



BASIC CONCEPTS AND THEMES

We are accustomed to a certain set of received ways of thinking about questions of government. These ways of thinking have been largely derived from ideas clustered around the ubiquitous but difficult and somewhat obscure concept of 'the state'. In most cases the question of government is identified with the state, i.e. with a sovereign body that claims a monopoly of independent territorial power and means of violence, that inheres in but lies behind the apparatuses or institutions of organized and formal political authority and that is separate from the rulers and the ruled. Central concerns of such ways of thinking involve the search for an origin or a source of the power held to reside in the state, the attempt to identify which agents hold or possess that power, and whether that power is legitimate or not. To the extent that we seek to analyse the language associated with government, it is construed as ideology, as a language that arises from and reflects a dominant set of power relations. The study of governmentality is continuous with such a theoretical framework in that it regards the exercise of power and authority as anything but self-evident and in need of considerable analytical resources. It does, however, break with many of the characteristic assumptions of theories of the state, such as problems of legitimacy, the notion of ideology, and the questions of the possession and source of power.

This chapter provides a basic introduction to the general approach associated with the concept of governmentality. The first section starts by defining key terms and spelling out the implications of those terms. The second outlines the nature of this perspective, which it terms an 'analytics of government'. The third suggests some fundamental precepts for those who are sufficiently persuaded to wish to employ at least some elements of this analytics. The second and third sections include some reflections on what distinguishes this analytics of government from more conventional approaches to questions of power and authority that can be typecast as the 'theory of the state'.

BASIC CONCEPTS AND THEMES

The style employed in this chapter is deliberately didactic in order to fulfil the aim of presenting an exposition of concepts, methodological precepts and axioms. This should not, however, obscure the status of the following as but one account of a particular perspective on problems of power, authority and government. Various thinkers have put together arguments and forms of knowledge derived from studies of governmentality with a variety of intellectual and political positions, theoretical arguments and value orientations. These thinkers stand in different relations to Foucault's own work and by no means represent a 'Foucauldian' stance. The position presented in this book is shaped not only by Foucault's work but also by a range of twentieth-century social thinkers and by a number of researchers in the contemporary humanities and historical studies.¹ I want to emphasize the analytic power of the governmentality framework and to avoid eliding that power with particular positions or orientations that are for or against government. In stating this, however, I do not wish to abandon the reader to the fashionable yet sterile relativism of the view that one account is as good as another. The present account should be judged in terms of its coherence, clarity, completeness and, above all, capacity to convince. To admit the perspectival character of knowledge should be to sharpen rather than blunt our critical stance.

Government and governmentality

Government as the 'conduct of conduct'

Let us start, then, with a short definition of the term 'government' by the phrase the 'conduct of conduct' (Foucault, 1982: 220–1; 2007: 192–3; ordon, 1991: 2). What should we take this to mean?

This definition plays on several senses of the word 'conduct'. 'To conduct' means to lead, to direct or to guide, and perhaps implies some sort of calculation as to how this is to be done. The ethical or moral sense of the word starts to appear when we consider the reflexive verb 'to conduct oneself'. Here one is concerned with attention to the form of self-direction appropriate to certain situations, e.g. at work and at home, in business dealings, in relation to clients or friends. Another sense of the term is as a noun. 'Conduct' here refers to our behaviours, our actions and even our comportment, i.e. the articulated set of our behaviours. Again the sense of self-guidance or self-regulation may often be involved as, say, in the case of discussions of our 'professional conduct' or the conduct of schoolchildren. Such discussions are almost invariably evaluative and normative, i.e. they presume a set of standards or norms of conduct by which actual behaviour can be judged, and which act as a kind of ideal towards

GOVERNMENTALITY

which individuals and groups should strive. Such discussions also presume that it is possible to regulate and control that behaviour rationally, or at least deliberately, and that there are agents whose responsibility it is here to ensure that regulation occurs, e.g. teachers or professional associations and their 'codes of conduct'.

Putting these senses of 'conduct' together, government entails any attempt to shape with some degree of deliberation aspects of our behaviour according to particular sets of norms and for a variety of ends. Government in this sense is an undertaking conducted in the plural. There is a plurality of governing agencies and authorities, of aspects of behaviour to be governed, of norms invoked, of purposes sought, and of effects, outcomes and consequences.

This short general definition of government as the 'conduct of conduct' can be expanded:

Government is any more or less calculated and rational activity, undertaken by a multiplicity of authorities and agencies, employing a variety of techniques and forms of knowledge, that seeks to shape conduct by working through the desires, aspirations, interests and beliefs of various actors, for definite but shifting ends and with a diverse set of relatively unpredictable consequences, effects and outcomes.

An analysis of government, then, is concerned with the means of calculation, both qualitative and quantitative, the type of governing authority or agency, the forms of knowledge, techniques and other means employed, the entity to be governed and how it is conceived, the ends sought and the outcomes and consequences.

This would appear to be an extremely wide, if precise, definition. There are several immediate implications that orient research into such an area. First, government is interesting, from this perspective, not simply because to govern means to order people about or to move things around. Rather, government here involves some sort of attempt to deliberate on and to direct *human* conduct. From the perspective of those who seek to govern, human conduct is conceived as something that can be regulated, controlled, shaped and turned to specific ends. Thus, students of governmentality might be interested in the regulation of a heterogeneous range of things – economies, populations, industries, souls, domestic architecture, bathrooms, exhaust emissions, etc. – but only in so far as the government of these things involves the attempt to shape rationally human conduct.

This brings us to a second implication. The term 'rational', it should be noted, refers to the attempt to bring *any* form of rationality to the calculation about how to govern. For present purposes, rationality is simply any form of thinking which strives to be relatively clear, systematic and explicit about aspects of

BASIC CONCEPTS AND THEMES

'external' or 'internal' existence, about how things are or how they ought to be. Since Max Weber, we have known that there is no single Reason or universal standard by which to judge all forms of thought and that what we call Reason is only the 'specific and peculiar rationalism of the West' (1985: 26; Dean, 1994a: 78-91). After Foucault, we know that, even within the latter, there is a multiplicity of rationalities, of different ways of thinking in a fairly systematic manner, of making calculations, of defining purposes and employing knowledge.

The rational attempt to shape conduct implies another feature of this study of government: its links with moral questions. If morality is understood as the attempt to make oneself accountable for one's own actions, or as a practice in which human beings take their own conduct to be subject to self-regulation, then government is an intensely moral activity. One can approach the morality of government in a number of ways. It is moral because policies and practices of government, whether of national governments or of other governing bodies, presume to know, with varying degrees of explicitness and using specific forms of knowledge, what constitutes good, virtuous, appropriate, responsible conduct of individuals and collectives. Thus a film and literature censorship board directly regulates access to materials and is easily recognized as concerned with moral matters. The requirement that persons receiving various social benefits perform certain tasks, e.g. attendance at meetings, counselling, even training and retraining programmes, is linked to assumptions about how such persons ought to conduct themselves. One can also discuss the morality of the 'governors' manifested in concerns for probity, honesty, impartiality and so on and regulated by parliamentary registers of private interests, codes of conduct for politicians, professionals and public servants. At a further level, government is intensely moral in that it seeks to engage with how both the 'governed' and 'governors' regulate themselves, e.g. a taxpayer can be constituted as an individual capable of honest self-assessment or a judge as someone with a duty to exercise fair, impartial and reasonable judgement and wisdom.

Notions of morality and ethics generally rest on an idea of self-government. They presume, at least since the seventeenth century in Europe, a conception of an autonomous person capable of monitoring and regulating various aspects of his or her own conduct. Further, to define government as the 'conduct of conduct' is to open up the examination of self-government or cases in which governor and governed are two aspects of the one actor, whether that actor be a human individual or a collective or corporation. Thus the notion of government extends to cover the way in which an individual questions his or her own conduct (or *problematizes* it) so that he or she may be better able to govern it. In other words government encompasses not only how we exercise authority over others, or how we govern abstract entities such as states and populations, but how we govern ourselves.

GOVERNMENTALITY

The government of the prison, of the economy and of the unemployed, as much as the government of our own bodies, personalities and inclinations, entails an attempt to affect and shape in some way who and what individuals and collectives are and should be. The criminal might be regarded as a victim of circumstance and environment who requires reformation; the unemployed person as someone at risk of welfare dependency who requires group counselling to provide self-help and increase self-esteem; and the national population as lacking the capacities of enterprise and entrepreneurship required to be internationally competitive. All these examples illustrate how government is crucially concerned to modify a certain space marked out by entities such as the individual, its selfhood or personage, or the personality, character, capacities, levels of self-esteem and motivation the individual possesses. Government concerns not only practices of government but also practices of the self. To analyse government is to analyse those practices that try to shape, sculpt, mobilize and work through the choices, desires, aspirations, needs, wants and lifestyles of individuals and groups. This is a perspective, then, that seeks to connect questions of government, politics and administration to the space of bodies, lives, selves and persons.

One of the points that is most interesting about this type of approach is the way it provides a language and a framework for thinking about the linkages between questions of government, authority and politics, and questions of identity, self and person. It offers us some novel ways of thinking about the relation of politics to ethics. Indeed, if we take our cue from another aspect of Foucault's (1985) later thought, ethics can be reconceived in these terms as the arena of the government of the self, as a form of action of the 'self on self'.

It is not difficult to come by examples of this kind of practical ethics in this sense of an action of 'self on self'. Think of the way in which many people problematize their eating habits and bodily shapes in practices of self-government called dieting. This is ethical in as much as such practices imply that it is good to be slim and virile, to have control over one's body, to regulate the intake of fatty foods, to reduce the risk of certain diseases, to be healthy and to increase the probability of longevity. Another example might be the way adulterous spouses may problematize their sexual conduct by seeking therapy to help with the propensity to infidelity. In both cases we find an attempt (often failed, at least in terms of its immediate aim) to act upon the self. The practices by which we endeavour to govern our own selves, characters and persons, then, are a subset of this broader domain of the 'conduct of conduct'.

In most of the present text I shall discuss practices concerned to conduct the conduct of others rather than those concerned to conduct one's own conduct. I shall thus deal with 'practices of government' in a narrower sense than that encompassed by the phrase 'conduct of conduct'. To the extent I discuss 'practices of the self', I shall tend to discuss the way in which they are utilized

BASIC CONCEPTS AND THEMES

in programmes and rationalities of government, particularly that of the government of the state. This entails largely ignoring the sense in which practices of the self are relatively independent of practices of the government of others or of the state. One of the implications of acknowledging this autonomy of the ethical from the political, of practices of the self from practices of government, is that practices of the self can be not only instruments in the pursuit of political, social and economic goals but also means of resistance to other forms of government (cf. Krinks, 1998).

Foucault discusses the possibility that these practices and techniques of the self might be sometimes taken up as a part of 'an immense family of what could be called counter-conducts' (2007: 202). Such 'counter-conducts' can be adopted by movements who want a 'different form of conduct', whether to be 'conducted differently', by 'other leaders (*conducteurs*)', in pursuit of 'other objectives', and with 'other procedures and methods' (pp. 194–5). While these are not necessarily counter-movements, they are specifically concerned with how we are conducted and thus they can be distinguished from revolts against state sovereignty and economic exploitation however much they are at work in them. An example were the movements that formed around women prophets beginning in the Middle Ages contesting the status of women in religious and civil society and which employed various types of mystical, ascetic and sumptuary practices (pp. 196–7). Another were the secret societies, like the Freemasons, which might be viewed as undertaking a counter-conduct that seeks not to challenge or overthrow but to influence the society of which they are a part. Concerns like opposition to war or the eating of animal products are aligned with counter-conducts of conscientious objection and vegetarianism. Foucault thus delimits this field of 'counter-conducts' as one element of the field of the conduct of conduct. However, I would like to indicate the broader sense of the relationship between government and freedom.

Government and freedom

If government is linked to ethics in this way, it also raises the question of freedom. Government as the 'conduct of conduct' entails the idea that the one governed is, at least in some rudimentary sense, an actor and therefore a locus of freedom. Government is an activity that shapes the field of action and thus, in this sense, attempts to shape freedom. However, while government gives shape to freedom, it is not constitutive of freedom. The governed are free in that they are actors, i.e. it is possible for them to act and to think in a variety of ways, and sometimes in ways not foreseen by authorities. Government presupposes the existence of subjects who are free in the primary sense of living and thinking beings endowed with bodily and mental capacities (cf. Patton, 1998).

GOVERNMENTALITY

Government as the 'conduct of conduct' entails living human beings who can act. This is clearly the case when the governed are to be empowered by expertise, or required to act as consumers in a market, as in many forms of contemporary liberal government. Consider, however, the apparent counter-examples and somewhat extreme situations of a condemned man sentenced to death or, to use Rejali's (1994) example, of a woman subject to political torture. Surely, one might think, their fate has very little to do with the shaping of freedom. The condemned man is to be treated in a certain way, such as being offered a last meal and religious counsel and rites. He is to be executed in some manner, whether by firing squad, electrocution or lethal injection. In some jurisdictions, he may even have the choice of the type of execution. Once executed, his body and personal effects are to be disposed of in some fashion. Before and up to his death, he is a subject to be governed as well as a prisoner to be killed. His death does not merely involve the perpetration of the ultimate form of violence on his being; it also involves forms of thought, deliberation, and calculation about his actions and reactions, including forms of knowledge of his living body made possible by medicine, psychiatry and so on. After his death, there is merely a corpse to be disposed of according to particular rituals, routines and beliefs. Yet even the burial or cremation of the corpse also entails a more or less calculated set of activities. However, after his death authorities no longer attempt to govern the conduct of the prisoner, but they continue to govern that of his family and friends, groups against capital punishment, even the general public, media, prison wardens and officers, undertakers, etc. They govern his body prior to the execution because, even in chains, it is the locus of a rudimentary freedom given shape through such legal and political discourses on rights, religious beliefs and certain forms of knowledge and expertise. In death he may commit his last act. Through the choice of a firing squad rather than lethal injection he may seek to publicize the brutality of capital punishment. After death, however, he cannot act in that he can no longer do something that will affect others' actions. To govern, in this sense, is to structure the field of possible action, to act on our own or others' capacities for action. Capital punishment entails simple brutal and sovereign violence (a human being to be killed) and rudimentary forms of physical domination (chains, leg-irons, cells); but to the degree that it requires the deployment of forms of knowledge and expertise, and the calculated action and coordination of the behaviour of actors who are free in that they can act otherwise, it is also a form of government.

In the case of the woman under torture, the point can be seen even more clearly. Torture would be typically discussed as a feature of the use of sovereign coercion by states or military or quasi-military forces contesting states. However, the modern victim of torture is subject to a range of

BASIC CONCEPTS AND THEMES

techniques derived from medical and psychiatric disciplines and a calibrated knowledge of the human body. In Foucault's terminology, there are bio-political and disciplinary elements within the practice of torture. The relation of torturer and tortured often takes on a therapeutic character in which the prisoner is invited to cooperate in a certain course of action. 'The prisoner was conducted (in the double sense of being led or learning to lead oneself) according to a requested norm. She was invited to recant, to condemn, to inform, to admit guilt, or to cooperate ... A certain freedom was essential to the torture interrogation and "follow-up" procedures' (Rejali, 1994: 75-6). The torturer, in this example, takes the position of a therapist. The prisoner is urged to take responsibility for her own state, and the pain she is causing herself, and to take such action as will remove that pain. She is thus urged to exercise her freedom in a specific fashion. She is hardly in a position to decline the offer because of the calibrated violence being inflicted on her body, the threat of rape, and so on. The margin of the exercise of freedom is of course extremely narrow. She can, however, refuse to cooperate by refusing to admit guilt, sign a confession or denounce others.

There is an even more fundamental and primary sense in which both the condemned man and the woman subject to torture are beings who remain loci of freedom. They can both exercise a capacity to think, i.e. to describe and re-describe their situation in ways that differ from that of their jailers. She can attempt to remind herself that it is the torturers, and not she, who are responsible for her current state of pain. He can understand his execution as one of rank injustice and racial discrimination. Both can re-describe their situation as a spiritual test or a travail on the way to salvation. All this counter-thought, of course, is itself made possible by educational, religious or ascetic practices that involve government and self-government. This primary sense in which thinking is an action of freedom is encapsulated in Hitler's dictum that even 'thinking exists only by virtue of giving or executing orders' (Arendt, 1958: 325). Such a pronouncement indicates, by the fanatical and 'totalitarian' desire to eradicate it, the close proximity of thinking and the exercise of freedom and the fact that the capacity to think is always a danger to the practice of 'giving and executing orders'.

Government concerns the shaping of human conduct and acts on the governed as a locus of action and freedom. It therefore entails the possibility that the governed are to some extent capable of acting and thinking otherwise. As we shall argue, certain ways of governing, which we will broadly define as *liberal* modes of government, are distinguished by trying to work through the freedom or capacities of the governed. Liberal ways of governing thus often conceive the freedom of the governed as a technical means of securing the ends of government. To say this is to say that liberal

GOVERNMENTALITY

rationalities generally attempt to define the nature, source, effects and possible utility of these capacities of acting and thinking. They also vary according to their conception of this freedom. For example, freedom may be conceived as a natural attribute of *Homo oeconomicus*, as in the case of Adam Smith's 'system of natural liberty'; as a product of the discipline of civilization, as for Friedrich von Hayek; as the exercise of rational choice in a market, as in many contemporary programmes of reform of the welfare state; or as a 'game of competitive freedom' whose rules are secured by a juridical and bureaucratic framework, as in the German 'ordoliberalism'. Any specific conception of freedom, however, can never capture or define the possibilities of the exercise of freedom.

The notion of government as the 'conduct of conduct' presupposes the primary freedom of those who are governed entailed in the capacities of acting and thinking. It also, furthermore, presupposes this freedom and these capacities on the part of those who govern. One of the consequences of this latter proposition is that when we govern ourselves and others we exercise our capacities for thinking. This brings us to our next point: what is meant by this strange term, *governmentality*.

Governmentality

It is possible to distinguish two broad meanings of this term in the literature. The second is a historically specific version of the first. In this chapter we shall deal principally with its most general meaning.

In this first sense, the term 'governmentality' suggests what we have just noted. It deals with how we think about governing, with the different rationalities or, as it has been sometimes phrased, 'mentalities of government' (Miller and Rose, 1990; Rose and Miller, 1992). What does it mean to talk about how we think about governing? Rationality in this context means any way of reasoning, or way of thinking about, calculating and responding to a problem, which is more or less systematic, and which might draw upon formal bodies of knowledge or expertise. It does not imply the hegemony of a particular Reason as prescribing how we must think or reason. It remains 'rationalist' to the extent that it privileges systematic ways of thinking over symbolic, mythic or poetic modes.

The notion of 'mentalities' might not carry this rationalist weight. It entails the idea that thinking is a collective activity. It is a matter not of the representations of individual mind or consciousness, but of the bodies of knowledge, belief and opinion in which we are immersed. The notions of collective mentalities and the idea of a history of mentalities have long been used by sociologists (such as Emile Durkheim and Marcel Mauss) and the

BASIC CONCEPTS AND THEMES

Annales School of historians in France (Burke, 1990). For such thinkers, a mentality is a collective, relatively bounded unity, and is not readily examined by those who inhabit it. A mentality might be described as a condition of forms of thought and is thus not readily amenable to be comprehended from within its own perspective.

The idea of mentalities of government is a little more modest than accounts of a collective consciousness or collective way of thinking that can be readily defined and described. It emphasizes the way in which the thinking involved in practices of government is explicit and embedded in language and other technical instruments but is also relatively taken for granted, i.e. it is not usually open to questioning by its practitioners. To say that these mentalities are collective is not necessarily to identify them with specific social groups or classes, although it might also be possible to examine the relation between the different mentalities of specific ruling or subordinate groups. It is to say that the way we think about exercising authority draws upon the expertise, vocabulary, theories, ideas, philosophies and other forms of knowledge that are given and available to us. In contemporary liberal polities, for example, these mentalities are often derived from the human sciences (such as psychology, economics, management or medicine). Yet, mentalities of rule might include a-rational elements: political discourse and vocabulary often relies on imagery and mythology with a strong emotional resonance, particularly in times of crisis, war or attack, to define 'the enemy', to characterize the task ahead, and so on. Indeed, in Foucault's own account, classical forms of sovereign rule are accompanied by a 'symbolics of power' relying on the imagery of blood, sword and crown.²

This point about the rational and a-rational aspects of mentalities of government can be elaborated in relation to some examples. The way we think about the government of nations crucially involves knowledge of the national economy and its trends. This knowledge is provided by a certain class of specialists, economists, drawing on theoretical and technical knowledge, such as models of the economy, economic statistics, forecasts and so on. This knowledge and its implications are provided by economists within the national treasury or the national bank, or even by international agencies such as the World Bank or the International Monetary Fund. Politicians choose between different 'macro-economic' policies. Electorates may choose officials who take 'soft' or 'hard' options with regard to the economy, as the case may be. Authorities may argue that it is becoming more difficult or even impossible to manage national economies owing to economic globalization. However, that it is necessary to attempt to properly manage the economy is one feature of the mentality of national governments that is completely taken for granted. On the other hand, the nation is often identified with a 'body politic' that can be viewed as inviolable but which, once penetrated by an enemy, occasions

GOVERNMENTALITY

national mobilization in the service of its defence. Similarly, international and foreign policy is often based on the geopolitical spatialization of hemispheres (the 'Western Hemisphere') and regions (the Mediterranean, Asia-Pacific, the Middle East) which seek to make the earth governable by particular actors with definite goals, and informed by imagery of the binding powers of geographical contiguity and the mythology of land and sea (Connery, 2001).

Similarly, if I undertake that ubiquitous exercise in self-government, the diet, I do so by drawing upon certain forms of knowledge and expertise provided by dieticians, health professionals, the purveyors of the latest health fad, or my religious or spiritual beliefs. Depending on why I undertake a diet, I may calculate my cholesterol intake, my calories or kilojoules, or whether certain foods have been prepared according to religious law and others are regarded as taboo. In all cases, I undertake a dietary regimen for specific sets of reasons (to attain a slim body, to prevent heart disease, to conform with divine law, to respect taboos), employ certain forms of knowledge and belief, and seek to act upon a certain aspect of my being (whether my energy intake and expenditure or my spiritual state). All these various ways of dieting, then, employ different mentalities of the government of the conduct entailed in eating and drinking. Indeed, the same activity can be regarded as a different form of practice depending on the mentalities that invest it. To restrict or prohibit the intake of certain forms of meat could be regarded as a component of a low-fat diet or as part of a fast, i.e. a practice of self-denial necessary to purify one's soul. The part of ourselves we seek to work upon, the means by which we do so, the reasons we do it, and who we hope to become, all vary according to the nature of the ascetic practice in which we are engaged.

This can be put in a more formal language, as I have done elsewhere (Dean, 1995). The analysis of the ethical government of the self, or of an attempt to govern the self, involves four aspects (Foucault, 1985, 1986b: 352-7). First, it involves ontology, concerned with *what* we seek to act upon, the *governed or ethical substance*. This may be the flesh in Christianity, the pleasures in ancient Greece, or the 'soul' of the criminal in modern penology (Foucault, 1977: 16-31). Second, it involves ascetics, concerned with *how* we govern this substance, the *governing or ethical work*. This may include the spiritual exercises studied by Pierre Hadot (1995), or the procedures of surveillance, management and normalization applied to deviant individuals. Third, it involves deontology, concerned with *who* we are when we are governed in such a manner, our 'mode of subjectification', or the *governable or ethical subject* (as one prey to the weakness of the flesh in Christianity, or as an active jobseeker in social programmes). Fourth, it entails a teleology, concerned with *why* we govern or are governed, the ends or goal sought, what we hope to become or the world we hope to create, that which might be called the *telos of governmental or*

BASIC CONCEPTS AND THEMES

ethical practices. All practices of government of self or others presuppose some goal or end to be achieved, whether otherworldly salvation, the sculpting of a beautiful and noble life and memory, an enterprise culture or an active citizenry and society.

The ways in which we think about government are multiple and heterogeneous, involving different types of agency and authority and employing different types of thought. Thought, however, is a collective product. Social and cultural historians and sociologists have sought to analyse the collective nature of thought by examining its social, political and economic conditions. Studies of governmentality, however, are more concerned with how thought operates within our organized ways of doing things, our *regimes of practices*, and with its ambitions and effects (Foucault, 1991b). Moreover, where historians of ideas and social thinkers have concentrated on the theoretical and abstract dimensions of thought, the analytics of government is more concerned with thought as it is embedded within programmes for the direction and reform of conduct. The analysis of government is concerned with thought as it becomes linked to and is embedded in technical means for the shaping and reshaping of conduct and in practices and institutions. Thus to analyse mentalities of government is to analyse thought made practical and technical, a point taken up below.

An analytics of government thus views practices of government in their complex and variable relations to the different ways in which 'truth' is produced in social, cultural and political practices. On the one hand, we govern others and ourselves according to what we take to be true about who we are, what aspects of our existence should be worked upon, how, with what means and to what ends. We thus govern others and ourselves according to various truths about our existence and nature as human beings. On the other hand, the ways in which we govern and conduct ourselves give rise to different ways of producing truth. National government in contemporary states is unthinkable without some conception of the economy, whether it is conceived as a national or global economy, and the attempt to govern economies leads to the production of knowledge about employment, inflation, trade and so on.

We have already seen (in the general definition of government as the 'conduct of conduct') that government entails not only relations of power and authority but also issues of self and identity. It might now be said, very schematically, that power, truth and identity mark out three general axes of government corresponding to what I shall call (later in this chapter) its *techne*, its *episteme* and its *ethos*.

If government involves various forms of thought about the nature of rule and knowledge of who and what are to be governed, and it employs particular techniques and tactics in achieving its goals, if government establishes definite

GOVERNMENTALITY

identities for the governed and the governors, and if, above all, it involves a more or less subtle direction of the conduct of the governed, it can be called an *art*. The object of our studies, then, is not the simple empirical activity of governing, but the *art of government*. To refer to the art of government is to suggest that governing is an activity that requires craft, imagination, shrewd fashioning, the use of tacit skills and practical know-how, the employment of intuition and so on. The undertaking does not comprise an empirical description of how various people or agents in positions of authority rule. An analytics of government is not a 'sociology of rule' if the object of this is solely actual relations of authority and domination. Rather, it is a study of the organized practices through which we are governed and through which we govern ourselves, what we shall call here *regimes of practices* or *regimes of government*. These regimes, however, involve practices for the production of truth and knowledge, comprise multiple forms of practical, technical and calculative rationality, and are subject to programmes for their reform. It is important to realize that regimes of practices exist within a milieu composed of mentalities of rule, without being reducible to that milieu.

As well as indicating the relation between government and thought, the notion of governmentality has a second meaning in Foucault's work. Here, 'governmentality' marks the emergence of a distinctly new form of thinking about and exercising of power in certain societies (Foucault, 2007: 98–110). This form of power is bound up with the discovery of a new reality, the economy, and concerned with a new object, the population. Governmentality emerges in Western European societies in the 'early modern period' when the art of government of the state becomes a distinct activity, and when the forms of knowledge and techniques of the human and social sciences become integral to it. We shall address the details of the emergence of this historical form of governmentality and its relation to sovereignty and bio-politics in Chapter 5. Here, we shall note some aspects of this historically delimited meaning of the term following Foucault's lecture 'Governmentality'.

First, the emergence of this modern governmentality can be identified by a particular regime of government that takes as its object 'the population' and is coincident with the emergence of political economy (and its successor, economics). Government, henceforth, will be required to be a government of 'each and all', evincing a concern for every individual and the population as a whole. Thus government involves the health, welfare, prosperity and happiness of the population. The notion of population is crucial to the definition of the ends of the government of the state. Yet, at the same time, government must become an *economic* government. To govern properly, to ensure the happiness and prosperity of the population, it is necessary to govern through a particular register, that of the *economy*. Moreover, government itself must be economical, both fiscally and in the use of power.

BASIC CONCEPTS AND THEMES

Second, the notion of governmentality implies a certain relationship of government to other forms of power, in particular sovereignty and discipline. In Foucault's lectures prior to those on governmentality, sovereignty is characterized as a theory and practice of royal administrative rule beginning with the actuality of feudal monarchy, as an element in the contests over the limits and strength of royal power, and as later providing an alternative model of parliamentary democracy (2003: 34–5). Its characteristic mechanisms are constitutions, laws and parliaments. Sovereign power is exercised through the juridical and executive arms of the state. It is exercised over subjects. Discipline, on the other hand, has a long history, with diverse origins in monastic, military and educational practices (Foucault, 1977). It concerns the exercise of power over and through the individual, the body and its forces and capacities, and the composition of aggregates of human individuals (school classes, armies, etc.). The expansion and intensification of regimes of discipline in the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries, in schools, hospitals, workhouses, manufactories, armies and so on, is roughly correlative with the development of the bureaucratic and the administrative apparatus of the state.

While governmentality retains and utilizes the techniques, rationalities and institutions characteristic of both sovereignty and discipline, it departs from them and seeks to reinscribe and recode them.³ The object of sovereign power is the exercise of authority over the subjects of the state within a definite territory, e.g. the 'deductive' practices of levying of taxes, of meting out punishments. The object of disciplinary power is the regulation and ordering of the numbers of people within that territory, e.g. in practices of schooling, military training or the organization of work. The new object of government, by contrast, regards these subjects, and the forces and capacities of living individuals, as members of a population, as resources to be fostered, to be used and to be optimized.

Third, governmentality seeks to enframe the population within what Foucault called *apparatuses of security*. Conventionally, these apparatuses of security would include the use of standing armies, police forces, diplomatic corps, intelligence services and spies. In Foucault's account, it would include all the practices and institutions that ensure the optimal and proper functioning of the economic, vital and social processes that are found to exist within that population and would thus also include health, welfare and education systems.

The last two points lead Foucault to conclude it is best now to see these three forms of power as a 'triangle: sovereignty, discipline, governmental management which has population as its main target and apparatuses of security as its essential mechanism' (2007: 107–8). Rather than replacing discipline or sovereignty, the modern art of government recasts them within

GOVERNMENTALITY

this concern for the population and its optimization (in terms of wealth, health, happiness, prosperity, efficiency), and the forms of knowledge and technical means appropriate to it.

The final characteristic of 'governmentality' stressed by Foucault is the 'tendency, the line of force, that for a long time, and throughout the West, has constantly led towards the pre-eminence over all other types of power – sovereignty, discipline, and so on – of the type of power that we can call "government"' (2007: 108). This long process by which the juridical apparatuses, grounded in an economy of sovereignty and founded with the state of justice of the Middle Ages, and the administrative state based on regulation and disciplines, is gradually governmentalized. This is the process he calls the 'governmentalization of the state' (p. 109). We should note that this is anything but a monolinear process of replacement of one economy of power with another. Even in Foucault's lecture, he observes that with the emergence of a new art of government the 'problem of sovereignty is more acute than ever' and 'discipline was never more important or valued than when the attempt was made to manage the population ...' (p. 107).

Much of the present text is dedicated to tracing the multiple and tangled lines that constitute the history of governmentality. That history will include a specification of the most characteristic rationality of government, that of liberalism, and the relation of this rationality of government to not only sovereignty but also the administrative imperative to optimize the health, welfare and life of populations, or what shall be referred to as *bio-politics*. These historical concerns constitute the themes of many of the later chapters of this book. For present purposes it is perhaps more important that we understand the first, more general meaning of the term.

An analytics of government

The perspective introduced here can be called an *analytics of government*. An *analytics* is a type of study concerned with an analysis of the specific conditions under which particular entities emerge, exist and change. It is thus distinguished from most theoretical approaches in that it seeks to attend to, rather than efface, the singularity of ways of governing and conducting ourselves. Thus it does not treat particular practices of government as instances of ideal types and concepts. Neither does it regard them as effects of a law-like necessity or treat them as manifestations of a fundamental contradiction. An analytics of government examines the conditions under which regimes of practices come into being, are maintained and are transformed. In an elementary sense, regimes of practices are simply fairly coherent sets of ways of going about doing things. They are the more or less organized ways, at any given time and

BASIC CONCEPTS AND THEMES

place, we think about, reform and practice such things as caring, administering, counselling, curing, punishing, educating and so on (Foucault, 1991b). Regimes of practices are institutional practices if the latter term means the routinized and ritualized way we do these things in certain places and at certain times. These regimes also include, moreover, the different ways in which these institutional practices can be thought, made into objects of knowledge, and made subject to problematizations.

An analytics of government attempts to show that our taken-for-granted ways of doing things and how we think about and question them are not entirely self-evident or necessary. An analytics of a particular regime of practices, at a minimum, seeks to identify the emergence of that regime, examine the multiple sources of the elements that constitute it, and follow the diverse processes and relations by which these elements are assembled into relatively stable forms of organization and institutional practice. It examines how such a regime gives rise to and depends upon particular forms of knowledge and how, as a consequence of this, it becomes the target of various programmes of reform and change. It considers how this regime has a technical or technological dimension and analyses the characteristic techniques, instrumentalities and mechanisms through which such practices operate, by which they attempt to realize their goals, and through which they have a range of effects.

Within any given society, there are a large, but finite, number of intermeshing regimes of practices. In contemporary liberal-democratic societies, there are regimes of practices of punishing, of curing, of relieving poverty, of treating mental illness and maintaining mental health and so on. These regimes involve and link up particular institutions so that we can talk of a 'criminal justice system', a 'health system', a 'social welfare system' and so on. However, such regimes are never identical with a particular institution or even system. Thus the regime of practices of punishing may find a central institutional support in the prison. However, how we punish also affects what happens in schools, families, barracks and so on. The existence of such regimes of practices makes possible borrowings across institutions and innovation within them. In addition, there are borrowings across these regimes themselves, and forms of cooperation, overlap, intersection, fragmentation and contestation between them. One regime may attempt to colonize and subjugate another, e.g. the way in which regimes of calculation drawn from accounting and auditing appear increasingly to be used to subsume alternative practices of accountability such as those drawn from professional and collegial norms (Power, 1994).

These regimes of practices give rise to and are informed and reshaped by various forms of knowledge and expertise such as medicine, criminology, social work, therapy, pedagogy and so on. Such forms of knowledge define the

GOVERNMENTALITY

objects of such practices (the criminal, the unemployed, the mentally ill, etc.), codify appropriate ways of dealing with them, set the aims and objectives of practice, and define the professional and institutional locus of authoritative agents of expertise.

This dependence of regimes of practices on forms of knowledge accounts for a related feature. Regimes of practices are associated with and become the objects of definite, explicit *programmes*, i.e. deliberate and relatively systematic forms of thought that endeavour to transform those practices (Gordon, 1980; Foucault, 1991b). In fact, the practices of curing, punishing, and so on, are invested with multiple programmes that employ certain types of knowledge to reform or radically challenge their operation, to reorient them to new goals and objectives, and to act upon the desires, aspirations, needs and attributes of the agents within them. Regimes of practices, while having a material and institutional locale, exist in the milieu of thought, one feature of which is these programmes of the reform of conduct. A part of the practices of punishment centred on the prison is the various programmes for reducing recidivism, reforming the prison system, sentencing and so on.

An analytics of government often commences analysis by examining the way aspects of regimes of practices are called into question (or *problematized*) by such programmes. However, as we shall see, these programmes do not exhaust the intelligibility of these regimes of practices. An analytics of government will seek to constitute the intrinsic logic or *strategy* of a regime of practices that cannot be simply read off particular programmes, theories and policies of reform. The strategic logic of a regime of practices can only be constructed through understanding its operation as an intentional but non-subjective assemblage of all its elements (Gordon, 1980). That is to say that regimes of practices possess a logic that is irreducible to the explicit intentions of any one actor but yet evinces an orientation toward a particular matrix of ends and purposes. It is necessary to be extremely careful to distinguish between the strategy of regimes of practices and the programmes that attempt to invest them with particular purposes. These programmes are internal to the workings of a regime of practices and not their *raison d'être*. The critical purchase of an analytics of government often stems from the disjunction between the explicit, calculated and programmatic rationality and the non-subjective intentionality that can be constructed through analysis – as we shall illustrate by an analysis of the logic of empowerment in Chapter 3 and discover as a recurrent feature of international affairs in Chapter 10. The key point to underline here is that, unlike many analyses in the social sciences, an analytics of government grants to these regimes of practices a reality, a density and a logic of their own and hopes to avoid any premature reduction of them to an order or level of existence that is more fundamental or real, whether that be the level of institutions, of structures, of ideologies and so on, or even any one of the

BASIC CONCEPTS AND THEMES

particular programmes that seek to invest them with certain purposes and orient them toward specific goals.

To put all this in a very simplified framework, an analytics of government takes as its central concern *how* we govern and are governed within different regimes, and the conditions under which such regimes emerge, continue to operate, and are transformed. An analytics of government thus emphasizes 'how' questions. It is possible to distinguish at least four dimensions of this:

- 1 characteristic forms of visibility, ways of seeing and perceiving
- 2 distinctive ways of thinking and questioning, relying on definite vocabularies and procedures for the production of truth (e.g. those derived from the social, human and behavioural sciences)
- 3 specific ways of acting, intervening and directing, made up of particular types of practical rationality ('expertise' and 'know-how'), and relying upon definite mechanisms, techniques and technologies
- 4 characteristic ways of forming subjects, selves, persons, actors or agents.

These four dimensions are developed in the final section of this chapter. It is sufficient to note that the axes of visibilities, knowledge, techniques and practices, and identities are co-present within each regime of practices, that each constitutes a line of continual transformation and variation, and that each presupposes the others without being reducible to them. An analytics of government tries to recover the intelligibility of regimes of practices through each of these dimensions, to give due weight to their independence, without falling into any kind of reductionism or determinism.

An analytics of government admits to being a perspective on questions of power and authority. This does not mean that it is a subjectivist, 'anything goes' enterprise. Rather it seeks to formulate and consistently employ a specific set of questions that follow from this concern with how regimes of practices of government operate. To admit its perspectival nature is to say that there is no absolute standard of truth by which this analytics can be judged. To evaluate it, we might simply compare the intelligibility and understanding it yields with alternative accounts.

In regard to such comparative evaluation, it is perhaps useful to draw a notional distinction between an analytics of government and theories of the state, if one is allowed to typecast the latter somewhat. The state, in the political and social sciences, is usually presumed to be a relatively unified set of institutions that are the source of political power and through which political authority is exercised within a particular territory. As Max Weber put it, the state claims a monopoly over the use of violence within this territory (1972: 78). In the modern liberal-democratic nation-state, the executive, either popularly elected or appointed by a representative parliament, makes decisions that are carried into

GOVERNMENTALITY

practice by a professional and nominally politically neutral administration. This executive is bound, however, by a tacit or codified constitution and the rule of law, and is accountable to the law-making agency of the parliament. The laws, enacted by the parliament, are in turn interpreted and enforced through the judiciary and through institutions of security such as the police. Moreover, the state pursues and protects what it understands as its external interests by means of its diplomatic corps and standing army.

As historical sociologists have shown, the processes by which nation-states were constructed and took on the various functions we assume of them today were complex.⁴ The internal pacification of a territory, the establishment of monopoly over the use of legitimate violence and taxation, the imposition of a common currency, a common set of laws and legal authorities, certain standards of literacy and language, and even stable and continuous time-space systems, are all integral to the process of state formation. The nation-state was historically constructed through the subordination of various arenas of rule to a more or less central authority and the investment of the duty of the exercise of that authority to long-standing, if not permanent, institutions and personnel. A central part of this process of state formation is the recognition by the state that the health, happiness, wealth and welfare of its population were among the key objectives of its rule.

Despite the complexity of the relations between the institutions that constitute the state, and our growing understanding of how agencies and domains of rule are integrated within the nation-state, our images of the state generally assume that the state can be addressed as a relatively unified actor, both in the diplomatic and military pursuit of 'geopolitical' interests and in its internal systems of authority. Indeed, social scientific theories of the state assume this unity when they typically seek to discover the source of the state's power, who holds it, and the basis of its legitimacy. Democratic, liberal, pluralist, elitist, Marxist and feminist theories of the state pose these same questions, however differently they might answer them. Thus, the source of power can be variously identified as the people, individuals, elites, the relations of production, patriarchy. Those who hold power may be the people, elites, ruling classes, men and so on, and the legitimacy of their rule may rest upon the rule of law, class hegemony, dominant ideologies, the consent of the governed, patriarchal culture, etc.

Theories of the state could be said in a general sense to memorize the trajectory of Western European states from feudal and absolutist monarchical rule to parliamentary democracy to the extent that they focus on the problem of *sovereignty* (Foucault, 1980b: 103). This is the problem of the relation between the sovereign and its subjects. On the one hand, such theories examine the legitimacy of the sovereign, the basis of its authority and its right as the law-making and law-enforcing agency within a territory. On the other,

BASIC CONCEPTS AND THEMES

they examine the issue of the consent and obedience of the governed, of those who are subjects to this authority. The foundations of sovereignty may be discovered in divine will, the rule of law or the rule of the people. The consent of the governed may be found in tradition, in religious belief, in a primal compact between the governed, in different forms of authority or in ideology. In any case, the problems of who or what is sovereign (and hence who holds power), of the legitimacy of this sovereignty, and of the relation of sovereign and subjects, deeply permeate our images and theories of the state and our political philosophies.

One of the sources of the development of an 'analytics of government' was a fundamental interrogation of these images and the suspicion of their inadequacy to an understanding of the key political problems with which we are faced in the present. We know Foucault's famous aphorism that 'in political theory we are yet to cut off the king's head' (1980: 121), by which he ventured that the problem of the foundations of sovereignty and our obedience to it needs to be supplanted by an analysis of the multiple operations and mechanisms of power and domination. To do this, he at first turned to the language of war and domination. This is present in his suggestion that we invert Clausewitz's aphorism that war is politics continued by other means (pp. 90-1). If politics is war continued by other means then we should attend to the mobile relations of strategy and tactics, to struggles and battles, and to the disposition of forces, that are employed in the exercise of political rule and in the resistance it provokes.

These statements by Foucault should be taken as revisable provocations to our thinking about social regulation and political order rather than as a fully fledged alternative theoretical position. One can track a number of points along the line of development of his thought on power and domination during the 1970s, although one must be cautious about assuming anything like a fundamental discontinuity. He first sought to question the grounding of a theory of power in the images of law and sovereignty. To do so, he experiments with the language of war and domination as a way of reconceptualizing power. His 1976 lectures '*Il faut défendre la société*' ('Society Must Be Defended') bear witness to this experiment (1997b, 2003). One of the consequences of this is an apparent dichotomy between the 'sovereign', juridical form of premodern power of the European absolutist monarchies and modern, normalizing 'disciplinary' power or 'bio-power'. Second, he later abandoned this language of war as leading to an 'extremist denunciation of power' as *repressive* (Pasquino, 1993: 73). He thus turned in the late 1970s to problems of government, as we have described it here, and related themes of security, liberalism and population. This latter move should therefore be placed in the context of an attempt to rethink problems of power and regulation outside *both* the images of law and sovereignty *and* the discourse on war. However, there are certainly fundamental continuities between Foucault's

GOVERNMENTALITY

characterization of 'bio-politics', or a form of power operating at the level of *living* individuals and populations, and his thought on government. Indeed, a full view of the analytics of government will need to revisit the relation between liberal government, bio-politics and sovereignty, as we shall see in Chapters 5 and 6.

This second shift opened up new ways of thinking about law, discipline and government. Law now needs no longer to be regarded as the archaic survival of sovereignty and its juridical and political institutions, and discipline no longer as the pre-eminent modern form of power. Rather the problem becomes the need to rethink the place of both law and disciplinary domination within contemporary governmental forms.

Indeed, having rejected the opposition between sovereign and disciplinary power, Foucault sought to consider the manner in which the art of government has transformed and reconstituted the juridical and administrative apparatuses of seventeenth-century Western European states. This is how we should take a further deliberation offered by Foucault on the excessive value accorded the image of the state in our political culture (2007: 109). This overvaluation consists in all the hopes and fears, love and horror, we invest in the state as a 'cold monster' confronting us, either as the means to our secular salvation (found in the glory of the nation, the superiority of the race, the attainment of social justice and equality, etc.) or as a fact of brute domination repressing our genuine humanity (located in civil society, the private sphere, even the market, etc.). Another overvaluation paradoxically reduces the state to a number of functions, such as the development of the productive forces and the reproduction of the capitalist relations of production, and thus makes the state the focus of political struggles. Perhaps, remarks Foucault in the same passage, the state possesses neither this unity nor this functionality, and we should recognize that the state is but a 'composite reality' and a 'mythicized abstraction'. Perhaps, he suggests, what is important for us 'is not then the state's takeover (*étatisation*) of society, so much as what I would call the "governmentalization" of the state'.⁵

Neither the image of sovereignty nor the language of domination and repression can account for the emergence of governmental authority and the place of law and legal institutions within it. Both approaches remain transfixed by a kind of political a priori: of the division between subjugation and liberation in one case, and of the sovereign and its subjects in the other. Both are concerned with the identification of who holds and wields power. Questions of how we govern and are governed are reduced to the problem of how the dominant group or sovereign state secured its position through legitimate or illegitimate means. Indeed, the problem of legitimacy, deeply tied to a conception of the state as a 'law-making' body, lies at the base of our thinking about power and the state. An analytics of government, by contrast,

BASIC CONCEPTS AND THEMES

assumes that discourses on government are an integral part of the workings of government rather than simply a means of its legitimation, that government is accomplished through multiple actors and agencies rather than a centralized set of state apparatuses, and that we must reject any a priori distribution and divisions of power and authority (cf. Latour, 1986a).

In challenging these centralizing images of power and the state, this analytics affirms that these divisions and distributions are something to be analysed as constructed, assembled, contested and transformed from multiple and heterogeneous elements. The mobile, changing and contingent assemblages of regimes of government and rule have analytic precedence over the resultant distributions of power and divisions between state and civil society and between public and private spheres. This is why it is necessary to attend to what is put together in these assemblages: the routines of bureaucracy; the technologies of notation, recording, compiling, presenting and transporting of information; the theories, programmes, knowledge and expertise that compose a field to be governed and invest it with purposes and objectives; the ways of seeing and representing embedded in practices of government; and the different agencies with various capacities that the practices of government require, elicit, form and reform. To examine regimes of government is to conduct analysis in the plural: there is already a plurality of regimes of practices in a given territory, each composed from a multiplicity of, in principle, unlimited and heterogeneous elements bound together by a variety of relations and capable of polymorphous connections with one another.

Regimes of practices can be identified whenever there exists a relatively stable field of correlation of visibilities, mentalities, technologies and agencies, such that they constitute a kind of taken-for-granted point of reference for any form of problematization. In so far as these regimes concern the direction of conduct, they form the object of an analytics of government.

Analysing regimes of government

The existing research into governmentality provides us with a number of indications as to how to undertake an analytics of government. Here, I shall endeavour to identify, clarify and state the characteristic moves of the analytics of government.

The identification of problematizations

The key starting point of an analytics of government is the identification and examination of specific situations in which the activity of governing comes

GOVERNMENTALITY

to be called into question, the moments and the situations in which government becomes a problem. This action of calling into question some aspect of the 'conduct of conduct' is generally referred to as a 'problematization'. Problematizations are something relatively rare. They have particular dates and places, and occur at particular locales or within specific institutions or organizations. Thus, rather than starting from a global theory of the state or of power relations, an analytics of government directs us to examine the different and particular contexts in which governing is called into question, in which actors and agents of all sorts must pose the question of how to govern.

A problematization of government is a calling into question of how we shape or direct our own and others' conduct. Problematizations might thus equally concern how we conduct government and how we govern conduct. To start with these problematizations is to start with the questions various actors and authorities ask concerning how 'governors' (politicians, parents, the professions, corporate entities, etc.) conduct themselves and how 'the governed' (citizens, children, clients, consumers, workers, etc.) conduct themselves. Indeed, from the perspective of these problematizations it is often difficult to make this division between governed and governor, e.g. in the attempts to make professions accountable to clients, boards of management of corporations accountable to shareholders, or academics in public universities to taxpayers. In each of these examples those who might be thought to exercise authority (over clients, investment decisions, workers, students) are subject to the exercise of other forms of authority.

Problematizations are made on the basis of particular regimes of practices of government, with particular techniques, language, grids of analysis and evaluation, forms of knowledge and expertise. It is possible that the same vocabulary and array of techniques can be used to govern those we might usually regard as belonging to either side of the division. Thus the now ubiquitous language of 'enterprise' and 'entrepreneurship' can equally be applied to public organizations and services (under the rubric of 'entrepreneurial government': e.g. Osborne and Gaebler, 1993) or to sub-populations such as the unemployed. Again, in Chapter 3 we shall consider how techniques of empowerment can be applied to populations whose conduct is problematized as 'disempowered' or 'dependent', with low morale and self-esteem. The techniques and language of empowerment can be used to problematize what is understood as the overly paternalistic, rigid and disempowering bureaucratic administration of welfare states. To study empowerment, or to study any other ways of reforming the exercise of authority (e.g. forms of managerialism, mechanisms of accountability, codes of conduct, etc.), is to interrogate the way we ask questions about how we govern and the conduct of both the governed and the governors. An analytics of government, then, starts from the questions we ask concerning

BASIC CONCEPTS AND THEMES

our conduct and that of others rather than from a general theory or set of theoretical principles. If this is the starting point, then how does an analytics of government proceed?

The priority given to 'how' questions

The literature on governmentality gives a certain priority to 'how' questions. It asks 'how do we govern?' and 'how are we governed?' What does it mean to say this? It surely doesn't mean that we simply describe how authority operates in a particular situation, say a workplace or a school. Rather, it directs us to attend to the practices of government that form the basis on which problematizations are made and what happens when we govern and are governed. This means, first of all, to examine all that which is necessary to a particular regime of practices of government, the conditions of governing in the broadest sense of that word. In principle, this includes an unlimited and heterogeneous range of things. If one wanted to examine the government of recipients of income support for the unemployed this would encompass such things as: the administrative structure, integration and coordination of various departments of state and other agencies, organizations and businesses; the forms of training of public servants and other professionals (counsellors, case managers) and the expertise expected of them; the means for the collection, collation, storage and retrieval of information about specific populations of clients; the design, layout and location of various offices; the procedures of reception of clients, and methods of queuing, interviewing and assessing them; the design and use of assets tests, eligibility criteria, waiting periods, forms of certification; the use of forms, publicity, advertisements, etc. To list such conditions of governing, however, is not to say that analysis is merely the description of the empirical routines of government. It is an attempt to understand, in addition, how all the above has to be *thought*. All of these things are formed in relation to specific forms of knowledge and expertise of a variety of authorities from architects to social workers, occupational psychologists to management consultants. Moreover, certain forms of thought (party political platforms and policies, programmes of reform of welfare systems, social planning and policy-making) seek to unify and rationalize these techniques and practices in relation to particular sets of objectives, diagnoses of existing ills, schemata of evaluation and so on.

This approach thus stands in contrast to theories of government that ask 'who rules?', 'what is the source of that rule?' and 'what is the basis of its legitimacy?'. An analytics of government brackets out such questions not merely because they are stale, tiresome, unproductive and repetitive. It does so because it wants to understand how different locales are constituted as authoritative and

GOVERNMENTALITY

powerful, how different agents are assembled with specific powers, and how different domains are constituted as governable and administrable. The focus on 'how' questions, then, arises from a rejection of the political a priori of the distribution of power and the location of rule. Power, from this point of view, is not a zero-sum game played within an a priori structural distribution. It is rather the (mobile and open) resultant of the loose and changing assemblage of governmental techniques, practices and rationalities.

Finally, these resultant power relations and situations are among the consequences of how we govern and are governed. To ask 'how' questions of government, then, is also to ask what happens when we govern or are governed. Crucial to the resultant power relations are the capacities and liberties of the various actors and agencies formed in practices of government. To ask how governing works, then, is to ask how we are formed as various types of agents with particular capacities and possibilities of action.

'How' questions lead us to problems of the techniques and practices, rationalities and forms of knowledge, and identities and agencies by which governing operates. Another way of putting this is to say that to ask 'how' questions of government is to analyse government in terms of its 'regimes of practices'.

Practices of government as assemblages or regimes

Practices of government cannot be understood as expressions of a particular principle, as reducible to a particular set of relations, or as referring to a single set of problems and functions. They do not form those types of totalities in which the parts are expressions or instances of the whole. Rather, they should be approached as composed of heterogeneous elements having diverse historical trajectories, as polymorphous in their internal and external relations, and as bearing upon a multiple and wide range of problems and issues. Thus the 'modern' regime of punishment brings together multiple elements (from the history of the use of firearms and pedagogical practices to British empiricism and utilitarianism), evinces polymorphous relations (of the application of theory, the borrowing of architectural models, the employment of tactics formed in relation to local issues), and can be brought to bear upon all sorts of problems (discipline in the military, the education of children, the securing of a capitalist economy) (Foucault, 1991b). The term 'regime of practices' refers to these historically constituted assemblages through which we do such things as cure, care, relieve poverty, punish, educate, train and counsel.

An analytics of government is a materialist analysis in that it places these regimes of practices at the centre of analysis and seeks to discover the logic of such practices. However, since regimes of practices partly comprise the forms of knowledge and truth which define their field of operation and codify what can be known, and since these regimes of practices are penetrated by all types

BASIC CONCEPTS AND THEMES

of programmes that seek their reform, one would need to add that this materialism must be concerned with thought. Practices are of interest, then, in that they exist in the medium of thought, given that thought is a non-subjective, technical and practical domain.

Following the work of Deleuze (1991), we are able to analyse these regimes of practices along four different, reciprocally conditioning, yet relatively autonomous dimensions. These are addressed by the next four points.

The examination of fields of visibility of government

The first of these dimensions concerns the forms of visibility necessary to the operation of particular regimes. We might ask what the field of visibility is that characterizes a regime of government, by what kind of light it illuminates and defines certain objects and with what shadows and darkness it obscures and hides others. An architectural drawing, a management flow chart, a map, a pie chart, a set of graphs and tables, and so on, are all ways of visualizing fields to be governed. These all make it possible to 'picture' who and what is to be governed, how relations of authority and obedience are constituted in space, how different locales and agents are to be connected with one another, what problems are to be solved and what objectives are to be sought. So much do studies of governmentality emphasize this visual and spatial dimension of government that they seek to draw attention to these *diagrams* of power and authority (Bentham's Panopticon being only the most famous). Such diagrams allow us to 'think with eyes and hands', to use Bruno Latour's (1986b) phrase, to capture the sense in which seeing and doing are bound into one complex or in which drawing or mapping a field and visualizing it are interconnected. More generally, we can identify different regimes of practices with certain forms of visibility. Thus clinical medical practice presupposes a field of visibility of the body and its depths while public health regimes locate the individual body within a visible field of social and political spaces. Practices of imprisonment and confinement may presuppose different forms and levels of visibility. Thus we could cite the anonymous and omnipresent surveillance of the prison and contrast it with the banishment from the field of visibility and light characteristic of the castle dungeon. To use another example, risk-management strategies today present social and urban space as a variegated field of risk of crime in which high-risk spaces suffer from a lack of visibility and inspectability.

The concern for the technical aspect of government

A second dimension concerns the technical aspect of government, what I have called elsewhere the *techne* of government (Dean, 1995). Here the literature

GOVERNMENTALITY

on governmentality asks: by what means, mechanisms, procedures, instruments, tactics, techniques, technologies and vocabularies is authority constituted and rule accomplished? In a more specific sense, one might discuss 'technologies of government', although it is perhaps worthwhile limiting that term to a certain class of phenomena within the *techne* of government (Dean, 1996b).

One of the key implications of this emphasis on government as technique is to contest those models of government that wish to view it solely – or even mainly – as a manifestation of values, ideologies, worldviews, etc. If government is to achieve ends, or seeks to realize values, it must use technical means. Those technical means are a condition of governing and often impose limits over what it is possible to do, e.g. in order to attempt to manage national economies it is necessary to use certain economic models and instruments. A concern for such things as 'balance of payments', inflation rates, public sector debt levels and so on is not simply an expression of a set of 'economically rational' or even capitalist values. This does not mean that government is purely technical, or that it is reducible to the technical aspects of government, or that it precludes discourses and rhetorics of value (see next point). It is to say, however, that the *techne* of government – like all other aspects of governing – is necessary, somewhat autonomous and irreducible.

The approach to government as rational and thoughtful activity

The third dimension of practices of government concerns the forms of knowledge that arise from and inform the activity of governing. I have elsewhere called this the *episteme* of government (Dean, 1995). Here the literature on governmentality asks: what forms of thought, knowledge, expertise, strategies, means of calculation, or rationality are employed in practices of governing? How does thought seek to transform these practices? How do these practices of governing give rise to specific forms of truth? How does thought seek to render particular issues, domains and problems governable? It is important to underline that 'thought' is something relatively rare. It has a particular time and place and takes a definite material form (a graph, a set of regulations, a text, etc.). It is this connection of government and thought that is emphasized in the hybrid term 'governmentality'.

To analyse regimes of practices of government, then, the literature on governmentality eschews a sociological realism that simply describes or analyses what exists, or how practices work in that sense. One of the features of government, even at its most brutal, is that authorities and agencies must ask questions of themselves, must employ plans, forms of knowledge and know-how, and must adopt visions and objectives of what they seek to achieve. The 'welfare state', for example, can be understood less as a concrete

BASIC CONCEPTS AND THEMES

set of institutions and more as a way of viewing institutions, practices and personnel, of organizing them in relation to a specific ideal of government. Similarly, the 'neo-liberal' critique of the welfare state is not first an attack on specific institutions but is a problematization of certain ideals of government, diagrams of citizenship, and the formulas of rule they generate.

Government, moreover, has an intrinsically programmatic character. Here the governmentality literature attends to all the more or less explicit, purposive attempts to organize and reorganize institutional spaces, their routines, rituals and procedures, and the conduct of actors in specific ways. Programmes or 'programmes of conduct' are all the attempts to regulate, reform, organize and improve what occurs within regimes of practices in the name of a specific set of ends articulated with different degrees of explicitness and cogency.

The attention to the formation of identities

The final dimension of regimes of practices is concerned with the forms of individual and collective identity through which governing operates and which specific practices and programmes of government try to form. We might ask in relation to this final axis: what forms of person, self and identity are presupposed by different practices of government and what sorts of transformation do these practices seek? What statuses, capacities, attributes and orientations are assumed of those who exercise authority (from politicians and bureaucrats to professionals and therapists) and those who are to be governed (workers, consumers, pupils and social welfare recipients)? What forms of conduct are expected of them? What duties and rights do they have? How are these capacities and attributes to be fostered? How are these duties enforced and rights ensured? How are certain aspects of conduct problematized? How are they then to be reformed? How are certain individuals and populations made to identify with certain groups, to become virtuous and active citizens, and so on?

The forms of identity promoted and presupposed by various practices and programmes of government should not be confused with a *real* subject, subjectivity or subject position, i.e. with a subject that is the endpoint or terminal of these practices and constituted through them. Regimes of government do not *determine* forms of subjectivity. They elicit, promote, facilitate, foster and attribute various capacities, qualities and statuses to particular agents. They are successful to the extent that these agents come to experience themselves through such capacities (e.g. of rational decision-making), qualities (e.g. as having a sexuality) and statuses (e.g. as being an active citizen). Much of the problem of government here is less one of identity than one of 'identification', if we follow the language of Maffesoli (1991). How is someone who buys

GOVERNMENTALITY

goods at a supermarket to be made to identify as a consumer? How is someone who depends on social security relief from a public authority made to identify as an active job seeker? How are certain men made into or make themselves into a 'gay community'? How are we all to become good citizens? All these imply a work of government, a way of acting on conduct to elicit various identifications for various reasons.

These four dimensions of government presuppose one another. However, they are not reducible to one another. They are each relatively autonomous and it would be erroneous to reduce a regime of practices to any one of its dimensions. Transformation of regimes of practices may take place along each or any of these axes, and transformation along one axis may entail transformations in others.

The extraction of the Utopian element of government

Mentalities of government contain a strangely Utopian element. To govern, according to this logic, is to do something rather more than simply exercise authority. It is to believe that government is not only necessary but possible. It is to suppose that such government can be effective, that it can achieve its desired ends, or, to use the parlance of contemporary public policy analysis, that there can be a match between outcomes and intentions of policies. This implies that it is possible to re-form human beings, to form or shape them or their attributes in some way, and that our exertions can be effective in this regard. It is to assume that we can draw upon and apply forms of knowledge to that task, that we can gain a secure knowledge of the world and of human beings in that world, that we can 'make things better', improve how we do things, and so on. In this the art of government, as distinct from merely governing, is irreducibly Utopian. It is necessary for of government to extract this Utopian aspect.

Another way of putting this is to say that one means by which we might make intelligible regimes of government is to isolate their ultimate ends and their Utopian goals. This is, if one likes, the *telos* of government. Every theory or programme of government presupposes an end of this kind: a type of person, community, organization, society or even world which is to be achieved. Notions of an enterprise culture, an entrepreneurial government, an active society, an active or enterprising citizen, an informed consumer, are so many examples of this (Heelas and Morris, 1992; Rose, 1992; Dean, 1995). Even at its apparently most bureaucratic and managerial, or its most market-inspired, government is a fundamentally Utopian activity. It presupposes a better world, society, way of doing things or way of living. The *teloi* of advanced liberal, neo-conservative or welfare-state modes of governing, or specific programmes of national renewal (e.g. Newt Gingrich's Contract with America

BASIC CONCEPTS AND THEMES

and President F.D. Roosevelt's New Deal), are extraordinarily different. Yet they are all not only ways of thinking about the mundane activity of administering things and people but also ways of leading them to a new and better existence.

The circumspection about the role of values

When actors in positions of authority ask 'how to govern' they are asking how we should govern, what is the best way to govern, from what value position and with what objectives. Thus public policies are often considered on the Left to be associated with the realization of the values of social justice, equity or citizenship rights, and on the Right with the securing of personal freedom, national efficiency and military strength. An analytics of government is careful not to read practices of government in terms of the values that are claimed or presumed to underlie them. It is thus distinguished from the project of a normative political theory such as found in John Rawls or Jürgen Habermas. Rather, claims to be operating in the service of 'values' must be scrutinized as components of the rhetorical practice of government and as part of different forms of governmental and political reason.

The question of values is a complex one. It is extremely important not to view regimes of governmental practices as expressions of values. Values are enunciated in relation to the programmes and practices of government and form a key part of the rhetoric of government. This rhetoric is internal, and often necessary, to the functioning of regimes of practices and thus cannot make intelligible their conditions of existence. For example, similar instruments for the delivery of welfare to the long-term unemployed, such as the contract, counselling and even participation in training and make-work schemes can be latched onto both the value of freedom (via such notions as social inclusion and active citizenship) and to the value of authority (in schemas of neo-paternalism). Values and their articulation form a part of the rationalities of government along with specialist knowledge and more practical (and often tacit) know-how, expertise and skills embodied in, say, the training of public servants, professionals of various kinds and so on. They give regimes of practices a particular purpose and seek to reform them in the service of such a purpose. These techniques and technologies, however, cannot be understood as emanating from these values. Thus rather than viewing regimes of practices as expressions of values it is important to question how 'values' function in various governmental rationalities, what consequences they have in forms of political argument, how they get attached to different techniques and so on. Values, knowledge, techniques, are all part of the mix of regimes of practices but none alone acts as guarantor of ultimate meaning.

GOVERNMENTALITY

The avoidance of 'global or radical' positions

An analytics of government, finally, turns away from 'all projects that claim to be global or radical' (Foucault, 1986b: 46). At its most general such a standpoint would eschew any position that claims that all the activity of governing is bad or good, necessary or unnecessary. More specifically, such a position would entail a rejection of the idea that the point of an analytics of government is to show how humans can be liberated from or, indeed, by government. At first approach, government works through practices of freedom *and* states of domination, forms of subjection *and* forms of subjectification. It sometimes takes the form of coercion (the taxpayer must pay tax) and, at other times, seeks consent (the unemployed person who agrees to a 'return-to-work' plan), without either coercion or consent being its essential form. Government presupposes and even creates forms of unfreedom and inequality (of the schoolchild in the classroom and the hierarchy of teacher and pupil) as it seeks to create various kinds of equality and to foster the exercise of certain types of liberty (the capacity to exercise citizenship and to enter the labour-market).

My own viewpoint is that we need to adopt a stance that is neither enamoured with the 'will to govern' nor utterly opposed to the practice of governing. Government, particularly the government of the state, does not lead to Utopia despite the fact that it is a fundamentally Utopian enterprise. Whatever it may achieve, those achievements will not amount to a global emancipation; whatever its deficiencies, we shall never be free from it. Even those practices of government that have as their objective the specific emancipation of a certain group in a particular way may result in, or even require, intentional or unintentional domination of other groups. All organized social existence, including all practices of liberty, presupposes forms of the 'conduct of conduct'. Many of these forms of the 'conduct of conduct' will require relatively durable, fixed, irreversible and hierarchical relations of power, which Foucault (1988a) called 'states of domination' in his later work.

A corollary of the rejection of all global or radical positions with respect to government would be the suspicion of any general principle by which we might rationalize or reform government. Thus one of the problems of using the language of domination and emancipation is that such terms often imply a normative framework, largely inherited from certain forms of critical theory and philosophical conceptions of the autonomous person, in which the task of analysis is to identify forms of domination that act as obstacles to the emancipation or fulfilment of human beings. A key problem here is the assumption that human subjects and the liberty they exercise stand outside relations of power and forms of domination. By contrast, an analytics of government reflects its Foucauldian inheritance by showing how the capacities and attributes of subjects and the kinds of freedom which they make possible

BASIC CONCEPTS AND THEMES

are shaped within regimes of government. Such regimes of government will include relations that are hierarchical, irreversible, fixed and durable, that is, in Foucault's sense, 'states of domination' (1997a).

The distinction between relations of power that are open, mobile and reversible and those that are not is a useful analytical and descriptive tool. However, to the extent that an analytics of government endeavours to avoid global or radical projects, such a distinction cannot be used to construct a general normative stance. Thus an analytics of government should be wary of the use of such a distinction to offer a general critique of domination. It would reject certain formulations that suggest that the point of doing analysis is to distinguish between good or legitimate forms of government and bad or illegitimate ones, or to distinguish between what is good within regimes of government and what is bad within them. Unfortunately, such a position seems to be taken up in several of the late interviews of Foucault when he appears to endorse the general idea that we should learn to exercise power 'with a minimum of domination' (see especially Foucault, 1988a).⁶ Domination is here identified with certain states in which 'relations of power, instead of being variable and allowing different partners a strategy which alters them, find themselves firmly set and congealed ... in such a state the practice of liberty does not exist or exists only unilaterally or is extremely confined and limited' (1988a: 3). It is indeed hard not to be sceptical of the juxtaposition of domination and liberty in such a formulation, given Foucault's insistence on the myriad ways in which subjects are formed through the exercise of power and forms of domination such as discipline (Hindess, 1996: 154). My point here is that making the opposition between domination and liberty into a feature of relations of power – or of regimes of government – does not absolve that opposition of its general declamatory functions and the possibility of using it for 'an extremist denunciation of power' (Pasquino, 1993: 79).

I thus want to insist that an analytics of government marks out a space to ask questions about government, authority and power, without attempting to formulate a set of general principles by which various forms of the 'conduct of conduct' could be reformed. The point of doing this, however, is not to constitute a 'value-neutral' social science. Rather it is to practise a form of *criticism* (Foucault, 1988d). This is a form of criticism that seeks to make explicit the thought that, while often taking a material form, is largely tacit in the way in which we govern and are governed, and in the language, practices and techniques by which we do so. By making explicit the forms of rationality and thought that inhere in regimes of practices, by demonstrating the fragility of the ways in which we know ourselves and are asked to know ourselves, and the tissue of connections between how we know ourselves and how we govern and are governed, an analytics of government can remove the taken-for-granted character of these practices. The point of doing this is not to make the

GOVERNMENTALITY

transformation of these practices appear inevitable or easier, but to open the space in which to think about how it is possible to do things in a different fashion, to highlight the points at which resistance and contestation bring an urgency to their transformation, and even to demonstrate the degree to which that transformation may prove difficult.⁷

An analytics of government is thus a way of thinking about how we conduct ourselves and others, and how we think about ourselves and others when we are doing this. It is thus an attempt to gain clarity about the conditions under which we think and act in the present. While this attempt to become clear about how we think and act upon ourselves and others does not necessarily stem from any particular set of values or principles it does, as Max Weber suggested, stand in the service of 'moral forces' (pp. 152).⁸ This is to say that, by making clear what is at stake when we try to govern in a particular way and employ certain ways of thinking and acting, an analytics of government allows us to accept a sense of responsibility for the consequences and effects of thinking and acting in certain ways. One of the things that such an analytics allows us to do is raise what Weber calls 'inconvenient facts' (p. 147). Such facts force us to consider the ramifications of our actions and commitments and point to the disjuncture between the self-representation of particular programmes and their strategic effects. Thus, to use an example we expand upon in Chapter 3, by noting that notions of 'empowerment' are capable of being used by very different political stances and are themselves imbricated in definite sets of power relations, we produce a certain discomfort for the advocates of such notions of all political persuasions, particularly those who imagine themselves to be standing outside relations of power. Similarly, a consideration of how the self-governing capacities of the governed are a key feature of contemporary liberal rule problematizes the radical view of emancipation as the liberation of the agency of those who are oppressed.

Serving moral forces in Weber's sense increases our sense of responsibility about techniques, practices and rationalities of government and self-government. It thus enhances our capacities for governing the way in which we attempt to govern ourselves and others. In this sense, the moral forces for which an analytics of government might work are those that favour the possibilities of the enhancement of self-government or, to put it negatively, those that seek to diminish *specific* 'states of domination'. Here the problem is not of taking a principled stance against all forms of domination, but of examining the points at which regimes of government meet forms of resistance and counter-conducts that reveal and embody possibilities for doing things otherwise. There is no single standard for deciding whether a form of power or state of domination is contingent or necessary. Such evaluations are made by various actors in the course of contestation and resistance to regimes of government as acts of the exercise of capacities for

BASIC CONCEPTS AND THEMES

self-determination. All an analytics of government can do is to analyse the rationalities of resistance and the programmes to which they give rise and to make clear what is at stake and what are the consequences of thinking and acting in such a way.

This is what I take Foucault to mean when he speaks of the 'stakes' of this type of analysis in 'What Is Enlightenment?' (1986b: 47–8). The stakes of an analytics of government concern the question of how governmental practices, including practices of self-government, form and increase the capabilities and autonomy of individuals and collectives and how they also lead to what he calls an 'intensification of power relations'. By becoming clear on how regimes of practices operate, we become clear on how forms of domination, relations of power and kinds of freedom and autonomy are linked, how such regimes are contested and resisted, and thus how it might be possible to do things differently. The enhanced capacity for reflecting on how we govern others and ourselves makes it possible to adopt an experimental attitude where we can test the limits of our governmental rationalities, the forms of power and domination they involve, and thus investigate how we might think in different ways about the action on the actions of self and others. An analytics of government might thus serve moral forces in that it makes it possible for us to consider how we have come to conduct ourselves and others, and hence the possibility of thinking and acting in new ways. Some of these ways might thus concern how particular forms of the relation between liberty and domination are being transformed. An analytics of government is thus in the service not of a pure freedom beyond government, or even of a general stance against domination (despite some of Foucault's comments), but of those 'moral forces' that enhance our capacities for self-government by being able to understand how it is that we govern ourselves and others. It thus enhances human capacity for the reflective practice of liberty, and the acts of self-determination this makes possible, without prescribing how that liberty should be exercised.

An analytics of government removes the 'naturalness' and 'taken-for-granted' character of how things are done. In so doing, it renders practices of government problematic and shows that things might be different from the way they are. Rather than prescribing a general stance against forms of domination (such as would take the form of the injunction to 'resist all domination' or 'minimize all domination') it allows us to reveal domination as a contingent, historical product, and hence to be questioned. It offers no general prescription of what the result of such questioning might be. In this sense there is a normative character of the project of an analytics of government. The normative character is one of 'exemplary criticism', after David Owen (1995), rather than foundational critique and prescription. This means that an analytics of government reveals a commitment to self-rule by practising a type of criticism that demonstrates the contingency of regimes of

GOVERNMENTALITY

practices and government, identifies states of domination within such regimes, and allows us to experience a state of domination as a state of domination. It does not tell us how we should practise our freedom.

The final point to mention here is that there is another side to this ethos of an analytics of government. It is that all political projects, including and perhaps especially those that endeavour to undertake a radical critique of forms of government, contain apparent and not so apparent dangers. Another sense in which an analytics of government could serve 'moral forces' is to make us permanently aware of the dangers that shadow the desire to augment, improve and fulfil our lives and those of others by governmental rationalities, practices and technologies. This is the point at which the next chapter on the 'ethos' of genealogy begins.

Notes

1. Among the former stand Norbert Elias (1978, 1982), Karl Polanyi (1957), Emile Durkheim (1992), Marcel Mauss (1978) and Max Weber (1927, 1968, 1972, 1985); among the latter, Pierre Hadot (1995), Paul Veyne (1987, 1990), Peter Brown (1987, 1992), Gerhard Oestreich (1982) and Quentin Skinner (1989).
2. The term 'mentalities of government' first appears in the governmentality literature in the seminal work of Nikolas Rose and Peter Miller (1992; also Miller and Rose, 1990; Rose, 1993). In this passage I have sought to give a conceptually clear rendition of the term and hence its brief comparison with the *Annales* school and early sociology. The term does not appear in the work of Foucault or in Gordon's key introduction (Gordon, 1991). Michel Sennelart (2007: 399–400, n. 126) has pointed out that governmentality does not result from a contraction of 'government' and 'mentality' and that it holds the same relation to 'governmental' as 'spatiality' does to 'spatial' and 'musicality' to 'musical'. I have maintained the use of the term 'mentalities of government' in the current edition because I view it as a part of the development of governmentality as a field of study. On the role of imagery, myth and symbolism in constituting governable domains including the state, see Neocleous (2003), land and sea (Connery, 2001), and world order (Dean, 2006b).
3. In saying government or governmentality 'seeks to reinscribe and record' discipline and sovereignty as I do here, the emphasis is on the provisional and incomplete nature of this. We would need to stress the word 'seeks'. I have elsewhere argued that it is a mistake to reduce the entire domain of power relations to those of governmentality and that many regimes of practices evince sovereign and bio-political dimensions intertwined with government as 'the conduct of conduct' (Dean, 2002b).
4. From an immense literature on the historical sociology of the state, see Tilly (1975), Poggi (1978), Skocpol (1979), Giddens (1985), Corrigan and Sayer (1985) and Mann (1988).
5. Foucault's view of the overvaluation of the notion of the state in modern politics finds confirmation in Skinner's (1989) survey of the etymology and use of the term in various types of early modern political theory. Skinner argues that the only kind of political theory to enunciate a conception of the state as an entity separate from both the rulers and the ruled, and standing behind the institutions of civil government, was that which was concerned to defend the emergent absolutist form of monarchy. Among these writers are Suarez, Bodin and, of course, Hobbes.

BASIC CONCEPTS AND THEMES

6. The following argument draws upon the cogent criticism of such formulations by Foucault as found in Hindess (1996: 152-6).
7. I have distinguished between conventional accounts of critique and notions of criticism elsewhere (Dean, 1994a: 117-19). I am on this point completely in agreement with the view that 'the need for a practice of critique as a troubling of truth regimes remains' (O'Malley et al, 1997: 507). On the ethos of criticism see Foucault (1988d).
8. The following discussion owes much to David Owen. My thinking draws here upon several of his important papers (1995, 1996, 1999) and on Foucault's discussion of critique (1996).