

Biopolitical Experience:

Foucault Power & Positive Critique

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CHAPTER 4

‘Post-Population’ or ‘Cultural’ Biopolitics? Rethinking Foucault’s Concepts Today, Against Nikolas Rose

Nikolas Rose has been highly influential in the Anglophone social-science reception of Michel Foucault’s thought and beyond. In particular he, alongside others such as Colin Gordon (Burchill, Gordon & Miller, 1991), is associated with the popularisation of Foucault’s thinking on governmentality and with the establishment of ‘governmentality studies’ as a sub-discipline of sociology, geography, political science and socio-legal studies – a sub-discipline focused upon the ‘conduct of conduct’ or governance through freedom (Rose, 1989; 1999; Rose, O’Mally & Valverde, 2006). Much of Rose’s work is addressed to the political history of medical knowledge and expertise, especially with respect to the ‘psy’ disciplines. In 1989 he argued that the proliferation of the ‘psy’ disciplines has been integral to the establishment of modern governmentality (Rose, 1989). In the past decade he has been concentrating on post-molecular transformations of biological knowledge, exploring the consequences for governmentality of

recent developments in genomics, neuroscience, pharmacology, and psychopharmacology (Rose, 2001; Rose, 2007). In this recent work Rose emphasises the plasticity and contingency of the conception of biological life that is at play in molecular biology, which emerged in the latter half of the twentieth century. He describes the efforts and intentions of scientists and patients to manipulate biological life at a molecular level in the name of individual health. The normativity that is at play in contemporary biology is, he maintains, a kind of somatic ethical work upon individuals. The norm of biological science is no longer population life (2001: 13).

According to Rose, and Paul Rabinow with whom he penned 'Thoughts on the Concept of Biopower Today', the post-molecular transformations in the normativity and objects of biological science and medicine mean that *biopolitics* also can no longer be understood in terms of population life. Molecular biology is, they suggest, part of a general movement of power away from a concern with populations and pre-given communities towards a liberal capitalist concern with transformation and ethical medicalised somatic manipulation. 'Biopolitics' Rose proclaims 'now addresses human existence at the molecular level: it is waged about molecules, amongst molecules, and where the molecules themselves are at stake' (2001: 17). Biopolitics no longer pertains to the life of populations but, instead, to 'the politics of life itself' (2001, 2007). These conclusions, about the non-population-centred character of contemporary biopolitics, have consequences for how we should interpret and apply Foucault's ideas today according to Rose. In particular he suggests that the analysis of biopolitics is not relevant to contemporary race politics and racism; that specifically *biopolitical* racism is a thing of the past (Rose, 2001: 2-7; Rose & Rabinow, 2003: 17-21). Whilst Rose certainly remains critical of the practices and economies of biological science, pointing to their integration with the production of biocapital, there is a markedly optimistic tone in his account. The (supposed) introduction of contingency, responsibility and choice to biological life has generated a kind of vitalisation of politico-ethical

as well as biological life; 'a spiritualization of the flesh, [a] sensualisation of ethics' (2007: 258). This does not only open doors to the production of biocapital (and the attendant normativity of bio-ethicists) but also to a new ethics 'one that is embodied in the judgements individuals make of their actual and potential choices, decisions, and actions as they negotiate their way through the practices of contemporary biomedicine' (*ibid*: 8).

In this chapter I will problematise aspects of Rose's interpretation of Foucault's theory of biopolitics and its applicability today. In particular I will problematise the way that he seemingly elides biopolitics with all, any and only politics of the somatic. Against Rose I will insist on the continuing importance of distinguishing between biopolitics and discipline as we talk about biopolitics today. Further I will challenge his contention that the economies of population life are no longer in operation, suggesting that population life may have been refigured in cultural and economic terms rather than having disappeared in the era since the molecular revolution in biological science. In particular I will suggest that (specifically dynamic, inclusive) biopolitical racism, and its dangers, might operate today in the experiential economy of culturalist politics. Again, the objective is not to negate, disprove or dismiss an account of the biopolitical. Rose's writings on medical power-knowledge and powers of freedom are a great contribution to the genealogy of the present. The objective remains positive-critique in the sense of pluralizing and adding to our accounts of reality. The problematisation of Rose's position can be seen as an attempt to recover distinctions and descriptions in the analytic of biopolitics that are in danger of becoming lost - a negation of negation. Following this I will move on to the more positive-critical work of building alternative, additional descriptions of post-molecular biopolitics. I will draw some highly speculative pointers towards alternative histories of the transformations of biopolitics since the Second World War suggesting that non-somatic formations of the trans -

economics and education – might have since become primary in the in-corporealisation, the embodiment, of population life.

An alternative perspective on the application of the concept biopolitics today, and on the transformed fate of biopolitics in the period since the Second World War, is that of Michael Hardt and Antonio Negri, whose book *Empire* and its sequel *Multitude* have been highly influential, both amongst social scientists and a wider activist audience (2000; 2005). Hardt and Negri incorporate the ideas of biopolitics and biopower into an autonomous neo-Marxist account of global politics. For them biopolitics is not contemporary with capitalism but rather describes a second-stage of capitalism, wherein global biopower and a decentralised Empire have taken the place of capital and the bourgeoisie, whilst the immaterial, autonomous multitude has taken the place of the proletariat and its labour power. Hardt and Negri maintain that nineteenth century capitalism was disciplinary, with power taking hold of and exploiting the bodies of the workers. For them ‘biopolitics’ indicates a new depth of exploitation whereby power takes hold of and invests the very life, the vitality, creativity and immateriality, of bodies. In line with the tradition of Marxist analysis, this totalisation of power – taking hold of life, exploiting surplus life – is at the same time a virtual emancipation of life from power. The power of the multitude, that is developed and exploited by Empire/capital, is specifically immaterial, affective, informational and creative, labour and it does not depend upon capital for its development, deployment or transmission. As such, according to Hardt and Negri, the (vital) power of the multitude is radically more autonomous from, and able to escape, capital than was that of nineteenth century disciplined labouring bodies.

Although Hardt and Negri seem to be talking about the positivity of biopolitics, their epochalising approach is so far removed from the perspective that is being developed in this study that it is appropriate to set them aside (especially given the effort to engage in *positive*

critique). Indeed, their interpretation of Foucault's concept of biopolitics owes more to Gilles Deleuze's comments on Foucault (especially his 'post-script on control societies') than it does to Foucault's own writings and lectures (Deleuze, 1995). I agree with Rose that the totalising character of Hardt and Negri's interpretation of biopolitics and biopower (as the power of global Empire, the power of capitalism) robs the concept of its analytical purchase (Rose & Rabinow, 2003: 7). Moreover their identification of biopolitics with a post-disciplinary and post-nineteenth century new epoch of power obscures the entire historical context in relation to which Foucault developed his ideas. As we have seen, Foucault identifies the emergence of biopolitics with the *beginning of the nineteenth century*. It is associated with the development, not the (supposed) decline, of the nation-state. The biopolitical era began with the nineteenth century and it is not disciplinary but regularising. Also Foucault insists that neither discipline nor biopolitics are capable of taking hold of the entirety of society. As we have seen, they are addressed to different domains - to different levels - and thus even though their values and objectives conflict they can act in concert and agreement. Certainly biopolitics cannot supplant discipline, for it could not operate unless there were also disciplinary institutions. If there ever was a non-biopolitical 'disciplinary society' then we would have to locate it in the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries - the time of natural history (Foucault, 1970) and police craft (Foucault, 2007) - before the technologies of biopolitics and biology had emerged, not in the nineteenth and early twentieth centuries as do Hardt and Negri. Given the inability of disciplinary institutions to take hold of mass phenomena, however, the term 'disciplinary society' seems far too strong even here.

Whilst Hardt and Negri do, in a sense, refer to the positivity of biopolitics their approach is antithetical to that developed in this book. For them there is a positivity to biopolitics precisely because it makes workers, freedom and life better able to *escape* the confining and exploitative

power of capital and Empire. In contrast I am interested in the positivity that is immanent to biopolitical power – that is an aspect of biopolitical rationalities and technologies even at their most exploitative and oppressive moments. I am arguing that life, capacity, contingency, creativity, experience and empowerment are intrinsic to and produced through biopolitics or biopower, they are not an alternative. Life cannot escape biopolitical power: biopolitical power/knowledge and ‘biomentality’ constitute the structures of experience in which creative life emerges and is perpetually produced. Rose, who posits the vitalisation of and care for bodies as immanent to the extension and exercise of biopolitical governmentality, and contingency as central to at least contemporary biological knowledge, is much closer to this position. Indeed, Rose’s work on governmentality has been a significant influence for me. A critical engagement with his ideas on the utilisations of Foucault’s concepts today is, as such, a far more ‘positive’ challenge, and far more interesting, for the project of this book.

ROSE ON POST-POPULATION BIOPOLITICS

As noted in Chapter 1 the latter half of the twentieth century saw the previously disparate branches of biology, physiological bio-chemistry and evolutionary genetics, come together spawning various new branches of study that operate at a molecular level (Jacob, 1973: 299). In the past decade Rose has been investigating the consequences of developments in some of these new molecular biologies; genomics, neuroscience, pharmacology and psychopharmacology, exploring their impact upon questions of social control, mental health and racial politics (Rose, 2007). He argues that the truth regime of biopolitics radically transformed in the second half of the twentieth century and that a new ‘molecular biopolitics’ has emerged that is entirely different from the eugenicist biopolitics of population life that Foucault described (2001:1). Molecular biopolitics, according to Rose, is not concerned with population (2007:58).

This new biopolitics is addressed to the plasticity of the biological and to the control of risk, rather than to the regulation of and care for the life of the population taken *en mass*. In the second half of the twentieth century, he argues the ‘norm of individual health replaced that of the quality of the population’ (*ibid*: 13). He emphasizes the belief in, and desire for, the capacity to *transform* biological destiny at a molecular level, on the part of contemporary scientists and patients, in the name of individual health, and he contrasts this contemporary ‘molecular’ ‘ethopolitical’ ‘risk control’ biopolitics with an older expert imagining of life ‘as an unalterable fixed endowment, biology as destiny’ and its attendant biopolitics wherein ‘the reproduction of individuals with a defective constitution [was] to be administered by experts in the interests of the future of the population’ (*ibid*: 20-1). He maintains that biology is no longer a science of determinations and that biopolitics is no longer a politics of population life. Biology operates at another scale (at the molecular) and that scale is full of contingency and hope. ‘[O]ur somatic, corporeal neurochemical individuality has become opened up to choice, prudence, and responsibility, to experimentation, to contestation, and so to a politics of life itself’ (2007: 8).

ON THE CONTINUED RELEVANCE OF DISTINCTIONS: BIOPOLITICS, ANATOMO-
POLITICS & THE MOLECULAR

ROSE COLLAPSING BIOPOLITICS, DISCIPLINE AND MOLECULAR BIOLOGY TOGETHER

Despite Rose’s frequent insistence upon the importance of historical specificity in Foucault’s concepts (e.g. Rose & Rabinow, 2003: 7), he happily refers to the new formations of genetic responsabilisation and molecular ethics as ‘biopolitics’ – divorcing the term from Foucault’s definition and dismissing the argument that the bio, the life, of biopolitics is only produced in the (limit-) experience of population (a point that was explained and defended in Chapter 1). It seems, then, that Rose is diminishing the specificity of Foucault’s terms and equating ‘biopolitics’ with something more general and ahistorical such as ‘the politics of the somatic’ or,

perhaps, 'the politics of medical expertise'. In the same vein Rose, alongside Rabinow, treats the distinction between disciplinary anatomo-politics and the biopolitical politics of population life as irrelevant to the analytics of biopolitics today. Rose and Rabinow's article makes no mention of this distinction and neither anatomo-politics, nor discipline, appear in the index of Rose's book on contemporary biopolitics (2007). Discipline and anatomo-politics are implicitly subsumed into the biopolitical. This amalgamating approach to the different formations and politics of embodiment reflects Rabinow's interpretation of the coming together of physiology and genetics that François Jacob described (Jacob, 1973: 299). Rabinow maintains since this juncture the two discrete modes of address to the body that Foucault delineated 'are being rearticulated into what could be called a postdisciplinary, if still modern, rationality' (1999: 407).ⁱ

In a move that seems designed to substitute for the distinction between discipline and biopolitics, Rose and Rabinow *do* talk about the distinction between the 'molecular' and the 'molar', borrowing from Deleuze and Guattari's vocabulary. They equate the micro with 'individuation' and the macro with 'collective politics' and go on to suggest that where the macro was privileged in the era of eugenics the micro is privileged in the contemporary era of liberal capitalism and molecular politics (2003: 15-16). In fact Rose and Rabinow's appropriation of these terms to (presumably) stand in for the anatomo- and bio-political seems ill-judged. When Deleuze and Guattari use the terms micro and macro they are not referring to a difference in scale but rather to a difference in the modes of differentiation, organisation and formations of embodiment. The molecular is qualitative and transforming, it is the more vital or creative, the nomadic. The molar is the quantitative, the centralising, the controlled, the statist (Deleuze & Guattari, 1988: 35). If this is what Rose and Rabinow understand by the terms then their deployment really does obliterate Foucault's distinction between discipline and biopolitics

altogether, for in the scenarios that Foucault describes it is precisely the more individuating and micro practices of discipline that are the more 'molar' in Deleuze and Guattari's terms - they are more centralising, quantitative, statist and reductive - and it is biopolitics that pertains more to the 'molecular' realms of the unconscious, creativity and affect. I do not wish to claim that the molecular maps on to the biopolitical or the disciplinary onto the molar, but simply that if one *were* going to draw the association in a manner that is in keeping with both Foucault's understanding of biopolitics/discipline and Deleuze and Guattari's understanding of molecular/molar, it should in fact be in the opposite alignment to the one which Rose and Rabinow seem to suggest. In making the molar and molecular substitute for the biopolitical and the disciplinary Rose and Rabinow in fact wholly obscure the meaning of both sets of concepts.

RECOVERING THE DISTINCTION BETWEEN DISCIPLINE & BIOPOLITICS

Rose's disregard for the distinctions between biopolitics and anatomo-politics (and, I would say, molecular-ethopolitics) is highly problematic from the point of view of this book which maintains that biopolitics and discipline refer to different and often contesting structures of experience. The reconciliation between bio-chemists and geneticists through the deployment of scale hardly amounts to a reconciliation between two fundamentally divergent formations of experience; of temporality, spacing and normativity. Whilst it is without doubt correct that new formations of power, knowledge and embodiment have been carved out in the post-molecular context - the era of the superfold and superman, as Deleuze describes it (1988: 107-10) - it does not follow that the distinction between biopolitics and discipline has thereby become irrelevant, as Rose and Rabinow have concluded. In order to maintain an account of biopolitics as the economy of modern *experience* that is not reducible to that of modern scientific expertise, it is crucial to maintain this distinction. There are three major problems with the assumption that

the molecularisation of biology has made the distinction between biopolitics and discipline redundant for the discussion of the relevance of Foucault's ideas on biopolitics today.

The *first* and most obvious problem is that, whether or not the two forms of power persist *today*, the distinction remains relevant to understanding recent history and, most certainly, to understanding the sense and utility of Foucault's concepts. Indeed, if the politics of life no longer stands in contrast to an individuating, rationalist, disciplinary anatomo-politics, and if it is *not* a politics of population, then it must in fact be something very different from the formations that Foucault wrote about in the context of 'biopolitics'. If we do want to maintain that the politics of life no longer pertains to the population, having turned molecular, then we should find another term for the post-molecular politics of life, and retain biopolitics and discipline as historical concepts, both of which are relevant to the analysis of nineteenth and early twentieth century European states and resistance movements. Doing away with the distinction whilst persisting with the use of one term (biopolitics), as Rose and Rabinow seem to propose, feeds the misconception that pre-molecular rationalities of politics, including such practices as eugenics, can be correctly characterised as disciplinary and *not* biopolitical formations.

Second, the fact of the production of new formations of power/knowledge does not in fact guarantee the dissolution of the old. Foucault's own positive, additive, approach to history assumes that this is not the case. The production of discipline did not mean the end of sovereignty or the law anymore than biopolitics meant the end of discipline and institutions. In line with this we should not assume that the production of new molecular and recombinant formations of embodiment has necessarily meant the demise and irrelevance of disciplinary and (properly speaking) biopolitical formations. Treating formations of power in the manner of successive eras is to participate in a singular view of power, the philosophical tendency (that had

failed to chop off the king's head) of which Foucault was so critical (Foucault, 1978: 89; 2000a: 89). If we accept that, as Foucault argues, there is a genuine plurality of formations of power and embodiment, and if we see history as a heterogeneous series of events, productions, and additions, then the fact of the emergence of molecular biology seems a slim basis for the assumption that discipline and biopolitics, as distinct formations, no longer exist.

This brings us to the *third* problem with Rose and Rabinow's treatment of the distinction between biopolitics and discipline as irrelevant for contemporary analysis; it seemingly equates biopolitics with biological science and medicine in particular. If biopolitics basically *is* medicine and the application of biological science, then the molecularisation of biology would indeed mean a molecularisation of biopolitics. But this does not follow from Foucault's analysis; if biopolitics were simply medicine and applied biology then the term itself would be superfluous. Foucault's work on biopolitics illuminates the uses of biological rationality and biopolitical formations of embodiment far beyond the context of applications of biological science and medicine. He states (in reference to the phenomenon of biopolitical racism):

evolutionism, understood in a broad sense ... became within a few years during the nineteenth century not simply a way of transcribing a political discourse into biological terms, and not simply a way of dressing up a political discourse in scientific clothing, but a real way of thinking about the relations between colonization, the necessity for wars, criminality, the phenomena of madness and mental illness, the history of societies with their different classes and so on (2003b: 256-7).

The development of biological rationality facilitated the production of a host of *values*, and a network of analogies and strategies for organising bodies and forces, that far exceed the scope of somatic well-being or the application of scientific expertise. Population is the embodiment of the nation, the civilisation, the class, or the empire, as much as it is that of the race or the species. The health and vitality of the race and the species, let alone of the other embodiments, have since they were carved out been conceptualised, performed, expressed and experienced in cultural, ideational, aesthetic and economic terms as well as in the somatic. The vitality of these

bodies, the health and security of the processes of population life that they designate, was never contained within the scope of medicine or the management of soma – immensely significant as these have been.

Rose's treatment of biopolitics as a historical, experiential and political event is overly 'soma-centric' and this leads to an unfortunate conflation of the emergence of new formations of biological expertise and somatic practice with the obliteration of older and additional technologies of power, knowledge and embodiment.

ON THE CONTINUED RELEVANCE OF 'BIOPOLITICAL RACISM'

ROSE ON THE IRRELEVANCE OF THE ANALYTICS OF BIOPOLITICS TO CONTEMPORARY RACE POLITICS

Further to his claim that contemporary biopolitics is not concerned with population life Rose rejects the idea that the concept of biopolitical racism is relevant for understanding race politics in the present (Rose, 2001:6; 2007: 184-6; Rose & Rabinow, 17-9). Rose makes this claim as part of his analysis of recent developments in genomic medicine, particularly the 'revival' of the idea that racial difference has a basis in biological fact, now figured as genetic difference. He wants to counter the claims of those who suggest that the recent moves to consider race and ethnicity in genomic medicine 'mark a potential shift toward a racialised medical practice, presage the reawakening of a dangerous racial science, and represent a further turn in "genetic reductionism"' (2007: 156). Such fears are, Rose suggests, based on a miscomprehension of the normativity and objects of genomic medicine, ignoring the fact that contemporary medicine is directed at the health of individuals not populations and that the identification of genetic difference in the present constitutes the creation of new ground for intervention and transformation, not a statement of determination. He writes:

[W]e need to locate the current debates over race and genomics firmly within the transformed biopolitics of the twenty-first century. This is a biopolitics organized around the principle of

fostering individual life, not of eliminating those that threaten the quality of populations... it is a biopolitics that does not seek to legitimate inequality but to intervene upon its consequences. Crucially it is a biopolitics in which references to the biological do not signify fatalism but are part of the economy of hope that characterizes contemporary medicine (2007: 167).

Rose accepts that race persists in the present political landscape, functioning as a mark of discrimination, a mode of identification, and basis of rights claims. He and Rabinow draw attention to the 'murderous racist wars that spread across Europe in the wake of the demise of the Soviet empire' as well as to persisting racial discrimination in the US (2003:18). However, they insist, 'appeals to racial identities ... [since the mid- twentieth century] needed no justification in the truth discourse of biology' as scientific expertise (*ibid*). Race, they state, is no longer related to 'a biological substrate', it is 'de-naturalised' (*ibid*).

Rose associates the idea that developments in contemporary genomics spells the return of eliminative eugenics with Agamben's ahistorical and negative account of biopolitics (2001:3-5; Rose & Rabinow, 2003:8-9). For Agamben, like Zygmunt Bauman, a thanatopolitical politics of population purification lies at the very heart of modernity (Rose, 2007: 56). Agamben's reductive account of the biopolitics fails to recognise the radical transformations that have taken place in the domain of scientific expertise as well as the positive, life-maximising, work of all biopolitics. Rose wants to dispel the idea that Foucault's analytics of biopolitical racism and the eliminative moment of biopolitics is relevant in the present as part of an attempt to recapture the ground for thinking biopolitics from Agamben and insist upon the plural, historical and positive character of biopolitics.

RECOVERING THE CRITIQUE OF BIOPOLITICAL RACISM

Whilst Rose is right to object to Agamben's assertion that all contemporary biopolitics is a thanatopolitical project to make life homogeneous (as well as to assumptions that any attention to race in genomic medicine spells the return of eugenic racism) the movement from this critique to the conclusion that Foucault's analysis of biopolitical racism does not apply to the

contemporary politics of race is problematic. Rose's argument effectively accepts Agamben's limited interpretation of biopolitical racism rather than taking seriously Foucault's own, very different, account of the phenomenon.

Indeed, Rose's contention that biopolitical racism is a thing of the past appears to rest on an identification of biological race politics with a pre-formist ontology and affirmation of eternity and fixed order corresponding to an attempt to establish a homogenous population. As Rose would have it we are *today* in the context of a politics of life without the population or biopolitical racism because 'life, today, is not imagined as an unalterable endowment, biology as destiny' and because the somatic has 'become opened up to choice, prudence and responsibility, to experimentation, to contestation' (2001: 20). This implies an image of biological racism and relationships in the past that runs counter to Foucault's (and Hannah Arendt's) own thinking on the subject. We have seen in the previous chapters that 'biomentality', biopolitical racism and the politics of population life are, for Foucault, concerned with processuality, historicity and transformation - not with pre-formation and the adulation of order or stasis (the kind of thinking that can be associated with natural-history, physiology or disciplinary power and which Agamben elides with 'biopolitics').

As such it is hard to accept Rose's apparent conclusion that *because* contemporary conceptions of race and biology are centred upon contingency *therefore* biopolitical racism is no longer a relevant category to the analysis of our present. Biopolitical racism and biological type relationships are quite so dangerous precisely because they are imagined within a contingent field of potential, transformation, affect, evolution and indeed hope. From the perspective of the account of biopolitics and biomentality that is being developed here, the changes that Rose alerts us to, as he describes a new plasticity of biological life, appear as a transformation in the *location* of contingency in the context of biological knowledge, not as the introduction of

plasticity and transformation into biological knowledge or life. His assurances that the presence of contingency, hope and a concern for individual health mean that we are safe from biopolitical racism appear to be based upon a conflation of eugenics with discipline, which Foucault's account of biopolitical racism is apt to displace.

I do not take particular issue with Rose's assessment of the politics of race in contemporary genomic medicine. There is not room to do justice to this topic here but I support Rose's contention that the identification of different propensities to diseases and treatments along racial and other lines is not, at present, constituting the lines of population-fragmentation upon which a vitalising politics of elimination and discrimination operates. Where I suspect Rose gets the analysis wrong is in the suggestion that there is *no such* politics of population, fragmentation and (what Foucault calls) biological-type relations taking place in the present time.

Whilst population might, as Rose argues, have become irrelevant to a biological science that has turned molecular, it might remain paramount in the formation of the political embodiments that are regulated and protected in national and international state politics, or fought for in socialist, nationalist, Islamist, and ecological movements. Population has been an immensely expedient, effective formation of embodiment from the perspective of the generation of experience, affect, values and political authority, and there is little evidence that it does not remain so. A world that was post-population would surely be post-nationalist. Far from witnessing a decline of nationalism, however, the supposedly post-population era has instead seen a proliferation of nationalist, or ethnic-tribalist (Bauman, 1995: 243-56), movements, as well as of political religious movements that closely resemble them. At the same time, new collective embodiments have emerged such as that of the EU, imagined in terms of an exclusive European civilisation (Bunzl, 2007). At the level of established states the vital(ist) imperative to 'secure the nation' - to always be doing something to be securing, regulating, enhancing the life

of the nation – seems as strong as ever, more than five decades after the molecular revolution in biology. When emphasis is placed upon biopolitics as a formation of experience, not simply as a politics of biological science, it is evident that the analytics of biopolitics might be relevant to the comprehension of cultural racism, culturalist nationalism and regionalism.

Rose makes biopolitics into something *much* more specific and much more Foucauldian than does Agamben. In his explanations of what biopolitics is about it is very clear that biopolitics pertains to the politics of a specific history of knowledge. It is also clear that the development of that knowledge has been an immensely ‘positive’, vitalising development, at least with respect to the people’s somatic wellbeing. I do not contest Rose’s account of the politics of contemporary medicine and biological expertise. However I do think that his interpretation of ‘biopolitics’ is too narrow; too tightly bound with the politics of medicine and biological expertise. Rose seems to reduce biopolitics to *nothing but* medicine and the expertise of biological scientists. In Foucault, however, the emergence of biopolitics heralds a whole new regime of values – outshining aristocratic spectacle and analytics of blood, constituting new grids of historical intelligibility (Foucault, 2003b), orchestrating new originations of meaning-value in sexuality and life, mobilising entire populations, even rendering massacres vital (Foucault, 1978). The analytics of biopolitics can help us to think about many things other than the political uses and abuses of biological-scientific expertise and medicine, pertaining to questions of ‘political spirituality’ (see Foucault, 2000e: 233). Foucault’s theories of biopolitics speak to crucial questions concerning ethics and the politics of culture.

Rose radically overplays the significance of scientific authority to the force of biopolitics. For him biopolitics is all about the application of biological science and expertise to the political (broadly understood). The authority of claims in biopolitical discourse and practice is, then, assumed to be vested in the authority and epistemic capacities of biologists. Whilst I would not

contest the idea that the authority of biological and medical experts has been important in the formation of modern governmentality I maintain that there is an additional dimension to authority in biopolitics as Foucault describes it, that of experience, embodiment and the production of vitalist values. The formations of experience and embodiment that biopolitics engenders are themselves powerful planes of affective investment, capable of producing grounds for political authority without *necessary* recourse to that of scientific expertise. Experience as life, not just the *scientific* knowledge of life, is utilised in the generation of epistemic and moral authority for modern regimes of biopolitical power. Population life itself can act as an immanent plane of authority and investment for biopolitical practice and values. The authority of biopolitics is not reducible to that of the scientist or of scientific knowledge. Biopolitics is *also* about the production of a specific collective trans-organic embodiment that engenders a particular, particularly vitalist, horizon of culture, visibility and sayability. This embodiment – the population – the unitary living plurality constituted through transmissions of reproduction and mechanisms of evolution, is in and of itself productive of affective reality, subjectivity and the (limit) experience of moving beyond finite singularity; it is productive of experience that engenders the possibility of authority, epistemic capacity, rhetorical and political appeal, and meaning-value. As argued in Chapter 2, it is the dynamic connection between bodies as capacities, not their somatic nature, that is crucial in the constitution of this trans-organic and limit-breaking embodiment. Those connections always did include flows of information, education and training in addition to those of blood and semen. The post-molecular age might be characterised not by a demise of the population but by a reconfiguration of *which* flows, and *which* capacities, are primary in its constitution such that blood and semen lose ground to education and economic integration.

In contrast with Rose's suggestion that we have seen an end to population biopolitics, I propose that what has in fact taken place is a coming to dominance of cultural and constructivist rubrics of population biopolitics. We will now turn to the consideration of anti-biologistic social-constructivism, which has been a defining aspect of dominant political discourses – both of the right and the left – in post-second world war Europe and beyond. Rather than a movement against the politics of population I will suggest that this 'anti-biologism' represented a widespread 'culturalisation' of population politics. Whereas Rose places developments in biological science at the fore in his analyses of the changing face of biopolitics my account will suggest that political struggle over the ontology of race is primary. Perhaps the rapid development of molecular biology in the post Second World War period is, at least in part, a *result* of political struggle concerning racial categories.

SOCIAL CONSTRUCTIVISM, CULTURAL BIOPOLITICS AND RACISM AFTER
AUSCHWITZ

European and Northern American political discourse and social science in the post-second world war period was characterised by a widespread 'anti-biologism'. In the early twentieth century eugenic ideas had been immensely popular throughout Europe and the US. After the second world war and the defeat and demonisation of Fascism, however, there was a general rejection of eugenic ideas in non-fascist Europe and America. Eugenics was now associated with the Nazis and the most horrific practices of eliminative eugenics (Taylor Allen, 2000: 449; Skinner, 2007: 933-4; Ziegler, 2008: 233-4; Rose and Rabinow, 2003: 17; Rose, 2007: 167-8).ⁱⁱ Naturalism, biologism and 'scientific racism' came under fire in the post-war blame games across the political spectra. These wranglings issued in a widespread celebration of social-constructivism as a supposedly emancipatory and anti-discriminatory ontology.

ANTI-RACIST SOCIAL CONSTRUCTIVISM

The most obvious movement against biologism is that of anti-racism. Thinkers such as John Rex positioned themselves as experts and educators of the public charged with the task of overcoming the ignorance and prejudice of racism, largely by contesting biological accounts of racial difference. The potency of anti-biologism in the sociology of race remains strong. In 2007 David Skinner could convincingly claim that '[s]uggestions that an approach intentionally or unintentionally contains some residue of biology remain one of the most powerful and contentious ways of criticising sociological work on race and ethnicity' (2007: 936). Arguably, a number of other anti-biology positions that have developed since the 1960s were motivated by the desire to challenge or gain distance from racism. For example, Vikki Bell argues that feminist 'anti-essentialism' was motivated by the problem of racism (Bell, 1999: 114-6). A radical anti-biologism was articulated in post-war feminist thought, with biologism and Darwinism being widely characterised as an 'ideology of the status quo' (e.g. Rosenberg, 1975: 142). This feminist anti-biologism will be discussed at length in Chapter 5.

NEO-LIBERAL SOCIAL CONSTRUCTIVISM

It is crucial to note that this strategy of attempting to gain distance from fascism through turning to, or affirming, constructivism was not at all a move restricted to the political left. Foucault details a parallel movement in the context of liberal political economy (Foucault, 2008: 120-121).

The Ordo liberals, although writing before the second world war, gained popularity in the post-war period, becoming a key voice in the reconstitution of the German state. The Ordo liberals argued that the rise of fascism could in part be attributed to the naïve naturalism of nineteenth century liberal philosophy; or rather, that the naïve naturalism of nineteenth century liberalism was responsible for the weakness of liberalism, and the failure of the liberal state in Germany,

which in turn enabled the unchecked expansion of the state, monstrously manifest in the rise of the Nazis.

The naïveté of classical liberalism's naturalism (according to the Ordo liberals) lay in the faith that the nature in question – the natural, self-regulating behaviour of market forces – would come into being of its own volition. It is this naïve naturalism that permitted the nineteenth-century liberals to espouse the principle of *laissez-faire*, of establishing markets as a domain *beyond* legitimate governance, to be left to their own self-regulation. When you uphold the principle of *laissez faire*, according to the Ordo liberals, you are thinking of the market as a sort of given nature, 'something produced spontaneously which the state must respect precisely in as much as it is a natural datum' (Foucault, 2008a: 120). The Ordo liberals essentially agreed with classical liberalism that the market behaves as an auto-normative, natural field of force (and site of verification-falsification for governmental practice (see Foucault, 2008a: 32)) – indeed the Ordo liberals wanted to radically extend the domains of life to be regulated through the laws of the market. However they maintained that for this nature, market behaviours and forces, to emerge, the market conditions would first have to be *constructed*.

Competition, for the Ordo liberals, is not a universal instinct but rather a formal structure that is given to intuition only in specific conditions; 'competition as an essential economic logic will only appear and produce its effects under certain conditions which have to be carefully and artificially constructed' (Foucault, 2008a: 120). As such, neo-liberal attention focused upon the ever extending development of mechanisms to produce markets and market behaviour. Whilst remaining *anti-state*, neo-liberalism has been able to drive towards ever-increasing, deepening, extending governmentality; towards the continually increasing construction of competition and market conditions.

RACIST SOCIAL CONSTRUCTIVISM OR 'CULTURAL RACISM'

The idea that new forms of 'cultural racism' have emerged since the Second World War, forms that are compatible with variants of social-constructivism, is widely held. The argument was spear headed by theorists of race and identity who are particularly interested in the power of culture, such as Stuart Hall (2000) and Paul Gilroy (1987) and now receives broad support in the context of discussions surrounding 'Islamaphobia'. For example, when Matti Bunzl argued in 2007 that Islamaphobia in contemporary Europe has to be seen in terms of a new normative paradigm wherein at stake is no longer a biologically constituted racial nation, but a culturally constituted European civilisation, his claim received support from a politically and philosophically diverse range of invited commentators - including Dan Diner, Brian Klug, Paul A. Silverstein, Adam Sutcliffe, Ester Benbassa and Susan Buck-Morss (Bunzl *et al*).

The idea that new cultural racisms can be seen as something like a refunctioning of older biological forms develops from the insight that the dynamic conceptions of collective life upon which culturalist discourses draw - conceptions such as civilisation and cultural development - have a shared genealogy with those of biological evolutionary racism in nineteenth century European thinking and imperialist practice. Historian of anthropology George Stocking has, for example, demonstrated the influence of Darwinian and other evolutionary biology on the development of anthropological and social-scientific conceptions of culture and civilisation (1968), whilst a recent volume of collected works in political theory makes a wide ranging case for the continuity between contemporary and nineteenth century 'civillisational' imperialist discourse and politics (Duffield & Hewitt eds., 2009).

Arguably a shift in overtly racist discourses from biological to cultural racisms follows a shift in the authority concerning the knowledges of difference from biological sciences to cultural and social science. Sociologist of race science David Skinner has pointed out that the second half of

the twentieth century saw a dramatic movement of authority whereby 'the baton for understanding race differences and managing race relations had passed from the natural to the social sciences' (2007:935). Anthropologist David Scott has suggested that a constructivist, relativist discourse of difference as cultural and linguistic has substituted for biologism as the ground for a 'post-ideology' inscription of western hegemony (2003).

If thinkers such as Bunzl are correct, then cultural racism is more pernicious, and more central to the mechanisms of governance in contemporary Europe, than is biological racism. Certainly a hostile and supremacist conceptualisation of Islamic culture is a defining political issue in the present. Bunzl cites comments from influential far right European political parties, such the remark from a leader of *Flemish Interest's* that 'Islam is now the No.1 enemy not only of Europe, but of the entire free world' (Filip Dewinter, cited in Bunzl, 2007: 40). The English Defence League (EDL), created in 2009, is a violent protest group who describe themselves as a 'counter jihad movement' and who have been characterised by as 'the most significant far-right street movement in the UK since the National Front in the 1970s' by *The Guardian* (EDL, 2010; Taylor, 2010). They constitute the latest chapter in an important Islamophobic strand of political culture in Britain, seeking to provoke violent unrest and tension in a number of cities. Unlike the leaders of *Flemish Interest* the EDL publicly reject the term 'Islamophobia'. However footage from a Guardian undercover investigation of hundreds of their members singing 'we all hate Muslims, we all hate Muslims' suggests the appropriateness of the term (Bunzl, 2007: 40; EDL, 2010; Taylor, 2010). Countering the idea that such sentiments are only relevant to a radical fringe in Europe Bunzl traces the movement by which far right parties from Austria and elsewhere have been able to shape the mainstream centre-right European political agenda, provoking such things as a move against support for Turkish accession to the EU on the part of centre right politicians such as German Chancellor Angela Merkel. The EDL add force to

Bunzl's suggestions that Islamophobia is primarily concerned with cultural, rather than biological, difference. Although there are reportedly organised racists and fascists in positions of influence within the movement, spokespeople for the group are adamant that it is a 'non-racist' organisation (Booth, Lewis & Taylor, 2009), by which they seem to mean that people of any colour are welcome in the movement. Their website states that 'we invite people of all races and faiths to join us in this campaign to awaken our sleeping Government to face up to and deal with the Jihad in our country, which threatens the very foundations of the freedoms won so dearly for us by past generations' (EDL, 2010). It is hard to believe that the pluralism about faith extends to welcoming Muslims. However footage from *The Guardian* investigation into the movement does demonstrate that in skin colour, ethnic origin and religion the group are far from monochrome (Taylor, 2010). Of course plural forms of racism intermingle and inform one another in this and other such contexts. With Bunzl and Rose I am attempting to indicate a shift in dominant emphasis from biological to cultural racism, not to suggest that biological racism is dead and buried.

The EDL and Flemish Interest might represent an extreme wing of cultural-racism but we can situate the shift in far right thinking from biology-centred, to culture-centred, racism, in the context of much broader shift in the imagining of difference, dynamics and fragmentation. A considerably more 'acceptable' manifestation of population life being presented as divided into dynamically related hierarchical fragments of culture in British political discourse, was former Labour Prime Minister Tony Blair's assertions that gun and knife crime, and a lack of respect, cannot be wholly explained in terms of factors such as economic inequality but must also be put down to a distinctive black culture (Potter, 2007). These comments resonate with the widespread condemnation of working class culture as 'chav culture' that is held to be responsible for social decline and 'anti-social' behaviour - legitimising moves towards tighter and tighter

legal control upon behaviour. The discourse of 'chav culture' can be regarded as a form of 'social racism', as was argued by polemicist Julie Burchell in 2005.

Forms of cultural supremacism are also central to the productive imagining of international political and social order. Most obvious is the Imperialist discourse concerning the oppressive nature of 'non-democratic' cultures that has been utilised in the legitimisation of US led military incursions into the Middle East in the past decade. More intractable is the concept of 'human development', which is institutionalised in the UN 'human development index' and embodied in the practices of millions of providers and recipients of international governmental and non-governmental agency across the global south. As Mark Duffield makes plain, contemporary development discourse is intertwined with global biopolitical projects of securitisation and fragmentation of life (2007; see also Beard, 2006). Cultural supremacism is at work in the machines of development, creating and shaping capacities to transform a world understood as dynamic, contingent and (at least potentially) progressing. Not only does the discourse of development legitimise an international hierarchy of global actors and attendant processes of imperialism, it also engenders practices of subjectification wherein cultural racism is central to the day to day self-constitution of development workers as moral subjects and is internalised by many of the people that they work with (Duffield, 2007; Lawson, 2007: 35; Heron, 2007: 88-99; Kothari, 2006).

In both national and international contexts such normative descriptions of cultural difference do not simply give voice to prejudices or enable people to construct 'identities', they constitute specific organisations of visibilities, embodiment and capacities producing the possible paths of power and activities of governance. Discourses of cultural differentiation have accompanied a governance of life that works upon our cultural being, just as discourses of biological racism accompanied the formation of an array of eugenicist politics, directed at the improvement of

population life through practices of care, control and elimination that operate at the point of biological reproduction or transmission of bodily fluids and touch. The new(er) cultural racisms describe alternative planes of contingency, animate new(er) possibilities of 'progressive' action, and valorise new(er) sets of activities as 'caring for life'. There is a focus upon practices of cultural formation and reproduction; educating, encouraging cultural change, capacity building and eliminating problematic culture.

Arguably the rationalities and, especially, the value systems of biopolitics and biologism have been reinscribed in a culturalist register - a register that is quite at home with the basic principles of social constructivism. If that is the case then the post-war critique of biologism may not have been successful in distancing 'progressive' thought and politics from the problems of modern racism and biopolitical rationality. Getting politics away from biological science has not necessarily meant an end to the experiential economy of population politics, biopolitical racism or biological-type relationships.

If there has been a culturalist reinscription of population then the biopolitical economy of experience that Foucault analysed, including the investment of (biopolitical) subjects in (bio)political embodiments and the generation of biological-type relations, might persist in the post-molecular, post-biologicistic context. Foucault's analysis of biopolitical experience draws the caricature of early twentieth century biologism as deterministic, pre-formist and conservative into question. If biological politics was invested in the experience of becoming, transcending limits, and transformation, and if biologicistic ontologies apprehended the world as historic, contingent, vital forces, then some of the assumptions that are made in the 'anti-biologicistic' celebration of social constructivism are problematic. At the least we can say that the affirmation of becoming and contingency are no necessary guard against the formation of biological-type relationships and racisms as Foucault has described them. Foucault's concept and analysis of

biopolitics might be applicable to political discourses and rationalities today that refer to culturalist not biologicistic ontologies.

NOTES TOWARDS AN ALTERNATIVE HISTORY OF POST-MOLECULAR BIOPOLITICS:
ECONOMICS, EDUCATION & THE EMBODIMENT OF POPULATION LIFE IN POST-WAR
BRITAIN

Foucault's theories of biopolitics can help us to think not only about the ever-expanding politics of medical practice, somatic citizenship and bio-technological consumption, as Rose implies. It can also help us to understand the experiential economy and positivity of non-biologicistic population politics. With further research it would be possible to develop an account of a *culturalist biopolitics*, as paramount in post-molecular/post-second world war European political discourse: an account pertaining to issues of experience, meaning and value not only with respect to the somatic, but also to cultural, educational, or formalist articulations and embodiments of population life. What follows are some highly speculative and schematic notes towards such a history in the context of post-war Britain. This is not intended as a substantive contribution to the political history of contemporary Britain, but as a continuation of our abstract exploration of the applicability of Foucault's concept of biopolitics today through the schematic indication of some of the areas to which that concept could be applied. In this section I will set out some very schematic pointers towards an alternative history of post-molecular biopolitics in Britain. This is not an attempt to put forward a new empirical history of post-war British politics. It is simply an indication of a few of the fields to which Foucault's concept of biopolitics could productively be applied in the post-molecular context if we understand biopolitics in terms of an economy of *experience*, not just the politics of scientific expertise. These observations are not based upon substantive research but rather constitute notes towards possible future research into contemporary, or post-molecular, biopolitics.

INTERPRETING THE SEPARATION OF POPULATION & BIOLOGY IN TERMS OF POLITICAL STRUGGLE

I have suggested that biopolitics in the post-molecular period could be understood not in terms of a post-population biopolitics but rather as a situation wherein there has been a split between biopolitics and biological science. Rather than the amalgamation of disciplinary anatomo-politics with biopolitics the molecular revolution in biological science and the movement of biology away from a focus upon population might be understood in terms of separation between biopolitical formations of knowledge and biological expertise. As Skinner suggests with respect to the specific discourse of racial difference (2007: 935), social-scientists might have supplanted biologists as the authoritative experts on matters of population life.

Some might argue that such a split between biopolitics and biology would be of the nature of a time lag. Some might argue that the politics of collective embodiment will sooner or later catch up with the natural sciences, giving up on the politics of population, as though culturalist formations of nationalism are a mere hangover from the eugenicist early twentieth century, and as though human science and political rhetoric simply follow the ontological lead of the 'natural' sciences. But, if we understand political struggle as primary in the formation of knowledge, then we *could* argue almost the reverse: that the apparent split between biological science and the biopolitics of the population is the result, primarily, of a political problem and of a solution championed by social scientists and politicians.

The political problem that might have initiated the split between biopolitics and biological science is that of how to persist with the nation state in biopolitical liberal democracies in the aftermath of the second world war, an aftermath characterised by horror and shock at the thanato-political totalitarian form of the nation state and at the intolerable trajectory that extremist eugenics had taken under Nazi rule. Arguably the solution to this problematic included the reconceptualisation of population as a primarily cultural, formal and economic

body. In a sense the biological knowledge of race was positioned as, if not exactly the scapegoat (being undoubtedly massively responsible) then perhaps, the 'fall-guy' for all the woes of the biopolitics of population life. Arguably, the latter was enabled to continue in a revitalised constructivised form rinsed clean of (apparent) responsibility for the excesses of eugenics. As has been said, scientific racism, biological determinism and naïve naturalisms were widely denounced in the decades following the Second World War, as epitomised in the UN statements against scientific racism. The relative demise of 'scientific racism' and the progressive delegitimisation of 'biological determinism' was not, however, to result in the end of biopolitical experience or of the politics of population (which might have meant the end of the nation as a focus of affective power). Arguably population politics continues in the present whilst non-somatic expressions and manifestations of population life have come to play a more paramount role, partially substituting for the trans-organic corporeal connections of genetics and degeneracy.

Arguably the shift in political discourse and social science away from biologicistic explanations and ontologies towards more constructivist 'sociological' understandings accompanied a reconfiguration of the biopolitical population. Foucault's analysis of biopolitical economies of experience and embodiment might be applicable to a welfare state population embodied through technologies of social insurance, articulating and investing capacities of caring, labouring and capital production. It might also be applicable to a post-welfareist neo-liberal population in which the capacities that are articulated are ideational and educational, even when they pertain to care and economic interaction.

ECONOMICS & EDUCATION AS ALTERNATIVE EMBODIMENTS OF POPULATION LIFE IN POST-WAR BRITAIN

In post Second World War Britain, the new 'welfare state' would focus on social insurance and education as much as it would upon health. Social progress would be achieved through a fight against 'want, disease, ignorance, squalor and idleness' (Beveridge Report, 1942), rather than – as we might have expected a couple of decades before – degeneracy and racial decline. Whilst the importance of genetic genealogy was being downplayed, the trans-organic (or trans-individual, or trans-familial), character of wealth and education was brought into a sharp – newly institutionalised – relief. With the institutionalisation of 'social insurance' and the production of the welfare state following the Second World War a new complexity of relationships of economic interdependence were described and materialised. There are parallels between this welfare-statist embodiment of population life through technologies of social insurance and the embodiment of population life through sexuality in the nineteenth century as Foucault describes it. The technologies of social insurance connect the capacities of bodies, responsabilise bodies, define the 'truth' or true worth of subjects and set-up fragmentations, sub-groups, that are understood hierarchically in terms of those definitions.

Economic productivity as an aspect of population life was *complexified*, coming to include collective risk and responsibility, in addition to collective productivity and (national) success or failure. Mechanisms of comprehensive interdependence were established, giving greater body, greater corporeality, to national economy (or rather, perpetuating the corporeality of national economy that had already been well established in the context of total war). Economics is thus drawn deeper into the warp and weft of population life, substituting, to some extent, for the relatively weakened role of sexuality and genetic reproduction.

At the same time further education was established as a comprehensive right to be provided free to all with the Butler Act of 1944. In practice secondary education was made free and

compulsory until the age of 15 in the year following the war. This was presented as a limited measure on the path to the ideal wherein the provision and compulsion would continue to the age of eighteen. The bigger transformation was the establishment of the principle that a liberal education was not simply a distinguished privilege but was, instead, an entitlement of all children and a practice that would serve as the *means* of social differentiation (Fraser, 2003: 242). Rather than simply reflecting the privileges of birth education was to become the dynamic *ground* of social differentiation and dynamic relation. This was far from the universalisation of an existing right of the privileged. Education would be universalised but at the same time fragmented, theoretically split into a tripartite system of grammar, technical and secondary modern schools, but more factually split into an internally hierarchised triplet of public, grammar and secondary modern. Thus we see a movement of fragmenting generalisation that echoes the generalisation of sexuality to the proletariat in the nineteenth century, as Foucault describes it. The education system is thus producing a unitary living plurality: dynamically related fragments of the population, the health of all of which is said to determine that of the whole (the success of the nation). Membership of the different fragments was to be 'determined' by psychometric testing (itself largely determined by class membership), rendering 'intellectual capacity' and capital crucial in the investment of individual bodies in and by population life. Work, wealth and education would carry the agency of individual bodies into the vitality of future generations and that of the existent population-nation. Culture and education would oust genetics as the principle fluid of reproduction.

A second-stage in the production of post-war welfare-state embodiment in the UK can be identified with the establishment, since the 1980s, of neo-liberalism as the hegemonic political rationality. Neo-liberalism can be seen as an alternative post-molecular regime of biopolitical embodiment, one that is more formalist and more abstracting, moving further again from the

explicit biologism and eugenicist discourses of early twentieth century biopolitics. Neo-liberalism emerged, as we have seen above, in Germany, where the problematic of reconciling the biopolitical nation state with the horror at its totalitarian potential and the excesses of eugenics was at its sharpest. If we are correct in identifying the tensions around continuing the nation-state in the aftermath of Auschwitz and extremist eugenics as a cause for the development of formalist, educational, imaginings of collective embodiment then it is no wonder that the 'constructivisation', formalisation or abstraction of the connectivity of population life was more complete in the neo-liberal regime of power/knowledge emanating from Germany. Economic relations, behaviours and vital interdependence were *themselves* conceptualised, by the Ordo liberals, as constructed *forms*, produced through education. The institutionalisation of neo-liberalism (heavily influenced by the Ordo liberals) in the UK in the 1980s included a radical centralisation of education production with the launch of the National Curriculum in 1988.ⁱⁱⁱ Neo-liberalism considerably undermined the welfarist production of collective embodiment in the guise of economic inter-dependence and social insurance, but it placed even greater emphasis upon education, culture and ideas (or forms) as the site of social reproduction, transmission and vitality. Neo-liberalism regards economic behaviour as itself a matter of culture – as constructed forms of behaviour produced through education. In turn it tends to view economic productivity as the measure of cultural life.

CONCLUSION

It is beyond the scope of this study to investigate this history empirically in a meaningful fashion. I am raising these pointers in order to suggest the types of areas to which Foucault's analytics of biopolitics *could* be applied, but I am not attempting to carry out that empirical application. *Very* schematically and *very* speculatively speaking we can suggest that, following the crisis in biopolitics brought on by the experience of extremist eugenics, total war, anti-colonial

struggles and the ideological wranglings around Nazism, a split was introduced between the formulation of population and the concepts and mechanisms of evolutionary biology – between biopolitics (though not discipline) and biology. Following this split, cultural and economic manifestations of extra-somatic embodiment became (even) more significant than they had been in the first half of the twentieth century. It is possible to suggest that this event might even have had a part to play in the molecular turn in evolutionary biology, turning biologists away from some of the issues of population life (especially those pertaining to racial difference) and thus perhaps encouraging a focus upon individuation and the more deflationary approach to living beings of biochemistry, assisting in the development of the new recombinant molecular biological science. Either way, the politics of population life continues despite the relative decline of the authority of discourses concerning the genetic difference and determination of races.

As always we should avoid epochalising pictures of historical process. A move from a more somatic to a more culturalist biopolitics of population should be assumed to take the form of additional productions and emphases, not the move from one epoch of biopolitics to the next. Economic interdependence has always figured in the constitution of the modern population, whilst the idea of culture was one of the main concerns of nineteenth and early twentieth century anthropology, studying the evolution and variation of Man as species. Conversely, the line between social and physical reproduction has been murky in post-war productions of population life and dynamic racism. Genetic thinking was never so broadly discredited in the context of class and especially sex difference as it was with respect to race. Also, post-biologicist liberal democracies continued to export eugenicist policies to so-called ‘developing’ countries, even where eugenics had been strongly denounced in a domestic context. If we are to note a shift between somatic and cultural biopolitics then it would pertain to a shift in emphasis and

dominance, not in totalising epochs. If this approach is broadly correct then we should imagine that the molecular revolution and associated events have given shape to new forms, adding to and thus transforming the biopolitics of population but not displacing it. Foucault's analysis of biopolitics might be of great relevance to a number of phenomena today, phenomena that are not generally referred to as biological (nor treated as such by Rose).

These speculative notes on the biopolitical population in post-molecular Britain are not, as I say, intended as a substantive empirical account of that history – such an account would be well beyond the scope of the present work. My intention is simply to explore, in the abstract, the question of what Foucault's concept and analysis of biopolitics might help us to understand in a post-molecular context. Amongst the many areas upon which Foucault's analytics of biopolitics might shed light are the political appeal, the constraints, the necessary racisms and the perpetual intensifications involved in the experiential economy of welfarist and neo-liberal educational policy. In contrast to Rose who ties the history of biopolitics very closely to that of medicine and biological science I have suggested that alternative, culturalist embodiments of population are important for contemporary biopolitics and that Foucault's analysis of the economies of biopolitical experience might be applied to technologies of embodying population through social insurance and national education.

ⁱ Rabinow also cites Gilles Deleuze's 'Appendix on the Death of Man and Superman' in *Foucault* as an inspiration, where Deleuze suggests that since the nineteenth century we have left the 'Man form' associated with discipline and biopolitics behind, and moved towards a new field of the 'afterman' in which finitude and empiricity give way to a play of forces and forms; the superfold (Rabinow 1999: 407; Deleuze, 1988: 102-10).

ⁱⁱ The ostensive rejection of eugenicist ideas did not prevent the governments of the US, many European countries (especially the Scandinavian countries, the UK and Germany) and, in recent decades, Japan, from quietly supporting the continuation of eugenic policies beyond their borders in many 'developing' countries where western funded 'aid' programmes have frequently been responsible for encouraging sterilisation and fertility control 'population' programmes (Grimes, 1998: 383). The US Agency for International Development (US AID) was, for example, instrumental in stimulating fertility control activities in the Philippines in the 1960s and in mobilising the Philippine government to adopt an explicit population policy in 1970 (Warwick, 1982: 16). A particularly controversial episode in the eighties and nineties was that of trials of *Norplant*, a contraceptive implant, in various non-western societies including Brazil, Bangladesh and Haiti. These trials, which were funded by US AID, involved extremely dubious practices, with women being misinformed as to the experimental status of the drug and with some even being refused removal when the side effects became unbearable (Barroso & Corrêa, 1995; *Horizon*, 1995).

ⁱⁱⁱ I am grateful to Victoria Margree for suggesting the national curriculum as an example of culturalist biopolitics in the questions following my conference paper 'Meaningfulness and Foundationless Power: Population, Process and Life' *Power: Dynamics Forms and Consequences* University of Tampere, 8 September 2008.