

**Disciplinary Power, Subjectivity and Liberalism: A Foucauldian Approach to the
Study of Democracy and Authoritarianism**

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Abstract

In his work, *Discipline and Punish: The Birth of the Prison*, Michel Foucault enhances discipline from a simple and straightforward concept to one of the fundamental and constitutional elements of economic and political modernity. While Foucauldian scholars have dedicated a fair amount of research to explore the role of discipline in the advent of economic modernity, the role of discipline in the emergence of modern political forms in general and liberalism, in particular, has remained relatively undertheorized. In this thesis, I attempt to fill this lacuna by providing a Foucauldian account of the relationships between discipline and liberalism. I argue that discipline has contributed to the possibility of liberal politics by constructing self-governed political subjectivities. After analyzing the role that discipline has played in the emergence and success of liberal politics in Western societies, I examine the implications of this analysis for societies that are governed by authoritarian regimes. By taking Iran as a case study, I show how the failure of disciplinary projects in shaping self-governed political subjects has contributed to the persistence of authoritarianism in this country.

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Chapter One: Introduction

In this thesis, I argue that, from a Foucauldian point of view, there is a relation between the invention of disciplinary techniques of power and the emergence of liberal democracy in the West European and North American societies. I challenge the understanding that the relation between disciplinary power and liberal democracy is only contingent. Based on Foucault's genealogical studies, I show how disciplinary techniques of power constructed a specific type of political subjectivity that functioned as a precondition for a fundamental change in the relations between the sovereign and its subordinates. This change, I argue, paved the way for a transformation from the authoritarian modes of rule to liberal democracy. Therefore, I argue that the relationship between disciplinary power and liberal democracy is not only contingent but also necessary.

The necessary relation between the invention of disciplinary techniques of power and the emergence of liberal democracy, I maintain, undergirds a new approach to the study of the modes of the rule in societies that are governed by authoritarian regimes. This approach is concerned with the mutual determination of political subjectivities and authoritarian regimes. On an abstract level, this approach assumes that the failure of disciplinary projects in shaping self-governed political subjectivities contributes to the persistence of authoritarianism. This approach can serve as an analytical tool to critique and evaluate dominant approaches to the study of authoritarianism. It suggests that a genealogy of contemporary political subjectivities in authoritarian countries is necessary to understand the reasons for the failure of democracy and the robustness of authoritarianism.

What motivated me to employ Foucault's genealogy of disciplinary power and examine it in exploring the roots of authoritarianism was a combination of my dissatisfaction with the available theories of authoritarianism on the one hand and my personal experience of living in Canada as a disciplinary society, on the other. I explain these sources of motivation in order. The question of the fundamental elements that undergird authoritarianism and undermine liberal democratic politics has long captured the attention of political science scholarship. In general, the major approaches on this topic can be divided into two categories: the prerequisites paradigm that focuses on cultural, economic, or institutional structures that perpetuate authoritarianism and the transition paradigm that sees democratization as a contingent choice of regime and opposition forces that can occur under different cultural and socioeconomic conditions (Posusney and Angrist 2005, 3). The prerequisites school introduces variables such as the level of economic development, culture, political parties, and government agencies into the study of authoritarianism. The transition school, on the other hand, emphasizes the role of human agency in shaping democratic and authoritarian forms. While these approaches have shed significant light on the roots of authoritarianism, an important critique can be made against them. None of these approaches pays adequate attention to the characteristics of political subjects and their role in determining democratic and authoritarian forms. The prerequisites paradigm is so occupied with macro-structural variables such as economic development or political parties that it ignores micro-level variables including political subjectivities. The transition school, on the other hand, underestimates the role of structural forces that determine political forms through constructing political agents. There seems to be, therefore, an

urgent need for a new theoretical framework that could cover the gap of these approaches. This framework must be concerned with structural forces that work at the level of micro-politics. This framework must consider the process of the formation of political subjectivities at the level of micro-politics as an important variable in determining democratic and authoritarian forms.

My quest for a new theoretical framework that considers the role of political subjects and their behaviors in shaping political forms was paired with my observations of the behavior of the people of Canada, as a Western society. Very small and seemingly trivial behaviors such as the way that people waited in lines in restaurants and coffee shops for getting services, the way that drivers behaved when they saw a pedestrian that wanted to cross the road, or the way that students acted in classrooms when they had an exam, caught me by surprise. From the perspective of a person who has lived in Canada for her entire life it might be entirely natural that customers must not cut in line when they are waiting for a service, drivers must not cross the road when they see a red light, and students must not speak or cheat when they have an exam. From the perspective of my personal experience in Iran, however, none of those behaviors was natural. Iranian society, of course, is not wild or out of control. However, the differences in the ways that Iranians and Canadians responded to the signals of law and order were too stark for me to be ignored. One might attempt to explain this difference by referring to the horrifying dominance of law in the Canadian society. That explanation, however, is not convincing. Law has been an established institution in Iran at least since the Constitutional Revolution of 1905, and despite the relative prevalence of corruption and nepotism, contemporary Iran has never

been a lawless society. However, the establishment and dominance of law in this country has not echoed in the behavior of its people. Therefore, the dominance of law cannot explain why Iranians and Canadians act differently in the same situations.

I assumed that the underlying reasons that motivated Canadians to act in those particular ways must be explored in a domain other than that of the law. My observations suggested that it was not the threat of punishment that drove those customers, drivers, and students to act in those particular ways. Instead, it occurred to me that they were programmed to act according to some specific codes of conduct. In other words, it was not an external power that made them restrict their behaviors; instead, they were driven by a power that was built into their bodies and minds, a power that made them act according to a level of discipline that seems to be specific to Western societies. These observations led me to some new questions: How has discipline affected individuals in Western societies politically? Has discipline constituted politically docile subjectivities? If so, what is the role of these subjects in the establishment and the success of democratic and liberal politics?

These questions connected my observations of the behavior of the majority of people in Canada to my theoretical desire to find a new framework to explain the roots of authoritarianism, a theory that could delve into the role of political subjectivities and their behaviours in determining political forms.

Any study of the history of discipline and its role in the formation of liberal states in western societies inevitably meets Michel Foucault, the French philosopher who revolutionized thinking about the concepts of power and subjectivity. Foucault

presents an appealing account of the history of modern discipline in his work, *Discipline and Punish*. In this book, he enhances discipline from a seemingly trivial and straightforward concept to one of the fundamental elements of the modern liberal societies. He introduces discipline as a new form of power that emerged in the late seventeenth and early eighteenth centuries. Foucault distinguishes disciplinary power from sovereign power and bio-power. In contrast to sovereign power that could “take life or let live,” discipline revolves around its ability to foster life (Foucault 1978, 138). Disciplinary power, according to Foucault, materializes itself in the form of some specific techniques and strategies that target the bodies of the individuals. These techniques and strategies strive to make the bodies of individuals more obedient as they become more useful and more useful as they become more obedient (Hoffman 2011, 138). Disciplinary techniques of power produce new potentials in the bodies of the individuals. Bio-power, which emerges in the nineteenth century, seizes on this potentiality and uses the logic of discipline to target the population with a concentration on “the problems of birthrate, longevity, public health, housing, and migration” (Foucault 1978, 140).

Since its publication in 1975, Foucault's *Discipline and Punish* became the subject of a unidirectional reading. Instead of reading *Discipline and Punish* as a text that elaborates on the constitutional role of discipline in the formation of political and economic modernity, this book became a hunting ground for critical readings that aimed at revealing the oppressive nature of the modern society. As the result of this reading, Scholars as diverse as Antoni Negri and Michael Hardt (2006), Gilles Deleuze (1992), Bob Fine (1994), and Mark Poster (1984) have regarded disciplinary power as a negative phenomenon that undergirded capitalism and restricted the freedom and autonomy of the individuals.

The dominance of this reading, inevitably, left no room for interpretations that sought to present disciplinary power as a productive and constitutive phenomenon that played a vital role in the formation of liberal and democratic states.

In recent years, however, some scholars have challenged the dominance of this negative reading. For example, In *The Empire of Habit: John Locke, Discipline, and the Origins of Liberalism*, (2016) John Baltes presents an affirmative reading of Foucault's understanding of disciplinary power when he applies it to John Locke's liberalism. Baltes challenges the common understanding that Locke's liberalism is grounded in natural law. Drawing on Foucault's concept of discipline, he argues that Locke's liberalism requires a new political subjectivity that is governed not by natural law but habits. Locke's liberal subjects, according to Baltes, are habituated by carefully designed and meticulously applied techniques of discipline that can be best explained by Foucault's notion of disciplinary power. Baltes claims that Lock's liberal subjects are profoundly disciplined and entirely normalized and it is by virtue of these subjects that a society can be fashioned to enable and sustain the liberal social contract. Another example of the positive reading of Foucault's discipline is Richard Flathman's *Freedom and its Conditions: Discipline, Autonomy, and Resistance*, (2003). While Baltes is concerned with the constructive role of discipline in shaping and sustaining liberal states, Flathman contributes to the positive reading of Foucault's conceptualization of disciplinary power by challenging the prevailing wisdom that discipline and freedom are opposite or mutually exclusive. In his work, Flathman takes a nuanced view of the relationship between discipline and freedom. He draws attention to Foucault's conceptualization of technologies of the self. These technologies are forms of

discipline that are applied on or to the self by the self itself. Technologies of the self, according to Flathman, create the capacity for resistance and it is through this resistance that individuals can experience freedom. Flathman concludes that there is no necessary conflict between discipline and freedom. For him, liberal freedom is only meaningful in the context of relations that disciplinary interventions create.

I categorize my reading of Foucault's notion of disciplinary power in this thesis under the aforementioned trend. I attempt to contribute to the positive reading of Foucault's work by examining the implications that his account of disciplinary power has for liberalism and authoritarianism studies. In the next chapter of this thesis, I attempt to provide a conceptual framework that includes disciplinary power and its role in constructing political subjects in its account of the emergence of liberal and authoritarian political forms. In doing so, I rely on Michel Foucault's work as my theoretical framework. I reinterpret Foucault's critical reading of disciplinary power and turn it into an affirmative theory of democratization which can help us to understand why liberalism could emerge in west European societies in the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries and why most non-western societies are resistant particularly to liberalism and liberal democracy.

In chapter three, I employ Foucault to challenge the conventional theorization of the emergence of liberal government. Following Foucault's rejection of the sovereign-obsessed political theory, I de-center the social contract and its implications for sovereignty in my analysis of the emergence of liberal politics and re-center discipline and its role in the formation of liberal subjects. I explain that carefully limited subjects are as fundamental to the success of liberal politics as carefully limited governments and argue

that to the extent that liberalism depends on reasonable, predictable, and manageable subjects, discipline is required to produce them. To clarify the relationship between the invention of disciplinary techniques of power and the emergence of liberal politics, I present Foucault's narrative of the emergence of liberalism and argue that the formation and application of disciplinary technologies of power were necessary for the emergence of liberal politics.

After laying out my account of the relationships between the invention of disciplinary power and the emergence of liberalism, I examine the implications of this account for democratic and authoritarianism studies in chapter four. I argue that the question of disciplinary power does not have a universal answer, and depending on the democratic or authoritarian form of each society, this question must be treated differently. In this regard, I criticize the prevalence of a negative approach towards disciplinary power that demonstrates itself in the emphasis on the concept of resistance. By emphasizing the differences between established liberal democracies and authoritarian regimes, I argue that resistance against disciplinary power would have different political implications for societies with different political forms. I take Iran as a case and explain how the failure of disciplinary projects in shaping self-governed political subjects has contributed to the resilience of authoritarianism in this country.

Finally, in the conclusion, I present some preliminary thoughts on the coordination of a Foucauldian approach to the study of democracy and authoritarianism. I introduce the concept of the “non-disciplinary society” and elaborate on its specifics. I argue that the non-disciplinary society is the flip side of the disciplinary society of the West and has two

definitive characteristics: the absence of disciplined and self-governed political subjects, and the prevalence of authoritarian regimes. I use the concept of non-disciplinary society intentionally to avoid the problematic implications that might be internal to concepts derived from the idea of civilization. While the idea of civilization inevitably categorizes societies as civilized and uncivilized and has a colonial tone, the idea of non-disciplinary society is value-free and refers to a historical fact. It suggests that West European and North American populations are more disciplined than the population of non-disciplinary societies because they have been subjected to a specific set of disciplinary mechanisms of power in a specific period of their history, a power that could not triumph in non-disciplinary societies. I argue that the individuals and the state in non-disciplinary societies are the products of the failure of disciplinary projects in constructing the self-governed and disciplined political subjects. Based on this assumption, I suggest that a Foucauldian strategy for the establishment of liberal democratic states entails de-centering resistance against disciplinary power and re-centering the necessity of the establishment of disciplinary projects in non-disciplinary societies.

Chapter Two: Conceptual Framework

In this chapter, I provide a conceptual framework to explain the role that disciplinary power and its contribution to political subjectivity may have in shaping democratic and authoritarian forms. In doing so, I rely on Michel Foucault's work as my theoretical framework. I reinterpret Foucault's critical reading of disciplinary power and turn it into an affirmative theory of democratization which can help us to understand why liberalism could emerge in western Europe in the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries and why most non-western societies are resistant particularly to liberalism and liberal democracy.

Before delving into Foucault's significance for liberalism and authoritarianism studies, it is necessary to elaborate on the meanings of authoritarianism and liberalism. Authoritarianism is a type of government that can be identified by limited political freedom and centralized power. Under an authoritarian regime, there is no accountability and the freedom of individuals is subject to the will of the state. According to Gretchen Casper, authoritarian systems have four defining characteristics: The lack of political pluralism; limited social mobilization; the existence of informally defined executive powers; and the prevalence of recognizable problems such as insurgency and underdevelopment (Casper 1995, 40-50).

Liberalism, in contrast, is a political ideology and a form of government which gives priority to the cause of individuals. In the controversy between the state and individuals, liberalism always favors the interests of individuals. It acknowledges the behaviors, attitudes, and opinions of individuals and does not consider them as threats to the existence of the state. According to Andrew Heywood, the core values of liberalism are individualism, rationalism, justice and toleration (Heywood 1992, 22). Liberalism has

ties a strong connection with democracy. In a liberal democratic state, representative democracy operates under the principles of liberalism. However, liberalism is theoretically different and historically distinct from democracy. As Philippe Schmitter puts it "Liberalism, either as a conception of political liberty or as a doctrine about economic policy, may have coincided with the rise of democracy. But it has never been immutably and unambiguously linked to its practices" (Schmitter 1995, 16). Foucault's work, however, sheds a new light on the study of liberalism.

The formidable body of Foucault's work has been influential in a variety of scientific disciplines from philosophy and history to education and criminology. His insights have also enriched different theories and approaches in the social sciences and humanities including feminism, post-structuralism, and post-Marxism. Therefore, it is no surprise that his works have influenced scholars in the field of political science as well. However, two general trends are noticeable in Foucauldian political studies: First, Foucauldian scholars have mostly employed Foucault's ideas in the study of the political phenomena in the West, and they have shown little interest in applying his insights to the study of political questions in non-Western societies. Second and perhaps following Foucault's preference, these scholars have rarely applied his findings in the study of questions regarding democracy and authoritarianism. These trends both have their reasons. Foucault's work has been focused on the history of modern institutions and scientific discourses in the West, and he rarely talks about non-western societies. He also intentionally avoids thinking about politics in terms of macro-level political institutions and ideas such as state or democracy. In fact, his novel and radically different account of power leads him to track power relations and its implications at micro-levels. Taking these facts into

consideration, employing Foucault's works to develop a theory to explain the reasons for the emergence of democratic or authoritarian political forms may seem problematic. However, Foucault's notion of subjectivity and his narrative of the emergence of disciplinary power provide robust analytical tools to investigate the conditions for the emergence of liberal democracy and the reasons for the persistence of authoritarianism. In the following pages, first I elaborate on Foucault's understanding of the concepts of subjectivity and disciplinary power, and then I present a hypothesis on the relationship between political subjectivity and political forms.

2.1-Subjectivity in French Philosophy

Foucault's approach to the concept of subjectivity must be understood as an intervention in a debate about this concept in French philosophy. In the 1950s, when Foucault started his career, a particular philosophy of the conscious subject, phenomenology, was predominant. Phenomenology is a methodology of philosophical investigation that starts with the conscious subject, as Descartes did. Jean-Paul Sartre, the most famous figure of French philosophy in that time, emphasized consciousness to an extreme degree, though there was also another trend in phenomenology, associated with Maurice Merleau-Ponty, that was trying to correct Descartes' dualism of mind and body in favour of a holistic embodied subject, following the work of Martin Heidegger (Kelly 2013, 511).

In the 1960s, phenomenology faced a strong reaction from a new trend which was called structuralism. Structuralist thinkers like Claude Lévi-Strauss and Jacques Lacan emphasized the importance of anonymous structures of culture, family, and language and explained subjectivity as the product of these structures. Structuralism not only attacked the conscious subject of phenomenology but also explicitly rejected the traditional notion

of subjectivity as assumed by Enlightenment philosophers. From the standpoint of structuralism, there was not such a thing as an autonomous, self-conscious, and self-sufficient subject who could think and act independently, as Descartes assumed, or could recover an authentic self from the detritus of civilization, as Rousseau wished.

In the realm of politics, it was French Marxist philosopher, Louis Althusser, who employed structuralism to provide a meticulous narrative of the formation of political subjectivities. In his immensely influential essay, *Ideology and Ideological State Apparatuses*, Althusser poses the critical question of Marxist theory: how does capitalist order reproduce itself? Althusser maintains that according to the traditional understanding of Marxism, the reproduction of the capitalist order is secured, for the most part, by the legal-political and ideological superstructure. However, he claims that one should go beyond this model of social structure, namely base-superstructure model. Althusser suggests that the reproduction of the capitalist order is secured mostly “by the exercise of state power in state apparatuses” (Althusser 1971, 22). In this point, he introduces the new concept of state apparatus that is composed of the repressive state apparatuses and the ideological state apparatuses. The repressive state apparatuses consist of institutions such as courts, police and armed forces which have as their function to intervene in politics to secure the interests of the dominant class, by suppressing the low social classes. The ideological state apparatuses consist of institutions such as media, schools, churches, clubs, and family which pursue the same objectives as the repressive state apparatuses by using methods other than physical violence.

For Althusser, the ideological state apparatuses operate by making an individual a subject of ideology, a subject who submits himself to the established order of society (Althusser

1971, 28). Therefore, the formation of political subjectivity, according to Althusser, is the outcome of ideological state apparatuses. Ideology, he states, interpolates individuals as subjects (Althusser 1971, 48). Althusser goes further and maintains that ideology not only shapes the life of an individual and makes her a subject, but also provides the only means for her to perceive the reality she lives in.

Foucault's understanding of subjectivity develops in the context of structuralism. Just as structuralist thinkers, he rejects the older understanding of the subject, namely the autonomous and conscious individual. He tries to theorize a subject who is constituted in and by social structures. However, he goes beyond the structuralist mode of thinking and challenges some of the underlying themes of this tradition. For instance, while structuralist thinkers such as Jacques Lacan and even Noam Chomsky attempt to define the nature and structure of the subject, Foucault sees any definition of the nature of the subject as the product of power (Mansfield, 2000, 51). In the realm of politics, he agrees with Althusser that subjectivity is a social construct; however, he dissociates the process of the formation of modern political subjectivity from the needs of capitalist order and associates it with the emergence of modernity. He also criticizes the concept of ideology as insufficient in explaining the function of knowledge in the social body and offers the concept of discourse as a more profound analytical tool.

2.2-Foucault's Conception of Subjectivity

Foucault understands human beings as subjects. In contrast to traditional political philosophy which takes the individual as a basic unit who has specific and natural characteristics, he maintains that the individual in any form is always a fabrication a

product of specific, historically contingent practices of power.

The individual is an effect of power, and at the same time, or precisely to the extent to which it is that effect, is the element of its articulation. The individual which power has constituted is at the same time its vehicle (Foucault 1980, 98).

Foucault tries to analyze the different techniques of power that diffuse and naturalize themselves in the social body to make themselves effective in the construction of the subjects. For Foucault, power not only subjugates an individual but also affirms the individual's being. This function of power echoes Althusser's notion of interpolation. Foucault maintains that it is through subjugation by the power that the body of the individual becomes a socially useful force. Therefore, power is not exercised merely as a prohibition or obligation over the subjects; it invests them, is transmitted by them and through them (Foucault 1977, 27). In Foucault's point of view, the power that constructs the individuals and makes them subjects does not work in isolation. It is always accompanied by a regime of truth which is commensurate with the production of knowledge. As Clifford explains:

Power proceeds through the deployment of various knowledges for the normalization and cohesion of the social body. Knowledge both guides and sanctions practices of subjugation and objectivation that at once govern and define individuals. The production of knowledge, in turn, requires entrenched institutional apparatuses (such as education, science, media) where it can emerge and disseminate (Clifford 2001, 98).

Power also relies on perceptions that individuals have of themselves, and this makes power even more effective in the construction of subjects. These perceptions open up the possibility of subjectivation which according to Clifford “is a process of self-formation in which the subjects construct an identity for themselves through an appropriation of

certain values, practices, regimes, and modes of comportment” (Clifford 2001, 99).

It is essential to bear in mind, though, that subjectivation is not the domain of freedom for the subject. The ‘values, practices, regimes, and modes of comportment’ through which the subject constructs are in fact the products of power/knowledge systems. Disciplinary power is one concrete form of power that Foucault analyses specifically. He investigates its role in the fabrication of modern political subjectivity. Understanding the different aspects of this form of power is essential for the argument of this thesis, since, as I explain later in this chapter, it plays a crucial role in determining liberal or authoritarian political forms.

2.3-Disciplinary Power

Foucault introduces the concept of disciplinary power in his 1975 book, *Discipline and Punish: The Birth of Prison*. This book is an analysis of the theoretical and social mechanisms behind the changes that happened in Western prison systems during the modern age. Foucault argues that prison became the predominant form of punishment because it provided the best condition to exercise disciplinary power, a new form of power that targeted the body and its forces. According to Foucault, discipline, as exercised in prisons, was extended to other social institutions such as workshops, schools, hospitals, asylums, and military barracks.

In a nutshell, disciplines are techniques of power which regulate the behavior of individuals in the social body. These techniques work by regulating the organization of space (the architecture of prisons etc.), of time (timetables), and people’s behavior and activities. Disciplines are enforced with the help of complex systems of surveillance. The most famous example of these systems of surveillance is Jeremy Bentham’s sketch for the

architecture of prisons. Bentham's Panopticon prison is designed to allow all prisoners to be watched by a single guard without the prisoners being able to know whether or not they are being watched.

Although disciplinary techniques of power were emerged in the late seventeenth and early eighteenth centuries, their proliferation was mainly a response to the social, demographic and military changes that occurred in Western Europe in the late eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries. The industrial revolution, at the end of the eighteenth century, resulted in the concentration of European populations in urban areas. Over decades, schools, hospitals, asylums, workshops, and military barracks became overcrowded by people who were seeking education, cures, and jobs. This concentration posed a new question to school administrators, hospital managers, and military generals: How was it possible to confront the torrent of the population most effectively? The answer was discipline.

Disciplines promised to organize, distribute, and individualize the growing mass of population as a way of reducing the threat that it posed. Taken as a simple mass, the people were unpredictable and dangerous. At the same time, the disciplines sought to integrate this newly organized mass into a complex production apparatus as part of the industrial revolution (Ransom 1997, 39).

Disciplines provided two opportunities for practitioners. First, they enabled them to take an untrained, unorganized, and technically useless mass and transform it into productive bodies. At the same time, disciplines guaranteed the political docility of that population. As Foucault puts it:

Discipline produces subjected and practiced bodies, 'docile' bodies. Discipline increases the force of the body (in economic terms of utility) and diminishes these

same forces (in political terms of obedience). In short, it dissociates power from body; on the one hand, it turns it onto an 'aptitude', a 'capacity', which it seeks to increase; on the other hand, it reverses the course of the energy, the power that might result from it, and turn it into a relation of strict subject (Foucault 1977, 138).

One way to understand the novelty of disciplinary power is through comparing it with the concept of governance. Both discipline and governance aim to make individuals act in specific ways without provoking them to think critically about what they are being asked to do. However, while with governance the already existing capacities of the individuals are steered in this or that way, the goal of discipline is to create particular capacities in individuals. In other words, in governance the already existing capacities of individuals are directed, with disciplines, capacities and inclinations are created (Ransom 1997:39). The creation of new capacities in individuals was made possible by making them subjects to disciplinary techniques of power.

The underlying logic of disciplinary power is as follows: "get a firm grip on the bodies of human beings and their forces, bend them to your will, and the minds will follow" (Ransom 1997, 33). Based on this logic, disciplines work to transmit capacities to individuals in a way that increases their productivity without enhancing their autonomy (Foucault 1977, 218). In the case of Western Europe in the late eighteenth and nineteenth centuries, the result of the operation of disciplinary techniques of power was nothing less than the formation of a new political subjectivity that Foucault calls "docile subject."

2.4-Docility and Liberal Democracy

Political theorists have usually looked at disciplinary power and its product, namely docile subjects, in a negative way. They have found disciplinary society as a dystopia where

dominance is overwhelming, and freedom is elusive. This vision has either reinforced their rejection of the modern society or their rejection of Foucault. No wonder that the dominant theme around Foucault's findings on disciplinary power has been the concept of resistance: how can individuals resist the subjugating implications of disciplinary power and widen their freedom. This dominant theme has resulted in an intellectual environment in Foucauldian scholarship in which the possibility of extracting a positive theory of democratization out of his works has been neglected. Such a theory can be developed through considering political subjectivity as an important variable in analyzing the conditions for the emergence of different political forms.

There are arrays of theories focused on the conditions for the emergence of liberal forms of government in Western societies. These theories also investigate the reasons for the democratic deficits and authoritarian persistence in non-Western countries. Modernization theory, cultural exceptionalism, historical sociology, institutionalism, rational choice approaches and theories focused on globalization are among them. However, none of these theories pay enough attention to the process of the formation of political subjectivities as an important variable in determining political forms; therefore, they are unable to explain the underlying reason for the emergence of liberal forms of government in some parts of the world and the persistence of authoritarianism in others.

Foucault offers no systematic discussion of the relationships between political subjectivity and political forms; however, his writings suggest a complex set of connections between disciplinary power and liberal democracy. At one of his lectures, he argues that the democratization of sovereignty was fundamentally determined by and grounded in mechanisms of disciplinary coercion (Foucault 1980, 105). In Foucault's point of view,

disciplinary power undergirds liberal democratic institutions.

Although in a formal way, the representative regime makes it possible, directly or indirectly, with or without relays, for the will of all to form the fundamental authority of sovereignty, the disciplines provide, at the base, a guarantee of the submission of forces and bodies (Foucault 1977, 222).

Foucault's writings suggest that the freedoms guaranteed by the role of law and liberal state require and presuppose the construction of a rational, docile, and disciplined subject.

Therefore, it can be said that for him, the liberating, non-coercive, and egalitarian aspects of liberal democracy are accomplished through non-egalitarian, coercive, and private practices of disciplinary power. It is this connection between disciplinary power, docile subjectivity, and liberal democracy that paves the way for the central argument of this thesis. If the construction of docile subjects through enforcing disciplinary techniques of power has historically been a determining variable in the emergence of liberal forms of government in Western societies, then the absence or the failure of disciplinary power could have contributed to the lack of these modes of government in non-Western countries. This hypothesis would have significant consequences for the theories of democracy and authoritarianism. It indicates that liberal modes of governance are only possible for individuals that have been subjected to the disciplinary techniques of power. To provide a historical base for this argument, I track the role that disciplinary power played in the emergence of liberal modes of governance in the next chapter. I explain why the construction of docile subjects was fundamental to the transformation from authoritarian modes of rule to liberal democracy in West European and North American societies.

Chapter Three: Liberalism and Disciplines

The liberal model of government has conventionally been approached through the lens of Social Contract Theory. This approach originates from the works of the seventeenth-century British philosopher, John Locke. Locke's argument that each individual has a natural right to life, liberty, and property, and his convention that government must not violate these rights has served as a fundamental principle of liberal government. Locke's version of the social contract underpins his argument in favour of individual rights and limited government. Following Locke, the attention of liberalism studies has mostly been focused on theorizing social contract in a way that provides the best foundation for liberal politics. Consequently, the theory of liberalism has become occupied with sovereignty and its limits.

Approaches that are focused on theorizing the social contract and defining the boundaries of sovereignty have been instrumental in explaining the formation of liberal politics. However, liberal obsession with sovereignty has resulted in a long silence regarding another fundamental element of the liberal political structure. These approaches, seemingly, take the individuals who are about to enter the liberal social contract as naturally liberal and civilized subjects. In other words, for them, the only obstacle to liberal politics is absolutism, and once limited government replaces the absolute state, liberal politics becomes possible. Therefore, in these approaches, the formation and characteristics of individuals who must fit into the necessities of the liberal social contract is no issue.

In this chapter, I challenge the conventional theorization of the emergence of liberal government from a Foucauldian point of view. Following Foucault's rejection of the sovereign-obsessed political theory, I de-center the social contract and its implications for sovereignty in my analysis of the emergence of liberal politics and re-center discipline and its role in the formation of liberal subjects. My argument posits that carefully limited subjects are as fundamental to the success of liberal politics as carefully limited governments and to the extent that liberalism depends on reasonable, predictable, and manageable subjects, discipline is required to produce them. What is at issue here is the relationship between the inventions of disciplinary techniques of power and the emergence of liberal politics. To clarify this relationship, I first present Foucault's narrative of the emergence of liberalism and then argue that the formation and application of disciplinary technologies of power were necessary for the emergence and success of liberal government.

3.1-Foucault's Analysis of Liberalism

Foucault's notion of liberalism is best understood through his narrative of the key historical changes in the relationship between the state and the individual from the sixteenth century onwards. According to Foucault, what distinguishes the modern state from its ancestors is its immense potential to incorporate individuals into the calculations of state power. This incorporation, Foucault argues, occurs through the dual operation of individualizing techniques and totalizing procedures.

Since the sixteenth century, a new political form of power has been continuously developing. This new political structure, as everybody knows, is the state. But most

of the time, the state is envisioned as a kind of political power which ignores individuals, looking only at the interests of the totality, or, I should say, of a class or a group among the citizens. That is quite true. But I would like to underline the fact that the state's power (and that is one of the reasons for its strength) is both an individualizing and a totalizing form of power. Never, I think, in the history of human societies—even in the old Chinese society— has there been such a tricky combination in the same political structures of individualization techniques and of totalization procedures (Foucault 1982, 782).

In his narrative of the transformations in the modern state's relation to the individual, Foucault draws attention to a new type of political reflection that emerged with the Renaissance and appeared in some political treaties on the art of government. These treaties, Foucault argues, were representative of a fundamental change in political thinking in the sense that they were not concerned with the traditional questions of the nature of state or protection of territory. According to Foucault, the scope of these treaties was much broader including nearly all forms of human activity, from governing a household to managing the most massive manoeuvres of the army (Foucault 1979, 8-10).

These treaties were not merely academic texts. Combined with the empirical knowledge of the state's resources and conditions, they constituted a new form of state and a new form of political rationality which Foucault calls "Police" and "The Reason of State," respectively. As Graham Burchell explains, Police and Reason of State assumed that it was possible to get an adequate and detailed knowledge of the reality to be governed, the state itself, and to use this knowledge to shape the reality to specific ends, usually to increase the power and the wealth of the state (Burchell 1996, 21-22). According to Foucault, liberalism emerged

in the late eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries in reaction to this political rationality.

David Gruber explains this point as follows:

Foucault understands liberalism as primarily reactive, not prospective. [For him], liberalism was generated as a hesitant reply to the burgeoning growth of the governmental and police mentalities, which in the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries took as axiomatic the endless expansion of government and its eventually pervasive infiltration into every sphere of human life for the sake of increasing life and the strength of the state (Gruber 1989, 618-619).

From Foucault's perspective, liberalism is not a form of state or a period of time, nor is it a set of policies or institutions. Instead, Foucault regards liberalism as an art of government. For Foucault, liberal government is a manner of doing things that can be analyzed as a principle, and a method for the rationalization and review of the exercise of government (Foucault 1989: 110 in Dean 2006:55). For him, the liberal art of government is "a more or less subtle activity that interlaces interventions and withdrawals, connects different agencies, and utilizes the interests, needs, and choices of individuals construed as more or less autonomous individuals" (Dean 2006, 50-51).

One way of understanding liberalism as an art of government is to contrast it with the political rationality of Police. In both cases, the primary concern is the best way to accomplish human activities. "Best," in this context, means what is most economical. The liberal art of government is concerned with how to introduce economy; that is, the correct manner of managing individuals, wealth, and goods into the management of the state (Foucault 1978, 8-10). However, liberalism and police state diverge in their understanding of the scope of the state power that must be applied. A police state seeks to gain knowledge

of all aspects of human activities and to use this knowledge to govern all actions of the population. Against this, liberal political rationality argues that it is not possible or favourable for the state to gain a detailed knowledge of the governed reality, or to use this power to shape that reality at will. This is because liberalism considers the reality neither transparent nor amenable to state manipulation (Rabinow 2010, 49-50). Therefore, the liberal art of government is always conscious of governing too much.

However, it would be a narrow view if we understood the liberal art of government as the absence of government or governing as little as possible. The real innovation of liberalism was the discovery that political government could be its own undoing, that by expanding government to every aspect of life, rulers could fail to achieve the very end of government, which is to govern as economically as possible. Liberal government accomplishes its goal in governing economically by recognizing the existence of several non-political spheres and the necessity of such spheres to the ends of government. These spheres are family, the economy, population, and civil society, which together shapes a new reality, called “the society.” The emergence of the society as an independent yet necessary part of the liberal government was the result of the invention of liberalism itself.

Liberalism is not about limiting government by leaving certain spheres of life out of the state’s sphere of intervention. Instead, it is about making careful, delicate, and economic decisions on the relationship between the society and the state. The guiding question for liberal government is under what circumstances and in what combination, should the state allow the free play of forces of the society and when should it intervene to protect the rights and liberties of the individuals who live in the society. The meticulous separation of the

society from the state had some significant results for the liberal art of government. First, it provided a foundation for the realization of limited government. Because the society was considered a non-political sphere, the state's intervention in its internal processes was considered not only unnecessary but also detrimental. Second, this separation guaranteed the rights and freedoms of the individuals living in the society. This freedom was not of a positive nature, but liberty from the interventions of the state in the processes that were considered profoundly apolitical. Finally, depoliticization of the society highlighted the need for regulation in general, and the rule of law in particular. The role of law became a necessary part of the depoliticized societies for two main reasons: On the one hand, it prevented the state from violating the fundamental rights and liberties of the individuals while, on the other, it assured that members of the society would not violate each others' rights and freedoms.

The separation of the society from the state, limited government under the rule of law, and individual liberties are vital components of the liberal art of government. Liberalism creates a novel and unprecedented combination of freedom and the rule of law, a condition in which individual freedoms in the society are necessary to the ends of government. The crucial question here is what made this complicated arrangement of seemingly contradictory elements possible? Was it the result of a breakthrough in political philosophy pioneered by John Locke, or was it the corollary of institutional changes that Western European societies went through in the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries? While those theoretical advances and institutional changes have left their marks on the invention of the liberal politics, my argument is that the liberal articulation of politics would not have been

possible without the invention and expansion of disciplinary techniques of power that dominated Western societies in the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries.

3.2-Discipline and the Emergence of the Liberal Art of Government

Foucault offers no systematic discussion of the relationship between the invention of disciplinary power and the emergence of the ideological or structural components of modernity. In fact, the growth of political and economic modernity is not his point of concentration. His focus is political rationalities that tie subject and power together. Nevertheless, there are some references to the relations between disciplinary power and the emergence of capitalism in his work. These references can also be viewed as a guideline for a Foucauldian analysis of the relations between the inventions of disciplinary techniques of power and the emergence and success of the liberal art of government.

3.2.1-Disciplines and Capitalism

According to Foucault, the rise of capitalist economy was not exclusively dependent on the accumulation of capital; it was dependent on another process of accumulation, which he called the accumulation of men. This refers to the process of the construction of subjectivities, which were necessary for the function of capitalism. As he notes:

The two processes – the accumulation of men and the accumulation of capital – cannot be separated; it would not have been possible to solve the problem of the accumulation of men without the growth of an apparatus of production capable of both sustaining them and using them; conversely, the techniques that made the cumulative multiplicity of men useful accelerated the accumulation of capital (Foucault 1977, 221).

The role of disciplinary techniques of power was significant in the process of the accumulation of men. As Foucault suggests, the accumulation of men was the result of the application of the individualizing techniques of disciplinary power. Disciplines targeted the bodies of individuals and made them docile bodies; bodies that were economically useful and politically obedient. Disciplinary power, according to Foucault, developed a new economy and politics for bodies. It created the type of individuality that was ideal for the new economics and politics of capitalist society. Paul Rabinow summarizes the relationship between the spread of disciplinary techniques of power and the development of capitalist order as follows:

The growth and spread of disciplinary mechanisms of knowledge and power preceded the growth of capitalism in both the logical and temporal senses. Although these technologies did not cause the rise of capitalism, they were the prerequisites for its success (Rabinow 2010, 18).

Rabinow's account of the relationship between disciplinary power and the capitalist order can be viewed as a model to understand the role that disciplines played in the development of liberalism. Disciplines started to become dominant in the late seventeenth and early eighteenth centuries and liberalism emerged in the late eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries. This fact indicates that similar to capitalism, disciplines preceded the emergence of liberalism in the temporal sense. Moreover, there are several connections between the functions of disciplines and the specific features of liberal government that suggest that disciplines preceded the emergence of liberalism in the logical sense as well. By elaborating on these connections, in the following, I explain why disciplinary power was a prerequisite for the emergence and success of liberal politics.

3.2.2-Foucault's Hints

In *Discipline and Punish*, Foucault hints at the fact that the great juridico-political structure of liberal society is under indirect influence of disciplinary techniques of power. According to him:

Historically, the process by which the bourgeoisie became in the course of the eighteenth century the politically dominant class was masked by the establishment of an explicit, coded and formally egalitarian juridical framework, made possible by the organization of a parliamentary, representative regime. But the development and generalization of disciplinary mechanisms constituted the other, dark side of these processes. The general juridical form that guaranteed a system of rights that were egalitarian in principle was supported by these tiny, every day, physical mechanisms, by all those systems of micro-power that are essentially non-egalitarian and asymmetrical that we call the disciplines (Foucault 1977, 221).

It is not difficult to hear Foucault's negative tone when he speaks about the role of disciplines in the structure of liberal government. He considers the function of disciplines as the "dark side" of the process. However, this tone must not be regarded as his negation of the role of disciplines in the construction of liberal government. In fact, he uses this language ironically to criticize the dominant notion of the individual promoted by liberal political philosophy. According to this notion, the individual is a pre-political and pre-existing entity that inherently is independent and self-directed. The task of liberal political theory, consequently, is to discover this individuality and to establish a political order, which is in accordance with its characteristics. Foucault rejects this notion of the individual. In his perspective, liberal individuals are fabricated by disciplinary techniques of power, and it is by virtue of this fabrication that liberal politics becomes possible. As

Gruber explains, “the individuals of discipline are not simply the warped, corrupted perversions into which the promise of liberalism has degenerated; Instead, the lineage of disciplinary firmly precedes the programmatic ideology of liberalism” (Gruber 1989, 618).

Foucault’s comments on the relations between disciplines and liberalism do not go far beyond this. In fact, his intention in these comments is to remind his readers of the contradictory nature of liberal political institutions. However, his detailed account of the emergence of disciplines provides a theoretical framework to specify the relationship between the application of disciplines that resulted in the accumulation of men, and the political changes that resulted in the emergence of liberal government. This framework suggests that there are strong connections between fundamental elements of the liberal art of government –the separation of the social from the state, limited government under the rule of law, and individual liberty– and disciplinary techniques of power. The role of discipline in constructing docile bodies/subjects connects discipline to the liberal art of government and makes it a prerequisite for the emergence of liberalism

3.3-Docile Subjects

The idea of docile subjects originated from Foucault’s narrative of a specific historical moment in the eighteenth century and a dramatic change in the practice of power. In that historic moment, according to Foucault, the bodies of individuals became the target of the practices of disciplinary power. This power did not approach the body in its biological dimension, but as an object to be controlled and manipulated. Disciplinary power considered bodies as texts on which it can inscribe ways of doing things. The goal of this

power was to forge a docile body. A docile body, according to Foucault, is a receptive body that accepts the powers that work on it. It is “something that can be made; out of a formless clay, an inapt body [from which] the machine required can be constructed” (Foucault 1977, 221).

In making the bodies of individuals docile, disciplinary power works through several related methods: drills and training of the body; standardization of action over time; and the control of space (Rabinow 2010, 17). Foucault concentrates on a number of institutions from the military to prison, to schools, and to workhouses, as he describes the settings in which docile bodies are shaped. Within these institutions, bodies and the souls that have been appended to them are made to respond to signals that are implicit, and yet tightly organized through the networks of relations that maintain order. The result of this arrangement is a political anatomy and a mechanics of power that defines 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 wish, with the techniques, the speed and the efficiency that one determines (Foucault 1977, 138).

According to Foucault, an individual with a docile body is a docile subject, a subject that is economically useful and politically obedient. While the usefulness of the body, as I explained earlier, played a key role in the emergence of capitalism, the obedience of the body, I will argue, played a crucial part in the emergence and success of the liberal art of government. It is necessary, however, to clarify the word obedient in this context. To be obedient does not equate with being dominated. Instead, it refers to tractability, manageability, and the predictability of the subject.

3.4-The Docile Subject and the Possibility of Liberal Government

By transforming members of shapeless populations into individualized and docile subjects, disciplinary power materialized the possibility of the liberal government in a number of ways. First, it reduced the constant threat that a mass of humans could pose to the existence of the state; second, it made the separation of the society from the state possible; third, it made the exercise of violence as a state political strategy unnecessary; and finally, it created the basis for limited government under the rule of law. These elements, together, changed the relationship between the state and the individual and paved the way for a transformation from authoritarian modes of rule to liberal democracy. In the following, I examine each of these changes in more detail.

3.4.1-Disciplines and the Threat of the Population

The threat that excessive power of an absolute government could pose to the rights and freedoms of individuals has long been a central concern for liberal political theory. In the forefront of this theory, there have been philosophical arguments (natural right, civil rights, etc.), and institutional arrangements (representative democracy, freedom of speech, etc.), that have been put forth to protect individual rights and freedoms from the infringements of the state. However, in a more implicit way, liberalism has also been concerned with the opposite threat: the threat that the individuals as a mass could pose to the existence of the state.

The complex nature of these two different, yet related threats can be clarified by examining them in the context of the Social Contract Theory. Social contractarians take the state of

nature, a pre-political condition absent of any political power, as their starting point. In the state of nature, according to them, individuals' actions are bound only by their power and desire. Therefore, there are no means to protect people's lives, freedoms, and properties dependably. Thomas Hobbes goes further and defines the state of nature as the condition of an endless war of all against all. In order to leave the State of Nature, social contract theorists posit that individuals have consented, explicitly or implicitly, to give up some of their powers and freedoms and submit to the authority of the state, in exchange for protection of their remaining rights. Therefore, social contractarians claim that the establishment of the state has limited the threat that individuals pose to one another in the state of nature. In its Lockean version, the Social Contract Theory makes promises that the state will not break the terms of the contract as well.

While the liberal version of the Social Contract Theory claims that the liberal state secures the rights and freedoms of its population, it exclusively relies on the concept of self-interest to explain why the individuals will not break the terms of the social contract. In other words, while the social contract theory considers the possibility of the breaking of the social contract by the state, it considers the possibility of the breaking of the social contract by the population unlikely. Locke, for example, says that the people are unlikely to revolt unless very greatly dissatisfied. Historically speaking, the state has had two sets of mechanisms to address the threat that the population as a whole can pose to its existence. The first set of mechanisms is the repressive mechanism. Repressive mechanisms refer to the political practices and institutions that rely mostly on physical violence. Police, the army, courts, prisons, and torture are some examples of the repressive mechanisms. The

key point here is that the liberal state cannot rely on these mechanisms to secure itself against the threat of the population, because the application of the repressive mechanisms was the fundamental characteristic of authoritarian regimes. This fact led liberal governments to deploy another set of mechanisms to reduce the threat of the population. These mechanisms were of a disciplinary nature.

As a simple collective mass, the population is unmanageable, unpredictable, and therefore dangerous. The population could pose a permanent threat to the existence of both the state and the society. In the language of the social contract, the population is always about to break the terms of the contract and to return to the state of nature. Disciplines reduced the threat of the population through organizing, distributing, and individualizing its components. Disciplines atomized the components of the population by ruling “a multiplicity of men to the extent that their multiplicity can and must be dissolved into individual bodies that can be kept under surveillance, trained, used, and...punished” (Foucault 1976, 242). Furthermore, disciplines reduced the political energy of the individuals, and consequently, decreased the disruptive political potentials of the population. Through these functions, the disciplinary power provided two opportunities for the liberal government: first, it eliminated the threat that population could pose to the existence of the state; second, it made the exercise of repressive mechanisms of power mostly unnecessary. Both of these contributed to the possibility and viability of liberal politics.

As explained above, disciplines work at the level of the individuals to reduce the threat posed by the population. This function of disciplinary power is completed by another

liberal art of government that works on the population at the collective level. In response to the growing demand for the democratization of sovereignty, the liberal art of government employed representative democracy as a both democratic and disciplinary solution.

Representative democracy is a disciplinary art of government in the sense that it manages the effects of factions among the population and ensures the strict separation of the population from the state. Representative democracy, in fact, limits and regulates the participation of the population in the operation of the government. Barry Hindess unveils this function of representative democracy by recalling the conventions of American federalists:

[For American federalists], one of the merits of representation... is precisely that it secures a form of popular government in which the people in their collective form are excluded from any part in their government (Hindess 1997, 264).

The elimination of the threat that the population could pose to the social contract was one of the most fundamental transformations that paved the way for the possibility of the other elements of liberal politics. Disciplines assured liberal states that their existence would not be under constant threat, and it was this assurance that made the independence of the realm of society from the state possible.

3.4.2-Disciplines and the Separation of the Society from the State

The idea that there is a social domain composed of the economy, family, and the population that has its own internal laws, and therefore, must be screened from state intervention is a new idea invented first in the nineteenth century in Western European societies. The society, in fact, was the result of some radical transformations in the relationship between

the states and their populations. Before the seventeenth century, the society simply did not exist. Up to that time, what was considered important for the state was not its population but its territory. Since the seventeenth century, and with the emergence of the Police rationalities of government, the population gained importance and was considered as the primary source of the strength of the state. Consequently, the life and activities of the population became the central concern of states. However, police rationalities of government considered population and its activities as a target of excessive manipulation. From their point of view, it was only through constant regulation that the population could contribute to the strength of the state. Foucault argues that the rise of the liberal art of government, as a response to police rationalities, had a significant influence on the relationship between the state and its population and resulted in the creation of a new domain of society:

What was discovered at that time – and this was one of the great discoveries of political thought at the end of nineteenth century – was the idea of *society*. That is to say, that government not only has to deal with a territory, with a domain, and with its subjects, but that it also has to deal with a complex and independent reality that has its own laws and mechanisms of disturbance. This new reality is society (Foucault 1989, 261).

Liberalism defends a specific form of separation between the state and society. The specificity of this separation refers to the fact that liberalism regards the society as both external and internal to its mode of government. It is external in the sense that it must remain secure from the state's intervention, and it is internal in the sense that the very independence of society from the state is necessary for the ends of the liberal government.

The emergence of society can be explained as the result of the withdrawal of the state power from the realms of economy, family life, and the population. However, the nature of this withdrawal needs some clarification. There are two questions regarding this arrangement that must be addressed: what theoretical arguments created the basis for the emergence of society as an independent entity? And, what practical changes made the emergence of society possible? Theoretically speaking, liberal political philosophy approaches society from the perspective of a sort of naturalism. From this perspective, society is a natural domain sensitive to excessive intervention. This naturalism assumes, “as government cannot override the natural dynamics of the economy without destroying the basis on which liberal government is possible, it must preserve the autonomy of society from state intervention” (Barry, Osborne, Rose 1996, 10). Furthermore, liberal political philosophy considers the realm of society as a space in which “critical reflections on the actions of state are possible, thus ensuring that such actions are themselves subject to critical observations” (Barry, Osborne, Rose 1996, 10). Liberal political theory, thereby, provides a sound base for the separation of the society from the state. However, the withdrawal of state power from the realm of society was not merely an effect of the state’s disposition to liberal conventions. Beneath that great disposition, there were practical mechanisms of disciplinary power that made the independence of society from the state possible.

The liberal state recognized the independence of the society only when it made sure that the society would not pose a substantial threat to its existence. Historically speaking, this guarantee was the result of the application of disciplinary techniques of power over the

courses of the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries. In fact, eliminating the threat that population could pose to the very foundation of the state paved the way for the possibility of the recognition of the independence of society. In other words, the society became bearable for the state only when its members were transformed into docile subjects. Otherwise, the society would pose a permanent threat to the existence of the state. Furthermore, the application of disciplinary techniques of power was a precondition for the function of what liberal theorists consider the natural laws of the society. That is, it was disciplinary techniques of power that determined those laws in the first place, and shaped the individuals that were about to act according to them. Disciplines were the mechanisms that formed the society in a way that was both bearable by, and useful for the ends of the liberal state.

3.4.3-Disciplines and the Rule of Law

The rule of law is one of the most prominent features of liberalism, and there is a strong consensus among liberal political theorists that liberty is internally connected to the rule of law. In this regard, British liberal political theorist, Leonard Hobhouse writes, “the first condition of free government is governing not by the arbitrary determination of the ruler, but by fixed rules of law, to which the ruler himself is subject” (Hobhouse 1964, 17).

Another outstanding theorist of liberalism, Fredrich Hayek, argues similarly in his work *The Constitution of Liberty*, “the conception of freedom under the law that is the chief concern of this book rests on the contention that when we obey laws, in the sense of general abstract rules laid down irrespective of their application to us, we are not subject to another man’s will and are therefore free” (Hayek 1960, 153).

Foucault's narrative of the position of law in the modern society, and his account of the relationships between liberalism and the rule of law, however, is more complicated.

Foucault argues that despite the proliferation of the framing of constitutions and the 'whole continual and glamorous legislative activity' we have entered into a phase of 'juridical regression' (Foucault 1979, 144). By this, Foucault contends that the judicial system of law in the modern society has lost ground to more productive, more expansive, and more continuous mechanisms of power that target individual bodies (disciplinary power) as well as whole populations (bio-power) (Brannstorm 2014, 173). Foucault differentiates the judicial system of law from these new mechanisms of power by maintains that whereas the judicial system of law operates as "a right of seizure: of things, time, bodies, and ultimately the life itself," the new mechanisms of power work to "incite, reinforce, control, monitor, optimize, and organize the forces under it" (Foucault 1976, 136). Foucault's statement about entering into the phase of "judicial regression" has provoked severe criticism from scholars as diverse as Habermas and Poulantzas. They accuse Foucault of downplaying the role of the legal phenomenon in modern society to an unacceptable level and with a distorting result (Martire 2011, 19). Foucault, however, does not downplay the role of law in the modern society. Leila Brannstorm explains Foucault's intention as follows:

Foucault's statement about the demise of "the juridical system of the law" is about the waning of a mainly deprivative and repressive way of exercising political power, and the concomitant ascendancy of mechanisms of power primarily geared towards maximizing abilities and productivity. With this change, law, although deployed even more extensively than before, is transformed. It no longer serves the same purposes as before and is now suffused with norms that express the truth

about human nature and social life, rather than conveying a sovereign's privileges or will (Brannstorm 2014, 177).

Foucault is specifically interested in the transformation that law has undergone in liberal societies. From his point of view, law, as an instrument of sovereign power whose language was that of punishment, has been connected to a complex set of disciplinary discourses. As a result, the law has changed more and more from an instrument of punishment to an instrument of normalization. In other words, Foucault argues that disciplinary power has penetrated its normalizing discourse into the body of law and has created a new structure that is juridical in appearance and disciplinary in nature. The transformation of law from an instrument of the sovereign power to a disciplinary instrument occurred in two stages and was related to the rise of two consecutive forms of state: the absolutist state and the liberal state. In the first stage, and in the context of the absolutist European states of the early modern era, the law became more and more detached from the will of the political sovereign and more attached to what was considered the end of the state. Although the policies of the absolutist states still had the form of law—regulations that were cast as the will of the political sovereign—they were different from the previous forms of law as they were centered on affirmative obligations and because they were tactics aiming at maximizing productivity. In this era,

law was less justified with reference to a right giving the sovereign person the privileged to rule and increasingly with reference to the objectives that government action had to reach, and these objectives were primarily the objectives of the state as such and not of the one holding the title of sovereign” (Brannstorm 2014, 177).

In the second stage, and with the rise of the liberal arts of government, new criteria for the

formulating and justifying of law were created. If in the context of the absolutist state, the law was justified with reference to the end of the state, in this new era, the law became formulated, justified, and criticized with reference to the regimes of truth created by discourses of knowledge. Sciences such as criminology, psychology, medicine, and sociology established criteria that defined normal and abnormal behaviors. These norms were primarily the discursive aspect of the disciplinary techniques of power that had dominated West European societies before the nineteenth century. By becoming the primary source of law, norms penetrated the logic of discipline into the body of law and completed its transformation from the instrument of the political sovereign to the instrument of normalization.

The concept of normalization plays a central role in this analysis of the transformation of law. Paul Rabinow summarizes Foucault's conception of normalization as follows:

By "normalization," Foucault means a system of finely gradated and measurable intervals in which individuals can be distributed around a norm—a norm which both organizes and is the result of this controlled distribution. A system of normalization is opposed to a system of law or a system of personal power (Rabinow 1984, 20).

Norms play a crucial role in the subjugating function of disciplinary power. They are not only fixed values but also rules of judgment and means of creating those rules. Norms produce equivalences, which act as tools of comparison; they also produce differences and inequalities through which subjects can be individualized and hierarchically ordered (Dean 1999:119). Norms, in fact, are the discursive aspect of the processes through which disciplinary power creates docile subjects. Here one can see the interconnection between disciplines, law, and docile subjects. Through creating docile bodies—subjects that are

politically obedient and submissive to authorities—disciplinary power makes the rule of law possible. This law, however, has already been transformed by the disciplinary power and has become a gear in a great disciplinary machine which works ceaselessly to normalize its subjects.

It is in the light of this conception of the relations between disciplines, law, and norms that one can understand Foucault's general orientation towards the role of law in the structure of liberalism. For Foucault, it is not liberal juridical thought that makes liberal modes of government possible:

Liberalism does not derive from juridical thought any more than it does from an economic analysis. It is not the idea of a political society founded on a contractual tie that gave birth to it; but in the search for a liberal technology of government, it appeared that regulation through the juridical form constituted a far more effective tool than the wisdom or moderation of the governors (Foucault 1997, 77).

From a Foucauldian point of view, the possibility of the rule of law in liberal society is highly dependent upon the application of disciplinary techniques of power. In fact, this perspective suggests, what distinguishes the nature of law in liberal societies is not only the fact that law is universal, independent from the will of the rulers, and specifically applicable to them. These features make the rule of law theoretically acceptable; however, there is nothing in them that could guarantee the submission of individuals to the liberal laws. What historically made this submission possible was the creation of docile subjects. This submission, in turn, provided the opportunity for the institutionalization of the rule of law in liberal societies, and it was through this institutionalization that respect for law became an entrenched feature of western culture.

3.4.4-Disciplines and the State Violence

In one of his widely known articles, *Politics as a Vocation*, Max Weber defines the state as a “human community that (successfully) claims the monopoly of the legitimate use of physical force within a given territory” (Weber 1919). Since then, and under the preponderance of this definition, the concept of violence has been considered constitutive of the idea of the state. However, the causes and dynamics of state violence against civilians have remained noticeably under-explained, and research has mostly been focused on insurgent violence committed by citizens. States, however, have long been the main perpetrators of violence against individuals and populations. Physical violence against individuals in the forms of imprisonment, torture, or the death penalty has been state’s instrument in preserving its power or maintaining social order. In the long history of state physical violence, however, liberal states have been proven exceptions.

It is true that liberal states historically committed and in some cases still commit violence against marginalized groups such as people of color, women, members of the LGBTQ community, ethnic minorities, Indigenous people. It is also true that these states still exercise a form of violence that John Galtung calls “structural violence.” A form of violence that comes from the ways that liberal states allocate access to essential goods or originates from status hierarchies that work through various forms of categorization and labelling with an effect of subordinating different groups of subjects (Galtung 1969). However, liberal states rarely commit physical violence against their citizens in a systematic, strategic way. Strategic violence is not the outcome of irrational motivations. It does not originate from state’s ideological or religious orientations. It is an instrument

through which the state guarantees its existence. Strategic state violence, in most cases, is a response to an existing insurgency or activities that could potentially lead to an insurgency. Regardless of the legitimate or illegitimate claims of rebellious activities, they always either disrupt the status quo or put the very existence of the state in danger.

The philosophical underpinning of the liberal state can explain why it would not commit ideological or expressive forms of political violence, but the liberal state's shunning of strategic violence needs another explanation. The liberal state found it unnecessary to exercise strategic violence against its population because it seldom encounters insurgencies or political activities that might end up in an insurgency. The reason for this fact must be explored in the way that the liberal rationality of government approaches the desires of individuals. Unlike authoritarian regimes, the liberal state does not say no to the desires of its citizens (Foucault 2003, 73). Liberal rationality does not promote specific desires. Instead, what are important for it are the general mechanism and the logic of desire. Liberalism considers desire as a source of action and movement that is necessary for its ends. Liberalism assumes that the free play of individual desires would result in the interest of the population as a whole (Foucault 2003, 73). By being affirmative to the desires of its subjects, the liberal rationality of government makes any form of political rebellion unnecessary. Citizens of the liberal states consume their energy in the free realm of civil society to satisfy their desires as much as possible. Therefore, they do not find any point in using this energy against their political structure.

The problematic here, however, is how a liberal state can promote the free play of the desires of its subjects without causing social disorder? How would the maximum

satisfaction of the desires of an individual not interrupt the same satisfaction for others? And, how is this unprecedented level of freedom compatible with the principle of the reduction of pain, as promoted by utilitarianism? As far as Western societies are concerned, disciplines played a key role in reconciling these seemingly paradoxical trends. As ‘techniques of detail’ (Foucault 2003, 249), disciplinary mechanisms rely on or dream of recognizing the reality of each desire. Disciplines decode desires to make sure that good and bad desires are differentiated. Through normalizing practices, disciplines guide individuals as to each desire must be followed, and each one must be neglected. Disciplines achieve this level of influence over individuals through detailed and constant surveillance that is the characteristic of disciplinary projects such as Panopticon utopias, or psychiatric models. By shaping individuals and their desires, disciplinary power produces a politically obedient subject who cannot think of acting out of the realm of liberal norms. In other words, Liberalism bestows unlimited freedom to the desires of individuals who have already been restricted by the normalizing function of disciplinary power.

Without this meticulously restricted subjectivity, it is hard to imagine a political structure that recognizes the independence of the society, allows the free play of the desires of its citizens, and eliminates the use of strategic violence. Historically speaking, it was by virtue of the formation of self-governed and docile subjects that liberalism could flourish in the nineteenth century in Western European societies. What are the implications of this account of the emergence of liberalism for societies that struggle with authoritarian regimes? In the following chapter, I explore these implications and question the universality of the necessity of resistance against disciplinary power.

Chapter Four: The Paradoxes of Resistance

In this chapter, I examine the implications that my account of the relationships between the invention of disciplinary power and the emergence of liberalism has for democratic and authoritarianism studies. I argue that the question of disciplinary power does not have a universal answer, and depending on the democratic or authoritarian form of each society, this question must be treated differently. In this regard, first I criticize the prevalence of a negative approach towards disciplinary power that demonstrates itself in an emphasis on the concept of resistance. To elucidate this negative approach, I draw attention to the case of Hel Company, an Iranian factory whose owner's efforts to impose disciplinary techniques of power were faced with hostile criticism from Iranian intellectuals. By emphasizing the differences between established liberal democracies and authoritarian regimes, I argue that resistance against disciplinary power would have different political implications for societies with different political forms. I take Iran as a case and explain how the failure of disciplinary projects in shaping docile subjects has contributed to the resilience of authoritarianism in this country.

4.1-Disciplines as Pure Evil

Foucault's main work on disciplinary power, namely *Discipline and Punish*, has been subject to critical readings that want to reveal the oppressive nature of modern societies. Scholars as diverse as Antoni Negri and Michael Hardt (2006), Gilles Deleuze (1992), Bob Fine (1994), and Mark Poster (1984) see *Discipline and Punish* as a sophisticated analysis of repression and domination in the capitalist society. The inclination to see Foucault's

account of disciplinary power as a gloomy analysis of a society that is under total surveillance, however, comes mainly from readers' theoretical leanings. These readers see *Discipline and Punish* as another analysis of the unprecedented process of the rationalization of power, which provoked Max Weber to talk about the 'iron cage' of bureaucratic domination in modern capitalist societies. These readings are also influenced by the works of the theorists affiliated with the Frankfurt School whose intention was to reveal domination in day-to-day practices of social life. In addition to these, it seems that Foucault is partly responsible for negative readings of his work. In his description of disciplinary power, he depicts the power as negative, coercive, and repressing. At some points, he even talks about looking for an 'anti-disciplinarian' form of power (Foucault 1980, 108).

The negative approach towards disciplinary power, however, originates from a misreading of Foucault's *Discipline and Punish*. This misreading assumes that Foucault talks about a disciplined society established since the eighteenth century. According to this reading, the practices of disciplinary power have entirely managed to fulfill their goal in subjugating individuals, and, at least in Western societies, nobody can escape from them. This reading naturally results in either rejecting disciplinary power or Foucault's narrative of the emergence of this form of power. Foucault's narrative, however, is entirely different. He never talks about a disciplined society where the goal of disciplinary techniques of power in subjugating individuals has been completely fulfilled. In contrast, he makes the excellent point that a disciplined society was, in fact, a utopia dreamed by the eighteenth

and nineteenth-century reformers who obsessively sought to control and shape the bodies of individuals. Therefore, disciplines that Foucault describes are not a description of reality, but descriptions of programs of action. John Ransom explains this point as follows,

In *Discipline and Punish*, Foucault uses the words ‘schemes’ and ‘dreams’ to denote the projects leading up to and culminating in the Panopticon. Major elements of these projects failed to see the light of day or were confronted by oppositional factors that forced modification in their implementation (Ransom 1997, 41).

The fact that Foucault’s *Discipline and Punish* is a description of the aspirations of social reformers to enforce the disciplinary projects, however, does not mean that these projects were wholly disconnected from the world they sought to order. Disciplines had historical configuration indeed. As explained in chapter three, disciplines played a vital role in the social disciplining of a regulatory organization of society aimed at producing docile and obedient subjects.

The negative approach towards disciplinary power also springs from a misreading of Foucault's conceptualization of power. Foucault maintains that “power is everywhere” (Foucault 1978, 83). Power, according to Foucault, not only determines the way we act and think but also fabricates us as subjects. The usual reading of Foucault’s account of power leads to the understanding that individuals are the completely determined and dependent creatures of power, and, as products of the power, they are unable to identify and thus incapable of criticizing or opposing it. This reading usually concludes that if power is omnipotent and individuals are carefully fabricated, then opposition and transformation are impossible.

Foucault, however, considers these conclusions as misguided and unidirectional. In a lecture delivered in 1976, Foucault maintains that individuals are the effects of power, but are also its vehicles (Foucault 1980, 98). By considering individuals as vehicles of power, Foucault suggests that individuals are part of power mechanism, and therefore, in a unique position to challenge it. The fact that we are vehicles of disciplinary power reveals, not the omnipotence of power, but its fragility, “such vehicles might go off the designated path in directions that frustrate the purpose for which they were originally developed” (Ransom 1997, 36). It is true that for Foucault, power relations are unbreakable, but this does not represent a deadlock because it is in the context of power relations that individuals can conceive opposition against them. As John Muckelbauer explains, what Foucault rejects is not the possibility of challenging power relations, but the possibility of programmatic versions of opposition that rely on spaces outside of power, a unified subject, and a normative foundation (Muckelbauer 2000, 73). Foucault maintains that opposition is a crucial part of the process through which individuals are constructed.

The individual is not to be conceived as a sort of elementary nucleus, a primitive atom, a multiple and inert material on which power comes to fasten or against which it happens to strike, and in so doing subdues or crushes individuals. The individual, that is, is not the voice-à-voice of power; it is, I believe, one of its prime effects. The individual is an effect of power, and at the same time, or precisely to the extent to which it is that effect, it is the element of its articulation (Foucault 1980, 98).

To this point, it must become clear that the way Foucault talks about the disciplinary society is not similar to the way that theorists of the Frankfurt School and Max Weber talk

about administrative and bureaucratic societies. Foucault does not pass a moral judgment on the notion of disciplinary power. For him, “relations of power are not something bad in themselves, from which one must free one's self” (Foucault 1984, 129). Rather than rejecting disciplinary power, Foucault maintains that “power is not an evil... it is a strategic game” (Foucault 1984, 129). Foucault indeed appreciates the positive effects of disciplinary techniques of power in shaping modern subjectivities. As Cressida Heyes writes,

One of Foucault's key insights was that disciplinary power, at the same time as it manages and constructs our somatic selves, also enhances our capacities and develops new skills. These capacities can be a part of a struggle for greater freedom (Heyes 2007, 7).

The affirmative readings of Foucault's conceptualization of disciplinary power, however, live in the margins of Foucauldian scholarship, and most approaches towards disciplines sway between scepticism and hostility. Although the hostility to disciplinary projects is a legitimate subject of criticism in societies with established liberal democracies, this hostility plays a more destructive role in the intellectual and political endeavours that work toward progressive political transformation in societies ruled by authoritarian regimes. To depict the dominance of this anti-disciplinarian culture, I draw attention to the case of Hel Company, an Iranian factory whose owner's efforts to impose disciplinary techniques of power were met with hostile reactions from Iranian intellectuals.

4.2-The Dream of Khalil Nazari

In 2016, an Iranian investor and industrialist, Khalil Nazari, published a manual containing

regulations and instructions for workers in his factory, Hel Company. In this manual, Nazari outlined his desired model of work ethics articulated through some strict rules. Some of his regulations were as follows: workers must wear overalls in different colors, demonstrating their rank in the factory (article 67). Everything must be visible in the workshop; there must be no wall or partition in warehouses and production halls (article 2). Workers are not allowed to have snacks for two hours after breakfast and lunch (article 80). Workers are not allowed to eat time-consuming snacks (article 13). Workers are not allowed to use washrooms twenty minutes before and after lunch, and before the end of their shifts (article 24). Workers are not allowed to stay in washrooms more than ten minutes; surveillance cameras control their entrance and departure (article 24/1). Workers are not allowed to use the expression 'next time' in their conversation with their supervisors (In Persian, this expression is usually used to make excuses for not accomplishing a task. By banning this expression, Nazari means that he does not accept any excuse) (article 71). And, it is mandatory for all male workers to practice daily prayers. Offenders of this rule are fined 1200,000 Rials per offense (article 5) (Nazari 2016, 4-25).

The publication of some photos of Nazari's factory depicting banners and signs bearing these rules brought Hel Company into the radar of the social media in Iran. Suddenly, everybody became aware of the existence of Nazari's manual, and it became published widely on the Internet. Nazari's manual was met with harsh criticism from the Iranian press and intellectuals. Some critics blamed Nazari's regulations on his personality or theorized about his possible mental illness. By describing him as a person who is chronically narcissistic, arrogant, and domineering, they related his rules to his voracious appetite to impose his will on his powerless employees (Fatourechi,2017). Others, instead, used

Marxian terminology to condemn him. From their point of view, the target of those rules was extracting as much surplus value as possible from the labour of the workers. They described Hel Company as an example of the gloomy future that capitalism was planning to impose on the working class in Iran (Shahrabi, 2017). Out of all regulations that Nazari outlined in his manual, the article regarding the mandatory daily prayers caught the eyes of his critics specifically. They took this article as a proof of their belief that in Iran Islamism and capitalism have reached the point of reconciliation, and there is no conflict between Islamic ideological leanings and capitalist attitudes (Nikfar, 2017). The adverse reactions towards Nazari's manual, finally, forced Iran's Ministry of Labor and Social Affairs to intervene. They announced that Nazari's rules were illegal and demanded him to change them immediately.

Some Iranian intellectuals found Nazari's aspiration to enforce his version of work ethics to be a draconian will to domination. They described his rules as real violence against the freedom and autonomy of his employees and called for resistance against the spread of such attitudes to other factories (Shahrabi 2017). However, when considered in the context of Foucault's historical studies on the invention of disciplinary techniques of power, it can be argued that Nazari's manual is in many ways similar to pamphlets and guidelines that aimed at laying down disciplinary projects in the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries in Western European societies. Although this manual is not precise in describing disciplinary techniques for distributing individuals in space, and making them subject to strict timetables, it has an evident tendency to shape a new individuality out of its subjects. By imposing strict rules related to time, these rules tend to penetrate timing into the body of the workers and prepare them for a level of punctuality that is necessary for complex

systems of production. By hierarchizing workers in different levels according to their performances, these rules provide a system of differences and equivalences that work to normalize worker's behaviours. Even his tendency to impose mandatory daily prayers on his workers must be seen as a disciplinary technique because he describes every stage of the process of preparation for daily prayers in detail and adds regulations that are not a part of Islamic rituals. For example, nobody is allowed to talk during ablution (article 37/3). Far from its religious nature, it seems that Nazari sees daily prayers as a way to make the body of his workers responsive to the signals of order.

The case of Hel Company is not the only manifestation of anti-disciplinarian culture in Iran, and this culture is not limited to this country. In fact, negative attitudes towards disciplinary power are dominant in political studies in general, and Foucauldian scholarship, in particular. One of the main signs of this anti-disciplinarian culture is the sheer amount of emphasis that scholars put on the concept of resistance (see Lilja and Vinthagen 2014, Muckelbauer 2000, Armstrong 2008, Hartman 2003, Thompson 2003, Hoy 2004, Picket 1996, Flohr 2016). In most studies, resistance is considered as a universally applicable answer to the infringements of disciplinary power. In the following, by mapping the position of the concept of resistance in Foucault's thought, I examine the relevance of such ideas and provide an alternative approach towards disciplinary power. This alternative approach takes into consideration the differences between established liberal democracies and authoritarian regimes.

4.3- The Paradoxes of Resistance

One of the strange aspects of Foucault's *Discipline and Punish* is the absolute absence of

practices of resistance in this book. It seems that Foucault's soldiers, prisoners, pupils, and workers submit themselves willingly and passively to the practices of disciplinary power. In fact, this book conveys the impression that disciplinary techniques of power pursue their targets ceaselessly and without any obstacle. Understandably, this aspect of *Discipline and Punish* became a subject of harsh criticism and it was in response to this atmosphere that Foucault gradually shifted his focus from the concept of power to the concept of resistance (Flathman 2003, 11). In 1976 in his first volume of *The History of Sexuality*, Foucault lays out his basic understanding of the relationship between power and resistance. In the "method" section of this book, he writes, "where there is power, there is resistance, and yet, or rather consequently, this resistance is never in a position of exteriority in relation to power" (Foucault 1978, 95). John Hartman interprets this notion of resistance as follows:

Because power is not coercive in the sense of direct threat of violence, it must be understood as an asymmetrical set of relations in which the existence of this multiplicity of nodal points or relations necessarily entails the possibility of resistance (Hartman 2003, 3).

Although Foucault's critics considered his attention to the concept of resistance in his *The History of Sexuality* as a turning point, they criticized his notion of resistance as entirely reactive. From their point of view, Foucault's resistance was merely a reaction to power and not an affirmative action on its terms (Hartman 2003, 4). Foucault's shift to resistance, however, culminated in his 1982 article, *The Subject and Power*. In this article, Foucault outlined a new direction in his studies:

I would like to suggest another way to go further toward a new economy of power relations, a way which is more empirical, more directly related to our present

situation, and which implies more relations between theory and practice. It consists of taking the forms of resistance against different forms of power as a starting point. Rather than analyzing power from the point of view of its internal rationality, it consists of analyzing power relations through the antagonism of strategies (Foucault 1982, 780).

In accordance with this new line, Foucault points to some contemporary anti-authoritarian struggles in the Western societies: “opposition to the power of men over women, of parents over children, of psychiatry over the mentally ill, of medicine over the population, of administration over the ways people live” (Foucault 1982, 780). He analyses these struggles and concludes, “The main objective of these struggles is to attack not so much “such or such” an institution of power, or group, or elite, or class but rather a technique, a form of power” (Foucault 1982, 781).

Some readers consider Foucault’s turn to concepts such as resistance, struggle, and opposition as a shift from conservative and pessimistic ideas about the nature of power to a more progressive attitude. These readers usually understand this shift as an answer to an inconsistency that they discover between Foucault’s hyperactive political life and his pessimistic account of power. They tend to understand Foucault’s late work as a celebration of resistance, a moment in which Foucault finally takes the side of the oppressed.

In contrast to those readers and along with scholars like Lila Abu Lughod (1990) and Dan Butin (2003), I argue that Foucault’s turn to the concept of resistance is not a normative political choice, but a methodological move. In other words, Foucault does not offer resistance as a way to confront disciplinary techniques of power. Instead, he uses resistance

as a diagnostic of power (Abu Lughod 1990, 42). In this regard, he writes, “we must use resistance as a chemical catalyst so as to bring to light power relations, locate their position, and find out their point of application and the methods used” (Foucault 1982, 780). For Foucault, resistance is not something that must be substantiated somewhere outside of power relations; therefore, his turn to resistance is not a shift from his “dark” conceptualization of power relations to a more revolutionary attitude. Dan Butin explains Foucault’s account of the origin of the practices of resistance as follows:

The ability to resist, Foucault maintained, is inherent within the dynamic quality of the relation of acting agents. Resistance, for Foucault, therefore, is not the goal of action. Instead, action can be understood only through the potential for resistance. Resistance is thus both a precondition for power relations and a manifest response to ongoing relations of power (Butin 2001, 169).

Not only does Foucault not promote resistance against disciplinary power but also he does not necessarily side with those that are resisting power relations. In Foucault’s point of view, practices of resistance eventually impose their regimes of truth that, in turn, might be even more oppressive than those they are struggling against (Butin 2001, 171). Foucault, therefore, is neutral when it comes to the practices of resistance. This neutrality comes from the fact that his turn to resistance does not introduce a new emancipatory political project but a new methodological approach. Foucault expresses this neutrality when he talks about the struggles of prisoners, madmen, or Iranian people:

One does not have to be in solidarity with them. One does not have to maintain that these confused voices sound better than the others and express the ultimate truth. For there to be a sense in listening to them and in searching for what they want to say, it is sufficient that they exist and that they have against them so much, which is

set up to silence them (quoted in Schmidt and Wartenberg 1994, 298).

Although, as explained above, Foucault's turn to the concept of resistance does not entail an affirmative theory of resistance against disciplinary power, some readers might take this turn as an affirmation for their anti-disciplinarian attitudes. They might understand Foucault's late writings as endeavours for a politics of emancipation aiming at releasing individuals from the infringements of disciplinary power. The obvious result of this reading is considering resistance as a normative choice which inevitably results in staging political projects of resistance. This approach values resistance against disciplinary power as a universally applicable approach and generalizes it as a necessary political solution for entirely different social and political systems. This general and universal appreciation of resistance, however, does not consider the differences between Western societies with established liberal democracies and those non-western societies that are governed by authoritarian states. The consequences of the promotion of resistance against disciplinary projects of power are completely different for these different societies.

4.4-Resistance in Different Political Contexts

As far as West European and North American societies are concerned, there is a clear correlation between the establishment of liberal democracies and the inventions and expansion of disciplinary projects of power. By constructing docile and self-governed subjects, disciplines functioned as a precondition for a fundamental change in the relations between West European and North American states and their citizens. This change paved the way for a transformation from authoritarian modes of rule to liberal democracy. Taking the prevalence of liberal states into consideration, it can be argued that the dreams and

schemas of the inventors of disciplinary projects of power have been fulfilled in Western societies. As a result of the applications of disciplines, Western political subjects have reached a level of docility that secures the functions of liberal structures. It is in this context that resistance against disciplinary techniques of power is meaningful and can have positive results for the whole system. In an established liberal democratic society, the practices of resistance would challenge the norms that disciplinary power and its attached discourses impose on individuals. Those challenges would open up spaces in which individuals can shape their own identity in ways that are not in complete accordance with programs of discipline. These spaces also help individuals to experience freedom through making their own decisions. In fact, in an established liberal democracy, there is no conflict between discipline, resistance, and freedom. Together, they form a coherent system within which an individual discovers that disciplines adopted by her are more conducive to freedom than those imposed by others. This individual also experiences freedom in practices of resistance against disciplinary mechanisms. Therefore, it is the very existence of discipline that makes both resistance and freedom meaningful for her.

The elaborate game between discipline, resistance, and freedom loses its sense when it is transformed into societies that are governed by authoritarian regimes. In contrast to established liberal democracies, the predicament in these societies is not that disciplines limit the freedom and autonomy of the individual. Instead, the problem is that there is no political structure within which the play between discipline, resistance, and freedom can be articulated. The reason for this difference must be explored in different logics of power that are dominant in these different societies. While the dominant logic of power in established liberal democracies is that of discipline, the relationship between the state and the

individual in authoritarian regimes follows the logic of sovereignty. Sovereign power is essentially repressive and represents itself as negating, legislative, prohibitive, censoring, and homogenous (Foucault 1978, 83-85). Sovereign power is exercised “mainly as a mean of deduction, a subtraction mechanism, a right to appropriate a portion of the wealth, a tax of products, goods, and services, labour and blood.” Sovereign power, therefore, is “essentially a right of seizure: of things, time, bodies, and ultimately life itself; it culminates in the privilege to seize hold of life in order to suppress it” (Foucault 1978, 136). In contrast to the suppressing nature of power in authoritarian regimes, the logic of power in liberal democracies is productive. It is a power that works to “incite, reinforce, control, monitor, optimize, and organize the forces under it: a power bent on generating forces, making them grow, and ordering them, rather than one dedicated to impeding them, making them submit, or destroying them” (Foucault 1978, 136). Taking the different logics of power that are predominant in liberal democracies and authoritarian regimes into consideration, it can be argued that it is only in the context of a liberal structure of power that the play between discipline, resistance, and freedom is meaningful. Therefore, the agenda for societies governed by authoritarian regimes is not how to resist the infringements of disciplinary projects of power. The agenda, instead, is how to establish a liberal democratic state within which individuals can experience freedom as practices that challenge and rearticulate dominant disciplines.

This point can be clarified by referring to Iran as a country with a long history of authoritarianism. As I will explain in detail in the next section, resistance against the establishment and application of disciplinary power contributed to the resilience of authoritarianism in this country. In Iran, disciplinary sites of power such as modern

schools, the modern army, and modern prisons were developed by Pahlavi's authoritarian monarchy in the first half of the twentieth century. Therefore, Iranian society saw discipline as a manifestation of authoritarianism and tried to resist it at different levels. Pahlavi's administration, on the other hand, applied physical violence in disciplinary sites, which, in turn, resulted in Iranians' alienating of disciplinary techniques of power. The result of this alienation was the failure of the disciplinary apparatuses of power in constructing docile and self-governed subject that could underpin liberal politics in Iran. The failure of disciplinary power in Iran in taking hold also resulted in the dominance of a specific logic of power which was sovereign in nature. Sovereign power, as Foucault explains, is inherently oppressive and depicts itself as negating, authoritative, restrictive, censoring, and homogenous (Foucault 1978, 83-85). In 1979, an anti-monarchy revolution overthrew the Pahlavi dynasty; however, it did not change the dominant form of power in Iran. The only significant change was the fact that the sovereign power became imbued with the Islamic ideology which justified the application of physical violence in disciplinary sites even more than the Pahlavi era. In the next sections, I will explain the role of this ideological violence in the failure of disciplinary power in contemporary Iran.

The example of Iran clarifies that taking the necessity of resistance against disciplines as a universally applicable concept, and generalizing it to the societies that are governed by authoritarian regimes would have a detrimental effect on the possibility of the establishment of liberal structures in those societies. This idea neglects the fact that the function of disciplines in constructing docile subjects is fundamental to the possibility of liberal politics. In fact, the question of disciplines in societies governed by authoritarian regimes cries for an entirely different answer. In such societies, the resilience of

authoritarianism and the failure of liberalism must be attributed to the lack of disciplinary projects or the failure of these projects in constructing docile and governable subjects. In the next section, by taking Iran as a case study, I examine the correlation between the failure of disciplinary projects and the resilience of authoritarianism.

4.5-The Dilemma of Liberal Politics in Iran

The quest for a political structure that is democratic and respects the fundamental freedoms of individuals is more than a hundred years old in Iran. Iranians were among the first nations in West Asia that endeavoured to initiate political transformation. In their efforts, they forged two revolutions and two reformist movements: the constitutional revolution of 1905 that established a democratic constitution and government; the nationalist-reformist movement of 1951 led by Mohammad Mosaddegh that re-established democratic institutions and nationalized Iran's oil industry; the Islamic revolution of 1979 that overthrew the long-standing institution of monarchy and established a republic regime for the first time; and the reformist movement of 1997 led by Mohammad Khatami that aimed at reforming the Islamic Republic of Iran and transforming it to a democratic regime. Despite all these democratic efforts, different studies show that Iran is still governed by one of the most authoritarian regimes in the world (Damiano 2015, 20).

While an array of studies has been conducted to explore the reasons for the failure of democratic movements in Iran, they have paid little or no attention to the reasons for the absence of liberal politics in this country. The necessary elements of liberal politics, namely, limited government, the rule of law, the separation of the society from the state, non-violent modes of rule, and the freedom of the desires of individuals have never

actualized in the long history of endeavours for political transformation in Iran. The impossibility of the formation of the liberal form of government in Iran, I argue, is the result of the failure of disciplinary projects of power in shaping docile and governable subjects in this country. To expand this argument, I take the modern incarceration system in Iran as an example of the failure of disciplinary projects of power in this country. Then, I explain how this failure has contributed to the impossibility of the constitution of liberal politics in Iran.

4.5.1- Iran's Modern Prison System

The establishment of institutions that could have functioned as sites of disciplinary projects of power goes back to the second quarter of the twentieth century in Iran. Starting from 1925, and after the collapse of the Qajar dynasty, the new king of Iran, Reza Shah Pahlavi, initiated ambitious programs aimed at modernizing Iran. During his sixteen years of rule (1925-1941), major developments such as a new schooling system, a modern army, and a modern health system were established. He also initiated several projects aiming at industrializing the country. His modernizing projects westernized the appearance of Iran and changed its social structure dramatically. Those developments also provided material bases for the implementation of disciplinary projects of power. In other words, the proliferation of institutions such as modern schools, workhouses, hospitals, barricades, and prisons was a historic opportunity for the emergence of a disciplinary form of power. The expansion of these institutions played an important role in the formation of contemporary political subjectivities in Iran. However, they could not become bearers of disciplinary mechanisms of power; thus they failed in shaping docile subjectivities necessary to the

possibility of liberal politics. I explicate this argument by elaborating on the history of the modern prison system in Iran.

During the reign of Qajar dynasty (1785-1925), the judicial system of Iran was a complex set of two overlapping systems: royal and Islamic courts. The two systems were supposedly complementary and could “check and balance” each other. For example, punishments ordered by Islamic courts, especially the death penalty had to be approved by the King. On the other hand, royal courts were not able to act against Islamic laws (Matin-Asghari 2006, 691). During this period, lengthy incarceration was not the norm, there was no written legal code, and the prevalent form of punishment was torture inflicted by different authorities from the Shah’s procurators to provincial governors, tribal chiefs, guild elders, and even village headmen (Abrahamian 1999, 17). This judicial system was transformed dramatically by the rise of Pahlavi dynasty (1925-1978). In 1926, Iran’s new Ministry of Judicial Affairs entirely dissolved the old judiciary system and started a wave of radical restructuring and overhauling reforms. The penal code, first created after the Constitutional Revolution, was expanded and the religious courts were abolished. Iran’s new penal code made imprisonment the principal form of punishment; accordingly, the new Pahlavi dynasty began building new prisons of various sizes. The modern prison system soon expanded from the capital city of Tehran to other cities. For example, by late 1920, Mashhad’s new prison had 900 inmates. The most famous prison that was built in that period was Qasr, a prison closely patterned from European models. The Pahlavi regime used this prison to detain its political dissidents. By 1940, this prison had 2000 inmates, 200 of them political prisoners (Matin-Asghari 2006, 692).

The modern prison system in Iran has been the subject of intense scrutiny for scholars with different political and theoretical leanings. Some of them have tried to take Foucault's ideas in *Discipline and Punish*, and use them to understand the function of the modern prison system in Iran. One of the most theoretically astute works of this type is Darius Rejali's *Torture and Modernity: Self, Society, and State in Modern Iran* (1994). In this book, Rejali uses a Foucauldian theoretical framework to approach the phenomenon of torture in contemporary Iran. Rejali identifies the modern prison system in Iran as a disciplinary apparatus and distinguishes it from the judiciary system of the Qajar era. According to him, Qajar's punishment system was not disciplinary because it did not aim at reshaping and remaking individuals (Rejali 1994, 54). Rejali explains torture in modern prisons in Iran as a disciplinary technique of power. According to him, the penal apparatus of Iran's modern state is embedded within a disciplinary regime of power that has been responsible for producing the conditions of possibility for torture (Nikpour 2015, 17).

Afshin Matin-Asghari endorses Rejali's argument on the disciplinary nature of torture in modern prisons in Iran; however, he believes that even the torture in Qajar era had "significant disciplinary dimensions." According to him, the pre-modern torture was meant to change the behavior both of punished individuals (except in the case of execution), and of society at large (Matin-Asghari 2006, 691). Similar to Rejali and Matin-Asghari, Golnar Nikpour characterizes the modern prison system in Iran as a disciplinary apparatus. In her work, *Prison Days: Incarceration and Punishment in Modern Iran* (2015), she claims that prisons such as Qasr played important tutelary functions "insofar as these prisons were a site in which Iranians met the pedagogical and disciplinary apparatus of the state

viscerally” (Nikpour 2015,4). While these scholars see the modern prison system in Iran as a disciplinary apparatus, there are reasonable doubts that they have understood Foucault’s account of disciplinary power properly. They see the application of violent practices such as torture as disciplinary dimensions of the modern prisons in Iran; however, from a Foucauldian point of view; the very existence and prevalence of these practices prove that the modern prison system in Iran has not been a disciplinary apparatus. A closer look at Foucault’s account of the modern disciplinary prisons clarifies this point.

4.5.2-The Panopticon

In *Discipline and Punish*, Foucault takes Jeremy Bentham’s Panopticon as the optimal model of a disciplinary prison. In Bentham’s Panopticon prison, According to Foucault,

Each individual, in his place, is securely confined to a cell from which he is seen from the front by the supervisor; but the side walls prevent him from coming into contact with his companions. He is seen, but he does not see; he is the object of information, never a subject in communication (Foucault 1976, 200).

Panopticon, as John Baltes writes, owes its efficacy to the total visibility of the prisoner and the complete invisibility of the power it brings to bear. The Panopticon architecture, Baltes continues, “slowly and inevitably induces its subject to self-regulate, to internalize the gaze of the supervisor until they themselves come to bear the stamp of the power of the prison” (Baltes 2016, 16). It is the potential of the Panopticon in producing a specific relation of power that makes it successful in reshaping prisoners and transforming them into self-disciplined, normalized, and docile subjectivities, a relation of power within which prisoners are engaged.

Panopticism is a relation of power, not domination: it convinces, persuades, and

pressures, but does not force. There are no instruments of torture; punishment ceases to strike at the body altogether, operating on the mind through gentle, medical, discreet techniques of visibility and invisibility (Baltes 2016, 17).

The inevitable conclusion that one can make after recognizing the structure of the Panopticon is the strict contrast between discipline and physical violence. In fact, physical violence belongs to a domain different from discipline. Physical violence is constitutive of the idea of sovereignty which works through the logic of exception. Sovereignty, as Agamben explains, excludes particular groups of people by suspending or withdrawing the law for them. By doing so, sovereign power abandons those groups of people to violence, harm, or potential death (Agamben 1998, 18). Disciplines, in contrast, do not work in this way. They isolate their subjects but do not exclude them. Disciplines are justified based on two claims: first, that there are specific disciplinary technologies that can systematically identify, classify, control, and isolate individuals with anomalies and second that there are technologies that can normalize these individuals through corrective or therapeutic procedures (Rabinow 1984, 22). None of these procedures involves exclusionary violence. Therefore, the introduction of any form of physical violence in a disciplinary process would ruin it and change it into an entirely different one. By inflicting physical violence in the prison, the relation of power between the prisoner and the supervisor would change and become a relation of domination. Foucault is rather precise when he defines domination.

When an individual or a social group manages to block the field of relations of power, to render them, impassive and invariable, and to prevent all reversibility of movements, we are facing what we can call a state of domination (Foucault 1984, 114).

In contrast to the productive function of power in a disciplinary relationship, physical

violence is destructive. While discipline trains and enhances the body of its subjects, physical violence destroys it. Violence does not accompany a discourse of normalization and has nothing to do with producing a mentality that is matched with the needs of modern society. Discipline can be punitive in some extreme cases. It also can merely aim at directing the movements of the bodies of subjects until they are internalized. However, in none of those cases, discipline destroys the bodies of individuals. Taking torture or other forms of physical violence as disciplinary techniques of power, therefore, comes either from a misunderstanding of Foucault's hypothesis or an entirely different account of discipline which has not been theorized in the work of those who define the modern prison system in Iran as a disciplinary apparatus.

Considering the prison system in Iran as a disciplinary apparatus is not only theoretically incoherent but also empirically incorrect. In his work, *Tortured Confession: Prison and Public Recantations in Modern Iran* (1999), Ervand Abrahamian makes a convincing argument against this hypothesis. By providing historical facts, he poses three questions to those that take torture as a disciplinary technique of power. First, if the primary purpose of torture has been to create discipline in the broader society, why it has been done behind doors and its existence denied? Second, if discipline has been the primary purpose, why have Iranian prison wardens always been so oblivious to the whole issue of order, control, and regimentations? Iranian prisoner memories, according to Abrahamian, are unanimous in reporting that the authorities invariably have left the administration of the wards to the inmates themselves. Finally, if the purpose of discipline is creating obedient subjects, why have the victims of torture mostly ended up more alienated from the torturing regimes? He concludes that the desire for discipline cannot explain the exercise of torture in Iranian

prisons (Abrahamian 1999, 3).

The prevalence of physical violence in the prison system of Iran is a symptom or the result of the domination of the logic of sovereignty in this system. This logic is entirely different from the logic of the discipline. It has its techniques and follows its discourses.

Authoritarian regimes in contemporary Iran (The Pahlavi Dynasty and The Islamic Republic), have employed this form of power either to create dramatic theatre -such as public executions- to intimidate their citizens, or to impose their moral-ideological dispositions on them. Regardless of the purpose of the application of this form of power, the important conclusion is that the enforcement of sovereign power has turned Iranian prisoners into political subjects utterly different from what is expected from the disciplinary mechanisms.

Foucault argues that the strategies developed within disciplinary prisons soon expanded to other modern institutions in Western societies: schools, hospitals, factories, and workhouses adopted disciplinary techniques and constructed subjects who internalized the Panoptic gaze. Those institutions, Foucault argues, became sites of self-discipline, diffusing discipline as broadly as possible (Baltes 2016, 17). The history of power in modern institutions in Iran, however, has been different. The establishment of the modern prison system in Iran did not precede the other modern institutions, and it was not the failure of this system in becoming a disciplinary apparatus that caused the failure of other modern institutions in becoming so. However, the failure of the modern prison system in Iran in shaping disciplined and self-governed political subjects can be regarded as an example of the failure of the whole modern disciplinary apparatuses of power in this

country. As far as liberal politics is concerned, the most important outcome of this failure is the absence of the self-governed political subject that is the prerequisite for the possibility of liberalism.

Conclusion

In contrast to the disciplinary societies of the West in which the dominant form of political subjectivity is the docile subject, we can categorize Iran as a non-disciplinary society.

Non-disciplinary societies have two definitive features: the absence of disciplined and self-governed political subjects, and the prevalence of authoritarian regimes. These two features produce and reproduce each other consistently. The result of this mutual reproduction is the impossibility of the formation of liberal politics. On an abstract level, the absence of disciplined and self-governed political subjects hinders the possibility of liberal politics in different ways: first, it makes the independence of the realm of society from the state impossible. This impossibility originates from the fact that a non-disciplinary society poses a permanent threat to the existence of the state. This threat justifies the constant intervention of the state in society, which, in turn, eliminates the possibility of limited government. The absence of disciplined subjects, furthermore, eliminates the possibility of the rule of law. The possibility of the rule of law is contingent upon two transformations: first, the transformation of the law from an instrument of punishment into an instrument of normalization, and second, the transformation of individuals from unmanageable subjects to docile individuals who submit themselves to the authority of law. Both of these transformations are the outcomes of the success of disciplinary mechanisms in becoming the dominant form of power. In a non-disciplinary society, the law is the instrument of punishment and individuals transgress it consistently. This problematic relationship between individuals and the law makes the institutionalization of the rule of law impossible.

The lack of disciplined subjects also makes strategic violence a permanent instrument of the state. Strategic violence, in most cases, is the state's response to an insurgency or political activities that could end up in an insurgency. While societies with established liberal democracies have limited the necessity of insurgent activities, these activities are permanent features of politics in non-disciplinary societies. The permanent possibility of insurgency in non-disciplinary societies originates from the complicated relationship between the desires of the individuals and the ends of the state. Unlike disciplinary societies, the desires of the individuals in a non-disciplinary society have not been shaped and restricted. Consequently, the desires of each individual contradict the desires of the other in some cases, and contradict the ends of the state, in others. In this situation, the state invariably rejects the desires of its subjects and pursues its ends, regardless of the desires of the individuals. The individuals, in turn, respond by staging insurgent activities aiming at forcing the state to change its ends or to overthrow it. It is in this context that the individuals find insurgency the only practical political agenda and the state finds violence the only means to maintaining its dominance.

All in all, the failure of disciplinary mechanisms of power in constructing self-governed political subjects leaves non-disciplinary societies with an intrusive state that cannot tolerate the independence of the society, a state which uses physical violence against its citizens regularly and pursues its ends regardless of the aims of its subjects. This draconian mode of rule is a response to a society which does not submit to any form of authority, disrespects the rule of law and stages insurgent activities against the existence of its state. What is missed in the political arena of such a non-disciplinary society is the feeling of

security. Neither the state, nor the individuals feel secure and, therefore, stay armed against each other. In Foucault's point of view, the constitution of norms creates an economy of power that plays a crucial role in establishing and maintaining security. What is specific about this economy of power is the way it subjectivizes individuals to exercise their freedom responsibly (Kendrick 2013, 5). It is in the situation of the absence of these norms that security becomes an elusive phenomenon both for the state and the individuals. This situation leaves the state and the individual *de facto* in the state of cold war or a state of exception that makes authoritarianism the only working system of rule.

One might conclude from this argument that an authoritarian regime is the natural or the necessary form of state for a non-disciplinary society. This conclusion, understandably, endorses authoritarian regimes and makes them the guardians of security and order. My conclusion, however, is different. From my vantage point, both individuals and the state in non-disciplinary societies are the products of the failure of disciplinary projects of power. Authoritarian states are constructed by a society which is the product of the failure of disciplinary projects; however, these states play a crucial role in this failure. By introducing physical violence into disciplinary sites, authoritarian regimes distort disciplinary projects and, consequently, shape distorted political subjectivities that invariably have a problematic relationship with different forms of authority. Taking Iran as a case, the prevalent use of torture, capital punishment and public recantation by Iran's authoritarian regime, as I explained, has played a crucial role in the failure of the modern incarceration system in Iran in becoming a disciplinary apparatus. The disruptive role of authoritarianism in disciplinary processes in this country, however, is not limited to the

incarceration system. Another example is the schooling system of Iran. While the non-disciplinary practices of violence have intercepted the disciplinary function of the incarceration system; it is the non-disciplinary discourses of knowledge that have distorted the disciplinary function of the schooling system in this country. Iran's authoritarian regime stubbornly endeavours to impose its religious-ideological attitudes on the students. This endeavour might shape the interests of students and brings them in line with those of the state. However, the goal of these discourses is not constructing useful and docile individualities that are necessary for the function of modern economic and political structures but making the students adherent to the Islamic ideology of the state.

In fact, both the state and the individuals in non-disciplinary societies are entangled in a specific logic of power that is the result of the failure of disciplinary projects. Taking this into consideration, a Foucauldian approach towards authoritarianism entails de-centering the concept of resistance against disciplinary power and re-centering the necessity of the establishment of disciplinary projects in non-disciplinary societies. This approach also entails challenging authoritarian regimes for their role in intercepting disciplinary projects by enforcing violent practices or non-disciplinary discourses. This approach relies on the argument that the relationship between disciplinary power and liberal and democratic modes of rule is not only contingent but also necessary. The meaning of the concept of necessity, however, must be clarified in this context. The concept of necessity here is not related to the philosophical category of historical necessity as invented by Enlightenment philosophy and culminated in orthodox Marxism. That is, the necessity of the invention of disciplines for the emergence of liberalism is not a representation of the essence of history.

In other words, the invention of disciplinary techniques of power and the emergence of liberalism in the Western societies was not inevitable, and they are not meant to happen in non-Western societies as a part of the actualization of the logic of history. Here, I use the concepts of necessity and contingency in a Foucauldian sense. For Foucault, necessity is not tied to the philosophy of history and does not equate with inevitability. From his perspective, social practices are both contingent and necessary. They are contingent as they are always exchangeable and necessary as they are constitutive of our present. This idea implies that the inventions of disciplinary apparatuses of power and the formation of the liberal state both were contingent phenomena that happened in a specific historical period (the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries) and specific geographical locations (Western Europe and North America). The invention of disciplinary mechanisms of power, however, was necessary for the emergence of liberalism in terms of their internal relationship. That is, liberalism would not emerge in West European and North American societies during the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries if disciplinary apparatuses of power were not invented. This account of the necessary relationship between discipline and liberalism provides a guideline for any political agenda that views the establishment of liberal democratic states in authoritarian countries as political projects, not as a necessary outcome of the progress of the history.

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