not approach the question of sovereignty head-on, but through Machiavelli's treatise *The Prince* and the responses leveled at it from the 16th century onwards. *The Prince*, in Foucault's reading, is a controversial embodiment of the medieval understanding of sovereignty. It presents a particular rationale of power that can be

[42] Foucault also briefly mentions disciplinary power (101), but the lecture does not spell out the difference between discipline and government.

characterized in terms of its object, its target, its goal and its instruments. The object of the type of rule Machiavelli propounds is a territory (93): the prince rules over a well-defined stretch of land. The target of rule, on the other hand, is formed by the people who happen to live on that land: the inhabitants. They are ruled solely in their capacity as subjects living on the prince's territory. The goal of rule is connected to the claim that makes *The Prince* so controversial: as Foucault paraphrases, for Machiavelli 'there is no fundamental, essential, natural and juridical connection between the prince and his principality' (90). Given that there is no such secure connection, the rule of the prince will always be threatened by either other sovereigns looking to seize the territory, or by inhabitants who refuse to accept his rule. Thus, the goal 'of the exercise of power is to reinforce, strengthen and protect the principality' (90), or, in other words, to protect the link between the prince, his territory and its inhabitants. Although Foucault does not elaborate on the tactics deployed to this end, he mentions the law (95) and the sword (96) as two crucial instruments to protect the principality and to produce obedient subjects. Importantly, such a notion of sovereignty is circular, as Foucault notes: 'the end of sovereignty is the exercise of sovereignty' (95). In other words, if the prince is only out to protect his principality, there is no other strategy or purpose other than a self-referential one.

This concept of sovereignty differs from the ones presented in *Discipline and Punish*, *The History of Sexuality*, and *Society Must Be Defended* in three subtle but significant ways, even though each of these three presents a change in emphasis rather than a fundamental conceptual change. First of all, we have seen that the concept of sovereignty used to function as a foil to specify a type of power that cannot be understood in a juridico-discursive, negative conceptualization of power. Throughout *The History of Sexuality*, *Society Must Be Defended*, and *Security, Territory, Population*, however, it becomes increasingly clear that sovereignty for Foucault no longer refers to a misunderstanding of power, but to a specific set of power relations with a rationale of their own.

A second shift in emphasis is related to the first: sovereignty is no longer a relic from the past, unable to capture the dynamics of modern power, but an actual element often recuperated in modern strategies of power. This shift, which had already become apparent in Foucault's 1976 discussion of the Third Reich as a concatenation of biopower and sovereignty, is emphasized more consistently in the governmentality lecture: the sovereign society is not simply replaced by a disciplinary society, which is in turn replaced by a society of government (102). Rather, these

different modalities of power can interlink, cooperate, or, as Duncan will show, even obstruct each other.

A third and final shift in emphasis relates to the role of violence in Foucault's account of sovereignty. If sovereignty now appears as a form of power with a rationale of its own, if only a circular one, the contrast between a negative and a productive power disappears. This more consistent development of the idea of a productive power is accompanied by a change in rhetoric: sovereignty is no longer solely described in terms of the right to take life or let live, thus making the gory description of sovereign torture and execution less prominent. This is not to say that Foucault simply erases violence: he still mentions the sword as an important instrument of sovereign power. Rather, I would argue that it is the shift from sovereignty as a foil to sovereignty as an actual rationale of power that forces Foucault to broaden the characterization of sovereignty as the right of death. In its exploration of the concept of governmentality, the next section will come back to the place of violence in Foucault's later work.

6.1.3. Concept: Governmentality and its Problems

Having related the concept of governmentality to both its wider context and the antagonistic concept of sovereignty, it is high time to take a closer look at the definition Foucault provides. In characteristic fashion, Foucault does not limit himself to one meaning, but provides three different meanings for 'governmentality':

> 1. The ensemble formed by the institutions, procedures, analyses and reflections, the calculations and tactics that allow the exercise of this very specific albeit complex form of power, which has as its target population, as its principal form of knowledge political economy, and as its essential technical means apparatuses of security.
> 2. The tendency which, over a long period and throughout the West, has steadily led towards the pre-eminence over all other forms (sovereignty, discipline, etc.) of this type of power which may be termed government, resulting, on the one hand, in the formation of a whole series of specific governmental apparatuses, and, on the other, in the development of a whole complex of *savoirs*.
> 3. The process, or rather the result of the process, through which the state of justice of the Middle Ages, transformed into the administrative state during the fifteenth and sixteenth centuries, gradually becomes 'governmentalized'. (102-103)

As Saar points out, 'it is hard to see how something can meaningfully be said to be an "ensemble" of something, a temporal "tendency" and the "result of a process" at the same time' (2011: 39). Yet, contra Foucault's assertion that with the term governmentality he means 'three things' (102), I would argue that this threefold quasi-definition implies only one specific signified, coupled with a number of additional statements about this signified. The first meaning Foucault identifies is the actual definition of a particular power formation, concealed in the second is the statement that this particular power formation has become the dominant power formation, and the third points out that the predominance of this power formation has had a clear impact on the conceptualization of the state.

Importantly, Foucault only speaks of governmentality as a 'very specific' form of power (102). This runs counter to Dean's general definition of governmentality as 'how we think about governing, with the different rationalities or, as it has been sometimes phrased, 'mentalities of government' (Miller and Rose, 1990; Rose and Miller 1992)' (24). The specific modality of power Foucault is after can be contrasted to sovereignty based on the parameters utilized earlier in this study: object, target, goals, and instruments. First of all, whereas sovereignty had a territory as its object and its inhabitants as the targets of rule, governmentality dissolves the distinction between territory and inhabitants with the notion of a population. Indeed, a population does not thrive or perish independent of its surroundings: it is the relation between human beings and their milieu that stands at the centre of government (100).

Second, unlike with sovereignty, government has a purpose that is extrinsic to the existence of government itself. Its ultimate end is not to protect or reinforce governmentality, 'but the welfare of the population, the improvement of its condition, the increase of its wealth, longevity, health, etc.' (100). Although such a claim makes governmentality appear identical to what Foucault had called biopower, the fact that he mentions not only health but also wealth indicates that what we have here is a formation of power that, besides biology, also incorporates a notion of economy.

This takes us to the final point of comparison: whereas sovereignty had the sword and the law as its primary instrument, governmentality relies on a form of knowledge that would come to be known as political economy:

> The new science called political economy arises out of the perception of new networks of continuous and multiple relations between population, territory, and wealth; and this is accompanied by the formation of a type of intervention characteristic of government, namely intervention in the field of economy and population. (101)

The term 'economy,' which in the sixteenth century used to refer to the government of the family (92), returns in the eighteenth century as a designation for the knowledge of the population and its management. Unlike sovereignty, this idea of government as management does not use the law to enforce obedience, but uses what we have called the whole apparatus of security to arrange things in such a way that the level of reality one calls economy can realize its full potential.

Having located the definitional meaning of governmentality and its relation to sovereignty, the time has come to outline the particularities of the concept of governmentality as a tool for analysis. Foucault leaves little doubt as to what he considers the central advantage: the concept offers a perspective on the state and its 'governmentalisation' (103). The state does not have the unity it has been endowed with, and appears instead as an ensemble of projects and practices that can neither be separated from the knowledge and management of the population, nor from the general apparatus of security.

Indeed, practices of government cannot be located solely in the state as institution, but pervade the entire social fabric. Practices of rule are not the privilege of the prince, but are rather 'multifarious and concern many kinds of people: the head of a family, the superior of a convent, the teacher or tutor of a child or pupil' (91). Moreover, even the relation to the self can be understood as a relation of government, when individuals attempt to conform to proper standards of behaviour. Thus, Foucault traces a continuity between the management of the population and the management of the self, which explains his later definition in "The Subject and Power" of governmentality as the conduct of conduct: 'to govern, in this sense, is to structure the possible field of action of others' (221). It is this line of thought that will eventually lead to Foucault's interest in ethics, understood as the relation to the self. In the lecture we are concerned with here, however, the emphasis lies on the state rather than the possibilities for the self. Still, the notion of power as the ability to structure the field of action of others will take on extra significance in colonial government.

A second feature of this perspective that will turn out to be absolutely crucial in reading Scott and Duncan relates again to the projects and practices of government. As Gordon puts it concisely, for Foucault 'government is not just a power needing to be tamed or an authority needing to be legitimized. It is an activity and an art which concerns all and which touches each' (Burchell & Gordon 1991: x). And: 'Governmentality is about how to govern. Foucault continues here his predilection for 'how' questions, for the immanent conditions and constraints of practices' (7). Needless to say, these how-questions imply a perspective that is completely different from the critique of ideologies and discourses that seek to legitimize the power of the state. Rather than its legitimization, it is the activities, technologies, and tactics of government that enter into focus.

Promising though this governmentality perspective may be, it is not entirely without its problems. Although it renders visible the arsenal of tactics and techniques that constitute the art of government, it casts new shadows over other phenomena. In *Foucault, Governmentality, and Critique* (2011), Thomas Lemke devotes an entire section to the problems, limitations, and blindspots that plague studies of governmentality. The focus of his survey lies primarily on the issues arising in the work of those scholars that have picked up on Foucault's work, rather than on Foucault's work per se. The remainder of this section will therefore attempt to determine to what extent the issues Lemke detects can be traced back to Foucault's 1978 lectures, before we move on to an analysis of how Scott and Duncan ignore, negotiate, or remedy these blindspots.

The first of the problems Lemke discusses relates to the relationship between sovereignty, discipline, and governmentality. As the cotextual section has pointed out, Foucault insisted in his lecture of February 1st, 1978, that the power formation he calls governmentality does not replace the older formations of sovereignty and discipline. Still, Lemke identifies among many authors 'a line of interpretation' arguing that 'discipline and sovereignty will sooner or later be replaced by governmental technologies' (89). Foucault cannot be excused here: in spite of his warning mentioned earlier, he still concludes the lecture with reference to 'a governmental state' that follows the sovereign and disciplinary state (104). But there is a second reason for the existence of this tendency: if governmentality is a form of power that operates through freedom, it presents an extremely efficient mode of power that does not have to control resistance, but rather succeeds in eliminating the need for resistance altogether. If relations of power develop along the way of least resistance, governmentality is sure to outrun its more heavy-handed

competitors such as sovereignty and discipline. As Lemke rightly points out, however, the question of what counts as efficiency is the outcome of a power struggle rather than its structuring principle (89): the question of what counts as efficiency is itself socially determined. Thus, an even more careful and local, historical conceptualization of the multiple possible relations between different rationalities of power is absolutely crucial.

A second, related issue concerns the role of violence in studies of governmentality. With the notion of government as a power of freedom that renders the violence of the sovereign superfluous, governmentality studies, according to Lemke 'ignore or underestimate the role of violent and "irrational" forms of politics' (89-90). In his reading, what makes this issue all the more pressing is that it overlooks the ways in which violence is not such a relic from the sovereign past, but an immediate and automatic counterpart to the freedom governmentality distributes. Based on Mariana Valverde's 1996 argument that 'the constitution of the liberal subject (…) makes it possible to govern "backward" or "primitive" races, classes, or sexes in order to bring them up to the level of autonomous liberal subjects,' Lemke concludes that liberty and domination are 'two sides of the same coin in liberal governmentality' (90). Thus, much like the idea discussed in the previous chapter of the violence inherent to biopower, the violent side of governmentality should not be overlooked either. Here too one faces the problem of explaining why certain regimes are more violent than others if domination and freedom are inextricably connected. As Duncan's analysis of colonial governmentality will show, there are other ways in which the critique of violence can be brought back into the conceptual architecture of governmentality without creating this problem.

Third, studies of governmentality do not always take into account the disturbances and ruptures of government. Lemke observes that 'some authors tended to treat programs as closed and coherent entities, as achievements and accomplishments rather than as projects and endeavours' (91). Perhaps this tendency can be attributed to a misunderstanding of Foucault's claims at the end of the lecture of February 1st about the rise of the state of government: although the coming into being of the state of government could be interpreted as the realization of the program of governmentality, it can more productively be understood as the intentional but non-subjective outcome of a multitude of coalescing projects and reflections. This also explains why a 'focus on failure is not sufficient' (Lemke 92): although useful as a corrective to the notion of governmentality as a fully realized program, such a focus fails to appreciate the extent to which failure is already a part of the dynamic of governmentality. Indeed, the crux of

the matter is not that programs can fail to be realized, but that governmental processes of calculation and management develop in certain directions on the basis of what is perceived to be effective and what is not.

Still, the tendency to ignore the ruptures and disturbances of government cannot be attributed to a mere misreading of Foucault alone. In the lecture that has become so famous, there is little mention of the gaps and incoherencies of power – a problem that, as we have seen, already plagued *Discipline and Punish* and *The History of Sexuality*. Ironically though, Foucault has never devoted as much attention to resistance as in the *Security, Territory, Population* lectures. The entire lecture of March 1st, 1978 focuses on what Foucault has called 'counter-conduct' (201). Having located pastoral power as one of the main constituents of governmentality, Foucault notes that both pastoral power and governmentality have developed a number of procedures and techniques to conduct the conduct of individuals. He then continues to analyze resistance, no longer as a theoretical axiom as in 'where there is power, there is resistance,' but as an equally specific set of procedures and techniques leading to movements that seek 'to escape direction by others and to define the way for each to conduct himself' (195). It is beyond the scope of this chapter to explore the forms of counter-conduct Foucault identifies (asceticism, communities, mysticism, the problem of the Scripture, and eschatological beliefs). For now, what matters is that the tendency of studies of governmentality to overlook forms of resistance can be attributed to the isolated, decontextualized publication of only one lecture.

A fourth problem relates to an issue our discussion of Mbembe has already insisted upon. As we have seen, the value of Mbembe's essay resides to a large extent in its analysis of technologies of destruction. Although a similar emphasis on technologies would be possible in studies of governmentality, many authors 'concentrate their investigation on the activity of humans while technological devices are regarded as inert and passive' (Lemke 95). Similarly, studies of governmentality tend to focus on human rather than non-human actors. Such an emphasis cannot be attributed to Foucault, however: the management of the population he focused on should not be confused with the management of human beings, given that the notion of a population already implies the link between individuals and their milieu. Thus, governmentality for Foucault was a way of managing a set of relations between human and non-human actors.

Before we link these issues back to Scott and Duncan, there is one final problem Lemke mentions: 'studies of governmentality were often informed by a "Eurocentrism" […] that ignored

non-Western as well as non-liberal contexts' (Lemke 97). Much like the histories of discipline and biopower, the history of governmentality understood as a specific and historical rationale of power is a self-contained history of the West. However, throughout the reading of Scott and Duncan, the task at hand will no longer be to demonstrate that the colonies have functioned as laboratories of modernity, but that it makes sense in the first place to speak of governmentality as the power of freedom and conduct in relation to colonial domination.

6.2. David Scott's "Colonial Governmentality": The Art of Colonial Government

6.2.1. Context: Redefining the Problem of Colonialism

David Scott's 1995 essay "Colonial Governmentality" has a very simple thesis: studies of colonial power would benefit from Foucault's concept of governmentality in historicizing strategies of colonial rule. Scott develops this argument in three steps: first, he demonstrates how critiques of colonialism have focused exclusively on the question of difference, at the expense of a broader understanding of colonial power. Second, he proposes the concept of governmentality as a remedy. A final section seeks to demonstrate the advantages of this approach through an analysis of modern colonial power in Sri Lanka.

Conspicuously absent in this argument is the overt attempt to go beyond Foucault: although Scott clearly deploys the concept of governmentality in an area Foucault did not consider, unlike in the work of Said, Mitchell, Kaplan, Stoler and Mbembe, there is no explicit contestation of Foucault's conceptual or historical framework to be found in his essay. The idea of the colonies as the laboratories of modernity, developed in amongst others Mitchell and Stoler, as a critique of Foucault's self-contained histories of Europe, is not even hinted at in "Colonial Governmentality." Neither does it raise the question as to whether the notion of power as management of the population, presupposing what Foucault calls freedom, makes analytical sense in a colonial context. By working through the list of problems Lemke identified in Foucault's work and its reception, the following sections will sketch the consequences of Scott's rather uncritical acceptance of Foucault's framework.

As forgiving as Scott may be of Foucault's potential shortcomings, his criticism of the ensemble of texts and arguments commonly gathered under the rubric of postcolonial studies is fundamental. This is not to say that Scott distances himself from the academic critique of colonialism, but – to the contrary – that he deems the ways in which this critique has been

conducted to be insufficient. Scott illustrates his dissatisfaction primarily through Partha Chatterjee's essay "The Colonial State," published in *The Nation and its Fragments* (1993). Chatterjee begins his analysis of the colonial state with the following question: 'Does it serve any useful analytical purpose to make a distinction between the colonial state and the forms of the modern state?' (14). The answer Chatterjee offers is an unambiguous yes: if we understand colonial power as merely another version of modern power, colonial power would be of 'only incidental, or at best episodic, interest; it would not be a necessary part of the larger, and more important, historical narrative of modernity' (14). Thus, the problem Chatterjee sets out with is marking the specificity of colonial power as a strategy of rule distinct from modern power. For Chatterjee, what sets colonial power apart from modern power is the importance of what he calls the 'rule of colonial difference' (16): the implicit colonial principle that not all subjects of the state are entitled to the same rights and status. Underlying this principle of difference is the category of race.

The example Chatterjee provides of the rule of difference is worth going into, given that both Scott and Duncan will provide alternative interpretations of this or similar cases. Here is Chatterjee's description of the so-called Ilbert Bill Affair:

> In 1882 Behari Lal Gupta, an Indian member of the civil service, pointed out the anomaly that under the existing regulations, Indian judicial officers did not have the same right as their British counterparts to try cases in which Europeans were involved. Gupta's note was forwarded to the Government of India with a comment from the Bengal government that there was "no sufficient reason why Covenanted Native Civilians, with the position and training of District Magistrate or Sessions Judge, should not exercise the same jurisdiction over Europeans as is exercised by other members of the service." (…) [A]fter more or less routine consultations, Ilbert, the law member, introduced in 1883 a bill to straighten out the regulations. (20)

Thus, a government intervention attempted to suspend the rule of difference and install a liberal state with free and equal subjects, regardless of race. However, a storm of protest from European planters and traders against the loss of their special privileges forced the government to reconsider: the bill was altered to such an extent that the rule of difference became even more manifest than before the introduction of the bill.

For Chatterjee, the conclusion is that this failure signals 'the inherent impossibility of completing the project of the modern state without superseding the conditions of colonial rule' (21). He thus not only establishes an opposition between colonial and modern power, but also points to the insignificance of modern liberal rule in the colony: the attempts to install a society of free and equal subjects were flimsy and unsuccessful in comparison to the dominance of the rule of difference. The implicit consequence is that critiques of colonialism should focus on the rule of difference rather than the insignificant attempts to install modern power.

Scott's essay contains three main objections to this argument. First, while Chatterjee is right to claim that the specificity of colonial rule should not be overlooked, there is no reason why one should accomplish this through offsetting up modernity and colonialism as a binary opposition. Not only does such an opposition render colonialism as 'a singular reiterated instance' disconnected from the logic of modernity, begging the question of whether the whole enterprise was entirely contingent, it also homogenizes colonial power as an unaltered and uncontested rule of difference. Finally, it makes a sustained historicization of Europe's power impossible, given that rationalities of power can only be understood as the result of the interaction of Europe with its colonies. Through the concept of governmentality, Scott aims to avoid these problems and to historicize colonial power in relation to multiple rationalities of rule as opposed to exclusively focusing on the rule of difference.

In order to understand the place of Scott's essay in the intertextual web we have been analyzing throughout the previous chapters, it is crucial to note how Scott's engagement with Chatterjee is indicative of his much broader dissatisfaction with critiques of colonialism. The exclusive focus on the rule of difference Scott laments is not restricted to Chatterjee alone, but rather informs two major strands of colonial critique. The first one Scott identifies is the body of work that, in the wake of Said's *Orientalism*, has analyzed how colonial discourse, through the creation and representation of difference, denies voice and agency to the colonized. A second strand has emphasized the creation of difference in the institutional realm, undermining the myth that colonialism installed a society of law and order with free and equal subjects. Thus, for Scott, the bulk of what we now know as postcolonial studies is concerned with exposing the constructedness of colonial difference and the falsity of its civilizing myth.

Looking back at the primary texts discussed in the previous chapters, the full extent of Scott's critique becomes apparent: whether it is Said, Bhabha, Stoler or Mbembe one calls up, all

of the texts analyzed partially or completely belong to the two strands Scott identifies. The critique of discourses and practices of othering that informs a wide array of texts from Said to Stoler is a manifestation of the notion of a rule of difference and corresponds to the first strand; the second strand and its focus on exclusion from the legal state correspond to Mbembe's emphasis on the state of exception.[43] Consequently, Scott's criticism is not only a criticism of a single text from Chatterjee, but of a major trend within the postcolonial studies under analysis here: it implicitly applies to Said's *Orientalism* and Bhabha's "The Other Question" (both Chapter 3) and to Stoler's *Race and the Education of Desire* and Mbembe's "Necropolitics" (both Chapter 5).

The one exception is perhaps Timothy Mitchell's *Colonising Egypt*, where the idea of a rule of difference does not dominate the argument. As chapter 5 has indicated, Mitchell is not at all concerned with staking out the singularity of colonial power: to the contrary, what *Colonising Egypt* discusses is exactly colonial power as modern power. The idea that colonial power is linked with modern power is something Scott and Mitchell clearly share, leading both scholars away from the common focus on the rule of difference.[44] However, whereas Mitchell presented an understanding of modernity as a single principle, Scott aims to flesh out the multiple rationalities that constitute modern and colonial power.

This idea of multiple rationalities can once again be explained through the example of the Ilbert case: if there was a documented government effort to introduce a liberal and egalitarian regime, can these efforts be dismissed as a colonial myth? Or would it make more sense analytically to give up the idea of colonialism as a single rationale of power? Did planters, traders, and government agents perhaps possess competing interests? It is these and other questions Scott would like to approach with the perspective of governmentality.

6.2.2. Cotext: Exit Sovereignty?

In order to break up Chatterjee's monolithic conceptualization of colonial power, Scott draws on Foucauldian concepts to differentiate multiple rationalities of power. Like Foucault, he

[43] Needless to say, Scott's essay does not actually refer to Mbembe, since the latter's essay had not been published at the time Scott was writing. Still, it shows how Mbembe's notion of animal life as the exclusion from the realm of the political is indebted to a tradition of critiques of colonialism as a rule of difference.
[44] This affinity is marked by an affirmative reference in "Colonial Governmentality" to Mitchell's *Colonising Egypt*. (216, n12).

distinguishes between sovereignty, discipline and governmentality. In a first section of the essay, Scott rehearses Foucault's schematic outline of the relations between these concepts (202-203). Much more revealing than his summary, however, is the brief exploration of sovereignty and discipline in a colonial context. In a short overview of the history of colonial Sri Lanka, Scott sets off the rationale of governmentality against the older sovereign strategy of rule. Thus, much like in Foucault's lecture of February 1st, the concept of discipline recedes into the background and the entire conceptual architecture becomes organized around the opposition between sovereignty and governmentality.

Colonial sovereignty, for Scott, is a rationale of power which has as its principle object "the extraction of tribute for the security and aggrandizement of the State and Crown" (207). One recognizes here the circularity of sovereignty discussed earlier: the sole objective of power is to fortify power. The points of application of this sovereign power coincide with the territory that holds resources, and the people who can extract them. As Scott points out, 'on this strategy of rule, the "lives" of the colonized population – their "local habits," their "ancient tenures," their "distinctions" and "religious observations" – were not a significant variable in the colonial calculus (at least so long as they did not interfere with the immediate business of extraction)' (207). Or, to put it succinctly, what is absent and irrelevant in this manifestation of colonial power is the knowledge and management of the population.

In Scott's account, this rationale is displaced by governmentality rather than complemented by it. What Scott's analysis of multiple rationalities boils down to is the simple 'displacement of one kind of political rationale – that of mercantilism or sovereignty – by another – that of governmentality' (207). In this story of chronological displacement, the Colebrooke-Cameron reforms, a set of economic and juridical measures taken by the British government of Ceylon in 1833, mark the break for Scott between sovereignty and governmentality. These reforms, which initiated the 'unification of the administration of the island, the establishment of Executive and Legislative Councils, judicial reform, and the development of capitalist agriculture, modern means of communication, education, and the press' (206), also signal the break between pre-modern and modern Ceylon in most accounts of the history of Sri Lanka.[45] But whereas these

[45] The example Scott gives of this tendency is that of C. C. Mendis, 'the first modern professional (and liberal-nationalist) Sri Lankan historian' (206).

accounts heralded the reforms as an 'advancement,'[46] Scott reads the break in terms of a shift in the rationale of power.

Summing up, then, the conceptual architecture of "Colonial Governmentality" consists in the opposition between sovereignty and governmentality and the parallel opposition between the pre-modern and the modern. These two pairs can be superimposed: sovereignty is the pre-modern rationale, governmentality is the modern strategy of rule. The link between these two pairs can be found in Scott's definition of modern power, borrowed from Talal Asad: 'modern power is distinctive not so much for its relation to capitalism, as varieties of modernization theory have it,' but for having the conditions in which people live as its point of application (198-199). It does not command people into obedience, but structures the space in which they can make decisions – a similar process to that which Foucault described as the conduct of conduct. In this sense, Scott presents modernity and governmentality as closely connected and it becomes a necessity to situate colonial power in relation to modernity: pre-modern and modern rationalities of power lead to pre-modern and modern configurations of colonial power.

Still, it remains to be seen to what extent Scott manages to avoid the homogenization he accuses Chatterjee of. As we have discussed in relation to Timothy Mitchell's *Colonising Egypt*, simply opposing the pre-modern to the modern in turn has a homogenizing effect. Although Scott seems aware of this problem and attempts to avoid it by speaking of 'modernities' to stress the many shapes modernity can assume (198), the understanding of modernity as governmentality still reduces these shapes to one common rationale, viz. the conduct of conduct. All in all, it seems that Scott's efforts to stress the multiple rationales of power yield a rather one-dimensional image of modern colonial power.

Although Scott's distinction between pre-modern and modern power is a potentially useful one, it is my contention that homogenizations of colonial power cannot be avoided unless one makes provision for rationales of power that co-exist or struggle rather than simply replace one another. This relates to the first of the problems Lemke identified in governmentality studies: Scott too falls into the trap of assuming a straight succession of rationales of power, rather than a space of competition or symbiosis. The second, related problem is also present: the presupposition that governmentality displaces sovereignty leaves little room in his account for an

[46] Scott quotes Mendis, who has argued that 'the reforms recommended by Colebrooke and Cameron have contributed greatly to the advancement of Ceylon' (206).

exploration of how the rule aimed at the extraction of wealth never entirely gave way to the conduct of conduct. How can we think these rationalities in tandem? It is a question to which the discussion of Duncan's work will return.

6.2.3. Concept: Governmentality as Modern Colonial Power

Having situated the concept of governmentality in relation to sovereignty and modernity, the time has come to take a closer look at the meanings, functions, and effects of Scott's notion of governmentality itself. As the above section has pointed out, the conceptual architecture of "Colonial Governmentality" is very similar to the one constructed in Foucault's lecture. It therefore should come as no surprise that Scott's definition of governmentality does not differ substantially from Foucault's: 'governmentality' for Scott refers to the 'government of conduct' (200). Unlike with Dean, then, Scott does not use the term to refer to the various ways of 'how we think about power' or different 'mentalities of government,' but to the same specific rationale of power Foucault discussed in the lecture. What characterizes this rationale is that it does not attempt to enforce obedience, but rather tries to structure the field of possible actions of others. In this sense, Scott too abandons the familiar anti-thesis of power and freedom. In a simple opposition of freedom and power, he argues,

> what gets elided is the emergence of a new – that is, *modern* – political rationality in which power works not *in spite of* but *through* the construction of space of free social exchange and *through* the construction of a subjectivity normatively experienced as the source of free will and rational, autonomous agency. It is this idea of a form of power, not merely traversing the domain of the social, but constructing the normative (i.e., enabling/constraining) regularities that positively constitute civil society, that Michel Foucault tries to conceptualize in his work on "governmentality." (201, emphasis in original)

The question we have been hinting at is of course whether colonial power really operated through the construction of such an autonomous subject, or whether it kept natives in a state of absolute objecthood. After all, as Chapter 4 has shown, part of the appeal of *Discipline and Punish* to postcolonial studies was its description of a rationality of power that worked on the body as an object: arranging bodies so as to discipline them into obedience may therefore sound

more like a description of colonial power than the construction of autonomous subjects does. Moreover, the entire point of Mbembe's concept of necropolitics has been to criticize the status of the colonized as animal life, an intermediate stage between objecthood and subjecthood excepted from a political and legal society made up of free and equal subjects. How, then, can Scott draw on this conceptualization of governmentality in an analysis of colonial power?

His analysis of colonial Ceylon does not deny the existence of rationalities of power working on colonial subjects as objects, but rather seeks to demonstrate that the Colebrooke-Cameron reforms mark not only the break between pre-modern and modern power, but also between a power that needed disciplined and obedient subjects (or, rather, objects) and a government that created the notion of autonomous subjects. Needless to say, colonial governmentality never stopped to display a manifest will to power – what changed with the Colebrooke-Cameron reforms is the strategy of power: rather than coerce natives into obedience, this new rationality of power attempted to create the conditions in which 'following only their own self-interest, natives would do what they ought' (214). In this sense colonial power is not the conduct of bodies, but the conduct of conduct.

Through an analysis of Ceylon's government, economy, and legal system after the Colebrooke-Cameron reforms, Scott demonstrates convincingly that the governmental production of liberal subjects was not an exclusively European process. First, in the realm of government, Scott notes the importance of the press in Colebrooke's plan: a free press would contribute to the public circulation of reason and therefore enhance participation of the public in politics (210). Second, in the economic realm, the sovereign system based solely on the extraction of wealth had established a government monopoly on certain goods and employed natives in a system of compulsory service. Colebrooke argued that such a system prevented the growth of the economy and obstructed the natives from looking after their own needs. The alternative he proposed was free exchange between free subjects (210). Third, he advocated a legal system where natives could judge and be judged (211). The point here is neither that justice was served in the colony (as the civilizing myth would have it) nor that it was not (as Chatterjee rightly points out in his interpretation of the Ilbert case): like the free press and free trade, the installation of a legal system is a strategy of power working towards a society of free and reasonable subjects, who, by following their own interests, further the interest of the colony.

In this way, Scott undermines the story of colonial progress, not through a dismissal of efforts to create a liberal society, but by acknowledging how these efforts are the strategy of

power rather than a march towards freedom. The concept of governmentality should therefore not be misunderstood as positing the existence of the autonomous subject, and the free exchange and legal system that accompany it – such a position in a colonial context would be quite absurd. Rather, the concept can be used to look into the efforts to create these notions and the strategies of power they work towards.

Such a reading of colonial power, compressed as it may be, has a number of crucial implications for postcolonial studies in general, and the texts discussed in previous chapters in particular. Besides Scott's dissatisfaction with a homogenizing study of colonial power as the rule of difference, there are at least three other implications of "colonial governmentality" he fails to spell out consistently. Each of these three can be linked back to one or more postcolonial appropriations of Foucault, illustrating once more what a huge mistake it would be to assume a continuity between Said, Bhabha, Mitchell, Kaplan, Stoler, and Mbembe, simply because they all draw to varying extents on Foucault. It is my contention that a reading of "Colonial Governmentality" as a critique of these appropriations is the more productive exercise.

First of all, Scott's essay clearly shows that colonial power cannot be reduced to the interplay between authority and identity. Although the basic Saidian scheme of constructed identities that lend the colonizer his authority is no doubt a valuable tool, it should not be confused with a systematic analysis of power as a set of discourses and practices with a specific rationale and strategy. Not only does the exclusive focus on identity and authority ignore the various tactics of governing a population, it also ignores the ways in which modern colonial power attempted to structure the possible field of actions of colonial subjects. In short, whereas postcolonial studies has devoted a great deal of attention to the stories and identitarian politics that created colonial authority and legitimacy, the various tactics and strategies of rule have been reduced to a homogeneous rule of difference. Even Stoler's work, which draws on Foucault's concept of biopower, hardly looks into the actual management of the population, but uses this notion to study the biopolitical component of colonial authority. By contrast, Scott's deployment of governmentality turns our attention towards the art of government, the reflections, discourses and practices of governing the relations between men and things. Gordon's earlier claim that 'government is not just (…) an authority needing to be legitimized,' but rather 'an activity and an art which concerns all and touches each' (x) attains its full significance here: colonial government and colonial authority cannot be reduced to one another.

Second, this distinction between government and authority considerably complicates the task of postcolonial critique: it no longer suffices to expose the lies on which authority has been built, one must also reveal the tactics and strategies of government. In the legal realm, a focus on governmental projects such as the Colebrooke-Cameron reforms reveals that it is insufficient to dismiss attempts to set up a legal system accessible to all subjects as a colonial myth, or to read these efforts as the legitimization of colonialism. Rather, what is at stake is a mode of subject-constitution that is not the simple outcome of a Self-Other dichotomy, but of a strategy of power Foucault described as the conduct of conduct. Given that such a conceptualization of power does away with the old opposition between domination and freedom, the task is no longer to fight domination, but to understand the ways in which even the notion of freedom can be structured along governmental lines.

Third, with the concept of governmentality, it becomes essential to historicize rationalities of power. This does not only involve steering clear of homogenizations of colonial rule across continents and through centuries, but also taking into account governmental strategies as they manifested in Europe, not because they constitute the original that has subsequently been copied, but because various modes of power create various modes of affecting the lives of the colonized (198). Consider, for instance, the case of Mbembe's "Necropolitics": to what extent does it make sense to presuppose what Foucault describes as biopower in Europe, and then to propose a notion of necropolitics that is somehow an inversion or the negative of this form of power? In part, this is the problem already hinted at in the previous chapter – of an implausible geographical boundary between different rationalities of power. But, having read Scott's "Colonial Governmentality," it also becomes harder to conceive of a rationale of power aimed solely at death and destruction. Provisional though Scott's analysis may be, it clearly demonstrates that colonial governmentality in Ceylon cannot be grasped exclusively in terms of necropolitics.

This is where the notion of a 'project' comes in:

> In any historical instance, what does colonial power seek to organize and reorganize? In other words, what does colonial power take as the *target* upon which to work? Moreover, for what *project* does it require that target-object? And how does it go about securing it in order to realize its ends? In short, what in each instance is colonial power's *structure* and *project* as it inserts itself into – or more properly, as it *constitutes* – the domain of the colonial? (Scott 197, emphasis in original)

Although Scott's notion of colonial power manifesting in specific projects may overstate the coherence of power, the notion of a project can be of use in highlighting the fact that the activity of government takes place in relation to expectations, calculations, imaginations, and reflections. Studying the Colebrooke-Cameron reforms as a project reveals a set of tactics that cannot be reduced to either a legitimizing story or a rule of difference and destruction.

Importantly, the claim that colonial power cannot be reduced to pure violence is not concerned with a moral evaluation of colonialism: the fact that colonial power at least partially operated through attempts to construct a legal system and an economy of free exchange does not make it more or less reprehensible – it becomes simply another mode of Europe inserting itself into the lives of the colonized. Scott's way of conducting critique then consists in demonstrating how modern colonial power does much more than simply install a rule of difference: it restructures the entire field of possible actions of all subjects.

Still, it is easy to see how certain elements of Scott's argument can be turned into an apology for colonial power: although this is quite obviously not what Scott attempts to do, his essay can be partially recuperated in the myth of colonialism as a civilizing mission because it fails to deliver on its promise to look into the heterogeneous nature of colonial power. This relates to the problem mentioned above of conceptualizing governmentality as a rationale of power that displaces all others, which in turn results in the problem of underestimating the issue of violence. As we have seen, this blind spot in Scott's framework can be attributed to his simple opposing of sovereignty and governmentality, in which the latter simply displaces the former. But there are at least two other factors, previously undiscussed, which exacerbate this problem.

First of all, while the concept of governmentality clearly has value in explaining the rationale behind the Colebrooke-Cameron reforms, it does not explain how a governmental rationale could co-exist with a rule of difference seeking to perpetuate strategies of exclusion. If governmentality really strives towards a liberal society with the illusion of free and equal subjects, how can racial difference still have the impact it does in the present day? Needless to say, racial difference did not all of a sudden disappear with the introduction of the reforms, which leads us to wonder how the category of race operated in the modern colonial power Scott describes. One might object that Scott's essay could not possibly have addressed such a vexed question within the confines of one essay, and this indeed seems to be the case. Still, it is my

contention that something much more fundamental is at stake here: Scott's conceptual architecture lacks the ability to explain how the field of possible actions of some subjects is different from that of others. In this respect, it does not differ from the work of Foucault: for reasons we can only try to guess, Foucault abandoned the concept of race as a split in the population somewhere between his lectures on biopower and the lectures on governmentality. The result in Scott's work is an account of colonialism that fails to spell out the tensions and interactions between race and governmentality.

A second effect of Scott's exclusive focus on the rationale he calls governmentality is that he conceives of colonial governmentality as a closed program. Lemke's earlier observation that studies of governmentality often overlook the ruptures and disturbances of government certainly applies to "Colonial Governmentality." Although Scott introduces a concept of resistance as a response to the structure of the field of possible actions (198), he does not elaborate on what such a resistance in Ceylon could have looked like. Moreover, he only mentions this resistance in relation to the native population, but if governmentality presented as substantial a change in the social fabric as Scott makes it out to have, there is no reason to assume that only the native population may have resisted governmental reason. Quite to the contrary, if we return to the Ilbert case once more, one observes that non-state white actors explicitly opposed the Ilbert bill and effectively managed to alter government policy. Clearly, the governmental attempts to conduct the conduct of the population in such a way that the interests of the subjects coincide with the interests of the state failed in this particular instance: the white subjects that protested against the Ilbert bill did not want to relinquish their privileges and therefore opposed the creation of a legal system.

Moreover, the analysis of resistance to governmentality should not be confined to resistance offered by human actors. This is the fourth problem Lemke had identified, in a colonial setting: governmentality as a form of modern power in the colonies can be seen as a rationale of power that must confront obstacles with which it is not familiar. One can think here in particular of the climate of the tropics, which caused great anxiety about degeneration, the unknown diseases that plagued colonial officials, and the vast geographical distances between settlements that complicated efforts to enforce the rule of law.

Summing up, Scott's "Colonial Governmentality" opens up a problem-space that is not only different from the questions of authority-as-identity posed by Said, Bhabha and Stoler, but also raises productive questions about exclusively focusing on colonialism as violence, as found in

Mbembe's "Necropolitics." However, in focusing on governmentality only, Scott reproduces exactly the mistake he accuses others of: his essay reduces colonial power to one single principle. Moreover, although "Colonial Governmentality" and its schematic analysis of colonial Ceylon can be read as an invitation to scholars to adopt the concept of governmentality in the analysis of colonial power, Scott himself seems to have abandoned this project in subsequent years. The essay itself was republished a number of times, but Scott's later work has thus far not gone any further with its own proposal. Is this where Duncan can step in?

6.3. Duncan and Governmentality: Negotiating Scott's issues

6.3.1. Context: Broadening the Picture

James Duncan's *In the Shadows of the Tropics* (2007) constitutes a central node in the intertextual web we have been discussing. Not only does it develop Scott's work to provide more substantial treatment of colonial governmentality, it also broadens the picture in the sense that it connects the concept of governmentality to many of the ideas and concepts discussed in the previous chapters. Indeed, in Duncan's work, many familiar elements return: Said and Stoler's focus on identity, Mitchell and Scott's emphasis on modernity, Stoler's concern with biopolitics, and Mbembe's invocation of the work of Agamben all contribute to Duncan's analysis of colonial power.

However, this is not to say that Duncan simply lumps all of these perspectives and concepts together. I want to argue, rather, that his primary strategy is one of differentiation, which plays out on at least two levels. First, Duncan's discussion of authority and power makes it clear that different scholars have been referring to different issues in discussions of colonial power. Second, even within these different conceptualizations of power, one still needs to differentiate strategies and rationales of power. The following sections aim to demonstrate how this process of differentiation is both one of distinguishing between scholars and concepts, and of bringing them together in a single conceptual architecture.

In the Shadows of the Tropics is a study of colonial power and authority in 19th century Ceylon, focused on the attempts of British colonists to set up 'modern forms of bureaucracy, governmentality and biopower' (1). Given that Ceylon in the 19th century developed into a plantation economy that depended almost entirely on the export of coffee, Duncan is particularly interested in the relations of power between government officials, planters of European descent,

the native population, and immigrant labourers coming from India to work on the plantations. He investigates the tactics Europeans used to discipline labourers, as well as the techniques labourers developed in response. Similarly, in the biopolitical realm, he analyzes how government officials installed systems of surveillance to keep disease in check, and the tactics natives employed to avoid this medical gaze. Furthermore, special attention is dedicated to the tense power relations between government officials and planters of European descent, whose private interests did not always coincide with those of the government. In short, the overall picture is one of tensions, struggle, and the inability of one group of actors to concentrate power. Add to this a host of diseases potentially fatal to human beings (e.g. cholera), and a fungus that would destroy entire coffee plantations, and it becomes apparent that colonial attempts to install a modern regime of power were by no means a guaranteed success.

Although such a focus on tensions and difficulties is clearly at odds with Scott's characterization of colonial governmentality as a closed project, there are a number of similarities between *In the Shadows of the Tropics* and "Colonial Governmentality" that should not be overlooked. Both Scott and Duncan draw on the opposition between sovereignty and governmentality Foucault established in the lecture of February 1st, and apply it to colonial power in Ceylon. After acknowledging Scott's work (29), Duncan follows him in identifying the aforementioned Colebrooke-Cameron reforms as the transition from sovereignty to governmentality. Although the next section will reveal a disparity in the way they understand this transition, it is safe to say that Duncan's determination to differentiate rationalities and projects of colonial power can be traced back to Scott and Foucault.

On the other hand, Duncan's treatment of Foucault differs from that of Scott in a quantitative sense. Whereas Scott drew almost exclusively on the lecture of February 1st, 1978, Duncan casts a wider net and includes references to Foucault's earlier work on discipline and biopower.[47] Although Bröckling, Krasmman & Lemke's general claim that 'the two central Foucaultian notions of government and of biopolitics have generated separate lines of reception' (2011: 23) may hold true in general, it certainly does not apply to *In the Shadows of the Tropics*. As the cotextual section will demonstrate, the concept of biopower holds a central place next to governmentality in Duncan's conceptual architecture, with important consequences for the picture of colonial power it presents: an emphasis on biopower as the power over life and death

[47] e.g. to "The Eye of Power" (1), "Prison Talk" (20), *The History of Sexuality, Vol. I*, (44, 67, 169), and *Discipline and Punish* (69).

allows Duncan to conceptualize the violent tendency in modern colonial power – an element conspicuously absent in Scott's account. It can therefore be argued that Duncan solves this problem by placing the governmentality lectures in the larger context of Foucault's work.

Still, such a claim is only partially correct: Duncan does not simply resort to Foucault's work on biopolitics, but also to appropriations of this work, such as Stoler's transformation of the concept of biopolitics, and Agamben's reconceptualization of the relation between biopolitics and sovereignty. References to Agamben (e.g. 68) and Stoler (e.g. 45) once again bear testimony to the density of this intertextual web: postcolonial appropriations of Foucault do not only consistently refer to specific texts by Foucault, but also to each other. In this particular case, what is implied is that Duncan's use of the concept of biopolitics involves phenomena and problems as divergent as the colonial power to kill (after Mbembe and Agamben), the biological and racial component of identity formation (after Stoler), and the medical surveillance of populations (after Foucault) – or even all three at once.

Before the cotextual section explores these layers of meaning in more detail, there is one final intertext of *In the Shadows of the Tropics* worth pointing out: James Scott's *Weapons of the Weak* (1985, not to be confused with the aforementioned David Scott). It focuses on 'what we might call *everyday* forms of peasant resistance – the prosaic but constant struggle between the peasantry and those who seek to extract labor, food, taxes, rents, and interest from them' (xvi, emphasis in original). This includes 'the ordinary weapons of relatively powerless groups: foot dragging, dissimulation, desertion, false compliance, pilfering, feigned ignorance, slander, arson, sabotage, and so on' (xvi). In order to study these tactics, James Scott spent two years in a Malaysian village (1978-1980), concluding that studies of resistance have focused disproportionally on 'organized, large scale, protest movements,' whereas in fact 'subordinate classes throughout most of history have rarely been afforded the luxury of open, organized, political activity' (xv). All too often, such activity has simply been too dangerous and would have defeated its purpose: to survive.

By drawing on this specific notion of resistance, Duncan avoids the problem of presenting a totalizing account of power, and shifts the reader's attention to struggles and power relations in everyday life on the coffee estates. This opens up a problem-space that differs considerably from the postcolonial studies discussed throughout the previous chapters, which, like Foucault, tended to account for the possibility of resistance in theory, but hardly ever explored it in detail. The tasks at hand are therefore not only to find out how Duncan connects the various

conceptualizations of biopolitics to governmentality, but also to determine how this form of resistance plays out in the face of biopolitical and governmental power.

6.3.2. Cotext: Bringing 'Biopolitics' Back In

In the Shadows of the Tropics presents a highly complex conceptual architecture. In stark contrast to both Foucault's lecture and Scott's appropriation of it, Duncan's architecture cannot be reduced to a single opposition between governmentality and its antagonist. Even a minimalist abstraction would still require the following concepts besides governmentality: sovereignty, discipline, biopower, identity, authority, and race. This section will analyze the implicit connections between them, starting from the notion of biopower. Because of its layeredness, the concept of biopower reveals not only how Duncan brings together the many intertexts listed above in a single conceptual architecture, but also even in a single concept.

A first of three layers in Duncan's concept of biopolitics corresponds to the definitions Foucault worked out in *The History of Sexuality* and *Society Must Be Defended*. It understands **biopolitics** as the management of the population and the rationale of power aimed at the improvement and protection of the health of the population. This layer of meaning dominates in the fifth chapter of *In the Shadows of the Tropics*, titled "The Medical Gaze and the Spaces of Biopower" (101-143). It focuses on the efforts of the government to control the spread of diseases among the immigrant Tamil labourers, which, due to malnutrition and starvation, were particularly vulnerable. A word of explanation is in order here: because the native population of Ceylon had little interest in working on the coffee estates, planters recruited Tamil labour from south India. These labourers, in a pattern of seasonal migration, made the journey to Ceylon for a wage that barely allowed them to survive. This permanent state of famine and migration made epidemics a permanent threat. Biopolitical tactics were deployed to gain control over diseases by quarantining symptomatic labourers and improving the conditions along migration routes, by constructing rest sheds, hospitals, and wells with clean drinking water (113). As with the biopower Foucault describes, here too biopolitical tactics rely to a great extent on power-knowledge. Whereas during the 18th century the first European colonists relied on the native Sinhalese medicine, the 19th century saw the rise of a new form of knowledge that required the colonists to intervene more directly in the colonial environment: the popular contamination

model of disease, which located the cause of disease in environmental conditions, necessitated 'a medical topography, the mapping of diseased environments' that needed to be sanitized (103).

It is easy to see how such a biopolitical rationale can link up with a **disciplinary rationale**: it displays the same concern with the legibility of space Mitchell detected in the British efforts to discipline Egypt. Indeed, here too the colonial effort is one of organizing space, through the creation of migration routes, medical checkpoints, and quarantine zones. The fact that Duncan establishes a strong link between Foucault's concepts of biopolitics and discipline is visible in his emphasis on the aspect of surveillance: much like Foucault's focus on the panoptical qualities of the penal regime, what is at stake here is the 'medical surveillance' (120) that not only attempted to single out labourers showing symptoms of cholera and other diseases, but also established 'an acceptable death rate' through observation, and put pressure on those planters who exceeded it 'to improve food rations and sanitation on estates' (112). Thus, rather than the displacement of discipline by biopower Foucault suggests, Duncan notes their coalescence in the fight against diseases in 19th century Ceylon.

Duncan's concept of biopolitics is also closely connected to the notion of **governmentality**, to the extent that biopolitics can even be understood as a subset of governmental tactics specifically concerned with health. Duncan speaks of sanitation as 'a central program of governmentality' (103) and notes that 'expanding colonial governmentality placed the health of labourers as a primary responsibility of the government' (101). This confirms again, contra Dean, that there is no necessary discontinuity between the concepts of biopower and governmentality: it is perfectly possible, and as Duncan shows, in the case of Ceylon absolutely crucial, to underline the continuity between these rationales of power.

Like Foucault, Duncan connects this conceptualization of biopolitics to the notion of **race**. As we have seen, for Foucault the notion of race served as a means to introduce a split in the population between those who should be made to live and those that can be left to die. However, the fact that Duncan finds the colonial government to have built clean drinking wells, rest sheds, and hospitals, problematizes Foucault's easy distinction: in 19th century Ceylon, the efforts to 'make live' were directed precisely at the colonized. There is no neat symmetry of a biopolitics aimed at the European planters and a necropolitics targeting the Tamil labourers. And yet, even this ostensible biopolitical concern with the labourers betrays the form of racism Foucault described. In Duncan's words:

> One of the central tenets of colonial governmentality was the division of a population into subgroups or populations as statistical entities with each having different characteristics, different norms, and different needs. It was believed that different technologies of power should be brought to bear on these groups depending upon their characteristics. Different calculations were used to decide what rates of sickness and death were unacceptable, implying that some deaths were acceptable. Tamil plantation workers were thought to be sickly by nature and consequently short-lived. (107)

In short, this medical knowledge relieved the colonizer of his biopolitical responsibility; the Tamil labourers could be left to die without consequences. Although Duncan uses the concept of governmentality here, the idea of the division of the population is structurally identical to the mechanism Foucault described with the concept of biopolitical racism in *The History of Sexuality, vol. I*, and *Society Must Be Defended*. Duncan thus introduces a principle of difference into his conceptual architecture, which was strangely absent in Scott's account of colonial governmentality.

A second layer of meaning to be found in Duncan's concept of biopolitics seems to have more in common with Agamben's reconceptualization of Foucault than with Foucault directly. As we have seen in relation to the work of Mbembe, Agamben does not conceive of the relation between **sovereignty** and biopolitics as a historical one, but as a fundamental one: the creation of a biopolitical body over which to rule is the originary activity of sovereign power. The foundation of the legal realm, as well as its suspension, creates bare life as life outside of the protection of the law. The sovereign is then the figure who decides on this exception from the law. All of these elements return in *In the Shadows of the Tropics*. Consider the following passage:

> The estates were not 'spaces of exception' in the very strong sense that Agamben defines them. The state technically had authority over the estates. In effect, however, the estates' economic viability was so closely tied to the viability of the colony, that the government granted them a fair degree of autonomy. The planters saw them as exceptional and tried to argue that they could most effectively and economically run their own affairs. (...) While planters did not have the right to take life, their decisions routinely created conditions that caused preventable deaths. Many of their actions would, in a court of law today, constitute manslaughter. However, as defacto-sovereign

> spaces, estates were spaces where the rights of migrant labour were often informally suspended.

The coffee plantations are spaces where planters act as local sovereigns and gain power over the lives and death of the labourers. They do not necessarily deploy the tactics of destruction Mbembe described as necropolitical, but neither do they focus on the optimization of the population Foucault referred to as biopolitics. Rather, what is at stake is a power over life that aims ‘‘to make survive,’ to use Agamben’s term’ (67): as long as labourers stay alive and perform work, no further energy and investment is required.

In this second layer of meaning, the concept of **discipline** is never far away. The fourth chapter, in which the Agamben-based notion of biopolitical sovereignty is especially dominant, already signals the centrality of discipline in its title, viz. “The Quest to Discipline Estate Labour” (67-99). The disciplinary rationale Foucault described finds a colonial counterpart in the efforts of planters to structure the plantation as an abstract space (84) with abstract bodies, ‘bodies that are made docile, useful, disciplined, rationalised, normalised, and controlled sexually’ (68-69). However, and this is the interesting point, Duncan claims that on the coffee estates of 19th century Ceylon this disciplinary rationale never acquired the importance Foucault ascribed to it in Europe. Observing that planters had found the strategies of producing structured, legible spaces ineffective in the environment of the tropics, Duncan notes that planters sought other ways to enforce obedience, ‘which they believed required sovereign power within the bounds of the estate’ (70). In other words, the planters deployed excessive force to instill fear, rather than the subtle and continuous tactics of discipline. This involved beating, flogging, and public humiliation (95), which, as biopolitical sovereigns, the planters could do with impunity. It is exactly these forms of violence that Scott’s account, based on the concept of governmentality, failed to explain. Through Agamben’s notion of a biopolitical sovereignty, Duncan highlights how even after the introduction of a modern colonial governmentality, violence continued to play a central role in the economy of power.

Moreover, the concept of biopolitical sovereignty is also connected to colonial **governmentality** in the sense that both rationalities of power work in tandem. Although governmentality might be expected, especially after the Cameron-Brooke reforms, to enforce the rule of law throughout the colony, it still allowed the planters to operate as quasi-sovereigns. Through the claim that ‘the estates’ economic viability was so closely tied to the viability of the

colony, that the government granted [the planters] a fair degree of autonomy,' Duncan implicitly demonstrates how biopolitical sovereignty in Ceylon was not just a pre-modern relic, but a vital part of the governmental strategy to maintain the wealth of the part of the population deemed worth living.

In drawing on the work of Agamben to explain violence in relation to governmentality, Duncan not only solves the problem Scott faced, but also presents an interesting variation in his use of the concept of biopolitics. In his discussion of the role of violence in studies of governmentality, Opitz has argued the following:

> faced with the difficulty of explaining the exercise of direct violence in the age of governmentality, leading scholars in the field have hitherto resorted to the concept of biopolitical racism sketched out by Foucault in the last lecture of his course *Society Must Be Defended*. (2011: 93-94)

By drawing on Agamben and Foucault, as opposed to Foucault alone, the explanatory potential of the concept of biopolitics is broadened considerably. The notion of biopolitical racism Opitz mentions is, as we noted in the discussion of the first layer of meaning, highly useful in explaining the colonial violence that stems from presumed biological knowledge of races. However, it does not explain how a biopolitical sovereignty can function at the service of liberal governmentality. This is the problem Duncan solves implicitly: the 'laissez-faire' strategy of governmentality allows, and, in the case of Ceylon, even requires, subjects to assume the role of local sovereigns to run the plantations as profitably as possible. The conceptual architecture thus presents not a displacement of sovereignty by governmentality, but their symbiosis.

The third and final layer of meaning in Duncan's concept of biopolitics corresponds to Stoler's appropriation in *Race and the Education of Desire*. As the previous chapter has argued, for Stoler the concept of biopolitics functioned primarily as a means to shed light on the connected notions of **identity** and **authority**. Focusing on the Dutch East Indies of the nineteenth and early twentieth century, she argued that the construction of European identity and authority was predicated on the biopolitical concern with race, gender, and sexuality. Such a focus, I have argued, shifts the attention away from the technologies of power Foucault gathered under the rubric of biopower, towards the psyche of the colonizer.

A similar operation underlies the third chapter of *In the Shadows of the Tropics*, titled "Dark Thoughts: Reproducing Whiteness in the Tropics" (43-65). Its two epigraphs reveal its structure: the first epigraph is a quote from Stoler's *Race and the Education of Desire*, the second is a quote from Foucault's governmentality lecture (43). In terms of conceptual architecture, this reflects Duncan's effort to connect Stoler's concept of biopolitics to the notion of governmentality. He accomplishes this through the idea of conduct: as we have seen, for Foucault governmentality can be understood as the conduct of conduct. This complements Stoler's emphasis on self-mastery: she argues that the construction of European identity and authority relies on the ability of Europeans not to give in to carnal desire. Similarly, Duncan notes that 'controlled self-conduct was seen as necessary for the planter not only to signal his authority, but also to present himself as a proper role model for the native elite and ideally for the native population as a whole' (44). However, the life of British planters far away from the safe haven of the bourgeois family put pressure on the ability of young male colonists to control their passions, and consequently produced 'anxiety about racial, class, and gendered identities and differences' (44). With this focus on identity and authority, predicated on the government of the self, Duncan returns to the critique of difference Scott had sought to replace with the framework of governmentality.

Nevertheless, there is one crucial difference between Stoler's approach and Duncan's: the latter does not confuse identity-as-authority with power relations as such. This is worth quoting at some length:

> I wish to make it clear from the outset that the ambivalent transcultural impacts, insecurities, and anxieties found on the margins of the British empire should not in any way be conflated with a fragility in the political economy of empire. The British rule over this part of empire was secure during this period and consequently our understanding of its exploitative impact should not be diminished through attention to British psyches. (47)

In making this distinction between psyche and political economy, Duncan introduces the possibility of understanding biopolitics not just as a set of technologies working on the population (cf. Foucault), or as a set of practices aimed at maintaining European identity and authority over the colonized (cf. Stoler), but as both simultaneously, connected by the notion of conduct. He thus shows implicitly how the production of racialized and gendered identities and

differences is not a phenomenon that runs counter to modern governmentality, but rather functions as a process that produces identities along governmental lines: the difference between Selves and Others can be articulated in terms of biopolitical knowledge, but also at the same in terms of the ability to conduct the Self, with considerable continuity between these two.

Looking back at these three levels, it becomes clear that each of them opens up a different problem-space. Not only does each layer dominate one particular chapter of *In the Shadows of the Tropics*, but they also serve to answer different sets of questions and to highlight different phenomena. The first one, predominant in Chapter 5 and originating with Foucault, analyses the strategies and tactics used by colonial power to 'make survive.' The second one, dominant in Chapter 4 and linked to Agamben, accounts for colonial violence under modern governmentality. Finally, the third layer, dominant in Chapter 3 and linked to Stoler, focuses on the production of identity and authority. Duncan's conceptual architecture brings all of these elements together in a framework built around the highly interlinked concepts of biopolitics and governmentality.

6.3.3. Concept: Colonial Governmentality as a Rationale amongst Others

From the conceptual architecture outlined above, it follows that governmentality for Duncan is not a rationale of power that displaces all others, but one that interacts with them. Colonial governmentality can therefore no longer be conceptualized as a closed programme, but should rather be understood as one project among others. This is the central difference between Duncan's concept of governmentality, and Foucault's and Scott's. Duncan conceives of governmentality as a rationale and a project that encounters resistant rationales, failures, disturbances, and physical obstacles. The present section will focus on this reconceptualization and the theoretical issues it negotiates.

However, before we can even begin to highlight the external obstacles that confront governmentality, it is crucial to point out that colonial governmentality itself is not an unequivocally unified project. This is not to repeat the familiar (and appropriate) argument that colonialism operated differently in different parts of the globe, but rather that colonial governmentality in 19th century Ceylon at any time is the result of various tactics and actions that reflect the governmental process of decision making and the shifting of priorities. Keeping in mind Foucault's earlier definition of governmentality as a strategy aimed at improving the health

and wealth of the population (cf. 1991: 100), it becomes apparent that governmentality on Ceylon faced a difficult balancing act between granting the plantation owners free reign and intervening to stop the lethal exploitation of labour.

This tension within governmentality is also connected to the tension between the universalizing ideals of modernity and a continuing rule of difference. Unlike Scott, who distinguishes between governmentality and the rule of difference, and fails to explain how they can operate together, Duncan presents the rule of difference not as an altogether different rationale, but as a crucial part of colonial governmentality at odds with its universalizing impulses. Duncan thus claims that 'while modernity was in the throes of dismantling naturalized racial differences and grappling with evolving ideas of citizenship and equality, the tropics cast shadows of doubt over these universalizing ideals' (2). By introducing the question of difference again, Duncan complicates Scott's picture of modernity and governmentality as a way to structure the space of possible actions: this structure is always already profoundly racialized, and governmentality has its own principle of difference. Governmental knowledge of the population and its subgroups creates the conditions for different spaces of possible actions. As Duncan argues about one such piece of governmental knowledge, 'the implication of Van Dort's report was that the Tamil labourers could not be trusted to attend to their own interests. (...) They were thus seen as prime candidates for programmes of governmentality to be carried out in the estates under orders of the state' (129). A rule of difference, an identity politics that follows from the logic of governmentality, thus operates in balance with the governmental 'laissez-faire' strategy.

As a rationale that vacillates between liberalism and interventionism, colonial governmentality competes with the sovereign biopolitics of the planters. Although planters operated as defacto sovereigns in their unofficial spaces of exception, this does not mean that governmentality and sovereign biopolitics always worked towards the same end. This is worth quoting at some length:

> From the beginning, planters argued that what was good for the estates was good for the colony more generally and this was largely accepted by the government. (...) In the early years planters disciplined their workforces as they saw fit. However, increasingly pressures were brought to bear on them, by the Government of Ceylon, the Colonial Office, and the Government of India to feed workers adequately, to curtail beatings and to challenge what the planters believed were acceptable death rates among workers. All

> of which is to say that the state sought to limit the near sovereign powers of the planters over life and death on the estates. (95-96)

With governmentality and sovereign biopolitics as two rationales which at times oppose each other, Duncan provides the means to shed light on issues such as the aforementioned Ilbert bill: planters can form a pressure group that resists governmental rationale. In the case of 19th century Ceylon, Duncan even concludes that 'the various attempts at expanding governmentality had made relatively little difference throughout the coffee period' because 'the planters undermined it' (141). These actions of the planters can be seen as acts of resistance to governmentality, which was deemed 'far too bureaucratic and onerous' (165).

To use the concept of resistance in this case may be highly unusual, as the term is usually reserved for the actions of the colonized against the colonizer. However, its use here usefully signals the fact that colonial power itself is fractured and dispersed. As even planters of European descent fought against governmental reason, the notion of governmentality and the resistance against it disrupt an unproblematic opposition of colonizer and colonized in terms of rationales of power.

A second obstacle governmentality encountered was the resistance put up by the native population and the Tamil labourers. Here too one has to carefully distinguish between different rationales of native resistance: Duncan's account does not focus on resistance to colonial power per se, but on resistance to the different rationales outlined above, even though he does not make the distinctions explicit. A first set of tactics can be understood as practices of resistance against the planters' rationale of sovereign biopolitics, aimed at the maximum extraction of wealth. This includes foot dragging or feigning illness to avoid work, or even using the legal system governmentality installed to collect unpaid wages from the planters (91). A second set are the tactics that confront governmentality itself: the practices that undermine the governmental attempts to set up modern legal and medical systems. Two examples can illustrate such resistance: although the government installed courthouses open to all members of the population, the legal system of producing truth and justice in court was seriously compromised by the attitude of the local population towards testimony. Indeed, 'locals believed that other factors such as the social position or known character of the defendant and plaintiff should take precedence' over objectivity and truth (163). The result was that the modern governmental discourse of justice and equality was continually undermined. The governmental efforts to

establish modern medicine shared the same fate: the aforementioned attempts to control epidemics by quarantining symptomatic individuals was seen by the Tamil migrants as 'yet another regime of oppressive power to be evaded if possible' (120). Thus, not only the sovereign biopolitics of the planters, but also the rationale of native survival resisted governmentality.

Although Duncan does not frame this focus on resistance as a corrective to the work of Scott, there is one clearly identifiable difference between Scott and Duncan that enables the latter to provide a much more substantial analysis of resistance. As we have seen, Scott's essay posited a displacement of sovereignty by governmentality. Modern colonial governmentality for Scott effectively structured the space of possible actions of the population. As such, resistance could only be conceptualized as space for manoeuvre *within* governmental reason. Duncan's example of Tamil labour recurring to the courthouse to collect unpaid wages from the planters is one example that fits into such a concept of resistance. However, the fact that natives had been reported to hide symptoms of disease shows how analyses of resistance should not be restricted to resistance *through* governmental means, but should also include resistance *to* governmentality. Consider the following passage from Scott's "Colonial Governmentality":

> In the colonial world the problem of *modern* power turned on the politico-ethical project of producing subjects and governing their conduct. What this required was the concerted attempt to alter the political and social worlds of the colonized, an attempt to transform and redefine the very conditions of the desiring subject. The political problem of modern colonial power was therefore not merely to contain resistance and encourage accommodation but to seek to ensure that *both* could *only* be defined in relation to the categories and structures of modern political rationalities. (214, emphasis in original)

However, *In the Shadows of the Tropics* implicitly makes it clear that such a restructuring of the social was never achieved entirely. With respect to Ceylon, Duncan argues that 'the attempts to produce rationalized bodies for the estates were continually undermined as elements of the workers' networks and ways of life remained intact, serving as important bases for resistance and tactics of survival' (69). Resistance thus follows from the fact that governmentality is not a rationale that displaces all others, but one that competes with them.

A third source of resistance to governmentality can be found in non-human actors. The most important non-human actor in Duncan's analysis is, without a doubt, the *Hemileia Vastatrix*, a fungus that spread around the island with a devastating effect on the plantations.

Governmental efforts to stop the disease were unsuccessful, ultimately knocking Ceylon 'out of the international network of coffee producers' (191). But less dramatic actors also had a role to play: the efforts to structure space on the island were complicated by the fact that 'most of the estates were hundreds of acres in extent and were surrounded by jungle, grasslands, and villages,' and planters 'could not afford to fence them' (145). Given that the lands the planters had seized formerly served as grazing grounds for cattle, the issue of cattle trespassing soon became a major problem, and the planters asked the government to intervene. With governmentality resting on a knowledge of the population and its environment, government also had an interest in providing a legible, structured space, so it complied with this demand and issued legal regulations allowing planters to seize trespassing cattle. However, as Duncan points out, 'the fact that villagers sometimes drove cattle onto an estate to settle a grudge with another villager reveals how bureaucratic rules can escape their originally intended purposes and how diffuse and fragmented power can be' (152).

More than that, the example reveals how resistance is not necessarily constituted by great subversive plans, but can also manifest itself as the unplanned result of certain practices. Although Duncan frames his concept of resistance as indebted to the aforementioned *Weapons of the Weak*, it is my contention that it is also structurally similar to the notion of resistance Foucault introduced in *The History of Sexuality, Vol. I*, but hardly developed. As we may recall, Foucault understood power as 'intentional but non-subjective' (94), which refers to the fact that power relations can coalesce or oppose one another in unanticipated ways. Similarly, for Foucault there is no master plan behind resistance, 'no single locus of great Refusal, no soul of revolt, source of all rebellions, or pure law of the revolutionary,' but instead 'a plurality of resistances' (95-96). It is this plurality Duncan reveals: resistance of planters to governmentality, resistance of labourers to sovereign biopolitics, resistance of the population to governmentality, and resistance of non-human actors to governmentality.

What is especially salient in this understanding of resistance is that it sees resistance as a set of 'embodied practices' rather than the struggle against a dominant ideology. In the context of postcolonial studies, resistance has often been conceptualized as a matter of 'speaking' or being heard. A case in point is Ashcroft's notion of postcolonial 'counter-discourse' (2001: 32) which challenges colonialist ideology, as is the concern with postcolonial literature as a kind of writing back (cf. Ashcroft, Griffiths, Tiffin 1989). The problem with such theories, however, is that, as Spivak has demonstrated in the aforementioned "Can the Subaltern Speak?," the voice of

the subaltern is often written out of colonial discourse, with the consequence that it has been extremely hard to research anti-colonial resistance. The manner in which Duncan integrates a focus on the weapons of the weak into the governmentality framework makes it possible to look at practices of resistance that do not hinge upon being heard.

Looking back at the list of problems formulated by Lemke, it becomes apparent that *In the Shadows of the Tropics* negotiates every one of them by complementing Foucault's lecture of February 1st, 1978, with other intertexts, scholars, and concepts, integrating all of them into the framework governmentality offered. The first three problems Lemke identified, viz. the notion of governmentality as a rationale of power that displaces all others, the obfuscation of violence in governmental regimes, and a lack of attention to the ruptures and disturbances of government, are all implicitly dealt with by looking at the interaction or confrontation of governmentality with other rationalities of power, such as sovereign biopolitics, or the native population's tactics of survival. By counting non-human actors among these ruptures and disturbances of government, *In the Shadows of the Tropics* also sidesteps the fourth problem of focusing exclusively on human actors. Finally, by introducing a principle of difference into governmentality, Duncan negotiates the Eurocentric perspective of Foucault's work. The point here is obviously not that Duncan 'solves' all of the problems Lemke listed – Lemke's list did not even exist at the time *In the Shadows of the Tropics* was published. Rather, juxtaposing Foucault's lecture, Scott's "Colonial Governmentality," and Duncan's *In the Shadows of the Tropics*, it becomes apparent that the concept of governmentality as it appeared in the isolated lecture needed to be contextualized and negotiated in order to take into account the fragmented nature of colonial power.

6.4. Conclusion: The Heterogeneity of Colonial Power

Scott's "Colonial Governmentality" and Duncan's *In the Shadows of the Tropics* are just as closely connected to the postcolonial texts discussed in the previous chapters as they are to Foucault's work on governmentality. In the case of Scott, this connection with other postcolonial appropriations is primarily a negative one: he faults postcolonial studies for reducing colonial power to the rule of difference, in both the representational and institutional realms. By presenting the concept of governmentality as a means to inspect the rationale and project of modern colonial power, Scott manages to raise a set of questions that differs considerably from

the analyses of the rule of difference in its various manifestations. However, he fails to point out how the rationale of modern governmental power can interact with both the rule of difference and the rationales Foucault had described in his earlier work, including sovereignty, discipline, and biopolitics. The result is an account that does not draw on the work of Said, Bhabha, Stoler, or Mbembe, but simply sweeps it aside. Just as Scott thinks of governmentality as a rationale that converts the colony into a blank space, he seems to think of the concept of governmentality as one that can simply displace all others. Consequently, his analysis of colonial power in Ceylon lacks any real notion that explains difference, violence, and resistance.

Duncan, on the other hand, not only connects the notion of governmentality to the other major Foucauldian concepts, he also links the questions Scott asked to analyses of the rule of difference, and negotiates the problems that plagued them. Thus, his work demonstrates how the process of othering described by Said, Bhabha, and Stoler can operate as a function in the governmental rationale of power, indicating that the dichotomy between Self and Other in 19th century Ceylon was articulated in terms of conduct – exactly the term Foucault used to highlight the specificity of governmental reason. At the same time, he shares with Scott the insight that the project of colonial power cannot be reduced to a rule of difference, and he therefore continues to search for the rationality that, at least partially, sought to universalize rather than to produce difference. With Mbembe, he shares the interest in Agamben's concept of biopolitical sovereignty, and its ability to explain how violence continued to occupy a central role even under governmental regimes. In the process, he negotiates the obfuscation of violence we had detected in Scott's essay. Finally, through and against both the work of Foucault and all of its postcolonial appropriations, he develops a workable conceptualization of resistance that follows directly from the plurality of interacting rationales, projects, and technologies Foucault, Said, Bhabha, Mitchell, Stoler, Mbembe, and Scott discussed in isolation.

7. Conclusion: The Foucault Effect in Postcolonial Studies

Adopting a phrase from Dipesh Chakrabarty, one can say that postcolonial studies has been 'provincializing Foucault.'[48] Pointing out the Eurocentric tendencies in Foucault's work, postcolonial scholars have demonstrated how his account of various rationales of power disregards the key role the colonies have played in the production and development of discipline, biopolitics, and governmentality. The argument that Foucault produces a self-contained history of Europe has been repeatedly articulated in the work of Mitchell, Kaplan, Spivak, Stoler, Mbembe, and Duncan, and it also follows from Scott's decision to look at colonial governmentality as a counterpart to the governmentality Foucault describes. However, this argument is not present in the texts by Said and Bhabha, which draw primarily on Foucault's theory of discourse, rather than his historical analyses of power formations. This should alert us to the fact that the postcolonial misgivings about Foucault's work relate to the historical content of his work rather than his conceptual apparatus.

Indeed, after noting the obfuscation of the colonies as key sites in the production of power formations, scholars such as Mitchell, Kaplan, and Stoler have sought to work *with* Foucault's concepts rather than *against* them. To varying degrees, they have incorporated one or more of these concepts, transformed them, and made use of them in order to better conceptualize colonialism. In all of the postcolonial studies analyzed above, Foucauldian concepts serve to buttress the main argument. The postcolonial engagement with Foucault is in this sense far from superficial.

It should be abundantly clear by now that this travelling of concepts is neither the straightforward application of a model, nor the mere appropriation of concepts to endow them with a meaning that subverts Foucault's work. Rather than a conscious choice of the writing subject, it is the recontextualization of concepts itself that changes their meaning in ways that seem to follow from the new context and cotext in which a concept finds itself. The significant changes in the meaning of travelling concepts discussed throughout this project are not the outcome of the desire to 'provincialize Foucault,' but the direct result of their appearance in a new context, within a new syntax.

As far as the functions of these concepts is concerned, their role in postcolonial studies is surprisingly coherent. The notions of discourse, discipline, biopower, and governmentality all

[48] After Chakrabarty: 2000, *Provincializing Europe*.

serve to forge an understanding of colonial power that cannot be reduced to either economic, military, or physical force and domination.

However, exactly what this alternative conceptualization of power should look like is very much contested, and different interpretations and transformations of Foucault's work have presented highly discrepant conceptualizations of colonial power. It is therefore of paramount importance to look beyond the travelling of concepts from Foucault to postcolonial studies: the transformations and discrepancies *within* these groups are at least as significant. This is hardly surprising, given that nine years passed between the publication of the first and the last of Foucault's texts discussed above (1969-1978), and almost thirty years between the first and the last postcolonial transformations analyzed in this study (1978-2007). Within and between these periods, the concepts of discourse, discipline, biopower, and governmentality have appeared in various contexts and conceptual architectures, leading to various meanings, functions, and effects.

While the previous chapters present sufficient evidence of these manifold transformations, a question that remains open is whether some kind of order or pattern can be discerned in their trajectories. Robert Nichols has taken up this question in an essay called "Postcolonial Studies and the Discourse of Foucault" (2010). He distinguishes two groups of postcolonial transformations: a first group that focuses on colonial power as an effect of representation, and a second group that thinks of power in relation to 'modern racism, its connection to questions of sexuality, biopolitics and modern state formation' (141). The first group draws primarily on Foucault's work on discourse, whereas the second uses the concepts of discipline, biopolitics, and governmentality. Nichols identifies Said and Bhabha as the central figures of the first group, and Stoler as the scholar that initiated the second wave. More specifically, he argues that Stoler is the one who has spurred on 'a new field of studies around questions of colonial governmentality' which works 'against the prevailing understanding of Foucault already established by the Said-discourse frame of reference' (141). Nichols also claims that this second school 'has remained relatively isolated from the first' (141).

An attention to the disciplinary location of the postcolonial studies analyzed seems to back up such a narrative. The first group, with Said and Bhabha, has not only approached representation as a textual construct, they have also taken literature to be one of the central means of identity construction. The work of Stoler, Scott, and Duncan, by contrast, focuses on practices and techniques in a specific time and place, and could thus be said to be more

historical-anthropological in nature. This seems to confirm the existence of two separate groups in the postcolonial reception of Foucault, which, linked back to the present corpus, would include Said and Bhabha in the group with a focus on representation, and Kaplan, Mitchell, Stoler, Scott, and Duncan in the group with the historical-anthropological focus, with Mbembe as a separate case that fits neither of the two.

Tempting though such a typology may be, it completely disregards the intertextual dynamic sketched in the previous chapters. Contra Nichols, I would like to argue that the distinction he establishes between the two groups misses the extent to which the model of power as representation continues to inform those postcolonial transformations which ostensibly adhere more closely to Foucault's historical analyses of rationales of power. The interesting thing here is not that the historical-anthropological group employs a different Foucault from the one summoned up by the representation group, but that it does not.

Put differently, the second group Nichols describes did not remain 'relatively isolated from the first' (141), but struggled to break free from the reading of Foucault the first group had established. Although Stoler and others clearly shift the focus from textual representation to colonial techniques and practices, their reading of Foucault is still profoundly affected by Said's transformation. As Chapter 3 has indicated, what we have called Said's instrumentalist architecture established two key concepts in the analysis of colonial power that hardly figure in Foucault's oeuvre: identity and authority. From *Orientalism* onwards, the concepts of identity and authority have surfaced time and again in postcolonial critiques of power, including those acknowledging Foucault as a central source of inspiration.

In many cases, Foucauldian concepts have served as ancillary concepts to arrive at the Saidian notions of identity and authority. The beginning of this process can be seen in Bhabha's recurrence to psychosocial notions in the analysis of discourse, and in Mitchell's analysis of colonial authority as a product of discipline, but it is most conspicuous in the work of Stoler. Although she draws on Foucault's concept of biopolitics, she only seems interested in biopolitical techniques to the extent that they create a European identity that supports colonial authority. In the work of Duncan, finally, it is the concept of governmentality that assists in exposing how technologies of the self created European identity and colonial authority.

Seen in this light, Stoler can hardly be said to have initiated a second wave of postcolonial transformations of Foucault, or to have worked against Said's reading of Foucault. If *Race and the Education of Desire* remains a pivotal work, this is not because it created a new postcolonial

Foucault, but because it transported the Saidian model of identity as authority into the historical and anthropological analysis of colonial power. This explains why the contextual analyses in the previous chapters had little to say about differences or struggles between disciplines: although the work of Said and Bhabha may be closely connected to the study of literature, and the work of Mitchell, Stoler, Scott, and Duncan could be considered more anthropological, all of these names are connected in an intertextual web in which disciplinary boundaries clearly have not stopped the spread of Said's reading of Foucault. A distinction between a postcolonial Foucault focused on textual representation, dominant in literature, and a postcolonial Foucault focused on practices and techniques in a specific time and place, dominant in anthropology, underplays the extent to which the latter inherits from the former the tendency to look at these practices only insofar as they produce identity-as-authority.

However, this tendency is not absolute, and there are also scholars who draw on Foucauldian concepts without subordinating them to the notions of identity and authority. This applies to Mbembe's "Necropolitics," which uses and transforms the concept of biopolitics in order to analyze technologies of power as they work on the body and destroy it. In doing so, Mbembe focuses not on the authority that legitimates colonial power, but on a rationale of power that is visible in the technologies it deploys. Although Mbembe's Agamben-inflected reading of Foucault by no means constitutes a simple application of a Foucauldian framework, it is fair to say, in the light of the reconstructions above, that Mbembe's attempt to trace a rationale of power in the technologies it deploys remains much closer to Foucault's genealogical approach. Moreover, in its focus on the destructive impact of power upon bodies, Mbembe's essay can even be read as an attack on the tendency to critique power only insofar as it produces identities. Indeed, the constatation that technologies of death can work directly on the bodies Agamben refers to as bare life makes it clear that a focus on the metaphysical pretensions of colonialism overlooks the extent to which colonial power was always also microphysical in its operations.

In dealing with the concept of governmentality, the tension between the focus on identity-as-authority and the analysis of specific rationalities of power becomes even more pronounced. Foucault's lectures on governmentality make it crystal-clear that the conceptual apparatus he had been developing serves to critique power as a set of practices and techniques that coalesce into strategies and projects. In short, all of Foucault's work from *Discipline and Punish* onwards was concerned with the question of how power formations operate, rather than

with their legitimization. It is exactly this issue of power as a project, with specific goals, ambitions, and means to achieve them, that Scott takes up with respect to colonial power. At stake are no longer the narratives and identities Europe produces, but the actual strategies of colonial power, the subject positions it creates, and the reconfiguration of societies it effects.

Thus, if there are two groups in the postcolonial reception of Foucault, it is in this tension between power as authority and power as activity that the break can be seen. It is simply astounding that this tension should have remained unacknowledged or misunderstood for such a long time. Its significance can hardly be overstated: these two conceptualizations of colonial power direct the focus to different objectives of power, to different instruments of power, and to different forms of resistance to power. To deepen our understanding of the crucial divide between the notion of power as authority and power as activity, it may be helpful to look at each of these three differences in more detail.

First of all, because the notion of colonial power as authority conceptualizes power only as the creation of authority aimed at colonization, and directs attention to the creation of authority, the presupposed objective of power receives comparatively little attention. To illustrate with an example, Said's *Orientalism* focuses on how the West positions itself as superior to the Orient, but it does not tell us much about the kind of colonization this authority was required for in the first place. In other words, it does not look into the projects of colonial power in the Orient or the kind of society power sought to create.

By contrast, the conceptualization of power as an activity sets out to answer exactly these questions. What are the objectives of colonial power? What are the different rationalities of colonial power? Are there perhaps conflicting views between individuals, countries, or historical periods about what these objectives should be? Colonial power is then no longer monolithic: it can be made up of different and potentially competing rationalities. Foucault's concepts of discipline, biopower, and governmentality can be used to spell out different objectives and strategies of power in the colonies. At stake is no longer the disciplinary, biopolitical, or governmental component of colonial authority, but the way these power formations work directly on colonial subjects. In the case of discipline, this involves the ordering and structuring of colonial societies to produce obedient subjects. A biopolitical rationale aims to protect the vitality of the population, and a governmental rationale attempts to create a society in which the interests of subjects coincide with the interests of the state. Postcolonial scholars who understand power as activity rather than authority have tried to grasp the projects of

colonial power with these concepts, and have at times found it necessary to complement Foucault's work with other concepts. Mbembe's notion of necropolitics is the clearest example: the project of colonial power cannot be grasped in terms of biopolitics alone, given its tendency to kill colonial subjects rather than protect their health. Mbembe therefore coins the concept of necropolitics to refer to an activity of colonial power, and the rationale that guides this activity, rather than the authority that legitimates it.

The difference between a conceptualization of power as authority and power as activity is also reflected in the instruments with which power is believed to work. Scholars who have focused on colonial authority, in the wake of Said, have understood authority primarily as something that is produced through identity constructions. More specifically, it is identity as a binary relation between Self and Other that has repeatedly been pinpointed as the key mechanism of colonial authority. Much to the dismay of scholars who would have liked to pursue a more materialist critique of colonialism, including Ahmad, Dirlik, Parry, Brennan, Lazarus, and many others, this focus on identity arguably resulted in a focus on identity-creation as a textual phenomenon. The conceptualization of power as authority thus took novels, travelogues, poetry, and other literary genres to be central instruments of colonial power, and it has been criticized extensively for this reduction of colonial power to a textual affair. Aijaz Ahmad complained as early as 1992 that the struggle against colonial power had become 'mainly a literary and literary-critical affair' (208). Writing from a position indebted to Marxism (cf. 4), Ahmad fulminates against the obsession with the textual at the expense of the material.

However, with the distinction between conceptualizations of power as authority and power as activity in mind, a more accurate assessment of the postcolonial focus on the textual becomes possible. I want to argue that what is problematic is not so much the tendency to limit the scrutiny of colonial power to its textual manifestations, but rather the underlying conceptualization of power as authority. It is this focus on authority that allows only a fragmentary answer to the question of how colonial power operates and restructures social spaces. The work of Stoler is an illustration of how accusations of textualism miss the mark: although Stoler does not focus on literature at all, just as with Said she neglects the material operations of colonial power by focusing exclusively on power as an authority that follows from identity constructions.

The conceptualization of power as activity, by contrast, can take into account the instruments upon which rationales of power rely to effect a restructuring of society, irrespective

of whether these instruments are textual or material. This includes anything from the military technology Mbembe focuses on, to the various techniques Foucault describes in his historical analyses of sovereignty, discipline, biopower, and governmentality. In a colonial context, one can think of the structuring of the land, the creation of new social hierarchies, the introduction of a juridical order, and the installation of a medical system, as well as the violent techniques of local sovereigns to force the native population into submission. Again, the focus on these issues follows from an understanding of power as an activity rather than an authority.

A third and final difference between the two conceptualizations of power relates to the notion of resistance. Throughout the previous chapters, it has become apparent that the concept of resistance has a problematic status in postcolonial studies. The analysis of power often dominates the argument, and the study of resistance remains limited to a few tentative remarks that function more as an excuse than as a proper consideration of the way in which power is undermined. The big exception in this regard is the work of Bhabha, which locates resistance in the instability of colonial discourse itself. But even this understanding of resistance has been criticized because it reduces resistance to 'a condition produced by the dominant discourse itself' rather than the anti-colonial actions of agents (Loomba 2005: 149). In fact, Duncan's *In the Shadows of the Tropics* has been the only work analyzed in this study to provide a comprehensive treatment of such acts of resistance.

The distinction between power as authority and power as activity can shed light on the problematic status of the concept of resistance. Power and resistance can hardly be conceptualized apart from each other, and it is therefore no surprise that the two different notions of power entail two different understandings of resistance. In the case of Bhabha, the understanding of power as authority leads to a notion of resistance that at bottom refers to nothing more than the instability of that authority. With Duncan, by contrast, the understanding of power as an activity with a rationale of its own entails conceptualizing resistance as acts and obstacles that run counter to this rationale. As section 6.3.3 has illustrated, this second understanding of resistance enables us to look at competing projects of power, at material and technical obstacles, as well as the subversive actions of individuals – all of which remain undiscussed in the first approach.

These three points demonstrate that the two conceptualizations of power I have distinguished are not simply two different approaches to the same issues, but rather conceptualizations of two disparate phenomena: the authority that supported colonial projects

on the one hand, and the rationales and activities of these projects on the other. The work of Said, Bhabha, and Stoler presents clear examples of a focus on the first, whereas Mbembe's "Necropolitics" and Scott's "Colonial Governmentality" focus on the second. Mitchell's *Colonising Egypt* begins with the second, but ultimately abandons this for the first. Duncan, finally, combines the first and the second approach, and distinguishes carefully between the two.

So where is Foucault in all of this? It should be abundantly clear by now that only the second conceptualization of power is structurally similar to the one Foucault developed throughout his career. The first understanding, of power as authority, does not have any substantial connection to Foucault's work whatsoever. As soon as he began to work towards a concept of power, Foucault left the notion of authority behind, and began to focus on activities, techniques, and rationales of power.

But if this is the case, how is it possible that Foucault's work has been used so often to explain colonial authority? How is it possible that, in spite of all these crucial differences with Foucault's conceptualization of power as an activity, Said, Bhabha, Mitchell, Stoler, and to a lesser extent, Duncan, have drawn on Foucault's concepts to explain colonial power as a form of authority?

An initial explanation can be found in the impact of Said's *Orientalism*. It is in this founding work of postcolonial studies that the first references to Foucault appear, and it seems to have established an extremely influential interpretation of Foucault. More specifically, it is what we have referred to in Chapter 3 as the instrumentalist architecture that has linked Foucault to power and authority. In spite of the fact that Foucault's understanding of power was completely different, Said's interpretation would continue to provide a point of reference for postcolonial readings of Foucault, across decades, and, as can be seen in Stoler's work, across disciplines. The fact that Stoler's *Race and the Education of Desire* provides a highly sophisticated analysis of Foucault's 1976 lectures, and yet fails to register the crucial distinction between biopower as an activity and biopower as a source of colonial authority, illustrates the pervasiveness of Said's interpretation. That Robert Nichols subsequently identifies Stoler's work as a turning point in the reception of Foucault (cf. 2010: 141), in spite of its fundamental similarity to Said's framework, illustrates how easily the two conceptualizations of power outlined above can be confused.

A second reason can be sought in Foucault's work itself. All of the contextual sections above have noted that Foucault's writing is void of explicit references to specific scholars. He rarely outlines his position within a specific discipline, field, or tradition, and hardly acknowledges his predecessors. Neither does he specify his opponents, leaving it to the reader to puzzle out who the antagonists are. Moreover, these opponents do not seem to be specific scholars, but rather large systems of thought and ideologies, such as Marxism, liberalism, and psychoanalysis. The result is that it is nearly impossible to contextualize the work of Foucault today. It has been one of the central premises of this study of travelling concepts that the meanings and functions of concepts are context-dependent. Consequently, the absence of such a clear context leaves concepts open to considerable transformations.

Third and finally, the distribution process of Foucault's work may also have been a major factor in the confusion surrounding his conceptualization of power. The previous chapters have analyzed Foucault's work in chronological order, with the result that the corresponding postcolonial appropriations appeared in a parallel, near-chronological order: the work of Said and Bhabha, drawing on the concept of discourse, stems from the late seventies and early eighties, the texts from Mitchell and Kaplan, drawing on the notion of discipline, were published in the early to mid-nineties, followed by Stoler's and Mbembe's appropriations of 'biopolitics' in the second half of the nineties and at the beginning of the new millennium. The concept of governmentality, lastly, was picked up in 1995 by Scott and in 2007 by Duncan. Only the three most recent publications we have considered, viz. Scott's, Mbembe's, and Duncan's, include a focus on colonial power as an activity, as a particular rationale and a project with specific ambitions and technologies to achieve them.

To that extent, it is the three most recent publications that stick most closely to Foucault's conceptualization of power. At first sight, it may seem surprising that those texts that are chronologically speaking the most removed from Foucault are actually closest in terms of their conceptual apparati. Yet, in light of the publication and translation history of Foucault's work, this process becomes perfectly logical. I have argued above that it is in Foucault's concept of governmentality that his focus on power as an activity becomes the most pronounced. Unlike with the concepts of discourse, discipline, and biopower, Foucault did not introduce this concept in a monograph, but in a series of lectures at the Collège de France. Thirteen years passed before an English translation of the governmentality lecture was first published in *The Foucault Effect* (1991) – long after Said's *Orientalism* had created the problem-space that would become known

as postcolonial studies. Moreover, *The Foucault Effect* had selected only one of Foucault's lectures out of a series of thirteen, with a further decontextualization of his work as a result. As we have seen, when Scott's 1995 "Colonial Governmentality" deployed the notion of governmentality in postcolonial studies, he produced an analysis of colonial power which contained serious flaws, all of which can be attributed to reading Foucault's lecture out of context.

Since then, we have seen the systematic posthumous publication of Foucault's lectures, rendering the task of understanding the trajectory of Foucault's thought considerably easier. The 2003 publication of the *Society Must Be Defended* lectures can be considered a milestone in this regard: because they deploy the same notion of biopolitics as *The History of Sexuality*, but without linking the notion to the creation of a bourgeois self, the lectures illustrates quite clearly that Foucault did not seek to explain a process of identity formation, but a strategy of rule based on state racism. Moreover, with its emphasis on the discourse of war, the lecture series demonstrated that a focus on the productivity of biopower does not necessarily involve a blindness to its potentially violent character.

In Duncan's book, we see how the concept of governmentality as Scott used it can and must be understood in the context of Foucault's work on the violence of biopolitics. By re-establishing the links that had been severed in the decontextualized publication of the governmentality lectures, Duncan addresses the flaws plaguing Scott's essay and provides a convincing and long overdue account of colonial power as an interplay of conflicting rationales and projects.

To avoid misunderstanding, it is worth stressing that the point of this chronological overview is not to create a story of the progress of postcolonial studies up to the point where it finally managed to adopt a truly Foucauldian conceptualization of power. Rather, the goal has been to highlight the trajectories of Foucault's work and postcolonial studies alike: the posthumous publications of Foucault's work continue to generate new interpretations and to raise new questions about power. Although I have argued that the more recent interpretations provide a more coherent understanding of Foucault's conceptualization of power, this is not to deny the value of the postcolonial critiques of power as authority. Indeed, the point has been all along that these two conceptualizations of power in reality study two different phenomena, viz. the projects of colonial power, and the authority that legitimates them. The real problem is not that postcolonial scholars have used Foucauldian concepts for a different purpose than Foucault

intended, but that for a long time they ignored exactly those issues Foucault had wanted to raise, and which are central to colonialism: the different rationales, strategies, and instruments of power. By dressing their critiques of authority in Foucauldian terminology, the postcolonial scholars working along the lines of Said's interpretation effectively substituted the critique of colonial authority for the study of colonial power as an activity.

To return to the question we set out with: has there been a Foucault effect in postcolonial studies? Looking at the work of Mbembe, Scott, and Duncan, the answer has to be a careful yes: these scholars have drawn on Foucauldian concepts in order to analyze different rationalities of colonial power. But if we look at Said, Bhabha, Mitchell, and Stoler, it also becomes apparent that among those who ostensibly draw on Foucault's work, there has been an even stronger 'Said effect': the tendency to focus on colonial power only insofar as it is a form of authority. This concern with authority has been extremely influential: it has not only determined interpretations of Foucault, but also limited the problem-space within which postcolonial studies has been working to the interconnection between identity and authority. However, with new publications and translations of Foucault's lectures becoming available to facilitate the interpretation and contextualization of Foucault's work, postcolonial scholars seem to be gradually venturing beyond the familiar questions of identity-as-authority again.

The result is that new questions – or old, forgotten ones – are being posed again: what were and are the different projects of colonial power? How do we think of the conflicts between different colonial projects and strategies? How have these projects been carried out? What resistant rationalities can they meet with? Or, to put it differently: in which way do colonial powers seek to shape colonial societies, and how do they (fail to) achieve these goals? If postcolonial studies seems to have lost some of the momentum it had gained in the nineties, this is perhaps not so much because it has exhausted all of its questions, but because it never really engaged the most important ones.

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German Abstract

Postcolonial Studies nach Foucault:

Diskurs, Disziplin, Biomacht und Gouvernementalität als _Travelling Concepts_

1. Einleitung

Nach einer Erhebung des *ISI Web of Science* von 2007 ist Michel Foucault der meistzitierte Autor in den Geisteswissenschaften. Der Bereich der postcolonial studies scheint dabei keine Ausnahme zu bilden: Anhänger_innen und Kritiker_innen Foucaults haben gleichermaßen auf die wegweisende Rolle verwiesen, die sein Werk in der Erforschung der (De-)Kolonisierung spielt.[49] Seit dem Erscheinen von Edward Saids *Orientalismus* im Jahr 1978[50] taucht der Name Foucaults immer wieder in den verschiedensten Richtungen der Kolonialismuskritik auf. Die Bedeutung Foucaults für die *postcolonial studies* ist Gegenstand dieser Arbeit.

Orientalismus hat als eine der frühesten Publikationen das Werk Foucaults in der englischsprachigen Welt sichtbar gemacht. Es wäre deswegen unzureichend, die *postcolonial studies* nur als passiven Rezipienten Foucaultscher Einflüsse zu betrachten: Postkoloniale Forscher_innen haben eigenständige Interpretationen seines Werks formuliert und es weiterentwickelt, um seine Theorien und Konzepte auf die Kolonialismuskritik anzuwenden. Darüber hinaus haben sie Bedenken bezüglich jener Elemente in Foucaults Werk formuliert, die vermeintlich eine eurozentrische Weltsicht aufrechterhalten, und diese zur Diskussion gestellt. Wenn die vorliegende Arbeit sich also mit den *postcolonial studies* nach Foucault befasst, so umfasst die Präposition ‚nach' eine doppelte Bedeutung: ‚Nach' verweist nicht nur auf die Tendenz bestimmter postkolonialer Texte, sich auf das Werk Foucaults zu beziehen, sondern auch auf den Bruch zwischen Foucaults Europa-zentrierten Analysen und einer postkolonialen Kritik, die versucht, sich von der eurozentrischen Sichtweise weg zu entwickeln. Diese Dissertation nimmt beide Aspekte zugleich in den Blick und stellt dabei die Frage, inwiefern die *postcolonial studies* sich Foucaults Arbeiten für ihre Zwecke angeeignet haben.

[49] vgl. Ann Laura Stoler 1995: 1, Timothy Brennan 2006: 103 und Neil Lazarus 1999: 11.
[50] Jahreszahlen bei Publikationen beziehen sich auf die originalsprachliche Ersterscheinung.

Statt sich also auf die theoretischen Rahmenbedingungen der Zusammenhänge zwischen Foucaults Werk und den *postcolonial studies* zu konzentrieren, versucht die vorliegende Arbeit, diese vermeintliche Einheit zugunsten der Ausarbeitung separater Konzepte aufzulösen. Weder das Oeuvre Foucaults noch die zahlreichen Texte, die unter der Rubrik der *postcolonial studies* subsumiert werden, können einem einzelnen theoretischen Rahmenkonzept zugeordnet werden. Daher ist es nicht zielführend, die *postcolonial studies* als reinen Anwendungsbereich Foucaultscher Theorien zu betrachten. Bei der Betrachtung ihrer einzelnen Bestandteile wird vielmehr deutlich, dass die Aneignung von Foucaults Werk durch die *postcolonial studies* in der Übernahme zahlreicher spezifischer Konzepte und der Debatte über deren Bedeutungs- und Funktionspotentiale besteht.

Es sind vor allem vier Konzepte, die sowohl in Foucaults Werk als auch in den *postcolonial studies* grundlegende Rollen spielen: Diskurs, Disziplin, Biomacht und Gouvernementalität. Als mobile *travelling concepts* sind sie in verschiedensten akademischen Disziplinen, Denkschulen, Fachbereichen und Texten – oder, kurzum, in den unterschiedlichsten Kontexten – in Erscheinung getreten. Eine Grundannahme dieser Arbeit ist die Kontextabhängigkeit von Konzepten: diese erhalten ihre Bedeutung nur, indem sie zu anderen Konzepten, Texten und theoretischen Systemen in Beziehung gesetzt werden.[51] Wird ein Konzept von einem Kontext in einen anderen transferiert, verändern sich im Zuge dieser Rekontextualisierung notwendigerweise auch seine Bedeutungen und Funktionen.

Umgekehrt spielen Konzepte eine entscheidende Rolle in der Konstruktion ebendieser Diskurse, indem sie Modi des Denkens und Wahrnehmens prägen und bestimmte Weisen der Weltwahrnehmung erzeugen. Daher sind Konzepte nicht nur als kontextabhängig zu verstehen, sondern sie tragen zugleich zur Konstruktion der Kontexte bei, in denen sie auftreten. Daraus folgt, dass Rekontextualisierungen nicht nur eine Veränderung von Bedeutungen und Funktionen von Konzepten, sondern auch eine Veränderung des Kontexts mit sich bringen. Am Ende der ‚Reise' eines Konzepts steht demzufolge eine wechselseitige Transformation von Konzept und Kontext als Endprodukt seiner Mobilität. Um die Bedeutung dieses Prozesses zu verstehen und

[51] vgl. Bal, Mieke. 2002. *Travelling Concepts in the Humanities: A Rough Guide*. London/Toronto: University of Toronto Press. S. 24.

hervorzuheben, untersucht das vorliegende Forschungsprojekt die Konzepte des Diskurses, der Disziplin, der Biomacht und der Gouvernementalität vor und nach ihrer ‚Reise' von einem Kontext zum nächsten.

Die Betrachtung dieser Konzepte erfolgt in vier separaten Kapiteln und bildet das Kernstück der vorliegenden Arbeit. Jedes Kapitel beginnt mit einer Analyse des zentralen Texts, in dem Foucault das jeweilige Konzept entwickelt hat. Im nächsten Schritt werden je zwei postkoloniale Texte untersucht, die maßgeblich von diesem Konzept beeinflusst sind. Durch diese Gegenüberstellung werden die Transformationen des Konzepts im Vergleich zwischen beiden Kontexten sichtbar und analysierbar gemacht.

Die Untersuchung der Veränderungen dieser vier Konzepte ermöglicht es, sich sodann der Frage zu stellen, inwiefern diese ‚postkolonialen Aneignungen' einen, wie der Titel eines einflussreichen Bandes vorschlägt, ‚Foucault-Effekt' in den *postcolonial studies* hervorgebracht haben.[52] In welchem Ausmaß ermöglichen seine Konzepte eine eigene Form der Kritik, und in welchem Maße ist diese in den *postcolonial studies* präsent? Unterscheiden sich die untersuchten postkolonialen Texte in ihren konzeptuellen Rahmenbedingungen von den Bereichen der *postcolonial studies*, die sich nicht auf Foucaultsche Theorien berufen? Und wenn ja, welche Konsequenzen ergeben sich daraus für die postkoloniale Kritik?

Die grundlegende These dieser Arbeit besagt, dass keineswegs von einem unproblematischen ‚Foucault-Effekt' in den *postcolonial studies* ausgegangen werden kann. Die Verwerfungen innerhalb von Foucaults Werk, die Vielschichtigkeit des durchlässigen Feldes der postkolonialen Forschung sowie die unausweichlichen Transformationsprozesse, die mit der Rekontextualisierung von Konzepten einhergehen, verhindern eine theoretische, methodologische oder konzeptuelle Einheitlichkeit innerhalb des von Foucault beeinflussten Segments der *postcolonial studies*. Vielmehr präsentiert sich dieses Feld als Netzwerk eng gesponnener intertextueller Bezüge, in dem die Vorherrschaft des Foucaultschen Impetus in Konkurrenz mit anderen Konzepten und Methoden verhandelt wird. Insbesondere das konzeptuelle Rahmenwerk, das Edward Said in seiner Studie *Orientalismus* entwickelt hat, eignet

[52] Burchell, Graham; Gordon, Colin; Miller, Peter (eds.) 1991. *The Foucault Effect: Studies in Governmentality*. Chicago: University of Chicago Press.

sich fortwährend Foucaultsche Konzepte an und leitet sie in neue Bahnen. Dies geschieht selbst in den Werken jener Autor_innen, die sich ausdrücklich gegen Saids Theoriegebäude wenden. Dies resultiert in einem grundlegenden Spannungsverhältnis zwischen Foucaults Konzept von Macht als Zusammenspiel von Techniken und Strategien und Saids Auffassung von Macht als Autorität.

2. Theoretisches Rahmenwerk und Methoden

Die kulturwissenschaftlichen Methoden, die in den vier Einzelkapiteln Anwendung finden, und der theoretische Kontext, aus dem sie sich ableiten, werden in einem separaten Kapitel erläutert. Den Ausgangspunkt bildet die Annahme, dass ‚Diskurs', Disziplin', ‚Biomacht', und ‚Gouvernementalität' Zeichen sind, die anhand des semiotischen Dreiecks verstanden werden können. Diese Konzepte sind also durch die Begriffe des Bezeichnenden, des Bezeichneten und des Referenten zu beschreiben. Obgleich dieser Konzeptbegriff dem allgemeinen Verständnis des Konzepts als Bezeichnetem und auch Mieke Bals Definition von Konzepten als ‚shorthand theories'[53] entgegensteht, bietet er den Vorteil, auch solche Transformationen eines Konzepts einzubeziehen, die sich auf den Ebenen des Bezeichnenden und der Referenz abspielen.

Entsprechend wird die Wendung *travelling concepts* übernommen, um auf die Veränderungen zu verweisen, die auf den verschiedenen Ebenen von Bezeichnendem, Bezeichnetem und Referenten stattfinden, wenn ein Konzept von einem Kontext in einen anderen wechselt. Dies führt schließlich zu drei möglichen Variablen am Ende des Reiseprozesses: 1) Das Bezeichnende ändert sich, wenn ein neuer Begriff im alten Kontext in Bezug auf denselben Referenten verwendet wird; 2) das Bezeichnete ändert sich, wenn der gleiche Begriff in einer neuen Bedeutung gebraucht wird; 3) der Referent ändert sich, wenn derselbe Begriff in derselben Bedeutung in Bezug auf ein neues Objekt angewendet wird.

Es sollte allerdings nicht vergessen werden, dass solche Transformationen nicht willkürlich stattfinden: Die wissenschaftliche Praxis verlangt, dass Konzepte klar definiert werden. Im Prozess der Ausarbeitung konzeptueller Apparate und spezifischen Vokabulars bemühen sich

[53] Vgl. Bal, Mieke. 2002. *Travelling Concepts in the Humanities: A Rough Guide.* London/Toronto: University of Toronto Press, S. 23.

wissenschaftliche Texte um die Festlegung oder das ‚Einfrieren' der Bezüge zwischen den drei semiotischen Variablen. Transformationen von Konzepten sind daher keineswegs regellos: Sie werden von anderen Konzepten, anderen Texten, Denktraditionen, disziplinären Strukturen und Forschungskulturen bestimmt.

Nachdem das ‚Reisen von Konzepten' als Prozess der Rekontextualisierung von Zeichen beschrieben worden ist, kann sich den verschiedenen Theorien und Methoden zugewandt werden, die unter dem Phänomen der Intertextualität zusammengefasst werden. Die untersuchten postkolonialen Theorien weisen nicht nur etliche Bezüge zum Werk Foucaults auf und transponieren so eine Vielzahl von Zeichen, sondern auch die Verwendung Foucaultscher Konzepte selbst steht bereits für die Präsenz von Zeichen aus einem anderen Text. Transponieren und verhandeln also wissenschaftliche Texte Konzepte aus anderen Texten, so kann das Konzept als intertextuelles Element *par excellence* angesehen werden.

Wenn wissenschaftliche Konzepte solchermaßen als intertextuelle Elemente verstanden werden, folgt daraus notwendigerweise, dass die innerhalb der Intertextualitätsforschung laufenden Debatten zu Bedeutungskonstitution und ihren Krisen direkte Auswirkungen auf den Status von Konzepten haben. Ausgehend von Bachtins Konzept der Hybridität soll die Untersuchung postkolonialer Transformationen von Foucaultschen Konzepten beleuchten, auf welche Weise diese t*ravelling concepts* multiple Bedeutungsebenen herausbilden: Als intertextuelle Elemente bringen Konzepte sowohl die Bedeutung mit, die sie in der Verwendung in ehemaligen Kontexten erhalten hatten, als auch die, die sie innerhalb des Zielkontexts erwerben. In diesem Sinne sind sie als hybride Konzepte zu verstehen. Darüber hinaus kann nicht davon ausgegangen werden, dass sich diese Bedeutungsvielfalt auf zwei Ebenen beschränkt: jedes Mal, wenn ein Konzept in einen neuen Kontext übertragen wird, wird eine neue Bedeutungsebene zu den vorherigen in Bezug gesetzt und verhandelt. Auch der gegenteilige Vorgang ist denkbar: Konzepte können an Bedeutungspotential verlieren, wenn ihre intertextuellen Charakteristika nicht mehr anerkannt oder aktualisiert werden. Dieses Bild soll jedoch keinesfalls suggerieren, es handle sich beim Hinzugewinn oder beim Verlust von Bedeutungsebenen um simple Additions- beziehungsweise Subtraktionsvorgänge: Bedeutungen von Konzepten summieren sich nicht lediglich auf, sondern stehen in Konkurrenz zueinander, widersprechen oder verändern sich wechselseitig. Da Bedeutungen nicht notwendigerweise kompatibel sein müssen, können sie zu Brüchen,

Verwerfungen und Unbestimmtheiten innerhalb von Konzepten führen, die unmittelbar von ihrer Rekontextualisierung herrühren.

Die Analyse dieser Ebenen und ihrer Transformationen, die in den vier Hauptkapiteln vorgenommen wird, besteht grundsätzlich aus drei Schritten. Jeder Text wird im Hinblick auf den Kontext betrachtet, auf den er sich bezieht, sodann auf den Kontext, in dem er das jeweilige Konzept situiert, und schließlich auf das Konzept an sich. Diese Struktur korrespondiert mit der Wechselwirkung von Konzepten und Kontexten, wie sie in Sektion 2.1 besprochen wird. Zwecks größerer Eindeutigkeit wird der Bezug des Kontexts eines Konzepts hier zweigeteilt: Es wird unterschieden zwischen dem ‚Ko-Text' (‚cotext') eines Konzepts, also dem Text, in dem ein Konzept beschrieben wird, und dem ‚context' als Kontext im eigentlichen Sinn.

Die erste, kontextuelle Analyse hat zum Ziel, den Text in seiner Relation zu anderen Texten zu verorten, indem seine intertextuellen Spuren nachvollzogen werden. Dies meint zunächst die grundlegende Aufgabe, Zitate, Paraphrasierungen und Bezugnahmen aus anderen und auf andere Texte nachzuvollziehen und ihre Funktionen zu bestimmen. Dies kann jedoch nur ein erster Schritt sein, der nicht zwangsläufig weit führt. Vor allem bei Texten von Foucault sind Bezugnahmen auf spezifische Fremdtexte sehr selten. Dies erschwert die Kontextualisierung seines Werks bis zum Anschein der Unmöglichkeit. Durch die Betrachtung von intertextuellen Spuren im weiteren Sinne ist es jedoch zumindest möglich, einen Text in Bezug auf andere Textgruppen zu verorten. Selbst wenn der Text gar keine direkten Referenzen zu anderen Texten enthält, kann er dennoch auf etwas reagieren, und in diesem Fall impliziert die Reaktion ihren textuellen Gegenpart. Diese Annahme kann auch in Bezug auf den Beitrag gemacht werden, den der Text zu leisten behauptet: Ein Beitrag beinhaltet per Definition eine Einbringung in etwas anderes, sei es eine Disziplin, ein Themenfeld, eine Forschungsgemeinschaft, -tradition oder -kultur. Was in einem Text also implizit aufgerufen wird, lässt valide Rückschlüsse darauf zu, auf was er aufbaut, was er verhandelt und worauf er reagiert.

Die kotextuelle Analyse zielt darauf ab, das Konzept innerhalb des Textes zu verorten, und zwar auf einer formalen und auf einer funktionalen Ebene. Die formale Ebene bezieht sich auf die Quantität (die absolute Anzahl von Nennungen des Konzepts innerhalb des Textes), Häufigkeit (die Anzahl in Relation zur Textlänge) und die Verteilung (die Häufigkeit innerhalb verschiedener

Textpassagen). Dies stellt die syntagmatische Dimension eines Konzepts dar: seine Position innerhalb eines konzeptuellen Systems. Der Begriff ‚konzeptuelle Architektur' wird dabei für den mehr oder weniger stabilen Bezugsrahmen von und zwischen Konzepten verwendet, der sich im Zuge der Interpretation herauskristallisiert. Dies stellt keine simple Abstraktionsleistung dar, sondern einen hermeneutischen Prozess – dies zeigt sich darin, dass aus demselben Text mitunter unterschiedliche konzeptuelle Architekturen rekonstruiert werden können. Statt als Problem wird dieses Phänomen als Chance verstanden, da innerhalb dieses Prozesses unterschiedliche Bedeutung-, Funktions- und Wirkungspotentiale von Konzepten ersichtlich werden.

Schließlich untersucht die konzeptuelle Analyse, auf welche Weisen Kontexte und Ko-Texte ein Konzept mit einem bestimmten Wirkungspotential hervorbringen. In diesem Prozess wird als erster Schritt die definitorische Bedeutung des Konzepts umgrenzt und daraufhin mit den impliziten Bedeutungen verglichen, die sich offenbaren, wenn das Konzept angewendet statt nur definiert wird. Neben der ursprünglichen Denotation umfassen diese dann auch Konnotationen und Assoziationen. Das Hauptaugenmerk liegt hierbei auf der paradigmatischen Dimension eines Konzepts, seinen Bezügen zu anderen Konzepten *in absentia* (Synonymen, Hyponymen, Hyperonymen und Antonymen) sowie den Kollokationen, in denen das Konzept angetroffen wird. Die zuvor beschriebene Vorstellung von mehreren Bedeutungsebenen erweist sich hier als sinnvoll: Häufig kann die Bedeutung eines Konzepts nicht auf einen einzelnen, stabilen semantischen Kern reduziert werden; und unterschiedliche konzeptuelle Architekturen innerhalb desselben Textes führen zu verschiedenen Funktionen der jeweiligen Bedeutungsebenen. Die Aufgabe der konzeptuellen Analyse besteht also darin, die jeweiligen Ebenen voneinander abzugrenzen und ihre Wechselbeziehungen untereinander zu verdeutlichen. Sind diese unterschiedlichen Bedeutungen und Funktionen klar benannt, kann die Frage nach ihrem Wirkungspotential gestellt werden: Welche normativen Implikationen birgt das besagte Konzept für Betrachtungen des Kolonialen? Welche Bedeutungsebenen sind dominant, und welche Elemente kolonialer Macht beherrschen das Bild? Dies stellt den kritischen Teil der Analyse dar, und der Kontext, von dem ausgegangen wird, bildet gewissermaßen die Basis für die kritische Betrachtung. Tatsächlich ist es nur in Relation zu anderen Konzeptualisierungen möglich, eine Bewertung des Verlustes, des Zugewinns oder der Modifikationen von Bedeutung vorzunehmen. Verlust und Gewinn sind dabei nicht als absolute Werte zu betrachten, sondern werden in Bezug

auf einen vorangegangenen Text, eine vorangegangene Analyse von Machtverhältnissen oder ein früheres Bild des Kolonialismus beurteilt.

In ihrer Gesamtheit geben diese drei Schritte Antwort auf drei Kategorien von Fragen, nämlich nach den Bedeutungen eines Konzepts, nach seinen Funktionen sowie nach seinen Auswirkungen. Die erste Frage befasst sich mit der Bedeutung: Wie wird ein Konzept definiert? Ist seine Bedeutung verändert worden? Hat es mehrfache Bedeutungen? Sind diese untereinander konsistent oder widersprüchlich? Worauf bezieht sich das Konzept, und was schließt es aus? In welcher Beziehung steht seine Bedeutung zu der von anderen Konzepten? Zweitens stellt sich die Frage nach der Funktion: Welche Aufgabe, welchen Zweck erfüllt das Konzept? Welche Rolle spielt es innerhalb des Texts? Welche Funktionen hat es in Relation zu anderen Konzepten? Die dritte Frage adressiert die Auswirkungen eines Konzepts: Inwiefern beeinflussen Bedeutung und Funktion eines Konzepts seinen Ko-Text und Kontext? Verändert die Verwendung eines Konzepts den Fokus des Texts, und wenn ja, auf welche Weise? Welche Konsequenzen und Schlussfolgerungen ergeben sich daraus für die *postcolonial studies*, und welche Implikationen haben die Ergebnisse in Bezug auf Foucaults Werk? Verändern sie die Beziehung zwischen Foucault und den *postcolonial studies*? Die Analysekapitel haben zum Ziel, Antworten auf diese Fragen zu finden und diese untereinander in strukturelle Zusammenhänge zu bringen.

3. Diskurs

Der Fokus dieses Kapitels liegt auf dem Konzept des Diskurses in der Form, wie es von Foucault entwickelt und von Edward Said und Homi K. Bhabha übernommen und weiterentwickelt worden ist. Das Kapitel beginnt mit der Analyse von Foucaults *Archäologie des Wissens*, erstmals 1969 erschienen, und betrachtet in der Folge Saids *Orientalismus* (1978) und Bhabhas Artikel „The Other Question“ und „Of Mimicry and Man“ (1994). Insbesondere betrachtet dieser Abschnitt, welche Bezüge Said und Bhabha zwischen dem Foucaultschen Diskurskonzept und unterschiedlichen Konzeptionen von Macht herstellen und die Schwierigkeiten, mit denen sie sich in Folge dieser Transformationen konfrontiert sehen.

Foucault stellte sein Konzept des Diskurses erstmals in der *Archäologie des Wissens* vor. Wie der Titel verdeutlicht, war sein zentrales Anliegen die Betrachtung von Wissensstrukturen, weniger die des Diskurses als solchem. Er hatte nicht zum Ziel, eine grundlegende Theorie des Diskurses zu etablieren, sondern nutzte vielmehr das Diskurskonzept, um die Produktion von Wissen als diskursivem Konstrukt anhand bestimmter Strukturen zu verstehen. Die Schlüsselidee liegt für Foucault darin, dass Wissen nicht in der Beziehung zu einem materiellen Objekt besteht, sondern ein autonomes System bildet, das seine eigenen Diskursobjekte selbst hervorbringt. Das Wissen wird also nicht von materiellen Dingen beherrscht, sondern von etwas, das Foucault *historical a priori* nennt: zufällige Regeln, die die Produktion von Wissen strukturieren. Die Aufgabe des Archäologen besteht somit darin, diese Regeln zu identifizieren und abzugrenzen sowie zu analysieren, wie bestimmte Gruppen von Regeln verschiedene Diskurse und Wissenssysteme prägen. Mit diesem Verständnis von Wissen als diskontinuierliches Phänomenen bricht Foucault mit der Vorstellung des souveränen Subjekts als Quelle und Grundlage absoluten Wissens und sieht das Subjekt vielmehr selbst als Projektion des Diskurses.

Dabei ist wichtig, dass dieses Verständnis von Diskurs als autonomem System traditionelle Vorstellungen von Wahrheit und ‚wahrem' Wissen modifiziert. Foucault behauptet weder, es gebe keinen Unterschied zwischen Lüge und Wahrheit, noch, dass alles Wissen unwahr sei. Vielmehr befasst er sich damit, wie die Regeln des Diskurses Wahrheitseffekte *innerhalb* ihrer diskursiven Formation hervorbringen. Wahrheit ist nicht die Beziehung zwischen einer Aussage und einem materiellen Objekt, sondern selbst Teil der Diskursbedingungen. Dies impliziert auch, dass Foucaults Theorie des Wissens weder eine Theorie der Repräsentation noch der Fehlrepräsentation beinhaltet: Der Archäologe betrachtet den Diskurs als autonomes System ohne festes Korrelat in der materiellen Welt, anhand dessen sein Wahrheitsgehalt verifizierbar wäre.

Als dritter Punkt sollte im Hinterkopf behalten werden, dass Foucault sein Konzept des Diskurses in der *Archäologie des Wissens* nicht mit seinem Konzept der Macht in Verbindung bringt. Tatsächlich wird das Konzept der Macht hier gar nicht thematisiert, und die Verbindungen zwischen Macht, Diskurs und Wissen werden erst in seinem späteren Werk hervorgehoben, insbesondere in *Überwachen und Strafen*. Das Konzept von Macht, das in *Überwachen und Strafen* entwickelt wird, lässt sich allerdings leicht mit Foucaults Konzeptualisierungen von

Diskurs und Macht aus der *Archäologie des Wissens* in Verbindung bringen. Foucaults Behauptung ist, dass Wissen und Macht keine getrennten Begriffe sind, sondern dass die Hervorbringung und Benennung von diskursiven Objekten selbst das Wissen in eine Machtposition gegenüber den Objekten versetzt: Der objektivierende Effekt des Wissens selbst begründet ein Machtverhältnis. Dies soll ausdrücklich nicht behaupten, dass Wissen stets durch Machtverhältnisse korrumpiert wird – eine solche Haltung würde suggerieren, dass Machtverhältnisse nur außerhalb und getrennt von Wissen existierten und zudem die Unterscheidung zwischen vermeintlich richtiger und falscher Repräsentation beförderten. Um zu unterstreichen, dass Macht und Wissen die gleiche objektivierende Grundstruktur teilen und in diesem Sinne flächengleich sind, verwendet Foucault für diese Struktur den Begriff ‚Macht/Wissen'.

In seinem Werk *Orientalismus* analysiert Edward Said Repräsentationen des Orients und bezeichnet das System entsprechender textueller Repräsentationen im Foucaultschen Sinne als ‚Diskurs'. Obgleich Said die objektivierende Macht des orientalistischen Diskurses bisweilen auf eine Weise beschreibt, die Analogien zu Foucaults Konzept von Macht/Wissen aufweist, bemüht sich Said um eine Beibehaltung der Unterscheidung zwischen ‚richtiger' und ‚falscher' Repräsentation und versteht also Macht und Wissen als potentiell voneinander getrennt. Dieser Widerspruch verweist auf die Tatsache, dass *Orientalismus* zwei konzeptuelle Architekturen beherbergt: aus dem gleichen Repertoire an Bezeichnenden konstruiert die Studie zwei völlig verschiedene und nicht kompatible Konstellationen von Konzepten.

Die erste aus dem Text abzuleitende Architektur versteht Macht und Wissen im Diskurs als flächengleich: Der orientalistische Diskurs ist eine objektivierende Form des Wissens, die das ‚orientalische Subjekt' als Objekt westlichen Wissens konstruiert. In diesem Sinne wird die Wissensbeziehung zu einer Machtbeziehung.

Die zweite Architektur arbeitet ebenfalls mit den Konzepten des Diskurses, der Macht und des Wissens, jedoch in einer anderen Konstellation: Macht und Wissen werden als voneinander abgetrennt verstanden und Macht ist in der Lage, Wissen und dessen diskursive Artikulationen zu korrumpieren. Der orientalistische Diskurs ist somit als falsche Repräsentation des Orients zu verstehen: seine Darstellung speist sich aus dem westlichen Willen zur Macht über den Orient.

Der orientalistische Diskurs repräsentiert den Orient daher in einer Weise, die den Westen als überlegen erscheinen lässt und ihm so die Legitimation verschafft, den Orient zu kolonisieren. Der Diskurs ist in dieser Konzeptualisierung kein autonomes System mehr, sondern ein Machtinstrument.

Im Zuge der von Said angestoßenen Transformation kommen zwei weitere Konzepte ins Spiel: Identität und Autorität. Während Foucaults Interesse rein dem Wissen als spezifischer Subjekt-Objekt-Beziehung und der Autonomie des Diskurses galt, konzentriert sich Said auf den Diskurs als Fehlrepräsentation. Diese Herangehensweise impliziert die Frage nach Identität eher als die nach dem Wissen per se: Said versteht den orientalistischen Diskurs als Strategie, die Identität des orientalischen Subjekts festzulegen, und den Westen als im Vergleich dazu überlegen darzustellen. Das Machtverhältnis innerhalb dieser Konstellation ist also nicht das Ergebnis einer Objektivierung, sondern der Erzeugung von Identitäten, die dem Westen Autorität verleiht. Macht bezeichnet hier demnach nicht mehr das Verhältnis zu einem diskursiven Objekt, sondern ein Autoritätsverhältnis.

Offensichtlich gibt es also grundlegende Unterschiede zwischen den beiden Rekonstruktionen von Saids Argumenten, und doch kommen beide in *Orientalismus* zum Einsatz. In Abhängigkeit davon, ob er versucht, die Strategien der Machtausübung über orientalische Subjekte darzustellen oder aber das Narrativ, das diese Unterdrückung rechtfertigt, spricht Said vom Diskurs entweder als einem autonomen System oder aber als Fehlrepräsentation, die die Autorität des Westens mittels der Erzeugung von Identitäten befördert.

Eine zweite Aneignung findet sich im Werk Homi Bhabhas und weist deutliche Bezüge zu Saids Arbeit auf. In „The Other Question“ und „Of Mimicry and Man“ kehrt Bhabha zu Foucaults Verständnis vom Diskurs als autonomem System zurück und vermeidet so die Widersprüche, die Saids Arbeiten innewohnen. Jedoch sind seine Studien denen Saids insofern durchaus ähnlich, als dass beide Wissenschaftler sich keineswegs wie Foucault auf die Analyse von Wissen beschränken, sondern das Diskurskonzept auf Strukturen von Identität und Subjektivität anwenden. Da Subjektivität durch den frühen Foucault lediglich als diskursiver Effekt wahrgenommen wurde und nicht als Faktor der Beziehungen *zwischen* Subjekten, ergänzt Bhabha die Theorien Foucaults mit denen Lacans, um diese vermeintliche Lücke zu schließen,

wobei das Konzept des Subjekts als Bindeglied zwischen beiden Theorien fungiert. Dies wiederum führt dazu, dass Bhabha Lacans universales Subjekt als Subjekt des Diskurses reproduziert und dabei Differenzen in Bezug auf Geschlecht, Rasse[54] und soziale Herkunft aus dem Blick verliert.

Somit dekontextualisieren sowohl Said als auch Bhabha das Foucaultsche Diskurskonzept: Während Foucault es definierte, um Wissensstrukturen zu untersuchen, wenden die beiden späteren Wissenschaftler es auf Fragen der Identitätsbildung und der intersubjektiven Beziehungen an. Außerdem verzahnen sie das Konzept des Diskurses mit dem der Macht: Bei Said wird Macht bisweilen als Synonym für Autorität verwendet; bei Bhabha hingegen erscheint Macht als psychosoziales Phänomen. Wie im Folgenden gezeigt wird, unterscheiden sich beide Konzeptualisierungen deutlich vom Begriff der Macht, wie Foucault ihn entwickelt hatte. Dennoch prägen diese psychosozialen Interpretationen Foucaults weiterhin grundlegend den Fokus auch jener postkolonialen Forschung, die sich ausdrücklich auf das Foucaultsche Konzept von Macht beruft.

4. Disziplin

Nachdem in Kapitel 3 festgestellt wurde, dass Said und Bhabha den Arbeiten Foucaults ihre eigenen Konzepte von Macht aufgepropft haben, wendet sich Kapitel 4 zu Beginn Foucaults eigenem Machtkonzept zu und legt dabei besonderes Augenmerk auf den Begriff der Disziplin. Eine weitere Sektion beschreibt, inwiefern Timothy Mitchells *Colonising Egypt* (1991) Foucaults Arbeiten zur Disziplin aufgreift, anwendet und transformiert. Darüber hinaus wird herausgestellt, wie Mitchell schließlich zu einem Autoritätsbegriff gelangt, der dem von Said in *Orientalismus* stark ähnelt. Schließlich betrachtet das Kapitel in einer Analyse von Martha Kaplans „Panopticon in Poona“ (1995) jene Aspekte des Foucaultschen Disziplinbegriffs, die ihn aus einer postkolonialen Perspektive problematisch erscheinen lassen: seine Tendenz zum Eurozentrismus und sein Ausschluss von Phänomenen des Widerstands.

[54] Hier ist anzumerken, dass ‚Rasse’ ein in den deutschen Geisteswissenschaften wenig verwendeter, da historisch stigmatisierter Begriff ist. Er bezeichnet hier in Anlehnung an das Konzept *race* eine konstruierte Differenzkategorie und nicht die Annahme einer biologischen Gegebenheit. Um möglichst nah am Sprachgebrauch in Foucaults Texten zu bleiben, wurde der Begriff nicht durch das zeitgenössische Konzept der Ethnizität ersetzt.

Foucault beschrieb sein Konzept der Disziplin erstmals in *Überwachen und Strafen* (1975), jener Arbeit, die innerhalb seines Werks den Übergang vom archäologischen zum genealogischen Erkenntnisinteresse markiert. In seinen genealogischen Arbeiten hat das Konzept der Macht das des Diskurses als zentrales Thema abgelöst: So, wie er das Subjekt als Resultat des Diskurses anstatt als seinen Urheber beschrieben hat, werden Subjekte und Objekte nun zum Ergebnis von Disziplinen[55] erklärt. Statt von einem souveränen Subjekt, das Macht besitzt, geht Foucault von einem Machtbegriff aus, der vom Subjekt abgekoppelt ist und Macht als relational, dezentral, multidirektional und strategisch versteht. Disziplinen bilden dann eine Form der Machtausübung, die den Menschen zum Objekt macht: Subjekte werden zu Objekten der Überwachung, des Wissens, der Manipulation, der Ertüchtigung, der Strafe etc. Es existiert kein Subjekt, das die Ausbreitung und Anwendung objektivierender Strategien kontrollieren könnte, und dennoch beschreibt Foucault eine klare diachrone Entwicklung hin zu einem Punkt, an dem solche Objektivierungsstrategien gesellschaftlich allgegenwärtig geworden sind.

Timothy Mitchells *Colonising Egypt* bezieht sich auf dieses Konzept der Disziplin, um die Kolonisation Ägyptens als Folge der Ausbreitung der Moderne und der disziplinierenden Technologien zu deuten, die seiner Ansicht nach den Kern des Konzepts der Moderne bilden. In diesem Sinne ähnelt Mitchells Verständnis von Macht zumindest der Struktur nach jenem von Foucault: beide verorten Macht eher in einem Geflecht von Machtstrukturen als in der konkreten Machtausübung eines Souveräns, eines souveränen Staates oder seiner Streitmacht. Letztendlich ordnet Mitchell dieses Konzept der Disziplin allerdings dem Konzept der Autorität unter, indem er argumentiert, dass disziplinierende Macht letztlich den modernen Dualismus von Subjekten und Objekten hervorbringt, wobei Autorität in der Sphäre des Subjektiven angesiedelt ist. Diese Auffassung von Autorität unterscheidet sich zwar deutlich von der Saids, aber auch hier fällt die Tendenz auf, vor allem die Umstände in den Blick zu nehmen, die koloniale Handlungen legitimieren, und weniger die eigentlichen Techniken der Unterdrückung.

In Martha Kaplans Essay “Panopticon in Poona” findet eine zweite Aneignung des Konzepts der Disziplin statt. Obgleich Kaplan sich auf das Konzept bezieht, um Strategien der Machtausübung im kolonialen Indien zu untersuchen, zieht sie letztendlich in Zweifel, ob das Konzept der Disziplin

[55] Unter ‚Disziplinen’ wird hier nicht der Plural des abstrakten Konzepts der Disziplin verstanden, sondern werden Instrumente und Techniken der disziplinierenden Machtausübung zusammengefasst.

überhaupt geeignet ist, Machtstrukturen in kolonialen Kontexten adäquat zu beschreiben, da Foucaults Konzeptualisierung durch und durch eurozentrisch geprägt sei. Dabei übersieht sie allerdings ein ebenso bedenkliches Problem: Weder *Überwachen und Strafen* noch *Colonising Egypt* oder ihrem eigenen Beitrag "Panopticon in Poona" gelingt es, dem Widerstand gegenüber den kolonialen Disziplinen gerecht zu werden. Stattdessen kritisiert Kaplan das Konzept disziplinierender Macht als europäisches Phänomen und führt aus, eine oberflächliche binäre Unterscheidung zwischen disziplinierenden und nicht-disziplinierenden Gesellschaften sei ein Versuch, eine Idee von Europa zu profilieren. Nach der Zusammenführung der Überlegungen zu Kaplans Behauptung und Mitchells Arbeiten endet dieser Abschnitt mit der Schlussfolgerung, dass *Überwachen und Strafen* insofern als eurozentrisch anzusehen ist, als dass es eine in sich geschlossene Geschichte Europas entwirft – ein Problem, dem bereits in *Colonising Egypt* abgeholfen wurde. Die mangelhafte Beschäftigung mit anderen Grundprinzipien der Macht – auch mit potenziell widerständigen – erscheint hier als dringlicheres Anliegen, da das Konzept der Disziplin als monolithische Darstellungsform moderner kolonialer Macht in Erscheinung tritt.

5. Biomacht

Während die vorhergehenden Kapitel festgestellt haben, dass Saids Auffassung von Autorität postkoloniale Transformationen eher von Foucaults Konzept der Macht entfernt, befasst sich dieses Kapitel mit der Unterscheidung zwischen Macht als Autorität und Macht als Handlung. Zunächst wird dargelegt, in welchem Umfang Biomacht als Konzept von Foucault verwendet wurde, um bestimmte Handlungsformen und Techniken zu beschreiben, um dann in einem zweiten Abschnitt der Annahme nachzugehen, dass Ann Laura Stolers Text *Race and the Education of Desire* (1995) über eine Saidsche Interpretation von Foucaults Werk nicht hinausgeht. Im dritten Teil legt eine Analyse von Achille Mbembes „Necropolitics" (2003) dar, inwiefern eine Transformation des Konzepts der Biopolitik koloniale Wirkprinzipien der Macht und insbesondere Strategien des Bevölkerungsmanagements, die in Stolers Darstellung von Autorität im Dunkeln bleiben, beschreibbar machen kann.

Foucault entwickelte sein Konzept der Biomacht in seiner *Geschichte der Sexualität* (1976) und einer 1975-76 gehaltenen Vorlesungsreihe, die später unter dem Titel *In Verteidigung der Gesellschaft* (1996) veröffentlicht wurde. In beiden Kontexten verwendete er den Begriff mit

Bezug auf das Management und die Optimierung der Bevölkerung durch eine Reihe von Techniken, die beispielsweise Hygienekampagnen, Krankenversicherung, Stadtentwicklung, Geburtenkontrolle und andere Maßnahmen zur Bevölkerungsentwicklung umfassen. Diese Techniken können in zwei Kategorien unterteilt werden: solche, die ‚normale' Werte und Normen definieren und jene, die tatsächliche Gegebenheiten an die zuvor bestimmten Normwerte annähern sollen bzw. Teile der Gesellschaft als abweichend pathologisieren. An dieser Stelle kommt das Konzept der Rasse ins Spiel: für Foucault ist der Begriff der Rasse ein Mittel, ein biopolitisches Kontinuum künstlich zu unterteilen und Lebensformen danach zu markieren, inwiefern sie sich der Norm annähern können. Dieser Abschnitt argumentiert, dass diese Macht der Normalisierung eher eine Verteilung rund um eine Normvorstellung zur Folge hat, als eine binäre Unterscheidung zwischen Normalität und dem Abnormen zu begünstigen. Das vorrangige Anliegen der Biomacht ist daher nicht, die Identität von Subjekten festzuschreiben, sondern sie durch Bevölkerungsmanagement der Norm anzunähern. Kurz gesagt: Macht ist Handlung.

Stoler verwendet dieses Konzept allerdings, um zu zeigen, inwiefern koloniale Autorität auf Voraussetzungen sexueller und rassischer Identität beruht. Dabei ist ihr konzeptuelles Rahmenwerk praktisch identisch mit dem von Said: Beide konzentrieren sich auf die Rolle, die Prozesse der Identitätsbildung für die Herausbildung kolonialer Autorität spielen. Sowohl die von Foucault analysierten Handlungen und Techniken, als auch das tatsächliche Management der kolonialen Bevölkerung bleiben außen vor. Erneut hat dies zur Folge, dass der Fokus auf der Legitimation des Kolonialismus liegt, statt seine Funktionsweisen in den Blick zu nehmen.

Mbembes Text stellt eine Unterbrechung dieser Tendenz dar: Sein Konzept der ‚Nekropolitik' stellt die Gewaltsamkeit des kolonialen Bevölkerungsmanagements in den Vordergrund. Für Mbembe besteht die Strategie des modernen Kolonialismus eher in der Zerstörung der Bevölkerung als im Schutz ihrer Gesundheit. Dieses zerstörerische Wirkprinzip leitet er aus einer Analyse der verschiedenen Waffen- und Tötungstechnologien der kolonialen Besatzung ab und betrachtet so die Technologien der Macht und nicht lediglich ihre Legitimation. Jedoch konstruiert Mbembe aus der Verschmelzung von Foucault und Agambens Konzept der Biopolitik eine binäre Opposition von kreatürlichem und politischem Leben, die zu einer entsprechenden

Trennung von Biopolitik und ‚Nekropolitik' führt. In diesem Sinne wird er dem Potential der Interaktion und des Wettbewerbs verschiedener Machtprinzipien nicht gerecht.

6. Gouvernementalität

Ebendieser potenzielle Wettbewerb zwischen verschiedenen Wirkprinzipien der Macht ist das zentrale Thema dieses letzten Kapitels. Nach der Diskussion der Vorlesungen, in denen Foucault das Konzept der Gouvernementalität entwickelt, arbeitet dieses Kapitel den Kontrast zwischen David Scotts „Colonial Governmentality" (1995) und James Duncans *In the Shadows of the Tropics* (2007) heraus. Während ersterer sich ausschließlich auf die gouvernementale Macht konzentriert, hebt Duncan hervor, dass koloniale Macht sich nicht allein auf Gouvernementalität reduzieren lässt, sondern im Zusammenspiel unterschiedlicher und oft widersprüchlicher Strategien besteht.

Hauptmerkmal von Foucaults Konzept der Gouvernementalität ist die Aufhebung des traditionellen Gegensatzes von Macht und Freiheit. Foucault versteht Gouvernementalität als Strategie des Managements der Bevölkerung, die darauf abzielt, ihren Subjekten die Verwirklichung ihres Potentials zu ermöglichen. Damit begreift er Macht als die Erzeugung eines potentiellen Handlungsraums statt als Bestrebung, Menschen zu etwas zu zwingen, das sie nicht wollen. Diese gouvernementale Strategie erfordert das Schaffen von gesetzlichen, politischen, medizinischen und ökonomischen Bedingungen, die es den Subjekten ermöglichen, sich für die Interessen der Gesellschaft einzusetzen, indem sie zugleich ihre eigenen verfolgen. In der Praxis involviert dies die Etablierung einer freien Marktwirtschaft, eines biopolitischen Systems, das die Menschen ermuntert, für das eigene Wohlergehen Sorge zu tragen, und eine demokratische Gesellschaft freier und gleicher Subjekte. Foucault diskutiert den Aufstieg dieses Grundprinzips innerhalb Europas, lässt aber dabei unbeantwortet, ob diese gouvernementale Strategie ein Alleinstellungsmerkmal europäischer Gesellschaften sei.

In „Colonial Governmentality" bejaht Scott diese Frage: Das Bemühen der kolonialen sei gewesen, den Handlungsspielraum der kolonialen Subjekte zu strukturieren. Durch eine Analyse der juristischen, ökonomischen und medizinischen Systeme, die während der Kolonialherrschaft in Ceylon des 19. Jahrhunderts implementiert wurden, zeigt Scott, dass koloniale Macht als

Projekt, als Grundprinzip und als Handlung verstanden werden kann. Bemerkenswert ist, dass Scott diese Herangehensweise als Intervention in ein Feld formuliert, das geradezu besessen davon war, das ‚Gesetz der Differenz' herauszustellen: jene Idee, dass Kolonialherrschaft als binäre Opposition von Eigenem und Fremdem zu begreifen sei; eine Auffassung, die, wie die vorangegangenen Kapitel gezeigt haben, bis auf Saids *Orientalismus* zurückgeht. In diesem Sinne bestätigt Scotts Auffassung von Macht als Projekt die bereits zuvor beschriebene Diskrepanz zwischen einem Verständnis von Macht als Handlung und Macht als Autorität.

Scotts deutliche Unterscheidung zwischen Souveränität und Gouvernementalität – wobei letztere die historische Nachfolgerin der erstgenannten ist – bringt allerdings einige Probleme mit sich. Zum einen führt sein Fokus auf die Gouvernementalität dazu, dass er außer Acht lässt, inwiefern eine gouvernementale Strategie, die auf die Förderung gesamtgesellschaftlicher Interessen aus war, mit der Strategie von Plantagenbesitzern in Ceylon im Widerstreit stand, die lediglich ihre eigenen Interessen verteidigten und als lokale Souveräne agierten. Zum anderen übersieht Scott, in welchem Ausmaß die lokale Bevölkerung und die Gegebenheiten in Ceylon sich der Implementierung gouvernementaler Projekte widersetzten. Darüber hinaus mag die Tatsache, dass er das ‚Gesetz der Differenz' nicht zentral in den Blick nimmt, den Fokus auf die Aktivitäten und Projekte kolonialer Herrschaft lenken; doch werden dadurch auch die zerstörerischen Tendenzen der Kolonialherrschaft außer Acht gelassen.

All diese Themen werden in der konzeptuellen Architektur von Duncans *In the Shadows of the Tropics* verhandelt. Indem er das Konzept der Gouvernementalität mit denen der Souveränität, der Disziplin und der Biomacht verbindet, zeigt Duncans Analyse Ceylons im 19. Jahrhundert, wie ein Gesetz der Differenz auch innerhalb eines gouvernementalen Regimes, nämlich im Dienste lokaler Souveräne, in Kraft blieb. Sie eröffnet zugleich die Möglichkeit, Widerstand im Sinne konkurrierender Grundprinzipien der Macht und konkurrierender Projekte und Handlungen zu begreifen statt lediglich als gegen die koloniale Autorität gerichtete Stimmen. Schließlich verbindet Duncan die Konzepte von Gouvernementalität und Autorität – jedoch ohne Strategien von Macht und Autorität zu vermischen – in seiner Schlussfolgerung, dass Kolonialherrschaft innerhalb eines gouvernementalen Regimes auf der Fähigkeit des Subjekts fußte, sich selbst in einer Weise zu führen und zu kontrollieren, die zugleich den eigenen wie gesamtgesellschaftlichen Interessen diente. In diesem Sinne gelingt es Duncan, die von Said in

Orientalismus begründete konzeptuelle Architektur und Foucaults Konzept der Macht als Handlung mit ihr eigenem Wirkprinzip gewinnbringend zusammenzudenken.

7. Schlussfolgerungen

Dieses abschließende Kapitel folgert auf der Basis der zuvor analysierten Transformationen, dass Saids Werk eine äußerst einflussreiche Interpretation von Foucaults Oeuvre begründet hat, indem es die Gewichtung von Wissen und Macht hin zu Identität und Autorität verschob. Der Einfluss von *Orientalismus* ist in den Arbeiten von Bhabha, Mitchell, Kaplan und Stoler klar herausgestellt worden. In jedem dieser Texte werden Foucaultsche Konzepte behelfsweise zur Beschreibung und Diskussion von Begriffen von Identität und Autorität herangezogen, obgleich Foucault selbst diese Konzepte nie benutzt hat. Diese Fokussierung auf koloniale Autorität – und Identität insofern, als dass sie Autorität hervorbringt – hat dazu geführt, dass die *postcolonial studies* die Diskurse und Praktiken untersucht haben, die den Kolonialismus legitimieren, und die Handlungen, Strategien und Projekte kolonialer Macht außer Acht gelassen haben. Die Arbeiten von Wissenschaftlern wie Mbembe und Scott können jedoch als Reaktion auf diesen ausschließlichen Fokus auf Identität und Autorität verstanden werden. Sowohl Mbembe als auch Scott untersuchen die Techniken und Wirkprinzipien, die die koloniale Macht konstituieren. Wie die Analysen von Foucaults Texten ausführlich verdeutlicht haben, kommt diese zweite Herangehensweise Foucaults eigener Kritik der Macht als nicht-subjektives, relationales und strategisches Geflecht von Techniken und Projekten wesentlich näher.

Wenn also von zwei Gruppen innerhalb der postkolonialen Rezeption Foucaults ausgegangen wird, ist die Trennung zwischen den beiden in diesem Spannungsverhältnis zwischen Macht als Autorität und Macht als Handlung zu verorten. Es ist erstaunlich, dass dieser Bruch für so lange Zeit nicht anerkannt oder fehlinterpretiert worden ist. Seine Signifikanz kann jedenfalls kaum zu hoch bewertet werden: Diese beiden Konzeptualisierungen kolonialer Macht führen zu unterschiedlichen Grundverständnissen von Macht, verschiedenen Instrumenten der Machtausübung, und verschiedenen Formen des Widerstands ihr gegenüber.

Im Anschluss an eine ausführliche Kontrastierung beider Positionen befasst sich dieses Kapitel mit der Geschichte der Verbreitung und Übersetzung von Foucaults Werk, um eine Erklärung

dafür zu finden, warum diese Unterscheidung so lange nicht vorgenommen worden ist. Die kürzlich erschienene Gesamtausgabe von Foucaults jährlichen Vorlesungen am Collège de France hat eine (Re-)Kontextualisierung seiner Monografien ermöglicht. So überrascht es nicht, dass die jüngsten postkolonialen Texte im Korpus der vorliegenden Arbeit endlich über die Saidsche Interpretation von Foucaults Werk hinausweisen.

Diese Schlussfolgerung schmälert keineswegs den Wert des Erkenntnisgewinns jener postkolonialen Arbeiten, die auf Saids konzeptueller Architektur basieren: Die grundlegende Annahme ist, dass die beiden erarbeiteten Konzeptualisierungen von Macht tatsächlich zwei unterschiedliche Phänomene untersuchen, nämlich die Projekte – im Sinne von zweckgebundenen Unternehmungen – der kolonialen Macht einerseits und andererseits der Autorität, die diese legitimiert. Dieses wird vor allem in Duncans *In the Shadows of the Tropics* ersichtlich, in dem der Autor sowohl die Narrative und Praktiken untersucht, die koloniale Autorität produzieren, als auch die Techniken und Strategien in den Blick nimmt, die eine koloniale Gesellschaft hervorbringen.

Das eigentliche Problem liegt daher nicht darin, dass postkoloniale Forscher_innen Foucaultsche Konzepte zu einem anderen als zu jenem von Foucault beabsichtigten Zweck angewendet haben, sondern vielmehr darin, dass sie lange Zeit die Anliegen außer Acht gelassen haben, auf die Foucault ursprünglich hinweisen wollte: die verschiedenen Wirkprinzipien, Strategien und Instrumente der Macht. Indem sie ihre kritischen Arbeiten zum Konzept der Autorität mit Hilfe der Foucaultschen Terminologie formulierten, ersetzten postkoloniale Denker_innen in der Tradition der Saidschen Interpretation schlussendlich die Erforschung kolonialer Macht als Handlung mit der Kritik kolonialer Autorität – mit dem Ergebnis, dass die *postcolonial studies* erst kürzlich damit begonnen haben, die bruchstückhafte Geschichte kolonialer Unternehmungen und die widerstreitenden Interessen und Strategien, die koloniale Gesellschaften hervorgebracht haben, in den Blick zu nehmen.

Erklärung zur Urheberschaft

Hiermit versichere ich, dass diese Arbeit von mir persönlich verfasst ist und dass ich keinerlei fremde Hilfe in Anspruch genommen habe. Ebenso versichere ich, dass diese Arbeit oder Teile daraus weder von mir selbst noch von anderen als Leistungsnachweis andernorts eingereicht wurden. Wörtliche oder sinngemäße Übernahmen aus anderen Schriften und Veröffentlichungen in gedruckter oder elektronischer Form sind gekennzeichnet. Sämtliche Sekundärliteratur und sonstige Quellen sind nachgewiesen und in der Bibliographie aufgeführt. Das Gleiche gilt für graphische Darstellungen und Bilder sowie für alle Internet-Quellen.

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