Part I: Framed by Theory: Security, Biomedical Science and the Biosecurity Individual

> They who can give up essential liberty to obtain a little temporary safety deserve neither liberty nor safety.
> *Benjamin Franklin*

Today, "security" is an overdetermined signifier in public as much as in academic discourse. It is usually understood within national security terms, which imply the notion of protection and control to guarantee freedom and liberty. According to most scholars, this rise of security as a central paradigm of protection was "predicated upon the nation-state" (Chilton 139). In fact, throughout the centuries security has become the main object of the state. The origins of security in that sense are most commonly fixed to liberal political theory and the protection of property, especially when discussing the expansions of the security state centered on surveillance and control.[1] But – as Benjamin Franklin's quote demonstrates – the founding fathers did not value security in the way it is predominantly understood and practised today. Franklin's famous phrase, originating from the failed negotiations in Britain before the Declaration of Independence, indicates the tension between security and freedom, particularly in the U.S. American context.[2] It

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1   In "The Aspiration for Impossible Security" Völz asserts that it is a simplification to assume that "security constitutes both liberalism's ultimate legitimation of power and a distinctly liberal technology of rule" (13). He points out that with the foundation of the nation the liberal roots of security are in fact not based on governmental control but the right to overturn the government. Security in its contemporary sense represents a break from the understanding of security in the tradition of liberal thought.

2   Benjamin Franklin also embodies the strong connections between politics and science in the United States. However, his emphasis on the primacy of liberty over control and security did not translate to the relation of the self to the individual. In *The Autobiography of Benjamin Franklin*, he showcases the "self-made" individual based on a vigorous practice of self-control according to 13 virtues. Furthermore, he was a supporter of variolation against smallpox.

represents a balancing act between collective, national and individual security defined by freedom and liberty. It exemplifies the intimate interconnections of the private and the public, which are both also central to the understanding of biological security. As the nation-state rose to become the guarantor of political security, medicine and science became the arbiter of biological security.

The study of security has established its own field, namely that of Security Studies, which comprises various different disciplinary perspectives, most dominantly Political and Policy Studies, as well as Anthropological and Sociological perspectives. More recently, also Literary Studies has started to engage in the growing field studying this central paradigm of contemporary culture. The disciplinary focus of Security Studies, which had been almost exclusively dedicated to national security concerns, was broadened and challenged decisively after the Cold War. The work of scholars such as David A. Baldwin and Emma Rothschild is paradigmatic for this discursive shift of rethinking the state as the "primary referent object" of security (Kaltofen 37). Rothschild seeks to find a new conceptualization of security in adding "human security"[3] to the purview and defining it as reliant on "the distinctive self-consciousness principles" (Rothschild 54–5). Today, the concept of security finds many fields of application, which range from individual security to human or environmental security, as well as to national and domestic security. Yet, more radical and more important for my argument is another theoretical shift of the field. In the 1990s the study of security underwent "a radical, linguistically based 'constructivist turn'" (Burgess 2) establishing so-called Critical Security Studies.[4] This theoretical approach to security "focuses on the means by which security issues are constructed through language" (ibid.).

Similar to this "constructivist turn" in Security Studies, I will regard biological security not as a determined end point but as a condition, which has to be defined to become meaningful and acquire its culturally constructed meaning. Understanding security as performative helps to recognize that any representation of security is at the same time expressing, as well as (re-)producing, an understanding of security. I am not interested in defining or redefining security. Rather, I wish to study security as an operational term that does things. I will further argue that security narratives not only produce the understanding of security, but arrange people, positioning them toward the defined state of security. Unlike in a political-philosophical context, where the components that make up the ideal configuration of security are discussed, my own Cultural Studies perspective focuses on the way security is (made) culturally present. Instead of focusing on security mechanisms and practices as a form of governmental control and infringement on liberty and freedom only,[5] I wish to focus on the narratives of security as a productive force that articulates an imaginary of security and facilitates such practices in the first place.

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3   "Human Security refers to both 'freedom from want' and 'freedom from fear'. . . . The core of Human Security is the concern for the holistic well-being of the individual human being. In other words, Human Security asserts that in order for an individual to be safe and secure both positive and negative peaces [sic] are necessary." (Von Feigenblatt 2)

4   Critical Security Studies are not exclusively focused on speech-act theory but also on other theoretical schools of Critical Theory. For a critical discussion of the use of the Frankfurt School in Critical Security Studies see Carolin Kaltofen "Engaging Adorno."

5   This is extensively done in anthropological and sociological studies following Foucault.

The "narrative constructedness" of security is understood by Security Studies scholars as "needed specification" to define a concept of security so as not to leave it a "useless category" (Baldwin 17).[6] More radically, I would suggest that security narratives are a form of storytelling and are therefore best analyzed with a Cultural Studies approach. Security narratives stabilize a social fiction which produces a "cultural imaginary" (Fluck; Iser) that cannot be described as a mimetic representation but is also always performative, relying on its aestheticization and reception. Studying biological security as performative allows for a more thorough understanding of the material effects that are produced by security narratives. With the performativity of security I refer to the theatrical as well as deconstructive sense of performativity, basing the perspective principally on John Langshaw Austin, Jacques Derrida, and Judith Butler, tracing the concept from speech to language, and finally to the body.

To establish my understanding of security and its reliance on narrative I will first turn to the central position of security narratives in the U.S. American cultural archive. In chapter 1 I will use the Declaration of Independence as the most iconic security narrative in the United States to explain my theoretical approach of performativity, and what it means to understand security as performative following the theory of Austin and Derrida. The Declaration of Independence is useful to highlight the structural and temporal characteristics of security which are central in biological security narratives. In chapter 2 I will show how science and medicine assumed normative power over life and its security, becoming in the Austinean sense the authoritative voices producing new security narratives. I will trace how body and life were increasingly securitized by focusing on the processes of medicalization and biomedicalization, as well as the shifting logics of security from prevention to pre-emption. I will use this historic overview to emphasize that the rise of biological security is not predicated on scientific findings only but on narrative practice and faith. In focusing on narrative construction I will argue that (bio)medical sciences as the arbiter of biological security establish a messianic narrative of scientific and medical salvation that represents the hope to control the body and correct nature's "mistakes."

In chapter 3 I will elaborate on the cornerstones of the theory of biomedicalization and show how biosecurity logics of prevention and pre-emption have become central for the understanding of individual biological security. I will discuss how biosecurity narratives define the relation of individuals to their body producing new biomedicalized identities: self-reliant biosecurity individuals, responsible and able to determine their own biological fate. In chapter 4 I will then focus on how to understand such biosecurity individuals in terms of identity theory. I will argue that biosecurity represents a further intersectionality that greatly impacts lives, structuring U.S. American society. To broaden the largely sociological Foucauldian-based understanding of biosecurity identities produced by governmentality, I will introduce Butler and the performativity of the body to facilitate a more thorough understanding of these "new" biosecurity individuals. Since security narratives are not only present in textual form in the traditional sense,

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6   Baldwin proposes that "one could specify security with respect to the actor whose values are to be secured, the values concerned, the degree of security, the kinds of threats, the means for coping with such threats, the costs of doing so, and the relevant time period" (17).

but are also "written" on the body, Butler's concept of the performativity of the body is crucial, both in its deconstructive as well as theatrical sense. It allows a more comprehensive study of biologically inflected security narratives that define the materiality of these bodies, which are not perceived as intimate space (only) but are also always public.