

## **Biopower and Technology: Foucault and Heidegger's Way of Thinking**

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Despite Foucault's claim in his final interview that his 'whole philosophical development' was determined by his reading of Heidegger, to date little has been published exploring the relationship between these thinkers.<sup>1</sup> Undoubtedly, the primary reason for this silence is the seeming impossibility of reconciling Foucault and Heidegger's work. Indeed, in key respects, we could hardly imagine two more different philosophers. Heidegger seeks to recover a primordial sense of being that he believes has been lost through the history of the West. Foucault pursues an entirely contrary trajectory, calling into question both the primordial status of forms of thought and experience, and the transcendental closure of philosophical-historical narratives. Heidegger's work is focused on a single question (the question of being), developing a single way into this question. Foucault's work bears out a plethora of questions, methods, and theoretical tools, all predominantly determined by the exigencies of the varying problems at hand. These differences, among others, would strongly suggest that a broad reconciliation of Foucault and Heidegger's work is out of the question. Any attempt to articulate the relationship between these thinkers must proceed on the basis of specific points of correspondence, taking its lead from shared themes and concerns.

The themes and concerns that define the argument of the present work derive from Heidegger and Foucault's respective interpretations of the relationship between technology and power in the contemporary age. Heidegger and Foucault share the view that individuals in modern society are to some extent determined by technological structures pervading that society. Both develop the idea that the basic character of these structures is to objectify and order the forces of life. Both argue that the view of human beings as a kind of manipulable resource is essential to the technological management of society, and both suggest that liberation from this state of affairs requires a radical renegotiation of the nature of human being as presently construed. Given these parallels, it is interesting to consider how far we might co-ordinate Foucault and Heidegger's accounts. To what extent does Foucault's critique of modern biopower recapitulate Heidegger's critique of modern technology?

To clearly define the issues at stake in this question, the argument of this paper will focus on what I take to be the two, pivotal moments in these respective critiques: the discussion of ‘biopolitical government’ and ‘technological enframing’. Biopolitical government is a form of strategic rationality that Foucault argues is essential to the processes of modern, state-management. Technological enframing is a ‘way of revealing’, or mode of world-disclosure, that Heidegger argues defines the *ethos*, or way of being, that characterizes the modern age. In the first three sections of this paper, I will establish a set of continuities in the inner experience—or ‘interiority’—of these forms of life. These continuities go some way to substantiating the relationship between biopolitical government and technological enframing. Yet, by themselves, they do nothing to determine the extent of the relationship between the critiques of biopower and technology. In pursuit of such a determination, the fourth and final section will mobilize these inner continuities to argue that in these critiques, Heidegger and Foucault deploy a *shared way of thinking*. This way of thinking comprises a movement from the interiority to the exteriority of biopolitical government and technological enframing respectively, and culminates in a radical transformation of the inner intelligibility of these modes of existence.

Grasping how a Heideggerian way of thinking is implicit in Foucault’s critique of biopower gives us an insight into what Foucault means when he claims he ‘thinks with’ Heidegger.<sup>2</sup> Foucault thinks with Heidegger to the extent that he recapitulates the basic form of Heidegger’s philosophical practice. Obviously, this makes Foucault and Heidegger philosophical compatriots of some sort. Yet, it would be a mistake to assume that Foucault is thereby a ‘Heideggerian’. In his appropriation of Heidegger’s philosophical practice, Foucault transforms Heidegger’s way of thinking in fundamental respects. I will argue that in the question of Foucault’s appropriation and deformation of Heidegger’s way of thinking, it is possible to discern the fundamental point of proximity and difference between them that permits us to answer the question: to what extent does the critique of biopower recapitulate the critique of technology?

### **The Inner Life of Technological Enframing**

In the opening lines of “The Question Concerning Technology,” Heidegger offers an insight into the nature of his critique. This insight concerns the ‘way-like’ character of his questioning and thinking. Heidegger writes:

In what follows we shall be *questioning* concerning technology. Questioning builds a way...The way is a way of thinking. All ways of thinking, more or less perceptibly, lead through language in a manner that is extraordinary. We shall be questioning concerning technology, and in doing so we should like to prepare a free relationship to it.<sup>3</sup>

It is important that we grasp the proposition being made here. To properly appreciate this work, Heidegger is saying, we must first of all attend to the *path* of the discussion. Before we ‘fix our attention on isolated sentences and topics’, we need to attend to the shifts, transformations, and displacements of the argument as it proceeds from question to response, premise to conclusion—in short, the way of thinking that is forged by Heidegger’s discourse as it proceeds through language. This way leads from the interiority of technological enframing to an experience of the ‘essence of technology’.<sup>4</sup> We need to experience this essence, says Heidegger, if we are to “experience the technological within its own bounds,”<sup>5</sup> and thus establish a free relationship towards it.

My underlying aim in the first two sections of this paper is to elaborate the way-like character of Heidegger’s critique of technology. We will begin with an analysis of the inner life—the interiority—of technological enframing. We then follow Heidegger’s path of thinking as it proceeds towards an experience of the essence of this interiority.

There are two, key aspects to the inner life of technological enframing. First, there is a relationship between technological enframing and the objectification of the real. According to Heidegger, we see the first signs of the emergence of this way of being in the mid-seventeenth century, when the real as such was first defined as something essentially amenable to the representation of human beings. With Descartes, Heidegger argues, ‘[w]hat is, in its entirety, is...taken in such a way that it first is in being and only is in being to the extent that it is set up by man, who represents and sets forth’.<sup>6</sup> We must note that this does not mean that in modernity the world becomes ‘subjective’. Modernity, Heidegger claims, not only ushers in a new ‘subjectivism’, but also an unprecedented ‘objectivism’. This subjectivism and objectivism condition one another in a reciprocal interplay.<sup>7</sup> In order to posit something as a determinate object, the modern subject of representation must first project a ‘groundplan’ of what is to count as an element within the governing sphere of objectivity.<sup>8</sup> Precisely how a thing is understood in its objectivity will depend on the groundplan thus projected.<sup>9</sup> But for there to be a subject at all, the subject of representation must also be ‘set up’ relative to a sphere of objectivity. The man of modernity not only re-presents the world *as picture*—that is to say, as an objective realm set out before him—he simultaneously “‘gets into the picture’...puts himself into the scene, i.e., into the open sphere of that which is generally and publicly represented.”<sup>10</sup>

The second aspect of the inner life of technological enframing concerns the relationship between the objectification of the real and the drive for power. To clarify this relationship, let us turn to Heidegger’s confrontation with Nietzsche and the doctrine of will to power. According to Heidegger, Nietzsche’s philosophical accomplishment was to correctly grasp the fundamental interpretation of being that was to dominate the century to come. This is the thought of will to power. Nietzsche argues that the ‘apparent world’ of human existence is ordered, in each case, “according to the viewpoint of utility in regard to the preservation and enhancement of the power of a certain species of animal.”<sup>11</sup> Will to power is the principle of this ontological ordering and selection. As Heidegger reads Nietzsche, ‘power’ in this argument is not “the goal towards which the will tends, as to

something outside it.”<sup>12</sup> Neither is power something achieved in securing the conditions of preservation-enhancement. In its essence, power names that kind of willing that wills itself *as* will to power.<sup>13</sup> Power is a double affirmation of the conditions of an entity’s heightened existence: an affirmation of the conditions of the enhancement and securement of life, together with an affirmation of that affirmation. Heidegger calls this double affirmation: will-to-will. He asserts that “[t]he basic form of appearance in which the will-to-will arranges and calculates itself...can be briefly called “technology”.”<sup>14</sup>

What is the relationship between will-to-will and the objectification of the real? Heidegger argues that in order to establish and maintain its conditions of enhancement of power, the will-to-will requires a ‘guarantee of stability’ regarding those conditions on the basis of which it posits and projects towards its goals. This guarantee of stability, Heidegger claims, “is just as essential for “life” as “increase” and “escalation”.”<sup>15</sup> Technological man seeks to accomplish this stability “through a complete ordering of all beings, in the sense of a systematic securing of stockpiles, by means of which [its] establishment in the stability of certainty is to be completed.”<sup>16</sup> Thus the world is ceaselessly objectified, qualified, quantified, and systematized—in essence, reduced to the level of stock, or resource (*Bestand*). What cannot be objectified cannot be put to use, and what cannot be put to use is useless, and thus redundant. The human being is no exception. In the unconditional demand for objectification attendant on technological enframing,

man himself and every aspect of human culture is transformed into a stockpile which, psychologically reckoned, is incorporated into the working process of the will-to-will...[T]he fact that...mankind has become a “human resource,” ranked behind natural resources and raw materials...is grounded in the unconditioned character of objectification itself, which must bring every stockpile, no matter what its nature, into its own possession and must secure this possession.<sup>17</sup>

## Metaphysics and Technology

This completes our analysis of the inner life of technological enframing. Our next task is to reconstruct how the way of thinking built into Heidegger’s critique works to effect a shift in perspective from this interiority to an experience of the essence of technology. To this end, we now turn to the question of the role of metaphysics in Heidegger’s history of being, and the inner relationship between metaphysics and technology.

What is metaphysics? For Heidegger, metaphysics is a way of thinking that seeks to define the meaning of beings (things that are) *as* beings, without asking after the meaning of *being* as such. In this way, metaphysical thought overlooks the being of thinking, and ultimately, being itself: “Being itself remains unthought in metaphysics, not just incidentally, but in accord with metaphysics own inquiry.”<sup>18</sup> In his lectures on

Nietzsche, Heidegger argues that the advent of modern technology is tied to the ‘end of metaphysics’. The ‘end of metaphysics’ means “the historical moment in which *the essential* possibilities of metaphysics are exhausted.”<sup>19</sup> Heidegger later amends this claim, arguing that technology is ‘completed metaphysics’.<sup>20</sup> So to make sense of this idea, let us review Heidegger’s history of metaphysics, and consider its implications for his interpretation of the contemporary age.

The history of metaphysics is the history of the ‘first beginning’<sup>21</sup>—the moment of inception of the history of the West as currently understood. Heidegger locates this moment of inception in preSocratic Greece. According to Heidegger, the preSocratics dwelt in a world illuminated by the ‘fire from the heavens’. By virtue of a certain simplicity of vision, they were enabled to grasp the very *truth* of being—that being as such is a primordial *unconcealment*, a revealing premised upon a more originary concealing. Heidegger claims that this insight is reflected in the Greek word for truth: *aletheia*. As a privative of ‘*lethé*’, *aletheia* connotes not only the unconcealedness of being, but the concealment which necessarily resides within it.<sup>22</sup>

Understood with respect to its truth, being may be described as a self-concealing revealing. To express this idea, Heidegger employs the metaphor of a ‘clearing’ (*Lichtung*). Just as the illuminated space of a forest clearing presupposes an exterior realm of shadow, the open place—or ‘world’—unconcealed in the clearing of being presupposes the concealed exteriority of being as such. Heidegger argues that this exteriority was present for the Greeks in a way that is almost inconceivable today, informing every aspect of ancient, cultural life. The onset of Platonic metaphysics, however, marked the end of this golden age. Heidegger argues that Platonic thought inaugurated a metaphysical tradition that has since dominated the history of the West, underpinning the two-and-a-half-thousand-year process of the forgetting of being (*Seinsvergessenheit*). It is this tradition that prepared the ground for modern, technological enframing.

With the establishment of the Platonic tradition in metaphysics, Western thought renounced the mystery of the clearing for an exclusive focus on what was revealed within it. As this way of thinking acquired an increasing normativity for the West, the exteriority of being faded into a vague and oppressive nothingness. It is not necessary for us to go into details concerning the various developments in the history of metaphysics between antiquity and the present day. Let us simply note that the history of metaphysics arrives at its completion when metaphysical thought is finally instantiated in object-oriented, technical relations. By the time it unfolds into modernity, metaphysics has become a way of thinking addressed solely to *objects* present to a *subject*, with no thought given to the fundamental-ontological conditions of the subject-object relationship itself. In instantiating this way of thinking within an extant system of social-instrumental practices and institutions, modernity brings the essential possibilities of Platonic metaphysics to fruition, completing the process of the forgetting of being as such.

For Heidegger, technological enframing is synonymous with nihilism—the fundamental oblivion of the transcendental exteriority of the clearing. Heidegger’s critique of technology, however, puts us on the way to a recovery of this exteriority. Let

us note that in conceiving technological enframing *as* completed metaphysics, we are presented with a distinctly different perspective on the matter at hand. We are no longer thinking enframing simply from the interior perspective, but in terms of the destinal history and truth of being. From this perspective, technological enframing is revealed as a way of being that simultaneously conceals itself *as* a way of being. To be sure, as we have seen in the previous section, the basic character of this way of being is intelligible enough. Yet, while the life of technological enframing bears out a definite interpretation of the meaning of being, it simultaneously conceals the *truth* of being: that the meaning of being is always something granted or ‘destined’ by forces which remain unthought in the event of this disclosure. That which remains unthought in the age of technological enframing is the exteriority of the clearing. Technology is the pure expression of the *oblivion* of the clearing; the oblivion of the truth of being, and with this, Heidegger argues, the oblivion of the essence of man.<sup>23</sup>

Heidegger claims that in the age of completed metaphysics, the very task of thinking is to prepare the way for a turn (*Kehre*) in thinking, such that we are opened to self-withholding governance of the clearing. And this is precisely what the Heideggerian critique seeks to achieve. Inscribed within this critique we have a movement of thought (i) *from* the interiority of technological enframing, (ii) *to* the exteriority of this way of being (the destinal clearing of being, withdrawn into oblivion), (iii) *and then back again*, reconceiving technological enframing in the process as something ‘given’ by these exterior conditions. In turning toward the exteriority of technological enframing, we undergo an originary encounter with the *truth* of being: that the world-historical disclosure of being is *always* a withdrawn hiddenness; that being as such is a self-concealing revealing. As we give ourselves over to this truth, our existential relationship to technological enframing is decisively transformed. “[W]hen we consider the essence of technology, then we experience Enframing as a destining of revealing...[and] find ourselves unexpectedly taken into a freeing claim.”<sup>24</sup> Though we are not thereby ushered into a new, post-technological epoch, the compulsion to reveal the real as objectified resource is weakened as we are opened to the mystery of the clearing. Technology is not overcome (*überwunden*), but ‘gotten over’ (*verwunden*), much in the same way, Heidegger suggests, as one gets over grief.<sup>25</sup>

## **Strategies of Biopolitical Government**

Let us now turn to Foucault. I want to argue for parallels between Heidegger’s critique of technological enframing and Foucault’s critique of biopolitical government. ‘Government’, as Foucault understands it, refers to “the way in which the conduct of individuals or of groups might be directed—the government of children, of souls, of communities, of families, of the sick...To govern, in this sense, is to structure the possible

field of action of others.”<sup>26</sup> Biopolitical government refers more specifically to a strategical rationality for the management of population, understood as a vital resource.<sup>27</sup> Through the deployment of various normalizing technologies of power, biopolitical government seeks to organize population so as to maximize its value as resource.

Foucault’s genealogy of biopolitical government begins in sixteenth century Europe, in the time of the breakdown of feudal institutions and the formation of what was to become the modern, administrative state. Here, Foucault identifies a decisive shift in the problem of government. The issues at stake are crystallized in the controversy surrounding Machiavelli’s *The Prince*. According to Foucault, in seeking to advise the prince on how to keep his principality, Machiavelli was addressing a problem that had dominated political thought since feudal times—namely, how was the sovereign to secure his legitimate power over his domain? Yet, at the time of publication of *The Prince*, a growing number of political thinkers were already seeking to replace this problematic with another—a problematic based about the question: how is one to govern?<sup>28</sup> Foucault ties this shift in problematic to the end of the age of empire. In the sixteenth century, he argues, a “new historical perception takes form; it is no longer polarized around the end of time and the consolidation of all the particular sovereignties into the empire of the last days; it is open to an indefinite time in which the states have to struggle against one another to ensure their own survival.”<sup>29</sup> Confronted with the exigency of competition between states, the problem of government was refocused about the question of how to reinforce the state from within. Increasingly, government was to become a matter of resource management: a “question of how to introduce economy...into the management of the state.”<sup>30</sup>

The ideas of the early-modern political theorists were not simply implemented through the legislation of some progressive sovereign. Rather, these ideas were taken-up and transformed in the process of a more general development, which occurred throughout the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries. This is the formation of a new kind of power over life. Whereas previously power had been a matter of ‘impeding [forces], making them submit, or destroying them’, since the seventeenth century, Foucault argues, power has worked “to incite, reinforce, control, monitor, optimize, and organize the forces under it; a power bent on generating forces, making them grow, and ordering them...”<sup>31</sup> This new mode of setting-upon and organizing the forces of life is what Foucault calls *biopower*. Biopower seeks to bring ‘life and its mechanisms into the realm of explicit calculations’<sup>32</sup>—to objectify the forces of life, to quantify them, measure them, and on the basis of this knowledge, to set them into productive coordination.

Foucault begins to develop this argument in detail in *Discipline and Punish*.<sup>33</sup> He argues that from the seventeenth century onwards, there was a veritable explosion in productive technologies of power. These new technologies were focused on ‘the body as object and target of power’,<sup>34</sup> Through a ‘multiplicity of often minor processes’, in schools, hospitals, and military organisations,<sup>35</sup> an ‘art of the human body’ was born—a whole anatomo-politics,

directed not only at the growth of....skills, nor at the intensification of...subjection, but at the formation of a relation in the mechanism itself that makes it more obedient as it becomes more useful, and conversely... The human body was entering a machinery of power that explores it, breaks it down and rearranges it. A 'political anatomy', which was also a 'mechanics of power', was being born; it defined how one may have a hold over others' bodies, not only so that they may do what one wishes, but so that they may operate as one wishes, with the techniques, the speed and the efficiency that one determines.<sup>36</sup>

Disciplinary power permits 'a "knowledge" (*savoir*) of the body that is not exactly the science of its functioning, and a mastery of its forces that is more than the ability to conquer them: this knowledge and this mastery constitute what might be called the 'political technology of the body'.<sup>37</sup> Heideggerian resonances aside, this argument has important implications for the human sciences. According to Foucault, the political technology of the body developed in the seventeenth century "made the human sciences historically possible."<sup>38</sup> On the one hand, Foucault argues that the human sciences "have their technical matrix in the petty, malicious minutiae of the disciplines and their investigations."<sup>39</sup> On the other hand, the very object of human-scientific inquiry—'man'—is held to be a product of disciplinary power: Knowable man (soul, individuality, consciousness, conduct, whatever it is called) is the object-effect of this analytical investment, of this domination-observation.<sup>40</sup>

In terms of the genealogy of biopolitical government, the emergence of disciplinary power was only one part of a double development. The second pole of development—'formed somewhat later' than the first<sup>41</sup>—arose on the basis of the objectification of human beings attendant on disciplinary power. Biopolitical government requires this process of objectification, this institutional generation of bodies as manipulable objects. It is only on the basis of the objectification of human beings on the level of their biological traits that government can assume the task of the administration of life. In the eighteenth century, the science of statistics—which had previously functioned within a monarchical administrative apparatus concerned primarily with the management of state resources<sup>42</sup>—was turned to the analysis of the state population. With the application of statistical techniques to the government of populations, a new form of political management came into being: one no longer focussed upon the body of the individual, but:

on the species body,...propagation, births and mortality, the level of health, life-expectancy and longevity, with all the conditions that can cause these to vary. Their supervision was effected through an entire series of interventions and *regulatory controls: a bio-politics of the population.*<sup>43</sup>

At the beginning of the nineteenth century, power takes life in charge, covering "the entire surface that stretched...from the body to the population, by a double play of technologies of discipline on the one hand, and technologies of regulation on the

other.”<sup>44</sup> We are henceforth in the realm of biopolitical government. Presiding over processes of birth, death, health, and illness, biopolitical government surveys the global mass in the manner of physician, deploying forms of regulation as required, measures to inculcate positive orientation and productive coordination, institutions to maintain standards of sanitation, public education, and welfare, techniques to activate the indolent, strategies to control forms of dissent—deploying, in short, a broad array of techniques of ‘bio-regulation’.<sup>45</sup> These have the end of establishing ‘economy’ at the level of population-resource. The word ‘economy’, Foucault claims, referred in the sixteenth century to “the correct manner of managing individuals, goods and wealth within the family (which a good father is expected to do in relation to his wife, children, and servants) and of making the family fortunes prosper.”<sup>46</sup> By the nineteenth century, it had come to designate a level of reality proper to the management of states—a complex composed of resources of various kinds, structured not only through a set of relations established between individuals and things (wealth, territory, intellectual and physical resources), but also through those relations that individuals establish with one another, and the relations they establish with themselves.

### **Between Biopower and Technology**

It is possible to discern at least three lines of continuity between biopolitical government and technological enframing. First, we have a *substantive* continuity. Both biopower and technology address reality understood as a field of resource. In this respect, the difference between Foucault and Heidegger’s accounts is merely a matter of scope. Whereas the viewpoint of technological enframing encompasses reality as such, biopolitical government is concerned with a limited field of reality-resource: the state population. Second, we have an *instrumental* continuity. In both these critiques, the process of objectification-commodification of the real is thoroughly mediated by technology, being inseparable from the deployment of technical concepts, structures, practices, and procedures, and governed by an overarching perspective on the world that would situate all forms of life within a domain of technical manipulation. Third, we have a *strategical* continuity. Both biopower and technology pursue the overall management of life. Reducing the forces of nature to raw material, both seek to set this material in order—implementing mechanisms to establish regular patterns of cause and effect, checks and balances to ensure the flow of energies into productive, self-enhancing systems, thus to achieve a heightened measure of mastery and control over this object-domain.

These parallels are certainly intriguing from a scholarly perspective. But what do they tell us about the relationship between Foucault and Heidegger? Do these continuities give us an answer to the question posed at the beginning: to what extent

does the critique of biopower recapitulate the critique of technology? Not at all. In fact, all that we have achieved thus far is to *problematize* the relationship between technology and biopower. The question remains how we might advance beyond these simple continuities. Is it possible to determine a more profound relationship between the critiques of biopower and technology? If so, how so?

Hubert Dreyfus indicates one way to proceed. In “Being and Power: Heidegger and Foucault,” Dreyfus argues that “Foucault’s notion of power denotes the social aspect of...the [Heideggerian] clearing.”<sup>47</sup> By folding Foucault into Heidegger in this way, Dreyfus lends ontological substance to the claim that Heidegger and Foucault share “a common critique of techno-/bio-power.”<sup>48</sup> On Dreyfus’ interpretation, the difference between these lines of critique is merely a matter of perspective. Heidegger’s history of being, Dreyfus argues, gives us a perspective: “from which to understand how in the modern world, *things* have been turned into *objects*. Foucault transforms Heidegger’s focus on *things* to a focus on *selves* and how they became *subjects*.”<sup>49</sup> In “Holism and Hermeneutics,” Dreyfus pushes this interpretation even further, arguing that, like Heidegger, Foucault seeks to recover the ‘non-technological micro-practices’ underwriting the holistic apperception of ancient times. Dreyfus’ unrepentantly syncretistic reading presents Heidegger and Foucault as united in the attempt to show that “an alternative [nonobjectifying and nonsubjectifying] understanding of human beings once existed and still continues to exist, though drowned out by our everyday busy concerns.”<sup>50</sup>

Dreyfus’ reading is provocative, but ultimately untenable. For a start, while Foucault claims that the aim of his critique is “to participate in the difficult displacement of forms of sensibility,”<sup>51</sup> there is nothing in his work to suggest that he seeks to recover the ‘fire from the heavens’ that Heidegger believes illuminated the world of ancient Greece. As Charles E. Scott notes, Foucault “has little interest in reshaping or denouncing metaphysics, or in countermanding metaphysical thinking.”<sup>52</sup> Furthermore, unlike Heidegger’s critique of modernity, Foucault’s critique of the present is particularistic. As Jana Sawicki points out, rather than attempt to provide a general account of the ‘essence’ of modern technology, Foucault ‘simply identifies particular practices in the present...and traces their lines of descent in a Nietzschean fashion’. Sawicki argues (and I would agree): “Such questioning is not tantamount to prescribing an ontology, either anti-humanist or humanist.”<sup>53</sup>

If Foucault’s critique of biopolitical government is not premised on a Heideggerian ontology, but is merely a Nietzschean response to a particular, problematic aspect of the present, then it is hard to see how there could be any relationship between Foucault and Heidegger’s lines of critique beyond the parallels that we have already identified in the objects under analysis. Then again, we may be looking for the *wrong sort* of relationship. The kind of relationship that Dreyfus tries to draw between Heidegger and Foucault is a relationship on the level of theory. As I argue above, on the level of theory, Heidegger and Foucault have almost nothing to say to one another. Having conceded this point, are we forced to say that there is no relationship at all between the critiques

of biopower and technology? Certainly not. I want to argue that there *is* a relationship between these lines of critique—a relationship that goes to the very heart of these critiques, yet which is indiscernible insofar as we continue to remain outside of the critical process itself. This relationship has to do with the *inner experience* of these lines of critique. The key to grasping this relationship is thus to learn to experience the critiques from the inside. When we experience them from the inside, we encounter their *parallel critical effect*. This effect, I maintain, is an expression of the basic continuity underlying these lines of critique—the expression of a shared way of thinking.

We have already noted the critical effect in question in our discussion of Heidegger's critique of technological enframing. Heidegger's way of thinking works to turn our attention from the inner life that characterizes technological enframing towards the conditions which establish this way of being *in its being*. As we shall see, there is an almost identical process at work within Foucault's critique of biopolitical government. Like the critique of technological enframing, the critique of biopolitical government works to promote a radical reversal in the experience of this form of life: a shift in perspective from the interiority to the exteriority of a contemporary mode of existence, transforming our experience of this mode of existence entirely.

To understand Foucault's critique of biopolitical government along the lines of a Heideggerian way of thinking, we first need to sharpen-up our conception of the interiority that we have associated with it. We have previously defined this interiority in its substantive, instrumental, and strategical dimensions. Let us now incorporate into this conception the specific forms of knowledge (*connaissance*) that Foucault has associated with biopolitical government.<sup>54</sup> Foucault's critique has brought to light three such forms of knowledge. First, biopolitical government involves a knowledge of the principles of state management—in particular, the exigency of organizing population into a productive economy. Second, biopolitical government involves a knowledge of strategies for mobilizing and manipulating bodies. Third, biopolitical government involves a statistical knowledge of the population on the level of its biological existence.

How does Foucault's critique direct us to the exteriority of this realm of understanding? To answer this question, we need only consider the kind of *savoir*—or 'deep knowledge'—that is associated with biopolitical government. The *savoir* of biopolitical government consists in a relationship toward three forms of exteriority. Corresponding to knowledge of the principles of state management, we have the exteriority of *competition between states*. Biopolitical government is fundamentally concerned with the problem of the competition between states, and the question of how the state might better position itself with respect to others. Corresponding to knowledge of the political efficacy of ordering and organizing bodies, we have the exteriority of *extant technologies of power*. Finally, corresponding to statistical knowledge of the population on the level of its biological existence, we have the exteriority of *the state biomedical apparatus (dispositif)*, with its interminable surveillance and control of the health and well-being of populations.<sup>55</sup>

This brings us to a point at which we can begin to delimit the extent of the relationship

between the critique of biopower and the critique of technology. In terms of their concrete point of departure—the kind of interiority with which they each begin—these lines of critique are almost indistinguishable. Both lines of critique refer us to the exteriority of this inner life—the conditions which establish this way of being in its being. In the turn toward exteriority, the critiques maintain a formal continuity. As the glance toward exteriority acquires the familiarity of a practice, both lines of critique bring us to the point at which our conception of the mode of existence in question is suddenly reversed, and we grasp this way of being—in its being—as a function of external forms and forces. In formal terms, to this point the critique of biopower and the critique of technology are more or less identical.

But then they come apart. For the experience of the turn in thinking in Heidegger and Foucault's work is radically different. This difference is related to the form of exteriority that we encounter in these lines of critique. As we have seen, Heidegger's way of thinking leads us to confront a *transcendental* exteriority. Accordingly, the Heideggerian turn in thinking serves to clarify and consolidate our sense of being: it brings us back to where we are, in truth, already. Foucault's critique, on the other hand, directs us to the *historical* exteriority of biopolitical government—the envolving network of struggles, practices, and institutional assemblages which surrounds and sustains this stratagem of power. In the limit-experience of biopolitical government, we find that 'being' is no longer a possibility. Whereas the Heideggerian turn of thinking restores us to our appointed place within a transcendental economy, the Foucaultian turn relegates us into a non-place, a site of pure dispersion. In a moment of radical instability, the interiority of this mode of existence is shattered and dispersed. Far from an attempt to recover the essence of man, Foucault's critique is a project of desubjectivation.<sup>56</sup>

In the experience of the displacement of thought from its standard locus within the subject into the exteriority of its historical conditions, we discern the precise point at which Foucault breaks with Heidegger's way of thinking. This is also the point at which the critique of biopower and the critique of technology part ways. Let us consider this parting of ways in the context of the general parallels that we have noted in Foucault and Heidegger's interpretations of the present. As we have seen, both biopolitical government and technological enframing represent modes of existence that seek to mobilize and manage the forces of life for the sake of the enhancement of power. Reducing the real to raw material, both attempt to establish regulated economies of objectified resource. Such continuities strongly suggest that in his interpretation of the present, Foucault had Heidegger's reading of technological modernity in mind. Yet, the continuities themselves do not determine the extent to which Foucault's critique of biopower recapitulates Heidegger's critique of technology. I have argued in this paper that Foucault recapitulates Heidegger's critique to the extent that he uses Heidegger's way of thinking as an 'instrument of thought'.<sup>57</sup> Displacing this instrument from the world of Heideggerian concerns, and reinserting it within a Nietzschean realm of practices and struggles, Foucault turns Heidegger's way of thinking to a different end. Whereas Heidegger's critique of technology seeks to recover the experience of what is always already forgotten in

enframing, Foucault's critique of biopower pursues an experience in which the *biopolitical subject itself* is forgotten: the moment of desubjectivation. In this transformation of Heidegger's way of thinking we discern not only the essence of Foucault's relationship to Heidegger, but an essential aspect of Foucault's own philosophical practice, which we might describe as a way of questioning being freed from the transcendental theme.

## Notes

1. Foucault says more or less nothing publicly in his life about his intellectual debt to Heidegger. Then in his final interview: "Heidegger has always been for me the essential philosopher. I started by reading Hegel, then Marx, and I began to read Heidegger in 1951 or 1952; then in 1952 or 1953, I no longer remember, I read Nietzsche. I still have the notes I took while reading Heidegger—I have tons of them!—and they are far more important than the ones I took on Hegel or Marx. My whole philosophical development was determined by my reading of Heidegger. But I recognize that Nietzsche prevailed over him. I don't know Heidegger well enough: I practically don't know *Being and Time* nor the things recently published. My knowledge of Nietzsche is much greater. Nevertheless, these were my two fundamental experiences. I probably wouldn't have read Nietzsche if I hadn't read Heidegger. I tried to read Nietzsche in the fifties, but Nietzsche by himself said nothing to me. Whereas Nietzsche and Heidegger—that was the philosophical shock! But I've never written anything on Heidegger and only a very short article on Nietzsche. I think it's important to have a small number of authors with whom one thinks, with whom one works, but on whom one doesn't write. Perhaps someday I'll write about them, but at that point they will no longer be instruments of thought for me." Michel Foucault, "The Return of Morality," trans. Thomas Levin and Isabelle Lorenz, *Michel Foucault—Politics, Philosophy, Culture: Interviews and Other Writings 1977-1984*, ed. L.D. Kritzman (New York: Routledge, 1988) 250.
2. Foucault, "The Return of Morality" 250.
3. Martin Heidegger, "The Question Concerning Technology," trans. William Lovitt, *The Question Concerning Technology and Other Essays* (New York: Harper and Row, 1977) 3.
4. Heidegger, "The Question Concerning Technology" 3.
5. Heidegger, "The Question Concerning Technology" 3.
6. Martin Heidegger, "The Age of the World Picture," trans. William Lovitt, *The Question Concerning Technology and Other Essays* (New York: Harper and Row, 1977) 129-130.
7. Heidegger, "The Age of the World Picture" 128.
8. Heidegger, "The Age of the World Picture" 118.
9. Heidegger clarifies this point with reference to modern physics: "If physics takes shape explicitly...as something mathematical, this means that...something is stipulated in advance as what is already-known. That stipulating has to do with nothing less than the plan or projection of that which must henceforth...be nature: the self-contained system of motion of units of mass related spatiotemporally." Heidegger, "The Age of the World Picture" 118-119.
10. Heidegger, "The Age of the World Picture" 131-132.
11. Friedrich Nietzsche, *The Will to Power*, trans. Walter Kaufmann and R.J. Hollingdale (Vintage: New York, 1968) 305.
12. Martin Heidegger, *Nietzsche: Vol. III: The Will to Power as Knowledge and as Metaphysics*, trans. Joan Stambaugh, David Farrell Krell, and Frank A. Capuzzi (San Francisco: Harper and Row, 1991) 195.

13. Martin Heidegger, "The Word of Nietzsche: God is Dead," trans. William Lovitt, *The Question Concerning Technology and Other Essays* (New York: Harper and Row, 1977) 77-78.
14. Martin Heidegger, "Overcoming Metaphysics," *The End of Philosophy*, trans., ed. Joan Stambaugh (New York: Harper and Row, 1973) 93.
15. Heidegger, "Overcoming Metaphysics" 94.
16. Martin Heidegger, *Nietzsche: Vol. IV: Nihilism*, trans. Joan Stambaugh, David Farrell Krell, and Frank A. Capuzzi (San Francisco: Harper and Row, 1991) 234.
17. Heidegger, *Nietzsche: Vol. IV*, 241-242.
18. Martin Heidegger, *Nietzsche: Vol. II: The Eternal Recurrence of the Same*, trans. David Farrell Krell (San Francisco: Harper and Row, 1991) 207.
19. Heidegger, *Nietzsche: Vol. IV: Nihilism* 148.
20. "The name "technology"...coincides with the term "completed metaphysics"." Heidegger, "Overcoming Metaphysics" 93.
21. Martin Heidegger, *Contributions to Philosophy (From Enowning)*, trans. Parvis Emad and Kenneth Maly (Bloomington; Indiana UP, 1999) 123.
22. Heidegger argues: "Only what *aletheia* as clearing grants is experienced and thought, not what is as such. This remains concealed." Martin Heidegger, "The End of Philosophy and the Task of Thinking," trans. David Farrell Krell, *Basic Writings* (New York: HarperCollins, 1993) 71.
23. It is this last point that really worries Heidegger. 'As soon as what is unconcealed no longer concerns man even as object, but does so, rather, exclusively as standing reserve, and man in the midst of objectlessness is nothing but the orderer of the standing-reserve, then he comes to...the point where he himself will have to be taken as standing reserve.' Heidegger, "The Question Concerning Technology" 26-27.
24. Heidegger, "The Question Concerning Technology" 25-26.
25. Heidegger, "The Question Concerning Technology" 39.
26. Michel Foucault, "The Subject and Power," trans. Robert Hurley et al., *Essential Works: Volume III: Power*, ed. James. D. Faubion (New York: The New Press, 2000) 341.
27. Michel Foucault, "Security, Territory, and Population," trans. Robert Hurley et al., *Essential Works: Volume I: Ethics*, ed. Paul Rabinow (Harmondsworth: Penguin, 1997) 69.
28. Michel Foucault, "Governmentality," trans. Robert Hurley et al., *Essential Works: Volume III: Power* 205.
29. Foucault, "Security, Territory, and Population" 69.
30. Foucault, "Governmentality" 207.
31. Michel Foucault, *The History of Sexuality: Volume I*, trans. Robert Hurley (London: Penguin, 1981) 136.
32. Foucault, *The History of Sexuality: Volume I* 143.
33. Michel Foucault, *Discipline and Punish: The Birth of the Prison*, trans. Alan Sheridan (Harmondsworth: Penguin, 1991).
34. Foucault, *Discipline and Punish* 136.
35. Foucault, *Discipline and Punish* 138.
36. Foucault, *Discipline and Punish* 137-138.
37. Foucault, *Discipline and Punish* 26.
38. Foucault, *Discipline and Punish* 305. "One is no doubt right to pose the Aristotelian problem: is a science of the individual possible and legitimate? A great problem needs great solutions perhaps. But there is the small historical problem of the emergence, towards the end of the eighteenth century, of what might generally be termed the 'clinical' sciences; the problem of the entry of the individual (and no longer the species) into the field of knowledge; the problem of the entry of the individual description, of the cross-examination, of anamnesis, of the 'file' into the general functioning of scientific discourse. To this simple question of fact, one must no doubt give an answer lacking in 'nobility': one should look into these procedures of writing and registration, one should look into the mechanisms of examination, into the formation

of the mechanisms of discipline, and of a new type of power over bodies. Is this the birth of the sciences of man? It is probably to be found in these 'ignoble' archives, where the modern play of coercion over bodies, gestures and behaviour has its beginnings." Foucault, *Discipline and Punish* 191.

39. Foucault, *Discipline and Punish* 226.

40. Foucault, *Discipline and Punish* 305.

41. Foucault, *The History of Sexuality: Volume I* 139.

42. Foucault, "Governmentality" 215.

43. Foucault, *The History of Sexuality: Volume I* 139.

44. Michel Foucault, cited in Ann Laura Stoler, *Race and the Education of Desire: Foucault's History of Sexuality and the Colonial Order of Things* (Durham: Duke UP, 1995) 84.

45. Foucault, cited in Stoler *Race and the Education of Desire* 82.

46. Foucault, "Governmentality" 207.

47. Hubert Dreyfus, "Being and Power: Heidegger and Foucault," *International Journal of Philosophical Studies* Vol. 4 (1): 1.

48. Dreyfus, "Being and Power: Heidegger and Foucault" 11.

49. Dreyfus, "Being and Power: Heidegger and Foucault" 1-2.

50. Hubert Dreyfus, "Holism and Hermeneutics," *Review of Metaphysics* 34 (September 1980): 22-23.

51. Michel Foucault, "Questions of Method," trans. Robert Hurley et al., *Essential Works: Volume III: Power* 234.

52. Charles E. Scott, *The Language of Difference* (Atlantic Highlands: Humanities Press, 1987) 95.

53. Jana Sawicki, "Heidegger and Foucault: Escaping Technological Nihilism," *Philosophy and Social Criticism* 13 (1987): 168.

54. Foucault distinguishes *connaissance* from *savoir* (both of which translate into English as 'knowledge'). He claims: "By *connaissance* I mean the relation of the subject to the object and the formal rules that govern it. *Savoir* refers to the conditions that are necessary in a particular period for this or that type of object to be given to *connaissance* and for this or that enunciation to be formulated." Michel Foucault, *The Archaeology of Knowledge and The Discourse on Language*, trans. A. M. Sheridan Smith (New York: Pantheon, 1972) 15.

55. The apparatus is a 'system of relations' established between 'a thoroughly heterogeneous ensemble' of discursive and non-discursive practices, 'institutions, architectural forms, regulatory decisions, laws, administrative measures, scientific statements, philosophical, moral and philanthropic propositions.' Foucault notes that the apparatus has 'a dominant strategic function'—in this case, the analysis and management of population of the level of biological traits. Michel Foucault, "The Confession of the Flesh," trans. Colin Gordon, transcript ed. Alain Grosrichard, *Power/Knowledge: Selected Interviews and Other Writings 1972-1977*, ed. Colin Gordon (New York: Random House, 1980) 194-195.

56. Michel Foucault, "Interview with Michel Foucault," trans. Robert Hurley et al., *Essential Works: Volume III: Power* 241.

57. See Foucault, "The Return of Morality" 250.