

Abstract Book

**Authority & Political Technologies 2016:
Biopolitical Matters**

June 13th-14th 2016, University of Warwick

Social Theory Centre, Sociology, Law, IAS

Key Notes:

A0.23

Kathryn Yusoff (Queen Mary) 'Geopower: biopolitics and matter after life'

Didier Fassin (Princeton IAS) 'The Rise - and Fall? - of Carceral Society'

Claire Blencowe (Warwick) 'Ecological Attunement in a Theological Key: Adventures in Anti-Fascist Aesthetics'

Parallel Sessions Abstracts:

SESSION 1 Chair: Henrique Carvalho, University of Warwick

A0.23

Occupy public spaces and the making of the common: Students political action in São Paulo public schools

Marcelo Burgos Pimentel dos Santos, Federal University of Paraíba

Rosemary Segurado Catholic University of São Paulo

The article intends to analyze the political action carried out by students from São Paulo between November 2015 and January 2016, known as Occupy Schools. This movement is a political response to a law by the São Paulo

government which promoted the school reorganization "from top to bottom".

Many students opposing to the lack of space for their participation in the process occupied public schools, thus enlarging the debate and the number of actors

discussing public education. The paper analyzes the making of Occupy Schools by

the students by stressing the political practices put into practice by them and the transformation of the schools in authentic common spaces for the making of new

subjectivities, political practices, and resistance. Occupy Schools may be seen as

successful, as the government revoked the above mentioned law, and the

education secretary, who had refused to dialogue with the students, resigned.

Exhausted Futures: writing the post-industrial city

Julian Brigstocke, Cardiff University

This experimental photo essay responds to a growing foreboding that the future has

been occupied, colonized, or destroyed. It is a methodological experiment with

attunement and futurity, aiming not to reattune to authentic forms of temporality or

to rediscover lost forms of imagination and memory, but to make creative use of our

temporal misattunements and disconnections. Drawing on research in a

postindustrial neighbourhood of Cardiff, the essay dwells on the new temporalities

that might emerge from an inertia of time. Key Words: aesthetics, affect,

attunement, exhaustion, future.

Whose place is this anyway? A tale of a hill, a heath and some big weeds

Julia Bennett, Manchester Metropolitan University

This is a story of community protest, natural landscape and ancient history. The

setting is Bickerton Hill in the county of Cheshire, UK. Based on the premise that

landscape and the story of the landscape, its history, are key elements of a national

and local identity, the paper observes a community protesting against accepted cultural tropes around landscape and conservation. Taking an ethnographic approach, this research examines contested perceptions of an area of countryside used mainly by walkers but with the national and European designation of a 'site of special scientific interest' (SSSI). Visits to the site over the course of 12 years, extensive use of photographs taken during this time and an investigation into the history of this conflict over the management of nature, show that there is a disjuncture between policy-oriented 'official' interpretations of the site as a SSSI needing conservation and local people's sense of belonging to the place as it has evolved through benign neglect. There are particular discourses of nature and conservation that allude to an often unquestioned moral superiority of the conservationists. By fixing on a particular point in the past, conservation tries to stop time and in doing so often infers, in a nostalgic way, that something was implicitly better in the past. But the images of the past here are not recognised by all stakeholders and there is a gap between acknowledgement of the place's past use and how it is used in the present. Conceiving the site as a Deleuzian rhizome and using an actor network theory (ANT) based approach to the analysis, this paper looks at the power inherent in the conservationist discourses surrounding such sites and questions the moral superiority of 'conservation' in the UK and across Europe today.

SESSION 2 Chair: John Narayan, University of Warwick
SO.20

I must have a body, it's a moral necessity, a requirement

Stephen James Connelly, University of Warwick

With this statement Deleuze opens his chapter on 'Perception in [Leibniz's] Folds'. There can be no doubt that Deleuze appreciates the biopolitical significance of this Leibnizian demand. Already in *A Thousand Plateaus* he and Guattari cite Artaud with approval: organs are the judgments of God. To construct a body is to legislate; to be constructed as a body is to be a subject of the law - there is, in short, nothing but legislation. This paper will examine Deleuze's reading of Leibniz's theory of the body, placing particular emphasis on the centrality of legal theory to the Leibnizian doctrine.

National commemoration without nation: The affective production of spirituality without spirit Michael S. Drake, University of Hull

This paper reads ritualised practices of commemoration - the spectacular commemoration of the military war dead - as a reflexive function of the biopolitical body corporate. Drawing on recent research data, it shows how changes in practices of collective remembrance can illuminate a submerged formation of the biopolitical, the imaginary dead which constitute a conscience collective, invoking obligation and indebtedness among the living who are identified with this monstrous dead. Interpreting current research findings from the case-study 'Heroes and Loved Ones', part of AHRC-funded project, *Remember Me: The Changing Face of Memorialisation*, the paper shows how the late modern biopolitical shift from mass to individual has displaced the nation from the core of the ritual commemoration of the war dead, emptying the collective ritual, but producing a politics of depoliticisation. In this postnational affective economy, the previously shared burdens of biopolitical identification with the military dead are now borne by individuals each alone amongst the many who are charged with fulfilling this duty of care in remembering bereft of the collectivity that such ritual may have originally constituted.

Rereading Europe's border and migration crisis: Deconstructive biopolitics and the affirmative potential of the autoimmune

Nick Vaughan-Williams, University of Warwick

Why do humanitarian border security practices often expose the very 'irregular' migrants that they are supposed to protect to dehumanisation and death? Dominant explanations of a gap between humanitarian rhetoric and the reality of 'irregular' migrants' experiences fail to address the ambiguities inherent within EU border security and migration management. Instead of viewing contemporary logics of securitisation and humanitarianism as essentially contradictory elements within the field of EU border security and migration management these can be understood more instructively as twinned elements of what Michel Foucault outlined as biopolitical forms of government. Critical border and migration studies, however, have diverged along two readings of biopolitics: a 'negative' emphasis on border control typically associated with (a particular reading of) the work of Giorgio Agamben; and a 'positive' prioritisation of the power of life often connected with Antonio Negri's approach. Seeking to move beyond this impasse and the apparent 'choice' that is forced, the paper draws upon Roberto Esposito's deconstructive account of biopolitics to reread borders as immune systems with the potentiality for

both the protection and negation of life. While the threat of thanatopolitical and zoopolitical drift is ever-present so too is a more affirmative direction immanent to the biopolitics of contemporary bordering practices.

The Coloniality of (B)ordering and Biopolitical Continuities: Making Subjects of Licence, Containment and Ban

Jayan Nayar, University of Warwick

Much is written about the biopolitical turn in politics. The underlying concern of much of that of which is written is the presumed novelty of biopolitics as it transforms the meaning, scope, operation, possibility of politics and thereby of the struggle for liberatory imagination itself. Biopolitics, in this sense, is worrisome as it is that which is exceptional in its very normality, in its everyday banality. At the core of its effects is the negation of the political subject itself. All of this of course presumes the opposition of biopolitical governmentality to that prior assumption of possibility of the political: the complex relationship between the sovereign and the subject within which, through which much 'western' philosophical imaginations of being-in-the-world has been thought. If the subject in/under sovereignty served as the possibility of emergence, as individual with the political society, the subject of biopolitical regimes of governmentality may be understood as the disappearance of political society through the commodified, securitised and technocratised individual. I want to present a different, less reified account of the entrenchment of biopolitical rationality and technologies. Mine is informed not from an assumption of sovereignty-subjectivity prior to biopolitics but by a decolonial reading of globalised appropriation of bodies and territories. Indeed, this account has as its focus, bodies and territory. It is an account not of a reified, fetishised Eurocentric invention of subjectivity' but a material viewing of the world as a differentiated (b)ordering of bodies in territory. Here, biopolitics is understood as the contemporary, globalised regime of (b)ordering the differentiated subject-beingness of licence, containment and bans, not a deviation from a prior 'political' condition/possibility but as a continuation of globalised coloniality.

SESSION 3 – Special Panel - Racialised (in)securities: race and migration in 'post-racial' global politics
A0.23

Chair: **Hidefumi Nishiyama**

IAS Early Career Fellow, Department of Politics and International Studies, University of Warwick

Panel abstract:

In 1979 Foucault foresaw the emergence of new forms of state racism that would replace genocides and ethnic persecutions of the twentieth century. These new forms of racism, he argued, arise in the context of migration which not only becomes painful and tragic but is also accompanied by deaths and murders. Today, Foucault's anticipation becomes ever more relevant: far from living in a 'post-racial' world, contemporary security discourses and practices are deeply entwined with the racialisation of migrant populations. This special panel scrutinises the persistent yet transforming roles of race in the biopolitics of migration in various historical and geographical settings. From free movement within an imperial state, biological symbolism in contemporary bordering practices, to humanitarian responses to the Mediterranean crisis, we explore the ways in which the government of human mobility is racialised and racialising migrant populations.

Papers:

Of Slave Traders, Trojan Horses of Ebola, and Humanitarian Saviours: Europe's Racialised Border Violence in the Mediterranean Sea

Maurice Stierl

Visiting Assistant Professor, Cultural Studies and African/African American Studies, University of California, Davis

Maritime spaces between Europe, Africa and the Middle East, those between Asia and Australia, as well as the desert between the US and Mexico constitute global 'faultlines' (William Walters, 2011) where, as Gloria Anzaldúa put it, 'the Third World grates against the first and bleeds' (1999, 25). In the Mediterranean Sea in particular we witness struggles over migration on an unprecedented scale: more than one million people succeeded to cross maritime borders in 2015 and entered the territories of Europe. In dominant discourses generated by European policy and political elites, Europe's militaristic deterrence strategies at sea are framed as humanitarian responses to criminal activities of smuggling networks, or, 'the slave traders of the 21st century' (Matteo Renzi). This paper explores the emergence of a humanitarian-necropolitical nexus, expressed in racialised imaginaries and framings of human mobility at sea.

Keywords: Mediterranean migration, slavery, militarism, humanitarianism, necropolitics

'These people can't stop talking about race': Migration Studies, Migration, and Race

Gurminder K Bhambra

Professor, Department of Sociology, University of Warwick

On 22 June 1948, the *Empire Windrush* entered the Thames and close on 500 West Indians, holding British passports, disembarked at Tilbury Dock. This rather mundane event – of imperial subjects moving within the bounds of the imperial state – has, subsequently, become foundational to mythologies of the changing nature (or, more accurately, face) of the British state. Britain, at this time, was still an imperial state, albeit with the recent 'loss' of newly decolonized India, and continued to understand itself as presiding over a territory greater than that of the island on which Westminster was based. This imperial territory was populated by British subjects (rarely acquiring that designation through any choice of their own) all of whom had the right to travel freely throughout empire. Given the realities of empire, the movement of people was not an unusual or unexpected occurrence. Indeed, populations moved – and were moved – through the various circuits of empire throughout its history. The *Windrush*, and its passenger list of 500 West Indians, did not inaugurate British multiculturalism. The British imperial state, in its very constitution, was multicultural; and, at the same time, hierarchically organised around racial inequality. What makes the *Windrush* significant is the fact that darker-skinned people were exercising their rights to move freely within the imperial state as many of their lighter-skinned compatriots had been doing throughout the history of empire. Empire is the context for the movement of people across territories and race is the basis for denying that movement. The erasure of race, and thereby empire, from much work within the field of Migration Studies decontextualizes the very history that it is necessary to engage with to make sense of contemporary politics.

Dissonant Belongings: queering home, race and nation

Hannah Jones

Assistant Professor, Department of Sociology, University of Warwick

This paper develops possibilities for queering understandings of racialization, nation, migration and home by thinking through bordering practices in Britain and Australia. A focus of everyday bordering in both countries is 'illegal immigrants', both in public performance (UK government signs telling irregular immigrants to 'Go Home'; Australian government publicity telling potential entrants 'No Way: You will not make Australia your home') and in treatment of those who are caught (Australia: confining asylum seekers to off-shore detention centres, refusing permanent refugee status; Britain: detaining irregular migrants indefinitely, forcibly deporting adults and children). Less often noted, Britons in Australia are among the largest group of visa overstayers (hence 'illegal immigrants') – and it is likely Australians are among the largest group of UK overstayers, although the data here is lacking. Yet these groups are much less problematized than irregular migrants from elsewhere; an imagined familial, imperial logic persists. Though both are multi-ethnic nations, these privileged statuses (as unproblematic migrants) stem from shared (symbolic) whiteness rooted in a belief in transnational kinship (a legacy of settler colonialism). This paper draws on feminist, queer, postcolonial and whiteness theory to examine the persistence of biological symbolism, questioning the ontology of family and home as a safe space of belonging and developing a theoretical framework in which to understand dissonant forms of racialised (trans)national belonging.

Keywords: migration control, bordering, whiteness, family

SESSION 4 Chair: Anastasia Chamberlen, University of Warwick

SO.20

A Genealogy of Epidemiological Reason: Biopolitics, Surveillance and Global Health

David Reubi, Kings College London

Quantification practices, counting techniques, metrics and other numbers are all prevalent in global health today. Instead of highlighting the advantages or shortcomings of numbers in global health, this article builds on Ian Hacking's notion of historical ontology and explores some of the political, conceptual and material conditions that made it possible for quantification practices and metrics to permeate contemporary global health in the first place. Drawing on extensive archival and ethnographic research on one of the first major international efforts to address the NCD epidemic in the global South – the Bloomberg Initiative to Reduce Tobacco Use in the Developing World – the article starts by suggesting that the numbers and counting practices that dominate global health are best conceptualised and examined as part and parcel of a wider style of thinking – epidemiological reason – articulated around theories, practices, expert networks and institutions associated with epidemiology. The article then explores the complex genealogy of this thought style. Specifically, it argues that three successive epistemological ruptures have been central to the development of epidemiological reason: (1) the revolution in political thought in the long eighteenth and nineteenth centuries that led to the reconfiguration of power around a new biopolitics of population; (2) the twentieth-century shift from pathological anatomy to surveillance medicine; and (3) the radical re-organisation of world health around the idea of globalisation at the start of the twenty-first century.

Recombination oriented biopower: On technoscientific objects of potential life

Aécio Amaral, Universidade Federal da Paraíba

The paper suggests that Foucault's studies of biopower provide a political analytic of finitude complementary to the epistemic analytic of finitude he critically sketched in the earlier *The Order of Things*. If one follows Foucault's assumption as for the complementarity of both sovereignty and governmentality approaches to life, the scientific understanding of the contingent and evolutionary properties of life appears as the proper political issue posed by the problematic of factual finitude in Modernity. If life and human beings are finite entities, the ceaseless improvement of finite life must thus be seen not as an outcome of power's hold over life, but precisely as power's very *raison d'être*. One needs then to point out the way in which Foucault's political analytic of finitude complements his epistemic analytic of finitude by revealing a shift into the principle of ordering knowledge that underlies current understanding and production of life - biopower presupposes the facticity of life as the ground for knowledge. Within such epistemological shift, the a priori ordering principle for the formalization of knowledge is the unlimited recombination of the properties of life, the technological animation of non-organic matter included therein. In order to illustrate such claim, the paper focus on technoscience's attempt

to experiment with life to an extent in which classical oppositions such as the living/the non-living and organic/inorganic are suspended. The debate, internal to nanoscience and technologies, about the possibility of opening up a phenomenological access to organic and inorganic materials is taken as illustrative of the fact that contemporary biopower conceives of the non-restrict matter as open physical being, thus rendering obsolete ontological distinctions between relational life and vegetative life. The notion of technological objects of potential life is outlined in order to account for the fact that technoscience supersedes base distinctions such as the living/the non-living, organic/non-organic, and life/death by stepping back before ontological claims in the name of recombination, the view of life as ceaseless potentiality.

Biohacking as a Technology of Cybernetic Biopolitics

Laura Hille, Leuphana University

In home-made laboratories, kitchens, garages and hackingspaces hobbyists are tracking, hacking, tweaking, grinding and tinkering organic material to alter and modify biology. 'Biohacking' serves as an umbrella term for different practices and techniques that focus on the experimental transformation of life. But what is this 'bio' that is being hacked? What concept of life is being contested? What practices (of the self) are part of the hack? What is the 'bio' in biopolitics today? The emerging role of technology and media for the life sciences has been widely noted (cf. Katherine Hayles, Lily E. Kay, Eugene Thacker). Works about the bioeconomical reformulations of what bodies and materialities are - and can become - have shown the growing relevance of molecular biology for our current definitions of life (cf. Melinda Cooper, Patricia Clough). What reformulations of life can we develop, if we focus on hacking practices of the "Do It Yourself"-Biology movement? Life is the object and mode of regulation of the biopolitical regime. If this life is being reformulated through technological assemblages and contested by biomediated practices, we need new criteria for biopolitical analyses. A genealogy of the molecularisation of life proposes the restating of the biopolitical regime as a cybernetic one, given that Cybernetics and Biopolitics are sharing the same regulatory fantasy: the control of life and everything living. Following the question of the cybernetisation (cf. Tiqqun, Erich Hörl, Luciana Parisi, Massimo de Carolis) of life and the expansion of biopolitical analyses with cybernetic epistemologies enables us to rework the grasp of power. Drawing on the works of Georges Canguilhem, Gilles Deleuze and Michel Foucault, the presentation will indicate, that 'Biohacking' can be read as a signature of today's biopolitical regime of cybernetisation.

SESSION 5 Chair: Stuart Elden, University of Warwick

A0.23

The anti-totalitarian and anti-colonial experiments of cosmic materialism

Angela Last, University of Glasgow * Invited Paper

The interwar period saw an overlap between anti-colonial and anti-totalitarian activism. A key meeting ground of this activism was matter, in particular how physical and intellectual experiments with matter could help to overcome terror and false securities of violent regimes. This experimentation moved across theory, visual and performance art, and even science. Matter was particularly contentious, because it was appropriated by both colonial and totalitarian regimes to establish human hierarchies and particular relationships to the land. Against this, a 'cosmic materialism' was offered, as a subversion of dominant narratives and as a set of practices to aid immediate survival as well as long-term change. This paper attempts to chart common themes and strategies, as well as connections between seemingly geographically dispersed authors, in order to show its relevance for today's bio- and geo-political situation.

Foucault in Tunisia: Biopolitical Critique as Anti-Imperial Praxis

Kathryn Medien, University of Warwick

'I remember that Marcuse said reproachfully one day, where was Foucault at the time of the May barricades? Well, I was in Tunisia, on account of my work. And I must add that this experience was a decisive one for me... Tunisia, for me, represented in some ways the chance to reinsert myself in the political debate. It wasn't May of '68 in France that changed me; it was March of '68, in a third-world country'. (Foucault 1980)

Foucault's assertion, that he was transformed in the Third World, at once ruptures the omnipresent intellectual genealogies of Michel Foucault's work and life. My contention throughout this paper is that thinking Foucault's work along this genealogy has important implications for both how we understand the philosophy of Michel Foucault, as well as for how we understand contemporary biopolitics, and the amalgamations, techniques, technologies and institutions of power that gave rise to Foucault's theorization of it. Within the current story, Foucault's biopolitical analytic, and the rise of post-structuralist philosophy more broadly, is one that arises from a European experience, rooted in the events of May 1968 in France. This implicit, often explicit, Eurocentric assertion, functions to re-affirm what Gurinder Bhambra (2007: 5) has called the "specialness of Europe" as at the center of Western development and thought. A mythological 'fact' that reproduces Europe's events, and their resulting paradigms of thinking, as geographically autonomous, narrating Europe as a bounded, coherent, critical theory producing entity. Thus, my aim in this paper is to offer an alternative genealogy of the biopolitical in the work of Michel Foucault. Rather than locating Foucault's political 'turn' in the aftermath of France's May 1968, as many of his subsequent commentators have done, I argue, as does Foucault, that his entrance into politics emerged as a direct result of his observations and involvements in the anti-imperialist, anti-authoritarian, anti-colonial, and anti-Zionist struggles that took place across Tunisia between the years of 1966-1968.

Resisting the Present: Biopolitics in the Face of the Event Thomas Clément Mercier,
Kings College London

The main trait of biopower is its plasticity, allowing it to reappropriate critiques and resistances. In its hegemonic definition, biopolitical governmentality is able to expand indefinitely by colonising the timescape of the living present in the name of capitalistic productivity. Under these circumstances, how can we invent rebellious forms and alternative temporalities evading biopolitical normativity? In this paper, I provide a deconstruction of the conceptual and temporal structures upholding the notion of biopolitics, in view of laying the ground for new forms of resistance. The articulation between life and power has a long philosophical history, which has been largely ignored by social theorists and political thinkers when they use biopolitics as an interpretative model. I wish to re-inscribe this model within the tradition of critical materialism, by articulating Foucault's political critique to Marx & Engels's conception of 'real life' and to recent philosophical works on biological plasticity (Malabou). In all these discourses, the logic of biopower depends on a representation of life as living present. Biopower is thus anchored in the authority of the present, that is to say, of being-as-presence (ontology); it sustains presentist definitions of life and materiality, be it under the form of a plastic ontology. By drawing on Derrida's reflections on spectrality, I wish to deconstruct these discourses on life and materiality, and disassociate them from their ontological grounding, in order to suggest new paths of resistance to biopower. This exit from the authority of the present is the condition for imagining a politics of the event, hospitable to otherly life forms and anachronistic timescapes.

SESSION 6 Chair: Lynne Pettinger, University of Warwick
SO.20

Governmentality and the bio-political regulation in the UK's benefit system since 2010 and in the 1930s

Matthew Cooper, University of Warwick

Governmentality studies of unemployment benefits have provided valuable insights into the way benefit systems function as disciplinary institutions. Measures like sanction enforced job search and unpaid work schemes seek to inculcate desired forms of subjectivity in claimants through behavioural regulative technologies of power. However the governmentality approach has been accused of lacking an ethical and political dimension. Of underplaying the autonomy of actors for political action and therefore of portraying institutions as governing without constraint in accordance with ideal schemes. This paper will shed new light on the application of the concept of biopolitics in the study of benefits by drawing upon the concept of 'moral orders' in Luc Boltanski's 'sociology of critique' to supplement a governmentality analysis. This is an approach that stresses the necessity of justification in social life. Policy makers must orient justifications to existing social precedents which can also limit their room for action. Those subject to biopolitical regulation have the capacity to contest or subvert these justifications to their own ends. This is illustrated by insights from my PhD study into the operation of unemployment benefits in the UK in the 1930s and since 2010. In the 30s the design of benefits strongly reflected moral arguments. Claimants were divided between two models of biopolitical regulation according to a measure of their moral worth a contributory insurance scheme and a reformed poor law. However claimants were able to subvert their construction within policy discourse and position within moral order to contest the regulatory techniques to which they were subject. The paper applies insights from the study of the 1930s to raise questions highlight where the project of neoliberal welfare reform since 2010 might face challenge from claimants.

Agents of Disease: Neoliberal Agency, Biosecurity and the Legalization of Homeless Encampments

Kevin S Jobe, Morgan State University

Since the 1990s, homeless populations have come under intense scrutiny from the public health community as a potential threat to the national biosecurity of the United States, as some populations were found to be a carrier of infectious louse-borne diseases such as typhus, trench fever and tuberculosis, among others. Even as early as 1992, it was pronounced that homelessness itself "...can be considered an agent of disease." (Jahiel 1992, 150) After 9/11, typhus received increased attention as a biosecurity threat, such that the rickettsiae bacteria that causes typhus is now considered a Category II bioterrorism agent. Together, these alarming trends seemed to position homeless populations as agents of emerging infectious disease who pose a biosecurity risk to the general civilian population. However, in recent years, these fears proved unfounded, with the consequence that the biosecurity concern over homeless populations has received relatively little attention. Thus, in part because of this waning of the biosecurity threat - which would have certainly prompted government intervention - city governments in the United States have been able to adopt a more complete "laissez-faire" attitude towards homeless populations which have already been largely abandoned under neoliberal social reforms. Thus, through measures such as the legalization of homeless encampments, city governments have distanced themselves from a more biopolitical-public health

approach towards a "laissez-faire-legal rights" approach to managing homeless populations. No longer positioned as "agents of disease" who pose a biosecurity risk, many US cities now legally recognize and regulate "at-a-distance" homeless encampments as a strategy of managing abandoned populations, while still grounded in the moral discourse of autonomy, agency and self-sufficiency (Herring and Lutz 2015). I conclude by locating these forms of recognition within neoliberal projects of abandonment through dispossession (Harvey 2003) Chris Herring and Manuel Lutz (2015) The roots and implications of the USA's homeless tent cities, City, 19:5 David Harvey, The New Imperialism, (London: Oxford University Press, 2003) Rene Jahiel. "Health and the Health Care of Homelessness" in Homelessness: a National Perspective. Marjorie Robertson and Milton Greenblat (eds). Plenum Press: New York, 1992.

Prison and the senses

Oliver Davis, University of Warwick

Drawing on prison writing by Peter Kropotkin, Jean Genet, the Black Panthers and le Groupe d'Information sur les Prisons (GIP), I will argue for a theorization of prison as a biopolitical technique for intervening in what Jacques Rancière calls 'le partage du sensible', 'the division of the sensible'. I will suggest that the intensifications and deprivations of sensory experience noted by prisoners are integral rather than incidental to the way prison functions as institution. I will ask what follows from this theorization for the politics of researching and representing prison by contrasting Didier Fassin's 'anthropology of the carceral condition', *L'Ombre du monde* (2015, English translation anticipated later in 2016) with the GIP's work and Genet's unpublished 452pp. script from the 1980s for a three-part television docudrama on the Mettray reformatory, *The Language of the Wall*.

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