Towards a Theoretical Understating of How to Study the State
Governmentality, Power and Governmental Regimes

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This is a theoretical paper that originates from a larger project that investigates the construction of the *Plan Nacional del Buen Vivir* 2013-2017 (PNBV 2013-2017) in Ecuador. Its overriding theoretical concern is to answer the following question: how to study processes of state formation in Ecuador since 2008. The paper answers this broad question by arguing, at a general level, that the state reproduces itself partly by effectively *creating* spaces where it can intervene in society. This work is concerned, thus, with looking at the particular ways in which states penetrate society through governmental regimes. In more specific terms, this work argues that processes of state intervention can be broadly understood by looking at three complementary and interrelated processes: a. The formation of narratives about the state seeking to legitimize its presence in society; b. Governmental practices: the ways in which the state apprehends, organizes, distributes and ultimately creates specific fields of intervention; c. The exercise of different and complementary modalities of power, including governmental and disciplinary forms of power. I call the combined operation and functioning of these elements the construction of a "governmental regime."

At another level of theory-making this work proposes to develop a novel use of the conceptual tools of the governmentality-studies school. Specifically, this paper argues that this approach can be particularly useful in investigating techniques of state formation that are not rooted on legal regulations or juridical forms, prohibitions, coercion and/or other means generally associated with the state and a logics of police. Modern forms of rule, including important dimensions of the Ecuador's state, are characterized by the conjunction of various forms of power, including facets of power seeking to construct self-governing populations through various knowledge-based techniques. Understanding the processes by which states seek to penetrate society through these techniques and knowledge practices is important for understanding ways states constitute fields of intervention in society. In order to study the constitution of fields of intervention through a governmentality-approach means looking at the ways in which the state problematizes them and renders issues technical and manageable, as well as the ways in which the state "protects" those constructions through, for instance, disciplinary acts. (cf. Li, 2007; Dean, 1991, 1999, 2002). This work, thus, develops a series of theoretical arguments that stress the importance of these elements in the constitution of governmental regimes and ultimately in processes of state formation.

Before continuing it should be noted that this work does not intend to develop a definitive discussion about power and politics or to engage in definitional debates about the state. Its central propositions are, in a way, rooted on the methodological question: how does one study the state? The difficulties of studying a complex, multifarious "entity" like the state are notorious, and reducing these complexities to an overarching theory about the state would be, I contend, following Foucault, counterproductive. The arguments presented here are, thus, theoretical propositions about establishing a manageable ontology for studying of states and, more specifically, how states penetrate society, without recurring to sweeping generalizations

about state behavior. The arguments presented here are, hence, not meant to constitute a definitive theory about the state but a series of working hypothesis about processes of state formation capable of generating productive lines of investigation about states.

This work is organized as follows. First, it defines the state and its two dimensions: practices and narratives. Second, it links its basic definitional propositions to the theoretical underpinnings of governmentality studies. The second section of the paper points to the specific ways in which governmentality-studies can be effectively "employed" to analyze processes of state formation. Third, the paper looks more closely at the specific aspects of Foucauldian power analytics that are pertinent to studying the state, particularly, the linkages between knowledge and power and the various dimensions of power studied by Foucault. Fourth, the paper addresses specific elements of how states construct fields of intervention. These sections highlight the importance constructing state narratives, acts of problematization and rendering issues technical as well as the relevance of genealogy for studying governmental regimes. The final two building blocks of this paper address the issue of politics and potential criticisms that could be leveled at a governmentality approach to studying the state. The paper finishes with a few brief concluding remarks.

Governmentality and Studying the Practices and Engagements of the Ecuadorian State

Max Weber famously defined the state as "a relation of men dominating men, a relation supported by means of legitimate (i.e. considered to be legitimate) violence" (Weber, as cited in Migdal, 2009: 13). Weber's definition highlights that the state is a relation of domination and, therefore, power. It can be inferred that in Weber's definition there is an important dimension for the role of police. But, the state does not only dominate through force or the threat to the use of force; there is ample space for power relations to take place prior to and in between applications of force. With this premise in mind, I would like to bring Joel Migdal (2001) into the conversation. Migdal's definition of the state complements Weber's precisely on this point. According to Migdal the state is "(1) *The image of a coherent controlling organization in a territory, which is a representation of the people bounded by that territory* and *(2) the actual practices of its multiple parts*" (Migdal, 2009: 16; emphasis on the original).

Both Weber's and Migdal's definitions look at the state as being intrinsically linked to power practices and material forces. For Migdal, it is worth stressing, the state is also an image, a construction based on narratives. This can be thought of as the equivalent applied to states of Benedict Anderson's (1983) definition of a nation (as an imagined community): Migdal's definition acknowledges the materiality of practices but adds a narratives aspect to the state in which the state and its power are not only about things, trade, policies, courthouses, money, arms, resources, but also about representations and the construction of imaginaries. This means that to look at the state and state power, one must consider both aspects of the equation: practices and meanings, battles for resources, as well as battles for definitions, for representations (cf. Rojas, 1998).

The state, thus, is the interstice between practice and image. Hence, I would like to make the following proposition: that the state can be defied as a series of governmental regimes that ultimately rely on the legitimate use of violence to dominate their populations. This working definition synthesizes Weber's and Migdal's through a Foucauldian lens: a governmental regime is a form of power that brings together narratives (images) and practices (techniques, plans, interventions) into an activity called government. As Foucault noted:

It is the tactics of government which make possible the continual definition and redefinition of what is within the competence of the state and what is not, the public versus the private, and so on; thus the state can only be understood in its survival and its limits on the basis of the general tactics of govermentality (Burchell et al., 1991: 103)

Consequently, I propose to analyze the Ecuadorian case through a post-Foucauldian governmentality-inspired approach. Simply put, governmentality can be "understood in the broad sense of techniques and procedures for directing human behavior. Government of children, government of souls and consciences, government of a household, of a state, or of oneself" (Foucault, as cited in Rose et al. 2006: 83). I have decided to call the approach developed in this work, a "post-Foucauldian," "governmentality-inspired" analysis for two reasons: first because many of the fundamental concepts in this work's theoretical approach are not directly Foucault's but derived from the vast literature on governmentality that has emerged since the 1990s in particular. Perhaps Foucault and a "mainstream" governmentality approach is most useful for analyzing highly organized, "developed" societies of the north in which the conduct of conduct and the self-government are already a reality. Second, as I explain in more detail below, my use of governmentality is not as a theory as such but, following William Walters and Jans Henrik Haahr (2005), as a "form of political analysis."

Through a governmentality-inspired approach I intend to analyze and stress three aspects about the state, its reproduction and expansion, that I consider fundamental: first, how it intervenes in society (its intervention schemes); second its power modalities and forms of authority; and third, its constitutive narratives (its regimes of representation). I look at all of these elements as being interrelated and co-constitutive (that is, not one particular element can be analyzed in isolation from the others and all affect their mutual constitution). In addition, as argued below, this work considers that a governmentality approach is not fundamentally opposed to some of the arguments of struturalism, insitutionalism or culturalism. Neither do I consider, however, that the approach I propose here is an all-compatible approach. I do argue that a governmentality-inspired approach can be better suited, in many respects, for understanding the transition from a disarticulated state prior to 2006 and a relatively strong state whose presence in society is unprecedented in Ecuador's history. A governmentality approach is, for instance, not inimical to the idea that the state may represent class interests or that institutions, once embedded in social practices may foster democratic development and strengthen the state.

Perhaps the fundamental difference between a governmentality approach and other approaches to studying the state is its level of analysis: it links the mezzo and micro levels without the need to refer to, as Charles Tilly would put it to "big structures, large processes and huge comparisons" (Tilly, 1983). Rather its ontological emphasis is at the level of governmental interventions and the ways in which they become constituted and penetrate society; at the epistemological level its focus is on the interrelationship between knowledge, discourse-practices and power. Both of these "levels" together are, as I hope to show below, able to produce an incisive look at power and the different power modalities exercised by the state over and through its population. A governmentality approach thus, understands governmental regimes as concrete, observable forms of state behavior. It is also worth pointing out that the state, from this perspective, could be understood as a series of governmental regimes that need not be understood as coherent, unitary, rational or progressive (teleological progression of government: governments are continuously improving and learning), but often contradictory, diverse and even chaotic.

I should also emphasize that one must be wary of not asking a governmentality-inspired

approach (or any approach for that matter) more than it can offer; this approach has important limitations (some of which I address below) and can be complemented by other theoretical sources. Thus, while this work mainly employs the tools developed by the governmentality school, I also draw from Weberian sources, critical theory (i.e. the Frankfurt School and other Gramscian sources) as well as the state theory of Joel Migdal (1989, 2001). This specific combination of sources will allow to expand the governmentality approach proposed here in three specific ways: to understand the relationship between bureaucratic power and state interventions, particularly in the context of a forming technocratic bureaucracy as is the case in Ecuador; to allow for more social agency in the theoretical approach of the work; and third to link governmental interventions to processes of state formation. Hence, in what follows I will attempt to articulate an interpretative framework for understanding the Ecuadorian state since 2008 and its interventions in society, particularly in the area of participation and in its relationship to specific social groups like indigenous organizations.

One of the basic methodological and theoretical premises underlying this work is its historical foundation. I place and understand the Ecuadorian state in a specific historical context: a historical juncture at the interstice between the end of neoliberalism and the emergence of a new state form. It was a time (the 2006-2008 period) during which politicized social movements sought to reconstitute a disarticulated, elitist state through a new institutional arrangement as well as a new identity of the state through the enactment of a new Constitution. Since the first time Foucault discussed the concept of governmentality in 1978 and 1979, in his lectures at the College de France, he meant it as a historical understanding of a modality of government and political power (Lemke, 2007; Walters, 2012). In this sense, I must stress that governmentality entails looking at the government of the state as a process, as a series of effects, beginings and ends – it means looking at the state as an ongoing project, not a *fait accompli*.

Furthermore, historically, governmentality is useful given that I am evaluating the "newness" of a state project and attempting to understand how it was re-articulated after neoliberalism. In this respect, a teleological or path-dependent historical view of the state would provide little analytical purchase. Foucault's preoccupation with the genealogy of the State points at processes of ruptures instead of continuities to capture meaningful instances of State formation. In Ecuador, it is clear that a moment of rupture occurred in 2006. Like in other countries of the region like as Venezuela (1998) or Bolivia (2007), Ecuador's population voted in large numbers for a political outsider, an anti-establishment, left-leaning as president that both in rhetoric and in his governmental plans, represented a break from Ecuador's neoliberal past. One of the most significant instances of political rupture that was brought about by the 2006 presidential election, like in Venezuela and Bolivia, was the drafting of a new Constitution aimed at reconstituting the State.

Finally, given the research purposes of this work, namely to look at state interventions in society, particularly in the area of participation, I require an analytical approach that sheds light on governmental schemes, plans, techniques and their relationship to larger process such as a state political and discursive identity, its material conditions (funding, economic doctrines). The analytical tools provided by this framework allow for a closer look at the unfolding of governmental regimes: the act of government is never assumed but problematized, investigated and unveiled. Looking at participation, thus, means problematizing the specific ways in which the state constructs the field of participation, its contours, its institutional devices as well as the knowledges and techniques used to do so. The central preoccupation of my research is precisely to understand processes of State formation through an investigation of interventions in society including through participatory planning and as: how was it constructed? What is the role of knowledge in participatory planning? How can power relations be characterized in the micro-

spaces of participatory planning? Who are the actors and how are the constituted as such during participatory planning processes?

Governmentality and the State?

At first governmentality may not appear as an obvious choice to study the state. Not only was Foucault wary of developing a "theory of the state" (Foucault, 1994), but an important portion of the governmentality literature has been devoted to studying power beyond the state (see Rose and Miller, 1992). However, Foucault's uneasiness about the development of a general theory of the state can also be interpreted from a different angle. Rather than looking at the state as a whole, or developing as Theda Skocpol (1985) suggests, a state-centric (as opposed to a society-centered) theory with the state as a central and unified actor, one could instead look at the state as series of governmental regimes which intervene in society with varying degrees of success. In this manner the problem of a unified theory of the state can be avoided and the indigestible meal bypassed. Additionally, the state and its actions are understood, through a governmentality approach, beyond its structural limitations. Governmentality is also concerned with the varying narratives and discourse-practices that help constitute the state as governmental regimes. Below I develop the specific tools of a governmentality approach in detail.

Studying the State as Governmental Regimes

As mentioned before, this work is concerned with the re-articulation of the Ecuadorian state since 2008. To analyze this process I look into various facets of state formation: its constitutive narratives, its power modalities and its interventions in society through concrete practices in the area of participatory planning. Following William Walters and Jans Henrik Haahr (2005: 289-292) I employ the concept of governmentality in two specific ways: First and more importantly, as a form of political analysis; I also look at governmentality as the historical development of a form of modern techniques of power including the conduct of conduct. Concretely, government, from this perspective can be understood as "a form of activity aiming to shape, guide or affect the conduct of some person or persons … government encompasses not only the government of others but the various ways in which we govern ourselves'" (Gordon, as cited in Walters and Haahr, 2005: 290). Two important research questions can be derived from this first theoretical proposition: a) How are we governed? b) How do we govern ourselves?

Governmentality as a form of political analysis entails analyzing government and its constitutive mentalities, rationalities and practices; in other words, the relationship between government and forms of thought. It "seeks to disclose the forms of political reason which inform, and are often presupposed by particular types of government. It interrogates the way in which different regimes have posed certain problems of rule: who can govern; who is to be governed; what is to be governed, and how?" (Walters and Haahr, 2005: 290). A mentality can be defined as,

> a collective, relatively-bounded form of thought in which individuals and groups are typically immersed. As such, a mentality is not always 'readily examined by those who inhabit it' … As a form of political analysis, governmentality thus aims to be critical and reflexive; for, it seeks to make explicit the forms of political reason and ethical assumptions that are embedded in our activities of government (Walters and Haahr, 2005: 290).

Additionally, as Nikolas Rose and Peter Miller (1992: 176) note,

a problematics of government [governmentality] should be analyzed in terms of their governmental technologies, the complex of mundane programmes, calculations, techniques, apparatuses, documents and procedures through which authorities seek to embody and give effect to governmental practices. Through an analysis of the intricate interdependencies between political rationalities and governmental technologies, we can begin to understand the multiple and delicate networks that connect the lives of individuals, groups and organizations to the aspirations of authorities in the advanced liberal democracies of the present.

Consequently, governmentality could link issues of participation and planning techniques to a specific understanding of what participation entails and how it *ought* to be governed. To the contrary, structuralist and institutionalist approaches to state formation, fail to account for the relationship between different rationalities of government and techniques of government. An institutionalist analysis of participatory processes, for instance, would analyze whether popular participation in government is being carried out or not according to its juridical forms. This type of analysis misses to account for the multiple ways in which normative bodies (laws, regulations, formal rules) could be turned into practices. Similarly, such an analysis would miss the diverse ways in which a government rationalizes its interventions in society in order to govern without recurring to force. Thus, in the context of participatory processes organized by SENPLADES, a governmentality approach allows me to make intelligible the process through which something called "participation" becomes a governable space.

After considering what has been said two additional research-guiding questions can be derived: c) what are the mentalities and forms of rationality that the state "employs" in its own definition as a social actor? d) How are these mentalities turned into concrete governmental practices, by what means (agencies, institutions, regulations etc.) and techniques (calculations, censuses, statistics, maps, workshops etc.)?

The State Apparatus

Not all states are the same. Besides differences in political and economic regimes, states are different in their internal organization. The importance of a bureaucratic structure for states is well recognized. In a well-known exploration of bureaucratic politics Graham Alison (1971) shows the direct linkages between a bureaucratic post and the behavior of state actors – where you sit determines the way you act. Similarly, Weberian-influenced scholars have emphasized the importance of a modern, efficient and effective bureaucratic apparatus for developmental states. Peter Evans (1995), for example, in his well-known study of varying state forms (predatory, developmental and hybrid) shows that state behavior is partly dependent upon its internal organization and the "Weberian hypothesis must be explored across [state] agencies and countries" (Evans, 1995: 40). Moreover, Evans continues, "[l]ooking at the state agencies involved in particular industrial sectors … is one way of putting more empirical meat on the idea that it is scarcity rather than surfeit of bureaucracy that impedes development" (Ibid.).

By looking at the comportment of state agencies and the bureaucratic apparatus is one of the ways in which Evans differentiates the effect on industry of different states. Evans was interested in the role of the state in industrial transformation, nonetheless, one can extrapolate Evan's argument to participation: Looking at state agencies in charge of fostering participation is essential to understand the type of state and the type of participation being promoted. At the same time, however, I consider it fundamental to problematize the idea that more bureaucracy is better for development. Particularly, in the area of participation the Weberian hypothesis, as I argue in a later chapter, may not apply.

At the same time as Lemke (2007: 2) points out "government by state agencies must be conceived of as a contingent political process and a singular historical event in need of explanation rather than a given fact." Governmentality studies are interested precisely in providing such an analysis. According to Bob Jessop, to study governmentality is to study the "historical constitution of different state forms in and through changing practices of government without assuming that the state has a universal or general essence." Nonetheless, Jessop continues, "whilst eschewing any general theory of the state, [Foucault] certainly explored emergent strategies (state projects, governmentalizing projects) that identified the nature and purposes of government (as reflected in alternative forms of *raison d'état*) in different contexts and periods" (Jessop, 2007: 37).

In summary, following Weber and Foucault, Evans and Lemke, it is important in studying a state, to link types of state interventions to the type of agencies that carry them out and more generally, to the specific characteristics of the bureaucratic offices, agencies, ministries and so on. By looking at the type of bureaucracy of a state one can, thus, derive conclusions about its identity (e.g. developmentalist, predatory, intermediate; disciplinary, authoritarian) and its mechanisms for penetrating society, or to extrapolate from Evans's theory, its forms of social embeddedness.

Thus far it has been argued that the state can be understood as a series of governmental regimes. These regimes are characterized by different mentalities and techniques and are carried out by different types of state agencies, ministries, organizations, etc. One highly important issue that has not thus far been discussed is the question of power. After all, it is of fundamental importance for understanding the interventions of a state in society the degree to which government can rule, to what extent and through which mechanisms. In order to understand this issue one must inescapably speak about state power – what types/modalities of power does the state exercise? How does it exercise power? I tackle these questions in turn.

The State and Modalities Power

It has been established that the state is practices as well as narratives, rationalities and techniques. Thus, an analysis of the state as series of governmental regimes would require recognizing that power goes beyond its juridical and police forms. This proposition has, at least, two implications for studying the state: First, power and rule cannot be reduced to juridical and/or police forms; and second, power is more than prohibition (legal or not), coercion and punishment. The notion of power beyond negation is recognized by a number of intellectual traditions like Gramscianism whose concept of hegemony gives a more prevalent role to classical Marxism's superstructure. Weberians too recognize that power is more than domination through the legitimate claim to the use of violence. Weber's charismatic authority, for example, can be defined as a form of power that employs persuasion rather than coercion. In like-fashion governmentality studies follows Foucault's lead in identifying various modalities of power within his broader definition of power as an action that delimits or constraints the realm of possibility of another action (Foucault, 1978). The different historical configurations of power identified by Foucault were: sovereign, biopower, pastoral, disciplinary and government.

In brief, sovereign power means domination through, in a way, the management of death. Foucault thought of sovereign power as the monarch's ultimate power to administer death. Power was the monarch and he/she had the power to kill and let live. By contrast biopower is the power to potentialize life, manage health and wellbeing. In a way then, biopower is power over (or through) life, rather than death. Disciplinary power is a way to manage populations through regimes of discipline (as in schools, barracks, asylums). In contrast to sovereign power, the definition of discipline entails the transformation of subjectivities. By definition, it entails a

process of improvement-normalization through regimes of discipline (disciplinary power is further discussed below). Finally, governmental power as well as biopower stems from Foucault's effort at responding to Marxist critiques regarding of his conception of power's inability to deal with larger power configurations, more specifically to account for his failure "to offer a proper consideration of the nature of and organization of the state" (Walters, 2012: 15). Both biopower and governmental power are forms if understanding modern regimes of rule, many of which are rooted on the administration of life, not death; freedom, not restriction and self-government not police-juridical enforcement (Dean, 1999; Walters, 2012).

Before discussing some of the constitutive elements of what Foucault thought as "power" in a more general sense, I would like to discuss, mainly following Barry Hindess (1997, 2001), the idea of disciplinary power. Discipline's main focus is the normalization of populations through more or less extended periods of disciplinary regimes; it is a generalized regulatory mechanism for the "production of docile and useful subjects" (Dean, 1999: 122). Discipline is intimately linked to the production of autonomous, self-regulating individuals amenable to being governed from afar. A good example of a disciplinary institution is the military. In a military barracks, men and women are subjected to a series of techniques (marching, tight-scheduling, etc.) designed to transform a man into a soldier – a transformation in subjectivity. Discipline implies the temporary affectation of the individual's or group's freedoms until the process of normalization is complete. Thus, an important difference between disciplinary and sovereign power is that in sovereign power regimes the tortured or imprisoned, are not thought of as corrigible. There aim of power is not to transform the subject but to use her as an example for others to follow, that is why practices of torture and punishment in the seventeenth century and prior where made into public spectacles (Foucault, 1977).

I would argue that this fundamental difference can be transposed to a more contemporary understanding of different power regimes within states: for an authoritarian state, oppressed populations are incorrigible, so to speak. The intent of power may be to keep a system going and not to transform certain populations. Examples abound, but the most extremes cases are Nazi Germany or Apartheid South Africa. In both of these states oppressed populations were managed through near complete inhalation or radical exclusion, respectively. Neither the Jewish population in Germany nor the Black population in South Africa was deemed to be "corrigible." The same can be said of other periods and authoritarian regimes of populations: communists in Pinochet's Chile, blacks in American slavery and segregation, Women in many contemporary societies. By contrast, in a disciplinary state, subjugated populations are managed through disciplinary actions designed to transform them, to "normalize" them. I think that this is a useful conceptual distinction, as I argue in Chapter 7, when it comes to evaluating the power modalities exercised by the Ecuadorian state. In its relationship with indigenous populations, for instance, is the Ecuadorian state mainly characterized as disciplinary or authoritarian? I argue in favor of the former.

I should also point out that disciplinary measures could take many different organizational shapes: school, a workfare program, an asylum, a prison or a military regiment (Walters, 2012). Disciplinary actions however need not be organizational but can be psychological, discursive and symbolic and develop within specific regimes of represenatiton. Examples of this can be shaming campaigns with a variety of purposes, from losing weight to making workers more productive through specific understanding of what it means to be a good worker (like working overtime without pay, normalizing unpaid internships and so on). The central aspect of discipline is to manage particular populations through discipline and in accordance to the precepts of a regime of representation, that is to say, normalization means being transformed in accordance to the dictums of a particular power regime expressed in

representation. In this sense, the aim of disciplining populations will be to reproduce a specific power regime. So, for example, the dominance of Eurocentric-white modernity in countries like Ecuador means that a disciplinary regime will seek to reproduce a regime of power that prioritizes cultural forms (Rotiman, 2008; Hindess, 1997, 2001).

Finally, there is the question of governmentality as a form of power. For Foucault the trajectory of power was teleological: more "primitive" societies were rooted on forms of sovereign power and modern, European ones on governmental power. According to Tania Murray Li (2007a) Foucault saw this progression as more or less inevitable. Much of governmentality as far as modern power is concerned is about liberal technologies of power, mainly, power through freedoms, through self-regulation. But is importance to stress two fundamental aspects about this issue that directly relate to this work: first that governmental power is an historical process, not a static state of affairs. This means that any analysis rooted in governmentality must acknowledge that states of self-regulation are first continuously being reproduced by agents other than individuals self-regulating, like states and governments. Also, states of liberal self-regulation did not appear overnight; they were encouraged and produced by the acts of governments as well as other forces, like the market. Thus, to say that governmentality is about regulation through freedoms does not entail ignoring the role that governments play in the historical development (and eventually reproduction of self-regulation as a historical fact.

Second, as Walter (2012: 6-7) notes:

> A great deal of commentary has conflated governmentality and liberalism … a careful reading of Foucault's lectures on governmentality reveals that … in no way does it [liberalism] exhaust the field of governmentality. Drawing attention to other governmentalities, only some of which Foucault has sketched, will allow us to see our political present as more heterogeneous than it might otherwise appear.

I side with Li (2007) in considering that Foucault took the idea of the teleology of power perhaps a little too far. Many Western societies, particularly those in the Andes, like Ecuador's are characterized by the coexistence of pre-modern and highly modern, liberal forms of social and economic organization. In similar fashion my research on the state in Ecuador suggests that one of the reasons the state has been so effective in its re-articulation, expansion and reproduction has been because of its exercise of different modalities of power, from governmental to disciplinary. Different modalities of power, as the Ecuadorian case suggests, coexist within the same socio-political point in history. Before moving forward it would be worth asking, how does governmentality and power translate into state practices? How is govermentality exercised? In tackle these questions in turn.

Knowledge, Power and Government

As a first step to answering these questions I should expand on the notion of positive power. For Foucault power had a strong positive dimension. In fact, as Mark Haugaard notes, for Foucault the presence of violence signaled the absence of power (Haugaard, 1997: 68). Also of importance is to note that by "positive" Foucault, or governementality theorists for that matter, did not mean desirable, welcoming – there were no intended normative implications to notion of "positive" power (see Haugaard, 2012). By positive Foucault meant variously productive, empowering, constructive.   This dimension of power is of crucial importance in this work for three reasons: first because it is clear, both from a theoretical as well as an empirical and historical point of view that states do not operate exclusively through force. Second, because

modern techniques of power not rooted on oppression or negation or the idea of "power over," must be regarded from a separate theoretical lens; third, when studying the contemporary Ecuadorian state it is evident that much of its processes of re-articulation, including of course its interventions in society, are highly knowledge-based and highly technocratic.

One of the fundamental theoretical contributions of the governmentality literature is precisely to link power to knowledge and discourse practices. This is an opportune moment to recall Migdal's idea that the state is both image and practice. Because the state is both image and practice it is fundamental to inquire into the power mechanisms that operate in creating an image about the state. There are, of course, questions of territory, nationhood and so on. But also, and very importantly, there is the image of the "government as the essence of efficacy" (Barthes, as cited in Lemnke, 2007: 2). In fact, this notion is precisely the first use given to the term "governmentality" by French Theorist Roland Barthes in his 1957 book *Mythologies* (Barthes, 1957; Lemke, 2007). The essence of efficacy is not only in reference to "getting things done" but getting them done in the right fashion. But, what is "right"? And how does the government construct an image of right? It was precisely in the relationship between power and "right," or more specifically, power and truth, that Foucault was interested. Without entering into an extensive philosophical and/or metaphysical discussion about the relationship between truth and power, there are a few issues that need consideration.

One of the fundamental and long-lasting contributions made by Foucault to the study of power was to make intelligible the close and intricate linkages and relationships that exist between power and knowledge. For Foucault unveiling the positive dimension of power meant digging into the relationship between power and knowledge. In short, Foucault thought that power and knowledge are not separable: Foucault took the truism "knowledge is power" a step further by asserting that not only knowledge is power, but power is knowledge as well. In short, for every field of knowledge to emerge there must be a corresponding field of power enabling it; similarly, for every form of power to exist, there must be a field of knowledge validating its purpose, its *raison d'etre*. This equation is particularly relevant and applicable to the notion of productive power. Productive power, unlike destructive, coercive power, must rely on knowledge in order to be productive. To provide a simple example: women's empowerment about their sexuality, can hardly be separated from knowledge about, among other things, reproductive health and reproductive rights.

From the perspective of governmentality and studying the state, as Hans-Martin Jaeger (2010: 52) notes, governmentality implies fundamentally "historically variable ways of imagining and directing conduct with the help of specific, often technical, knowledges (or rationalities) and methods." One of the central tenets of governmentality, as indicated before, is that "government defines a discursive field in which exercising power is '*rationalized*.' (Lemke, 2007: 2; added emphasis). And for this the government needs specific fields of knowledge that invest its interventions with a mantle of "technical expertise." Hence, to study govenemental interventions in society means looking at how the state through its different agencies constructs: a) An image if itself as the essence of efficacy as well as the essence of right; b) the fields of knowledge and techniques that it employs to construct such an image and c) the narratives and discourses employed in defining governmental spaces and state legitimacy. Hence, and in synthesis, the following proposition can be made: the power of the state, particularly in modern democratic states is partly rooted on the knowledge production and the knowledge fields it can generate; the narratives and discourses through which the state seeks to instill in the population an image of itself that is, if not legitimating, it is at least an image that justifies state interventions in society. Empirically this means studying the state from the perspective of the agencies that are in charge of producing and disseminating knowledge. As I show later, I demonstrate this

theoretical proposition through the study of SENPLADES and the construction of the PNBV 2013-2017.

It becomes evident, from what was just discussed that as the state tries to penetrate society through an image of efficacy and right, it will often encounter opposition from those who do not accept such images. As Migdal notes: While the image of the state implies a singular morality, one standard way, indeed one *right* way, of doing things, practices denote multiple types of performance and, possibly, some contention over what is *the* right way to act (Migdal, 2009: 19). I will address the issue of opposition/ resistance to power in a later section. Here I will address some of the specific ways through which, besides violence, repression, and/or coercion, the state seeks to control populations – that is, to make effective the image of efficacy and right). Following the governmentality literature, particularly Mitchell Dean (1999, 2010), as well as other theoretical resources, particularly Mary Louise Pratt's concept of autoethnography, I will discuss specific mechanisms through which the government employs strategic narratives as partial mechanisms to justify its interventions in social spaces.

Before doing so I should reiterate a central theoretical and methodological aspect of this work. As mentioned in the Introduction, my research, hypotheses and arguments are about the state, not about social groups. This does not mean that one can easily separate the two. As discussed, these are inseparable ontologies. Nonetheless, I focus, without necessarily making judgments about society's compliance to state power, on the different strategies, mechanisms, and contexts in which the state seeks domination and control. In other words, my interest is in problematizing state interventions, not so much responses to those interventions. I make this distinction to make this project feasible and to elucidate what happens "within" the state: this is one of the central ontological assumptions made by this work.

State Narratives and Reverse-Autoethnography

Mary Louise Pratt developed the concept of autoethnography to refer to instances in which,

> Colonized subjects undertake to represent themselves in ways that engage with the colonizer's own terms … If ethnographic texts are a means by which Europeans represent to themselves their (usually subjugated) others, autoethnographic texts are those the others construct in response to or in dialogue with those metropolitan representations … Autoethnographic texts are not, then, what are usually thought of as "authentic"; or autochthonous forms of self-representation … Rather autoethnography involves partial collaboration with and appropriation of the idioms of the conqueror ... Autoethnographic texts are typically heterogeneous on the reception end as well, usually addressed both to metropolitan readers and to literate sectors of the speaker's own social group, and bound to be received very differently by each (Pratt, 1992: 7).

Admittedly Pratt is coming from the perspective of colonial relations as well as from an anthropological point of view. Nonetheless, her concept above all aims at representing political relations between the colonial state and its subject. In this sense, her understanding of autoehtnograhic representations, while most relevant fro colonial relations helps to understand the various ways in which the state and its subjects seeks to self-represent in the eyes of the other.

Even though Pratt is primarily concerned with colonial subjects (indigenous peoples from the Andes), her definition of autoehtnography can be applied to state power as something I would call "reverse-autoehtnography." By reverse-autoethnography I mean the ways in which the state (or a dominant actor for that matter) through its various programs, agencies, documents,

Ministries and, more generally, its interventions in society represents itself through the language and perspective of marginalized subjects, particularly indigenous peoples to represent itself in terms of the subject's own terms.

During the research process for this work it became evident that concepts like "subjugated knowledges" and/or "marginalized epistemologies," which are popular in the Foucauldian-oriented literature (see for instance, Escobar, 2010; Bahba, 2003; Foucault, 2003), were not enough to capture the fact that the post-2008 state (that is, the post-Constituent Assembly state) had begun to self-represent through a de-radicalized language akin to indigenous populations narratives about *"Sumak Kawsay"* (SK). I will discuss this issue in detail later, but I should not here that one of the most compelling and significant aspects of SK are its radical contents, some of which challenge the most fundamental structures of the Ecuadorian state (see for example Radcliffe, 2012). In this sense, an important question emerges: what is the relationship between government and the language of SK? I argue, that through the use of reverse-autoethnography SK has been, if not completely striped, at least substantially devoid of its radical content. From a theoretical stance I contend that reverse-autoethnography is a governmental technique, rooted in non-coercive power, aimed at countering radical narratives and movements emerging from non-state actors, like Ecuador's indigenous movement, popular organizations and/or radical NGOs. Reverse auto-ethnography is, thus, a technique of narrative construction aimed at de-radicalizing the strategic self-representations of certain social movements.

Regimes of Government[1] and Practices

In addition to reverse-autoethnography governments use several other practical techniques rooted on the same equation: knowledge-power-knowledge-power. These techniques are a prior step to the creation of public policy and programs. Some of these techniques include: the constitution of populations, acts of problematization, the production of technical solutions through technical knowledges, charts, statistics, maps, and other devices that help constitute a field for intervention (participation, health, the economy, education, tourism, etc.). The constitution of a field of intervention of a governmental regime follows one of Foucault's basic methodological propositions: genealogy. A central tenant of this "method" is that fields like health, the economy and/or participation, cannot be assumed to exist *a priori*. In the words of Jacques Donzelot:

> [Foucault] did not set out to show the historical relativity of these objects, or even to deny their validity, as has often been said, but postulated *a priori* their non-existence, thus dismantling all our certainties concerning them, including that of their pure historicity. This enabled him to reveal how something which did not exist could come about, how a set of practices were able to come together to produce a regime of truth with regard to these objects, a combination of power and knowledge which makes it possible to say, at least insofar as the regime of truth succeeded in being effective what was true and false in matters concerning madness, delinquency, sexuality and government (Donzelot, as cited in Walters, 2012: 17; emphasis in original).

Drawing from this perspective it can be said that governmental regimes' interventions in society depends upon and are designed by at least three concrete practices: First the constitution

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[1] Although with important differences of content, I borrow this term from Mitchel Dean (1999).

of populations; second acts of problematization; third, the creation of technical knowledges and techniques of intervention

The Constitution of Populations

Populations offer the type of regularities that enable governments to employ calculated means to intervene in society: calculating the rates of births and deaths, aging, health, number of men and women of working age etc. The sovereign modality of rule of the monarchies of Europe prior to the XIX century was rooted on the model of the family (Dean, 1999, Foucault, 1994). But in modern forms of rule "populations provides the key to overcoming the model of the family, which was too narrow, weak and insubstantial;, and a framework based on sovereignty that was excessively large, abstract and rigid (Foucault, 2007: 103). It is the notion of populations that makes possible the elaborations of distinctively governmental techniques and rationalities …" (Dean, 1999: 127). In addition, populations, while possessing their own interests, history and characteristics are unlike other governable groups like unions, ethnic organizations, religious groups and so on, highly amenable to being ruled by government and large management processes. Populations are at once a homogenous, large conglomeration of individuals united by nationhood, territory and *government*, as well a series of dispersed individuals, unable to become organized under the concept of "population." Thus, the creation of a "population," thus, constitutes the fundamental ontology of modern governmental rule. This is the first step in the constitution of a regime of governmental interventions.

But, it should be noted, populations, contrary to what common intuition may suggest, are not simply "out there." Populations are constituted through knowledge practices through calculable patterns like poverty, inequality, education levels, age groups, race and so on. This is one of the reasons censuses are so prevalent and at the same time so important for making governmental rationalities intelligible. Kim Clark (1998: 185), for instance, notes that, "while statistics seem to present objective data through the simple counting of already existing facts, the very categories used in their collection reveal conceptions of society and personhood." The relationship between population and government is captured elegantly by this quote from a Ecuadorian governmental official working in the 1950s: "'the census is a statistic that is of interest to everyone: the merchant for his business, the agriculturalist for his crops, the industrialist for his production, the worker for his culturalization [*culturalización*] and the peasant for his improvement [*mejoramiento*].' (Clark, 1998: 198). Moreover, Clark shows the mentality about the census at the time was to establish "how many *useful people* there are in the republic. ... How many *citizens* the republic has and how many *passive people* there are, to whom it is of no interest or importance what happens, because *their capacity for culture is completely deficient*" (Ibid.). In synthesis, what Clark shows with the example of Ecuador's first census is precisely what Foucault would have predicted: that one of the objectives of modern rule is to produce useful subject, but also, that this logic of rule was rooted on a discursive field that regarded indigenous populations as backward and as in need of be cultured. Some of these themes will appears again in the course of this work, particularly on Chapters 5 and 6. Finally I should also mention that the government of Galo Plaza is regarded as the first manifestation of a developmentalit state in Ecuador.

Problematization

In short a 'problematization' means "calling into question how we shape and direct our own and others' conduct" (Dean, 1999:38). The point behind this concept is not whether or not governments problematize (although sometimes they clearly do not) but *how* they do so and what elements, groups, issues, and considerations are left in/out of the field being problematized. As

mentioned by Dean, problematizing an issue is not just about posing technical questions about an issue, like participation. Rather is to call into question how to govern participation. Hence, it could be said that problematization is a two-fold process: on the one hand is the act of creating, or at least clarifying the contours of an issue-area appropriate for governmental intervention and second, it asks how to best govern it. In the area of participation, for instance, the issue of problematization is quite clear. First, prior to the Constituent Assembly of 2007-2008, participation in Ecuador was not what it is today. The field called "citizens participation" or participatory citizenship has been re-problematized and its boundaries re-drawn. It is less a question of social movements, unions, and social agency as much as it is a question of technical expertise (see Chapters 5 and 6). After clear demands from social movements about the need to increase popular participation in policymaking, the state was confronted with the need to both create a field called "participation" and identify how to best govern it. Neither of these acts is self-evident or obvious. As I show in a later chapter, participation was molded in very specific ways, from the institutional-normative sphere to the level of practice. This 'specificity" means that many other ways of conceiving participation were left out of the field now called participation.

Thus, in order to study regimes of government it is necessary to inquire into *how* governments problematize issues (cf. Dean, 1999). Moreover, one must ask, what are the implications of such processes, particularly, inquire into what issues have been left out and which ones in in the process of constituting a field of intervention. The overall point, following Foucault's genealogical method, is to make evident the fact that participation is a governmental creation, not an *a priori* category. As I said earlier, governments attempt to create an image of "the essence of efficacy" and the essence of right and in doing so seek to portray a particular field of intervention as an unquestionable reality. Relative measures of state intervention, hence, can be "measured" in relation to how effective governmental interventions are in creating such an image. Thus, studying governmental regimes means showing the "constructed" nature of fields of governmental intervention.

Technical Knowledges and Techniques of Intervention

In theory, problematizations "are made on the basis of particular techniques, language, grids of analysis and evaluation, forms of knowledge and expertise" (Dean, 1999: 38). The relationship between knowledge for government is, as I have already discussed, fundamental; however, in more specific terms, technical knowledges directly relate to how governments in modern states delineate or frame areas of intervention and create specific solutions to problems. Rather than the specific content of a technical knowledge, this category refers to the manner in which knowledge is utilized to render issues technical. The actual content of the knowledge may be mundane and even simplistic, as long as it "extracts from the messiness of the social world, with all the processes that run through it, a set of relations that can be formulated as a diagram in which problem (a) plus intervention (b) will produce (c), a beneficial result" (Li, 2007b: 264). Along with the act of problematization, technical knowledges disclose a certain range of possible solutions for problems and allow certain individuals to become authorities in the offering of those solutions. These individuals are called "experts"; and the rule by experts is called a technocracy. As I show later, one of the fundamental characteristics of the Ecuadorian state, starting from its PhD-trained President is its reliance on technical knowledges and experts; I illustrate this theoretical scenario, empirically, mainly through the case of the PBNV 2013-2017.

In this sense a governmentality analysis of the state reveals important aspects of the political dimension of government. For instance, as I show in more detail in Chapter 6, what this approach unveils is the experts and expert knowledges operate in dealing with questions that

belong to their general domain of expertise but that go beyond the technical language and knowledge that they possess and utilize. To paraphrase Nikolas Rose the point is to find out "switch points," that is, where critical scrutiny of governmental programs is absorbed back into the realm of expertise, and "an opening turns into a closure." (Rose, as cited in Li, 2007: 11). There are a number of issues that methodologically one could look for in this respect while investigating the state. First, "switch points," which can also be phrased as forms of silencing through knowledge practices; second, the reverse: "the conditions under which expert discourse is punctured by a challenge it cannot contain; moments when the targets of expert schemes reveal, in word or deed, their own critical analysis of the problems that confront them" (Li, 2007: 11); and third, the ways in which targets of expert knowledge succeed in incorporating their own knoweldge into a governmental scheme (through participatory planning, for example).

At the same time, however, one may pose the question: is it not an obvious fact that modern governments must rely on knowledge in order to govern? The answer is, clearly, "yes." However, the question that interests me here and that is relevant for studying governmental regimes, is not whether governments use knowledge, but what kind of knowledge, what issues are revealed by its use and what issues are left unattended. The objective of this methodological choice is to problematize issues and solutions that may appear obvious, evident and/or automatic. Moreover, it reveals the role of knowledge in constituting fields of governmental intervention, their contingent "nature" and the variety of ways in which an issue can be articulate in order to justify the need for the state to intervene in it. Outlining these issues is an important element in understanding political tensions in processes of state formation over definitions, meanings, or, more succinctly, over forms of representation. At this point a few theoretical propositions could be thus made: first, if social forces demand solutions that go beyond the self-representations of the state and its technical means for intervention conflict may ensue; second, government through knowledge-intensive practices is less condicuve to radical changes like those demanded by social movements during the 2006-2007 pre-Constitution period.

Governmentality's Historical Stance: The State as a Historical and Relational Ontology
The study of governmental regimes from a governmentality perspective is concerned with the constitution of what Foucault calls epistemes or regimes of truth. This entails that identities must be seen in relation to fields of knowledge and discourse (Foucault, 1994; Escobar, 2010). Foucault's notion that there is a social will to knowledge; that knowledge, power and discourse are intimately linked is crucial (Foucault, 1972, 1980, 1994), for it allows views of history based on a genealogy of regimes of representation. In contrast to other approaches to history common in the social sciences, such as path dependence, or Hegelian teleology, my understanding of history following a governmentality-studies stance contends that there are no historical accumulations, linear progress or a transcendental logic to historical development. History must be investigated in small fragments; in its moments of ruptures and by observing the marginal voices of history. Power is better understood from the margins (cf. Mohanty, 2002; Heckman, 1996). Thus, to understand the historical process of state formation through participatory engagements and participatory planning one must not only look at what the State did and continues to do, but also at dissenting voices, at the ruptures in regimes of representation and to the voice of the margins, like indigenous peoples, unions and other social forces and their relationship to those regimes of representation.

For Foucault the genealogical method was an essential tool that defined his studies of government, power, subjectivity and the state. As I said, governmentality can be understood as a guideline for the genealogical study of the modern state. In this sense, governmentality, it should be made clear, is a continuation of Foucauldian analytics concerned with power, knowledge,

regimes of representation and modes of intervention (Lemke, 2007: 2). Governmentality, thus, allows me to look at the state as a historical construction through disconitnuitites in the past and the present. Genealogically, it is possible to situate the condition of the Ecuadorian State as a fragmentary expression of a particular historical moment. In my research of SENPLADES and its planning systems and participatory engagements planning and participation are situated as a particular rationalities and techniques of government that makes a particular form of governing possible within a historical juncture. While governmentality allowed many researchers to conceptualize the neoliberal state as government through freedoms (e.g. Drinot, 2011; Hindness, 2001; Lemke, 2000) governmentality also allows one to link processes of state formation to planning and participatory processes beyond neoliberalism, and therefore, to interpret the development of the "new-left" in Ecuador (and potentially in other parts of Latin America) beyond common binarisms such as left vs. right; authoritarianism vs. democracy; populist vs. legal-rational.

Finally, what this historical stance makes evident is the contingent and constructed nature of fields of governmental intervention. As mentioned earlier quoting Donzelot, the Foucauldian genealogical project does not negate, relativize or evade the constitution of "structures" like the state or an economic system, what it does is make their historical identity clear; it focuses, therefore, in how structures are continuously reproduced rather than used. In the specific context of this work what a geneaological stance allows is looking at the ways in which governmental fields are constituted through the processes mentioned thus far. Hence, it is possible to ask how participatory citizenship, for instance, has become a field where experts as opposed to political leaders and social activists are the "authorities." As shown in Chapter 6, contrary to the participatory ethos of the late 1960s (the May of 1968 mobilizations being an emblematic case) (cf. Cooke and Kothari, 2001) participation can now be understood (not necessarily approvingly) as a technocratic, governmentalized field amenable to be governed through the authority of the state and its technical plans. In sum, the genealogical method looks at history, contrary to the other approaches mentioned above as, as a process of ruptures and reproduction, not as a series of inevitable causes and effect; moreover it directs the attention of the researcher, to the marginal voices of history in order to develop a more complete understanding of how certain voices prevail in the narratives of history.

Two issues that I have alluded to, but not yet developed sufficiently, are the issues of agency and identity. Thus far, I have largely ignored the cultural (identity) context in which participatory planning and participatory engagements take place. I have also pushed to the sidelines a theoretical discussion of the agency implied in the resistance of social forces in the face of governmental knowldges, schemes and plans that they are confronted with. Before I tackle these issues I would like to discuss some of the criticisms leveled against Foucauldian analytics in general and governmentality in particular. I will address four specific criticisms.

Conclusion

The first portion of this chapter has outlined ways of understanding the state as a series of governmental as well as specifying the actual components of a governmental regime. The conjunction of elements such as state narratives, including reverse-autoethnography, acts of problematization, rendering issues technical and so on is what I call a governmental regime. In short, governmental regimes seek to govern by "educating desires and configuring habits, aspirations and beliefs" (Li, 2007a: 5). But configuring a series of governmental regimes is only part of the equation. As governmental regimes seek to penetrate society they will encounter opposition. As Foucault noted, where there is power, there is resistance. I will tackle the issue of resistance to power in a later section, before doing so, however, I would like to address in more

the issue of politics. Resistance is a political act and the lack of politics means lack of resistance. Thus, stripping issues from their political content is an effective, albeit temporal, form of rule. In the following section I address the issue of politics and (de)politicization.

POLITICS and RESISTANCE

Politics and De-Politicization

An important application of Foucauldian and governmentality analytics in studying processes of state formation is in understanding how governmental techniques can be "anti-political" (e.g. Fergusson, 1994; Li 2007a, 2007b). The issue of politicization is of importance for my work, particularly because a central piece of my arguments is the relationship between regimes of government and politics. In this section, drawing from diverse but compatible theoretical sources, I attempt to provide a working (useful) definition of "the political." Before doing so, I should note that I acknowledge that, as James C. Scott (1985) has shown, politics can occur in small spaces, within resourceless regions, at the level of communities as well as individuals. Indeed, in some sense politics could be said to be everywhere. However and notwithstanding the validity (and problems) of these assertions, due to the notoriously numerous array of existing and past discussions about politics, I will for the sake of theoretical neatness concentrate on politics at the level of organized groups within civil society and politics in the context of state-society relations – which may entail looking, as I do in Chapter 7 at microspaces of political encounters such as the PNBV workshops.

A good place to start this discussion is Chantale Mouffe's (2000) and Marisol de La Cadena's definition of politics as

> the field that makes antagonism livable, curbs or even cancels its warlike potential, without ever canceling the conflict it entails. Politics are … those practices through which the antagonistic differences between friends and enemies are tamed, dealt with (ideologically and institutionally) and transformed into the agonisms—the relationships among adversaries—that characterize hegemonic orders, with their inclusions and exclusions (Mouffe, as cited in de la Cadena, 2010: 343).

Conflict, strategies, and power are, thus, important elements of politics; however, it is worth noting that political agonisms need to be between "warring" enemies, politics and difference can emerge within groups of the same denomination. I would argue, however, that above all, perspective stresses politics as the means of existence of opposites; it entails that "the political" can be thought of as the field of discourse-practice where opposites are *allowed to emerge*.

Another important source of theoretical thinking about politics comes from Jacques Ranciere (1995, 2001, 2006; Chambers, 2011). Here I will only address Ranciere's basic tenants regarding politics. In his well-known article *Ten Theses on Politics* (2001) outlines some of his most important arguments regarding the fundamentals of the political. For Ranciere politics is "a mode of acting put into practice by a specific kind of subject and deriving from a particular form of reason. It is the political relationship that allows one to think the possibility of a political subject(ivity) [*le sujet politique*] not the other way around" (Ranciere, 2001: 3); moreover, this subject(ivity) is defined through its *participation* in contrarieties and dissensus. Here Ranciere determined a necessary condition for the emergence of politics: engagement and participation. As Ranciere notes, there is no political subject prior to its participation in contrarieties and in a

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specified form of reason and discourse. Unlike say, Marx's worker whose political inclinations are assumed to exits prior to its participation in revolutionary struggles, Ranciere's political subject has not content prior to its participation in politics.

There are a few important implications that can be derived from these propositions. Mainly, politics can only exits in a field where political subjectivities are allowed to exist. This means that politics cannot be defined by the formal structures of the state. As Ranciere notes, the political is the polar opposite of what he calls *la police* --- 'a term that encapsulates most of what we normally think of as politics (the actions of bureaucracies, parliaments, and courts)" (Chambers, 201: 303). Additionally, Ranciere's (and Mouffe's) conception of politics goes beyond the instiutionalist view of the political as a search for institutional power (whether electorally or by other means). Being "politicized" does have to mean being associated to a party or a "political" movement although these entities could well be spaces where political engagements unfold. Popular political participation cannot be equated or reduced, according to this view, to a formalistic or juridical understanding of participation, like voting, participating in workshops organized by the state, occupying bureaucratic positions in "participatory" institutions like Ecuador's recently formed Council for Citizen Participation and Social Control, being a member of parliament or a political party. Politics is not, and this is an important contribution of Ranciere's, a formalistic term equitable to state forms, bureaucracies, or even political organizations.

De-Politicization

It follows, therefore, that *de-politicization* would entail the elimination of the spaces, or the fields where certain political subjectivities can emerge; it means the limiting the possibility for political subjects to enter in non-violent antagonisms. De-politicization entails, moreover, the process through which governmental regimes replace spaces where politics, that is, political subjectivities, are able to emerge. In other words, if there is little space for antagonism to become agonisms, it means that a process of de-politicization is taking place. This replacement of politics with other forces is carried out through various mechanisms: the intervention of experts, the partial utilization of technical knowledges and so on. Put differently, the governmentality of the Ecuadorian state is, I argue, largely rooted on a de-politicizing thrust that seeks to turn political issues into technical ones (cf. Li, 2007a).

As Murray-Li notes, "Questions that are rendered technical are simultaneously rendered nonpolitical. For the most part, experts tasked with improvement exclude the structure of political-economic relations from their diagnoses and prescriptions. They focus more on the capacities of the poor than on the practices through which one social group impoverishes another. This feature led James Ferguson to describe the apparatus of planned development as an 'anti- politics machine" that "insistently repos[es] political questions of land, resources, jobs, or wages as technical 'problems' responsive to the technical 'development' intervention.' Anti-politics of this kind is subliminal and routine (Li, 2007: 7). In similar fashion Ferguson argues, in reference to the development industry, that "by uncompromisingly reducing poverty to a technical problem, and by promising technical solutions to the suffering of the powerless and oppressed people, the hegemonic problematic of development is the principal means through which the question of poverty is de-politicized in the world today" (Ferguson, 1994: 256).

To conclude, I should mention, once again, that this work's interest is not in whether the Ecuadorian state has been successful in depoliticizing social forces. This, I consider, would be a misplaced question. Clearly, no state could accomplish the full elimination of politics. The question that interests me is: what characterizes the form of rule that has emerged in Ecuador and what is its relationship to politics. One of the conclusions that my investigation has reached is

that the "governmental ethos" of the contemporary Ecuadorian state is largely anti-political. I conclude, furthermore, that an important artifact for the construction of a strong(er) state in Ecuador has been its negative stance towards politics. And finally, to end this section, I would like to make three concluding theoretical claims: first, that anti-politics/ de-politicization is regarded in this work as an ongoing process that displaces politics from one arena to another, never fully eliminating it; second, and notwithstanding, the previous point, the successful displacement of politics can entail the temporary or permanent demobilization of social forces and political identities; and finally, anti-politics is a modern form of rule that is rooted not on coercion and force, but on the prevalence of governmental regimes that penetrate society through legitimate means.

Marginalized Populations, Governmental Regimes and Resistance to Power

While this work is about the state and ways of understanding its power manifestation in contemporary Ecuador, it is indispensible to look at non-state actors to understand something about the state. As I mentioned in the Introduction, I am particularly interested in indigenous peoples organizations and to a lesser degree, dissident NGOs. While my research for this work was mainly conducted at the level of state institutions, programs and officials, I also undertook a series of interviews, participated (as an observant) of indigenous peoples protests and meetings. Thus, my theoretical-methodological approach must be able to reflect the relationship between indigenous peoples and the state beyond a simple, nominalist analysis of the struggle between a marginalized group and a powerful state. Specifically, I seek to contextualize the state-society relations within an analysis of modernity that acknowledges the discriminatory aspects of that have been reproduced through forms of representation that depict indigenous peoples as backward, irrational or as child-like actors that are easily manipulable by non-indigneous agitators (see Chapter 7).

Processes of state formation have to be given a specific significance according to the cultural settings in which states operate. In the specific case of Ecuador, engagements between indigenous peoples and non-indigenous peoples must be placed within the larger context of postcolonial relations and the often racialized and discriminatory practices that have historically defined processes of state formation. The Ecuadorian state, especially in its relationship to indigenous peoples, cannot be analyzed apart from its colonial past and present. Thus, in my investigation of participatory processes, especially those taking place in knowledge-intensive forums (like the PNBV workshops), I pay particular attention to manifestations of believed ethnic/racial/cultural superiority.

One of the fundamental reasons for my interest in indigenous peoples is that, along with Afroecuadorians, indigenous peoples are perhaps the most evidently marginalized of all social groups in Ecuador. Among other things, this has the important implication that a central part of their demands towards the state imply far-reaching structural changes in economic, social, cultural and political practices. As shown in the previous chapter, the "radical" nature of indigenous peoples demands rests on a politicized "core." Several indigenous peoples' demands, particularly those emerging from CONAIE, like plurinationalism or interculturalism, are political in nature because they emerge as strategic narratives of contestation of the status quo and not necessarily plans with concrete definitions, applications and techniques. Consequently, a study of the state, especially as it comes in contact with indigenous organizations like CONAIE, must consider the question of politics and political subjectivities beyond formal aspects like representation in parliaments, ministries and/or bureaucratic posts.

In a previous section I had mentioned the issue of politicization. Critical theories, as De la Cadena (2010) shows explain an additional issue regarding politicization. Specifically Foucauldian power-analytics entails looking at the margins to gain an epistemically privileged vantage point from which to look at state power (cf. Mohanty, 2002). Such an analysis suggests that marginal voices often are not even accorded political status, not in a formal sense but beyond it. That is, their political positions often do not enter in the radar of authorities as potential challenges. According to De la Cadena (2010: 343), in the battlefield of politics "decisions are taken about who the enemies are, but as important, about who, notwithstanding the antagonism, are not even worthy of enemy status. On occasions they are not even worth killing; they can be left to die because, although included in the concept of 'Humanity,' they do not count—at all, for they are too close to 'Nature'." In other words, depoliticization goes beyond the issue of making certain issues technical and leaving political decisions to technical experts; depoliticization is also about the non-inclusion, the complete dismissal and even sheer ignorance of certain issues and groups considered not worthy of the status of enemies or adversaries. In this sense, one is not so much talking about a depoliticization of some issues and social forces as about their "a-politicization." Thus, the critical stance of Foucauldian-analytics helps us, through its emphasis on the epistemic privilege the hegemonic interpretations of certain actors and processes within historically bounded spaces.

Problems with Governmentality

First, critics have noted that a problem with Foucauldian analytics relates to shortcomings in identifying theoretical explanations to account for people's resistance to power. Put differently, Foucauldian analytics fails to account for how and why people mobilize against power (agency). To be fair, it should be said, as Li (2007) does, that governmentality, and the works of Foucault are generally not meant to analyze political mobilizations; Foucault's concern was not why people oppose power but how power defined the lives of those that came in contact with it. This is not to say, however, that through governmentality one cannot pose meaningful questions about people's resistance to power or the ability of subjects to escape Foucault's power/knowledge "trap." Governmentality, as well as Foucauldian analytics, is useful for figuring out ways in which power affects the lives of people without, as Li notes, their consent being given or withheld. Govermentaility is therefore crucial to investigating the power implications of governmental techniques that are seemingly neutral, benevolent, or even emancipatory like, for instance, participatory planning. However, while Foucault, probably due to his untimely death, was unable to account for people's resistance to power, he always contended that wherever power was, there was also a corresponding field of resistance to it. In this sense, it is only fitting to extend Foucault's research program into an analysis of forms of resistance and political mobilization.

Two additional (and important) criticisms have been leveled against Foucault and governmentality. Jonathan Joseph (2010: 226), for instance, argues that "the danger inherent in the concept of governmentality is that it becomes a catch-all category that can be applied far too generally." More concretely Joseph asserts that governmentality should be directly associated both historically and analytically to liberal states (although he does not define what a 'liberal' state is, or when a country becomes 'liberal'). Middle-Eastern states, for instance, are perhaps better understood through the notion of sovereignty (the direct intervention of the state over the lives of people) not governmentality. Because the essence of governmentality is that power operates in more ways than coercion and negation, governmentailty is well suited to explain liberal societies in which government operates through freedoms, concessions, self-responsibility

and so on, and not states where government is conducted through the elimination, or restriction of freedoms.

Joseph's second concern is that, and I quite him here at length,

> despite Foucault's own talk of the development of capitalism, the spread of political economy and a new concern for population and workforce, many of the followers of Foucault are not prepared to talk of such conditions of possibility, only of the practices of governance themselves. Here we see the final limit of governmentality. It explains a particular set of practices and techniques, but something else is required to explain the context in which these practices and techniques can best operate. Quite simply, for governmentality to be a useful concept, it must be part of a wider social ontology that can account for its successes and failures and hence the uneven nature of the international terrain … Governmentality theorists often have what might be called a flat ontology in that they are not prepared to talk of underlying *causes*, processes or structures … governmentality approaches have a tendency to focus too much on the mentality aspect, that is, the idea of governmentality as a *nomos* or political rationality. This misses out on its social, structural and institutional possibilities and limitations (Joseph, 2010: 241; emphasis added)

In certain sense, I agree with Joseph's criticisms. Indeed, without limits, governmentality, along with discourse analysis and Foucauldian power analysis have the potential to represent an inescapable logic. If discourse/power is everywhere how can we know when and why it is discourse/power that is having its own effect in determining the conditions of possibility of a particular phenomenon or event? This is a common problem associated with post-structural approaches to political analysis: even though they seek to avoid totalizing logics and metanarratives, their focus on discourse tends to reproduce the same totalizing effects of metanarratives.

Without incurring into a convoluted and overly-rehearsed metatheoretical discussion about discourse, and power, I would like to rebut Joseph on a few counts. While Joseph is correct in that governmentality ought not to be separated from other social phenomena, he underplays the importance of history, capitalism and the state in his criticism of governmentality. This position, as I see it, almost entirely misses the importance and trajectory of Foucault's studies on power and governmentality. For Foucault governmentality is a historical phenomenon and, therefore, cannot be separated from a wider social context. In fact, the whole of Foucault's intellectual project regarding power is precisely about different power modalities in varying socio-historical contexts (a cursory look at "Discipline and Punish," "The Order of Things" or "A History of Sexuality" would show this clearly). Foucault always gave due importance to capitalist development and modernity in his interpretations of power, knowledge, discourse, etc. My point is that Joseph too quickly dismisses the rich historical (and therefore thick contextual) content in Foucauldian analyses. He seems to be mistaking a focus on mentalities, discourses and ideas found in Foucauldian analysis, with a reductionist account of political life that reduces everything to the presence of these issues. Thus, I think that that Joseph constructs a straw-man reading of Foucauldian analyses

A second problem with Joseph's reading of governmentality is that there is little sense, unless one comes from a foundationalist (cf. Monteiro and Ruby, 2009) and ontologically dualist (cf. Jackson, 2008) perspective (Joseph is a self-declared scientific realist – see Joseph, 2007) in separating mentalities from "structures." Structures, if defined as consistent and enduring social practices and institutions cannot be separated from the mentalities/discourses that disclose their

significance to people. Joseph, I believe, makes two errors on this point. First, he seems to consider governmentalities (and Foucauldian analytics) as being exclusively about ideas (mentalities/rationalities) and words (discourses). The second is that he employs a dualistic ontology (cf. Jackson, 2008) which arbitrarily separates "structures" like capitalism, from discourses/mentalities. That is, he implicitly separates subjects from the world in which they live – the world "out there."

With respect to the first point, it is crucially important to state that for Foucault, as for many of his followers (e.g. Jessop, 2007, Lemke, 2000, Walters, 2009), mentalities (and discourses) imply practices – they cannot be separated. Lemke (2000: 7; emphasis added), for instance, notes that:

> The *first important* aspect of the concept of governmentality is that it does not juxtapose politics [meaning practice] and knowledge but articulates a "political knowledge". Foucault does not pose the question of the relation between practices and rationalities, their correspondence or non-correspondence in the sense of a deviation or shortening of reason. His "main problem" is not to investigate if practices conform to rationalities, "but to discover which kind of rationality they are using" (Foucault 1981, p. 226). The analytics of government not only concentrates on the mechanisms of the legitimisation of domination or the masking of violence, beyond that it focuses on the knowledge that is part of the practices, the systematisation and "rationalisation" of a pragmatics of guidance. In this perspective, rationality does not refer to a transcendental reason, but to historical practices; it does not imply a normative judgement, since it refers to social relations.

In this passage Lemke makes clear, I believe, that governmentality implies: a) social practices as part of a wider social context; b) governmentality is about mentalities/rationalities and about practices; c) practices and mentalities (and therefore discourses) cannot be separated.

The second point, where in my view, Joseph errs, is in evaluating Foucauldian analytics from a dualistic ontology. A dualistic ontology is an ontological view that separates the subject (the 'knowing' subject) from the world "out there" along Cartesian lines (Jackson, 2008). This entails a condition in which reality is conceived on its own terms, separated from those who populate it, conceive it and live it, that is, from subjects. When Joseph phrases the conditions of possibility for governmentality in causal terms, he is ontologically separating structures from mentalities. This entails that there are objective structures "out there" that can be separated from the discursive practices that disclose their character to people. In other words, there are objective structures on the one hand, and discourses/mentalities on the other.

My concern here is not to refute a dualistic ontology from a metatheoretical standpoint. The issue I am raising here is that Joseph interprets Foucauldian analytics from a dualistic perspective without a proper discussion about the relationship (and possible separation) between mentalities/discourse and structures. Here it would be useful to note that as Ernesto Laclau and Chantale Mouffe (1985) make clear, discourse and structures (reality) are inseparable. Moreover, focusing on discourses (or mentalities and rationalities) has nothing to do with negating or accepting the existence of a reality outside discursive practices. There may well be a reality beyond discourse, but insofar as we think and speak about it, the real question is whether and to what degree such a reality can be constituted independently of any discursive onditions of emergence (Laclau and Mouffe, 1985). For Laclau and Mouffe, like for Foucault (inspired in Heideggerian philosophy), there is no point in separating discourses from "structures", or ideas from practices like Joseph does. Joseph therefore begins his analysis from a meta-theoretical

position that most governmentality scholars would reject. In this sense his criticisms seem somewhat arbitrary.

It is important to note that governmentality and studies based on it, unlike Marxist approaches, emphasize the mentalitites that make governing possible in specific socio-historical contexts. Like I said earlier, Joseph is correct in pointing out that governmentality must be used within certain limits and in certain contexts, but he errs in conceiving the conditions of possibility for governmentality in causal-structural terms. The very use of governmenality implies an emphasis on power/knowledge relationships and therein lies the analytical specificity and usefulness associated with govermentality. This does not mean, however, that governmentality argues that focusing on ideas, discourses or mentalities is all that is needed in order to understand governmental practices, in particular, and politics more generally.

In sum, while Foucault's theories', including governmentality's, shortcomings are important in the ways mentioned above, they can be complemented and "improved." Governmentality, I contend, is perfectly compatible with theoretical approaches that look, for instance, at postcolonial relations of power/knowledge as well as questions of political agency (why people oppose power and mobilize). I consider, in fact, these questions to be organic extensions of a Foucauldian research program. In the following section I explain why this is the case. I will also present a few theoretical stances that, in complement with Foucauldian governmentality, will be useful for my analysis of Ecuadorian governmental techniques such as participatory planning. Before doing so, however, I would like to borrow Tania M. Li's words, and note that the intention here is not to produce a "supertheory," or a grand-narrative akin to Michael Hardt's and Antonio Negri's *Empire*, rather to "tolerate the untidiness and tension introduced by different theoretical traditions because of the distinct questions they pose, and the tools they offer to guide [its] analysis" (Li, 2007a: 19).

Conclusion

To finalize, it would useful to state work's contributions as follows: At the level of theory, it seeks to open debate over a novel use of the conceptual tools of the governmentality school. The central argumentative proposition in this paper was that governmental regimes, which are the central complexes through which states intervene in society, are composed of three basic elements: narratives, practices and power practices. The conjunction of these elements reveals the state as it intervenes in society. Strong states are able to penetrate society effectively while weak ones are not, at least not in the medium- and long-terms. This proposition emerges from a definitional dimension of the state that links its interventions in society to its ability to generate narratives about its own relevance as a social actor and its privileged position as the "essence of efficacy." In addition, governmental practices were linked, among other things, to the ways in which states construct, define and re-define spaces for governmental interventions. Through acts of problematization and/or rendering issues technical governmental regimes are formed and modern practices of assembled. Once a governmental regime is produced states protect it. Some, like the Ecuadorian state protects many of its regimes through a disciplinary logic aimed at transforming populations – a transformation that is compatible with its "regimes of improvement."

A further central theoretical argument presented here is that, even though governmentality is typically applied to forms of rule beyond the state, it can be particularly useful in investigating techniques of state control that are not rooted on vertical prohibitions, legal/juridical forms coercion or other means generally associated with the state. As mentioned earlier, states with a technocratic dimension, in particular, engage in forms of regulation that are mundane, indirect and rooted on the self-regulation of agents. Governmentality can be useful

precisely in making intelligible the unintended consequences of the application of governmental techniques of rule like: methodologies, manuals, calculations and so on. At the same time, it was argued that this approach reveals the state as an "entity" in need of explanation, particularly as it is being reproduced. From this perspective the state is, thus, never assumed or reified. The state as well as its regimes of government and fields of intervention, it was shown, are contingent and are not ontologically prior to the act of government itself.

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