

**Neoliberal and Militarised Post-Politics: Four Social Regimes,
Four Affects and Radical Politics Today**

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Abstract

This dissertation theorises the depoliticised conditions of late capitalism through what I call a 'neoliberal and militarised post-politics.' It argues that ours is a neoliberal and militarised post-political society that cannot imagine disruptive revolutionary events. The dissertation addresses key debates on governmental social regimes of neoliberal post-politics, the inseparability of neoliberalism and war/militarism, and the historical/geographical unevenness of global capitalism. In so doing, it offers an original topological analysis that makes the following critical interventions: an exploration of how the much-discussed social regimes of sovereignty, discipline and control relate to each other in the production of neoliberal governmentality; an analysis of the affective logic each regime entails and how they inter-relate; a proposal for a fourth regime, 'terrorism', and a theorisation of its associated affect, 'spite.' Finally, radical critique as divine violence is set against neoliberal and militarised post-politics.

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Chapter One

1.1 Introduction

The possibility of properly political action is an ancient question that has been continuously rearticulated through changing conditions. This question of the political is still as urgent as ever in these neoliberal times. Often dubbed 'post-political', current conditions have sparked incisive if sometimes despairing analyses of how and why truly political collective action seems so difficult in the current historical juncture of ever-spreading marketisation and militarisation (Badiou, 2012; Bauman, 2012; Diken, 2009; 2012; Harvey, 2005; Graham, 2010; Žižek, 2010; 2011; 2012). Much is said of the debilitating and even violent effects of individualisation from both Marxist and poststructuralist perspectives (Dean, 2010b; Dikeç, 2007; Harvey, 2003; Mouffe, 2005; Rancière, 2010; Žižek, 2008a; 2008b). But one of the most tantalising but undeveloped aspects of this body of scholarship has been the affective aspects of post-politics. In this dissertation I offer a systematic theoretical analysis of not only some of the effects of post-politics on political subjectification, but of how its affective logics are integral to its regimes of power, regimes which help condition the field of power in which political subjectification takes place. Furthermore, discussions of these regimes have largely been confined to the triad of

sovereignty-discipline-government familiar from Foucault (2007; 2008) and the regime of control suggested by Deleuze (1995). Here I argue that these regimes alone are insufficient to account for the peculiar violence of neoliberalism. I propose an additional regime, 'Terrorism', with its associated affect of spite, in order to theorise the special relationship between neoliberalism and terrorism.

While this dissertation theorises neoliberal post-politics, many – but not all – of neoliberalism's characteristics are generic to capitalism, and so the dissertation often makes use of the past to make sense of the present. As Walter Benjamin (1969: 261) pointed out in the advent of fascism, revolution "is a tiger's leap into the past", which enables human subjects to fulfil some historic task by linking the present to the time of the virtual. Simply put, in order to understand the present, the whole of the past has to converge with the present. In the process, moment of the past and moments of the present eventually coalesce meaningfully, disrupting the continuum of history and thus providing the subject of history with a theoretical and practical framework for altering the present. And so I put relevant theoretical and cultural productions from the past century and more in conversation with current intellectual and historical developments. I say much more about the approach taken in structuring the argument below. But first, why appeal to cultural productions? They are key here, given the centrality of affect to this project. They are the bridge between the theoretical and the empirical, as they give sensible form to the

conceptual. Furthermore, while this is not an empirical study, they serve as empirical 'evidence' of a particular sort to complement the current events also discussed, as they are materially symptomatic and exemplary of the logics being explored here, including those that are untimely or out of place in terms of their original production.

Second, it is worth noting at the outset that many of the theories and cultural productions used here specifically address the political within urban life. Indeed this project was initially conceived as an exploration of the logics of neoliberal urbanism. Yet it quickly became apparent that the rationalities of post-politics jump scale, and that theorising neoliberalism and its violence at the urban scale would be an additive factor that would expand this project beyond manageable bounds. Instead, this study takes its cue from a central insight of scholarship on modernity, that urban ways of life have colonised multiple scales from the global to the intimate as time-space compression has continued (Coaffee et al, 2009; De Caeter, 2004; Dikeç, 2007; Graham and Marvin, 2001; Graham, 2004; 2010; Harvey, 1990; 2012). Thus many examples are urban, but theorising the urban per se alongside affective rationalities and regimes of power will have to be a separate project.

And so this dissertation theorises neoliberal and militarised post-politics and historical social regimes and their affective structures. It argues that ours is a post-political society in which lives inhabit a time all of their own,

unrelated and unbothered by disruptive 'revolutionary' events. As such, it does not give us, "*all of us*, the space and time to become something else, the right and opportunity to experiment, to enable lines of flight, to forge solidarities" (Amin et al., 2000: 26). Neoliberal and militarised post-politics - the institutionalised reaction, the systematic silence - is the clear logic beneath this process.

The ideal of a world without conflict, antagonism and radical political change is the problem of neoliberal and militarised post-politics. It is precisely for this reason that confronting post-politics must be a political question. For politics proper is always an intervention into a particular situation, against specific agents. If conflict, antagonism and 'the event' are invisible in our contemporary post-political condition, the challenge of politics today is to make them appear. The task of politics is, in other words, to shift conflict and antagonism to their proper place. But in what form? At this point, let us focus on agonism as a common good that can accommodate conflict, passions and creative destruction.

1.2 Agonism

Agonism is a political theory which, following the ancient Greeks, asserts contest and struggle as the proper bases for politics. In doing so, it challenges some of the fundamental commitments of liberal theory as embodied in procedural/aggregative model (e.g. Schumpeter) and

consensualist/deliberative democracy (e.g. John Rawls and Jürgen Habermas). In both models, the primary aim is to achieve a ‘rational’ consensus by means of free discussion (Habermas, 1996; Rawls, 1996). Theorists of agonism are, however, sceptical of the possibility of a consensus-based liberal politics. Hence agonists specifically focus on what Chantal Mouffe (1996: 247) calls the “ineradicable character” of “power and antagonism.”

Before proceeding, it is worth noting that there are different versions of agonism, such as the work of Ernesto Laclau, Chantal Mouffe and William Connolly, but I want to exclusively refer to Mouffe’s and Connolly’s work when I use the term “agonism.”¹ This is because their agonistic politics are based on the notion that politics proper cannot be thought of without adversaries, that they are both inspired by Nietzsche’s agon, that politics is based on affect and difference, and that conflict and antagonism are fundamental ingredients of adversarial politics. In short, both of them aim

¹ Agonism is, after all, a classical concept used by more than one advocate. It is also referred to as “strong democracy” (Barber, 1984); “virtu politics” (Honig, 1994) and “deliberative neo-pluralism” (Mansbridge et al, 2010).

to target consensual politics, which has a good deal in common with neoliberal and militarised post-politics. Since we cannot and should not eliminate conflict, antagonism and difference from the domain of politics, both Mouffe and Connolly guide us to construct a politics of adversaries rather than enemies, which would entail an ongoing process of conflict, antagonism and affect.

In what follows, I refer to Mouffe's recent work on *The Political* (2005) and Connolly's work on *Identity/Difference* (2002) and *Pluralism* (2005). Heavily inspired by Nietzsche, Mouffe's work on the political is an updated extension of her earlier collaboration with Laclau (2001), but it differentiates from that work in the sense that it focuses on post-political politics, which is embodied in "Third Way politics" (Giddens, 1998). Similarly, Connolly's work on identity/difference guides us to aim toward a politics of adversaries rather than enemies, which has also common denominators with neoliberal post-politics. To articulate Mouffe and Connolly's work in the context of post-politics, I aim to build up a critical approach, returning each to agonism via Nietzsche's agon, thus showing the weak sides of their agonistic politics. Conversely, I assert, radical politics based on Nietzsche's agon should accommodate struggle, as well as affects and will.

Let us start with Chantal Mouffe. Mouffe argues that deliberative democracy cannot accommodate deep difference; it does not produce

difference (in the sense of antagonism, dialectic) but rather a deliberation which denies passion in favour of consensus. In this sense Mouffe (1996: 16; 2005: 14, 20-1) proposes “agonistic pluralism” as a fundamental ingredient of public culture and politics that involves “a vibrant clash of democratic political positions.” All of this brings us to the distinction between ‘politics’ and the ‘political.’ Whereas, according to Mouffe (2005: 9), ‘politics’ refers to “the set of practices and institutions through which an order is created, organising human coexistence in the context of conflictuality provided by the political”, the ‘political’ refers to the potential emergence of new forms of antagonism, understood as a distinctive political experience in which particular identities can be constituted and refuted. While the political refers to the distinctive experience of antagonism, politics necessarily involves an agonistic struggle for hegemony. And, in so far as politics is politicisation, politics without agonism is a depoliticised politics. The aim of an adequate democratic theory is, in contrast, to defuse antagonism and affirm democracy, that is, to provide the possibility for antagonism to be transformed into “agonism”, so that conflict takes a form “that does not destroy the political association” (ibid. 19-20). While antagonism designates a we/they relation “in which the two sides are enemies who do not share any common ground”, agonism designates a we/they relation “where the conflicting parties, although acknowledging that there is no rational solution to their conflict, nevertheless recognize the legitimacy of their opponents” (ibid. 20).

Another significant exponent of agonistic pluralism is William Connolly's work (2002) on identity/difference. Connolly, like Mouffe, follows a Nietzschean tradition, suggesting that agonistic democracy is capable of mediating the two poles of identity/difference. By both demonstrating the centrality of identity and difference with regard to life while being aware of the dangers of the identities getting dogmatized, Connolly also folds "care for the protean diversity of human life into the strife and interdependence of identity/difference" (2002: x). Connolly's thesis can be divided into three main propositions. He suggests as a first step that life requires identity. Second, he argues that identities create and maintain differences. Identities are formed by way of constitutive others; they refer themselves to a "constitutive outside"² against which they define themselves. That is to say, identities are structurally incomplete; they are always marked by a constitutive outside which both constructs and deconstructs them. Third proposition is what Connolly (ibid. ix) calls "the second problem of evil",

² In *Hegemony and Socialist Strategy* Laclau and Mouffe (1985) also argue that the political field and identities are constructed through the production of a determining outside. In other words, the very domain of politics and identities establish themselves through the naturalisation of the "pre-" or "non-" political. In Derridean terminology, this is called the production of a "constitutive outside."

which “emerges out of solutions to the first one.” The second problem of evil, according to Connolly (ibid. x), “flows from diverse political tactics through which doubts about self-identity are posed and resolved by the constitution of an other against which that identity may define itself.” “To explore this territory”, Connolly (ibid. x) writes, “is to struggle against the evil done by attempts to secure the surety of self-identity.”

According to Connolly, the two evils of identity/difference must be protected. Identity can be the source of “the second problem of evil”, but it is also a defining dimension of life. In this respect, contemporary politics does not seek to eliminate identity from the domain of life, for “to do so would be to work against a public ethos of deep pluralism” (ibid. xxii). It is in this respect that Connolly proposes agonistic respect as a constitutive element of politics and society, which consolidates identity through the constitution of difference. Agonistic democracy is based on agonistic respect which “is a civic virtue that allows people to honor different final sources, to cultivate reciprocal respect across difference, and to negotiate larger assemblages to set general policies” (ibid. xxvi). Agonistic respect is a fundamental political virtue in a society “in which partisans find themselves in intensive relations of political interdependence” (ibid. xxvi). As such, it seeks to combine tolerance with the possibility of “selective conflict” in its practice. But how can agonistic respect flourish in contemporary society? Agonistic respect “flourishes most when it becomes a reciprocal virtue cultivated by interdependent partisans” (ibid. xxviii). However, agonistic

respect for the other is not enough to establish an 'expansive ethos of pluralism.' It also needs to involve the civic virtue of critical responsiveness" (Connolly, 2005: 127). Whereas, according to Connolly (ibid. xxviii), agonistic respect "speaks to relations between already crystallized constituencies", critical responsiveness "speaks to the relation a crystallized constituency pursues to a disqualified minority struggling to migrate from an obscure or negated place below the register of legitimate identity to a place on that register." To embrace critical responsiveness as a civic virtue "exposes the extent to which a positive ethos of political engagement exceeds the reach of any fixed code, austere set of procedures, or settled interpretation of moral universals" (ibid. xxx). Predicated upon the notion of agonistic respect and critical responsiveness, agonistic democracy thus opens up political space for agonistic relations of adversarial respect (ibid. x, 86).

Connolly's work is a significant attempt at linking identity and difference. His understanding of agonism, however, is not devoid of difficulties. In order to clarify this point, we need to take a closer look at Nietzsche's agon. As is well known, God dies in Nietzsche's world. But Nietzsche is indeed far more interested in asking what happens when 'God is dead.' Nietzsche points out that if God is dead, then so is Man, or "at least the conception of humanity favoured by the guardians of social order" (Eagleton, 2012: 8). Hence his main concern is to create the Overman whose life is full of passion for greatness in a world without Gods. The

Overman is one who revolutionises the idea of himself without pretending that God is still alive. For this to happen, however, the Overman should engage in the art of the struggle because struggle is the essence of life. In his early essay "Homer's Contest", it becomes obvious that Homer's contest occurs, for Nietzsche (1954: 34), in an "uninterrupted spectacle of a world of struggle and cruelty." Hence Nietzsche values the Greeks for their embrace of cruelty, violence and destruction, the very affects that made the Greeks' accomplishments achievable. Nietzsche's agon, too, is a channel for our destructive affective capacities. In short, the Overman is the agonal spirit incarnate (see Thiele, 1990: 12). As such, he bears a "spiritualized enmity" that does not "stretch out languidly and long for peace desire peace" (Nietzsche, 2005: 173). In his world, strife is not the great-vote winner, but it is actually the best policy because from strife, from struggle "man emerges ... stronger for good and evil" (Nietzsche, 1986: 163). For life is a struggle, a conflict between two necessary aesthetic elements: Dionysus and Apollo. As Apollo creates boundaries, Dionysus transcends them; Apollo is life-preserving, Dionysus life-creating.

Dionysus never finishes his labours. And the agon provides the opportunity for Dionysus to enjoy cruelty and transcend boundaries. In this sense the formulations such as the "full release of ...hatred as a serious necessity", "the tiger charged out", or "the cruelty of the victory" (Nietzsche, 1954: 34-39) refer to will to power, the supreme immanent principle of Nietzsche's philosophy: "[a will to power] – when you speak of good and evil too, and

of valuations. You still want to create the world before which you can kneel: that is your ultimate hope and intoxication” (Nietzsche, 1961: 136). Seen in this perspective, life for Nietzsche is will to power, which expresses and seeks to expand itself. Life as will to power forces us to destroy old values and set new ones. Values are, however, not *there* in nature, waiting to be discovered, but instead are created, or willed. And it is through *interpretation* that values can be authentically created. To engage in competition requires us to view values from the perspective of a will to power as an immanent principle. Significantly, will to power should not be understood as success, for success can undermine the benefits derived from the contest. How is victory, therefore, measured? Victory is meaningful only when it “heightens the feeling of power, the will to power, power itself in man” (Nietzsche, 1990: 127). Nietzsche asks: “What is happiness?” He answers: “the feeling that power increases – that a resistance is overcome” (ibid. 127). In this sense the struggle is permanent.

At this point, I seek to show that Nietzsche’s agon has an aesthetic dimension with respect to life. Nietzsche (1967b: 20) tells us that art is “the true metaphysical activity of his life.” Thus art and struggle are intimately connected. For Nietzsche, intoxication is indispensable for the agonistic struggle, and this applies to action as well. These points have been remarkably neglected by Connolly. When it comes to politics, Nietzsche’s agon should be thought of as an exit point which the will to power may take, be it the sublimation of passions, or creativity. As a common outlet

for the will to power, a uniquely political agon does not desire *power* but *desires* itself. That is, the political agon can only be satisfied in so far as the subject desires something other than power. Thus, although Connolly and Mouffe have made important contributions to the theorisation of democratic politics, there is a fundamental difference between their agonistic politics and the Nietzschean agonist. The key problem arises when they attempt to transfer the ontological agon to a normative status. For instance, they agree with Nietzsche that, ontologically speaking, absolute truth is an impossible one. In agonists' hands, however, this can become a distinctly liberal-democratic and egalitarian normative claim. Thus Connolly (2005: 123-4), for example, places the emphasis of Nietzsche's agon in entirely the wrong place, writing that:

"An ethos of agonistic respect grows out of mutual appreciation for the ubiquity of faith to life and the inability of contending parties, to date, to demonstrate the truth of one faith over other live candidates. It grows out of reciprocal appreciation for the element of contestability in these domains. The relation is agonistic in two senses: you *absorb the agony* of having elements of your own faith called into question by others, and you *fold agonistic contestation* of others into the respect that you convey toward them."

What this passage reveals is how Connolly attempts to institutionalise Nietzsche's agon which demands respect for others' beliefs. My contention is that any attempt to institutionalise and formalise agon is doomed to fail. This is what Connolly's agonism is about: the agon without the struggle. The Nietzschean agon is an ability to interpret, that is, to construct a perspective in which life, along with differences, is felt, experienced, lived.

In this sense, the agon is not submission to an already established institution; it is sustaining the struggle, the contest, while preparing the stage for potential contingencies. Crucially, and contrary to Connolly, the agon does not promote a *conservative respect* for institutions, for existing differences; it itself is pure *difference*. Thus the agon emerges out of a desire to think beyond the existing practices. As such, it demands its warriors create their values against another's with the aim of deciding whose values are life-affirming and whose life-negating values must be ruthlessly destroyed. In this very concrete sense, Connolly's agonistic pluralism predicated on conservative respect is insufficient to produce the agony of the perfect struggle, or Dionysian fervour and intoxication. As a consequence, Connolly's agonism, and his emphasis on the opening of more political space, becomes a pseudo-agonism which produces no genuine political events, and no genuine political space, because it misses the necessary 'affective' dimension of Nietzsche's political agonism.

Converting difference into otherness, Connolly's agonism, in short, seems to skip the value of struggle and cruelty. Nietzsche, however, repeatedly celebrates confrontation, struggle, cruelty and war. For Nietzsche, life simply is will to power and the will to power is a struggle for mastery over life. Paradoxically, however, Connolly (2002: 185) does not accept "the reading of Nietzsche as the consummate philosopher of world mastery." As can clearly be seen from the following passage, he writes that:

“While such a reading is possible, it is not the single or necessary reading to be drawn from a thinker as protean as Nietzsche. It tends to be given by those who endorse strong transcendental or teleological perspectives. They presume that any ethic of care and self-limitation must flow from a teleotranscendental perspective, and that since Nietzsche noisily repudiates such a perspective, the coiner of the phrase ‘will to power’ must endorse a ruthless philosophy in which a few exercise mastery over other humans and nature.” (Connolly, 2002: 185)

I agree with Connolly that Nietzsche’s agonism is not about world domination. And the same goes for will to power. Will to power as a struggle for “mastery over life” does not entail domination over people. Instead, it asserts confrontation, struggle and cruelty as fundamental features of life. But, in Connolly’s agonistic democracy, they are seen as positive, generative sources of potentiality. In contrast to Connolly, in his notion of life as will to power, Nietzsche (2005: 213) writes: “The free man is a warrior. – How is freedom measured? By the resistance which must be overcome...” This crucial point has been repeatedly ignored by Connolly. And despite that he is heavily influenced by Nietzsche, the insufficiencies of Connolly’s ethics necessarily becomes indexed to a politics of liberal tolerance in which antagonisms are reduced to agonism and agonistic respect to a general political dialogue.

Let us now return to Mouffe. Though there are clear parallels between Connolly’s and Mouffe’s agonistic model of democracy, there is also a difference between the two approaches. While Connolly seems to think that “the ethos of pluralisation” constitutes a fundamental basis for democracy, Mouffe’s democratic politics is based on the idea of

democratic community and citizenship. I largely agree with Mouffe's theorisation of post-political politics, which, according to her thesis, imposes consensus and excludes the 'passions' from politics. In a neoliberal post-political vision, as Mouffe suggests, the dimension of antagonism based on affect vanishes. For this reason, the post-political vision leaves no room for affective or passionate form of politics. Though Mouffe's agonistic democracy goes beyond Connolly by proposing the idea of democratic citizenship, she seems to suggest a clean-cut distinction between rationality and affect. For instance, Mouffe argues (2005: 28) that democratic politics "needs to have a real purchase on people's desires and fantasies and that, instead of opposing interests to sentiments and reason to passions, it should offer forms of identifications conducive to democratic practices." Mouffe seems to be saying that values are irrational and there is an absolute distinction between reason and emotions, in the context of the political. However, I would argue that reason and affect can be only thought of together.

As argued in detail above, Mouffe's (2005: 21) democratic politics aims to sublimate antagonism and open up a space in which antagonism is transformed into 'agonism.' The process of sublimating or 'taming' antagonism brings to mind Nietzsche's concept 'transfiguration', which is also about organising and channelling passions against those who are indifferent, which prevents one from going under because of one's passions. In short, then, both antagonisms and passions are inherent to

political struggle “because there are passions, there are antagonisms, and because there are antagonisms, there are passions in society” (Diken, 2009: 114).

To clarify this point, Nietzsche’s notion of “joyful wisdom” can be useful. For Nietzsche (1960), joyful wisdom is a concept which conjoins the levity of affect with the gravity of reason. The real force behind wisdom is an immanent principle, the will to power. In other words, joyful wisdom is a question of will and passions; it is thus the most powerful affect of all. Like Nietzsche’s ‘perfect nihilism’, joyful wisdom refers to a practical activity that does not separate reason, affect and will from one another, but to an immanent principle which consists of reason and will in the same context. Behind the rational context of any politics there is also an affective force, an intensive desire.

To put it bluntly, reason is not a barrier to living passionately. Referring to science, what Nietzsche wants, in short, is a will to power which is free-spirited, joyful, and life-affirming. In Nietzsche’s formulation, if there is to be any normativity in will to power it will have to be active will rather than passive will: the joy felt in courageous wisdom. And, as I argue in a greater detail in the last chapter, what we need is a radical politics that aims at constructing a will to struggle, which will become the defining characteristic and alternate will on the abyss of neoliberal and militarised post-politics. The political, then, is created through affects as well as a will

to struggle. Hence, and contrary to Mouffe and Connolly, what we need is a radical politics that is at the intersection of affect and a will to struggle, a perpetual struggle which is constitutive of agonism in a radically political framework.

If neoliberal and militarised post-politics is the impossibility of a real change regarding the 'given' situations, then the challenge of radical politics today is to disrupt that givenness. Neoliberal and militarised post-politics is counterrevolutionary because its main task is to displace dissent, rupture and resistance against the system. Its logic, of course, is political. It is a determinate formation, a principled reaction with tendencies toward the increasing neoliberalisation and militarisation of society. Post-politics is, in short, a complex combination of different types of social regimes and affective structures. This also explains why a radical politics of event should delve into the complex linkages between historical social regimes and their affective structures that constitute neoliberal post-politics. Because neoliberal and militarised post-politics is a principled reaction against revolutionary alternatives, and because radical politics is not simply a politics of resistance, any discussion of how to rethink alternate social and political imaginaries, cannot proceed without a proper understanding of the established social regimes and the affective logics of neoliberal and militarised post-politics that it seeks to emancipate itself from. Hence the challenge of radical politics: to diagnose the depoliticised conditions of late capitalism and better understand the relationships between historical

social regimes that constitute it, and the affective logic each regime entails and how they inter-relate. So what rationalities of power underlie the post-political? How can one theorise the affective logics of the established social regimes?

1.3 Social Regime

In this dissertation I use social regime to refer to a prevailing social system, affects and emotions, pattern or the set of rules, both formal and informal that discipline, control, manage, regulate the operation of a specific 'governmentality' and its interactions with society overall. A social regime is, in short, constituted to make the existing social order function effectively. A social regime assumes society is anarchic and that there is no authority above the existing order capable of regulating, managing, assaying its interactions and the corresponding characteristics such as affects. Since the aim is to create a society without radical conflict and antagonism, a social regime assumes that conflict should be shifted, regulated and, if possible, eliminated through strategies and affects. In this sense, a social regime maintains an intimate relationship between society and the local and global insertion of particular norms and rules.

Even though a social regime may at first seem identical to the dispositif, it is in fact a more complex concept. To get closer to an understanding of social regime, we need to highlight the differences between the concept of

dispositif and unpick its political logic in relation to 'governmentality.' In Deleuze's reading of the dispositif, we observe remarkable similarities with his own reading of assemblage. In "What is a Dispositif?", Deleuze (2007) argues that a dispositif can be analysed in terms of "lines" which enable new forms of objects and subjects to appear. Dispositifs are then composed of "lines of visibility, utterance, lines of force, lines of subjectivation, lines of cracking, breaking and ruptures that all intertwine and mix together and where some augment the others or elicit others through variations and even mutations of the assemblage" (Deleuze, 2007: 347). Deleuze (1988), therefore, links dispositif to a complex network of power relations in Foucault's writing which enables human beings to "see and speak" with regard to truth.

Thus the key to a dispositif is the valorisation of truth; indeed a dispositif is a heterogeneous ensemble of power relations through which truth both creates an ontological surety and a 'grid of intelligibility' in which truth takes shape and functions. As with Deleuze and 'assemblage', a dispositif

for Foucault is not to be confused with a technical device. Rather, it is a heterogeneous system where the truth of any real is produced. Foucault thus used the term *dispositif* to refer to multiple power relations, norms, values and discourses that maintain the functioning of power.³

This dissertation discusses social regime as a more specific type of *dispositif*. Rather than making a general claim that a social regime is identical to the *dispositif*, or apparatus and assemblage, I suggest that a social regime is a type of *dispositif* that, in brief, organises society in a particular way in a specific time and place, according to a particular rationality of power and affective logic. A social regime, by aiming to create a society without conflict and antagonism, is self-transcending. From this perspective, it is produced through counterrevolutionary principles and the

³ “What I’m trying to pick out with this term is, firstly, a thoroughly heterogeneous ensemble consisting of discourses, institutions, architectural forms, regulatory decisions, laws, administrative measures, scientific statements, philosophical, moral and philanthropic propositions—in short, the said as much as the unsaid. Secondly, what I am trying to identify in this apparatus [*dispositif*] is precisely the nature of the connections that can exist between these heterogeneous elements. Thirdly, I understand by the term ‘apparatus’ [*dispositif*] a sort of—shall we say—formation which has as its major function at a given historical moment that of responding to an *urgent need*.” (Foucault, 1980: 194-195)

corresponding affects that shape human conduct and social and political relations, with the aim of preventing and preempting disruptive events.

A social regime, then, is a specific form of dispositif that is enacted always in response to an urgent threat: 'the event.' By events, I mean revolts, uprisings, riots, insurrections, revolutions – in short any relatively unorganised individual or collective upheavals that threaten to overthrow the existing social order as a whole. Since a social regime is essential to the operation of the existing order, it should be seen as a more parallel concept to 'governmentality.' If governmentality organises 'the conduct of conduct' - from the individual to the collective - that requires techniques, rationalities, affects and above all, a way of countering the event, then *the* social regime is the component that provides the conduct that organises the social, and prevent disruptive events through counterrevolutionary principles and affective logics. Thus, the power of social regimes has to do with the preemptive and regulating strengths they inject into governmentality (see Debrix and Barder, 2009: 407). Social regimes are indeed machines *for* governmentality. If the event is the problem, and if social regimes are the answer, the existing governmentality must ensure that the conduct responsible for disruptive events is done away with (before they take actual shape). It is indeed through techniques, rationalities, affects and by way of organisational and counterrevolutionary social regimes that governmentality takes charge of a population, orchestrates the conduct of conducts, and represses all forms of disruptive

resistance, ensuring that the event is an impossible one. The event is, therefore, managed at the governmental level (through social regimes).

Further, a social regime implies not only principles, rationalities, norms and affects that facilitate the functioning of existing governmentality, but a form of interaction and cooperation that is more than short-term interests or temporary arrangements. It facilitates regulation by organising 'the conduct of conduct' and establishing standards of norms, rules and generating affects in changing circumstances. Techniques, standards of behaviour and the interventions that follow are, after all, conducted in order to manage and organise society and life so that individuals will behave in the desired way. In this way, potential events that threaten the existing social order are neutralised and the probability of maintaining the existing system is assured.

Indeed, a social regime is established on the presupposition that life is characterised by pervasive uncertainty. Thus actions, threats and affects that are considered potentially dangerous do not only interrupt the present but also have future consequences and that it is therefore in the interests of the social order to govern, manage, neutralise and eliminate "unknown unknowns", ensuring that the event does not take place. Since the aim is to create a society based on order and certainty, a social regime declares pervasive uncertainty to be the problem to be solved. Hobbes (1651/2008), for instance, argues that our lives are characterised by

pervasive uncertainty as we have conflicting interests. Yet, we are roughly equal in strength so we cannot easily dominate others and thereby put an end to conflict once and for all. Within this context, the social regime facilitates the maintaining of the existing order so that conflict and antagonism do not degenerate to disorder. It is in this sense that the social regime should be approached in terms of an imposed governmentality. In short, social regimes are deliberately established by dominant and hegemonic governmentalities with the aim of getting populations to conform to the existing norms, rules and requirements through normalisation and regulation of human behaviours and their affects, as well as a combination of war and violence. A social regime is the pursuit of war and violence by corresponding characteristics and associated affects so that the existing order remains intact.

Alongside this, social regimes and their associated affects are complex and plural (Foucault, 2007; 2008), distinguished by their capacity to counter the event. Social regimes are thus as plural and complex as neoliberal and militarised post-politics. After all, neoliberal and militarised post-politics is concerned to keep its own social regimes of governance under continuous control and critical review (Dillon and Reid, 2001: 47; see also Dean, 1999; Dillon and Reid, 2009; Rose, 1999). A social regime operates then as a complex and heterogeneous network of rationalities, tendencies and affects. Structuring the affects and the corresponding characteristics that shape the operation of the existing order, of life, social regimes typically

develop around a specific problematic: that of the event. In retaining the idea that politics is an attempt to manage and control the 'aleatory' element implied in life, the social regime avoids, at all costs, the unexpected 'eventualities' that would be the dissolution of the existing system, of neoliberal governmentality.

The point of a regime, then, is a study of a particular aim of exercising power and intervening upon particular problems: that of potential disruptive events. This makes neoliberal and militarised post-politics more effective, thus saving the system from the threat of political and moral decline. It also makes struggle more difficult, for a social regime aims to decrease subjectivities' subversive affective capacities. In this view, a social regime seeks to both manage and control social and political groups in the pursuit of harmony; it organises human subjects by preventing individual and collective action from occurring. The social regime is, in other words, *counterrevolutionary* in that it aims to achieve certain outcomes in the context of an art of governing. It is in this context that the properly ideological function of neoliberal and militarised post-politics is directly evident. Mobilising concrete social regimes, the cultivation of affects such as resentment, fear, cynicism and spite are central tropes which the integrity of the system is maintained while, at the same time, a counterrevolutionary logic that accompanies the established social regimes is one which aims to create a society without conflict, struggle and radical systemic change. The social regime targets actual practices with the aim of

minimising the possibilities for struggle, the event. As I will outline shortly, it is as much about *actual conduct* as it is about *virtual conduct*. It is as much about preventing actual practices as it is about repressing virtual events. As I argue in detail in the following chapters, central, then, to social regimes is the idea of event, which enables neoliberal and militarised post-politics to touch the virtual within actual practices. Actual as well as virtual conduct of (disruptive) event is all that is important; the actual as well as the virtual (disruptive) event is what restructures the established social regimes that constitute neoliberal post-politics.

As I elaborate further in the following chapters, proponents of the concept of neoliberal and militarised post-politics have taken as their point of departure two “rationalities of power” (sovereignty-discipline) discussed by Foucault (1977) in *Discipline and Punish* and the regime of control by Deleuze (1995) in his “Postscript on the Societies of Control.” However, the links between these rationalities of power have only been hastily suggested (see Diken and Laustsen, 2005; see also Collier 2009; Diken, 2009; Graham, 2010). In this dissertation, I reread sovereignty, discipline, control - along with my own proposed regime of terrorism - as ‘social regimes’ in order to illuminate the corresponding characteristics and the affective logics that are either only implicit or else partially developed in Foucault’s and Deleuze’s accounts, yet are essential to their operation. I focus on the concept of neoliberal and militarised post-politics further by rigorously

theorising the links between the four basic types of social regimes of sovereignty, discipline, control and terrorism.

Furthermore, I link these social regimes (sovereignty-discipline-control-terrorist) within the topology to four distinct affects, which have been proposed as characterising neoliberal post-politics: resentment, fear, cynicism and spite. Since affective modulation becomes an essential function of contemporary society, affects such as resentment, fear, cynicism and spite are necessary to impose neoliberal governmentality on population. Thus the population is addressed affectively so that it can be rendered governable and manageable for the stable unity of global capitalism and the neoliberal order. In the process, therefore, the affective logics become a generative principle of neoliberal and militarised post-politics. A social regime cannot function without affects it brings into play. For every social regime of governance generates its own particular affect.

Importantly, the aim is to analyse each affect independently so that their effects can be studied within the established regimes. Thus resentment, fear, cynicism and spite are explored as different affects without one determining the others. Alongside this, social regimes open up new fields of entry, so that it becomes possible to engage in life with more political energy, to directly manipulate life purely at the level of its affective relations. Thus, when one says sovereignty, one also says discipline, when one says discipline one is also saying biopolitical control - or to be more

specific, when one refers to neoliberal and militarised post-politics one is effectively pointing towards an entire political economy of affect (Evans, 2010). In this sense, social regimes are inseparable from affective relations. Nietzsche (1967a: 148) writes: “moral evaluation is an exegesis, a way of interpreting. [...] Who interprets? – Our affects.”

1.4 Topologies of Power

Crucially, however, I propose that every social regime is connected with the other social regimes in a specific way without one determining the others (not even in the final instance). Rather than viewing sovereignty, discipline, control and terrorism, for instance, in terms of a dialectical confrontation, social regimes can be seen as inextricably connected and interdependent. One should, therefore, note that this is not a straightforward linear development; it is not, then, intended to argue that a new order is emerging - that “sovereignty is replacing discipline” or that biopolitical control is replacing terrorism (see Foucault, 2007: 143). Rather than there being an implied redundancy or, a logic of temporal developmental succession, there comes into being a dynamic interaction that is called neoliberal governmentality.

The established social regimes and their associated affects are not pre-given, lying there waiting to be revealed. The effect of such a perspectival analysis is not, then, intended to be solely an ‘intellectual’ one. Rather,

what is at stake is the production of a certain kind of experience, a refiguring of truth itself. Each social regime “never functions in order to represent a persisting world but produces a new kind of reality, a new model of truth” (Deleuze, 2007: 30). Each social regime has its own procedures for establishing truths and undoing the untruths, and its own rhetorical devices for adjudicating and certifying truth claims. And we cannot passively wait for the Messiah to come with the ability to recognise the existence of such relations. The real problem we must confront, therefore, is a political one: how to sustain a critical rationality with political intent? How to find the events? The task is to find the events, “where they are, at their time, and in their element” (Deleuze, 1983: 110).

Hegemonic social regimes aim at countering disruptive events that threaten the dominant hegemony in order to bring about radical structural change in the way they function. This strategy is composed of a diversity of practices and interventions operating through multiple topologies of power. Hence I employ a “topological” analysis of “the patterns of correlation”, as Steve Collier (2009: 78) has put it, “in which heterogeneous elements – techniques, material forms, institutional structures and technologies of power – are configured, as well as the redeployments through which these patterns are transformed.” By topology I refer to a branch of mathematics that concerns not only “with the geometrical properties of objects” but also with how society is organised (ibid. 80). However, by topological analysis I am not aiming to pursue mathematical

analyses. Instead, the primary aim is to show how the established social regimes are configured in assemblies of neoliberal and militarised post-politics, without implying that they follow a straightforward linear development.

The key theoretical reference in this dissertation is Michel Foucault's concept of "governmentality" (Foucault, 1991; 2008). While governmentality includes the repressive state apparatus' of the police, it is the way "in which one conducts the conduct of men, is no more than a proposed analytical grid for these relations of power" (Foucault, 2008: 186). Thus, it is Foucauldian governmentality that enables us to name, understand and analyse neoliberal and militarised post-politics, imaginaries, and the established social regimes and their associated affects. To be more precise, governmentality is seen by Foucault as the model for social relations, as its "grid of intelligibility" (Foucault, 2007; see also Protevi, 2010). The 'grid of governmentality' opens up new possibilities in which relations of power and affects can be grasped and analysed. It is these modern arts of governing that I endeavour to capture in the notion of neoliberal governmentality. The present study therefore examines neoliberal and militarised post-politics as a form of governmentality, as complex combination of different types of knowledge, subjectivities, political rationalities, techniques, affects and tendencies aimed at governing society and human subjects. This specificity of

governmentality, in other words, lies in the complex interweaving of social regimes and affects.

The term topology seems preferable to me because it refers to a multiplicity among diverse elements without providing a tendency to what Rose et al. (2006) call “rigidification.” The combination of sovereign power, disciplinary power, neoliberal control and terrorism *is* this definite principle of relationality within which populations are managed and governed. Neoliberal and militarised post-politics operates in practices of relationality and uncertainty. To maintain its hegemony, it needs to permanently mobilise multiple social regimes and affects in order to shape people’s identities and the political/cultural terrain. We need new critical tools to analyse it.

1.5 Research Questions

It is here that the question of neoliberal and militarised post-politics comes up. The idea, then, is not that discipline-biopolitical control-terrorism replace sovereignty, but that they develop alongside of it throughout neoliberalism: which is why it is difficult to ‘distinguish’ one social regime from another. Hence my research questions: If the established social regimes operate in conjunction rather than opposition to each other,

- 1) How should/can one theorise the relationship between neoliberal and militarised post-politics and the established social regimes of sovereignty, discipline and control?
- 2) How can one theorise the affective logics of these three social regimes?
- 3) How can one account for terrorism as a new social regime with its affect, spite?
- 4) How can one theorise the intimate relationship between radical critique and revolution in neoliberal and militarised post-political society?

1.6 Deleuze/Foucault

The key methodological question for theoretical interpretation, then, is how to conceptualise the relationships between regimes of power and their affective logics. In the following chapters, this conceptualisation will proceed in conversation with a number of philosophers and theorists, the most important being Michel Foucault, Gilles Deleuze, Slavoj Žižek, Friedrich Nietzsche and Walter Benjamin. First, as argued above, I take as a point of departure a topological analysis that employs Deleuzian/Foucauldian concepts. For they provide us with analytical tools to grasp the truth of neoliberal post-politics, an immanent target in which different social regimes of power, affects, and knowledge take shape and function. Utilising Deleuzian/Foucauldian concepts, I explore how

sovereignty, discipline, control - along with my own proposed regime of terrorism - are combined in “complex edifices”, “systems of correlation”, or “topologies of power” (Collier, 2009), thus diminishing neoliberal and militarised post-politics’ political and moral fallout. For Deleuze, for instance, the topological analysis always acts on the present. What is our present situation? What new possibilities of life do we see appearing today? What are new forms of political subjectivation? Above all, one might say, the topological dimension of Deleuze’s analysis requires an ‘untimely’ intervention into history and the present. Untimely in the Nietzschean sense: the aim is to act “counter to our time” and thereby act “on our time and, let us hope, for the benefit of a time to come” (Nietzsche, 1991: 60).

Deleuze always insists on creating new concepts, which enables us to see the world in a new way, in a process of becoming. A creation of new concepts means that we see the world and time within the perspective of becoming or ‘virtuality’ rather than a linear, determinist time. The virtual is real itself in the sense of making future potentialities and possibilities real in the present. Only on this basis can we be able to invent new ways of conceiving time and temporality and create new perspectives on life and being, leading to revolutionary events. This is what history means for Deleuze: everything is historical and contingent, a process of revolutionary becoming. In doing so, Deleuze thus stresses the importance of the virtual. Philosophy, for Deleuze, is an attempt to grasp the virtual, for it is the

virtual that generates the actual. In other words, life, according to Deleuze, “is composed of virtualities, events, singularities. What I am calling virtual is not something that lacks reality. Rather, the virtual becomes engaged in a process of actualisation as it follows the plane which gives it its proper reality” (2007: 388). This is why the event should be understood as the virtual form of what is to come: “the part that eludes its own actualisation in everything that happens” (Deleuze and Guattari, 1994: 156).

For Foucault, on the other hand, history is made up of two principles which are matter (that is only potential) and form (that makes the object a reality). Foucault’s work in this respect serves as a “grid of intelligibility” (Protevi, 2010: 2) that reveals immanencies in historical social regimes and events. Furthermore, these immanent regimes in historical events “are revealed rather than constituted” (ibid. 2). These historical orders of power and knowledge provide analytical tools to examine the configurations in which ‘regimes of truth’ are produced. Foucault, like Deleuze, is careful to note that regimes of truth do not follow a straightforward linear development. Rather, he proposes a reading of history that is against historicism, for historical immanent orders are seen as “multiplicities”, that is, dynamic effects of “incessant transactions” (Foucault, 2008: 77).

In short, Deleuze and Foucault offer a reading of history that is against the entire model of linearity, for immanent social regimes and the corresponding characteristics are seen as, to borrow Julian Reid’s term

(2010b: 394), “moving targets”, not rigid ideological rationalities. What unites them is that they both conceive power to be immanent to the social field, not external to it. If we read Deleuze’s and Foucault’s concepts as an account of regimes of truth that operate through ‘incessant multiplicities’, then the question of power, the truth of neoliberal and militarised post-politics becomes available for contestation. As such, Deleuzian/Foucauldian concepts provide us to construct forms of subjectivities and social relations that are immune to neoliberalism as counterrevolution.

1.7 Žižek

Within Deleuzian and Foucauldian topological analysis, the dissertation also employs a Žižekian approach to understand how post-politics both signifies and tends toward the *foreclosure* of politics. A Žižekian approach allows us to understand how post-politics is grounded in the depoliticisation of conflict and antagonism within society, ensuring that events do not occur. The aim of post-politics is to eliminate conflict and antagonism, leading to revolutionary events. Conflict, however, can never be truly eliminated, but can be evaded as a possibility. Conflict and antagonism are the system, the system is antagonism and conflict. Thus the aim of the Žižekian approach is to shift conflict and antagonism to their proper places. Neoliberal capitalism is marked by a false hope that struggle and alternate political possibilities might be resolved, allowing the system

to go on as far as it can. A Žižekian approach, however, reminds us forcefully that there is always an alternative that is never assimilated. This unassimilated rest is, in Žižek, antagonism and revolutionary struggle. Even though post-politics tries to occlude the very possibility of alternate social imaginaries to the existing order, conflict and struggle remain significant elements of revolutionary politics. And because there is conflict and struggle, revolutionary subjectivities cannot be constituted independently from agonism and affects.

1.8 Nietzsche

Hence my conception of political agonism and affect follows Nietzsche and his notion of will to power, the supreme immanent principle in life, which he juxtaposes to God's transcendent judgment. Based on cruelty and struggle, Nietzsche's agon takes life as will to power as a guiding principle. In Nietzsche, life as will to power expresses and continuously expands itself, which leads him to identify will to power with freedom. Thus, for Nietzsche, freedom can only emerge in so far as it is understood as a necessity, a necessity which enables a passage between affect and a will to struggle. Nietzsche's radical agonism provides and encourages human actors to fulfil life's main purpose: to engage in a ruthless struggle which is to become fully the will to power and thus become free. Significantly, however, will to power does not refer to actual physical force or political dominance. Rather, it is a process of overcoming a struggle.

For Nietzsche, life as will to power requires that an organism strives to heighten mere-life; it is the fundamental value, a value on the basis of the enhancement of life conditions, its self-overcoming. If the primary value is life as will to power, then the fundamental point concerning will to power is to establish alternative counter-ideals/values to life. Life here, however, is to be understood as a struggle between creation and preservation. All life is therefore the will to “striving against something that resists” (Nietzsche, 1967a: 374). Nietzsche, therefore, enables us to see life as an immanent principle, a conflict, which has neither an external cause nor a final end. Life as will to power is not to be exhausted in existence; it is a permanent struggle.

1.9 Benjamin

Lastly, Deleuzian and Foucauldian topological analysis, a radical Žižekian approach and Nietzsche’s conception of agonism and will to power allow us to link their concepts with Walter Benjamin’s critical approach to historical memory, whose task is to emphasise an intimate relationship between past and present events, by which agonistic history opens up the path to universal redemption. In this sense, the idea of agonistic histories is essential to Benjamin’s Marxist analysis of society. Of course Walter Benjamin’s dialectical perspective to historical memory and revolutionary events predates Deleuze, Foucault and Žižek. However, we are still haunted by the spectre of Benjamin, for he provides a negative dialectical

perspective that is opposed to any determinist, evolutionist historicism. Seen in this light, the past, for Benjamin, is not simply past, but carries in it signs and traces of another temporality, a promise of a future redemption. Benjamin did not write specifically about neoliberalism or the post-political. His main targets were totalitarianism and fascism. However, from a Benjaminian perspective, in order to understand a past properly, one should not only analyse actual conditions in which neoliberal and militarised post-politics is constituted – one has also to take into account alternate political possibilities that are available in the “now-time” (Benjamin, 1969).

Benjamin’s notion of “now-time” refers to a theologico-political temporality that is entirely different from mechanical, linear time. Simply put, his messianic Marxism (dialectical perspective) enables us to conceive of a different temporality suspending vulgar historicism based upon linearity, succession, and homogeneity. As such, his dialectical perspective allows us to unearth the hidden potentialities (the utopian emancipatory potentials) “which were betrayed in the actuality of revolution” (see Žižek, 2006: 78) and in its final outcome, which is now embodied in neoliberal and militarised post-politics. And “awakening” from this sleep, from this counterrevolutionary moment (neoliberal governmentality) is the primary purpose of materialist historiography, and “dialectical images” are (in Benjamin’s case, industrial capitalism) the moments of historical awakening from this hell, the very hell of neoliberal capitalism:

“It’s not that what is past casts its light on what is present, or what is present its light on the past; rather, image is that wherein what has been comes together in a flash with the now to form a constellation. In other words, image is dialectics at a standstill. For while the relation of the present to the past is a purely temporal, continuous one, the relation of what-has-been to the now is dialectical: is not progression but image, suddenly emergent.” (Benjamin, 1999b: 463)

Benjamin’s notion of temporality and revolution as redemption-through-repetition of the past reveal radical-emancipatory potentials that can reappear as dialectical images, as historical spectres and haunt historical memory. They require an ‘untimely’ intervention that repeats not an aspect of the past but a ‘configuration’ that generates a certain relationship between history and politics, enabling a passage between the present and the past, between the actual and the virtual. Here the aim is to construct an ‘interruptive’ theory against historicism, namely a form of temporal hegemony (neoliberalism) and the established social regimes and the violence that accompanies them. And that is possible only if the past critically analyses the present, if the past and the present are united in the moment of danger, ‘a moment of danger’ which is neoliberal and militarised post-politics.

However, this is not the whole story. Benjamin’s notion of temporality and dialectical perspective also opens up the past to the present, the actual to the virtual, in which the subject of history is capable of escaping the entire model of linearity, the captivity of neoliberal capitalism. If we follow Benjaminian perspective, we are left with two conflicting philosophies of history: the one, represented by neoliberal and militarised post-politics,

that is the modern victor, refers to a worldview as power and hegemony, and the other by revolutionary events. What seems for neoliberalism to be consensus, for the history of events is conflict and antagonism. On the one hand, bare repetition, which is counterrevolutionary; on the other, productive repetition, which is revolutionary. On the one hand, the 'enlightened' human being, who is determined by the conditions, on the other, the subject of history who is able to determine the conditions that determines her. On the one hand, the history of progress, which insists on continuity; on the other, the history of events, which insists on discontinuity and thus wants to change the course of history.

In this respect, there is a striking similarity between Benjamin's notion of time and history and Deleuze's conception of becoming, time and the event. As I argue in detail in the last chapter, Benjamin's dialectical image reminds of Deleuze's time-image in which "the actual image must enter into relation with its own virtual image as such" (Deleuze, 1989: 273). This untimeliness of the dialectical image and the time-image is associated with shortcuts, interruptions and discontinuities. Thus they are both concrete devices that help us make sense of historical events as well as historical sources such as older movies and novellas for the present. Also, Benjamin's dialectical image is a useful theoretical/philosophical supplement to Deleuze's virtual in conceptualising revolutionary time as non-linear and contracted historical moment and the intimate link between revolution and critique.

So this dissertation is a social and political account of neoliberal and militarised post-politics that ‘thinks with’ Deleuze, Foucault, Žižek, Nietzsche and Benjamin. Through my empirical discussions I put social and political theory in conversation with them, all of whom I contextualise as crucial to understanding the dominant hegemony, and radical social change as an ‘event.’ The dissertation, in short, brings together these diverse figures not in a ‘dialogue’ but in a ‘debate’; a debate which allows for both collective solidarity and confrontation among the theorists mentioned above in its own framework. I am particularly interested in the way in which these figures and their radical theories paradoxically converge, despite important differences, on some significant common aspirations (freedom, struggle), and unite against common enemies (e.g. dominant, hegemonic ideologies.)

1.10 Chapter Outline

The substantive chapters of the dissertation start with Chapter Three. It aims to explore the concept of sovereignty. The main argument is that sovereign political power is a radically contingent power in which the ‘cruel manifestations’ of the modern state manifest itself. Taking Deleuze’s notion of sovereignty as its point of departure, the chapter reactivates the concept of sovereign power by establishing its relevance to life and sociality. Furthermore, the chapter suggests that *ressentiment* is the main affect that pertains to sovereignty, which emerges as a kind of passivity or

impotence. The social regime of sovereignty cannot be thought of without resentment as it creates pacified and oppressed subjects who cannot act.

Chapter Three also deals with cinema, focusing on Pier Paolo Pasolini's final film *Saló*. *Saló* poses significant questions regarding sadistic torture as a form of sovereign exceptionalism. Contrary to vulgar liberal democratic interpretations that consider torture as a form of insanity, as a juridical problem, the chapter discusses torture as the most privileged actualisation of state terror, for it reveals the nature of sovereign exceptionalism and its rational consciousness. Torture is, in short, a rational necessity that defines neoliberal and militarised post-politics in general and sovereignty in particular. In this sense, *Saló* helps us theorise torture as a way of social control that acts out of the same fear other techniques act: the fear of revolution. At issue here is a kind of torture that is political, a constitutive act of state terror, which aims to decrease the body's revolting capacity.

In Chapter Four, I propose to rethink Foucault's *Discipline and Punish* by exploring the profound mutation from sovereign power to neoliberal governmentality. The organising principle here is the political grasp of neoliberal governmentality as a 'grid of intelligibility.' First, I discuss the birth of neoliberalism that is based on the market, or competition as an *eidōs*. I argue that the Benthamite panoptic prison is crucial to the development of disciplinary and economic aspects of neoliberalism and the capitalist labour market. The crucial point at this juncture is how the rule of

law (Rechtsstaat) plays an important role to get rid of various forms of socialism. I contend that it is the fear of revolution that establishes the rule of law. Here I discuss fear as the main affect of discipline, arguing that fear is the essential condition and a positive element of neoliberalism. I also deal with modern biopolitics as both katechontic and as figured around the eschaton, suggesting that although biopolitics is still about making life live, its main aim is to defuse any fears of a repeat of events.

To flesh out these arguments, in Chapter Four discipline and neoliberalism are approached through *kettling*, a police tactic that turns a legitimate protest into a 'violent disorder.' I argue that kettling has two relational results: to discipline the crowd in order to produce secure and docile bodies to thrive, and displace resistance, the contingency of the event/revolution, which now appears to be *the* problem of neoliberalism to be solved.

Chapter Five discusses the continuing relevance of Deleuze's framework about the 'society of control', relating it to neoliberal capitalism. The main argument here is that neoliberal control manages and regulates life in its productive new capacities that works in conjunction with the disciplinary society. Neoliberal control is a simultaneous process of 'decoding' and 'deterritorialisation', which is particularly concerned with the maximisation of human vitality. What is crucial is the role of the biopolitical production of infinity, that is to say a factual finitude of life as an immanent quality,

which is another name for the desire to subject the potentialities of life itself to the pernicious logics of capitalist accumulation. The chapter also dwells on cynicism, a crucial concept for the examination of the affective politics of neoliberal capitalism, arguing that ‘the cynical individual’ demonstrates real obedience’, the belief and desire that are necessary for the system. Then a new form of contemporary biopolitics is introduced through the conception of *preemptive indifference*, which attempts to create a society without antagonism and the event. Taking uncertain future as its main point of departure, preemptive indifference signifies a desire to oppose the event, both before and after it takes place.

To flesh out these arguments, in Chapter Five I focus on gated communities. Threatening the idea of common good, the privatised, secessionary gated communities provide a generic response to the contingency of the event. As controlled and securitised sites of modern wealth and luxury consumption, gated communities are emblematic of the society of neoliberal control, protecting the intact territory and security of the cynical and threatened ‘good’ circulation. ‘A liberal way of life’, in which the urban elite can pay dues and are protected, is central in this discussion.

Chapter Six proposes a new affect, spite, which is defined as a willingness to cause harm for harm’s sake. Drawing on Dostoevsky’s *Notes from Underground*, it argues that spite offers an invaluable opportunity for

diagnostic social and spatial theory to study contemporary society. Furthermore, the chapter suggests that spite corresponds to a fourth, paradoxical social 'regime', terrorism, which uses pain/suffering as a state of (self)punishment against neoliberalism.

To exemplify and supplement the main arguments, Chapter Six focuses on Gerhard Richter's cycle *October 18, 1977*, a series of 15 paintings about the Baader-Meinhof group. Comparing the Baader-Meinhof's strategy of sabotage to contemporary terrorism's suicide acts, I argue that spiteful fundamentalist terrorism should not be seen as a political act, for it refers to a will to nothingness that cannot create new values. The chapter confronts the consequences of the previous discussions and asks whether it is possible to theorise a relationship between two concepts, revolution and critique. It rethinks potential openings for radical politics rendered by the established regimes and the associated affects in a post-political setting. In doing so, it summarises the relationship between neoliberal and militarised post-politics and the established social regimes and their affective structures.

Chapter Seven asks what kind of radical critique is needed to resist neoliberal and militarised post-politics. I focus on the intimate relationship between revolution and critique, arguing that radical critique within social and aesthetic theory is strictly inseparable from the concept of revolution. In so far as the contemporary regime of governmentality is neoliberal,

neoliberal post-politics constitutes the problematic of critique today. Against this background, the chapter argues that critique is the paradoxical constitution of politics through the relationship between strategy and intoxication without referring to a stable synthesis between them. In this context, I suggest that critique is an indeterminacy, which can be articulated in the context of divine violence. The main argument here is that critique as divine violence is a radically contingent decision that has a capacity to connect the virtual with the actual, strategy with intoxication, without falling back on either cynicism or spiteful destruction. The chapter insists that the relationship between the virtual and the actual, between strategy and intoxication is marked by an aporia, not an antinomy.

The final chapter (Conclusion) deals with the actuality of critique as divine violence in the context of the Occupy Movement and the Arab revolts. It returns, in this context, to the topological space of the event, that is, to both sides of *kairos* – strategy and intoxication, seeing and desire. What is crucial in this context is the strategic aporia of divine violence, which must be overcome in *praxis*.

But first, what is the post-political? Chapter Two continues this introduction by elaborating the concept of neoliberal and militarised post-politics. Using Marx's *The Eighteenth Brumaire of Louis Bonaparte* as a model, I argue that Marx's diagnoses of the French counter-revolution allow us to understand the very foundations of neoliberal and militarised

post-politics. However, I do not suggest that the lessons of *Eighteenth Brumaire*, or Bonapartism are identical to the current developments in contemporary society. Rather I argue that there are analogies between Marx's analyses of the French counter-revolution and neoliberal post-politics, which is, above all, an inability to think conflict and antagonism in politics. Neoliberal and militarised post-politics is the art of foreclosing the political.

Chapter Two

Neoliberal and Militarised Post-Politics

2.1 Introduction

In 1848, Louis Bonaparte, nephew of Napoléon Bonaparte, was elected president of the new Second Republic of France. Defending the work of the revolution of 1848, promoting prosperity for all, he promised glory and greatness for a nation which supposedly characterized his uncle's reign. Because the constitution limited the president to a single four-year term, and because he failed to secure the three-fourths majority required for constitutional revision, he staged a coup d'état on December 2, 1851. The coup provides the occasion of Marx's insightful book *The Eighteenth Brumaire of Louis Bonaparte* (1852).

What follows is an analysis of the post-political as a 'political' formation, juxtaposed against Marx's account of the 1851 coup d'état by Louis Bonaparte. The first part of the chapter introduces the argument of Marx's *Eighteenth Brumaire* as a model for understanding the foundations of contemporary politics. Part two concerns the depoliticised conditions of late capitalism through what I call a 'neoliberal and militarised post-

politics.’ To better understand the depoliticised conditions of the late capitalist society we need an analysis which is both historically inspired and more sympathetic to the securitised and neoliberal character of post-politics. This is precisely a moment of Benjaminianism in the sense that the analysis inserts the past into the ‘now-ness’ of a present danger, a danger which is embodied as neoliberal and militarised post-politics. Aiming to redeem the past generations of the oppressed, a Benjaminian approach allows us to grasp the truth of post-politics, a truth which is found in present-day-life (Benjamin, 1999a: 297). After Benjamin, then, what do we see? It is important to stress that Benjamin’s concept of history does not see in history happy promises. Looking at contemporary society through the lens of Benjamin, what we see is a moment of danger, or neoliberal and militarised post-politics as a counterrevolutionary logic that grows incessantly, with its social regimes and their associated affects. In front of such danger, Benjamin’s concept of history would like to help; an irruptive history which illuminates and actualises new possibilities. From a Benjaminian perspective, the possibility of revolution and dialectical history is what matters.

In this precise sense, one should not forget the face of the past (the spectre). It is true that we see a past that is full of traumatic experiences and counterrevolutionary events. Whereas ‘the history of the victors’ sees the past as something that we should all leave behind, a Benjaminian approach allows us to see history that includes danger and catastrophe,

but wants to liberate it from chains. Benjamin sees the past capable of interrupting and thus stopping counterrevolutionary logics that produce non-events in which misery, injustice and reaction are continuously (re)produced. It is the past which reveals a new dimension of history. That is the difference.

Hence the importance of Benjamin's concept of history in which the past (19th century France) has a new meaning that can rise in light of the present (neoliberal and militarised post-politics). Let me add that I do not mean to equate the political lessons from 19th century France with the current developments in contemporary society. Rather I use Marx's diagnoses of the French counter-revolution in order to understand the tenuous relationship between neoliberal capitalism and the evident militarisation of society. In doing so, I aim to show the emergent link between an analysis which does not forget the past, and the object of its attention, which emerges as a flash in the present, becomes present: "knowledge comes only in lightning flashes" (Benjamin, 1999b: 456).

2.2 Model: The Eighteenth Brumaire of Louis Bonaparte

"Hegel observes somewhere that all the great events and characters of world history occur twice, so to speak. He forgot to add: the first time as high tragedy, the second time as low farce." (Marx, 1852/2002: 19)

When Marx writes of *The Eighteenth Brumaire of Louis Bonaparte* (1852/2002), the main question to which Marx is responding is how the revolution of 1848 had led to Louis Bonaparte's coup d'état and the subversion of democracy. To explain these events, Marx divides Louis Bonaparte's (farical) rise and rule into three separate phases, in which different alliances of classes and groupings rule. In the first phase, called the February Period, King Louis Philippe, whose rule Marx identifies with the finance aristocracy, is forced to abdicate by a broad coalition, including the republican bourgeoisie. This alliance is modified by the removal of the 'proletariat' from the centre of the revolutionary stage. The second phase is brought on by the fall of the republican bourgeoisie, which gives rise to the Party of Order as the ruling alliance. The Party of Order is a bourgeois formation, representing two antagonistic wings of the two bourgeois factions - the landlords (Legitimists) and the industrialists (Orléanists). For Marx, their rule is made possible only in the framework of republicanism. This is why not royalism, but the parliamentary republic becomes the common denominator of the two bourgeois factions. For it is the best possible political shell for the common class interest, the interests of the capital. Eventually, however, republican institutions are discarded by the Party of Order, that is, by 'capital', in the name of 'order.' This is the key to understanding the different role of the bourgeoisie in 1848 as compared to 1789: in 1789 the bourgeoisie played a heroic role by allying with the people against the monarchy, the aristocracy and the established church, whereas in 1848 they had become much more conservative by doing

everything in its power to prevent the spread of potential disruptive revolutions.

The third phase ends in a coup d'état which brings Louis Bonaparte to power. The alliance behind Bonaparte comprised of the various factions - from finance capital, the Legitimist landed aristocracy, to the industrial bourgeoisie, the lumpenproletariat, the state officials and the army. As a consequence, the victory of 'order' succeeds in conquering democracy's 'disturbance of order' and Louis Bonaparte declares himself emperor of France. In the process, Bonaparte profits from the myth of his uncle as the symbol of the revolutionary ideals of liberty, equality and, at the same time, order and stability. In exploiting this legend, Bonaparte projects himself as a man who would rule above class interests, the divisions of French politics, for the reconciliation of all classes.

Significantly, as Marx argues, there is something special about France where the head of the executive - with a bureaucracy of more than half a million civil servants, a complement of a half million officials alongside an army of another half million - controls a state apparatus which "restricts, controls, regulates, oversees and supervises civil life from its most all-encompassing expressions to its most insignificant stirrings...where through the most extraordinary centralisation this parasite acquires an all-knowing pervasiveness" (Marx, 1852/2002: 53). In other words, this is a process in which the "*material interests* of the French bourgeoisie are intertwined in

the most intimate way” with the maintenance of the machinery of state (ibid. 54). With the support of the bourgeoisie, Louis Bonaparte needs the widespread and ingenious machinery of state, “the fearsome parasitic body”, in order to repress other classes. For this reason, the bourgeoisie is “compelled by its class position both to negate the conditions of existence for any parliamentary power, including its own, and to make the power of the executive, its adversary, irresistible” (ibid.). It thus finds the everyday business of democracy useless, and stigmatises any popular agitation as “socialistic.” Thus by now decrying as “socialistic what it had previously extolled as ‘liberal’”, the bourgeoisie confesses that “its own interests require it to dispense with the dangers of self-government”; that in order to “retain its power in society intact its political power would have to be broken” (ibid. 57).

In the name of saving society ‘from being destroyed’, from ‘anarchy’, the bourgeoisie betrays its ‘progressive’ past to try to safeguard capitalist class interests by invoking, in Bonaparte, a leader who contradicts them. Hence they cry out: “only theft can still save property; only perjury, religion; bastardy, the family; only disorder, order!” (ibid. 107). Put differently, the bourgeoisie – so much afraid of the revolutionary working-class and socialist ideals - is willing to sacrifice democracy in order to maintain a state of ‘order.’ However, while the main protagonist of *Eighteenth Brumaire* is the French bourgeoisie, Marx points out that Louis Bonaparte is able to garner the support not only from the small-holding peasants, but

from the petty bourgeoisie, and the lumpenproletariat as well. Bonaparte's strength lay in his ability to be able to depict himself as 'all things to all men.'

It is precisely when he becomes aware of himself as a man 'superior' to his bourgeois rivals, as an 'authority' over them, that Louis Bonaparte attains a position which enables him to become the master of the society, an 'original author', in his own right (ibid. 64). And, as Marx (ibid. 101) argues in another passage, it is this "abject dependence" which enables Louis Bonaparte to represent each class against all the others in turn. Since they are unable to enforce their class interest, they must be represented by a master, Bonaparte. Herein lay the central dilemma of Bonaparte's rule: he wants to be seen as the "patriarchal benefactor of all classes" but, in this, he is spectacularly unsuccessful because he could not "give to one class without taking from another" (ibid. 108). Thus, in the final analysis, Bonaparte is a 'floating signifier', whose true loyalty lies with himself, his clique, the clandestine police force and standby army who keep him in power. And the rest is a total failure:

"The constitution, the national assembly, the dynastic parties, the blue [right-wing] and the red [left-wing] republicans, the heroes of [the Algerian wars in] Africa, the thunder from the grandstand, the sheet-lightning of the daily press, all the literature, political names and intellectual reputations, the civil law and the penal code, *liberté, égalité, fraternité*, and the ninth of May 1852 [when Bonaparte's presidency was supposed to expire, but didn't] – all that has magically vanished under the spell of a man whom even his enemies would deny was a sorcerer." (ibid. 23)

Bonaparte's coup is undoubtedly illegal and brutal. The revolution of 1848 becomes an empty gesture, embodying a dialectic of 'purification' and 'destruction.' The authoritarian regime the coup establishes is a short and exceptional period of 'dictatorship' where the rule of law is suspended. The state power, therefore, unconditionally authorises itself to exercise an absolute power in order to suppress other classes. Anticipating states of emergency in modern times, thus restoring state power by manifesting it at its most spectacular, the 'obscene' message of the 'unlimited governmental power' imposed by Louis Bonaparte is thus: "laws do not really bind me, I can do to you whatever I want, I can treat you as guilty if I decide to do so, I can destroy you if I want to" (Žižek, 2006: 337). Consequently, the process of promising peace and national honour culminates in a brutal and decidedly unbourgeois regime of banditry that seizes the reins of power. It is the army, "personified by its own dynasty", which must "represent the *State* in antagonism to the *society*" (Marx, 1858). In fact, the bourgeoisie renounces power in favour of a gangster regime (Carver, 2002: 152). For Bonapartism is about enforcing and preserving capitalist exploitation.

The aim of Bonapartism is to recognise popular sovereignty whilst placing it under a specific disciplinary control in the best interests of the bourgeoisie. At the heart of the regime's policy is technocratic and administrative romanticism, which is seen as crucial in building a competitive economy. Thus the entire bureaucratic-military machine would be deployed to

safeguard the managerial-technocratic 'bourgeois order', to support the government's candidates and to counter opposition. In the process, therefore, urgent efforts are made to increase the effectiveness of civilian policing (Carver, 2002: 153). Salvation seems to be offered by the security state. The oft-proclaimed desire for liberty is compounded always by social fear. 'Liberty' depends both on the curbing of the personal power of the Emperor and on the preservation of order (ibid. 156-7).

The French as a whole nation sees not the emergence of proletarian power, but the return of a demoralising defeat at the hands of a popular "reaction under the leadership of Louis Bonaparte" (Thoburn, 2003: 54). Under the repetition of Napoleon in Louis Bonaparte, the revolution leaves no room for rightful actors on the scene, bourgeois and proletarian, "making way for a troupe of substitute comedians whose burlesque performance reaches its climax in the triumph of the clown Louis Napoleon" (Rancière, 2004: 93). What we have here is a repetition with difference that is "enriched by the notion of a decline from heroism to foolishness": "...the London constable [Louis Bonaparte], with a dozen of the best debt-ridden lieutenants, after the little corporal [Napoleon Bonaparte], with his roundtable of military marshals! The eighteenth Brumaire of the fool after the eighteenth Brumaire of the genius!" (1852/Marx, 2002: 19; see also Carver, 2002: 120). The result is a deeply retrogressive situation, wherein, "it seems that the state has merely reverted to its oldest form, to the shameless, bare-faced rule of sword and

cross" (Marx, 1852/2002: 22). The 'threat' of the socialist revolution leads the bourgeoisie to the conclusion: "better an end to terror than terror without end!" (ibid. 89). Its logic, of course, is political. This is a history which produces a period of "crying contradictions." In the end, nothing changes and everybody occupies exactly the same position as in the beginning. Hence Marx (ibid. 34) writes on the Second Republic:

"Passion without truth, truth without passion; history without events; development driven solely by the calendar and wearisome through constant repetition of the same tension and release; antagonisms which seem periodically to reach a peak only to go dull and diminish without resolution."

In this sense the Bonapartist politics is based on a "lack of belief", on "realism" (Badiou, 2009a: 328-9). As a result, the class struggle is foreclosed, the antagonism and conflict are merely weakened and transformed into harmony, and the entire political structure is delimited to the actual reality by preventing potential 'revolutionary' events, from occurring.

To better understand and reveal the illegitimacy of Louis Bonaparte, one need not look further than Napoleon Bonaparte. The Napoleonic idea, as Napoleon (1859: 154) himself insists, "is not one of war, but a social, industrial, commercial idea which concerns all mankind." The want of order out of chaos and "stability and perseverance which is the great defect of democratic republics" are portrayed as especially important, whereas passions and excess are seen as potentially dangerous, for France seems to

be 'unready' for democracy (ibid. 32, 36). The Napoleonic idea in this respect "cleared up the chaos of nothingness and glory, separated truths from passions", which provided the foundation "to secure the liberty of the citizen and the prosperity of the country" (ibid. 23, 144). In a similar process of repeating and inverting Napoleon Bonaparte, Louis Bonaparte tried to establish the link between stability and prosperity, while, at the same time, eliminate the 'party' divisions. Louis Bonaparte's ideal would have been a society without antagonisms.

Since the lessons of the French counter-revolution are past, they can never be experienced again in unmediated form. But *The Eighteenth Brumaire of Louis Bonaparte* can be experienced now and in the future. It is here that one should return to Benjamin's concept of history, for it allows us to generate an interrelationship between past and present events. Here the implicit issue is the construction of a *critical* analysis that interweaves Marx's arguments of *Eighteenth Brumaire* (past) with neoliberal post-politics, how "history is referred to its 'making' – political praxis" (Tiedemann, 1983: 84, 91). To put it another way, by juxtaposing Marx's analysis of the 1851 coup d'état and neoliberal and militarised post-politics, I argue that there is a direct relationship between past and present events, a certain relationship which enables us to see the future as a new radical possibility, which goes beyond just the temporality of the present. For Benjamin, then, an 'interruptive' philosophy of history makes sense only in so far as the past *critically* examines the present conditions. This

analysis is of course “dialectical”: “for while the relation of the present to the past is a purely temporal, continuous one, the relation of what-has-been to the now is dialectical: is not progression but image, suddenly emergent” (Benjamin, 1999b: 462). Following Benjamin, the dialectical image is the moment of waking from hell, the very hell of neoliberal and militarised post-politics as a counterrevolutionary system. In this sense, the time of the dialectical image is Messianic time, the time of revolution as redemption.

Benjamin’s main concern is to seek the future in the past that journeys in the present. In this respect *The Eighteenth Brumaire of Louis Bonaparte’s* temporal status in a continuous present is “still journeying” (Marx, 1852/2002: 98). Rereading Marx’s cutting descriptions of Bonaparte and of French politics with an eye focused on contemporary society, the late post-political politics comes to mind again and again. But, to reiterate, by juxtaposing these two historical realities, I do not mean to suggest that the political lessons from 19th century France can be equated with the current developments in contemporary society. The point of comparison is confined to the lessons of the relationship between neoliberal capitalism and the increasing militarisation of contemporary society. What really counts, therefore, is the history of events not as a linear, homogeneous and continuous process but as a temporality capable of interruption and self-fulfilment, as “dialectics as a standstill” (Benjamin, 1999b: 463).

Past makes its present appearance as an interruption of the present. And “articulating past historically means appropriating a memory as it flashes up in a moment of danger.” This danger for Benjamin (2003: 391) is what “threatens both the content of the tradition and those who inherit it.” By “those who inherit it” Benjamin means the tradition of the oppressed, those who are aware – through a dialectical perspective- of this very danger and the meaning of liberation. Hence the importance of *The Eighteenth Brumaire* which enables us to see history as both a moment of danger and hope in which “time takes a stand and has become to a standstill” (ibid. 396). Through an analysis of the *The Eighteenth Brumaire* as the clash between the past as a moment of danger and hope arises, then, a new mode of critical thought, where the present remembers the past and liberates the oppressed. This means that *The Eighteenth Brumaire* allows us to introduce an ‘untimely’ intervention into the counterrevolutionary aspects of the present conditions, which is neoliberal and militarised post-politics.

The Eighteenth Brumaire has relevance today on its 159th anniversary for many reasons. First, if Napoleon Bonaparte is a floating signifier who can be classified as a tragic hero, then the emptiness of the imitative acts of Louis Bonaparte can be qualified as “low farce” (Martin, 2002). In this way Marx tries to “demonstrate how the *class struggle* in France created circumstances and relations that made it possible for a grotesque mediocrity to play a hero’s part” (Marx, 1852/2002: 77). Crucially,

however, Marx declares that the tragedy of Napoleon Bonaparte is that of society, not of the man. Likewise, the farce of Louis Bonaparte is tragic, not for the man but for society, for it is the society that is both the victim of Bonaparte's rumblings and a cause contributing to them (Riquelme, 1980: 69). As Marx (1850: 81) rightly observes, although Louis Bonaparte was "the most simple-minded man in France", he had "acquired the most multiplex significance. Just because he was nothing, he could signify everything to save himself."

Cutting to the chase, Marx's argument is that the reign of Napoléon le petit is not 'real' history but merely a parody of non-events, a farce (Riquelme, 1980; see also Diken, 2012; Žižek, 2006). There are two kinds of repetition, which helps us understand history as a 'paradox.' On the one hand, there is a 'productive' repetition that creates something new. On the other hand, there is bare repetition that parodies "the old" (Marx, 1852/2002: 12). In other words, repetition can dramatise the "spirit" by awakening the dead, as part of a new struggle, or make the ghost of revolution "walk about again" (ibid. 12). Productive repetition resurrects past events, while bare repetition takes an empty form of history, the consequence of which is 'farce' (Diken, 2012: 84).

Thus 'revolution' occurs twice: first as tragedy, as a productive repetition, which can create something new, then as 'farce', as counterrevolution (Marx, 1852/2002; Žižek, 2009). Counterrevolution is bare repetition which

is built on harmony and consensus, whereas revolution is productive repetition which seeks to disrupt harmony and consensus (Diken, 2012: 84-86). Simply put, counterrevolution as bare repetition produces non-events within the given, while revolution disrupts that givenness. When the spirit of revolution is forgotten, what remains after is bare repetition, a society characterised by the absence of revolutionary events. Neoliberal capitalism was conceived at the creation of a new world order. It legitimatised sovereign states who were supposed to defend liberal values both home and abroad: freedom of speech, all being equal access to prosperity, the ability to challenge governments, the elimination of torture and other cruel sovereign acts. Neoliberalism, in short, asserted values that would improve lives of human beings, and generate prosperity for people living through it (Friedman, 2002; Krugman, 2007; Stiglitz, 1998). Soon after the collapse of the Berlin Wall, it became institutionalised, declaring “the end of history” (Fukuyama, 1992; see also Jameson, 2003). It started to exercise its hegemony, especially in economic and military matters, a power which is constituted by a complex and open ended social regimes. The first Gulf War and the war against terror consolidated the hegemony of neoliberal power, in the hands of dominant sovereign states. Today, however, the hegemony of that power seems to have broken down (Harvey, 2005; see also Crouch, 2011; Žižek, 2009; 2011). The neoliberal world order, in short, is now under siege and being pushed back. As the threat of political and moral decline continues, however, it becomes increasingly authoritarian

and thus violent (Bigo and Tsoukala, 2008; Diken, 2009; Dillon and Reid, 2009; Duffield, 2011; Evans, 2011; Hardt and Negri, 2004; Toscano, 2010).

After the broken promises of neoliberal capitalism ('more democracy', 'less war' and 'state', and 'equality for all'), what sets is an authoritarian liberal society in which radical conflict and 'true events' are foreclosed (Bauman, 2002; 2012; Badiou, 2005; 2009c; Diken, 2009, 2012; Swyngedouw, 2009a; 2009b; Žižek, 2008b; 2010). What we have here is nothing else than an 'authoritarian liberal populism' that "identifies singular actors as the immediate causes" of non-events (see Lavin, 2005: 443). After all, we, as 'good liberal subjects', have grown used to the individual acts of heroism. The ideology of authoritarian liberal populism allows and even compels heroes to emerge in the popular consciousness, which produces a moment of historical possibility on which the subjects are able to capitalise (ibid. 443). It compels us to identify individual heroes to appear as the authors of non-events, the consequence of which is farce. It should, therefore, come as no surprise to those of us that McCarthyism, Thatcherism, Reaganism, Bushism, Mulroneyism, Harperism, Putinism, Erdoganism, and now Obamaism have become the rule, not the exception. Although these 'isms' have different objects, the common denominator that exists between them all is the fact that they have presented themselves as the 'kinder gentler' face of neoliberal capitalism. What a scene! What a farce!

Second, the Bonapartist coup of 1851, while 'not an exact parallel' to what happened post 9/11, also shows the drive for total domination by the neoliberal security state. Precisely in this sense the text exposes the shallow structure behind the fragile façade of liberal (bourgeois) democracy and its political allies that supposedly protect democratic liberties. In this age of ID cards, biometric passports, poster bans, military-style borders, fences and checkpoints around 'security zones', armed predator drones, Guantánamo, Border Agencies, Home Office, Patriot and Terrorism Acts etc. (Agamben, 1998; 2005; Elden, 2007; Graham and Marvin, 2001; Graham, 2004; 2010; Gregory, 2006; Lyon, 2001; 2003), Marx's critique of bourgeois democracy still rings true. Despite its rhetoric, the bourgeois understanding of liberal values can all too easily sink into authoritarianism at the first opportunity. Thus, citizenship rights may be suspended in the name of 'democracy', innocent civilians can be killed by unjust, illegal and immoral drone strikes to save democracy, and torture can 'reasonably' be legalised to preserve human dignity. Instead of legal rights and legal systems based on universal citizenship, neoliberal and militarised post-politics is based on 'states of exception', pervasive surveillance, tracking and DNA database technologies, which give governments virtually unchecked powers to preemptively profile entire population, thus determining how the situation might be understood (Agamben, 2001; 2005; Aradau et al, 2008; Bell and Evans, 2010; Diken, 2009; Dillon, 2007; Dillon and Reid, 2009; Ericson, 2008; Evans and Hardt, 2010; Graham, 2010; Rose, 2007; Žižek, 2008b, 2010). In other words, the

neoliberal security state is an exceptional state, so are its characteristics. This has been accompanied by the revival of *sovereignty* and a vast expansion of the social regime of *discipline*, the very characteristics which pave the way for managing and expanding the mechanisms of *control*. For that reason, Marx's text reveals the thin line between democracy and authoritarian populism, demonstrating how they mirror each other too closely (Carver, 2002; Cowling and Martin, 2002; Jessop, 2002). Those who are supposed to safeguard our essential democratic values threaten to destabilise democracies or perhaps even usher in a new era of global authoritarian rule, so as to retain its social power. Today, that is a danger that lurks more than ever under the surface of militarised post-politics, which operates within multiple rationalities and affects, and above all, within the overall socio-economic context of neoliberal capitalism.

Third, under Bonaparte's rule politics was reduced to an instrumentalist or technocratic rule. Similarly, in post-politics everyday life has been subjected to increased technocratic control, ensuring that social movements cannot be seen to take root and thrive, and that those who challenge the system politically and ethically can never, under any circumstances, be perceived to win (Graeber, 2011) Politics is, therefore, reduced to a technical-pragmatic exercise "in implementing and managing developments that are regarded as inevitable, performed by an elite coalition of diverse experts" (Bavo, 2007: 7; see also Stavrakakis, 2007). With the normalisation of the 'state of exception', suspension of basic

rights, ideological cultivation of a culture of fear and cynicism, and fundamental separation of bad and good circulation, or the included and the excluded, the aim is to prevent the event, an event which threatens to overthrow the system as a whole (Agamben, 2005; Badiou, 2008; Diken, 2012; Dillon, 2011; Evans, 2010; Swyngedouw, 2009a; Žižek, 2008b; 2012)

The dimensions of the neoliberal security complex now beggar the imagination. Neoliberal and militarised post-politics, in order to defuse the fear of potential revolutions, demands a constant auditing of biopolitical control over life to determine which lives are desired and productive and which lives are dangerous and need regulation (Aradau et. all 2008; Aradau & Van Munster, 2008; Dean, 2010; Dillon and Reid, 2009; Reid, 2012). With neoliberal and militarised post-politics, in other words, life becomes the enemy of life itself because it is where the event takes place. Worried about the possibility of the event, revolution, post-politics is a politics in which neoliberal capitalism seems to have become a second nature, and where security and militarisation have become formative, productive and generative principles of social life (Dillon, 1996; see also Agamben, 2001).

In other words, a neoliberal consensus has been built around the indispensability for capitalism, and the politics of security that posits order as an absolute value.

Marx's analysis of the *The Eighteenth Brumaire* is sharp and vivid. While 'not drawing an exact parallel' to Bonapartism, present-day readers will find some resonances in contemporary politics. My own is to think of the

increasing militarisation and neoliberalisation of society and then to grasp the truth of post-politics. Neoliberal and militarised post-politics expresses itself as an inability to think conflict and struggle in politics. As a principled counterrevolutionary formation, like Bonaparte's rule, it aims at defusing the idea of revolution. If happiness, as Benjamin illustrates (2003: 390), is liberation from pseudo-events, that is, 'farce', which occurs as counterrevolution, the task is to remember the chains of the past in order to liberate the present. Only on this basis can it be possible to break the misery and counterrevolutionary aspects of the present and create something different from what already *is*. The past that I am interested in is the farcical character of *The Eighteenth Brumaire* that, as principled, reactionary logic, now reappears in a different guise, as one of the dominant mode of thinking in contemporary society: neoliberal and militarised post-politics. According to Benjamin, the historical consciousness of what-has-been starts with a 'political awakening', which offers an interpretation of past and present events. Hence I suggest that *The Eighteenth Brumaire* is a text that comes to the present from the past and awakes the oppressed in the very core of the present, a remembrance. What precisely does neoliberal and militarised post-politics stand for in the current historical conjuncture between the present and the past? This will be the central question addressed in the second part of the chapter.

2.3 Neoliberal and Militarised Post-Politics

As noted in Chapter One, for Nietzsche, what made ancient Greek culture alive and thriving was its understanding of the *polis* as a site of public political encounter and radical dissent. For him, the Greek agora asserted disagreement as the base for politics proper. Hence Nietzsche praises the Greeks as there is no *a priori* separation between man and nature in them, a praise that acknowledges that “‘natural’ qualities and those called truly ‘human’ are inseparably grown together” (Nietzsche, 1954: 32). For this reason, the Greeks, according to Nietzsche, serve as a corrective to “the flabby concept of modern humanity” because this was a clear manifestation of the Greek’s “earnest necessity to let their hatred flow forth fully” (ibid. 33). The insistence on the inhumane aspects of humanity (cruelty, the will to destroy and create) is what makes the Greek agora as a site of performative contradictions, and the Greeks so terrifyingly human. As such, Nietzsche views the Greek polis as the *agonal* spirit incarnate, for it offers a political culture in which agonism was the common good and antagonism was constitutive of the activity of politics. The Greek polis was a place where political subjectivation literally took place, and in which conflict, antagonism and struggle were accepted as ontological givens, as parts of life.

Society in the late capitalist order, however, cannot even imagine radical structural change. It is a ‘neoliberal and militarised post-political society’ in

which any questioning of reality becomes unacceptable, where radical change as an 'event' has no place and thus seems impossible or crazy. A common complaint about the late capitalist society is that it has been profoundly depoliticised in this way, and a number of scholars have begun to describe this process as 'post-political.' For example, Slavoj Žižek (1999: 35; 2006), Chantal Mouffe (2005) and Eric Swyngedouw (2009a; 2009b) among others, argue that the post-political is a principled 'political' formation that "forecloses" the political, preventing the "politicization" of particular conflicts and identities. According to Žižek (1999: 29), for instance, post-politics is the attempt "to depoliticise the conflict by bringing it to its extreme, via the direct militarization of politics." In this way, as political geographer Eric Swyngedouw (2009a: 608) suggests, not only is the public arena evacuated from antagonism and radical conflict, but "the parameters of democratic governing itself are being shifted, announcing new forms of governmentality in which traditional sovereign or disciplinary society is transfigured into a society of control through disembedded networks of governance." The aim of the post-political is, in short, "pre-emptive risk management, ensuring that nothing disturbing *really* happens, that 'politics' does not take place" (Diken and Laustsen, 2002: 303).

Moving away from 'old fashioned' ideology based politics, a new politics has to deal with knowledge and information rather than (traditional or simple-modern) beliefs. In reality, however, this shift in attitudes means

that politics itself should go “beyond left and right” (Giddens, 1994), since “partisan conflicts are a thing of the past and consensus can be achieved through dialogue” (Mouffe, 2005: 1). As Agamben (2006) argues, “there is a shift from the model of the *polis* founded on a centre, that is, a public centre or *agora*”, to a new order “that is certainly invested in a process of de-politicisation, which results in a strange zone where it is impossible to decide what is private and what is public.” All of these developments suggest that the political itself is foreclosed, relying instead on compromise and trade-offs between particular interests and a depoliticised expert administration. This “retreat of the political” (Lacoue-Labarthe and Nancy, 1997; Lefort, 1988; see also Swyngedouw, 2009a) has enormous implications in contemporary society and thus requires urgent attention.

At this point, Rancière’s interpretation of postdemocracy I find especially telling because it helps us better understand how post-politics is characterised by a propensity towards harmony, towards a consensual arrangement in which radical structural change, the event, seems to be ignored. Rancière (1999: 93) defines post-politics as “a political idyll of achieving the common good by an enlightened government of elites buoyed by the confidence of the masses.” It is a consensual arrangement that operates within a *given* socio-spatial distribution of things and people. This givenness, this existing order of things, is nothing other than the police order, or what Rancière (2001) calls “partition of the sensible.”

Rancière argues that 'conflict' is tightly controlled by the police order with the object of replacing a democratic configuration of politics with a post-political consensus that eliminates real dispute, the very possibility of demonstrating 'acts of subjectivation' and 'contestation' that might interrupt the existing order. In this sense "consensus is the reduction of politics to the police" (Rancière, 2001). The post-democratic police order insists on circulation: "Move along! There is nothing to see here!" (ibid). Assembling around a consensus, the 'police' is a process of counting, of managing who and what counts, and the manner in which they count. The police in this respect refers to "all the activities which create order by distributing places, names, functions" (Rancière, 1994: 173). It "refers to an established order of governance with everyone in their 'proper place', whose essence "is not repression but distribution – distribution of places, people, names, functions, authorities, activities, and so on – and the normalization of this distribution" (Dikeç, 2007: 174). In other words, politics "acts on the police" (Rancière, 1999: 33). Based on a particular regime of representation, the consensual police order is organised as a partition of the sensible which "discloses the existence of something in common and the delimitations that define the respective parts and positions within it" (ibid. 12). The partition of the sensible "arranges the perceptive givens of a situation"; it sets the division between "what is in or out, central or peripheral, audible or inaudible, visible or invisible" (Dikeç, 2007: 3-4).

The real, question, therefore, is: if 'the police' is based on a particular regime of representation, what would constitute a genuine democracy, a proper political democratic sequence? Politics proper can only be expressed in adversarial terms, and a coming together which can only occur in conflict (Rancière, 2007: 49). It asserts yelping dissent and rupture as the proper bases for politics. A proper political act, for Rancière, perturbs the existing legal order, the police, and gives word to the Wrong, to those who are not included, whose statements are not comprehensible in the ruling political/police space. Hence, a proper political act claims, in the name of equality, a place in the order of things, demanding "the part for those who have no-part" (Rancière, 2001). Politics proper, according to Rancière, only occurs when the existing order is questioned and interrupted.

I find Rancière's notion of politics proper instructive in this regard. However, I would like to go beyond Rancière's understanding of politics not by negating him but by showing to what extent a proper political act is "not just a strategic intervention into a situation, bound by its conditions – it retroactively creates its conditions" (Žižek, 2010: 33). As will be argued in the last chapter, a proper political act is an essential coincidence of strategy and intoxication without referring to a stable synthesis between them. Combining in the right measure both revolutionary intoxication and strategic predicament, politics proper aims at distorting the situation as a whole.

As noted before, productive repetition redeems past events, while bare repetition simply parodies the past, the consequence of which is 'farce.' Productive repetition (tragedy) is revolutionary, for it is a resurrection of past events, bare repetition (farce) is counterrevolutionary, for it is a repetition without difference or consequence that produces non-events. The farcical character of post-politics derives from the fact that it builds upon harmony and consensus; what it produces is nothing other than pseudo-events within the confines of the given. Its aim is to repress all forms of disruptive resistance, ensuring that revolutionary subversion is an impossible one. In this sense the post-political security state is an old trick repackaged, but with some flimsy social democratic window dressing (Mouffe, 2000: 93): in mid-nineteenth century France, it was socialism for the Party of Order; in McCarthy's day, it was anti-communism coupled with the national security state; and today, it is neoliberal and militarised post-politics, which is not a positive politics, actively pursuing a new social project, but a politics of fear, "a reactive politics, whose motivating force is defence against a perceived threat" (Žižek, 2008b: 41).

It is its counterrevolutionary aspects that make neoliberal and militarised post-politics farcical. Hence it endlessly promises to bring democracy and prosperity, and advocates harmony and consensus within the bounds of a given hegemonic discourse in order to maintain a state of 'order' to 'disorder.' The only subject position this farce allows is that of individual types whose have the ability to capitalise historical moments in which they

live. Put differently, the only subject position this comedy allows is that of heroes who are incapable of disrupting harmony and consensus. Harassing the many but catching the few, neoliberal post-politics is the art of foreclosing the politicisation of subjectivities.

The fact that we live in a post-political society, that politics has been suppressed and foreclosed, has also received severe criticism. One might think of Jodi Dean's work (2009) on Rancière, where she argues the shortcomings of his post-political politics. Dean's article entitled "Politics without Politics" is a significant attempt to demonstrate the weaknesses and the inadequacies of the sign of 'democracy' as it is currently constituted for left political aspiration. Dean examines the end of ideology thesis which Rancière associates with the triumph of democracy. Referring to Rancière's idea of post-politics "as the art of suppressing the political", Dean (2009: 22) claims that this argument is incapable of handling the current conjuncture. While it is worth noting that he speaks of the cause of depoliticisation, Rancière, Dean goes on to suggest, can't explain the specificity of neoliberalism (ibid. 22). Thus the arguments for post-politics and dedemocratisation "are at best unconvincing and at worst misleading" (ibid. 23). Because left political theory should undo the damage neoliberal ideas and policies have created, Dean suggests that "the claim that we are in a post-political time is childishly petulant" (ibid.). In this sense post-politics might not be a helpful term to grasp contemporary reality. As a term, post-politics, Dean argues, obfuscates the political moves and

struggles that produce the current conjuncture, and “prevents us from understanding them as such.”

Nevertheless, Dean argues that “there are two reasons that post-politics might be a useful descriptor. “ First, it refers to a specific problem in left political theory: “the fantasy of a politics without politics” (ibid. 24). Thought in this way, post-politics becomes a term that refers neither to governance, nor to consensus, but rather to an identity politics that the left tends to embrace. For Dean, the left embraces identity politics based on inclusion and recognition results in naturalisation rather than the politicisation of identity. Second, post-politics is also a useful descriptor “as an accentuation of the depoliticization of democracy” (ibid.). Dean seems keen to argue that in contemporary society, to demand democracy is to demand what already exists, that is, givenness of the partition of the sensible. To this extent, as Dean seems to hint, democracy sustains, rather than challenges, the hegemonic relations in a given political constellation. Basically, this means that democracy is not the solution; it becomes a common denominator on which both left and right agree. Democracy, in short, takes the form of a fantasy that leads to a politics without politics.

Dean (ibid. 23) also contends that the right has been engaged in the political, reframing the constitution, reversing the steps that had been taken towards greater race equality, redistributing the wealth to the wealthy, undermining habeas corpus and enforcement of the Geneva

Conventions, expanding unwarranted state surveillance, lobbying aggressively to make evangelical Christian beliefs a part of schools' curricula so that creationism and climate change denial will be taught in the classrooms and so on. Given that these are all political achievements, the claim that we live in a post-political society, according to Dean, does not have political grounds. As such, post-politics is inapplicable to the United States post 9/11 as it fails to acknowledge the collapse of regulation in the financial sector, the public/private partnership, "the rise of private security forces, and contemporary practices of surveillance wherein state agencies rely on private databases" (ibid. 24).

While I find Dean's argument elegant and persuasive, it results, however, in an analysis that fails to grasp the governmental rationalities and the affective logics of neoliberal and militarised post-politics. Let us start with the right's engagement in the political. To be sure, the right in the USA managed to transform politics; they set the pace for 'political change.' How did we get here? Contra Dean, I argue that the right's engagement in the political is a result of post-political politics, an emergency politics in which fear/security becomes a way of life (Badiou, 2008). We live in emergency times, a new era in which the exercise of state power refers to a depoliticised expert administration. In such a situation, the only way to introduce passion into politics, the only way to energise people and increase their self-awareness is through fear (Žižek, 2008b). The right seeks to mobilise fear and resentment on the part of relatively privileged

groups in relation to 'threatening others.' Reducing politics to affects, it boils down all political issues to the fear of external threats: immigration, crime and terrorism, economic downturn, foreign trade, as well as socialism and Islamism (Obama is a Muslim and a socialist). "Increasingly reckless, anarchic and strident", the American right, as columnist Gary Younge (2010: 31) observes, "is living in a parallel world where fear and rage drive out the facts." The right, in short, articulates its lack of political conviction by trying to mobilise the 'fear of the fear' ended up naturalising rather than questioning the capitalist order and the market.

In this sense the right, like neoliberal and militarised post-politics, relies on the denial of a radical, utopian dimension to politics and depicts the given reality as the only reality. Having a general suspicion of social change, the American right plays a given game that relies on the manipulation of fears in a populist fashion, which sustains rather than challenges the consensual neoliberal order. Radical social change, it believes, should be cautious and pragmatic. Thus the American right seeks to sustain the existing values (neoliberal capitalism, the market, conservatism), with no ambition of overcoming their positivity; it seeks to preserve particular relations of power. Committed to capitalist power relations, it defends privilege from those who threaten it (e.g. the power of employers and managers over workers). The American right, in other words, pivots on an essential commitment – defence of privilege and inequality. In this sense it is spectacularly successful in 'politicising' the notion of the public good and

replacing it with a free-market ideology precisely through naturalising and establishing a consensus around neoliberal capitalism.

In this way consensus becomes an invariant of politics, and most significant issues inherent to the system cease to create scissions, taking neoliberal capitalism and the market merely as an unquestionable, naturalised background. In the final analysis, nothing really political happens; the outcome of the mobilisation of the American right does not change anything, and, in contrast to productive repetition, no perspective takes place. Contrary to productive repetition, which necessarily causes disruption by changing the coordinates of the existing system, of neoliberal capitalism, the politics of American right builds upon harmony and consensus. Precisely in this sense, and contrary to Dean, the 'political success' of the American right should not be seen as 'politics proper.' Politics proper aims at disrupting the situation as a whole. What we see in the American right, however, is bare repetition, that is, farce, which produces non-events within the confines of the capitalist order and the market. In the end, therefore, the right does not provide an all together different perspective on social change and everybody returns to the same position as in the beginning.

As for the private security forces and the contemporary practices of surveillance, one of the central characteristics of post-politics is that it is primarily security oriented. Contrary to Dean's claim that post-politics fails

to grasp the rise of military-industrial complex, that it fails to acknowledge the rise of the contemporary practises of surveillance, neoliberal post-politics focuses on depoliticised expert management and designates security as the overriding responsibility of the modern state. By making security one of the central features to modern governance (Agamben, 2001), neoliberal post-politics redefines populations as vulnerable and resilient that must be protected (Reid, 2012). In the process, therefore, the affective logic becomes a generative principle of formation for rule. The post-political is a determinate political formation with distinctive social regimes and affects toward ever increasing 'militarisation', or the 'privatisation' and 'capitalisation' of society. The key question then is how to conceptualise the relationships between regimes of power and their affective logics. As I propose in this dissertation, the discursive framing of neoliberal post-politics and the established social regimes has enormous implications for society and politics. Yet, in Dean's analysis, this remains under-researched. Installing "communicative capitalism" (Dean, 2010b) as the determinate formation, the power of agency, and 'drive' the only affect, does not seem relevant precisely because it fails to acknowledge the complex linkages between neoliberal capitalism, and historical social regimes and their affective structures.

For instance, in order to explain liberalism's "constitutive inability", Dean refers to Lacan's discussion of drive as a "constant thrust", which "forbids any assimilation of the drive to a biological function, which always has a

rhythm” (Lacan, quoted in Dean, 2010a: 4). Dean (2010b: 30) goes on to suggest that the Lacanian conception of drive “expresses the reflexive structure of complex networks.” In this context, Dean argues (ibid. 30) that beyond the law “are the reflexive circuits of drive.” Communicative capitalism, according to Dean, “thrives not because of unceasing or insatiable desires but in and as the repetitive intensity of drive.” By making communicative capitalism operative, drive therefore disengages subjects from a political act of resistance and transformation. For this reason, Dean (ibid. 31) argues that, “under conditions of the decline of symbolic efficiency, drive is not an act.” Politically speaking, the challenge is, according to Dean, to produce “the conditions of possibility for breaking out of or redirecting the loop of drive.”

Dean (2010a: 4) asserts that “the structure of biopolitics, biopolitics’ underlying dynamic and shape, is drive.” For it can still help us clarify “how it is that biopolitics is a politics of reversal, repetition, and return”, an activity wherein action and reaction merge together (ibid. 4). Emphasising three features of the Lacanian notion of drive, that is to say, drive as failure “which does not reach the goal to enjoy”, drive as a “compulsion to repeat” and drive as “creative destruction” (ibid. 4-5), Dean seems to be saying that drive has a force of loss and capture, which strengthens the specificities of both liberalism and neoliberalism. Drive allows us to understand how people are “captured in the population”, a biopolitical capture that neoliberalism uses and extends its hegemony.

This understanding of drive as a force, as an affect that sustains neoliberalism is also prone to problems. Drive may be an important affect that enables us to see biopolitics as byproduct of fundamental change in terms of 'governmentality', but it is insufficient to understand how human beings are captured in the population, a biopolitical capture that neoliberal and militarised post-politics amplifies and extends. Neoliberalism, as Foucault (2008: 22) states, is "the general framework of biopolitics." Only on this basis will be able to understand the true meaning of neoliberalism and biopolitics. Its objective is to neutralise anything that can threaten the hegemony of neoliberalism. In the process, neoliberalism relies not only on a circuit of fear and danger but an entire political economy of affect. Just as neoliberal post-politics produces and organises different social regimes, its functioning also requires multiple differentiated affects in which subjects are managed and governed through a biopolitical capture. The established social regimes are a kind of sustaining the hegemonic power of the system, a mechanism which consists of affects and emotions. Neoliberalism relies on *this* interplay between different social regimes and the affective circuit they generate, intervening in its management. In other words, neoliberal post-politics is as much about mobilising concrete social regimes, as it is about managing multiple affects.

Precisely in this sense, it cannot be reduced either to drive, or the stimulation of fear and threat. Neoliberalism is not stable; it is continually transforming itself. In short, it is a dynamic ideology, a heterogeneous

multiple. And it is necessary that our analysis targets this nexus of relations between different regimes of power relations, a multiple political economy of affect, life and security/militarisation/war that is its heart. The affective logics are tendencies or incitements inherent to regimes of power, but they cannot determine in any final way the concrete experiences of those logics, such as perceived emotions. In other words, just as each social regime is connected with the other social regimes in a specific way without one determining the others (not even in the final instance), each affect is connected with other affects without one determining the others. Closing down possibilities rather than opening them, Dean, however, seems to offer 'drive' as the only stable category of political economy of affect, subordinating all affective politics to it. The biopolitical attempt to manage life in its productive new capacities, to maintain completely a population, requires a force that exceeds the capacity of drive as a sustaining force. Interventions are, after all, conducted in order to affect life so that the individual will behave in the desired way. Neoliberal biopolitics' dynamic oscillation between the established social regimes, its compulsive circulation from one affect to the other, indicates that we reground the affective logics differently, that an analysis of extra dimension of affect is necessary for any social and spatial analysis of neoliberal capitalism. What truly matters is an analysis that explains the dynamics of neoliberal post-politics and the established social regimes, which directly manipulate and intervene in life purely at the level of its 'affective relations.'

Dean also argues that the claim that we are in a post-political time is “like the left is saying, if we don’t get to play what we want, we’re not going to play” (2009: 23). But do the regimes and affects characterising neoliberal and militarised post-political completely foreclose the possibility of politics? No, of course not! The reign of neoliberal post-politics does not mean the end of politics; it does suggest, however, that the traditional models of politics are no longer valid, and that new models are called for. What gives rise to neoliberal post-politics is also what gives rise to possibilities for radical political change. In Dean’s analysis, this element is not properly addressed, and she fails even to treat post-politics as a complex and historical regime of power relations, instead asserting it as crude and stable ‘fact.’ Neoliberal and militarised post-politics is a moving target. And “moving targets are, nevertheless, targets of a kind. Harder to hit, but more rewarding for it” (Reid, 2010b: 394). As argued above, multiple governmental rationalities and their associated affects are means to, and methods of, neoliberal post-politics. As I discussed in Chapter One, what is then needed is a dynamic ‘topological’ analysis that allows us to make sense of particular governmental forms. Topology refers to virtualities as well as conditions of possibility that are actualised in concrete situations; the topological approach is a theoretical strategy through which I propose to characterise, link together and analyse different social regimes. What is then needed is a dynamic topological perspective that aims to explore the complex interplay between sovereignty, discipline, control and terrorism at a theoretical level, and

conceptualise the relationships between complex and historical regimes of power relations and their affective logics. Today, neoliberal and militarised post-politics, the established social regimes and related affects such as resentment, fear, cynicism and spite continue to play a major role in relation to the social. We need a dynamic topological approach to analyse them.

One is tempted to say that, along the same lines, neoliberal and militarised post-politics oscillates in between present and future, to make sure that 'disruptive events' do not take place. Post-politics in this respect actually precludes the gesture of politicisation proper; it is the art of foreclosing the possibility of politicisation. More importantly, and contrary to Dean, the post-political consensual order takes as foundational the inevitability of the capitalist economic system and the idea that radical dissent and antagonism can only exist within the bounds of neoliberal consensus (as long as they do not attempt to radically challenge the very foundations of neoliberal capitalism). In the process, politics is boxed into a technocratic managerialism; a "post-democratic" process, which leads to the effective silencing of genuinely political questions" (Marchart, 2007: 66). Concerned more with the electoral mechanisms which are themselves conceived of purchasing power, politics is reduced to a depoliticised expert administration, and the space of legitimate political debate is compromised by the coordination of interests, whereby all problems are left to experts,

social workers and technocrats, that is, to an elite coalition of diverse experts.

2.3.1 The Euro Crisis

The euro crisis is a high point of doing politics without any ostensible politics. Talking quite a lot of the peculiarities of US situation, Dean also fails to analyse the peculiarities of European politics, which is again depoliticised technocratic post-politics. In Europe, in particular, the rise of the managerial-technocratic bourgeois order is what we are witnessing. As we have seen in Greece and in Italy, elected if flawed prime ministers were forced to resign in favour of unelected economic experts, of technocrats, for they could not push through all of the necessary draconian austerity measures. In the Italian case, Berlusconi was toppled neither for corruption, nor for rising unemployment, xenophobia, or for having sex with underage girls; but because the markets think he had to go, whereas in the Greek case, former Prime Minister George Papandreou threatened to give the people a say on austerity plan, through a referendum. This means that, in a crisis, so-called democratic principles and institutions may be entirely scrapped in favour of technocracy, of 'safe pair of hands', backed by the full force of the state, for the sole purpose of implementing policies. More troubling, though, is that the suspension of parliamentary democracy in favour of 'unity governments', of the rule by the ideologically neutral technicians, "is viewed not as a problem but as an affirmation that

these nations mean business” (Editorial, 2011: 26). What we have here is a modern debased version of the political that relies on expert knowledge and administration and “legitimizes itself by means of a direct reference to the scientific status of its knowledge” (Žižek, 2006: 188). In the process, doing politics is reduced to “a professional spirit of an engineer fixing an aeroplane” (Editorial, 2011: 26).

Recall Tony Blair’s advice to young people in one of his ‘goodbye tours’ before he stepped down as prime minister: “an idealistic young person [who] wanted to change the world [should] become a scientist” (quoted in Rawnsley, 2006). What this means is that the political no longer represents itself in terms of purely political aims, dissent and rupture, but emerges, “both theoretically and practically, from the social process, a process that only knowledge has access to” (Swyngedouw, 2009a: 604). Thus science becomes politicised and, more importantly, the place of the ‘agent’ and belief is occupied by knowledge. Today science becomes a new religious authority that can provide the ‘ultimate truth’, the best way to understand life. In post-politics, therefore, political problems are given apolitical solutions in which human beings are reduced to “a pure disembodied gaze” observing their own “absence”:

As Lacan pointed out, this is the fundamental subjective position of fantasy: to be reduced to a gaze observing the world in the condition of the subject’s non-existence – like the fantasy of witnessing the act of one’s own conception, parental copulation, or the act of witnessing one’s own burial, like Tom Sawyer and Huck Finn.” (Žižek, 2010: 80)

The aim of Bonapartism was to place popular sovereignty under specific security regimes in the name of order, of bourgeoisie. At the heart of regime's policy was technocratic management, which was supposed to be a catalyst for the development of a competitive economy. As such, the political debate was reduced to a farcical exchange without taking on an antagonistic form. Similarly, the aim of neoliberal post-politics is to protect liberal state power whilst placing it under a disciplinary control. The farcical character of post-politics derives from the fact that it is based on a technocratic management, which is viewed as the only viable alternative for the development of a market capitalism based on competition. The Bonapartist politics was largely restricted to the wealthy members of the regime, and not necessarily across 'class' lines, for a share of political and economic power. Thus politics was locked into a 'technocratic management', represented by older and newer elites. In post-politics, in a similar way, politics proper is prohibited and restricted to experts, scientists and technocrats. In this, there is no proper content of politics; the political space is closed down by criminalising or ridiculing dissent. In post-politics, like Bonaparte's era, politics has been reduced to a managerial-technocratic rule without a possibility of a radical structural change regarding the 'given.' Post-politics is farcical in the sense that it is deployed to safeguard the managerial-technocratic 'bourgeois order', for it is the best ideological shell behind which neoliberal capitalism continues on its brutal, militarised, unjust and destructive way.

2.3.2 Militarisation of Society

While post-politics sacralises the liberal democratic order, it also mobilises all sorts of military/security complex, a process in which the state of exception has become the rule (Agamben, 1998; 2005). The militarisation belies the seemingly pacific façade of ‘consensual’ post-politics; indeed, contemporary society now seems to be formed in the image of militarisation. What we are witnessing is the loss of distinctive notions such as progress, order and modernisation and the emergence of “the new military urbanism” (Graham, 2010) as the organising principle of contemporary society. In a sense, therefore, the exception has become the rule: military urbanism and the wave of fear have permeated “the sphere of the everyday, the private realm of the house” (Misselwitz & Weizman, 2003: 272).

Indeed, militarisation of society is central to depoliticised consensual post-politics that has characterised the past few years. Especially since 9/11, this process has been accelerated. This is not to say that the militarisation of society did commence on 12 September 2001. Processes of urban militarisation and securitisation are nothing new; they predate the War on Terror. Thus, like others (Coaffee *et al*, 2009; Graham, 2004; 2010), one could argue that the “war on terror has been used as a prism being used to conflate and further legitimize dynamics that *already* were militarizing urban space” (Warren, 2002: 614). In effect, there is a particular

relationship between the histories of the city and political violence. For instance, war, for Virilio (2002), is at the origins of the foundation of cities. War, according to Virilio, is not only to be understood as 'warfare', but as a means for thinking about the way in which society itself is constituted. War, in this sense, is an 'absolute immanence' that political sovereign power "ceaselessly fails to capture in performing the kinds of biopolitical manoeuvres upon which forms of civil pacificity are built" (Reid, 2005). As an absolute immanence, "pure war" enables the state to establish homogeneous cities under the auspices of purity and safety. Indeed, methods of discipline and control – coupled with processes of urban militarisation - served to normalise war and preparations for war as central elements of the material, political-economic and cultural constitution of cities and urban life (see Graham, 2012: 137).

To understand the importance of militarisation and war as the organising principles of societies, it might be useful to read Clausewitz from a Foucauldian perspective. Such a Foucauldian perspective suggests that in *On War* (1993), Clausewitz did not simply define the conjunctive relation of war to society and politics as the art of strategy. He provided a theory of strategy upon which complex power relations operate within contemporary societies (Foucault, 2003; see also Reid, 2003). The primary significance of Clausewitz's strategic thought, according to Foucault, was its basic principle upon which a new form of political power had emerged, that which Foucault described as "governmentality" (Foucault, 2007; 2008;

see also Reid, 2003: 2). Clausewitz's theory is valuable as it outlines the modern role of warfare in what Foucault (1998) called the strategy of power. As Foucault provides an analytics of power that permeates the morphological networks of contemporary society, so Clausewitz helps us better understand the networking of "the liberal way of war" (Dillon and Reid, 2009). In this sense militarisation and war take on positive characteristics of neoliberal post-politics that takes on the task of the management of life in the name of the entire population (Foucault, 1977).

Post-politics, then, is as much about *neoliberalisation* as it is about *militarisation* of society. It is as much about expanding the processes of capital as it is about war and violence. These two registers are intimately connected. Neoliberal post-politics increasingly centres on securitising and militarising the architectures and circulations of society (Dillon and Reid, 2009; Graham, 2012). The struggle for contemporary society now coincides more and more with the struggle for the liberal way of war. For the ability to provide security is especially useful in maintaining a liberal way of life. However, as Agamben (2002) shows, security consists not in the prevention of crises and catastrophes, but rather in their continual production, regulation and management. Therefore, by making security central to modern governance, there is the danger of producing a situation of clandestine complicity between terrorism and counter-terrorism, locked in a deathly embrace of mutual incitement. In this sense, the post-political war on terror, coupled with increased militarisation and preemptive

techniques, suggests a normalisation of the state of exception, which has become the dominant paradigm of contemporary politics today (Agamben, 2005: 1-31). Or, to say this differently, the state of exception is an instance of neoliberal and militarised post-politics. When security becomes the organising principle of politics and society and law is replaced by the state of exception, a state “can always be provoked by terrorism to become itself terroristic” (see Agamben, 2001).

Importantly, the state of exception is always reactionary. We know very well from Schmitt (1996: 21) that the political involves a permanent struggle between order (counterrevolution) and chaos (revolution). This is why the state of exception is declared to save the condition of normality (order), that is to say, to avoid a true exception (Žižek, 2002: 108). The state of exception is always counterrevolutionary because its main task is to displace dissent and resistance against the existing order. It holds together as a response to an ‘urgent threat’: how to protect order against the fear of disorder. Neoliberal and militarised post-politics is nothing else than the materialisation of the state of exception as a reactionary political principle.

We seem doomed to repeat history. In its desire to protect a liberal way of life through militarisation, war and violence, post-politics takes the empty form of farce, bare repetition. Post-politics in this respect is counterrevolutionary because it is a compulsion to repeat. For Marx,

tragedy refers to disharmony and interruption, whereas farce is built upon harmony and consensus. In this sense farce is a constellation of non-events which produce no difference within the bounds of a given hegemonic discourse. The farce of Louis Bonaparte was tragic, not for the man but for the society. Likewise, the farce of neoliberal and militarised post-politics is tragic, not for the man but for the society. It is its counterrevolutionary tendencies that make neoliberal and militarised post-politics farcical. Hence it insists on bringing democracy and so on and advocates harmony and consensus within the existing social order. Just as Louis Bonaparte subverted democracy and disavowed class antagonisms in order to bring 'freedom' in a mode of futurity, in the interest of the capitalist class, neoliberal and militarised post-politics (the war against terror) recognises freedom and democracy only in a conservative way, specifically as market freedom. Both are authoritarian populist regimes that allow individual heroes to emerge in the popular consciousness (Bonaparte-Bush Senior and Bush Junior). Both depict their societies as the end of history (the 'end' being Bonapartism in one case and neoliberal capitalism in the other). Both mobilise the repressive state apparatus in order to subvert democracy and disavow class antagonisms. In both, political debate is reduced to the managerial-technocratic 'bourgeois order' without taking the form of antagonism. And in both the politics of security/fear appears as the ultimate mobilising figure (Žižek, 2008a: 34); two militarised societies, two preemptive strategies, two counterrevolutionary regimes, one Bonapartist,

one neoliberal post-politics, which depict the given reality as the only reality, pushing the idea of revolution to the background.

Just as Bonapartism signified the 'depoliticisation' of the political, and transformed it into apolitical administration, post-politics signifies a naturalisation that rejects the political nature of given questions. However, neither engineering nor militarisation, politics remains as much an art as a science, and it always involves antagonisms which require us to make a choice between conflicting alternatives. It represents reclaiming the terms of debate in wider society. As Diken and Laustsen (2004: 9) put it: "[p]olitics...is the ability to debate, question and renew the fundament on which political struggle unfolds, the ability to radically criticise a given order and to fight for a new and better one. In a nutshell, then, politics necessitates accepting conflict." Neoliberal and militarised post-politics, by contrast, has eliminated a genuine political space of radical conflict and disagreement. It should be clear how in such a climate there is hardly room for a genuine political gesture: that is, the positioning of those groups who have no space in the current or future police order. At this point, a naïve, but nevertheless crucial, question is quite appropriate: is consensual neoliberal order a peaceful order? Absolutely not. Quite the contrary: because post-politics is a lack of contestation, because it enforces a particularly violent way of securitisation and neoliberalisation in society, it creates more problems than it solves. This includes the large wage gap between the highest and lowest paid people; sweeping cuts in health care,

education and pensions; 'dispensable populations' excluded from social services and political participation (i.e. the poor, the homeless, the undocumented); increasing privatisation, unemployment and poverty, and the extreme concentration of wealth and consumption in the hands of the top %1; corruption among the parties and the political class embroiled in media ownership; banking and the phone-hacking scandals and the transgression of international law, disrespect of nationals' opinions; the inability to control the 'free market' and the rapacious corporations; the inter-ethnic wars and the displacement of hundreds of thousands of people; drug cartels, the mafia, bribes and organised crime; the manipulation of goods and services, for power purposes; and so forth.

Because neoliberal and militarised post-politics is based on a consensual order by excluding those who understand themselves as increasingly alienated and abandoned by neoliberal forms of power and rationality, this provokes greater violent insurgent activism. Because the system is unable to handle political and mass civic participation, it operates culturally and ideologically through the demonisation of dissent, or the moral castigation of all radicalism as 'bad', as 'terrorism.' Are we not witnessing the same ideological operation in the ongoing protests against the system around the world? If you build a system on the assumption that there will be no radical dissent, critique and fundamental conflict, what happens when antagonism and dissent do appear, and begin to articulate themselves as political alternatives? In this sense the violence, the naked force we have

seen against protesters (Occupy Movement, the Arab revolts, the Indignados, the Québec student strike etc.) exposes the brittleness of neoliberal and militarised post-politics and its refusal to accommodate radical socio-political conflict and antagonism in politics. What such hypocrisy shows is that the 'intimate' partnership between democracy and neoliberal capitalism has come to an end.

All of which leads to a problem: when the political, and the real democratic subject, is foreclosed, the blind violence tends to be seen as the only 'political' (re)action for the affective staging of active discontent. As Lefebvre (1991: 23) had put it long ago, "this is a new negativity, a tragic negativity which manifests itself as incessant violence. These seething forces are still capable of rattling the lid of the cauldron of the state and its space, for differences can never be totally quieted." Thus, even though post-politics represses the political, such a repression is bound to lead to a 'return of the foreclosed', to violent expressions of discontent and hatred; but also to the return of new forms of anti-immigrant and anti-Marxist racism, as in the case of the Norwegian terrorist Anders Behring Breivik, who killed 77 people in Norway in July 2011. The Paris suburb riots (2005) and England riots (2011) were also classic violent examples of such violent outbursts. Though such violent explosions were not protests with properly 'political aims', they surely must tell us something about the foreclosure of the political space. Which points to a problem: we live in a society in which

“the only available alternative to enforced democratic consensus is a blind acting out” (Žižek, 2011).

Consequently, late capitalist consensual governance and debates signal a depoliticised politics “where administrative governance defines the zero-level of politics” (Swyngedouw, 2009b: 225-6). As such, affects such as resentment, fear, cynicism and spite neoliberal and militarised post-politics has engendered are difficult to overstate. Mobilising concrete social regimes, neoliberal and militarised post-politics also profits from an entire economy of affect, whose strategic remit has turned towards creating the conditions of the event. Neoliberal post-politics is always in the process of conditioning the event and thus determining future reactions so that struggle and resistance become futile. It attempts to securitise, privatise and defuse the fear of potential revolutions. It does so through historical social regimes and the corresponding affects.

It is at this point that one should return to the historical lessons of *The Eighteenth Brumaire*. The most astonishingly original analysis of Marx in the text is not the idea that human subjects make history, albeit in well-determined conditions. The novelty is rather quite different: “traditions from all the dead generations weigh like a nightmare on the brain of the living” (Marx, 1852/2002: 19). That is to say, we agents in the present “are compelled by the imagery and symbols of the past when they come to fulfil some historic task” (Cowling and Martin, 2002: 4-5). In this sense the

nightmare world of tradition that Marx refers to is nothing else than 'farce.' The 'new' that comes to be actualised in the present always gives a comforting 'familiarity' in which the spectres of the past are continuously summoned up. Marx's theory, in other words, is that history is a parody of events which have to be thrown away in the dustbin. Similarly, in contemporary society, we have neoliberal and militarised post-politics which is not 'real' history but merely a 'farce', a dusting off of long-dead historical form. Neoliberal and militarised post-politics is a 'political' formation, a principled counterrevolutionary logic that aims to defuse, disperse and suppress revolution. History, then, is revealed to be a tissue of farcical non-events, which are not identical in nature but inextricably merged with their effects. Failure to be conscious about the past events results in a pseudo-history that is static rather than dynamic. The greatest danger for our understanding of history thus resides in the entire model of linearity, and the violence that accompanies it. No doubt this is a form of temporal hegemony to which we are subjected and by which we unwittingly become a silent accomplice to the dominant. As it appears in Marx and Benjamin, the ruthless critique of linear progression provides an opportunity not only for correction to historicism, but also to homogeneity of history and vulgar progressivism. Seen in this way, one cannot address the present independently of the past; the present is always in relation to the past. For both Marx and Benjamin, this insight is vital, for it allows us to think of the relation between time and politics in non-linear terms. This conception of history is marked by the notion of remembrance as not the

past-made-present, but the past that “flashes up” to the present and arrives in the future “in a moment of danger” (Benjamin, 2003: 391).

Thus, juxtaposing the *Eighteenth Brumaire* and neoliberal and militarised post-politics, I aim to reinforce the act of remembrance and farce as dynamic principles of history and politics; dynamic principles in which the past (Bonaparte’s rule, the French counter-revolution) and the present (post-politics) converge and unearth the real dialectics of history (Benjamin, 2003: 396). Thus I propose a ‘critical’ reflection in which a moment in the past (*Eighteenth Brumaire*) and a moment in the present (neoliberal post-politics) coalesce, subverting the non-linearity of history and thus providing with a theoretical and practical model for interrupting the present. And this is where Marx’s text discloses its close ‘political’ relationship to Benjamin’s philosophical revitalisation of material history.

The reign of Bonaparte was based on a ‘depoliticised politics’ where socialist ideals, revolutionary events were equated with terrorism. As such, the official plebiscite campaign was accompanied by affects (e.g. fear) created by carefully established social regimes. Its logic, of course, was political because it was a reactionary counterrevolutionary logic that aimed at suppressing revolution. In short, the Bonapartist regime was a principled ‘political’ formation with different social regimes and affects toward militarisation and technocratic romanticism in the interest of the capitalist class. Similarly, the post-political is not simply an absence of politics. It is a

determinate formation with tendencies, rationalities and affects, toward ever increasing securitisation and managerial consensual governing in the interests of the market. But what rationalities of power and affects underlie the post-political? This will be examined in the next chapter.

Chapter Three

Sovereignty

3.1 Introduction

The previous chapter gave a general overview of the debates concerning the functioning of securitised and neoliberal post-politics in contemporary society. Taking as its point of departure Marx's analysis of not only history as farce, but politics as farce in *The Eighteenth Brumaire*, it showed that neoliberal and militarised post-politics is the current art of foreclosing the political. However, the crucial question raised by the last chapter was: what rationalities of power underlie the post-political; how do we understand the relationships between sovereignty, discipline and control, and their corresponding affects? Research has yet to fully delve into the complex linkages between post-politics and historical social regimes and their affective structures. In addition, radical politics must diagnose and confront these modalities of post-politics and the affective logic each regime entails and how they inter-relate.

In this chapter I examine the concept of sovereignty, arguing that sovereign political power is one of the vital regimes to the development of neoliberal and militarised post-politics. Here, I take as my point of departure

Deleuze's notion of sovereignty. This is for two reasons. First, because sovereignty always involves the effort to reduce multiplicity to unity, difference to sameness, the concept of sovereign power requires itself an updated understanding on which to resist that capture operation globally. Nevertheless, sovereignty is a vengeful regime that generates what Nietzsche (1996) calls *ressentiment*. The immediate exercise of vengefulness is the privilege of sovereign political power whilst victims (slaves) are burdened with resentment. Following this, the problem, for Deleuze, is not simply that of how to criticise sovereignty as a concept, as a social fact, for "those who criticize without creating, those who are content to defend the vanished concept without being able to give it the forces it needs to return to life...are inspired by *ressentiment*" (Deleuze & Guattari, 1994: 28–9). Thus, the central purpose of this chapter is to reactivate the concept of sovereignty by mapping its relation to contemporary society.

Control over a territory has long been one of the fundamental organising principles of sovereignty as exemplified by the signing of the Treaty of Westphalia in 1648. According to the Westphalian vision of sovereignty, political power should not be separated from territorially defined state sovereigns. However, the conjunction between sovereignty and the exclusive control over a territory has changed in contemporary societies. Today the control over a territory should not be viewed as a sufficient condition for sovereign political power. Although sovereignty is often associated with territory, developments such as globalisation (Appadurai,

1996) and war on terror (Amoore, 2006; Bigo, 2006; Elden, 2009; Gaddes, 2004; Harvey, 2003) suggest that the emphasis on territories as spaces as a normative precondition for sovereignty is a “stubborn delusion, part of the mistaken notion that sovereignty is absolute and always territorially defined” (Chamberlin, 1988: 15). Or, to say this differently, the equivalence of territory and state sovereignty is highly questionable (Agnew and Corbridge, 1995; Brenner, 2004; Cox, 1991). As Saskia Sassen (1996: xii) argues, global financial markets centred on “cross-border flows and global telecommunications has affected two distinctive features of the modern state: sovereignty and exclusive territoriality.” Thus the Westphalian sovereign state model in political geography and international relations theory, which have generally linked sovereignty with the notion of territory, which views territory as an area of land claimed by a country, is insufficient to analyse the realities of contemporary society “because of its mistaken emphasis on the geographical expression of authority (particularly under the ambiguous sign of ‘sovereignty’) as invariably and inevitably territorial” (Agnew, 2005: 437).

In this chapter I argue that we can think sovereignty as a *contingent* concept without dependence on traditional notions of territory (Elden, 2011). By territory, I do not only mean national borders, lines on a map, or the physical manifestation of place. Rather I argue that territory is to be understood as the product of a set of governmental practices than a pre-given object or physical space. Territory is not defined by a ‘physical space’;

rather it defines physical spaces “through patterns of various relations.” After all, “every type of social relation can be imagined and constructed as territorial” (Brighenti, 2010: 57). Territory, in other words, is both a social and political process. The notion of territory is not absolute. Rather, it is always in relation to governmental practices by which things can be ordered and controlled. As Valerie November (quoted in Elden, 2010: 811) notes, “the notion of territory is at the same time juridical, political, economic, social and cultural, and even affective.” Thus the mainstream view that interprets territory as merely “land” or a static “terrain” must be challenged. This, however, in no way means that we should conceive of sovereignty without territory or borders (Brenner and Elden, 2009). In fact, every social regime requires a territorial endeavour. Once a social regime is set up, territory-making becomes the norm.

This, however, tells only part of the story. Territory is a dynamic concept, a heterogeneous multiple. It is a vibrant concept, “a juridico-political” power that is concerned with resources and the means for their management and “circulation” (Foucault, 2007: 176). In other words, territory is to be understood as a “political technology”: the “government of populations”. For Foucault, therefore, governmentality is about population, along with security mechanisms, the discourses, rationalities of power and the disciplinary technologies. Thus the population “is not the simple sum of individuals inhabiting a territory” (ibid. 70) but dependent on a series of variables that includes the “climate”, “the material surroundings”, “the

intensity of commerce and activity” and “the circulation of wealth” (ibid.). In this sense, territory is a governmental response to the problem of population. From this perspective, sovereignty is inseparable not only from territory, but also from various set of practices such as “civil society, population and the nation” by which it becomes as “a way of governing, a way of doing things, and a way too of relating to government” (Foucault, 2007: 277; see also Elden, 2007: 574). We should therefore stop using a notion of territory as the key element to define contemporary sovereign power. Sovereignty is a social regime, a set of governmental practices and rationalities that is more than merely land, terrain and territory.

Thus, following Deleuze, we need a better theory of sovereignty, for it allows us to avoid falling into the “territorial trap” (Agnew, 1994), a logic which is static and has become unable to grasp changes and transitions that occur in contemporary society. One way out of this trap, than, is to analyse sovereignty not only as a concept which increasingly became associated with exclusive forms of territory, but also as a *contingent* concept that is able to analyse the dynamics of contemporary society. Today, with the war on terror and foreign intervention, “boundaries may remain fixed, and considerable efforts may be undertaken to preserve existing territorial settlements” (Elden, 2010: 759). Yet sovereign political power within them is held to be quite contingent in the sense that it does not seek to simply acquire the whole territory but also create “zones of indistinction.” According to Agamben (1998), the sovereign, through the

use of force and violence, imposes a political order, creating an inside and outside. The outside, or zone of indistinction, is a place where the dividing line between the legality and illegality, citizen and outlaw, law and violence and, ultimately, life and death tends to disappear. The zone of indistinction is a place where contemporary sovereign power creates new market dynamics and thus increases the impacts of global capital flows. This, however, cannot be done without violence and war upon which sovereignty was founded (Lefebvre, 1976: 1991; Mbembe, 2001). Sovereignty, therefore, needs to be seen in relation to war and violence, an intersection which cannot be separated without the 'cruel contingency' of sovereign political power.

Concomitantly, sovereignty is a social regime which attempts to appropriate, or capture war and violence, and utilise them for its own purposes (Deleuze and Guattari, 1983). This means that both territory and sovereignty have an association with war and violence, an association which cannot be thought independently of contingency. The overall suggestion here is thus that sovereignty is not best understood through "territoriality" (Elden, 2010), but through an examination of the relation between cruel contingency and its intimate relation to war and violence. In short, sovereignty must be approached as a concept itself rather than simply through territoriality, which hinders our ability to understand the social, historical, and geographical specificity of sovereignty, both as a social regime and a political form. Understanding sovereignty as a

contingent social regime, as the political control of power relations, allows us to account for a range of modern society. Hence the importance of Deleuze.

In *A Thousand Plateaus* Deleuze and Guattari (1987: 88) provide an alternative to thinking of the concept of territory as a geographically bounded space. They argue that a territory (geographical, political, and conceptual) is associated with a continuously changing configuration of multiple social regimes. Thus territory is never fixed, neither by national borders, nor by physical manifestations of place. Rather “it exists in a state of process whereby it continually passes into something else”. As a mode, or act, territory “also maintains an internal organisation” (Message, 2005: 275). As dynamic configurations, various interrelated assemblages form a historically specific territory, where deterritorialisation, and in reaction to that, territorialisation take place. State sovereignty cannot deterritorialise from some relations without (re)territorialising on some others. On this basis then, the focus of sovereignty is not exclusion *per se* but the creation of ordered social and political relations and more secure life cycles which refer, above all, to relations of dominance. In other words, state sovereignty is a social regime of capture, an instance of (re)territorialisation, which always hegemonises and thus stabilises new configurations of deterritorialisation. Whenever a state sovereignty, an organisation, an institution stop resistance, reterritorialisation takes place.

Before proceeding, it is important to show the difference between Foucault's and Deleuze's analyses of sovereignty. Foucault (1977; 2003) argues that political sovereignty emerges as a "realisation" of war and power. Foucault's concept of sovereignty is pluralised, fragmented, relational, and closely related to various set of governmental practices spread throughout society. In brief, he aims to historicise the concept of sovereignty through discursive modalities over time by showing the transition from the (classically modern) idea of the state to the governmentalized apparatuses and the set of practices. For Foucault, therefore, what matters is the complex relationship between territory and population at the heart of governmentality, the relationship which sustains the triangle of sovereignty–discipline–government. Deleuze's analysis of state sovereignty, on the other hand, is related to both war and resistance. Indeed, Deleuze offers an account of sovereignty in which war is a property to be appropriated and institutionalised by the state. For Deleuze, therefore, it is important to grasp the 'appropriative' character of state power, for it provides us new analytical weapons to resist the cruel contingency of political sovereignty. Referring to the work of anthropologist Pierre Clastres, he argues (1987: 357-9) that some primitive societies used war as a means of preventing concentrations of power which may give rise to forms of state. As a response to this challenge, nomadic peoples nevertheless seek new ways to preserve the uniqueness of their way of life so that the relation between them and the earth - the agent of all social production - does exist. Hence they attempt to create

strategic mechanisms to ward off the state apparatus. If the history of Western civilisation is the history of ordered and more secure life cycles, the foundation of the state is made possible not through the destruction of nomadism but of its “appropriation” (Deleuze & Guattari, 1983: 194, 225, 327). In this regard, the Western model of sovereignty derives its strength not so much from its denial of nomadic multiplicity, but from the integration and regulation of nomadism for the development of a unity (see Reid, 2010a: 413). The state, or sovereignty, endlessly attempts to ‘appropriate’, or ‘capture’, nomadism, and utilise it for its own purposes. Thus sovereignty employs a different ‘regime of violence’, a ‘lawful violence’, which consists of judicial and penal institutions of capture and punishment, and the repressive state apparatus of the armed forces and police.

Thus, rather than start from the analysis of the role of radical politics in Deleuze’s thought it is necessary to focus directly on sovereignty’s ‘cruel contingency’ and contemporary processes of ‘capture’ that create resentment. In Deleuzian political theory, an admission of certainty is seen as problematic. Deleuze’s political theory urges us to recognise sovereign power in terms of changing socio-historical circumstances. Once this has been achieved, we can move on to the next step of creating for ourselves not only the capacity to confront the ‘cruel’ contingency of sovereign political power, but also the capacity to counteractualise certain kinds of transformative agency for radical politics. If radical politics is a

response to the problem of sovereignty, it can become an 'event' only when it succeeds in creating new concepts that can overcome resentment and counteractualise identities and affects. In this sense, any understanding of post-politics and radical politics is incomplete without an understanding of sovereignty and resentment. However, we must first examine more rigorously how sovereignty comes into being. And it is this that I shall turn to next.

3.2 Sovereignty

"[They] come like fate, without cause, reason, consideration, or pretext; they appear as lightning appears too terrible, too sudden, too convincing, too 'different' even to be hated. Their work is an instinctive creation and imposition of forms; they are the most involuntary, unconscious artists there are—wherever they appear something new soon arises, a ruling structure that lives, in which parts and functions are delimited and coordinated, in which nothing whatever finds a place that has not first been assigned a 'meaning' in relation to the whole. They do not know what guilt, responsibility, or consideration are, these born organizers; they exemplify that terrible artists' egoism that has the look of bronze and knows itself justified to all eternity in its 'work', like a mother in her child. It is not in them that the 'bad conscience' developed, that goes without saying-but it would not have developed without them, this ugly growth, it would be lacking if a tremendous quantity of freedom had not been expelled from the world, or at least from the visible world, and made as it were latent under their hammer blows and artists' violence." (Nietzsche, 1989: 86-7)

This is how Nietzsche speaks of a new *socius*, of a new social regime with its blond men and its own conquerors, who have the ability to wage war and inflict their own institutional cruelty upon its victims, especially upon the formless, the crowd. For the crowd aren't true social formations inasmuch as they are ephemeral gatherings of people, living and dying with

the moment. This new regime is nothing other than despotism, which replaces the old primitive socius with its own distinct character: “a terror without precedent, in comparison with which the ancient system of cruelty, the forms of primitive regimentation and punishment, are nothing” (Deleuze & Guattari, 1983: 182). Unlike true social formations, the crowd refer to a kind of anti-social form that is never far from a mob and potentially very close to an overthrowing force. Neither subjects, nor objects, they are the *anti-organization* par excellence. The new socius, however, is more enduring than the crowd and it is precisely the ability to perform endurance than spontaneous irruptions that makes the state state and distinguishes it from the primitive socius.

For Deleuze and Guattari, the first social regime to capture and code the flows of desire is the primitive social machine. Invented by the ‘primitive peoples’, it is the “machine of primitive inscription, the ‘megamachine’ that covers a social field” (Deleuze & Guattari, 1983: 141). The primitive society is built on the collective investment of the organs, not directed at whole

persons or their privatized organs, which are referred to as the Earth, as the original condition of all production. The Earth thus appears to be the agent of all *social production*. It is this deterritorialisation that forms the basis of Deleuze and Guattari's concept of the full body, or the body without organs.⁴

As a result, the State comes into being by capturing nomadic space of connections and coding the flows of desire. For Deleuze and Guattari, the task is therefore to inquire about meaning behind the coding of every aspect of life, ranging from the daily practices and the biological life to the metaphysical. Anthropologists have of course been engaged in this task for a century or more, but mostly with a view to trying to decipher the social purpose behind the codes and what they mean to the people whose lives are determined by them. Deleuze and Guattari take a different route. They

⁴ A body without organs (BWO) is a process that is directed toward 'pure becoming'. In this sense it is opposed to the organising principles that structure, appropriate and thus hegemonise the collective investment of the organs, experiences and states of becoming. A BWO is a non-organismically organised body, a limit of a given process of destratification, where matter-energy flows come into play immanently without reference to a transcendence. A BWO refers to absolute disorganisation of organs, which is nothing else than a process of pure becoming: it is "what remains after you take everything away" (Deleuze & Guattari, 1987: 151).

are not concerned with what native people think; rather they are interested in the operations of the unconscious. In other words, what is important is to discern the machinic processes, that is, the modes of organisation that link the differentiation and distribution of material flows, desires, affects, and so on, to the human body as a living system (Deleuze and Guattari, 1987: 435; see also Patton, 2000: 88). To be sure, the conception of the machinic, or the territorial machine, overturns the vulgar assumptions that have conditioned anthropology for a long time. Contrary to the orthodox Marxist anthropology and other Western interpretations which claim that, in the primitive society all relations between subjects are ultimately exchangeist, Deleuze and Guattari argue that society is inscriptive, not exchangeist.⁵ In this sense the process of capturing and coding the flows of desires is not enough by itself to establish a social regime; it is merely the means. Since the nature of the individual relations is changed, it requires a social regime to come into being.

⁵ “We see no reason in fact for accepting the postulate that underlies exchangeist notions of society; society is not first of all a milieu for exchange where the essential would be to circulate or to cause to circulate, but rather a socius of inscription where the essential thing is to mark or to be marked. There is circulation only if inscription requires or permits it” (Deleuze and Guattari, 1983: 156).

For Deleuze and Guattari, there are two kinds of relationships between people in groups: affiliations and alliances. The primitive society mobilises both types towards its own purposes. Filiation is by nature intensive, inclusive and polyvocal, whereas alliance is extensive, exclusive and segregative (Buchanan, 2008: 24-5). Thus filiation and alliance “are like the two forms of a primitive capital: fixed capital or filiative stock, and circulating capital or mobile blocks of debt” (Deleuze & Guattari, 1983: 146). That is, a debt which is measured in blood and inscribed on the body. Even though processes of circulation produce differences in rank and prestige, they are without “net investment”, without forming a system of exchange or a hierarchy with groups self-elevated above others. In this sense, the primitive society is without a state and an exchange economy.

As argued above, the primitive social machine does not exchange but inscribe, mark the bodies with rituals of cruelty, which consists in “tattooing, excising, incising, carving, scarifying, mutilating, encircling, and initiating” (Deleuze & Guattari, 1983: 144). As Mellor and Shilling (1997: 48) have demonstrated, the primitive habitus is a place where violence is normative, if not common, and marks on the body as a result of violence or disease have a significant role in communication. The body has this role in communicating because knowledge is acquired through *figural* and carnal knowing. That is, in this medieval route to knowledge the body is the central organising principle. Thus open, mobile and finite debt emerges from the process of savage inscription on the body. However, no

ressentiment or *revenge* arises from the finite blocks of debt. To put it bluntly, *ressentiment* does not exist in primitive societies because pain, as a festive occasion, as a fundamental ingredient of active life, is very public phenomenon. It is shared and part of the belief system that supports active participation in community life. In short, pain itself has meaning:

“The fact that innocent men suffer all the marks on their bodies derives from the respective autonomy of the voice and the graphic action, and also from the autonomous eye that extracts pleasure from the event. It is not because everyone is suspected, in advance, of being a future bad debtor; the contrary would be closer to the truth.” (Deleuze & Guattari, 1983: 181)

The longing for contact through pain is believed to be not only necessary but also the proper order of social relations between the community and God. Thus punishment takes the form of compensation, or the repayment of a debt. In wars, for instance, the injured party demands satisfaction, which involves punishing the offender, the debtor’s body. Yet the logic of this kind of “exchange”, according to Nietzsche (1989: 65), is not, cannot be a direct compensation for the damage done. Instead, “a kind of pleasure—the pleasure of being allowed to vent his power freely upon one who is powerless, the voluptuous pleasure...the enjoyment of violation.”. Punishment, then, is considered as a festive occasion, a transgression in which cruelty is gratified, and where the carnivalesque activity takes place. Hence Nietzsche (ibid. 67) writes: “without cruelty there is no festival: thus the longest and most ancient part of human history teaches and in punishment there is so much that is festive!—”

As a segmented society, the primitive socius exists as a nomadic space of connections. However, as we have seen, “in their preservation of a style of life tied to and subordinate to that topography”, nomadic peoples and movements “attempt to ward off the social-political processes of unification on which political sovereignty relies” (Reid, 2010a: 411). But how does sovereignty occur? Rejecting the orthodox Marxist anthropology’s and other Western models’ interpretation of primitive society which states that societies evolve almost linearly, ultimately enabling the state apparatus to come into existence, Deleuze and Guattari argue that the state does not occur in a linear way (from nomadic to agricultural), but is born as an idea, which replaces the old primitive social regime and its essential elements: “the State was not formed in progressive stages; it appears fully armed, a master stroke executed all at once; the primordial *Urstaat*, the eternal model of everything the State wants to be and desires” (Deleuze & Guattari, 1983: 217).

The actual state does not come into being as a result of the internal dynamics of the primitive territorial machine but is imposed from without. As Deleuze & Guattari insist (ibid. 195), “the death of the primitive system always comes from without; history is the history of contingencies and encounters.” Thus they propose a history written from a contingent point of view, which provides a point of intersection between past and present. This is a remarkable achievement, for it leaves no room for historicism that posits a determinate mode of thought. In other words, social regimes are

not considered as successive stages in the sense that one can occur as a result from the effects of another. Rather, Deleuze & Guattari argue that all social regimes (territorial, despotism and capitalism) co-exist within the perspective of becoming or virtuality: “all history does is to translate a coexistence of becomings into a succession” (Deleuze and Guattari, 1987: 430).

In short, the state is a virtual existence that proceeds from the abstract to the concrete (Deleuze & Guattari, 1983: 221), conditioning both what comes before and what follows: the primitive system and capitalism. From this perspective, the state comes into being not by suppressing but subordinating the determinate relations of the primitive system to its own system of alliance and filiation, which is based on the despotic will, that is, God’s chosen peoples (ibid. 89). The nature of the whole system is changed, a new hierarchical structure is installed, and these changes make both the despot and the new machine, the State, the new paranoiac: “for the first time something has been withdrawn from life and from the earth that will make it possible to judge life and to survey the earth from the above: a first principle of paranoiac knowledge” (ibid. 194). The despot becomes the new body that replaces the Earth as the body without organs of the social, possessing all the organs of all the subjects. Everything seems to emanate from the despot. As a consequence, life becomes politicised and absolutely subject to sovereign power; a power in which “it is

permitted to kill without committing homicide and without celebrating sacrifice” (Agamben, 1998: 83).

Since a new bureaucracy replaces intertribal alliance and all stock becomes the object of accumulation, debt is rendered infinite, and becomes a debt of existence on subjects themselves, including their very lives, in the form of tribute to the despot (Deleuze & Guattari, 1987: 197). That is to say, there is a transition in sovereignty from marking bodies with rituals of cruelty to imposing infinite debt. From now on, all meaning arises from the sovereign because all debt is owed to him. Thus, it is debt that rather than the sovereign will that holds the despotic regime together. In using terror, the despot also acquires the monopoly on violence that is inscribed on the bodies of the subjects. In the shadows of sovereign violence is born a new city, a city of blood, “where power spoke *through* blood: the honor of war, the fear of famine, the triumph of death, the sovereign with his sword executioners, and tortures; blood was *a reality with a symbolic function*” (Foucault, 1998: 147). The system of cruelty as principle and practice now becomes an integral part of the state apparatus that renders debt infinite to the despot, which assumes a juridical form, the law (Deleuze & Guattari, 1983: 213). Sovereignty demands only obedience and holds only the power of death over its members. In this way law and sovereignty are completely merged without ‘designation’, which makes it possible to make arbitrary decisions, thus creating an empty space around the despot. The despot acquires ‘the right to punish’, which then becomes a very aspect of

sovereignty to make war on his enemies. The purpose of punishment is not, then, to restore justice but to reconstitute sovereign power. This is why, quoting Muryart de Vouglans, Foucault (1977: 48) asserts that “the right to punish ... belongs to ‘that absolute power of life and death which Roman law calls *merum imperium*, a right by virtue of which the prince sees that his law is respected by ordering the punishment of crime.”

3.3 Ressentiment

How, then, does sovereignty relate to the ‘social’ and its affective structure? I shall argue that *ressentiment* is crucial to understand such an evaluation of state sovereignty. Yet, in social theory, this link remains surprisingly under-researched. A social regime does not exist without affects it brings into play. For every regime of governance invokes its own particular affect. In a revision of Deleuze’s and Foucault’s understanding of sovereignty, I argue that sovereign political power cannot be thought of without *ressentiment* because it is sovereign vengeance that creates *ressentiment*. Initially, it is therefore not *ressentiment* that generates vengeance, but vengeance that generates *ressentiment*. Any analysis that claims to explain sovereignty without paying full heed to the momentum of this thoroughly important affect will be fundamentally incomplete. This part of the chapter fills that particular gap by demonstrating attention to the affective logic of sovereignty.

Within the enjoyment and the renunciation of pain, of punishment, which is turned into a sovereign law, the subjects are now ruled by the threat of death, by terror, which makes punishment the vengeance of the despot: “in the execution of the most ordinary penalty, in the most punctilious respect of legal forms, reign the active forces of revenge” (Foucault, 1977: 48). As the limitless vengeance of the despots’ is increased and exercised on the pacified subjects, it generates *ressentiment*, the main affect that pertains to despotism. As mentioned before, the finite blocks of debt in the primitive society does not cause *ressentiment* but within the matrix of terror, of despotism, *ressentiment* is born as a kind of passivity or impotence: desire becomes reactive. Under the tragic regime of infinite debt, as Deleuze and Guattari (1983: 214-5) powerfully demonstrate, “the eternal *ressentiment* of the subjects answers to the eternal vengeance of the despots.” The state terror, with its right to punish, with its elevation of death to a permanent threat and with its subordination of desire to the providence of God sovereignty, thus forms a massive pacification and creates subjects who are essentially reactive. Hence the importance of Nietzsche and his ideas of master-slave morality, which could help us better understand *ressentiment*.

For Nietzsche (1989: 34), *ressentiment* is a state of “deeply repressed...vengefulness.” Three elements are crucial in this regard. First, the ‘man of *ressentiment*’ desires to live a certain kind of life which he sees invaluable: thus the priest, a member of the nobility, values a life that

includes political supremacy (see Reginster, 1997: 286). Second, the man of resentment becomes aware of his complete inability to fulfil this aspiration: he is inspired by his 'weakness' or 'impotence.' Third, he retains his arrogant attitude or his 'lust to rule' (Nietzsche, 1989: 33). Since his 'will to power' remains 'intact', he retains his certain values or pretensions, and refuses to accept his inability to realize them (Reginster, 1997: 287). Crucially, therefore, his soul oscillates between a desire to live the life he values and his belief that he is unable to satisfy it. He dreams of a future revenge, that he "will be better off someday" (Nietzsche, 1989: 47). In this sense, the man of resentment is one who does not act (Deleuze, 1983: 111).

If sovereignty is characterised by an eternal vengeance, resentment refers to a repressed vengefulness. Sovereignty is marked by action, the man of resentment by reaction; he is rendered an inert subject, and subordinate to an absolute sovereign power (vengeance). This coincidence of action (vengefulness) and reaction (resentment) means that sovereign power is per definition the arbitrary and external power, that it does not abide rules. Thus in exceptional circumstances such as 'disorder', the law can be suspended (Agamben, 2005: 42). In this sense sovereignty is conditioned by the exception - that is the ability of the sovereign to stand inside and outside the law at the same time. In the words of Schmitt (1985: 5, 13), the sovereign is not only "he who decides on the state of exception", but also he "who definitely decides whether this normal situation actually

exists.” Significantly, however, law is not suspended completely. Rather, in the state of exception the distinction between order and chaos becomes blurred. The hidden secret of sovereignty, then, is this radical indistinction between law and lawlessness, between politics and violence. In short, the state of the exception has become the rule.

The state of exception is not any power whatever of sovereignty but its central aspect. It is conditioned by the assertion that the “legal order must be broken to save the social order” (Ericson, 2008: 57). The state of exception is “a space devoid of law”; it is “a zone of anomie in which all legal determinations—and above all the very distinction between public and private—are deactivated” (Agamben, 2005: 50). Thus, what takes place in the state of exception is the ‘law of indifference’, an action whose content involves a radical undecidability from the law’s point of view. In this sense the state of exception is not only bound up in the self-founding power of the logos or raw power-as-property, but also subjectivation and affection: the sovereign is s/he which is also subjectified as vengeful, while victims who are subjectified through resentment are marked by reaction. In short, sovereignty is not only a rational social regime but also an affective one.

How does the state of exception function in contemporary society? And how does one make sense of resentment in the context of sovereign exceptionalism? In what follows, I argue that ‘cruel manifestations’ of the

modern state, which are intimately connected to the state of exception, have become normalised in contemporary society. In a sense, therefore, contemporary sovereign power has transformed the logic of exception into a form of sociality. The state of exception is no longer a historical anomaly but the normalcy itself. However, this normalcy is not only about states of exception. Post/11, we are also witnessing the increasing justification and legitimisation of torture as a form sovereign exceptionalism. And this is a theme which I shall return next.

3.4 Torture

Pasolini's controversial final film *Saló* (1975), based on Marquis de Sade's *The 120 Days of Sodom* (1785), poses significant questions regarding the intersection between sadistic torture and sovereignty. The film is divided in four segments, heavily inspired by Dante's *Inferno*: Ante-Inferno, Circle of Manias, Circle of Shit, and Circle of Blood. *Saló* focuses on four corrupt sovereigns after the fall of Italy's fascist ruler Benito Mussolini in 1944. Four fascist libertines - the Duke, the Bishop, the Magistrate, the President - kidnap the most beautiful young people in town and take them to a villa, to an enclosed space called The Republic of Saló; a Nazi puppet state that became the last stronghold of Benito Mussolini (Pugliese, 2007: 249). From now on, the Republic of Saló becomes a fascist enclave from which there is no escape. Thus starts extreme abuse, torture, and the murders of young men and women for the sake of perverted lust and extreme pleasure. The

fascist captors welcome the beautiful young Italians to hell with the following words:

“You herded, feeble creatures, destined for our pleasure. Don’t expect to find here the freedom granted in the outside world. You are beyond reach of any ‘legality’. No one knows you are here. As far as the world goes, you are already dead.” (Pasolini, 1975)

The young victims’ bodies become sites of repressive pain and sexual pleasure, bearing the scars of sovereign vengeance. The greatest strength of the movie lies showing us that the appeal of pleasure is inseparable from the appeal of sovereign violence, which is at once served and kept at bay by a minor festival of the arts. Reminiscent of the rituals of primitive system of cruelty, Pasolini almost succeeds in making the sadistic torture part of an entertaining spectacle. This festivity is, however, unlimited and protected by an unrestricted law of sovereign power. Thus sadistic violence can go “as far as the world goes”, carrying to a point “where it is no longer anything but a unique and naked sovereignty: an unlimited right of all-powerful monstrosity” (Foucault, 1998: 149). What we encounter in *Saló* is what I call the limitless ‘enjoyment of cruelty’, which makes torture the vengeance of four corrupt despots. Sovereign cruelty punishes the victims’ bodies without any quilt, while sexual pleasure becomes a weapon of total domination. Whereas physical beauty becomes a symptom of vulnerability, sovereign power becomes a total form of fascism, a repressive desublimation of nihilism.

Torture is widely considered as a form of madness, as an unethical practice that is confined to corrupt administrations or totalitarian systems. In this view, torture is conceived as an “illiberal act”; it is “irrational”, “cruel” (see Dershowitz, 2002; Luban, 2005, MacIntyre, 2007). It is also viewed as a juridical problem, as one of the basic principles of human rights (see Kelly, 2009; 2011; Langbein, 2006; Pavlischek, 2007; Todorov, 2009). I suggest that both approaches misunderstand and simplify the role of torture; they fail to grasp the true purpose of torture within sovereign political power. Torture, I assert, is one among many manifestations of sovereign as domination. Thus, on the eve of the publication of his memoir, *Decision Points*, which is believed to “contain anecdotes seemingly ripped off from other books and articles”, George W. Bush was still describing waterboarding as “highly effective”, saying it provided “large amounts of information” (quoted in McGreal, 2010: 7). Torture, therefore, needs to be considered in relation to other cruel manifestations of state sovereignty: for example, the destruction of ecological systems; the risk-security complex; the state of exception; and the complete animalisation of human beings carried out by neoliberal biopolitics. And yet torture is not one among these various forms of sovereign power. It is the most privileged actualisation of state terror, for it reveals the nature of sovereignty (and its rational consciousness).

I contend that torture is the extreme systemic expression of the logos of sovereign domination. Torture is a technique of sovereign domination; it is

not an extreme expression of lawless vengeance. For vengeance is political. It is for this reason that it is widely practiced in secret. Torture is a smaller system which is representative of a rational sovereign law; it is a tool of governance, with the aim of eliciting information from and humiliating the 'enemy.' As a tool of war and sovereign domination, torture is, therefore, intimately bound to a "liberal way of war" (Dillon and Reid, 2009). Liberalism consists of various interrelated social regimes, which, although said to be committed to 'peace-making', is nevertheless also dependent upon violence, a permanent state of emergency, and constant preparedness for perpetual war (ibid. 7). Seen in this light, war, violence and society are mutually constitutive and the liberal way of war is "a war-making machine whose continuous processes of war preparation prior to the conduct of any hostilities profoundly, and pervasively, shape the liberal way of life" (ibid. 9). The main object of the liberal way of war is *life itself* because it is what threatens life itself. Thus "everything is permitted" to the liberal way of war.

Consider, for instance, war on terror's torturers at Guantánamo Bay and the Abu Ghraib prison where torture is systemic. Lodged between (extra) territoriality and contingent sovereignty, Guantánamo and Abu Ghraib exist in a grey area, as spaces of exception, where "enemy non-combatants" are being held without charge or trial (Butler, 2004; Gregory, 2006; Isin and Rygiel, 2007; Žižek, 2008b). The sort of sovereign political power being deployed is not only a sovereign "who decides on the state of

exception”, but also a social regime which transcends land, terrain, or national borders. Far from being legal “black hole”, Guantánamo Bay, for instance, is not only a carefully constructed legal territory, but also the product of a set of governmental practices by which things can be ordered and controlled. In this sense Guantánamo emerges as a new form of cruel and contingent sovereignty that deterritorialises and (re)territorialises, expands its capacities to act as beyond its own borders and territories (Reid-Henry, 2007; see also Margulies, 2004).

In brief, contemporary sovereign power is not territorially limited; it spreads through contingent acts and practices, bringing about a type of reterritorialisation as deterritorialisation (Hardt and Negri, 2000). This, however, does not mean the end of territories as such. On the contrary, deterritorialisation always goes hand in hand with (re)territorialisation, creating new markets, identities, and regimes of power, as well as new territorial configurations (Brenner, 2004; Sparke, 2005). Sovereignty is as much about “selective openings” (deterritorialisations) as it is about “closures” (reterritorialisations). While someone, something, or somewhere is included, someone else, something else, or somewhere else is also excluded (see Brighenti, 2010: 65). In the process, however, violence, permanent states of exception and war become a powerful force in making and unmaking of territory. Hence contingent sovereignty is intimately bound up with the liberal way of war. We should, therefore, begin to examine the relation between deterritorialisation and

(re)territorialisation, on the one hand, and war, violence and other cruel manifestations of sovereign as domination, including torture, on the other (Butler, 2004; Comaroff, 2001; Gregory, 2006).

It is in this context that Guantánamo should be viewed as the sort of space which makes possible the territorialisation of the war on terror alongside a deterritorialisation of domestic jurisdiction (Reid-Henry, 2007: 639). Simply put, it reinforces “a deliberate spatial separation” of sovereign law and “violence” within spaces of exception. And it is by enforcing this spatial separation that the cruel contingency of sovereign political power is deployed alongside the law. Thus Guantánamo reminds us that the real politics of contemporary sovereignty lies not in putting boundaries and territories up, but in blurring them (ibid. 644). The cruel contingency of state sovereignty would suggest asking not only “where are the territories of sovereignty”, or “where are spaces of exception”, but also “how does sovereignty’s cruel contingency operate in contemporary society.” As Agamben (1998: 55) writes: “the precise scope and location of sovereignty and its jurisdiction is never final, but always fleeting.” The functioning and the operation of new forms of sovereign power cannot be understood only in terms of its territories, but in terms of its cruel and contingent effects (its scope).

How then are we to understand the relationship between torture and the detention of enemy combatants in light of sovereign political power as

cruel radical contingency? As discussed before, torture is a tool of cruel sovereign political power, of the liberal way of war. Hence, it has its own set of theological, philosophical, and political values. The physical destruction of the 'enemy' - from crucifixion employed by the Scythians in antiquity, to the sleep deprivation and mutilated arms of the accused with a blunt knife put into practice during the time of the English Civil War, from public executions during the Middle Ages, to prolonged use of stress positions, starvation, beatings, electrical charges and extreme cold throughout the Cold War, and "squeezing of the testicles, hanging by the arms or legs, blindfolding, stripping the suspect naked, spraying with high-pressure water" (HRW, 1997) practised by specialized teams in Turkish prisons - in short, what we see before us today is not the expression of incomprehensible horror. It is the exact opposite: the calculated expression and a rational necessity that define sovereign power. It is the same expression that led Pasolini to explore the nexus between torture, the state of exception and the biopolitics of late-capitalist hegemony. Today's most likely successors of Pasolini's corrupt sovereigns are to be found in the torture chambers of Abu Ghraib and Guantánamo.

In the Republic of Saló, young captors are given the taste of sovereign vengeance at its most radical shape: that of the limitless enjoyment of sovereign cruelty and torture. Beyond reach of any 'legality', 'herded creatures' are reduced to bare life, life devoid of any value. In Abu Ghraib and Guantánamo, similarly, 'enemy combatants' have been given the taste

of sovereign cruelty and the 'liberal way of life' at its most effective: that of the limitless enjoyment of sovereign vengeance, violence and systemic torture. Reduced to bare life, they are effectively stripped of all rights. Systemic torture starts at the top and trickles all the way down. Behind water-boarding is the commander. Behind the commander are the policymakers such as Dick Cheney, Donald Rumsfeld and George Bush. Torture widens the circle of resentment and creates victims who are not able to act. Resentment is a peculiar reaction in which the subject's immediate responses (anger, spite, revenge) against the oppressor are muted and thus take a detour through sublimation, inward suffering. Hence the favourite destination is not the courtroom but the camp where torture is practised secretly. Creative forms of torture find expression in water boarding, sodomy and fucking. This is the paradigm of sovereign political power, of reign, that makes neoliberal and militarised post-politics and capitalist power operative. That is to say, torture and the state of exception are fundamental to the operation of neoliberal capitalism as a whole. They are fundamental engagements of the war against everything. The bare life of victims has come to define contemporary society in the war against terrorism.

Second, the metaphor of the Republic of Saló as a fascist enclave in an inaccessible place signifies a state of exception, or the space of exception where legal order is suspended. The violence of sovereignty in both the Republic of Salò and Abu Ghraib and Guantánamo (as spaces of exception)

demonstrate that space is one of the central media of struggle, and is therefore to be seen a fundamental political issue. For Lefebvre (1976: 33; see also Elden, 2007: 822), for instance, “there is a politics of space because space is political.” Lefebvre tells us that space is not only the place of conflict, but also an object of struggle itself (Elden, 2007: 822). In short, each concrete space, territory and spatiality is an arena of conflict and struggle (Soja, 1989). Considering the interrelation of the space as the place of conflict and space as an object of power and struggle provides us an important dimension for grasping the truth about the war on terror. Today modern sovereignty is no longer founded on a distinct territory. Since acts of governance are distributed among the established social regimes and relations of power, it is now everywhere. Sovereign political power “is in no case complete; it is also, openly or surreptitiously, everywhere contested and eroded, facing ever new pretenders and competitors” (Bauman, 2010: 138). Legitimising torture and creating global spaces of exception, the violence of sovereignty undoes territory so that the rule of law becomes ineffective. In the eyes of the sovereign power, the preservation of the territory necessarily entails the disruption of another territory (war on terror). Put differently, the insistence on territorial preservation goes hand in hand with the insistence on wholly contingent sovereign power: “the stress on territorial preservation is enforced most strongly at the very time territorial sovereignty is disrupted” (Elden, 2007: 827).

This means that both territory and sovereignty need to be seen in relation to war and violence, an intimate relation which cannot be separated from contingency. While sovereign power wants to completely enforce its own territory, it wants to assert the cruel contingency of sovereignty over territory elsewhere (Elden, 2007). Contingent sovereignty does not seek to simply acquire the whole territory but only create 'grey zones' or 'zones of indistinction' (CIA prisons in Eastern European countries), and facilitate capital flows and access underground sources (Harvey, 2003; Elden, 2007). This also explains the relation between mobility and immobility. While some are literally 'arrested' and legally abandoned through spaces of sovereign exceptionalism, others enjoy limitless mobility. In this, modern sovereignty is looking to preserve its own position, while at the same time expands capital flows in order to support neoliberal economic order.

Summarising rather crudely, states are inseparable from war and violence, and the creation of spaces of exception in which people are treated as if they have no value. Consider, for instance, Hobbes's *Leviathan*. For Hobbes, nobody is eligible for the task of doing politics. Hobbes (1651/2008) argues that *Leviathan* is the main solution to the problem of chaos, of civil war: a sovereign state ruled by an undivided and unlimited absolute sovereign power through social contract. In a sovereign state, what counts, therefore, is the relationship between subjects and the sovereign, just as all humans are equally related to God in the same way. Thus, for Hobbes, secular powers and religious authorities are completely

merged in the sovereign. Because the state of nature is a “dissolute condition of masterlesse men, without subjection to Lawes, and a coercive Power to tye their hands from rapine, and revenge” (1651/2008: 127), it can only be overcome by conferring all powers upon one political authority, for “so long a man is in the condition of mere nature, (which is a condition of war,) as private appetite is the measure of good and evil” (ibid. 109). Hobbes’ Leviathan refers to absolute sovereign power and atomised individuals, who are reduced to completely powerless buffeted by a sovereign state.

Hobbes’s Leviathan was a reactionary response to the problem of ‘revolt’: he was afraid of human beings of roughly equal capacities, trying to forcefully pursue their own individual interests against the sovereign state, but also against each other. In a similar vein, Schmitt’s definition of sovereignty was a reaction to ‘chaos’ in Germany after the First World War. The common denominator between them is that, they were both so afraid of the emergence of disorder. For them the question of order is the question of politics and sovereignty. Thus ‘order’ means that in dangerous situations such as ‘chaos’, ‘revolution’, the law can be suspended in favour of the existing order. And, in so far as the threat of chaos, of revolution continues, the existing order cannot exist without the myth of sovereignty. And, since sovereignty establishes social order and protects it from potential revolutions, it cannot do without cruel sovereign acts. Just as the

state of exception is an instance of sovereignty, torture is an instance of the state of exception.

In this sense Salò's fascist corrupt libertines are successors who have acted out of the same fear their ancestors have acted at Abu Ghraib and Guantánamo: the fear of revolution. It was the same fear that executed Robespierre; it was the same fear that turned the revolution of 1848 into a regime of banditry; it is the same fear, in sum, that establishes a neoliberal and militarised post-politics in modern times. This fear, and sadistic violence that follows, reconfigures post-politics in the same sense that Hobbes and Schmitt treated a state of exception as a political kernel of the law, as a condition for the establishment of a totalitarian state power. And it is in this sense also that today we pay witness to a 'cruel and indifferent sovereign power' that has culminated in the public torture at Guantánamo Bay and Abu Ghraib, and the secret torture at CIA prisons, or the extermination of precarious individuals with remote-controlled drone missiles, and extrajudicial killing, contracting out the secret transportation of 'enemy combatants' to third parties and states.

Along the same lines, the portrayal of fascist libertines as legally and morally corrupt people explains the "redundant affection" that Sade and Pasolini attach to their libertines and vigilance of their criminal acts or performances (Subirats, 2007: 176). What is crucial in this context is the portrayal of sadistic sovereignty as the "law beyond the law" (Agamben,

1998: 59). In this sense Salò also anticipates the totalitarian tendency inherent to contemporary military-security complex, which is now embodied in neoliberal post-politics. Nevertheless, Salò does more than reveal the extreme actualisations of state terror: it juxtaposes it to a critique of the biopolitics of late-capitalism. By denouncing acts of collective torture, Salò also reveals one of the secret aspects of sovereign order that attempts to legally legitimise torture as a way of social control.

3.4.1 Torture is Aesthetic

It is worth noting that Pasolini succeeds in presenting two main definitions of torture, two aspects of its institutional practice. One is aesthetic. What we see in Salò is the aestheticisation of torture. Torture inflicted upon the young Italians is performed in a ritualised manner. The “anthropological genocide” of Salò, a term used by Pasolini himself (quoted in Chiesa, 2007: 209), takes place in a villa, decorated with a magnificent art collection of futurism, cubism, art deco etc. The masterpieces of the artistic vanguards make you feel bad because they are the key to what he is thinking. Pasolini hates modernism, and makes the masterpieces of the artistic vanguards, or modern art, look fascist (see Jones, 2005). Thus we get the message loud and clear: life itself is continuously being destroyed by the biopolitics of late capitalism and sovereign power to which no moral ideal is attached. Salò presents torture as one of the supreme expressions of sovereign domination. The aestheticisation of torture in Salò thus metaphorically

anticipates the state of exception on the basis of which the legal and moral order of a sovereign exceptionalism might be constituted. In other words, just as the state of exception and institutional regimes of cruelty are the basic characteristics of the Republic of Salò, the justification of torture and the practice of permanent detention have become the rule in contemporary society through mediated mise-en-scènes. Recall the victims of Guantánamo and Abu Ghraib in orange boiler-suits, who were urinated on, sodomised with chemical light and broomstick, in short, the victims who were tortured to death. What is more, Guantánamo and Abu Ghraib are spaces where absolute sovereign power operates through absolute suspension: suspension of humanity and the Geneva Conventions regulating the treatment of prisoners of war. These practices were supposed to be stopped in neoliberal societies, but torture is a permanent aspect of sovereignty which keeps returning in spaces of exception. In this sense the aesthetic (and sadistic) torture of Salò signifies a rationalisation of what has hitherto been an exception.

3.4.2 Torture is Political

The second meaning of torture presented by Salò is political. Torture appears as a constitutive act of political and military organisation of the state. Torturers are normal (not mad and bad) sovereigns because the bodies of the victims are inscribed by signs and regimes of sovereign violence that is seen as 'legally legitimate.' In this way the sadistic pleasure

of the torturer meets the total passivity of the tortured body, “an immobile obedience of the body that almost seems to offer itself to the torturer, and thus approve the latter’s actions” (Chiesa, 2007: 221). In other words, the sadistic torture coincides with reactive subjects who are rendered obedient and subordinate their desires to sovereign political power. Victorious only in perversion, the torturers derive pleasure from inscribing signs and regimes of sovereign violence on the bodies. In effect, signs and traces of sovereign vengeance become an integral part of oppressive norms that give rise to the creation of a legal sovereign state. Pasolini thus shows “how torture is the interior dimension of the neutral and autonomous machinery of fear and trembling” (Subirats, 2007: 179-80), according to which political philosophy, from Hobbes to Schmitt, has defined the absolutist idea of state sovereignty.

Nevertheless, Salò does not only denounce torture, it also anticipates the crimes of state sovereignty. Torture as aesthetic and torture as political: these are the contemporary dimensions of torture as instruments of sovereign domination and repression. As mentioned before, Pasolini presents two dimensions of torture by means of four segments: Ante-Inferno, Circle of Manias, Circle of Shit, and Circle of Blood. Circle of Blood is particularly illuminating in this regard. At issue here is a kind of torture that is political, which is replete with sadistic violence, gore, blood, and death: precisely the sort of torture that the fascist regimes in Latin America and Turkey put into practice and is being practised in the torture chambers

of the 'liberal way of war.' Circle of Blood symbolises torture as a paradigm for the intended destruction of the integrity of the humanness.

In the final sequence of scenes, an orgy of aesthetic and political torture is practised in a courtyard. While the young victims are subjected to most brutal and almost unendurable torture and eventual execution, the fascist sovereigns derive greater sexual pleasure and enjoyment, from watching them suffer. Aroused by the display of suffering, the libertines begin to suffer with the victims they've once degraded, tortured and exterminated. Who's torturing whom? What goes there? What does it all mean? The fascist sovereigns and the victims enter into a zone of indistinction, making it impossible to distinguish between obedience to the law and its transgression. The entire system would start to break down. But one of the libertines and a fully aroused soldier watch this deadly and inverted scene from an enclosed balcony and through a set of binoculars. The screams, the cries, the pains, and the sufferings of the victims cannot be heard. Orff's *Carmina Burana* is played in the background. We begin to witness eroticism, beauty and the suffering in silence. The camera then shifts from the suffering bodies to the fascist libertine, who is being masturbated by the soldier. The scene focuses on the voyeuristic and masturbatory victimiser, who seats with his back to the camera. All of a sudden, the victimiser turns out to be an anonymous viewer. He becomes us, the audience. Voyeurs of the voyeurism of others, we are - by this conclusion - both distanced from and become part of the film's aestheticisation of

sadistic violence. The sadistic pleasure of Salò is projected onto the audience: we are shocked and disgusted at sadistic violence, and are shocked and disgusted all the harder when we realize that we all ourselves become a silent accomplice to violence committed by the global sovereign order in our everyday lives.

3.5 Conclusion

So what are we left after the depiction of torture, and the state of exception in Salò? Before proceeding, let me reiterate the point made at the beginning of this chapter. The concept of sovereignty implies a process, a mode of becoming rather than a state of being. This allows us to recognise the further temporal aspect of Deleuze's notion of sovereignty. Torture and the state of exception show that sovereignty is a cruel contingency, an act of deforming and depersonalising. Today, more than ever, sovereign vengeance is pertinent; it becomes a foreign policy, the only game in town. Amnesia and vengeance are the privileges of contemporary sovereignty. And this makes the global war on terror a permanent war. The more people appear to be the object or victim of vengeance, the more they appear to be an object of resentment. Thus sovereign vengeance is intimately connected to its counter-affect, resentment; which is why sovereignty is but a particular regime for the reproduction of resentment. The victims of sovereignty, and the collateral destruction of their humanness by abject spaces of exception, unjust drone

killings and torture, set off a radicalised resentment, lasting for long, spiteful generations.

Every victim of sovereignty dreams of a postponed and imaginary revenge, which can easily become pure destruction. Hence one of the paradoxes of sovereign political power: the more cruel the sovereign becomes, the less effective it is. Or, the more vengeful it is, much resentment it generates. In short, resentment that the exercise of sovereign vengeance generates is enduring. In the world of victims the story of resentment, and the shame and humiliation it creates, will be told for years to come. Cruel manifestations of contingent sovereignty create more enemies from a population that are motivated by a feeling of resentment, which provokes rationally uncontrollable aggressive or destructive acting-out. They give rise to a feeling of resentment that can lead to spiteful extremism. Resentment emerges as a kind of passivity or impotence but when it becomes impossible to construct meaning out of resentment, this can lead to a new desire for revenge. In this sense the vengeance of the despots can explain the energy that feeds resentment.

There is, in this respect, an intricate relationship between resentment and the 'slave.' As I discussed before, resentment "is always a revolt...the triumph of the weak as the weak, the revolt of the slaves and their victory as slaves' (Deleuze, 1983: 116-7). Resentment is a state of impotence in which the weak triumph not by creating new values, but simply reversing,

through resentment, the existing order, by taking the place of the master. In other words, the slave revolt can turn into a victory of resentment. The 'slave', however, should not be understood as someone dominated. Slavery is a situation in which the 'dominators' are influenced by passive, reactive forces. Modern states in this respect are "regimes of slaves, not merely because of the people that they subjugate, but above all because of the type of 'masters' they set up" (ibid. x). For this reason, the real antagonism is between the sovereign and the oppressed class, between the slaves of the sovereign state and those who resist it. The struggle of the oppressed class can be 'valuable' only in so far as it can describe an external factor as 'evil.'

The sovereign society is a society of resentment, in which slaves triumph as slaves and command other slaves. However, sovereign political power constitutes only one of the four social regimes embodied in neoliberal post-politics. Neoliberal and militarised post-politics is also a social regime of discipline, which constitutes a differentiation between an inside and outside. Discipline is a "non-sovereign power" (Foucault, 2003: 36)

Chapter Four

Discipline and the Birth of Neoliberal Governmentality

4.1 Introduction

In the preceding chapter, I theorised an updated understanding of sovereignty that is no longer founded on a distinct territory. I argued that, since technologies of government are distributed among the established social regimes and relations of power, sovereignty is now everywhere. Furthermore, I suggested that sovereignty cannot be thought of without resentment as it creates an intricate relationship between the sovereign and the victim. Sovereignty, in other words, is a dynamic radical contingency because it is in that contingency that the forceful and brutal sovereign presence manifests itself.

However, the revival of sovereignty constitutes only one of the four principles embodied in neoliberal and militarised post-politics. Post-politics is also organised according to discipline, which constitutes a differentiation between an inside and outside. Discipline is one of the most central elements of Foucault's analytics of power. This chapter proposes to rethink Foucault in order to make sense of discipline that he began to understand

but at the same time has evolved very rapidly over time. Foucault proposes a fragmented and relational concept of power that allows us to examine a non-sovereign centred potential for disciplining subjects. The chapter explores this slow but profound transition from sovereign power to biopolitical governmentality, which is based on high levels of disciplinary normalisation upon life. Drawing on Foucault's argument in *Discipline and Punish* (1977), I argue that discipline works through situated contingencies where individualised bodies are ranked and assayed according to "a political anatomy of detail" (Foucault, 1977: 139). Furthermore, I suggest that the biopolitics of fear is vital to the development of the disciplinary regime and neoliberal governmentality, whose mission is to pacify life in order to delay the event. Biopolitics, I assert, should be viewed as an eschatological, katechontic response whose objective is to neutralise the event. And it is toward these Foucauldian considerations and their implications for a discipline and neoliberal biopolitical governmentality that I now turn.

4.2 Discipline

"And yet the fact remains that a few decades saw the disappearance of the tortured, dismembered, amputated body, symbolically branded on face or shoulder, exposed alive or dead to public view. The body as the major target of penal repression disappeared." (Foucault, 1977: 8)

Above the punitive city hangs the body of the condemned, bearing the ritual marks of sovereign vengeance. The body of the criminal tortured on the scaffold signifies the power to punish. Sovereign power, in short, is a certain power upon life where “the law can be inscribed, a life capable of reading and following the proscriptions and prescriptions of those inscriptions” (Dillon, 2002: 78). For a long time, one of the crucial aspects of sovereign power is the right to decide life and death - the right of a single sovereign to make life ‘live.’ The ceremony of cruelty is an exercise of sovereign terror at its most spectacular.

But, as Foucault suggests (1977), this has become only one aspect of sovereign power in a range of mechanisms because the power over life is transformed in the modern West. From the late eighteenth century, as Foucault observes, political power is no longer exercised through the stark choice of taking life or letting live. Wars are still bloodier, killing an enemy is still the objective, and torture is still frequent. Yet, a major shift occurs in the way the right to punish is exercised. Now the wars are no longer waged in the name of the sovereign, but in the name of the entire population: “the right to punish has been shifted from the vengeance of the sovereign to the defence of society” (Foucault, 1977: 90). What emerges is a new social regime with a new political authority that takes on the task of the management of life “in the name of life necessity”, ranging from illness, sanitary conditions in the towns, to the problems of security. The mechanisms “shift from exclusion to inclusion”, from “sending the victims

outside the bounds of the polity, to a mechanism for spatial partition that allows them to be contained within” (Elden, 2007: 564). The new regime is that of discipline, which aims to manage life through a multitude of attempts, turning bodies into information and knowledge. Discipline is an immanent historical reality, “a quite different materiality, a quite different physics of power, a quite different way of investing men’s bodies” (Foucault, 1977: 116).

From this moment on, politics addresses the vital processes of man as a self-creature, who speaks, lives and works. Man as a finite being is to discipline, it might be said, what the state of exception is for the sovereign power of the state. In disciplinary regime, man is conceived as a being that is finite, but this finitude turns out to be a source of knowledge, meaning, and history. At once a subject and an object, man is the being who produces himself. Here Foucault’s argument closely parallels Marx’s definition of man as a species-being. Consider the famous lines in *The Economic and-Philosophical Manuscripts*, where Marx (1970: 31) defines species-being in the following terms: “Man is a species-being not only in that he practically and theoretically makes his own species as well as that of other things his object, but also...in that as present and living species he considers himself to be a universal and consequently free being.” What fundamentally separates Marx from Feuerbach is his insistence on the historicity of man, namely that man does not come into being as the object of consciousness, but is produced practically by the concrete factors of

social life due to labour. Man is a species-being because “the practical creation of an objective world, the treatment of inorganic nature” is proof that “nature appears as his work and his actuality” (ibid. 32).

For Foucault, similarly, man - who is supposed to be an a priori, transcendent figure outside history - turns out to be a historical category, a product of power and knowledge. Man as a transcendent category, who is supposed to be ahistorical, thereby becomes the historical itself. Thus, with the disciplines, man (and his body) appears “as object and target of power” (Foucault, 1977: 136). Or, to say this differently, the new body is not a “mechanical body”; it is now conceived as man-the-machine “composed of solids and assigned movements” (ibid. 155). The new machine body has two registers: “the anatomico-metaphysical register, of which Descartes wrote the first pages and which the physicians and philosophers continued”, and the technico-political register, “which was constituted by a whole set of regulations and by empirical and calculated methods relating to the army, the school and the hospital, for controlling or correcting the operations of the body” (ibid. 136). Their point of intersection is the docile body, “which joins the analysable body to the manipulable body” (ibid.). In the process, therefore, man emerges as a ‘theoretical’ object whose body, whose decipherable depth and actualities could be formed and corrected through mechanisms of normalisation (Foucault, 2003: 38). Utilising mechanisms of normalisation, the primary target of discipline is to manage the situation and maximise individual efficiency and productivity. Through

production of self-regulating individuals, society begins to become, as Foucault (1991) would explore in his governmentality writings, a space that to a certain extent has to be left to itself in order to achieve maximum efficacy.

Inseparable from these issues is the integration of the system of observation into a tightly connected circuit. Disciplinary social regime belongs to the level of the diagram of power and forces, acting on “the potentiality of danger that lies hidden in an individual and which is manifested in his observed everyday conduct” (Foucault, 1977: 126). In other words, the very principle of strategic danger is crucial to the operation of discipline. Without danger no such discipline, without discipline no such danger. Danger becomes a formative, productive aspect of disciplinary action. Within the matrix of the potentiality of danger, discipline can be viewed as an abstract machine in which power relations emerge and operate in different physical spaces such as schools, hospitals, military barracks, prisons, and so on. It is in this context that the panoptic prison emerges as the form of punishment as an apparatus of knowledge. Let us recall Bentham’s vision.

4.3 The Panopticon

“Thou art about my path, and about my bed: and spiest out my ways. If I say, peradventure the darkness shall cover me, then shall my night be turned into day. Even there also shall thy hand lead me; and thy right hand shall hold me.” (Bentham, quoted in Miller, 1987: 5)

When Jeremy Bentham first used the above verses of the 139th Psalm, what he had in mind was creating a semblance of the 'image of God.' Bentham was a utilitarian who used an "architecture of choice" (Bentham, 1995) - by which he meant that the authorities should give an appearance of choices so that the prisoners have the illusion of autonomy but end up behaving in the desired way. Thus he believed the panoptic architecture could be applied to any physical space, including schools, workhouses and prisons. The principle was that the inspector sees everyone "without being seen" (Bentham, 1995: 101), ensuring everyone in making the right choices.

Bentham wanted to achieve a system of utilitarian thought that avoids dangerous "concert among minds" (ibid. 48) so that any challenge to the system does not take place. The goal was to maximise general utility and to minimise harm. With the emergence of the idea of the Benthamite panoptic prison the power to punish becomes institutionalised, and death is just the reverse side of life. The punishment is no longer seen as a crucial aspect of sovereign power, using the ritual marks of the vengeful act. Rather, it is now seen "as a procedure for requalifying individuals as subjects, as juridical subjects" (Foucault, 1977: 6). Because discipline deals here with an attempt to alter man, punishment becomes "as a technique for the coercion of individuals" (ibid. 6). Nothing is allowed "just to exist"; thus all circumstances, including that of chance, must be controlled, weighed, compared, evaluated, calculated, banished, organized (Foucault,

1977: 25-6; Miller, 1987: 5). In short, everything must be technically argued out. This is no doubt a new discourse, a new knowledge of the body that will overlook no single detail. Discipline works through minute controls of the body; it is a life problem that must play out. Hence a whole learned economy of the 'strategy' of the body through the institutions such as schools, hospitals, barracks, and workshops.

However, this does not mean that discipline techniques disrupt sovereign political power and violence. Rather the new 'strategy' of the body now finds itself recombined with the internalisation of the sovereign gaze. The primary goal of the new strategy is, therefore, not confinement and enclosure but the true and faithful *obedience of the subject*. With the emergence of the panoptic prison, therefore, it becomes possible to develop a disciplinary regime which produces the individual as a governable, and economically productive but politically inert commodity. In other words, the panopticon idea also paves the way for the development of a global political economy, under a strong interventionist state. The development of capitalist economy and the neoliberal state introduces systematic surveillance in order to better discipline and control the labour process and relationships. Put simply, surveillance is an integral feature of the capitalist market (Foucault, 1977; 2007; 2008; see also Aradau & Munster, 2007; Barber, 1996; Bigo and Tsoukala, 2008; Dillon and Reid, 2009; Ericson, 2008; Gill, 1995; Retort, 2005; Rose, 1999). The central concern is to colonise social life by market relations so that all

spheres of life can be better managed and ordered. In the emergence of Taylorism and scientific management, for instance, similar surveillance practices of worker are widely used not only to supervise workers and managers, but also constitute and expand labour processes more systematically. What is crucial in this context is Taylor's articulation of the *raison d'être* of global capitalist management: managers are supposed to act as "information specialists, as close observers", disciplinary analysts and planners of 'productive' labour processes (Webster and Robins, 1993: 245). Taylor (1947: 40) writes:

"The deliberate gathering in on the part of those on the management's side of all of the great mass of traditional knowledge... The duty of gathering in of all this great mass of traditional knowledge and then recording it, tabulating it and, in many cases, finally reducing it to laws, rules and even to mathematical formulae, is voluntarily assumed by the scientific managers. And later, when these laws, rules and formulae are applied to the everyday work of all the workmen of the establishment, through the intimate and hearty cooperation of those on the management's side, they invariably result...in producing a very much larger output per man, as well as an output of a better and higher quality."

This connection between Taylor and the panopticon is also recognised by De Gaudemar when he (quoted in Webster and Robins, 1993: 245) writes that "the principles set out by Taylor scarcely go beyond those set out by Bentham." In both Taylorism and the panopticon, we find the same mechanisms of surveillance and disciplinary control. The very principles of the panopticon become intensified and extended through Taylor's capitalist management and thus extended throughout society. In this sense the panopticon is the precursor of global capitalist management. In this

way the panopticon (surveillance) and disciplinary regime are incorporated more firmly into the labour process.⁶ That is to say, the Benthamite panoptic prison and disciplinary regime are crucial to the development of economic aspects of liberalism and the capitalist labour market. Disciplinary panoptic power sustains the political economy of capitalism, especially the free (competitive) market. It is not just what is done by a strong interventionist state but what is *allowed* by this state in a 'free market' society.

Indeed, the key to the capitalist political economy is the cooperation of free trade and competition, and a strong governmental apparatus. Free trade is productive as long as it is protected by an administrative social regime. In other words, free trade and competition require a centrally organised and disciplined social regime that facilitates and expands free market policies, capital and labour. The capitalist political economy (and thus state) is required a centrally organised and controlled interventionism

⁶ Note that Marx and Engels (1970: 122) see Bentham as one of the theoreticians of liberal capitalism, along with James Mill.

in society to help to promote 'the greatest happiness of the greatest number'. In order to sustain an individualised society with economic freedom, Benthamite political economy and disciplinary mechanisms of normalisation⁷ go hand in hand in order to modify human behaviours and promote responsible, reliable and rational 'acts.' So, on the one hand there is an active and strong interventionist apparatus with discipline, panopticon and surveillance practices, and on the other a market economy (economic freedom), competition, individual pleasures and good acts. Consequently, the panopticon is crucial to the development of a neoliberal governmentality that aims to intensify surveillance, while at the same time produces self-governing 'harmless' individuals according to the established norms.

Yet the panopticon itself is insufficient to solve the conflicts inherent to society. Neoliberalism entails spreading the free-market to all aspects of society as the basis for the production of new forms of life: it extends the

⁷ By disciplinary mechanisms of normalisation I mean social and political processes through which ideas and actions become 'normal' and 'natural' in everyday life.

process of making the free-market a general matrix of social and political relations by taking as its focus not exchange but competition. As such, it is precisely this extension of market relations to all spheres of society that compels individuals to internalise the logic of surveillance and control from the panopticon, for there is no escape from failure in the neoliberal logic of market-based competition. After all, one cannot legislate away inherent systemic problems. Because in the eyes of neoliberal governmentality the only solution to such conflicts, problems, is competition. Free trade and competition work better than an authoritarian governmentality precisely because they compel human beings to compete and thus come up with 'better' solutions to conflicts and problems. The Benthamite panoptic prison, therefore, gives the way for the materialisation of competition as an *eidōs*. The 'invisible' panopticon must regulate the society overall by perpetuating a culture of competition that promotes capital and labour in accordance with free market policies. Thus, in the absence of a 'visible' authoritarian governmentality the political competition solution is anything but clear and convincing. Consequently, the panopticon is adopted by the market order and becomes invisible, but its effects are tangible, operating through a culture of competition as an 'eidōs' (instead of a natural given). The striking similarity between them is that both rely on individual freedom understood as 'economic freedom' from a *given* menu. In the panopticon, the confinement is actualised by the cells and physical barriers. In the case of the market order, the cells are now socially constructed, given by property rights and competition. As a consequence, competition as an

invisible 'watchtower' spreads across all aspects of life and thus becomes an organising force through which human beings engage into a continuous activity of capital and labour. That is, life that is conducted in market-relationships as competition.

But what is competition? "Competition is an essence...an eidos...a principle of formalization. Competition has an internal logic; it has its own structure. Its effects are only produced if this logic is respected" (Foucault, 2008: 120). According to Foucault, by competition we must always understand the market and inequality, rather than equality of exchange. In short, competition is "a formal game between inequalities." The task of neoliberalism is to develop the concrete spaces in which competition as an eidos can take shape and function. "So it is a matter of market economy without laissez-faire, that is to say an active policy without state control. Neo-liberalism therefore should not be identified with laissez-faire, but rather with permanent activity, vigilance and intervention" (Foucault, 2008: 132). Competition regulates conflicts and problems inherent to society and the neoliberal market whose logic must be "respected." Significantly, for Foucault, the new - as distinct from the 18th century - disciplinary paradigm announces a new phase of liberalism. Contrary to classic liberal governmentality, which believed that the economy was somehow natural, that things could develop on their own without any intervention, the economy is understood by neoliberalism as an effect of a legal order. Neoliberalism, in other words, is a market builder. "The

juridical gives form to the economic, and the economic would not be what it is without the juridical” (ibid. 163). As such, the market, or pure competition, “can only appear if it is produced, and if it is produced by active governmentality” (ibid. 121). The market thus has to be created and maintained. This is the key point that distinguishes classic liberalism from contemporary economic liberalism.

4.4 The Rule of Law

But how could competition as an *eidos* be extended from the realm of the market and become the regulative principle of society? At this point, Foucault makes reference to the rule of law (*Rechtsstaat*) as a concept which may literally be described as “state under law.”⁸ The rule of law plays a central role in constituting a disciplinary normalisation that is based upon economic order. With the constitution of the rule of law, the

⁸ The rule of law (*Rechtsstaat*) first appeared in political theory and German jurisprudence, at the end of the 18th – beginning of the 19th century. It “corresponds to the English ‘Rule of Law’ but with a special focus – particularly relevant in the XIX century - on the concepts of the State and public administration (see Mannori and Sordi, 2009: 242).

sovereign no longer has the power of life and death. The new sovereign is different in that it is not based on the juridical power of coercion. The function of the state, then, is elevated to a status that guarantees freedom, particularly a domain of economic freedom. Economic freedom, in other words, is central to the development of the state. The state will exist to guarantee and protect freedom, namely economic freedom.

What is the ultimate purpose of the rule of law? The rule of law is a response to the needs of the market but market expansion creates more opportunities for conflict and political dissent. Conflict and dissent cannot be resolved by the market but require a rule of law under which the intervention and arbitration are carried out. In establishing the rule of law, the liberals see the possibility of getting rid of various forms of socialism. Or, to put it even more succinctly: it is the fear of 'potential revolutions' that creates the rule of law. Neoliberalism views society as a battlefield. Revolution is always in the air. Neoliberalism is wary of dangerous multitudes, the crowds who shun the unity of the State and create disorder. The aim of the constitution of the Leviathan (Hobbes) and the state of exception (Schmitt) was to transform the multitude into the 'people.' However, the multitude can always reappear within the state. Thus dangerous multitudes should be transformed into 'ordered multiplicities' so that resistance does not occur, that the event does not take place. For the multitude is "anti-state", "anti-people." Hence Hobbes (quoted in Virno, 2004: 9) writes: "When they rebel against the state, the

citizens are the multitude against the people.”⁹ The fear of the multitude, the fear of revolution reconfigures neoliberal economic theory in the same sense that Hobbes and Schmitt treated a state of exception that is war operationally as a political kernel of the law, as a condition for the establishment of an absolutist state. This is also the way how the rule of law institutionalises a culture of competition as an *eidos*.

The realisation that the economic growth is the only general good for contemporary neoliberal theory, that this is only possible within the matrix of competition, as an *eidos*, is culminated in the idea that politics should be kept away from economy; politics, that is to say, should not act for the general good. All that society needs is formal law that paves the way for the enterprise society subject to the dynamic of competition, but also banishes the state intervention in the economy, and in society overall. What is then needed is more market and less politics and the state, for a state “under the supervision of the market” is preferable “than a market supervised by the state” (Foucault, 2008: 116). The market, in other words,

⁹ I follow Hobbes’ conception of the multitude, which refers to the very negation of the sovereign authority with its entailing techniques of normalisation.

governs the state. Crucially, therefore, the rule of law is not only used to do away with the threat of socialist ideals. Rather it becomes a general strategy to transform the society into an economic battleground. The battleground means that the liberals also use the rule of law to ward off the other aspect of the savage, “that other natural man or ideal element dreamed up by economists: a man without a past or a history, who is motivated only by self-interest and who exchanges the product of his labor for another product” (Foucault, 2003: 194). The liberals see the possibility of warding off both two senses of the savage, “who emerges from his forests to enter into a contract and to found society, and the savage Homo economicus whose life is devoted to exchange and barter” (ibid. 194). For the savage Homo economicus, the rule of law “constitutes a social body, which is, at the same time, an economic body” (ibid.).

In this figure of homo economicus as a grid of intelligibility, the noble savage who carries an inscriptional subjectivity is now gone. Gone also is the classical economy of crime and punishment. Sovereignty rules men as subjects of right, while the rule of law supplements disciplinary panoptic power with the management of individuals qua homo economicus. Summarising rather crudely, neoliberal economic theory manages individuals qua homo economicus that is based on the dynamic of competition as an eidos. Homo economicus therefore is the key to understanding neoliberal economic theory. Homo economicus is a person “who is eminently governable” (Foucault, 2003: 270), just as neoliberalism

is a modification of “the art of governing” as an exercise of political sovereignty. Neoliberalism must manage the social; this is the key turning point in the history of the state seen through the grid of intelligibility (Protevi, 2010: 22). Nowhere is this personal-social-economic transformation more aptly expressed than in how *homo economicus* responds to sovereign power:

“This is what the man right, *homo juridicus*, says to the sovereign: I have rights, I have entrusted some of them to you, the others you must not touch... *Homo economicus* does not say this. He also tells the sovereign: You must not. But why must he not? You must not because you cannot. And you cannot in the sense that ‘you are powerless’. And why are you powerless, why can’t you? You cannot because you do not know, and you do not because you cannot know.” (Foucault, 2008: 283)

Homo economicus reveals a reality that transcends all the limitations of sovereign power, including the economic domain, because the sovereign is incapable of mastering the new emerging society. The new society cannot be founded on ruthless, cruel sovereignty as having a power of life and death. Neoliberalism declares that what’s important about the market is competition, so the state should protect and secure market mechanisms that facilitate competition. As a result, permeated by state-phobia, competition becomes the organising and regulatory form of state and society. What emerges in the process of transformation of the noble savage to the savage *homo economicus* is a ‘free’ subject with its passions, and a ‘freedom’ that is deprived of justice and equality. Neoliberalism is not satisfied with respecting or guaranteeing any kind of freedom. Neoliberalism, in short, “is consumer of freedom” (Foucault, 2008: 63). And

it is valuable only insofar as other freedoms exist: “freedom of the market, freedom to buy and sell, the free exercise of property rights, freedom of discussion...and so on” (ibid. 63). Freedom is consumed as much as it is produced. In order to consume freedom, the new neoliberal governance should produce and manage freedom. In neoliberalism, freedom is limited, controlled, and subject to “forms of coercion, and obligations relying on threats etcetera” (ibid. 64). All that matters, in the end, is organising ‘the conduct of conducts’ that require techniques, and above all, a way of speaking the truth of neoliberalism “about the nature of times through the truth of the end of times” (Dillon, 2011: 784). In other words, neoliberalism always charges itself with delaying the end of a temporal order of things, of life. Neoliberalism is a truth teller. And “if the truth teller is the truth, then the truth is for everyone, and if what the truth teller says is true, then it follows that the conduct of conduct, from the individual to the collective, should be aligned or align itself with the truth” (ibid. 784). What is now played is a new ‘game of truth’: market. The market becomes a ‘site of veridiction’, a new reality which connects up “of a regime of truth to governmental practice” (Foucault, 2008: 37). What we have here is a particular regime of truth, neoliberalism, which finds its theoretical expression and formulation in the market.

In the new governmental practice, the neoliberal subject as homo economicus is a subject who must be left on its own. In the process, the individual is addressed affectively. The universalisation of competition, as

an *eidos*, means that any way of life that does not fit with neoliberal economic forms is rendered valueless. What is sought, therefore, is a “society subject to the dynamic of production” (Foucault, 2008: 147). To facilitate competition, discipline should not naturally restrain human beings and their passions. On the contrary, their wants, desires, passions and instincts should be duly noted, turned into liberal dialogue. If human beings are motivated by passions, which lack the idea of equality for all, there should be no control of their actions. After all, how could disciplinary regime ever obtain the knowledge that would enable it to produce faithful and law-abiding subjects?

Neoliberalism governs with economic freedom, while regulating ‘ontological freedom.’ Interestingly, but not surprisingly, neoliberalism had a model of the state that guarantees economic freedom. In reality, however, the state has never disappeared; it has always been a guardian, maintainer of order. Thus state-phobia results in the strengthening of the state apparatus in which the guiding principle is to create docile, yet free, bodies that assume their ‘identity’ and their well-regulated freedom “as subjects in the very process of their desubjectification” (Agamben, 2009: 19-20). Neoliberalism views society as a battlefield, aiming to prevent disruptive events by state apparatuses, by dispositifs of power such as the panopticon.

Sovereignty centralises power as a way of dealing with fears of dangerous events. With neoliberal discipline, fear is what must be (re)produced by social regimes of power to secure a life to make life live. In other words, the process of competition combined with flexible labour markets, economic freedom understood as the free choice constrained within a competitive jacket, and socially constructed barriers (property rights), contributes to the pervasiveness of a threat and the actualisation of fear. The next part of the chapter argues that fear is what enables secure and docile bodies to thrive in the marketplace. Furthermore, the decentralisation of fear and power of disciplinary regime mobilises the spectre of danger and threat in order to normalise and organise populations. The effects of this (re)productive mobilisation of fear are central to disciplinary regime.

4.5 Fear

Since affective modulation of people becomes an essential function of discipline, fear is necessary for society to impose discipline on population and the multitude. Addressing bodies from the angle of their affectivity, the growth of disciplinary society depends on effective means of enforcing rules by punishing those who break the rules - by creating, in effect, a 'culture of fear' in which control is achieved by a collective fear of punishment, including loss of livelihood, economic status etc. Thus citizens begin to experience fear, wrapped in the perpetual anxiety, which glorifies

reaction rather than action: “the fear snowballs, as the reaction runs its course” (Massumi, 2005: 37). It is here, in that immanence, that discipline coincides with its affective potential: “fear becomes a generative principle of formation for rule” (Dillon & Reid, 2009: 86). Having fear as a habitual posture becomes a way of life.

Fear is the essential condition and a positive element of discipline. Life is now lived as a natural ‘fear environment’ in which there is no relief, no day of rest. The fear of failure/punishment also dissolves trust, one of the binding agents of society togetherness. Thus, with discipline, neoliberal governmentality molds itself to suspicion, for self-censorship becomes the new normal. At the core of such fear lies “the nonentity of the frightened, wan and mortal being compared to the enormity of the everlasting universe; the sheer weakness, incapacity to resist, vulnerability of the frail” (Bauman, 2004: 47). In other words, disciplinary society addresses fearful bodies “at the level of their dispositions” toward (re)action, capturing the spontaneity of the individual soul. Capturing spontaneity, however, converts the individual soul into something it is not: “a habitual function” (Massumi, 2005: 33). The goal is to convert fearful bodies and fearful subjects into disciplined and ultimately (re)productive subjects of neoliberalism.

Importantly, the fearful subject is not a passive subject but an actively driven subject of neoliberalism who is continuously produced through its

fears and insecurities. If sovereignty generates a weak subject of resentment whose collective existence is damaged, who does not re-act, discipline addresses a fearful subject whose freedom is (re)produced in response to insecure and unsafe situations it encounters within the requirements of docile and obedient bodies. What is the political importance of the fearful subject? Two points stand out. First, the subject is always already recognised or recognises itself under fearful conditions. Enslaved by its own fears and anxieties, the subject cannot show a collective political response as fear environment becomes a second nature. Fear braces people together in the terror of not yet being able to answer the question, "what can we do?" Thus collective action is restrained, for fear becomes an open field for intervention and arbitrary exercises of neoliberal power operating on a continuum with militarisation of society (Massumi, 2011a). When a response occurs, "it is on the individual scale of the personal actions of 'everyday heroes' carrying out small deeds of voluntaristic support" (ibid). Second, the object of discipline is the management of fear and the insecurities that are its foundations. Fear and danger meet the necessities of securitisation, while civil and political rights are suspended in the name of the market's future stability. The association between fear and growing state security apparatus - in the interests of the market - becomes almost automatic. What remains is a fearful subject whose ability to understand and make sense of events is suspended. For fear caused by discipline is unresolvable. To paraphrase Engin Isin (2004: 232), what the fearful subject wants is the impossible. It wants absolute

security. It wants absolute certainty. It wants absolute safety. It wants to have the perfect body. Yet, since providing absolute security, certainty and safety is impossible, it cannot tackle its fears; it cannot act. It cannot live a normal life. Since these claims are impossible because they pronounce a space that the fearful subject cannot reach, it cannot overcome its fear. Consequently, fear becomes a permanent feature of discipline, which “circulates through the capillaries of collective life” by not repressing but producing and intensifying life (see Collier, 2009: 81).

Accordingly, fear presents society as an ‘exposed community.’ Discipline does not model a dominating totalitarian society; it is “not a means of producing terrorized slaves without privacy” (Foucault, 1977: 215). Rather it addresses fearful and ‘self-managing citizens’ capable of conducting themselves in economic freedom, deprived of justice and equality. Thus ‘economic freedom’ and fear are intimately connected. Fugacity, instability and insecurity are elementary ingredients of discipline, in which freedom and fear refer to one another. In other words, discipline nurtures fear and makes it subject to an economic calculus. In fact, fear and homo economicus are of a piece: they are indissociable dimensions of the same subjectivity. Homo economicus as rational self-entrepreneur promises manifold options and opportunities to consume, but it also creates a risk-security-aware culture, thus establishing a permanent fear of success, or fear of failure. With neoliberal discipline, the incentives are changed, not by a coercive sovereign authority, but motivated by self-interest – fear of

failure. For fear (economic failure, fear of failure) is the best way to transform harmful responses into the beneficial, undesirable into desirable; it is an integral part of capital expansion. Fear of failure does not only become a positive force, but also a destructive force (the inability to even live) in the market economy. In this sense, forms of desire and pleasure “are intimately wedded to fear” (Hardt & Negri, 2000: 323).

Neoliberal discipline’s key concept is less liberty and more fear. For without a persistent sense of fear and danger present in the minds and bodies of subjects, productive and ‘inspiring’ powers vested in the disciplinary regime may lose its legitimacy. The emphasis on fear and danger is vital to the development of a biopolitics of fear. The managing of fear becomes the scope of biopolitics: biopolitics needs fear to manage it. This is particularly clear when ‘danger’ is involved. In what follows I argue that biopolitics is precisely the disciplinary (and neoliberal) strategy of pacification and stabilisation of society that takes making live as its objects. For modern biopolitics, only a constantly pacified and administered life is a safe environment. Furthermore, I contend that the coevolving fear of revolution is the basis and motive for the constitution of the responsible, reliable and rational self because this paves the way for continually growing security apparatus. In between stretches a continuum of ‘the event’, which becomes a legitimate tool for preemption.

4.6 The Political Theology of Biopolitics

“All significant concepts of the modern theory of the state are secularised theological concepts.” (Schmitt, 1985: 36)

As I noted earlier, within the matrix of discipline, politics addresses the vital processes that sustain human existence: “the size and quality of the population; reproduction and human sexuality; conjugal, parental, and familial relations; health and disease; birth and death” (Rose, 2007: 52-3). This shift in history is what Foucault (2003) calls “biopolitics”, which refers to the political strategisation/technologisation of life for its own productive betterment; the *modus operandi* of power relations that aims to enhance, render productive, promote, compose, maximise, and administer life. Biopolitics is a privileged form of intervention; it is “the politics of life itself” (Rose, 2007).

In volume 1 of *The History of Sexuality*, Foucault proposes (1998) two bipolar diagrams of biopower, or power over life. One pole of biopower works by individualisation, that is, on the micro-level of power, which seeks to produce individuality, and thus incorporate it into efficient systems. But this pole also makes another pole that works on the macro-level, namely *biopolitics of the population*, which focuses on “the species body, the body imbued with the mechanisms of life: birth, morbidity, mortality, longevity” (Rose, 2007: 53). Foucault (2007: 30) claims that this bipolar technology,

emerging in the seventeenth century, seeks “to invest life through and through”, which is “a question of constituting something like a milieu of life, existence.” As a consequence, the development of life necessarily becomes the focus of inquiry.

However, one should bear in mind that the seeming distinction between disciplinary normalisation and regulatory mechanisms is sustained by a shared underlying feature: they both aim to “maximize and extract forces.” Thus, they are intimately connected. The biopolitical control “does not exclude disciplinary technology, but it does dovetail into it, integrate it, modify it to some extent, and above all, use it by sort of infiltrating it, embedding itself in existing disciplinary techniques” (Foucault, 2003: 242). Within this dual structure, life as a model of governing is displaced by life as a site of intervention, the point where new forms of life knowledge, discipline and control must be applied. Thus nothing occurs in vain. All life forms have to be analysed in terms of their properties, propensities and potentialities. Thus the discourse of man must be understood “on the basis

of the emergence of the population as the correlative power and the object of knowledge. After all, man...is nothing but a figure of population” (Foucault, 2007: 79).¹⁰

This, however, tells only part of the story. One should, therefore, raise the more fundamental question: what is the true purpose of biopolitics? My contention is that, since biopolitics is also a regime of truth that is to side with the forces of ‘neoliberal order’, its main purpose is to avoid more catastrophic and radical change. In other words, the main objective of biopolitics is to defuse any fears of a repeat of revolution. Precisely for this reason, when we examine modern biopolitics, we should pay attention to its theological reason because how to minimise the potentially disruptive events is shaped by ‘secularized theological concepts.’ Biopolitics is one of them. The always present possibility of an event is what defines modern

¹⁰ Note the evolution of ‘man’ in Foucault’s writings. In *The Order of Things* man emerges as an enigmatic mutation within knowledge. In *Discipline and Punish* man appears as a finite being who is formed as the principal subject of history. In *Security, Territory, Population* man becomes the figure of the population, “in the first form of his integration within biology” (Foucault, 2007: 75).

biopolitics' legitimacy. This powerful configuration also makes the fear of revolution the currency of neoliberalism.

4.6.1 Katechon

In a revision of Foucault's account of biopolitics, I shall suggest that contemporary biopolitics is a measured attempt to combine neoliberal order and legitimacy of a neoliberal economic theory in order to decrease resistance. In a sense, therefore, contemporary biopolitics is doing here to the 'sacralised neoliberal order' what Schmitt did to the exception, turning its revolutionary potentiality (Benjamin) into a counterrevolutionary politics of event. Contemporary biopolitics is therefore *katechontic*. To clarify this point, let us now turn to Schmitt's *katechon* (from the Greek for 'to hold down'). In *The Nomos of the Earth*, Schmitt (2003) contends that the legacy of Roman law, and temporal political orders established over the centuries, is katechontic: what is the best possible order that prevents decay, the victory of 'evil', and resists the Anti-Christ, the end of finite time? With the katechon, or the 'restrainer', Christianity emerges as an empire whose centre is Rome, and gains a juridical, cultural and prosecutorial imperial power within history.

The katechon is what transforms eschatological time into the time of Christian Empire, always prepared to act against catastrophe. Empire, according to Schmitt (2003: 60), "meant the historical power to restrain the

appearance of the Antichrist and the end of the present eon.” The concept of katechon refers to a mysterious Pauline verse, II Thessalonians 2.6-7: “And you know what is restraining him now so that he may be revealed in his time. For the mystery of lawlessness is already at work; only he who now restrains it will do so until he is out of the way.” The passage is a Pauline warning to the primitive community in Thessalonica against the revelation of the lawless activity of ‘Satan’, of Anti-Christ, upon whom God sends a “strong delusion”, “so that all may be condemned who did not believe the truth but had pleasure in unrighteousness” (II.2.11). The concept of katechon, according to Schmitt, is a “historical concept”, a “lucid Christian faith in potent historical power” because, as a belief, as a restrainer, what it “holds back” is nothing other than the eschatological “end of the world” (Schmitt, 2003: 60). It holds the end at bay and suppresses the power of the Satan, the Anti-Christ. “Who holds the Anti-Christ at bay?” thus becomes the historical question from which Schmitt’s concept of the political derives. The katechon is a theology in the service of sovereignty, of power, which seeks a theological legitimation of the political.

In Schmitt’s view, the real struggle is between the katechon and catastrophe, between counterrevolution and revolution. If the sovereign is he who “decides on the state of exception”, his main task is to restore and maintain the political order, which is threatened by an event. While revolution seeks to establish a new order, the katechon strives to maintain

the existing social, economic and political order. Revolution attempts to turn over the old order, whereas the katechon tries to appropriate revolutionary ideas by sovereign exceptionalism. Sovereignty (katechon) and revolution are thus intimately connected. The katechon is haunted by the knowledge that existing orders (empire) are always preceded by radical social change. Thus, it is not a passive figure but an active one, prepared to sacrifice everything to keep catastrophe at bay. Schmitt's katechon is a biopolitical imaginary of an imperial sovereign who insists that "time is limited", thus radicalising modern biopolitics and the politics of security even further.

Acting under the sovereign law, the katechon is a radical reconceptualisation of a biopolitical imaginary, attempting to prevent its own end. It is here that the biopolitical imaginary of the katechon coincides with its central aspect: the state of exception. The time of the biopolitical imaginary is the time of the exception. Thus, confronted with the coming defeat of the existing social, economic and political order, the state of exception becomes the central aspect to postpone its own end by restraining the powers of revolution. Put simply, the katechontic discourse empowers liberal regimes biopolitically; "the analytic of which...furnishes its governmental technologies and military strategic operational concepts and doctrines, as well as its political rationalities" (Dillon, 2011: 783-4). When Foucault theorised biopolitics, he did not explicitly address the transformation of theological reasoning. In this sense Foucault's genealogy

should be extended to take note of how theological reasoning is one of the central characteristics to the development of biopolitics. Schmitt (1985: 4) reminds us forcefully that “in modernity, theology continues to be present and active in an eminent way.” As far as the event is concerned, which aims at bringing about the end to the existing order, theological and political reasoning become increasingly difficult to distinguish. If “the transformation of political reasoning often finds its expression through the tropes of theological discourse”, so, too, “the transformation of theological reasoning often finds its expression through newly addressing questions of temporal conduct and rule” (see Dillon, 2011: 785). The task of each reasoning is to organise ‘the conduct of conduct’ and establish a regime of truth in changing circumstances. In this sense, the katechontic response is an imperial biopolitical order of securitisation, a political reality, on which the ‘new normal’ runs. It is the spectre of the event that haunts modern biopolitics, as well as the established social regimes that constitute neoliberal and militarised post-politics. The spectre of the event, revolution is intimately bound up with security politics and modern biopolitics: without it, they are doomed to fail at their mission to ensure society’s well-being through enforcing market relations.

4.6.2 Eschaton

Every politics of security (and counterrevolutionary strategy) is also a politics of the limit; it is concerned with the limit, and end times, of the existing rule. The political orders of modern finitude know very well that they are finite. This is why the katechontic response becomes an imperative to delay that end. However, in legitimising the politics of security and the war on terror for which it kills, contemporary biopolitics must also be seen as a political *eschatology*. At this point, Michael Dillon's article (2011) entitled "Specters of Biopolitics: Finitude, Eschaton, and Katechon" I find especially significant, for it provides new critical reflections on the nature of neoliberalism and biopolitical warfare. Dillon's analysis of the role played by political theology gives a new inflection to security politics and contemporary biopolitics. For security politics and neoliberal biopolitics, Dillon (2011: 782) has diagnosed a "political eschatology", a "modern eschaton", in which the transcendental finitude of horizon is transposed into a factual finitude and thus becomes an immanent quality. As a modern eschaton, contemporary biopolitics and security politics in general, explains Dillon, are concerned "with the end of things", "the very end of time itself", which has to be delayed through social, political and economic interventions. As opposed to the transcendental finitude of biopolitics, the modern aspects of the eschaton, Dillon (ibid. 781) goes on to argue, provide biopolitics with an open horizon of temporal possibility, an open historicity, within the infinite becomings of finite beings,

happenings, or events (ibid.). That is to say, the temporal imagination that informs modern biopolitics changes from time as a derivate of eternity to time as continuous emergence in which life is conceived as an immanent process, a life of becoming (Dillon and Reid, 2009: 108). There is no relief, no day of rest for modern biopolitics because, as a modern eschaton, it is defined by continuous processes and patterns of continuous contingent emergence. Taking life as the main focus of inquiry, modern biopolitics, like liberalism, is therefore diverse and heterogeneous. It is based on the regulation of the 'infinity of finite beings.' The temporal limit of modern biopolitics is marked, in other words, an open horizon of finite possibilities, 'an infinity of finite possibilities and becomings.'

In this precise sense, modern biopolitics as a modern eschaton deals with potential events as a matter of managing the infinity of finitudes, without allowing these finitudes to universalise themselves, and thus leading to radical structural change. Doomed to time, modern biopolitics can thus be seen as an extension of Christian eschatology. Securing the liberal order from its ongoing struggle against the event is a task that is shaped by religious traditions. In this sense, biopolitics derives its warrant to secure the neoliberal order from the fear of the event, of revolution, 'eschatologically.' Contemporary biopolitics is motivated by the fear of the event, which is intimately bound up with the fear of a breakdown of order tout court. As Dillon (2011: 782) rightly observes,

“[T]he catastrophic threat-event of the dissolution of the temporal order of things is continuously also interrogated to supply the governing technologies, by which the political order is regulated in peace to be ‘fit’ for war and is regulated so as to resist the same catastrophic threat-event.”

Modern biopolitics is, in short, a political eschatology that is “concerned with the end of things” and this gives rise to an updated understanding of security politics that “derives from the positive exigencies of government and rule that arise in restricting that end” (ibid. 782).

The eschaton remains a source of political as well as ‘religious’ dissent and resistance today. And it seems that today there are two responses that continuously call the nature of the eschaton into question: the first response is *katechontic*, which legitimises the existing order, the second is *revolutionary*, which seeks a total deligitimisation of that order. The first is to side with neoliberalism and the war on terror, the second with ‘divine violence’ and revolution. As both katechontic (preventing radical structural change and delaying the coming of end times) and as figured around the eschaton (the end time), contemporary biopolitics is a preemptive take on the event/revolution, which legitimises counterrevolution in general and the neoliberal security politics (the war against everything) specifically. As a political eschatology that refers to an open horizon of temporal possibilities, contemporary biopolitics is also a katechontic response, which attempts to foreclose the reservoir of temporal possibilities so that they cannot universalise themselves. Where there is an eschaton, the katechon grows too. Where there is a fear of revolution, there is always a

counterrevolutionary tendency that defuses that threat. While the eschaton concerns the open finitudinal horizon of the modern account of life, the katechon concerns the preservation of that horizon (ibid. 789).

In Hobbes' political eschatology, Leviathan was the main solution that acts with an eye toward the catastrophic end. Thus Leviathan centralised all individual fears to react to such fears of dangerous events. Consequently, fear became the currency of the political order and the constitutive rule of the sovereign. This eschatology for Hobbes was nonetheless based upon the virtuality of threat and danger. In Schmitt's political eschatology, Hobbes' model of absolute sovereign would be revisited and the sovereign decision on the exception became a mechanism that could centralise all individual fears so as to ensure control over fear/danger. In Schmitt's political eschatology, the sovereign decision was the katechon that delays the empire's end. Modern biopolitics of security, however, emerges as an eschatological, katechontic response, whose mission is to manage life to make life live by preventing the event. In the process, therefore, security and war become constitutive principles of formation for rule. With modern biopolitics, security and war as centralised forces are redesigned, or redistributed throughout neoliberal arrangements. It is that katechontic gesture which legitimises perpetual security and perpetual war against the threat that the event (Satan, the Anti-Christ) mobilises against this move. Delaying empire's end, contemporary biopolitics of security and war thus become empire's katechontic tools. And the same goes for fear. Modern

biopolitics' relation to fear is revisited and becomes a new modality of power that is able to preserve or enhance the life-efficiency of a given population (see Debrix and Barder, 2009: 406). Contemporary biopolitics turns fear into a *dispositif*, a katechontic response, geared towards preempting disruptive events and supplying the governing technologies and military apparatuses of security. When we speak of a biopolitical production of fear, what we are really describing is a series of scare tactics that can only produce 'good' social effects by agents/agencies of neoliberal governmentality.

If the event, revolution, is the problem, then a new productivity of biopolitical fear is the answer. Life, therefore, get fused with fear. As an eschatological katechontic response, which takes place in life for life, modern biopolitics 'sacralises' the liberal democratic market, and understands 'freedom' only in terms of existing neoliberal values. Modern biopolitics only recognises market freedom, that is, the freedom to talk endlessly about consumer products. Other freedoms will invariably follow. As a political katechontic response, contemporary biopolitics is concerned with the virtuality of what already exists. As an eschatological katechontic response, the rule of truth spoken by biopolitics, in short, is prepared to sacrifice everything to keep 'the threat of revolution' at bay. The revolutionary event of the dissolution of the neoliberal order is continuously also interrogated to renew and modify biopolitics (Dillon, 2011). In short, there is always a need for modern biopolitics to think in

terms of disruptive events, or to mobilise the spectre of fear and absolute threat in changing circumstances. It is in this sense that neoliberalism should be seen as “the general framework of biopolitics”: “only when we know what...liberalism was will we be able to grasp what biopolitics is” (Foucault, 2008: 22). What modern biopolitics dreads most is the impotence of neoliberal power. Its objective is to neutralise anything that can threaten the existing order. In this sense, contemporary biopolitics is a preemptive counterrevolutionary tendency that seeks to sustain the existing neoliberal order of things.

Modern biopolitics is a finitudinal form of rule, a privileged form of intervention, whose mission is to secure life with its vital new capacities. In this sense, as Foucault (2008) insists, when one says “biopolitics”, one says, “biopolitics of security.” Or, to paraphrase Foucault, when one says “biopolitics”, one says, “biopolitics of fear.” With the biopolitics of fear, life itself becomes the enemy of life itself because life “threatens life in its positive procreativity” (Dillon, 2011: 788). Thus, rather than only a politics of sovereign exceptionality, modern biopolitics of fear is enacted by way of governmentality that mobilises all sorts of public agents to use the spectre of fear, danger and threat (see Debrix and Barder, 2009: 400). And crucially, it is the fear/danger/threat of revolution that leads to a biopolitics of fear because it is through the event that fear is rendered productive in order to establish disciplinary control. When biopolitical agents/agencies of fear production become the loci of disciplinary

techniques of neoliberal post-politics, the production and the reproduction of fear is no longer the exception but the rule. And this means wondering how the biopolitics of fear takes place and reproduces itself in special sites or exceptional events. In the next section of the chapter, I argue that disciplinary techniques, and the biopolitics of fear, also perform an important segregatory function. They divide society/city into particular groups such as responsible/reliable individuals and dangerous individuals, and thus serve as significant lines of demarcation that are materialized and spatialised in urban governmental practices. Examples of this are almost too numerous but a single one will suffice for a bullet point: kettling.

4.7 Geographies of Kettling

In November 2010, British students staged a series of demonstrations in several cities of the UK and Northern Ireland. Organised by the *National Campaign against Fees and Cuts* (NCAFC), thousands marched against spending cuts to further education and an increase of the cap on tuition fees by the Conservative-Liberal Democrat coalition government. After the 2003 anti-Iraq war protest in London, which attracted almost a million people, the 2010 protests have marked something of a turning point in modern British history: the political protest was back. But if these protests made dissensus visible, and posited it at the heart of British politics, they also gave police an opportunity to widely use a scare tactic, an extrajudicial punishment, ensuring that protest against the status quo is ineffective. The

tactic is called 'kettling', which so easily turns a legitimate protest into a 'violent disorder.'

Though kettling may at first seem a tactic of 'total policing', it is in fact a more complex spatial strategy. To get closer to an understanding of kettling we need to unpick its political logic in relation to discipline and neoliberalism. I shall argue that kettling aims to achieve two seemingly relational results: to discipline and incite the crowd in order to produce 'good' social effects by agents of neoliberal governance, and displace dissent and resistance in order to defuse the fear of the event.

Firstly, kettling aims to discipline the crowd in a specific site. Police officers with batons, sniffer dogs and riot shields block the protesters into a specific area for hours. Thus kettling aims to organise what Steve Herbert (2007: 601) has called the "protest zoning state"; where "the expression of dissent...is controlled with a territorial strategy - it is banned from some areas and confined to others." The protesters are held in tightly confined spaces without time limit and thus become the subject of police brutality at its most devious: anybody can be crushed by horse, or hit with batons to the head. Legitimising police violence, kettling is designed to limit the disruption in the interests of 'public safety.' Punishing protesters without charge or trial, kettling is, in short, designed to silence the crowd in the interest of 'public security.' If the first aim of kettling concerns the specific

day where the protest takes place, the long run aim is to dissuade protesters from demonstrating in the future.

Aiming to discipline the crowd, kettling also attempts to incite the crowd. By seeing and treating the protesters as *adversaries*, the police aims to produce violent reactions from them. By creating difficult and unpleasant conditions (sub-zero or warm temperatures without food, water, toilets, or freedom of movement) and by preventing people from leaving the demonstration, the police aims to provoke the crowd into action. The containment process can last until protesters lose their moral energy. It makes people feel utterly helpless, hopeless, and 'discharge' their anger until it overflows into acts of criminal damage. Schoolchildren, or university students, for instance, join the protest to defend their right to protest, but what they learn from kettling is nothing other than fear: fear of missing lessons and lectures, fear of missing their train back to colleges, universities, and most importantly, fear of being caught up in a 'peaceful protest.' Even living in fear of being arrested by the police has all sorts of negative effects; it puts the relief of your fear and anger in the hands of the 'managers of the event.' After all, managers of the event know very well that fear and political anger can be easily turned into violence, seeking action above and beyond words. Thus, what appears to be targeted is the possibility of a violent act to the police. The logic which underwrites this is rather simple: by provoking the crowd, violence is inflamed by kettling itself. The exercise of kettling is therefore *incitatory* in that it creates the

threat in order to deal with the threat. In colonizing the imaginary of the protester, kettling strives to make this imaginary real. Thus the crowd is addressed affectively as it is rendered controllable and manageable for the stable unity of the order. What is at work here is a mutation of discipline/neoliberal governance in which the affective subject of 'action' is rendered governable and manageable. As a classificatory disciplinary technology, kettling, therefore, "makes up people" (Hacking, 1995).

A crucial ideological operation of kettling in this respect is its repression or the moral castigation of all radicalism as 'bad' or 'violent.' This strategy is based on the assumption that the protesters can be divided into two basic categories: 'peaceful' legitimate protesters and violent illegitimate 'anarchists', which include radical student groups, left wing groups, and initiatives like UK Uncut. At this stage, the media play a central role in shaping 'public opinion.' 'Anarchists' are frequently labelled as 'violent minority' and 'anti-capitalists' by the sympathetic media. Thus they must be separated and marginalised from the crowd, for kettling builds upon the distinction between an inside and an outside. Inside the kettle, order reigns. Outside the kettle, disorder lurks around the corner. Managing disorder, the main aim is take robust action against aggressive 'trouble-makers' and deal with them as quickly as possible. What becomes vital, therefore, is anticipating the 'crowd-effect' to be created in the context of the demonstration as a whole. Discipline and the knowledge of the crowd must be total so that 'a becoming of the crowd' can be controlled. Put

differently, kettling aims to preempt or prevent 'dangerous multitudes' forming.

This brings us to the main point in the logic of kettling: to normalise 'social struggles' by disorienting and demoralising the masses. The goal of kettling is to care for a 'liberal life' by neutralising threats to that life through some form of intervention: it is a fight to 'hit' the target before it takes actual shape. Kettling, therefore, holds together as a response to an 'urgent threat': how to govern events in a world where neoliberalism is perpetually on the verge of collapse. To put it even more succinctly: kettling is introduced to protect the neoliberal order against the fear of potentially disruptive events. The exercise of kettling is being done in a way that makes 'total policing' more confrontational or more political. In kettling, therefore, the 'politicisation' of the police proceeds in parallel with the 'militarisation' of the police. For the police, or total policing, even a peaceful protest is treated as a problem to be kettled, predetermining the political outcomes. Protest is, in other words, prevented from explaining its

purpose to the public. The TUC march on Wednesday 30 November 2011 in London, where more than two million public sector workers staged a nationwide strike, is a case in point. The march was subject to extraordinary police control and restriction, including the erection of a preemptive “ring of steel.”¹¹ In this sense kettling functions as a preemptive strategy that aims to empty out the emancipatory core of demonstration in advance: anything potentially dangerous must be excluded. Since demonstration is seen as an ‘inconsistent’ element within the existing neoliberal order, kettling must prevent its massification. Thus the crowd must be continuously kettled so that their demands cannot reach the public, but rather remain regulated and controlled in its own particularity.

In short, kettling is the materialisation of neoliberal security practices of the state. If the state of exception is an instance of neoliberalism, kettling is an instance of the state of exception. In neoliberalism, certain social

¹¹ Note that this was erected on a trade union strike! Coaffee et al. (2009: 26-7) argue that the term ‘ring of steel’ was first used in 1976 “to refer to the amalgamation of the four individual security zones around Belfast city centre into one large security sector ringed between 10-12 foot high, steel gates.”

practices are normalised and legitimised (kettling, police brutality), while practices which disrupt the existing order are criminalised. This is why kettling protesters, used extensively during the G20 protests in London in 2009, was upheld as lawful in the Court of Appeal. The European Court of Human Rights also ruled on 15 March 2012 that kettling was the 'least intrusive and most effective' tactic available to the police. These rulings show that the exercise of kettling is ideological in that it defends not only the legal and juridical, but also the moral and symbolic forms of neoliberalism. It is another way of suppressing political differences. It is another way of sustaining a liberal way of life.

Neoliberalism is always haunted by the knowledge that it is underwritten by the event. After all, it knows that history is replete with events, revolutions to come. By targeting the affectivity of the individual, neoliberalism is, in short, animated by fear and danger. It aims to be purely *preemptive*. After all, every new tactic of power is simply the outcome of a particular power struggle. Its inscription always follows the management of the event. When the UK Court of Appeal ruled on 19 January 2012 that kettling was lawful, it meant that neoliberal capitalist states would be more efficient and effective in response to the contingency of the crisis event than they now are. The war on terror, for instance, has made presidents and their men, including CIA torturers to remote drone pilots, into 'political actors' who aren't interested in law-based governance but instead improvise against the event (disorder) and the courts that would severely

limit their abilities. After all, laws cannot be politically neutral. Whatever the jurisdiction, they are enacted in a highly tactical way in response to the fear of potential events. Thus the effective normalisation of a neoliberal politics of fear and violence should be seen as a far more sinister attack on social movements than an attempt to improve the natural foundation of 'civilised' contemporary society. Liberalism is not to be confused with the juridical problem of order. More than that, it is a form of governmentality that operates through complex and overlapping historical social regimes. But if there is one defining singularity to its global strategy of pacification, then it is the biopolitics of fear itself. Today, more than ever before, the politics of fear resides in contemporary society and is woven into the quotidian spaces and circulations of everyday life. It operates within a global imaginary of the event. It establishes the overwhelming fear of revolution as the driving force of general culture.

Each regime (and each legal tactic) of neoliberalism responds to the event, just as every law (and every decision) responds to revolution. Not only do law (the state of exception) and scare disciplinary techniques (kettling) permit the reworking of the boundaries of neoliberal existence, but the fluctuating shift from sovereignty to disciplinary normalisation and biopolitical security/fear governance defines the neoliberal encounter. In other words, kettling is intimately bound to the neoliberal politics of fear, just as fear is intimately bound to the active production of political subjectivities. Both set out who we are as people, what we are fighting

against (the event, revolution), and define what we are to become (neoliberal subjects as homo economicus). Since what is dangerous today (the event) is seen as productive to the very life processes that sustain neoliberalism, the biopolitics of fear is directly related to the vitality of existence on which the neoliberal order depends. As a consequence, it is the event that appears to become the generative source of neoliberalism. It declares the contingency of revolution to be *the* problem to be solved.

As an instance of the state of exception, kettling is a spatial imprint of discipline, a neoliberal order which can face 'terminal decline.' As the threat continues, however, it becomes increasingly violent. When a weak system is threatened and thus "legitimized by fear", it "is virtually fit to become terroristic" (Badiou, 2008: 13). Given that neoliberalism's struggle for survival knows no boundaries, it is safe to say that it would fight tooth and nail to stop or derail that defeat. In short, this will be a permanent struggle to delay catastrophe. But let's not assume that liberalism's permanent war completely forecloses the possibility of resistance and change. As Deleuze (1995: 178) writes: "There's no need to fear or hope, but only to look for new weapons."

Chapter Five

Understanding Neoliberal Control

5.1 Introduction

The previous chapter explored the functioning of disciplinary regime in contemporary society. Taking Foucault's analysis as its point of departure, it showed that discipline goes hand in hand with the birth of neoliberal governmentality, whose mission is to pacify life to make life live. We found also that the (re)productive mobilisation of the biopolitics of fear is central to neoliberal governmentality, for it is the fear of the event that defines neoliberalism's legitimacy.

This chapter proposes to rethink Deleuze's framework about "the society of control." Deleuze proposes a new phase of power that allows us to examine how the Foucauldian disciplinary regime has been reorganised into our present social state. Within this new system of governance a new field of power and domination emerges, which operates through localised and decentred points. With Deleuze, therefore, one might speak of a generalised form of 'neoliberal control' which does not destroy, but rather sustains and regulates life in its productive new capacities. It constitutes a

governance of free-floating control that works in conjunction with disciplinary panopticism. Moreover, neoliberal control is a mode of governance which is made possible through the expansion of the market, and the shift from industrial to post-industrial modes of production. In this sense control is a social regime in which the truth of neoliberal capitalism is produced. Furthermore, the chapter discusses cynicism as the main affect that pertains to neoliberal capitalism, arguing that cynicism reinforces and (re)produces 'dividuals' motivated by self-interest. Then a new form of contemporary biopolitics is introduced through the conception of 'preemptive indifference', which attempts to prevent potential events from occurring. And it is toward these Deleuzian considerations for a governmental approach to neoliberal capitalism that I now turn.

5.2 Neoliberal Control

"Ceaseless control in open sites." (Deleuze, 1995: 175)

The axiom underlying the disciplinary regime is that circumstances make the subject. Disciplinary panopticism and the formation of 'docile bodies' is based on the subject as a source of knowledge, where the disciplinary sites of enclosure both individualise and normalise identities appropriate to that enclosure. "There are two images...of discipline", Foucault (1977: 209) writes. The first one is that of "the enclosed institution, established on the

edges of society, turned inwards towards negative functions” (ibid. 209). The other image is that of Panopticism which improves “the exercise of power by making it lighter, more rapid, more effective” (ibid.). It is the latter image of discipline that enables Deleuze to develop his notion of “the society of control.” With the emergence of a neoliberal control society, there is a movement from the strictly ordered spaces of enclosure - hospital, prison, military barracks, factory, school - to a more general dynamic model in which human beings are regulated through digital networks that facilitate free-floating surveillance (see Deleuze, 1995: 178). This, however, does not mean that we have left behind disciplinary panoptic. Rather, it is built more firmly into the “axiomatic” and socialised model of activity that operates according to the logics of circulation, “the *perpetuum mobile* of circulation” (Marx, 1976: 71). Neoliberal control is digital; it operates through codes and passports. Individuals are thus replaced with fluid and endlessly “divisible”, fractal, digital “dividuals”, and “masses become samples, data, markets, or ‘banks’” (Deleuze, 1995: 180).

While Foucault introduced discipline (and biopolitics) as an analytics of power that emerged with, and continues to accompany, liberal modernity, Deleuze (1995) argues that the society of control is concerned with the transformation of life into value, in the form of commodity and capital, which is directly related to digital computing technology. The society of control is concentrated on the management of life and production rather than confinement, as is the case in disciplinary panoptic. In this sense the

transition from the disciplinary to neoliberal control society marks a fundamental change in the way the physical production is managed and controlled. Deleuze (1995: 180) consistently argues that “this technological development is more deeply rooted in a mutation of capitalism.” He carefully points out that the transition from discipline to control is organised and governed with the major changes in capitalism that some others have noted: the transition from classical liberalism to neoliberalism; from welfare state to the neoliberal state; from Fordism to post-Fordism and “flexible accumulation” (Harvey, 1990); from disciplinary panopticism - in which workers are required to obey - to the capitalist free-market - in which workers become adaptable, flexible and “entrepreneurial” (Boltanski and Chiapello, 2005: 108-121); and from the formal to the real subsumption of labour under capital (Hardt and Negri, 2000: 254-256).

Neoliberal capitalism operates through “continuous control and instant communication” (Deleuze 1995: 174) through the market. It is about modelling all social relations on market relations, even when the particular relations in question have not actually been commodified. Neoliberal control is thus about modelling all social relations that are still viewed as outside the market according to market rationalities. Indeed, neoliberal capitalism is based on the continuous process of production; it is a system of “production for production’s sake” (Marx, 1976: 742), which makes it possible to overcome limits and barriers. It is in this context that one could identify two important characteristics of the capitalist socius. First,

neoliberal control is a continuous process of deterritorialised flows (decoding). Second, and relatedly, the circulation of capital has no necessary external limit; its only barrier is capital itself. Since capital has the ability to constantly renew itself, it undergoes mutations, adjusting its mechanisms to the logic of the neoliberal market in which it is exercised. Capital becomes the new “body without organs” of the social from which everything else emanates.

Indeed, Deleuze and Guattari (1983: 261) argue that capitalism “has realized immanence” in the “flows on the full body of capital-money.” Hence they rejoin Marx in their analysis of capitalism as an immanent system that constantly modifies itself. As Marx and Engels (1973: 36-7) write in *The Communist Manifesto*, referring to the ‘immanent barriers’ to capitalist development:

“Constant revolutionising of production, uninterrupted disturbance of all social conditions, everlasting uncertainty and agitation distinguish the bourgeois epoch from all earlier ones. All fixed, fast-frozen relations, with their train of ancient and venerable prejudices and opinions, are swept away, all new-formed ones become antiquated before they can ossify. All that is solid melts into air, all that is holy is profaned, and man is at last compelled to face with sober faces his real conditions of life and his relations with his kind.”

What Deleuze and Guattari are particularly concerned with Marx is his analysis on the system of credit in capitalism in *Capital Volume III*. Capitalism is for Deleuze an immanent system that continually overcomes barriers and limitations. Whenever a new market is opened up, it becomes

assimilated into the capitalist system itself. Furthermore, as an immanent system neoliberal capitalism values 'equality' in so far as all things are turned into a commodity. In other words, equality makes sense only if everything can be bought and sold on the open market. Capitalism is an immanent system because the operation of its monetary system is "axiomatic" in the sense that flexible decoded flows make no reference to value. Thus they are an additive characteristic of neoliberalism facilitated by technology. Deleuze and Guattari present three aspects of capitalism's axiomatic: its operationality, its flexibility and its multiple realisability. First, the capitalist axiomatic is purely operational (Bonta and Protevi, 2004: 57). Deleuze and Guattari (1983: 248) argue that "money as a general equivalent" signifies an "abstract quantity" that generates indifference to flows. Money, in other words, has no truth value. But the equivalence of money itself marks a position of relation that has no necessary external limit. Second, capitalism's axiomatics is always flexible (ibid. 248; see also Bonta and Protevi, 2004: 57). Money as an abstract quantity cannot be separated from the destruction of all codes that would become concrete. Consisting of abstract quantities and entities, neoliberal capitalism does not operate according to rules of codes. It differs from previous regimes by its capacity to function directly by decoded flows without the insertion of fixed points or rules of codes. The capitalist axiomatic is therefore not a closed totality. Rather it is independent of the values of buyer and the seller, establishing relations and decoded and flexible flows that are unrelated. Third, as a result of its operationality and flexibility, the

capitalist axiomatic is also multiply realisable that “deals directly with purely functional elements and relations whose nature is not specified, and which are immediately realized in highly varied domains simultaneously” (Deleuze and Guattari, 1987: 454). Since the current capitalist model is neoliberal, the attempts to privatise all public assets that are seen as outside the market (e.g. the university, the healthcare system and so on) demonstrate how neoliberalism attempts to restrict the multiple realisability of capitalism to a single model (Bonta and Protevi, 2004: 58). Simply put, the axiomatic method is the key for legitimizing neoliberal control, which is thus identified with the capitalist regime of accumulation. Neoliberal capitalism is a hegemonic ideology, presiding over an accumulation regime. Human consciousness, leisure, play, and so on, are all directly covered by this regime of accumulation. The immanent axiomatics of neoliberal capitalism as a regime of accumulation must be understood as a system of money and credit, which opens up a new space where the entire capitalist production and circulation of commodities is regulated by specific financial institutions such as banks, creating a flow of credit-debt. Consequently, the flow of credit-debt remains infinite, but it is no longer a debt owed to the sovereign.

The result of the capitalist axiomatic is what Deleuze and Guattari call “deterritorialisation”; a process in which identities, institutions, bodies and labour-power are destabilised and integrated into global circuits of neoliberal capitalism. In this new regime, the productive labour power has

expanded to cover all spheres of society and life such as human DNA, credit card histories, lifestyles etc. - in short - all aspects of life itself that have become commodified outside of the old-fashioned labour process under neoliberalism. With neoliberalism, capitalist production is no longer limited to the factories or offices, and as 'dividuals', human beings selling their labour power are no longer necessarily how capitalism gets a hold of the products of their labour power. Therefore, the entire *raison d'être* of neoliberal capitalism is that it requires a concomitant transformation of labour-power and value, enabling the maximisation of the body's capacity of labour-power. For biopolitical control is now inscribed in the habits and vital practices of bodies. In the capitalist mode of production, labour-power "does not exist apart from" the worker because his "specific productive activity...is his vitality itself" (Marx, 1973: 267). If the specific productive activity of the worker is the vitality itself, then neoliberal control (and thus neoliberal biopolitics) must first of all grasp the importance of labour power.

Since, with capitalism, economy no longer depends on slavery but on 'free' deterritorialised subject, the nature of labour is also transformed. As Marx (ibid. 267) put it, labour-power "is the use-value which the worker has to offer to the capitalist, which he has to offer to others in general, is not materialized in a product, does not exist apart from him at all, thus exists not really, but only in potentiality, as his capacity." In other words, the continuous and unstable process of adaptation as labour power, according

to Marx, is sheer “potentiality.” However, capitalist biopolitics is not simply the management of labour power. Rather, as Virno (2004: 84) demonstrates, it “is merely an effect, a reverberation, or, in fact, one articulation of that primary fact...which consists of the commerce of potential as potential.” That is to say, neoliberal biopolitics is nothing other than the commerce of labour power, and it exists wherever that potential does appear. This potentiality refers to “all the different faculties” (speaking, producing etc.) and potentialities of human beings. And “where something which exists only as possibility is sold”, argues Virno (ibid. 82), “this something is not separable from the living person of the seller.” In contrast, “the living body of the worker is the substratum of that labor-power which, in itself, has no independent existence.” Life as “pure and simple bios”, Virno (ibid.) continues, “acquires a specific importance in as much as it is the tabernacle of dynamis, of mere potential.”

Marx had already acknowledged the unique role of ‘species-being’ of human labour and the way in which capital was in the process of being realised as species being. Similarly, Foucault argued that biopolitics configures the population as ‘species-being.’ With neoliberal capitalism, or bios, the body becomes the object of biopolitics as mere potentiality, a commodity, which obtains an empirical manifestation or mode of labour-power, which has the capacity of self-actualisation (see Kordela, 2011). The object of neoliberal capitalism is, therefore, life as an immanent quality, that is, the potentiality of being to actualise itself, which provides

neoliberal biopolitics with an open horizon of temporal possibility in the form of “labour-power...as a capacity of the living individual” (Marx, 1976: 274). Life is now widely interpreted by neoliberal biopolitics (and thus modern security politics) as a radically contingent force, an open historicity, which takes infinite becomings of finite beings, or ‘events’ as its focus of inquiry. Put differently, the body’s creative capacity is what makes ‘the event’ possible because it is where creative potentialities take place, especially in relation to every living form’s independence with other existing forms. The body produces the event because it is composed of infinite possibilities for new emergent forms of actualisations.

To say that with labour power, or bios the body becomes an immanent quality, a sheer potentiality of being to actualise itself, is tantamount to saying that bodies are now conceived as ‘eternal’ bodies - the species of eternity - and thereby secularising the ‘eschaton’ of time as a metaphysical category that can be bought and sold from every angle in the market. With the secularised eschaton, the subject’s relation to eternity becomes the object of neoliberal biopolitics, which aims to provide only secured and controlled illusions thereof. In this way infinity enters the historical realm of neoliberal capitalism under the name of the market in which “one never finishes anything” (Deleuze, 1995: 179). Social control is no longer left to ideological state apparatuses such as schools, police forces and the army, but is now a branch of marketing, as even “elections themselves are conceived along the lines of buying a commodity (power, in this case): they

involve a competition between different merchandise-parties, and our votes are like money which buys the government we want” (Žižek, 2008b: 284). Thus contemporary society is a neoliberal control society in which all social relations are commodified; it is about modelling all sociality according to the logic of businesses. Neoliberal control initiates an “endless postponement” in the mundane realm of the capitalist market that is never complete (see Deleuze, 1995: 179). With the biopolitical production of infinity, “don’t make money, be money” becomes the capitalist dictum, a weightless, infinitely circulating, immortal idea. The biopolitical production of infinity through market exchange means that the potentialities of life itself become subject to the pernicious logics of capitalist accumulation.

All of this brings us to surplus-enjoyment, a concept that lies at the heart of neoliberal capitalism. With neoliberal control, the extended regime of capitalist accumulation is coterminous with the constant availability of all social relations that create surplus-value. Indeed, surplus-enjoyment is the main target of neoliberal capitalism because it is where the exchange-value and the subject’s relation to infinity coincide. Enjoyment occurs only in the surplus; it “is constitutively an excess” because subtracting the surplus in enjoyment means losing “enjoyment itself” (Žižek, 1989: 52). Human beings usually seek to satisfy life by satisfying the needs of human life. But more importantly, this results from our desire for life. As Aristotle (1992: 84) argues, human beings “are eager for life but not for the good life; so desire for life being unlimited, they desire also an unlimited amount of

what enables it to go on.” By misunderstanding the “unlimited desire for life” with what good things that make life worth living, we are forced to believe that we need an unlimited amount of goods, services, or unlimited wealth, to satisfy the unlimited human wants. Turning morality and value into a source of enjoyment, the unlimited desire for life thus comes to be actualised in “excess.” While aiming at good life, human beings act and communicate in the pursuit of enjoyment; what they seek is nothing other than enjoyment. For, Aristotle (1992: 85; see also Kordela, 2011: 18) goes on to suggest, “where enjoyment consists in excess, men look for that skill which produces the excess that is enjoyed.” Consequently, this excess or enjoyment is never fully achieved in itself; instead what we get here is a distinct mode of enjoyment, a “surplus enjoyment” (see Zupančič, 2003: 47). ‘Shopping’ is a case in point. Shopping goes on ceaselessly precisely because “surplus-enjoyment enables infinity to conquer lived life in the act of shopping - a central biopolitical frustration machine that sustains (the illusion of) immortality” (Kordela, 2011: 19). Shopping must continue for the excess of enjoyment of the ‘dividual’ who really benefits from the cynic participation in the market.

In neoliberal capitalism, enjoyment and (the illusion of) immortality do not require belief in order to function. On the contrary, enjoyment and immortality operate through perpetually infinite mechanisms of surplus-enjoyment predicated on the figure of homo economicus. As I argued in the previous chapter, if the figure of homo economicus is a “man without a

past or a history”, then the key to a metaphysical grasp of surplus-enjoyment and immortality is self-interest. Indeed, self-interest is not empirical, utilitarian or pragmatic, but metaphysical. And it is here, in that secular eschaton, that neoliberal control coincides with its affective subjectivity of the ‘dividual’ ‘motivated only by self-interest.’ In other words, a cynical dividual of ‘I know I am motivated by neoliberal capitalism-induced self-interest but I still obey’ is indispensable for the analysis of neoliberal control to advance. Thus, what is distinctive about the form of cynicism characteristic of and necessary for neoliberal control is that it legitimises and ultimately (re)produces ‘dividuals’ based on market defined self-interest(s). In what follows I argue that the cynical dividual is able to participate within neoliberal capitalism without internally accepting its truth value. Put simply, an understanding of neoliberal control is sustained exactly through the allowance of cynical disagreement (‘I am motivated by self-interest but I still obey’) premised on the perceived (in)ability to change the existing social order.

5.3 Neoliberal Capitalism and Cynicism

“From something he clings to something he has come to see through; but he calls it ‘faithfulness’.” (Nietzsche, 2001: 145).

As argued above, the logic of operation of neoliberal capitalism is axiomatic in the sense that it does not create any code; neoliberal capitalism does

not require belief in order to function. Hence, it is characterised by “the age of cynicism” (Deleuze and Guattari, 1983: 225; see also Žižek, 1989). However, it should be emphasised that more than one affect may coexist within neoliberal control. The reason why cynicism should be considered as the main affect of neoliberal capitalism is that it invites us to pay attention to how neoliberal capitalism relies not only on the carrot, but the stick as well (Glaser, 2012: 15). Cynicism is a crucial concept for the examination of the affective politics of neoliberal control. However, in neoliberal capitalism cynicism is accompanied by a “strange”, false piety (Deleuze & Guattari, 1983: 225) in the sense that it is a structural effect of neoliberal capitalism in which individuals are “ruled by abstractions” of money and labour rather than other individuals, as in the case of despotism (Read, 2008: 147). Due to its cynical modus operandi, the essence of capital is indifferent to the intentions of its rulers. The fundamental characteristic of capital is not simply the difference between being ruled by abstractions of market-defined self-interest(s), but that “being ruled by abstractions” produces its own particular form of subjectivity, namely the cynical individual (ibid. 147). Subjectivity is, in other words, inseparable from the mode of production that makes it possible. At this point, Žižek’s psychoanalytic interpretation of fantasy I find especially telling because it helps us understand how cynicism reinforces neoliberal capitalism.

In *The Sublime Object of Ideology*, Žižek (1989) argues that jouissance plays an important role for the hegemony. To be sure, jouissance “always

emerges within a certain phantasmatic field”, as Žižek (1997: 48) writes, and “the crucial precondition for breaking the chains of servitude is thus to ‘traverse the fantasy’ which structures our jouissance in a way which keeps us attached to the Master - makes use accept the framework of the social relationship of domination.” For Žižek, what psychoanalysis can do to help is precisely to clarify how the dominant understandings are indeed sustained through the surplus-enjoyment individuals gain from the hegemonic world-view. Just as neoliberal capitalism is characterised by atomism and individualism, fantasy is individualistic by nature. The law, on the other hand, is constructed against the particularity of the fantasy, for it regulates individuality and sets collective limits on individual desires. The law is the set of rules, mandates, and norms that creates collective limits for individual desire, while fantasy is borne out of respect for the law and yet, at the same time, necessitates a law to be transgressed.

This ‘tension’ between fantasy and the law is crucial for a proper understanding of cynicism. It is the continued transgression of the law that ensures the continued obedience of the subject. Since transgression becomes a norm, a rule, it ends up affirming the principles of law. This contradiction is what Žižek, recalling a long line of Freudian and Marxist analysis, calls the “fetishist disavowal.” Here, the subject recognises the absurdity of failures of the existing system yet nonetheless continues to partake in perpetually infinite mechanisms of that absurd system. In other words, it is the perspective of the obedient cynical individual, who justifies its

submissive attitude by internally declaring “I know that I am governed by market-defined self-interest(s), but still, I am doing it.’ Such an attitude is based on a deep ideological commitment to the necessity of a given order and thus serving as its positive condition of possibility of its effective functioning.

It is this awareness of the distance “between the ideological mask and the social reality” that explains the actions of the cynic (Žižek, 1989: 29-30). Even at her most frustrated moments, the cynical individual remains committed to the necessity of the law, of the socio-symbolic order. In this way the subject transgresses the law yet subservient to the hegemony, and thus reflecting the affective role of the fetishist disavowal for reproducing the existing power relations/configurations. The cynical individual is able to gain the enjoyment of transgressing the law without engaging in the ‘Real’ of social conflict and antagonism. When the cynical individual says ‘I know that I am ruled by abstractions of money and labour , but still, I am doing it’ what s/he is articulating is the surplus-enjoyment gained through the fetishist disavowal, the calculated distance s/he retains to the actual reality, to the set of ideological relations commanding its actions.

Crucially, therefore, this hegemonic strategy prevents cynical individuals from demanding or even imagining radical social change, that is, disruptive (‘revolutionary’) events. In this sense cynicism is the relief from responsibility because it provides individuals to accept the hegemonic power

of neoliberal capitalism even in disagreement yet still comfortably acting as they please. As a result, to radically question hegemonic configurations of power becomes impossible, for it is conceived as a challenge to the entire structures of society. Cynicism enables the disenchanted individual to show internal dissent without confronting the neoliberal hegemony as spectacular gestalt totality.

Cynicism is internal dissent at its purest, relieving the subject from the obligation of revolutionary act. It is a rational consent to the absurdity of failures of the existing order. If law, in the Lacanian sense, is irrational, then “it follows from this continuously senseless character of the Law, that we must obey it not because it is just, good or even beneficial, but simply *because it is the law*” (Žižek, 1989: 37). For this reason, cynicism is stronger than the ideological compliance that is based on an unconscious belief. For it differs from unconscious belief in that it requires a self-conscious submission to the irrational symbolic order, or authority. “The only real obedience”, Žižek notes, “is an ‘external’ one: obedience out of conviction is not real obedience because it is already ‘mediated’ through our subjectivity.” That is to say, “we are not really obeying the authority”, Žižek maintains, “but simply following our judgement, which tells us that the authority deserves to be obeyed in so far as it is good, wise, beneficent” (ibid. 37).

The cynical individual expresses a more complete acceptance of the neoliberal framework, and thereby demonstrates 'real obedience', the belief and desire that are necessary for the capitalist mode of production. Cynicism is an assertion and consolidation of power, capable of cancelling out social solidarity and collective human action. It claims the force of 'special loyalty' to the existing order. And when special loyalty, real obedience is to be dealt with, other considerations must be put aside. The cynic's real obedience comes not out of belief or a rational acceptance of its mandates, but out of duty and fidelity to the need for power as such. Paradoxically, therefore, the cynic's real obedience relies on not *believing* but *disbelieving*. Rationally accepting the irrational order, the disbelieving fetishist cynics "are not dreamers lost in their private worlds, they are thoroughly realists able to accept the things the way they actually are" (Žižek, 2001: 14). It is in pragmatic realism of the cynical individual that fantasies remain at their most effective, for pragmatic realism makes the subject cling even more tightly to hegemonic ideology. However, if the ruling ideology seems to be taken seriously, pragmatic realism can disintegrate. This is because the rationalisation of an ideology as a fantasy paves the way for radically questioning its legitimacy. The cynic registers not only her obedience but also her complicity in upholding the system. And to be complicit is to become bound up in crimes committed by the existing regime in everyday lives. The ruling ideology (and the law) is not an object of belief but a clear means to the end where the subject is aware of his own complicity and continues to act accordingly. It is for this reason

that neoliberal capitalism is at its strongest when it contributes to the rise of depoliticising conditions in which passive or cynical compliance becomes habitual and self-enforcing. Cynicism is, in short, the perceived inability to positively confront hegemonic power. This mode of regulation and thinking is by no means apolitical. Instead, it is political: the cynic's principal concern is individual survival and the avoidance of conflict.

Central to cynicism, then, is individual consent that is motivated by self-interest. The reduction of the subject to market-defined self-interest(s) is precisely an example of how human beings become cynical individuals. And economic crisis is not an exception to cynic's surplus-enjoyment. Even in times of crisis, capital increases its own power and ultimately reproduces cynical individuals burdened by credit cards. This is why consuming should be seen as an extension of surplus or the regime of indebtedness. By consuming during times of crisis, the cynical conformist enters the infinite diachronic temporality of surplus and debt. From a biopolitical perspective, the cynical individual is one in whom certain amounts of capital will flow through her, extending the regime of indebtedness. And it is this that I shall turn to next.

5.4 Debt as a Mode of Governance

“A Man is no longer a man confined, but a man in debt.” (Deleuze, 1995: 181)

Neoliberal capitalism has 'biopolitical' control over life. Hence Deleuze's above statement in his text on the societies of control, where the regime of indebtedness is as much about biopolitical control as it is an extension of capital. In primitive society, debt is charged through the primitive inscription, or coding, on the body. Blood-revenge and cruelty address a non-exchangist power. In the despotic society, all debts become infinite debts to the divine ruler. In capitalism, all debts finally break free from the sovereign and become infinite by conjoining flows. With capitalism, debt is continuous and without limit: student debt, credit card debt, mortgage debt, medical debt. What is distinctive about neoliberalism is the privatisation of public goods and services which has become an integral part of 'debt governance' in contemporary post-political society. Whereas in the primitive system debt is incurred through inscription and, in despotism, exercised by divine law, in capitalism "the market-eye keeps a watch over everything" (Dienst, 2011: 124-5). With neoliberal capitalism, the market-eye becomes the new normal that constitutes a biopolitical control around a weightless, infinitely circulating, immortal debt. We now live in the era of debt in which it is the soul of the individual that is imprisoned.

In neoliberal capitalism, the innovation of the market coincides with the individual that owes nothing except to itself. We should, however, stress that this self-interested individual is also one indebted to others. In contemporary society, the subject is literally locked into a regime of indebtedness whose belonging is infused with insecurity and isolation (see Read, 2012). For a

better grasp of what is at stake in the politics of debt, we must therefore see debt as a mode of governance, which predetermines political outcomes. Debt is a mode of governance, a future acting, restricting and curtailing human imagination. Debt defies a collective response precisely because it is seen less as a regime problem, as part of a capitalist free-market ideology, than as an individual fate.

Student debt is a case in point. As students take on loans in order to fund their studies, their future changes form. Debt transforms the educational experience of students, producing desperate individuals who try to match their actions to the laws of the market, rather than radically question their place within society (Read, 2012). As an exceptionally punishing kind, debt prevents students from engaging in politics that makes them think creatively and critically about society, and ask questions. As such, it has a profound disciplining effect on them, taylorizing their studies and undermining the sociality and politicisation that has traditionally been one of the main benefits of college and university life (Caffentzis, 2011: 32). With the internalisation of debt, politics and critical thinking are transformed into a monetary relation and the subject's individuality and morality become parts of the market by emptying public life of moral argument. Thus, to quote Marx (1844), "instead of money, or paper, it is one's own personal existence, flesh and blood, social virtue and importance, which constitutes the material, corporeal form of the spirit of money."

More importantly, student debt produces what Paul Mason (2012) calls “the graduate without a future.”¹² As individual carriers of unpayable debt, students are simply facing a future without a future because it “has disappeared, shielded by a wall of debt” (Armstrong, 2011: 4). Further, carrying so much debt on their shoulders, they are forced to accept insecure, part-time, temporary, casual, intern, flexible, project-based, contingent and adjunct positions, and are thus becoming a source of cheap, instructional labour.

Viewed in this way, debt perpetuates a subjectivity of desperation whose morality and individuality become enslaved by money. The subject of debt is a new figure of homo economicus as a grid of intelligibility that is trapped in isolation and insecurity. With debt, therefore, there is only an isolated and fragmented individual who cannot show a collective response. To put it bluntly, “debt is a collective phenomenon suffered individually” (Armstrong, 2011: 5). The subject of debt is one that must be left on its

¹² “The graduate without a future” refers to an indebted student who is “part of a wider precariat, poorer and with less life chances than previous generations. The affluence and welfare state that benefited cohorts post-1945 is being replaced by unemployment and the reduction and marketisation of public services” (Martell, 2011).

own. It is told to blame itself, rather than look to the economic and social conditions that have driven individuals into deeper and more unsustainable debt. Enslaved by its own isolation and anxiety, the subject of debt is rendered governable, just as neoliberalism is the 'the art of governing', dealing with competing interests. In this context, debt expresses a biopolitical control that aims to defuse the idea of radical structural change. Debt should be understood as a mode of neoliberal governance that keeps people off the streets, preventing them from protesting. Underemployed and broke, the subject of debt is an atomized but networked individual whose lack of collective response is presented as a kind of autonomy and liberation. All that remains is, therefore, individual responsibility, which is often branded as 'freedom.'

Saddled with massive debt, the subject of debt cannot act, resist. Unable to collectivise struggles against indebtedness and unemployment, the in(dividual) is thus produced and governed by the idea of maximising value and minimising risks where the notion of social solidarity is excluded, in which any connection with other groups in the 'precariat' is avoided. Collective action to remedy these precarious conditions is also foreclosed as the state of exception becomes the rule. And when governmentalities act, they do so to further control based entirely on individual self-interest, or individual human motives and intentions that are ethically justified in capitalism.

Locked into isolated and immiserated futures, the subject of debt becomes an investor in its own human capital in which relations of trust and collective action are replaced by security and biopolitical control that aims at life's global pacification. The regime of debt not only appears to become a defining characteristic of neoliberal biopolitics, but also a precondition of human life in general in which the subject is simultaneously bound to capitalism while potentially cynical to its rule. Debt presupposes a kind of (un)sociality of people who are connected only by self-interest, but not engaged in direct conflict. In other words, debt is, like neoliberal capitalism, indifferent to the idea of sociability and politicality, or, worse still, exploits them. The regime of debt creates responsible, insecure yet cynical individuals aimed at decreasing desires for radical social change. Isolation and insecurity combined with cynicism about the world are the marks of the subject of debt. Here, the individual realises its isolation and disillusion yet refuses or is unable to actualise its dissent. Debt is a future war on human imagination that disempowers individuals from demanding positive social transformation, or collective action.

To cut a long story short, debt functions as a mode of governance for the subjection of populations to neoliberal control. However, it is not to be seen as the only rationality enabling that subjection. In contemporary society, the governmentalities of neoliberalism can take several and often multiple forms. This is because the modelling of the cynical individual under conditions of neoliberal biopolitics reifies life as the main object of inquiry,

of governance. As a result, life itself takes the privileged form of surreptitiously oppressive governmentalities as the state of emergency becomes a second nature. Indeed, neoliberal and militarised post-politics operates by 'capture', through a culture of a perpetual state of emergency that immobilise thinking and restrain collective action. It endlessly attempts to appropriate collective action and resistance by sovereign exceptionalism, which consists of military apparatuses of security and police. Neoliberal biopolitics is, in short, hostile to collective action and attempts to own the future. However, it is essentially different from a "lawless state of exception and more in relation to the laws and counter-laws", forms of post-political expertise and governmental regulation which constitute the growing state security apparatus (Dean, 2010: 469; see also Aradau & Van Munster, 2008; Aradau et. all 2008).¹³ Let us, at this point, move on and investigate the military-security complex in relation to

¹³ Thus, in adopting a realist ontology of risk by itself is (risks are out there), as Beck (2002: 211-12) does, insufficient to explicate the role of preemptive risk-security management in contemporary society; it fails to grasp how the risk-security complex has become an intrinsic modality of neoliberal governmentality that is being normalized through its very repetition. For what happens in the life "out there" (Dean, 1999) becomes the main political problematic of our times. Instead of Beck's realist notion of risk I have opted for a new concept, preemptive indifference, which can be understood as a way of governmentality developed by Michel Foucault (1991).

contemporary biopolitical mechanisms. Neoliberal control rearticulates a new problematic in which all our political capacities and adaptive and creative potentialities, that is, all radical politics of event, are in danger of becoming the object of delegitimation and indeed elimination. This power is what I would like to call a ‘preemptive indifference.’ The remainder of this chapter is dedicated to thinking through this new concept and teasing out its biopolitical implications.

5.5 Preemptive Indifference

“Unpredictability in every field is the result of the conquest of the whole of the present world by scientific power. This invasion by active knowledge tends to transform man’s environment and man himself ... to what extent, with what risks, what deviations from the basic conditions of the existence and of the preservation of life we simply do not know. Life has become, in short, the object of an experiment of which we can only say one thing—that it tends to estrange us more and more from what we were, or what we think we are, and that it is leading us ... we don’t know and can by no means imagine where.” (Valery, 1962: 71)

“[T]here are known knowns; there are things we know we know. We also know there are known unknowns; that is to say we know there are some things we do not know. But there are also unknown unknowns—the ones we don’t know we don’t know.” (Donald Rumsfeld, 2002)

To be sure, many have argued that the events of 9/11 have only strengthened Donald Rumsfeld’s remarks that we live in a society of “unknown unknowns” marked by the radical uncertainty of any subjective position. ‘Inescapable dangers’ are real and imminent, we are continually told, and they are just beyond our ability to understand and control. In the

terms of Rumsfeldian terminology, “we not only do not know where the tipping point is, we do not even know exactly what we do not know” (Žižek, 2008b: 456). A certain radical reflexivity becomes the positive condition of contemporary society where life no longer ‘goes by itself’ but by ‘unknown unknowns’ – things we do not know we do not know. Unknown unknowns thus reveal the neoliberal aporia; a condition in which ‘fighting emergencies’ become the sole centre of security politics.

To better understand the actual and the possible future implications of the continued reworking of security framework, we need to look no further than the advances in complexity thinking, which focus on the mystery of ‘emergent properties’, on the conditions that constitute unknown, yet disruptive future ‘events.’ Simply put, events will happen. Overall, complexity approaches tell us that interdependent emerging properties involve a sense of unpredictable and unstable openness. Through a conversation with complexity sciences the world is rendered open to the future where unknown unknowns open up the social world to the virtual. In contemporary society under neoliberal control, politics of security’s principal response to the problem of unknown unknowns is now fully reliant upon the virtual. Thus, it is precisely the virtual that now serves to consolidate the liberal post-political imaginary. As Brian Massumi (1993: 11) succinctly expresses:

“Viral or environmental...these faceless, unseen and unseeable enemies operate on an inhuman scale. The enemy is not simply indefinite (masked

or at a hidden location). In the infinity of its here-and-to-come, it is elsewhere, by nature. It is humanly ungraspable. It exists in a different dimension of space from the human, and in a different dimension of time...The pertinent enemy question is not who, where, when, or even what. The enemy is a what not; an unspecifiable may-come-to-pass, in another dimension. In a word, the enemy is virtual.”

In other words, the enemy has attained a summit of virtualisation, an unknowable futurity, which involves a sense of contingent openness and multiple futures. Central, then, to security governance is the idea of ‘event’, which makes it possible to restructure the virtual from within the actual. An event is what calls the *future* into being. “The virtual is abstract event potential” (Massumi, 2011b: 16). The question is clearly whether the event will take place. But we shall never know. What we have in neoliberal control, then, is the real repression of a virtual event. The cost of rendering a future event unproblematic is precisely the focus of security politics. Although future events cannot be known, they can nevertheless be enacted. Through its conversation with complexity sciences, politics of security concerns how the future events are understood, how the emergent properties are understood, how the virtual potentialities are understood, or how the abstractions are understood. To consider security politics under the heading of virtuality is “relative to an experimental practice”:

“Abstraction is not the product of an ‘abstract way of seeing things’. It has nothing psychological or methodological about it. It is relative to the invention of an experimental practice that distinguishes it from one fiction among others while creating a fact that singularizes one class of phenomena among others.” (Stengers, 2000: 86)

In this climate of abstraction and uncertainty everything truly matters. Nothing exists in vain. Anything moves, anything circulates has the potential to be truly catastrophic. Neoliberal control is, therefore, concerned with “circulation” as the main object of security shifts from the traditional disciplinary enclosure to life: “circulation concerns a world understood in terms of the biological structures and functions of species existence together with the relations that obtain between species life and all its contingent local and global correlations” (Dillon, 2007: 11). Concerned with circulation, control operates in an “aleatory” and statistical field in the sense that it is concerned with the “aleatory events that occur within a population that exists over a period of time” (Foucault, 2003: 246). Thus, it is population that becomes the key to security governance. At the most basic level, population is identified as the biopolitical collective that ‘unpredictable dangers’ emerge from and are sustained by. In other words, a population is defined by its ‘potentiality of danger’ rather than actuality. The potentiality of danger has value because it introduces uncertainty and unpredictability. Thus, the final twist that circulation adds to the prospect of the society of control concerns what moves: problems not solutions. This means posing new problems rather than working out solutions to the old ones, which ultimately only mask the dynamics of neoliberal and militarised post-politics.

Therefore within the language of neoliberal control, there is clearly the possibility for a movement towards a more pervasive and sophisticated

nature of power in which distinctions such as reality/representation, politics of event/non-politics of event, terrorism/war against terrorism tend to disappear today. This power is what I call a 'preemptive indifference.' I shall suggest here that preemptive indifference is a form of contemporary biopolitics, but life is defined and assayed in a very different way. Contemporary developments suggest that a reengagement with biopolitics is more pressing than ever. In order to broach such a reengagement it is necessary to focus on the differing biopolitical mechanisms and politics embedded within it. It is my hope that preemptive indifference can augment Foucault's discussion of biopolitics and Deleuze's framework on the society of control. The first pole of this power works by preemption, but this pole also makes another pole that works by a constitutive indifference.

5.5.1 Preemption

Neoliberal control is concerned with the 'making live' of the threat. However, it does so at the level of preemption in order to identify populations who serve as threats to the existence of the prevailing neoliberal order. Preemption is fought 'amongst' a population and for 'total security' of a population. Through 'controlling' a population preemption, then, is the vehicle that attempts to prevent any event whatever from occurring. In other words, preemption signifies a desire to oppose the event, both before and after it takes place. An 'uncertain

future' is a key term for preemption. Consuming its own imaginable futurity, preemption involves "assimilation of powers of existence, at the moment of their emergence" (Massumi, 1998: 57). Taking unknown unknowns to be its point of departure, it is concerned with the things which have yet to emerge (the virtual). Taking as its target potential as well as actual risks, it "operates in the present on a future threat" (Massumi, 2007). Within this thread, in which unknowable and uncertain performances hold the potential to be truly 'eventful', what is now rendered terrifying "is anything which could unsettle the normal Liberal flows of life" (Evans, 2010).

Preemptive indifference implies a relation to our experience in the present. In attempting to prevent future bad occurrences, it also colonises the future (see Aradau & Munster, 2008: 198). The value of an act of preemption speaks in an indefinite future tense, for it takes into account the unexpected "eventualities that may or may not occur." (Bush, cited in Massumi, 2005). Yet it must be borne in mind that the aim of preemption is not simply the future that needs to be ordered against unpredictability and 'bad occurrences' caused by potential disruptive events and terrorism. Rather, it oscillates in between present and future, to make sure that nothing dangerous really happens, that antagonisms do not occur. For preemption, there are disruptive events that are unexpected, but which, in hindsight, can be anticipated and enacted. As 9/11 illustrated (perhaps above all else), it is now the 'catastrophic individual' who holds the

potential to tell a micro-apocalyptic tale. The events of 9/11, therefore, transformed the dimensions of security politics.

In contemporary society, sovereignty is made up of the use of social and political imaginative techniques. The sovereign order is no longer simply that of decision, but that of preemption. Thus 'who is to be killed' is supplemented by 'who gets to preempt the future?' In other words, preemptive ontology is governed less by "sovereign wills" and more by the contingency of the "event" (Dillon, 2008a: 327-8). The problem of preemption is not simply that of contingency, but that of catastrophic contingency (Aradau & Munster, 2007: 101). What counts therefore is a coherent scenario of catastrophic events and the preemption of the future. Preemptive indifference is characterised as a way of optimising the forces of individual and collective life. It is on this basis that sovereign power "'to make die' has been derogated from the state in favour of private security firms, management consultants and contractors and delegated onto multiple agents, including police officers, air marshals, security operatives", or the multinational security companies (Dean, 2010: 470). Similarly, decisions on unjust drone killings, which become a 'legitimate' tool for preemptive indifference, are made by either presidents or 'their men', including the CIA and FBI directors or military planners (ibid. 470). Preemptive indifference is placed in the continuity of national security practices (Aradau & Munster, 2008: 194).

5.5.2 Indifference

Preemption, however, tells only part of the story. In colonising the future to preempt the event, neoliberal control also creates an “affective uncertainty”, which becomes a political operator (Massumi, 2005). In agreeing to eliminate all future events, affective uncertainty introduces potentiality within the realm of neoliberal control. What is crucial in this respect is the centrality of the affective exploitation of the present. In this way, future uncertain events can be translated into more growth. As such, they help restore subjects to social life. Affective uncertainty has a value because it is a tool for disruption. Thanks to a radically uncertain future, disruptions can be stabilised and absorbed by a system which attempts to preserve its identity. No culture of risk, no preemptive indifference. Or, no culture of risk, no neoliberal post-politics. For risk is politically operative. And in so far as these affective uncertain risks signify irruption, the neoliberal order cannot do without preemptive indifference. For preemptive indifference, the question of order is the question of politics. Its logic is of course counterrevolutionary.

Preemptive indifference is based on order and certainty in the face of continual ‘disorder’, resistance and uncertainty. It merely uses the future to secure the existing order and thereby denies the possibility for any radical structural change. Colonising the future through an orderly process, it de-dramatises social struggles and thus defuses the possibility of an

event. The possibility of an event in the future upsets preemptive indifference. After all, it knows that history is replete with invocations of revolutions to come. And the next revolution, or the event, can radically disrupt and destroy the “liberal way of life” (Evans, 2010). Put simply, the next revolution is nothing other than the breakdown of order tout court. Hence the temporal effect of preemptive indifference is not simply the future that needs to be rendered palpable and governable against events; rather, it is the event that appears to be the problem to be solved, for it can appear to interrupt the temporality of neoliberalism.

Since the event is an experimental practice, security governance takes as its target virtual as well as the actual. The virtual threat calls for a virtual non-politics of event. Put simply, a non-politics of event needs to act against the ‘events’ to effectively counter them. Assimilating and appropriating the concepts and thoughts of ‘radical politics of event’, preemptive indifference has learned to counter the unknowable, the uncertain, the unseen, and the unexpected. Since the event-based neoliberalism becomes the focus in which power struggles take shape and function, the question then becomes how to think through a non-politics of event that aims at exploiting differences and antagonisms without allowing them to be eventful. For Deleuze (1994), for instance, the politics of event is a belief in the possibility of radical social change, while for security politics it consists in the problem posed in the future it creates (see Stengers, 2000: 67). For Deleuze an event, an act is a virtual potentiality, as

excess, up against the actual, whereas for security politics it is what enables a living life, a 'species-life', to continually renew and generate itself. While for Deleuze "the event is the immanent consequence of becomings or of life" and, for Badiou, "the immanent principle of exceptions to becoming, or Truths" (Badiou, 2009b: 385), for security governance it is opened up to military strategies and tactics which today seek to anticipate and preempt future catastrophic events. In this sense the politics of event becomes a non-politics of event, transforming the possibility of social change into a new array of tactics for security-risk governance, ensuring that 'disruptive events' do not take place. Since it is precisely the event *as* problem-formation which now appears to be *the* problem of neoliberal control, the 'cancelling out of differences' becomes the generative principle of life:

"We see the emergence of a completely different problem that is no longer of fixing and demarcating the territory, but of allowing circulations to take place, of controlling them, sifting the good and the bad, ensuring that things are always in movement, constantly moving around, continually going from one point to another, but in such a way that the inherent dangers of this circulation are cancelled out." (Foucault, 2003: 65)

The 'cancelling out of differences', however, is a nihilistic principle (Deleuze, 1983: 46). The more you cancel out of differences the more you will remove the sources of conflict. The more you exploit differences and antagonisms, the more you will empty out the emancipatory potential of revolutionary events in advance. What neoliberal post-politics lacks is the ability for enmity, the capacity to live with antagonism, conflict and 'true'

events. Indeed the argument here is that, in its range and in its depth, the cancelling out of differences requires a power which acknowledges no immanent limit, which assimilates actual as well as virtual differences and risks without allowing them to be 'eventful.' It is precisely actual as well as the virtual event as problem-formation which now appears to be *the* problem to be solved by preemptive indifference.

In attempting to create a society without potential events, life in this context becomes the main object of study for preemptive indifference. However, preemptive indifference is not simply interested in life, but in the political and historical context in which life functions and is consistent with the event-based neoliberal capitalism. The life to be protected is 'propertied' life, life that is assayed, organised and optimised through a range of mechanisms. Thus preemptive indifference should be understood as a governmentality that orders society and life through managing social problems and surveying populations (Aradau & Munster, 2008: 97). It is a way in which we can become clear on the truth of the neoliberal control society such that it becomes available for contestation.

Cancelling out of differences, upon which politics is based, the act of preemption is, in short, accompanied by a constitutive indifference, which refers to a model of 'affective disengagement.' Absorbing and thus emptying out the emancipatory core of differences and antagonisms and egalitarian movements in advance, the challenge is not to solve a problem,

but manage a panoply of risks at every level, from that of society to the state. Preemptive indifference depicts the given reality as the only reality, pushing radical social change to the background. It always compromises with what exists and thus sustains the functioning of the existing order. In short, the defence of neoliberal and militarised post-politics is fundamental to preemptive indifference. Like all counterrevolutionary thoughts and doctrines, preemptive indifference accepts the existing situation as it is, while, at the same time, depicts it as a fragile order in the face of potential upheavals and revolts. The event, therefore, is an unthinkable idea because preemptive indifference can only think from the perspective of the given. As can be seen in every counterrevolutionary thought, it is also characterised by a desire to oppose the event, both before and after it occurs, fighting for the preservation of the existing order. Preemptive indifference is, in other words, a principled reaction that keeps the emergence of future events at bay.

In so far as the event transcends the given by opening up new realms for experimental thought, preemptive indifference seeks to delimit those realms by (re)defining what is acceptable and unacceptable. Therefore, the centre of gravity is always what exists. But it also revises, rather than simply opposes, new possibilities. In this sense, the indifference I am referring to constitutes a strategic field of appropriation, in which the struggle revolves around revising and accommodating ideas and progressive principles. In this, freedom and revolt are possible as long as

they do not challenge the given. Preemptive indifference understands freedom only in terms of existing values.

As an infinite extension of the capitalist market ideology, preemptive indifference is always limited and finitised by an event through which it naturalises and legitimises itself eternally. Naturalising and presenting radical structural change as 'impossible', preemptive indifference condenses in a single statement: market freedom=cynical individual and its separable body, interests, desires=privatised enclaves. The vision of preemptive indifference is limited to cynical subjects and biopolitical bodies as objective existence, without allowing them to universalise themselves and lead to an event. In other words, preemptive indifference involves the abstract uniformity of a cynical conformist and infinitely circulating immortal bodies that produce a general abstract equivalence and indifference and thus condensates all differences into one single choice: market freedom. When humanity is reduced to cynical indifference and sheer animality, politics becomes a negative power of preemption. When the relation between the human and the animal becomes one of non-relation, freedom disappears. True freedom is not something given; it is regained through a hard struggle, discipline, in which one must be ready to bear the consequences of a true choice. True freedom is the realisation of being able to produce truths, eternal ideas.

So far so good! Does the act of preemption, and constitutive indifference that accompanies, make preemptive indifference a peaceful order? Surely not. Since the goal of preemptive indifference is to care for a 'liberal life' by neutralising threats to that life through some form of intervention, it is itself based on war and violence. Preemptive indifference, that is, signifies the end of the event, not necessarily the end of war and violence. Hence, in the pursuing the 'liberal flows of life', it can wage war on whatever threatens it. With preemptive indifference, war becomes a permanent condition "with no beginning or end, no front and rear... life itself is war" (Agre, 2001). Preemptive indifference and war are two sides of the same experiential coin. They are inseparable.

Under the signifier of the event, revolution, the virtual threat implies action, the action that is war. It is total war in so far as there is no 'outside' of preemptive indifference, that the politics of preemption and constitutive indifference should extend to all domains of everyday life. It is total war in so far as it uses surveillance, total control and information culture to effectively counter the event. Preemptive indifference is a total war on human imagination: a virtual threat legitimates all kinds of preemptive security measures and violence. Since total war is seen as a natural phenomenon, preemptive indifference should be understood not purely as a form of social control, but as a form of counterrevolution that aims to extend the power of constitutive indifference and preemptive

securitisation, and thus manage all forms of virtual threats. Its vocation is to be the *anti*-event.

Here, preemptive indifference defines a space in which “the liberal way of war” (Dillon & Reid, 2009) meets the necessities of securitisation and violence, extending the circulations of capital even during times of crisis. Making threat its business and identifying the threats which do not simply challenge the capitalist flows of life, preemptive indifference requires “the regulation of each and every type of circulation which propagates either a ‘good’ or ‘bad’ way of life” (Bell & Evans, 2010: 383). Even though there are certain threats and abnormalities that currently exist outside of this regulation, they must be somehow incorporated into contemporary society and the capitalist economic activity. Circulation is both threat and an opportunity in a ‘reflexive’ world in which life is suspended between ‘freedom’ and ‘danger.’ This is why preemptive indifference operates in relation to the ‘technologies of optimisation’, which sustains the basic integrities of life itself. Unlike the standard security/biopolitics, the threat in preemptive indifference is essential to the management of society. Preemptive indifference would not succeed without the event. Thus, unlike classic accounts of biopolitics, the preemptive threat must be enabled to survive so that it does have a continued presence in the collective social consciousness. Preemptive indifference focuses on the management of a population that is a threat to sovereign power and to a good circulation, not necessarily to eradicate it but to manage it as a way of organising the

social. More sinisterly and expectedly, it prevents individuals from demanding radical social change so that they end up imagining alternatives within the boundaries of the neoliberal market.

Foucault argued for a biopolitics that is concerned with the biological species of the population that acts in relation to war and security. Preemptive indifference is an updated formulation of Foucault's biopolitics, a condition in which immanent biological species and preemptive security measures are inextricably intertwined in a set of practices. Preemptive indifference is the nexus of the species of eternity and war and security that aims at a total pacification of life and society. For order and public security can only be improved through the condition of permanent exception (pacification), that security of the population can only be improved by continually targeting the population as vulnerable.

For preemptive indifference, the permanent biopolitical state of emergency is maintained by constantly producing virtual threats. Here, security, preemption, and indifference fold into a single problem: how to identify virtual threats to the life of the biological species, such that preemption and indifference will coincide perfectly. The threat to eternal bodies based on market freedom is also a threat to society, and thus the threat to 'market freedom' is also considered a threat to 'life itself.' In the context of preemptive indifference, the biopolitical concern over biological species (the population) is thus transposed into a call for a politics of life

itself because the common threat to biological species is 'life itself.' By definition, the war against everything is without end, precisely because 'life itself' constantly threatens to end 'life itself.' As a foundation upon which the politics of life is constituted, preemptive indifference, therefore, aims to own a future. Its aim is to erase the event, revolution. The same reason that establishes preemptive indifference and the politics of life that it carries, is therefore also the reason that dissolves it: the common, the multitude, dissent, chaos, revolution.

In brief, preemptive indifference is the ongoing management of a political order by constituting points of threat and the event. The importance of preemptive indifference is that it does not require the 'taking of life'; exclusion and elimination are not the hidden truths of preemptive indifference. Although it has some territorial consequences, preemptive indifference today does not operate only in a problem space defined in relation to its physical, surface area, or in relation to its territory and nation, but in relation to the management of life. Today, more than ever, life has become a "strategic enterprise", but those "strategies" are not made by a state managing the populations en masse (see Rose, 2007: 107). While preemptive indifference works hand in hand with sovereign exceptionalism, it does not draw upon threats only in terms of states of exception, but also in terms of "circulation" by identifying threats which do not simply challenge the "liberal way of life", but becomes the generative principle of formation for life (Evans, 2010). With preemptive indifference,

sovereignty gains a new legitimacy to continually identify, assess and manage potential and actual events to the population. For preemptive indifference, no situation is more exceptional than the event, revolution. It is in relation to the event that preemptive indifference opens up a body to a different set of biopolitical practices, what is to come. Since the body is conceived by labour power as an immanent quality, the becoming of the body is now the unifying driver for preemptive indifference, which is taken by security practitioners to wage a permanent war in the name of the capital, of life necessity. Let us examine this shift more closely.

5.6 The Body Politic of Preemptive Indifference

In *The Republic*, Plato (2001) argues that the body has three registers: head, heart, and belly. The head rules, while the other parts play supporting roles. Although each part pursues a different goal, they share a common ground: to rule over the body and its soul so that society keeps together harmony and stability. Since society functions in a similar manner to the body, the notion of the “body politic” is crucial to the preservation and safety of the “common good.” Hence Plato uses the concept the body politic to describe not only the actual body, but its soul, man and the unity of society as well. Referring to both technical and organic sides of the body, the body politic is thus described as a “secure and harmonious” regime (Plato, 2001: 195).

The body and the body politic alike were seen as threats to the harmonious ancient Greek city. More importantly, the notion of the body politic was always accompanied by a reflection on 'disorder.' For Plato, therefore, the history of the body politic was the history of order against disorder. The body politic aimed at rendering the uncertain certain, indeterminate determinate, that is, a governmentality that ruled over and masters society against the threat of chaos. The body, in other words, was seen as a 'battlespace' because it was capable of disrupting the national and social unity of an order. The body politic of preemptive indifference functions in a similar manner to the body politic of Ancient Greece. When Deleuze (1992: 255) argues that Spinoza's claim "we do not know what a body can do" is practically a war cry, his aim was to define a new concept of philosophy and subjectivity, a battle against the transcendental philosophy. For preemptive indifference, in a similar vein, "what a body can do" functions as a war cry because the body is conceived of as an organ capable of everything. Preemptive indifference is a methodical response to the question 'What is a body?' Thus any(body) and every(body) truly matters. What a body is capable of becoming is fundamental to preemptive indifference because the body is what threatens to unleash catastrophe (see Dillon & Reid, 2009: 108).

In the society of neoliberal control, the body is digitalised. Digital networks have become the new base structuring of body, society and life. The global control of bodies via technologies deriving from digital networks, the

targeting of individual bodies through advanced surveillance technologies such as biometrics, interface life into new complex digital arrangements which are manipulative by 'codes' and 'passwords.' Neoliberal control works by new biopolitical strategies that constitute bodies in relation to populations. The body and life in passwords mean that populations are now considered to be databanks of digital networks. Targeting the affectivity of the body through which digital technologies function, neoliberal control, in short, turns the human body into a password (Lyon, 2001: 75). In contemporary society, the body becomes a property of the state, functioning as an instrument of domination, or better yet, as a dispositif against the event. Catastrophe is always incubating. The body may be on the verge of becoming catastrophic. The body threatens to produce catastrophe because it is where individuation takes place, especially in relation to every living form's independence with other existing forms. As discussed before, since the body is perfectly aligned between finitude and immortality, it is both thing and the possibility together. Precisely because the body necessarily belongs to infinity, it is conceived of as an element of mass materiality - as an 'eternal' body. The body is *this* world itself, it is the source from which immanent life and perception unfold. And yet, the body is also flesh. It exists in the world, it wants what it lacks, it knows what it wants and strives after what it values. In short, the body is an organism that strives to enhance its life conditions.

Preemptive indifference knows very well that the body has a freedom that lodges itself in a realm of historical possibilities. It is not somehow devoid of context, society, history, economy and so on. And it exerts its presence from this historical realm beyond phenomena. The body has its own voice that speaks from the flesh. In other words, the body's own voice can exceed the experience of the body itself. The body is a limit, a border, against which the self is both subjectified and objectified. Thus the body implicates the subject and the object at the same time. The body either brings the self into life, or prevents the self from life. The body thinks, for itself; it goes on.

Displacing any absolute normative thinking, the body is indefinite and immanent to living. The body threatens to create the event because it has a creative capacity, a 'vital' power through which being becomes. The body creates the event because it is where the event takes place. Or, to say this differently, the body is the set of everything that the 'eventful individual' mobilises. This is nowhere better illustrated than by the events of 9/11, when the potential of the event changes the way we think and act. Because the event is catastrophic, preemptive indifference cannot but counter/preempt the event before it is visited upon it.

In this sense preemptive indifference expresses a fantasised dominance over the movement of 'bad' bodies, protecting the security of the threatened 'good' bodies. In brief, the circulation of bad bodies has to be

distinguished from the circulation of good bodies. What has changed under the regime of neoliberal control is the geography of 'body' security, for in an age of global capitalism it is not enough to protect borders. Thus "the fight must be taken 'over there', before it 'reaches here'" (see Bruce, 2007: 22). With preemptive indifference, it is necessary to have an "ontological premise" that "what is dangerous is precisely that which has yet to be formed, what has *"not yet even emerged"*" (Massumi, 2007). Thus, any virtual challenge before it can take actual root should be eradicated. For preemptive indifference, not all bodies are subjected to emergency in the same way and emergency is rarely arbitrary as Agamben seems to imply.

What we should abandon therefore is merely the classic narrative of the state of exception, which negates the possibility of considering contemporary biopolitics as a differential and universal regime. What needs emphasis today is how circulation is fundamental to the effective functioning of neoliberal capitalism, for, in the society of control, capitalism thrives on "circuits of movement and mixture" (Hardt & Negri, 2000: 198). Nowhere is this process stronger than in the world of gated communities, which house a very specific politics of place wherein the logic of good circulation (preemptive indifference) and the global capital collide. In the society of control, gated communities are necessary if the desirable attributes of responsibility, reliability, and rationality are to flourish. They are also necessary, for the desired outcome is to stop potential events to the existing order.

5.7 Gated Communities

“The new global elite...avoids the urban political realm. It wants to operate in the city, but not rule it; it composes a regime of power without responsibility.” (Sennett, 2000: 27)

The contemporary gated community first emerged as a response to transformations in the political economy of late twentieth century urban America (Low, 2008: 51; see also Harvey, 1990). As Low (2008: 51) argues, “the increasing mobility of capital, marginalization of the labour force, and dismantling of the welfare state began with the change in labour practices and deindustrialization of the 1970s.” This process accelerated with the “Reaganomics” of the 1980s. Globalisation and ‘economic restructuring’ weakened governments and dissolved patterns of existing social relations, causing a “breakdown of traditional ways of maintaining social order” (ibid.). Furthermore, social control mechanisms such as police and schools were seen as either ineffective or absent. The breakdown in local control mechanisms “threatened some neighbourhood residents”, and it is in this context that gated communities appeared to become viable and socially acceptable options of contemporary societies (Low, 2008: 51-2).

The creation of gated communities is an integral part of the building of “the new military urbanism” (Graham, 2010), a disciplinary control technique, hinted at by Davis (1990: 226-236), in which “the contemporary city prescribes security as a lifestyle.” Gating is only one example of

neoliberal control in which policing and enclosures create areas where people (wealthy urban elite) “seek to ‘capsularize’ themselves away from people, experiences, and spaces that they perceive as risky, vulnerable, or unpredictable” (Graham and Marvin, 2001: 16; see also De Caeter, 2004). The main goal is to create a safe, controlled environment that excludes all those who are considered ‘unsuitable’ or potentially ‘dangerous.’ Thus it is the fear of external social life itself that leads people to the building of walls and the construction of exclusive enclosed estates all around the world, protecting the rich from the poor, the desirables from the undesirables.

Gated communities are the new borders within society, where preemption coincides with constitutive indifference. High walls, security guards, video surveillance systems, CCTV cameras and the like tell you that you enter into a new territory, a territory essentially different from what is traditionally understood by ‘city.’ With their technologies of preemptive social sorting, they mean to some that they are home, and in a place that they can feel safe, while they are warnings to ‘urban others’ that they are not where they are supposed to be, and should leave immediately. In this sense, gated communities are the materialisation of othering. With the deepening of socio-economic and geographical polarisation, the ‘happy minority’ now seek to refuge in gated communities, occupying a different realm of circulation.

To be sure, such thinking translates urban others into potential targets, and potential targets into war and violence. In contemporary society 'urban others' (the homeless, the poor, ethnic minorities and alternative subcultures) are they who must be seen. Today's seeing is preemptive (or discriminatory) and its object is discriminated. Control and surveillance operate through technologies of preemption that continuously zone city space by drawing lines that urban others cannot cross and the powerful cannot see. The act of preemption is a technology of power that maintains and secures a 'liberal way of life.' Urban others are the focus of preemption that are made to embody all that appears to threaten the neoliberal order. For this reason, they have to be always watched.

As machines of exclusion, gated communities also demonstrate how the city is "fragmented" and "splintered" today (Graham and Marvin, 2001). This process of "splintering" can be characterized by two main features. First, physical infrastructure (water, roads, power, and communication technologies), various social services and public spaces are continuously being fragmented through the process of privatisation. Second, selective re-bundling of the fragments and public monopolies are being replaced by "contested profit-driven markets", which in turn has placed advanced premium networked infrastructures at the centre of global flows of capital and finance (Graham and Marvin, 2001: 13-4). The latter also emerged in a context where mobility and power are two essential concepts. "The people of the 'upper tier' do not apparently belong to the place they inhabit",

observes Zygmunt Bauman (2003: 16), “their concerns lie (or rather float) elsewhere.”

The result is that the new global elite are allowed to lose touch with society. If gated communities are the signature material form of ‘exclusive capitalist power relations’, they often entail a particular biopolitical imaginary in which isolation seems to be a remedy for vulnerability. As Massey (1995: 201) rightly observes, “those who already have more strength within the shifting power-geometry can wall themselves more tightly in.” The result is a willed isolation which obscures the political context of social inequalities of capitalist power relations, and privatises public issues. This of course undermines public values and the centrality of togetherness and nearness, dissent and strife that are fundamental ingredients of society. Displaying armed guards, high walls, electric fences, CCTV and automatic gates, the ostentatious power of gated communities contrast starkly with the extreme poverty that, in many cases, literally surrounds their walls. Indeed, the construction of these powerful enclaves always involves the construction of barriers for others (see Graham and Marvin, 2001: 11). Simply put, one person’s mobility may be another’s immobility. While some can buy £40m homes “without giving it a second thought” (Neate, 2011: 27), others lack even the most basic of services. The result appears to be an increasingly “acute sense of relative deprivation among the poor and heightened fears among the rich” (Massey, 1996: 395). Hence the simultaneous expression of fear and

cynicism in the affective exploitation on 'the event management' in neoliberal and militarised post-political societies. Since the fear of potential events and cynicism are embedded into geography, it expresses total surveillance and control over the movement of 'bad' circulation, protecting the intact territory and security of the fearful and threatened 'good' circulation.

In supporting good circulation, a gated community is a desired place of neoliberalism where disagreements are suppressed, antagonisms are foreclosed, and 'the contingency of the event' is sought to be preempted through risk-security management. Viewed through such a lens, gated communities that span global cities provide an important material dimension to the society of control. In a neoliberal world in which power operates as pure strategy (Evans & Hardt, 2010), and where people are abandoned to a fabricated event and thus left responsible for their own survival, gated communities are said to be 'necessary' sites of refuge and strategisation for the political, economic, and urban elite. In other words, gated communities are defended enclaves from which non-negotiable power can be strategized in the face of induced uncertainty (Duffield, 2011: 765).

Neoliberal post-politics is only 'possible' because the forces of global corporate capital need biopolitical preemptive indifference to actualise itself in concrete contexts. In the society of control, conflict and danger

arise when bad flows occur and threaten the expansion of good flows. If greater financial flows cannot move on and interact with each other, the global mobility regime is broken down. Since circulation is essential to the functioning of the capitalist market, preemptive indifference uses very specific mechanisms in which the reduction and investment of human life will be constituted. Preemptive indifference reduces *some* bodies to surveillance and control. It does advocate killing *some* types of life: those that cease to be a political adversary but become a biopolitical threat. In advocating a certain sort of intervention over life, preemptive indifference also invests in the bodies of *others*, as the maintenance of spectacular capital. In brief, as we have discovered, not all circulation is good. While some bodies are offered continuous mobile *navigation*, others are *suspended* under the national security acts. This continuous navigation/circulation, and the discontinuous suspension that follows, is part and parcel of the functioning of preemptive indifference in that it compels people to recognize power as “vitality”, not those of “mortality” (Rose, 2007: 70).

In this sense a gated community is a place wherein good circulation and global capital enter into an interdependent relationship: a voluntary camp with Starbucks. Voluntary in the sense that the residents seek escape from a chaotic and damaged world outside the gates using spectacular capital. As voluntary camps, gated communities are structured by design to enable consumption, (im)mobility, and social sorting. As such, they are places

where the violence of sovereignty is hidden by the blinding lights of consumption. On the one hand there are sophisticated surveillance technologies, private security guards - paired with sniffer dogs, controlling and thus preventing events. By passing through metal detectors and body scanners, possible threats are meant to be filtered out, thus resulting in the 'sterilised individual' who enters the sterile zone of the community inside. In gated communities, in short, nothing accidental is allowed to happen as the environment is homogenised and standardised as much as possible, defusing the fears of potential events. On the other, there are upscale shopping malls, golf courses, expensive restaurants, and clubhouses which offer a vast variety of choices, including gourmet meals and spa treatments. Within gated communities, the political 'reduction' and 'investment' of the body goes hand in hand with 'docile' and equally productive mobile 'individuals' who are governed by codes and passwords. Thanks to banks, restaurants, hotels and shopping malls in the immediate vicinity, the gated community resembles a megacity in flux, which incorporates differential and affective power relations sutured along good circulation and the capitalist spectacle.

The mixed regime of circulation and the global capital has the potential to take on several forms, forms that are biopolitically contingent upon territorial divisions of power. The political reduction and investment of the body will be differentially determined according to the locality and geopolitical context. "Sovereignty", therefore, "becomes wholly

contingent” (Bell & Evans, 2010: 384). It seeks to create secure spaces of modern wealth and luxury consumption, and defended enclaves from which liberalism’s “permanent emergency of its emergence” can be managed safely (Duffield, 2011). This irrevocably blurs the boundaries between circulation and suspension, as different authorities seek to act upon the one through action upon the other (Rose, 2007: 53). Like sovereignty, preemptive indifference is also a wholly contingent term to both reduce and invest the human body to optimise, and organise the forces of individual and collective life.

Gated communities refer to the political strategisation of human lives through dispositifs of power so that they can be defined and naturalised eternally. The perceived events from the outside are translated into a demand for cynical conformity on the inside. The sterile individuals have a right to live their freedom, particularly economic freedom, as they please. Other freedoms will invariably follow. Hence transgression is elevated into a moral injunction, enjoyment is rendered a duty, all social relations are reduced to economic relations, deprived of justice and equality. Gated communities, in other words, produce self-secure (in)dividuals who are not only less of a threat to themselves but to neoliberal capitalism as well (see Reid, 2012: 74). The principle of neoliberal self-interest undermines, if not completely disappears, politicality and democratic public life. Gated communities employ deception by seizing upon self-reliance/interest – all of which works to personalise responsibility and collapse political problems

into private problems. As a consequence, responsibility towards others is replaced by a self-secure individual who develops a narrow and inflexible responsibility only for itself. Self-secure gated subjects demonstrate an inability to act politically.

Self-secure individuals are, by definition, cynical subjects which cannot radically question their place within society and which accepts the world poverty, inequality and injustice as a condition for partaking of that world. And to be cynical, as we have discovered, is to forego the very power of resistance. If all sociality and politicality is reduced to a cynical reduction of capitalist exchange, if there is nothing but bodies and cynical (in)dividuals who pursue economic freedom, “live without idea” necessarily becomes the violent subjective injunction (Badiou, 2009b: 510). Gated communities are the signature architectural response to the denial of the political; walls, electric fences and checkpoints occupy the space abandoned by politics. They work hard to make ‘idea’, ‘thought’, an act of stupidity, demonising oppositional ideas so that they cannot reach the public. Gated individuals and the privatised enclaves that support them believe in a society that “has stopped questioning itself” (Castoriadis, quoted in Bauman, 2000: 22). Control and surveillance, targeted drone killings, armed guards, and other forces contribute to the power of neoliberal hegemony, making sure that no one is allowed to trespass on privatised enclaves, that disruptive events do not take place. Gated communities of market capitalism have walled off, if not disappeared, critical thinking and the values of social

responsibility. Thus a fortress of constitutive indifference and manufactured stupidity are no longer exceptional but part of a normality in contemporary society.

In short, gated communities and its gated individuals do not work with ideas, thoughts, but build a moat around revolutionary ideas (e.g. communism) so they cannot be accessed and organise egalitarian movements against the system. They don't engage in debates, ideas, for they are 'unbearable' and tied to 'dangerous events.' If gated (in)dividuals are believed, harmony rather than dissent, life without idea rather than debate, pacifism rather than antagonism, cynicism rather than courage is the hallmark of the 'progressive' outlook. If the horizon of life with an idea is vanishing, then the horizon of life without an idea based on the capitalist market system of social exchange can still arise to save the day. And this is where life without idea coincides with the imperative 'Enjoy', thereby producing a generalised 'cynical conformity' in which any questioning of radical social change appears to be ignored.

5.8 Conclusion

As I argued throughout the chapter, the object of neoliberal control – and its biopolitical governmentality preemptive indifference - is a mere functioning of the 'dividual' that is reduced to its bodily vitality, an organic constitution of a factual finitude of life as an immanent quality. Reducing

bodies to commercial capacities, to surplus enjoyments and furnishing secure spaces of a liberal way of life, the violent injunction is to live life in a purely bodily fashion, in pure animality without an idea. The continuation of life through market exchange and bodily survival strategies means that subjects are left with their own, and thus become passive spectators whose only aim and vision is economic freedom and biological survival.

Despite its hegemony, however, neoliberal control is not a peaceful regime. What's more, no victories are permanent or final. Since neoliberal capitalism (and preemptive indifference) deals with future as a virtual indeterminacy, then its neutrality and declared indifference becomes a source of an affect, provoking the potential/virtual to become an actual event it can respond to. Neoliberal control is therefore *incitatory* in that it allows the subject no freedom to be, but summons it to reveal itself just as it *is*. After all, "the most effective way to fight an unspecified threat is to actively contribute to *producing* it" (Massumi, 2007). Indeed, the more capable you are of revealing, producing, creating, provoking, mimicking, supporting and ultimately proliferating your enemy, the better. For it allows the enemy to reveal herself and press the button. Neoliberal control, in this sense, actively provokes a 'fatal' threat to emerge, bringing with itself a unique logic of (self)destruction, spite. Now the 'cheap happiness' is gone. All that is left is spite, and the only glorious ending the subject can imagine is pure destruction. Spite is a stochastic principle in that anyone can become a potential "hostage" (Baudrillard, 1990: 34-5).

Chapter Six

Age of Spite: Revisiting Terrorism

6.1 Introduction

In the preceding chapter, I argued that neoliberal control manages and regulates life in its vital new capacities. Drawing on Deleuze's "Postscript on the Societies of Control", I suggested that biopolitical control is directly related to neoliberal capitalism, which cannot be thought of without its associated affect, cynicism. Furthermore, I claimed that neoliberal control goes hand in hand with preemptive indifference, a new concept, which attempts to create a society without antagonism, conflict and struggle.

This chapter aims at theorising a new affect, spite, which may be defined as a willingness to cause harm for harm's sake. With spite, everything is pushed to its boundaries; everything is taken to the extreme, to its outermost limit. The chapter contends that spite has become one of the major affective dimensions of neoliberal and militarised post-politics. The question is, however, what corresponding social regime would produce the distinctive affective modality of 'spite.' I contend that spite corresponds to a fourth, paradoxical social 'regime': terrorism. In the aftermath of 9/11, I

argue, terrorism is no longer merely an 'exceptional' event but seems to have become a social regime, which reveals a new model of truth on contemporary society by restructuring the social.

Spite is the antithesis of one of the most cherished of aims commonly espoused by 'progressive ideologies.' Indeed, 'enlightenment' ideologies such as liberalism and conservatism have had a longstanding interest in the value of reason because it enables people to become 'rational' and 'controllable.' Progressive ideologies, in other words, have been always aiming to produce rational individuals who are abstracted from their passions and thus become harmless and faithful to the existing order. And the same goes for neoliberalism. As a 'progressive' ideology, neoliberalism asserts rationality and reason as the proper bases for nature and society. It desires self-interested human beings who act rationally so that they become not only less of a threat to themselves but to neoliberal capitalism as well.

However, a growing body of scholarship has called into question the liberal democratic assumptions about rationality and the consequences of reason. Ranging from Marxists, poststructuralists to postcolonialists and postmodernists, such critiques have explored the importance of affects and emotions, arguing that reason cannot be thought of independently of affect (See, for example, Ahmed, 2004; Anderson, 2006; Anderson and Smith, 2001; Ansell Pearson, 1997; Balibar, 1997; Bauman, 1991; Boltanski,

1999; Borch-Jacobsen, 1988, 1993; Buchanan, 1999; Butler, 1997; Butler et al., 2000; Damasio, 1999, 2003; Deleuze, 1983, 1986, 1988, 1989, 1992, 1994; Deleuze and Guattari, 1983, 1987; Furedi, 2002; 2005; Game and Metcalfe, 1996; Goodchild, 1996; Hardt and Negri, 1994, 2000, 2004; Jameson, 1981; Massumi, 1993, 2002; Ngai, 2005; Rubin, 2004; Sedgwick, 2003; Sloterdijk, 1987; Thrift, 2007). In seeking to analyse the meaning of reason and affect in human lives, novels and novellas can be helpful because they can allow us to see how reason and affect are understood and expressed by individuals, under historical circumstances. They can take us into the workings of rationality and irrationality and show how the inner world of human beings is shaped by the society in which they live; novels and novellas, in short, can prompt us to question the validity of deeply embedded assumptions about reason and unreason.

At this point, Fyodor Dostoevsky might be especially helpful. For his characters tell us as much about weaknesses of reason as they do about its strengths. Here I analyse this theme, with particular reference to *Notes from Underground* (1864/2008). I provide a theoretical reading of *Notes from Underground*, arguing that the novella is remarkable in two points at least. First, the novella is Dostoevsky's critical response to what he saw as disturbing trends in Western European thought and Russia: that of the rational philosophies of naturalism and scientism. In *Winter Notes on Summer Impressions* (1863/1997), a novel which Dostoevsky published before *Notes from Underground*, he provided some reflections from his

recent visits to London, Paris, Berlin, and other European cities. Dostoevsky was the inheritor of a longer-standing Romantic tradition that was formed as a counter discourse against enlightenment rationalism. Wrestling with an early form of modern existential questions which deal with human beings' role in a world where the idea of God was dying, he noted with alarm the absence of friendship and love and the rise of a new society based on individual self-interest.

In *Notes from Underground*, Dostoevsky's target is the rational human being, which has a good deal in common with neoliberal post-politics. To be sure, Dostoevsky didn't write specifically about neoliberalism but what he had in mind was the enlightenment of the 17th and 18th centuries' ideologies, which espoused the value of reason and rationality. The novella, therefore, provides an important critique of a particular type of rationality, an important aspect which can reappear, in a different guise, as one of the dominant mode of thinking in contemporary society. In fact, Dostoevsky's *Notes from Underground* was written in response to Nikolai Chernyshevsky's (1863/1989) *What Is to Be Done?* - a key text for rational egoists and scientists. *What Is to Be Done?* was written in the mid-nineteenth century Russia, which then became an emblem of orthodox historical materialism and the philosophical doctrine of rational egoism - a branch of utilitarian and 'scientific' utopian thought that began to influence Europeans (Frank, 2010; Scanlan, 1999).

1863-1864 are years of social and economic upheavals that hit Russia, following emancipation of the serfs. Both Chernyshevsky and Dostoevsky seek to provide mainly 'intellectual' solutions to complex social, political and human problems. The debate is especially focused on the idea of 'progress.' Chernyshevsky implicitly asserts that human beings are 'good' and when governed by reason and science, they can form an ideal socialist society. Together with other rational egoists, he believes that rational egoists can be beneficial to society; they cannot disintegrate society into disorder or conflict. To the contrary, if human beings should act in accordance with their own best interests, this can lead to harmony and order. Strongly critiquing this philosophy, Dostoevsky thus writes *Notes from Underground*, claiming that human beings are emotional and conflictual characters and their complex social and political problems cannot be solved such simplistic solutions proposed by Chernyshevsky and other rational egoists. Dostoevsky advances the claim that human beings also have an 'irrational' side, that they cannot be confined to act according to the rational philosophies of rationalism and scientism. In short, a man of reason, for Dostoevsky, is also full of multiple affects and emotions.

Notes from Underground was written in the mid-19th century. And this was not an age of neoliberalism. There are, however, striking similarities between the assumptions underlying neoliberal and militarised post-politics and Dostoevsky's critique of rational egoism. While 'not drawing an exact parallel' to his time, present-day readers will find analogies in

contemporary society. First, like the rational philosophies of naturalism and scientism Chernyshevsky and other rational egoists preached, neoliberalism assumes behaviour is rational. Like rational egoists and naturalists of Dostoevsky's time, it claims that rationality is essential for creating utility maximising, self-interested, choosing individuals, whose benefits go hand in hand with the benefits of society. Pursuing their real interests, reasonable self-interested individuals, neoliberalism believes, are also essential for maintaining a healthy and harmonious liberal democratic society, and thus preventing potential events from occurring.¹⁴

Second, through the words and actions of the Underground Man, the development of the spiteful personality comes into sharp focus. Providing a valuable source on reason and its limits, *Notes from Underground* is a carnival of spite, expressed by the Underground Man - an example of the extremes to which the physical side of a human being can go when it is not restrained inwardly by any reason, by any law. Strongly opposed to the

¹⁴ It is worth noting that enlightenment and 19th century rationalists wanted revolutionary events to occur. Rationalism proposed by Chernyshevsky and others was revolutionary, it was meant as a form of critique, while Romanticism was a counter critique.

philosophical doctrine of rational egoism, Dostoevsky argues that human beings might not act rationally under given circumstances because they are also ruled by passions and emotions. There are certain situations in which humans might not want, or even be unable to abandon desires and passions. Thus they act not only in accordance with reason, but also with their wanting and willing. Once again, the same goes for neoliberal and militarised post-politics. Let me add that I do not mean to equate the political lessons from 19th century Russia with the current developments in contemporary society. Rather I use Dostoevsky's diagnoses of the mid-19th century Russia in order to understand the relationship between the rational philosophies of naturalism and scientism swept through Europe and Russia and neoliberalism as a progressive ideology. For both of them espouse the value of reason and rationality, claiming that human beings are good and can act only according to the laws of reason and rationality. 'While not an exact parallel' to the rational philosophies of naturalism of the mid-19th century Russia, neoliberalism, in a similar vein, proposes that individuals should act rationally and always serve the interests of society based on individual self-interest. Valuing certainty, neoliberalism attempts to create a society without irrational and uncontrollable human beings, whose affects and emotions are transformed into 'neoliberal harmony.' Thus I reflect on what Dostoevsky's novella can teach us about the limits of reason and neoliberalism, offering that spite corresponds to a fourth, paradoxical social 'regime': terrorism. Let us now turn to *Notes from Underground*.

6.2 Notes from Underground: Theorising Spite

“We shall not know what to join on to, what to cling to, what to love and what to hate, what to respect and what to despise. We are oppressed at being men—men with a real individual body and blood, we are ashamed of it, we think it a disgrace and try to contrive to be some sort of impossible generalised man.” (Dostoevsky, 1864/2008: 115)

Dostoevsky's *Notes from Underground* poses significant questions regarding the limits of reason and rationality. The novella is in two parts. In Part One of the novella, the Underground Man – a retired civil servant from St. Petersburg – attacks rationality with irrationality (especially the one proposed by Nikolay Chernyshevsky in *What Is to Be Done?*), spite against rational and purposive social activity that dominates emerging Western philosophy. In Part Two, we encounter certain events that both destroy and renew the Underground Man. His world seems to be nothing more than a world of conflicting and traumatic events in which a heightened consciousness is painfully suspended between the convictions of his reason and the revolt of his conflictual emotions. He is aware of his contradictions, of his own marginality. He is, he declares, “a sick man...a spiteful man” (Dostoevsky, 1864/2008: 1). Then the question is this: how did the Underground Man come to this point? The struggle between the individual freedom (full, heightened consciousness) based on passions and instincts and oppressive rationalism that devalues passions and emotions is what constitutes the tragedy of the Underground Man. In short, his is a theory that is against the philosophy of rational egoism.

Virtually, every conceivable aspect of *Notes from Underground* would seem to have been discussed countless times (See, for example, Bakhtin, 1984; Bercovitch, 1964; Blumenkrantz, 1996; Diken, 2009; Frank, 1961; 2010; Scanlan, 1999; 2002; Williams, 1995; Wyman, 2007). However, I want to examine a genuinely unique aspect of the novella: that of spite. Though many readings of *Notes from Underground* are fascinating and valid, they have missed spiteful musings of the Underground Man. One significant exception is Bulent Diken's (2009) work on *Nihilism*, where he discusses The Underground Man's paradoxical weakness, that is, his resentment in relation to spite. Diken (2009: 68) asks whether it is possible to imagine a radically nihilist society of spite, "which cannot exist in actuality but nevertheless persists as a constant threat of deformation." With "society of spite", Diken (ibid. 12, 119) goes on to suggest, "everything (power, meaning, subjectivity) is taken to the extreme and disappears." However, even in his work the link between the Underground Man's spite and contemporary society has been hastily suggested. These readings, therefore, have not considered how the 'social' is closely related to the Underground Man's spite understood as a total (self)destruction. Thus *Notes from Underground* allows us to theorise and develop spite as a new affect. And as such, it offers an invaluable opportunity for diagnostic social and spatial theory to study terrorism, especially how spiteful destruction has increasingly become a social regime in contemporary society.

The Underground Man is unwilling to meaningfully interact with others. What he desperately needs is dreams of 'faith' as the fundamental capacity for free will. He is, in short, a man of resentment who is inspired by his 'weakness' or 'impotence.' As argued in the sovereignty chapter, the man of resentment has a soul that oscillates between a desire to live the life he values and the belief that he is unable to satisfy it. Likewise, Dostoevsky's bitterly tragic anti-hero is suspended in two stages of resentment, during which self-consciousness is oscillated between negation and affirmation. In Part One of the novella, the strategy of the underground revolt is essentially reactive: his revenge is postponed. He cannot act but instead feels; reaction becomes a defining feature of his life. Unable to act, his resentment is prevented from expressing itself directly and is forced to take a detour through internal suffering. A man of action (Chernyshevsky and other rational egoists are the targets), on the other hand, with whom he argues all through the first part of the novella, inspired by a feeling of revenge, "dashes straight for his object like an infuriated bull with its horns down" (Dostoevsky, 2008: 8). He envies "such a man with all the forces of his embittered heart", says the Underground Man. "He is stupid—I am not disputing that. But perhaps the normal man should be stupid" (ibid.8). Such 'normal' men have a single-mindedness; they do not have a heightened consciousness. For this reason, they do not seek vengeance when offended by others. The men of action are stupid because their actions are determined by the laws of nature (statistical analyses and scientific considerations), which devalue the importance of

passions and instincts. The men of action simply do not understand how the laws of nature prevent them from being “morally decisive about anything”; they accept “its conclusions with a smug awareness of being up-to-date, while they go on behaving exactly as in the past” (Frank, 1961: 10-11).

It is at this point that the Underground Man realises that it is necessary to go ‘beyond good and evil’, that is, to act. This, of course, means that he both accepts the basic premises of natural laws on the rational level and then suspends them on the level of belief. “Good Heavens!”, he says, “what sort of free will is left when we come to tabulation and arithmetic, when it will be a case of twice two make four? Twice two makes four without my will. As if free will meant that!” (Dostoevsky, 1864/2008: 26). This statement is an extreme depiction of his revolt against scientific determinism. The Underground Man points out that for thousands of years humans have acted “deliberately” and “consciously” against their perceived best interests. Thus, contrary to utilitarian and ‘scientific’ utopian thought advocated by Chernyshevsky and other rational egoists he is addressing, the Underground Man asserts the importance of ‘free will’, even destruction and chaos. Human beings, for the Underground Man, assert their right to defy reason and to suffer. Humans act, in short, in accordance with their free will.

Laws of nature - the conclusions of natural science and mathematics - assume human behaviour is rational; human beings are thus simply conceived as a piece of material that should act according to the laws of rationalism. Reason must be an excellent thing, but “reason is nothing but reason and satisfies only the rational side of man’s nature”, whereas wanting, or will “is a manifestation of the whole life, that is, of the whole human life including reason and all the impulses” (Dostoevsky, 1864/2008: 30). Furthermore, “although our life, in this manifestation of it, is often worthless, yet it is life and not simply extracting square roots” (ibid. 30). “I quite naturally want to live”, declares the Underground Man, “in order to satisfy all my capacities for life, and not simply my capacity for reasoning” (ibid). In Part Two of the novella, he thus enters the second but more caustic, stage of resentment, during which self-consciousness is indissolubly linked with negation: spite takes the place of reaction. The Underground Man begins to defy reason and to embrace suffering. One can take pleasure even in “toothache, and in humiliation”, he asserts (ibid.15-16). This stage allows him to retain his “personality”, his “individuality” (ibid. 31). Will may go hand in hand with reason, but it remains stubbornly at odds with it.

Contrary to oppressive rationalism advocated by the gentlemen he is addressing, the Underground Man asserts the importance of wilfulness, even spite, for this separates human beings from the beasts, making them “human, all too human”, not just a spiritless organ. In *Notes from*

Underground, Dostoevsky, therefore, provides some important challenges not only to scientific rationality but to other ideologies and systems based on similar assumptions, including neoliberal post-politics. His observations run parallel to the spirit of our age, where technocratic and market-oriented solutions to complex human, social and political problems have become the norm. To be sure, rational egoism of the Chernyshevskian variety may no longer dominate the current debates but other doctrines and 'progressive ideologies' sharing similar assumptions have been dominant in the Western world over recent decades. Neoliberalism, with the utilitarian, competitive individuals 'motivated only by self-interest' at its heart, takes it as given that human beings act 'rationally' and that they want to act rationally. However, as I noted in the previous chapters, the forms of freedom and rationality fostered by neoliberalism are limited and subject to forms of coercion. The concept of freedom and rationality make sense only as far as they facilitate the consumer choice-making process. Both rational egoism and neoliberalism are underpinned by the idea that human beings are governed by reason, science and self-interest in their activities. In this sense, Dostoevsky's critique of reason and rationality still rings true.

Neoliberalism proposes that one serves one's own interests over those of others. Dostoevsky, however, shows that humans consciously and knowingly act against their real interests, seeking sometimes their complete annihilation and destruction. Contrary to scientific determinism

and other systems such as neoliberalism which advances the notion that human beings are good, and when governed by science and reason, they can act only according to the laws of rationalism, Dostoevsky asserts that although our decisions may be irrational, and even can lead to chaos and destruction, they are still decisions of our heightened consciousness, or free will. Where neoliberal post-politics (and its biopolitical governmentality preemptive indifference) seeks to maximise utility and minimise harm through the pursuit of happiness by individuals 'motivated only by self-interest', Dostoevsky insists that life also consists of suffering, and this does not 'make sense' under neoliberal post-politics in which happiness is reduced to surplus-value and politics to securitised/militarised conformism. Certain things can be gained through reason and rationality but through suffering and spite as well. One can find truth in reason and scientific determinism, but one can also love destruction and chaos.

Neoliberal post-politics wants an efficient, well-ordered society that is based on an implied quest for order and certainty. Against this, Dostoevsky posits a view of human beings as complex, conflicted and paralysed characters, which makes it impossible to transform them into truly 'rational' and 'enlightened' beings. Precisely in this sense, Dostoevsky's concept of 'free subject' with a 'free will' differs greatly from the form understood by rational egoism, or consumer-style choices under neoliberalism. The Underground Man, for instance, is not satisfied with respecting or guaranteeing any kind of 'pseudo-freedom' provided by

rational egoism; he demands freedom that is beyond rational egoism. His notion of freedom is more akin to the idea of wanting, which includes the human capacity to say 'no', even where it can lead to total annihilation.

For neoliberalism, wants, desires, needs, wishes and affects are useful in securing a politics of consensus, while for Dostoevsky they have profound value for the development of human beings. Wants, desires, thoughts, feelings, ideas exert a powerful influence on our everyday lives. They are, in other words, linked to the moment of self-realisation of human beings, seeking freedom from oppressive rationality. Reason, Dostoevsky believes, cannot be separated from affects and passions. For neoliberalism, emotions and affects have some utility in producing faithful and law-abiding subjects, and they need to be kept in line with serving perceived best interests. They have, in short, a place in advancing a well-regulated freedom. As such, passions and instincts make sense only as far as they create consumer desires to buy goods and services and thus increase the capitalist accumulation of surplus-value. Dostoevsky, in contrast, sees life as a source of rich emotions and affects, including suffering. Emotions and affects, passions and instincts are forms of violence which are ecstatic eruptions from the background of normativity and reason. "Reason is only one part of our temperament", the Underground Man reminds us. "Individualism as a value includes the right to screw yourself up" (Denby, 2012). Reason does not disappear under affects and emotions, but it has its own limits. "What does reason know? Reason only knows what it has

succeeded in learning (some things, perhaps, it will never learn” (Dostoevsky, 1864/2008: 24). The Underground Man’s spite is on the one hand sheer, irrationalist rejection of oppressive rationality, but on the other hand it is in fact in partly related to reasoning: it is as much about using irrational capacities as it is about reasoning capacities. And it is as much about reasoning capacities as it is about passions as a guide. The Underground Man is ‘insulted’ and ‘humiliated’ by an oppressive social system, hence he wants to destroy that which destroys him. The world he created turns around him, not around God because ‘God is dead.’ He rejects God in the name of a ‘mysterious loathsome truth’, a truth in which pain and suffering are necessary to construct a spiteful subjectivity.

In this sense the spiteful personality of the Underground Man brings to mind Nietzsche’s radical (or ‘suicidal’) nihilist, whose will becomes a will to nothingness, to annihilation. Nietzsche (1967a: 318) argues that the ascetic ideal is ultimately a failure, an illusion. When the illusion disappears, this is followed by the emergence of radical and passive nihilisms. A radical nihilist is a human being “who judges of the world as it is that it ought not to be” (ibid. 318). In other words, a radical nihilist wants to destroy all values, including those that are attached to ‘this’ world. Passive nihilism, on the other hand, is a sign of weakness: “the strength of the spirit can be tired, exhausted, so that the previous goals and values are insufficient and no longer inspire belief” (ibid. 23). Thus it refers to “a depreciated life...a world without values, stripped of meaning and purpose” (Deleuze, 1983:

148). If the passive nihilist seeks to deny the virtual, the radical nihilist seeks to deny and destroy actual existence for the sake of realising his values. Since freedom from the existing world is her goal, the radical nihilist comes to realise that she has values and goals but they are not realisable in *this* (actual) world. Hence she hopes for another, transcendent or 'true' world, and her world tends to lose its virtual dimension.

Such a comparison between nihilism and the Underground Man is of crucial importance, for it serves to strengthen the view that spite is an active feeling that results from passive nihilism (Nietzsche 1996: 67, 119). Passive nihilism emerges when the man of resentment turns "his resentment against God", when he puts "himself in the place of the God he has killed" (Deleuze, 1983: 155). Seen in this perspective, the relationship between passive and radical nihilism can be described as a non-dialectical, complementary synthesis in which full consciousness or free will is oscillated between spite and passivity. Spite, that is to say, has become legitimated as a technique of governance because it justifies itself with reference to and thus mirrors passivity and slavish comforts imposed by rational egoism and neoliberal and militarised post-politics. While the passive nihilist, rational egoist, or neoliberal society is obsessed with fear/security, the radical nihilist is addicted to danger. Whereas the rational philosophies of naturalism and scientism and neoliberal and militarised post-politics opt for a pseudo-freedom devoid of passions and instincts, the radical nihilist is ready to destroy the 'society' for his

passionate attachment. Thus spite has become the only object of 'fascination' for human beings who destroy the actual in the name of the virtual.

In this way, although the Crystal Palace - namely Chernyshevsky's socialist utopianism for human happiness, where the whole world run according scientific rationality - seeks to expel violence from its system of values with the aim of producing rational and controllable individuals who thus become harmless and faithful to the existing order, it itself produces a paradoxical, ecstatic violence: that of spite. Underground versus the Crystal Palace, or spite versus slavish comforts. In the process, every slavish comfort and the notion of pseudo-happiness espoused by rational egoism can become the source of spiteful musings of the Underground Man. Spite, therefore, becomes a radical nihilist strategy which does not mirror the level of antagonism and conflict but the level of reason and rationality. Thus, while spite aims at radicalising the society "through sacrifice" (Baudrillard, 2003: 97), rational egoism aims at realising the society through reason and rationality which are identical to terrorism. Spite, which is generated by the system, is thus normalised as a factor of sociality, as a social regime. Spite is the mirror image of rational egoism, and this is why it is again and again generated by the Crystal Palace. Located outside the Crystal Palace, the Underground Man is continually renewed through negation and suffering because they are necessary in order to construct his spiteful subjectivity. Hence he poses a 'true' against the 'false' totalitarian

ready-made happiness devoid of passions, against the reduction of human beings to “piano keys” (see Dostoevsky, 1864/2008: 26).

Cheap, ready-made happiness describes the lot of the people who overwhelm the Underground Man “with spiteful and pitiful derision” because he feels he is not like any of them (ibid. 57). His humiliation at their hands leads him to ignore the cheap happiness, denying the given world as it is. Thus he chooses suffering which will ‘raise and purify’ him: the continual experience of the moment of choice that the man of action rejects. And this is what makes him an inherently tragic figure: he is condemned to his ultimate failure. The tragedy of the Underground Man derives from his acceptance of suffering as a way of spiritual growth, as a path to redemption. Suffering as doubt constitutes the terminal character of this tragedy. His struggle between the individual freedom and natural determinism do not oppose each other; they are united in disunion, in a non-dialectical, complementary synthesis. At the root of his vaunted struggle/false choice, then, is a cycle of negation (humiliation) and affirmation (revolt) in which he is at both the aggressor and the victim of aggression.

The Underground Man’s spite is a celebration of human perversity which knows no bounds. He seems to be a ‘rational’ human being, but much of what he does seems to be utterly ‘irrational.’ He has formidable reasoning capacities, but he is spiteful at the same time. He has clearly an affective

personality who is not afraid to show his passions and instincts. He can be rational and controllable one moment, filled with spite the next. What really drives him is not only reason, but affects and instincts as well. Thus reason and affect are intimately connected. In this sense, the Underground Man unsettles us as 'rational' and 'enlightened' beings. Not just the fact that spiteful individuals are capable of performing the most horrible deeds. But also the fact that the basic idea of 'human beings as primarily rational' is an imagination, possessing no moral safety nets. In other words, moral laws are not absolute. Human beings make their own moral laws without respecting the moral boundaries provided by the established order.

How might we view contemporary society in the light of the Underground Man? In what follows I argue that the Underground Man is one of the representatives of a generation that is still with us. Like the Underground Man, today's spiteful terrorist has a critique of both himself and the ideas provided by neoliberal post-politics; yet, in his full consciousness, he also understands that reason and rationality espoused by neoliberalism have their limits. In this sense, the terrorist lives constantly on the edge, an abyss, whose soul oscillates between reason and unreason. He is a troubled and conflicted character who is shaped in important ways by neoliberalism.

Contrary to neoliberalism that wants a 'ready-made' happiness, separated from action and reduced to passivity, the spiteful terrorist lives suffering as

a state of (self)punishment. As I develop in the following section, neoliberalism is an inability to accept pain, conflict and antagonism, whereas terrorism is an internal condition of neoliberalism which insists that pain/suffering, conflict and antagonism are necessary in order to construct a subjectivity. Neoliberalism is content with the actual world; it opts for a decaffeinated reality by directing desires, emotions into surplus value and security/militarism, whereas terrorism primarily seeks to negate the value of such ready-made decaffeinated reality for the sake of passions and values, including suffering.

6.3 The Art of Terror

“Hello there, mice! Don’t be sad - it is far better to be angry.” (Ulrike Meinhof, quoted in Lewis, 2008)

“What have I painted? Three times Baader, shot. Three times Ensslin, hanged. Three times the dead Meinhof after they cut her down. Once the dead Meins. Three times Ensslin, neutral (almost like pop stars). Then a big, unspecific burial—a cell dominated by a bookcase—a silent, grey record player—a youthful portrait of Meinhof, sentimental in a bourgeois way—twice the arrest of Meins, forced to surrender to the clenched power of the state. All the pictures are dull, grey, mostly very blurred, diffuse. Their presence is the horror and the hard-to-bear refusal to answer, to explain, to give an opinion.” (Richter, 1995: 125)

Perhaps the most famous paintings about the Baader-Meinhof group, later known as the Red Army Faction (RAF), is a series of 15 canvases by Gerhard Richter, entitled ‘October 18, 1977’ (1988). The title names not the group, nor its members, but a date. For anyone familiar with revolutionary violence and state violence in post-war Germany, 18 October 1977 is

deeply shocking. On that date, three principal members of the Baader-Meinhof group, Andreas Baader, Jan-Carl Raspe, and Gudrun Ensslin, were found dead in Stuttgart's Stammheim prison. Andreas Baader was found dead with a bullet wound to his head, Raspe lay dying of gunshot wounds, and Ensslin was hanging from a grate in her cell. The official explanation on Stammheim was suicide, as was Ulrike Meinhof, a co-founder of the group, who was earlier found hanged in her cell.

Richter's paintings show the scenes copied from magazines and police photographs. There is violence lurking within the pictures: three versions of Ulrike Meinhof's corpse, one with a rope still around her neck, Andreas Baader's bookshelves and record player in his cell at Stammheim prison in which Baader was said to have hidden a gun, two versions of Baader's corpse, his comrade Gudrun Ensslin hanging from her Stammheim prison cell, and their vast public funeral, a blurred landscape in which the painful and tragic complicity of the aggressors and the victims of aggression tend to coincide in a zone of indistinction.

What Richter's paintings eloquently convey "is absence, emptiness, the howling space of the void; the rest is silence" (Kauffman, 2008: 357). Indeed, there is no communication in the paintings, for the political itself is foreclosed, leaving spite as the only 'political' (re)action by distilling a will to destruction. The guerrillas' journey to this psychological state is hinted at but not seriously considered. "Strange, touching hints at the normality of

these people are everywhere” – Baader’s cell, with its hundreds of books, the record player, and an empty coat (Jones, 2002). However, the ambiguity is deliberate. Spiteful destruction is absorbed into the very act of representing; paintings and violence become one and the same gesture. Thus, we are given, not guerrilla Ulrike Meinhof, but a sentimental beauty, not Baader but a bookcase, a record player, and not spite, but ‘funeral.’ In their engagements with the historical subjects the paintings serve as a critique of something deeply disturbing: literal as well as social martyrdom as justification for war against the German state.

The Baader-Meinhof group were some of the most notorious violent guerrillas among German youth, like many elsewhere, during the 60’s and 70’s. The silence of German society led them to begin by peacefully protesting against materialism, nuclear proliferation, the cold war and Vietnam, and support for authoritarian regimes (like that of the Shah of Iran), but more specifically in West Germany against the country’s Nazi past. At that time, the very venom of fascist ideology still had not been removed from the very pores of German society, including the police and the military. “This is the Auschwitz generation”, announced Gudrun Ensslin, “and there’s no argument with them!” (quoted in Aust, 2008: 44). Peaceful protests sometimes provoked repressive responses from the authorities, which caused even more violent responses. The Baader-Meinhof group became antiheroes to many young Germans disaffected from their parents who had acquiesced to Hitler (Kimmelman, 2002).

The RAF members strongly believed that urban guerrilla tactics were necessary to battle the government of West Germany and the economic leaders within that system. Ulrike Meinhof (quoted in Guelke, 1998: 93, 97) explains the RAF's mission: "nauseated by the ... system, the total commercialisation and absolute mendacity ... deeply disappointed by the actions of the student movement ... they thought it essential to spread the idea of armed struggle." "Not because they were so blind", she writes, "as to believe they could keep that initiative going until the revolution triumphed in Germany, or that they would not be killed and imprisoned." Their aim was to "salvage historically the whole state of understanding attained by the movement of 1967/68; it was a case of not letting the struggle fall apart again" (ibid. 97).

Pursuing the same idea Ulrike Meinhof (2001: 278) writes elsewhere: "in its first phase the guerrilla is shocking." The aim of the shock, of course, was triggering a revolt through sabotage and violence. In this way, Meinhof argues, people would "act without being determined by the pressure of the system, without seeing themselves with the eyes of the media, without fear." Sabotage, or action, Meinhof (ibid. 278) insists, could awaken the masses, enabling them "to have a consciousness of their history", for "all history is history of class struggle." By provoking an even greater state terror through sabotage, "the enemy betrays himself, becomes visible", writes Meinhof (ibid. 279), and this "allows contradictions to escalate and thus forces the revolutionary struggle." The group, now growing in

numbers, carried out a campaign of violence, targeting and murdering West German politicians, the leading business figures, American soldiers and German policemen. The act of sabotage, however, “did not precipitate any revolutionary situation in the former East Germany.” Rather, “the campaign was widely condemned and led to the defeat of the RAF and its eventual disbandment” (see McDonald, 2010: 13). ‘Liberal Germany’ became more draconian and cruel. Consequently, anyone linked not only to the Baader-Meinhof, but also to the radical left risked being barred from public service.

Their campaign of violence was aimed at leading to a socialist state. The ideological struggle of “six RAF members against sixty million West German citizens”, as Henrich Boll (quoted in Aust, 2008: 147) characterized it, turned out to be a tragic failure. The Baader-Meinhof failed to win the support of the disaffected workers. More importantly, they failed to bring about the desired change. As Wollen (2001) succinctly put it, “armoured against doubt, driven by fear of what might happen if their certainties were abandoned, desperately struggling to maintain their sense of self, afraid of each other’s contempt, they staggered from idealism to self-destruction.” That is, idealism transformed into spiteful violence that could not create something new.

6.4 Spiteful Fundamentalism

The Baader-Meinhof's universe was godless. Death as an idea had preoccupied them for a long time. "Suicide is the last act of rebellion", writes Ulrike Meinhof (quoted in Aust, 2008: 347). "The struggle goes on", as Ensslin says. "Even if they have taken the guns out of our hands, we are still left with our bodies. These we will now use as our ultimate weapon" (quoted in Becker, 1989: 264). In the era of a 'permanent war on terror' their words and suicides have acquired a new resonance. In short, they continue to disturb. In a society which seeks to maximise utility and minimise harm through self-interested, choosing individuals in the pursuit of enjoyment, suicide is a toxic act. Now the toxicity has spread. Compared to the Baader-Meinhof's strategy of sabotage, today's terrorism uses spite as a strategy, the spectacle of death against 'the pacified life' on offer in neoliberal post-politics.

The Underground Man's fantasy aimed at targeting oppressive rationalism. His society, in short, was based on a constantly rationalised, pacified and administered life, devoid of passions and desires. The Baader-Meinhof's fantasy aimed at targeting the capitalist consumerist ideology that dominated West Germany. They believed that capitalism had complete dominance over the working class through ideological state apparatuses, including the media and the education system. Hence, they asserted, capitalism could only be destroyed through 'spectacles' or terror acts

which blew a hole into the functioning of the consumerist society. Theirs, in other words, was a society where the marketisation of social relations went hand in hand with the pacifism of their generations. Neoliberal and militarised post-politics, in a similar vein, attempts to create a reactive life in which 'happiness' is reduced to consumerism, politics to a depoliticised expert administration, to something that "appears essentially as narcotic, anesthetic, calm, peace" (Nietzsche, 1996: 23–4). The mission of neoliberalism is, in short, to pacify life by turning passions and affects into the language of market freedom and 'neoliberal harmony.' However, in a society of the spectacle, in a neoliberal age that constantly produces 'radical losers' (Enzensberger, 2005) some of them are not resigned to their fate, waiting for their 'moment' to come. Indeed, not all radical losers "can be pacified by pointing out that their status corresponds to their poor placement in a contest." Many will disagree by declaring that "they have never gotten a chance to participate in order to be positioned according to their merits" (Sloterdijk, 2010: 40). Their spite turns not just against the happy-indifferent centre of society but also against the whole system. The spiteful individual always remembers the injustices inflicted upon him. But, more importantly, he pays them back with his burning spite. Touching the void, the 'nothing', becomes the truth of the spiteful individual. The person who pays back is the one with the "lasting will" (Nietzsche, 1996). Once this subject is constituted, spite can last for long periods of time.

In the age of the spectacle, the radical other goes by the name of terrorism, which is frequently associated with religious spiteful fundamentalism: “Our men are eager to die just as the Americans are eager to live” declared Bin Laden (2001). “We want to create a European version of Al-Qaeda”, “the most successful revolutionary movement in the world”, says far-right Norwegian mass killer Anders Behring Breivik (quoted in Malik, 2012). While Al-Qaeda sees itself as warriors defending the Islamic world against Crusaders from the West, Anders Behring Breivik sees himself as a crusader warrior defending European Christian civilization against ‘Muslims’, ‘immigrants’ and ‘cultural Marxism.’

Significantly in this context, previous forms of revolutionary groups claimed to represent clear and specific political demands. As such, the classical attacks “were usually directed at well-defined highly symbolic targets of the authority”, which could include police, military and government officials, political leaders, or other symbolic targets such as government buildings (Spencer, 2006: 7). Contemporary terror, however, signifies the return of the foreclosed with a vengeance, a seemingly medieval vengeance against the passive nihilist consumer society in which to die for a cause seems impossible or crazy.

Moreover, whereas ‘old terrorism’ was predominantly secular in orientation (Spencer, 2006: 9), fundamentalist terrorism signifies ‘holy war’ with religious belief, mainly radical Islam and Christianity. Thus new

terrorists hold themselves accountable only to God (Hoffman, 1995: 273). A fundamentalist terrorist is convinced that her narrative is the only true one, she is certain that she is the elect of God. Hence she pledges her submission to God and meditates on the blood to come (DeLillo, 2001). In appealing to the divine world, she builds a plot around spite and eliminates all contradictions in order to serve God's purpose on Earth. Taking the scriptures and commandments and prophecies literally, fundamentalist terrorism "liberates the true believer from secular morals, from obligations to tolerance and other norms of the Enlightenment and allows him – even demands of him – to dehumanise the 'others'" (Hess, 2003: 348-9). Thus, anything can be justified by an appeal to God and judiciously selected passages from the holy books such as Koran and Holy Bible. The spiteful terrorist is convinced that his is the only truth, and this truth loves not just happiness but also suffering and spite. The fundamentalist terrorist uses spite in the name of a loathsome truth. For her, the truth lies in complete annihilation and destruction.

Because of the abstract, monological character of religious fundamentalism, there can be no commerce with it, no mediation; in short, there is nothing to discuss, nothing to sort out. Hence spiteful fundamentalism is empty of affect capable of promoting spite and violence in principle. When spite and destruction become sole principles, the idea of freedom becomes an abstract idea, something that *is felt* or perceived in full consciousness, as in the Underground Man, and here the claim is that

'freedom' is only so felt or perceived through acts of spiteful destruction. In an attempt to feel freedom, the terrorist becomes committed to the abstract character of harming or destroying sociality, rather than the hard work and discipline of political collective action or political praxis. She believes that only the whole-hearted affirmation based on faith can save her from the ready-made happiness of neoliberal post-politics, which desires self-interested human beings who act rationally so that they become not only less of a threat to themselves but to the system as well.

Further, the realisation of god's will on earth is the prototype for all fundamentalist terrorists, the ideal in whose shadow religious ethics and political theory all developed. In other words, the fundamentalist terrorist is certain that he represents God's will and sees himself merely as the appointee of God. For extremists who see themselves as instruments of God's will, everything is allowed. To paraphrase Augustine, "Love God, and then everything is permitted."

As a result, earthly ends are devalued, even as they are pursued. The fundamentalist terrorist realises that her values and goals cannot find a place in this world. Beyond *this* world, there is *that* other world, which promises 'emancipation' from decaffeinated reality of the existing world. It is precisely for this reason that this world must be annihilated for the world to come. Thus her will becomes a will to destruction and suicide and martyrdom become paths that lead to heaven. An overall religious

devaluation of existence becomes exploited and expressed in spite where it does not matter who dies, self or other. Religion is capable of offering its followers a clear, aggressive, and grandiosely theatrical 'worldview' that rests on a clear differentiation of friend and enemy (Sloterdijk, 2010: 220). The dominant discourse of spite is thus fundamentally Manichean, introducing a binary opposition between good and evil, us and them. Fuelling future cycles of spite and violence, such a discourse evil is apocalyptic, evoking a permanent war with 'enemies.' When a binary logic of 'us' and 'them' is invoked, terror could happen everywhere, it could happen anywhere. The spiteful terrorist knows where it wants to hit. It enters society "like the bullet enters the battle" (ibid. 10). Thus, he dares to face the abyss of the real, in the form of suicide, martyrdom, as a terrorising *jouissance*. Being indifferent to the choice of targets, fundamentalist terrorists have an active desire for the spectacular acts of destruction: a conscious, spiteful denunciation of the actual city in the name of the City of God.

In this regard, fundamentalist terrorism articulates a symbolic sacrifice of life which is 'alien' to neoliberal post-politics; it is deeply shocking to neoliberalism governed by the principle of the preservation of life and the careful, methodical and administrative functioning of the established social and biopolitical regimes. In other words, what is truly 'shocking' about fundamentalist terrorism is that we are witnessing a religious dimension, an 'apocalyptic' tradition, that is entirely alien to neoliberalism, which

assumes human beings are 'good' and when governed by reason and self-interest in their activities, they can become harmless to the existing order, and that spite is an impossible affect in a 'rational' and 'enlightened' society. Fundamentalist terrorism, therefore, shares the foundation of the eschatological tradition as it declares that one should always 'act' in order to destroy the given. It urges the believer to act in the name of God and other believers (see Moussali, 1999: 38; Münlerr, 2002: 70-1).

As argued in the discipline chapter, today there are two responses that endlessly call the nature of the eschatological tradition into question: the first response is *katechontic*, which sides with the given, the second is *revolutionary*, which seeks a total deligitimisation of the given. At first glance, fundamentalist terrorism looks like a continuation of the eschatological tradition, but a closer look reveals that it is not radical enough to be seen as a 'real apocalypticism.' Real apocalypticism not only draws a distinction between this and that world, but also employs a dialectical thinking, which puts the actual and the virtual, or history and what is to come into interaction (see Diken, 2012: 117). In fundamentalist terrorism, on the other hand, the gap between divine liberation and earthly realms is no longer mediated but cancelled, for it believes that it has direct access to willing God and is appointed by God. In other words, the dialectic between the actual and the virtual, the earth and heaven, is not preserved; divine justice is found in *that* other world. Thus everything is permitted, at whatever cost, to eliminate evil from the earth. Precisely in

this sense, spiteful fundamentalism cannot be seen as revolutionary. Real apocalypticism seeks to combine violence with a transvaluation. And this is what is missing in fundamentalist terrorism. While real apocalypticism targets the given framework of sensibility, fundamentalist terrorism plays a given game, using spite against neoliberal capitalism.

Hence, I suggest that spite is not actually 'political.' What defines fundamentalist terrorism is a depoliticised gesture, that is, nihilistic quality of the violence that leads to a state of disengagement from politics as purposive, collective action. Fundamentalist terrorism is not acting without purpose; rather its actions consist only of 'reactions' because it justifies itself with reference to and thus mirrors the preemptive war against terror. Spiteful fundamentalism is thus post-political in the sense that it is "the product of listless and indifferent forces" (Baudrillard, 1993: 76) rather than social and political conflicts and antagonisms. And this also explains why we are witnessing the rise of fundamentalist terrorism today. Precisely because ours is a post-political society in which the politics is reactive, and conflict/antagonism is eliminated. Precisely because neoliberal post-politics proposes that change is no longer desirable or possible, and that there is no alternative. Precisely because neoliberal post-politics is an inability to act politically. Weakened by preemptive indifference, hedonism and consumerism accompanying neoliberal capitalism, we 'the Westerners' cannot find a worthy cause to fight for (see Žižek, 2002: 40-1). Dead men, on the other hand, have a cause to fight for. There is always 'something'

for which the 'fight' takes place. And if there is one thing that is repressed and banished from 'rational' and 'enlightened' neoliberal post-politics, it is spite, death, suicide, martyrdom. Fundamentalist terrorism is marked with the return of the repressed with a vengeance (Diken, 2009; Žižek, 2006).

It is true that spiteful terrorism has social origins in the global neoliberal order, in social, political and economic forces that attempt to create homogenous global networks. However, it is also equally true that today, terrorism produces contemporary society. Terrorism is the state's pronouncedly evil changeling, its perfect friend and enemy, whose existence prefigures and summons forth the (re)production of the social by the global security state as our saviour and redeemer. In the aftermath of 9/11, terrorism (and the war against terrorism) has become a social regime, a factor of sociality, which sustains, rather than challenges the consensual neoliberal order.

It would seem that in an age where the concept of death has vanished from the register of politics and contemporary society, it has returned as a spectacle itself – the spectacle of spiteful terrorism paralyses our gaze. However, I argue that the spectacle of terrorism is inseparable from the spectacle of security. The spectacle of security, conjured by the established social regimes and counterrevolutionary principles of the antiterrorist state, must produce the state's most necessary social and political enemy, terrorism. And terrorism has become a generative principle of formation

for neoliberal post-politics. The social regime of terrorism does not only mean the global security state that is now embodied in the war against terrorism. It also demonstrates how neoliberal and militarised post-politics is now also governed by multiple affects such as a widespread fear of terroristic events, or spiteful fundamentalism. It locates those affects in the way that the global security state has made “contingency” as a generative principle of formation for rule (Dillon, 2007; see also Aradau & Munster, 2007; Dillon and Lobo-Guerrero, 2008). In this way, the aim is not simply to eliminate terrorism, but the “contingency of terrorism” as well. In the process, therefore, “the contingency of terrorism” goes parallel with “terrorism of contingency”, a process in which governing technologies of security have permeated in every aspects of daily life (Dillon, 2007: 8). Thus, it is the contingency itself that makes terrorism as the generative principle of formation for rule. But contingency is also the very operational practice of security politics as well (ibid. 9).

When fear escapes state control and instead is disseminated by the ‘dangerous multitudes’, absolute terrorism and the spectre of security can easily return. Such a fear of terrorism should not only be understood as a fear of spiteful destruction though. This fear (or a biopolitics of fear) is also crucial to the administration and pacification of society and life. For it follows those who mobilise its spectre periodically to renew and modify neoliberal governmentality that is distributed among political rationalities and governmental technologies that have accompanied the development

of the global security state (Butler 2004; Brown 2006; Paye, 2007). This also means that the global security state is tempted to create policies for the management of fear. Fear, then, becomes part of the 'military industrial complex' through which the neoliberal security state sustains and extends its activities. If fear becomes a generative principle in neoliberal biopolitics, it can no longer be to prevent a transgression of the existing order maintained by the security state (Debrix and Barder, 2009: 406). Rather, it can also help produce, create, proliferate spiteful terrorism with the established social regimes and security technologies. Thus, the biopolitics of fear and terrorism seem to accompany the deployment of political technologies and governmental rationalities, as much as it precipitated by a contingent terroristic event (Dillon, 2007: 8). In the context of neoliberal governmentality, the biopolitical (re)production of fear is the result of a series of scare tactics, political rationalities, or terrorism regimes that can only produce 'good' social and political effects by agents of government. Terrorism thus has both a philosophical and political logic, and on the other as an affective logic.

The primary purpose of the war against terrorism is to bring terrorism with the established social regimes and the corresponding characteristics of the neoliberal security state with the aim of destroying it, or preempting it. In this sense, the aim is to eliminate terrorism through the massive global security effort, or make terrorism at least manageable through preemptive risk-security measures (Aradau and Munster, 2012; Dillon, 2007). This

radical ambiguity – to govern terrorism in order to bring terrorism within the orbit of the established social regimes and security technologies – bears within it an essential risk. As Agamben (2001) notes, “a state which has security as its sole task and source of legitimacy is a fragile organism; it can always be provoked by terrorism to become itself terroristic.” The obscene/off-scene reality behind the politics of fear/security is that the fetishisation of security generates more terrorism.

If a contingent terroristic event is the problem, and if the biopolitics of fear and the social regime of terrorism is the answer, governmental technologies and political rationalities must ensure that the conduct responsible for ‘unknown threats’ is done away with (before they shape and become eventful). But, more importantly, these terrorism regimes upon which the political rationalities and governing technologies of neoliberalism rely must also make certain that human beings are not only to become mobilised and adaptively govern themselves. Rather, the self-rationalising, self-governable individuals that act, react, and interact in coordination with governmental technologies and the established social regimes of neoliberalism that are found at the heart of fear and terrorism production are more likely to represent what Michael Dillon has called “emergent life” (Dillon, 2007).

Dillon argues that emergent life in societies “governed by terror” can be understood “as a constant potential for adaptation in biopolitical terror

apparatuses" (Dillon, 2007: 8). As he (ibid. 14) notes, "emergent means that they [human beings] are capable of moving out of phase with themselves and becoming other than what they were." The "living things" that are governed "by a widespread fear of terror" have no choice but to rely on the contingency of terrorism and terrorism of contingency. This means that they have to redefine themselves constantly inside the established social regimes and governmental technologies. Yet, because the social regime of terrorism and the biopoliticised fear and security technologies create conditions that allow it to thrive, emergent life undergoes constant change and transformation but always remains on the look-out (Debrix and Barder, 2009). And, as discussed throughout the dissertation, it is a life that endlessly needs to monitor itself so that it can fear today what can be tomorrow's terrorism. Thus, unlike the standard security/biopolitics in which individuals are rendered inert, emergent human beings actively and energetically partake of the biopolitical (re)production of fear, terrorism and, ultimately, neoliberal capitalism. Today there are no 'passive' subjects, only actively driven subjects of the liberal struggle and war.

Indeed, what emergent life and emergent human beings (re)produce through their constant 'events watch' is nothing else than the perpetuation of the biopolitical regimes of terrorism. As Dillon (2007: 8) pithily put it, "the more effort that is put into governing terror, the more terror comes to govern the governors." Emergent life in today's neoliberal society guided

by the established social regimes, governing technologies of security and the affective politics ensures that terrorism (no matter which enemy or dangerous situations such as 'chaos', 'disorder', 'revolution' are targeted) will not be completely eliminated but, instead, will remain as one of the main generative principle of formation, of government. Terrorism, in other words, has become legitimated as a social regime on account of how it functions to 'make life live' for neoliberal and militarised post-politics. Or, to say this differently, neoliberal post-politics needs terrorism in order to depoliticise politics, to recast "political and economic choices as military necessities" (Bauman, 2008: 246-247).

It is on this basis that terrorism joins the previous social regimes of sovereignty, discipline and control. Sovereign operates through cruel and contingent acts, transforming the state of exception into a form of sociality. In other words, sovereignty is at the intersection of war and violence, an intersection which cannot be separated from contingency. The always present possibility of war and of violence is what defines state sovereignty's legitimacy. As such, cruel and contingent acts are mobilised alongside other techniques of governance (the war on terror) to avoid future terrorist threats within a population. In targeting a population in order to defuse events, sovereign political power thus creates more enemies from a population. In the end, the vengeful acts of sovereignty produce resentment. And, as discussed before, resentment can

transform itself into spite, an aggressive will to deny and destroy everything, including sociality.

Terrorism, in a similar vein, speaks of a governmentality that radically disrupts the normal state of affairs, or ruptures the usual flow of sociality. Significantly, however, terrorism does not come from the outside, it is terrorism within, a spiteful terrorism that has become the rule. Established as a social regime based upon war, violence and permanent states of exception, sovereign political power reconstitutes itself in the form of an endless terrorisation of life's "radical undecidability" (Reid, 2005). Life's radical contingency, however, initiates a politics of security. Moreover, what we see in the politics of security's response to terrorism is nothing other than sovereign vengeance at the very heart of state authority, which disguises this violence and cruelty through a terrorism of its own. The desire to continually justify state terrorism is more than a mere feature of the war against terrorism being waged by the contemporary state. That is to say, if we are to understand terrorism as a social regime of violence, it is difficult to distinguish it from the violence that is carried out by the sovereign power of the state. The social regime of terrorism has the effect of unmasking the intimate relationship between law, war and violence at the heart of sovereign political power. In this sense, the concept of terrorism is internal to state sovereignty, or the politics of security in contemporary society. Hence the emergence and development of liberalism as an art of government conditioned by what Foucault (2008: 65)

called as “strategies of security.” And strategies of security, as we have discovered, generate more terrorism. The permanence of security serves to continually reinvest and justify terrorism. To cut a long story short, vengeful sovereignty generates resentment, resentment can easily be radicalised into spiteful terrorism. Cruel and contingent sovereignty then sustains and enhances the social regime of terrorism. Or, to put this more forcefully, vengeful sovereignty begets spiteful terrorism.

In contrast to discipline and control, which operate through confinement and decoded and flexible flows, terrorism functions through fear, insecurity and uncertainty. Thus the fantasy generated by insecurity is terrorism, which allows the neoliberal state to extend its power and makes the state of exception permanent. The very mode of being of terrorism is that radically contingent terrorist violence, “characteristic of every state of emergency including that of emergence, in which law is suspended, and the contingent necessity/the necessary contingency of pure operationality prevails” (Dillon, 2007: 19).

Indeed, post 9/11, the global security state increasingly needs to generate and intensify the evil of terrorism as a ‘fact’ of contemporary society. Its ‘evildoers’, ultimately, needs a materialised enemy. Further, the spectacle of security has fixated upon the fetish of evil terrorist, the enemy combatant through where the war on terrorism may be practically and physically realized (De Genova, 2007; 2009). For the spectacle of security,

our life and labour power supply the global neoliberal state with the innumerable and multiple manifestations of its perfect enemy and friend. Indeed, as Marx (1843/1978: 43) rightly argues, “security is the supreme social concept of civil society; the concept of the police...Security is...the assurance of its egotism.” The egotism of the global security state operates through both the capitalist market and the established social regimes that legitimise and protect it, but also through the spectacle of terrorism that (re)produces an alienated everyday life.

6.5 ‘Clash’

Significantly in this context, both spiteful terrorism and the war against terrorism have convergences and divergences, differences and similarities, without, of course, being the same. The forces of terrorism and the war against terrorism function with equal strength in opposite directions: the former driven by religious spiteful fundamentalism, the latter by the market ideology, the nihilism of capital. While terrorism negates this world for the freedom in the other world, the war against terrorism seeks to sustain this world, recognising it only in a conservative manner, specifically as neoliberal market. If the first perceives terrorism as a means of destruction to open up a space for a God to come, the latter turns (state) terror into a form of governmentality, aiming to counter preempting eventualities.

Yet, there are significant convergences between terrorism and the war against terrorism. In both the dominant discourse is fundamentally Manichean, introducing a binary rift between us and them. Whereas, for instance, the religious emphasis of spiteful terrorism lies on absolute values such as Jihad, the religious emphasis of the war against terrorism lies on freedom and neoliberal democracy. The war against terrorism sacralises the liberal democratic market as an unquestionable, naturalised background, and understands 'freedom' only in terms of existing neoliberal values. Just as the war against terrorism needs the figure of fundamentalist terrorism as a 'radical evil, religious fundamentalism needs the figure of 'evil empire.' Whereas religious fundamentalism is seen "an unruly subject in a modern world" (Holsinger, 2007: iv), the war against terrorism is understood as a 'secular' war or as a 'humanistic' version of evangelical Christian empire (Huntington, 1997). Thus both justify their actions, attacks with reference to hostility and spite. This mirroring reveals a complementary synthesis between terrorism and the war against terrorism in which it is a 'moral duty' to wage war either in the name of God (religious fundamentalism) or democracy and civilisation (neoliberal post-politics).

Thus, what we see in both is an utter abandonment of politics in favour of hostilities through a use of "empty rhetoric and gesture politics" (Schehr, 2006: 147) that obfuscate antagonisms and conflicts inherent to society. In this sense, neither offer much hope to human beings looking for practical

ways to democratically integrate themselves into the society they live. Further, both reduce politics to a clash between “MacWorld and Jihad” (Barber, 1996). In other words, both speak in absolutes of the ideologies, the one driven by religious fundamentalism, the other by universalising capitalist markets. And finally, both are convinced that their narrative is the only ‘true’ one, that they possess the truth (religious orthodoxy, and neoliberal capitalism as a new religion). Thus they are united in disunion, in a non-dialectical, complementary synthesis in which the war against terrorism (politics of security/fear) justifies itself with reference to and thus feeds terrorism. In such a space, the only form protest can take is ‘meaningless spiteful violence.’ The overall result of this ‘clash’ then remains a register constituted by the “bloody and nihilistic games of power without purpose and without truth” (Badiou, 2005: 120).

However, by turning security into an internal perversion, and with its neutrality and indifference to social and political reality, neoliberal and militarised post-politics provokes lethality and radicality, a ‘fatal’ violence to emerge. Affirming the ‘good’ and getting rid of the ‘bad’, neoliberal post-politics (and its biopolitical governmentality preemptive indifference) actively incites an abstraction, a terrorism to itself to emerge. Neoliberal and militarised post-politics is being reproduced by terrorism, just as terrorism is being actualised through “a terror based on “law and order measures”, that is ‘a security terror’ (Baudrillard, 2003: 32). Neoliberal post-politics, in short, “needs the otherness of the terrorist in order to

legitimate itself affectively and in order to self-actuate” (Massumi, 2007). It tames terrorism, turning its radical potentiality into a counterrevolutionary justification of the system. Since neoliberalism is an open ontogenetic governance productive of otherness, it should be seen as a heterogeneous ‘consensual’ order rather than a stable order strictly speaking. In this sense, neoliberal post-politics brings with it a violence of a system based on a consensual ‘preemptive order’ by transforming antagonisms into harmony, by excluding those who understand themselves as increasingly alienated and abandoned by neoliberal forms of power and rationality.

As mentioned in the previous chapter, the nightmare of neoliberal capitalism is that of living in an eternal present, while prey to a preemptive order based on certainty in the face of continual ‘event’, a life governed by an infinite extension of the market ideology, the nihilism of capital. A world devoid of all passion, of all meaning. A world constructed with the sole intent of surplus with regard to capital accumulation and the commodification of human relations and life. The violence involved in such a situation is relative to neutralisation, that is, the violence of consensus, which forces the ‘enemy’ to reveal itself in a violent manner, without bringing real political change. To put it bluntly, capital’s indifference to social and political reality is the source of a complex, systemic violence that cannot be attributed to concrete individuals and their intentions.

Most importantly, neoliberal post-politics cannot attain consensual unity other than through war and violence. Violence and war are modalities of neoliberal post-politics. Neoliberal post-politics, I suggest, is a complex of enforcements and exclusions, devoted to the suppression of all radicalisms and their energies, with the demonisation and the victimisation of those energies being only one (among many) of its apparatuses. Consensual neoliberal order, that is to say, is deeply (constantly) a form of violence, a deliberate action against political possibilities that can lead to an event. In fact, violence and neoliberal post-politics are central to each other. As I demonstrated in the previous chapters, violence and war have not been 'others', or optional, means of neoliberalism. They have been what neoliberal post-politics most fully and essentially is. Indeed, violence (and war) is necessary to the symbiosis of the market and state, stimulating the economy in difficult times (see Stallbrass, 2006: 88). Colonising social life by capital and neutralising antagonisms and conflicts, neoliberal post-politics is "the submission of more and more facets of human sociability...to the deadly solicitations of the market" (Retort, 2005: 19). It produces opportunities for endless accumulation and inures the population "to the spectacle of their armed forces punishing some recalcitrant state by killing and maiming its citizens" (Stallbrass, 2006: 88). In these circumstances, the 'liberal peace' is nothing other than peace as *permanent pacification*, and it is achieved through pacification and elimination not only of the spiteful individual, but also of all non-liberal elements. Neoliberal and militarised post-politics is the nexus of war and

violence that aims at a total pacification of nature and society. Violence as peace, peace as permanent pacification.

Through an endless biopolitical war and violence against the forces of dissent, neoliberalism would fight tooth and nail to maintain the current order to the end. Since 'factual finitude' conditions the problematisation of politics, neoliberalism and rule in the modern age (Dillon, 2011), war and violence are normalised bio-political conditions "in which the attempted closure of geo-political space merely proved to be an initial experiment in the attempts at setting out the all embracing political terrain" (Evans, 2010). Today, therefore, everybody becomes part of the liberal way of war, a biopolitical regime aimed at "producing and reproducing all aspects of social life" (Hardt & Negri, 2004: 31). The exercise of neoliberal post-politics is thus incitatory in that it seeks to actively produce (hence profit from) spiteful terrorism. That is to say, neoliberal post-politics informs and enforces spite. Mostly that fact is hidden. Neoliberal post-politics *is* that hiding. And it is the endless (re)production of spiteful terrorism, to whatever immediate end, serves also to normalise and *keep neoliberalism running*. Thus, any analysis that claims to explain spiteful terrorism without paying full heed to the momentum of this thoroughly violent strategic neoliberal governmentality will be fundamentally incomplete.

The banality of the Underground Man was tied to the rationalisation of spiteful acts and the senseless destruction of all sociality. Rather than a

political act, his spite was a will to negation that no longer indicates a creation and a will to act (uniquely). For the Baader-Meinhof, violence was a process of reflection which mirrors the level of German state terror. They believed that the group's 'enlightened violence' was a form of pedagogical communication, which enables the workers and the German society to understand them. Violence was seen as a form of language, both the language of the 'system' and of the working class. In other words, their spite, too, was produced by the 'fascist German state.' Religious or fundamentalist terrorism, similarly, reproduces the militarism of neoliberal post-politics which it originated. Sheer spiteful destruction is merely the reverse side of creation and radical social change.

Thus, in contrast to political violence, which is based on the internal systemic contradictions of neoliberal capitalism, spite only reflects the level of neoliberal consensus. Rather than a political act, the fantasy of a salvation through the suffering of violence, through spite should be seen as, to borrow Žižek's term (1997: 61), "a trancelike subjective experience" in which the traditional political subject ceases to exist. Being reactionary, spiteful fundamentalism, like an 'antibody', turns against the system that creates it. This lethality does not have the capacity to create new, immanent values. Yet, when violence and spite are normalised and become embedded in political norms, it will be almost impossible to interpret its qualities as a political act. Politics proper only occurs when the existing order is questioned and interrupted. The rationalisation of violence and

spiteful destruction, however, suggests a fantasy of direct and immediate access to the real. In this way, the spiteful individual reproduces neoliberal and militarised post-politics which it is against. If the *mise en scène* of contemporary society is, after all, the disappearance of the political subject, the only hope for resistance seems to come from “a politics of abstraction ... overly attached to an idea at the expense of a frontal denial of reality” (Critchley, 2009: 300).

Let us put it differently. One cannot destroy rational egoism (the Underground Man), fascism and totalitarianism (the Baader-Meinhof group), and neoliberal post-politics (fundamentalist terrorism) by producing the same spite and indifference. Politics proper cannot occur within the bounds of spiteful terrorism. Since neoliberal post-politics is intimately linked to war and violence, anything else that goes by the same name is simply a reproduction of neoliberal capitalism. Seen in this perspective, spiteful fundamentalism and neoliberal post-politics become two aspects of the same cycle of bare repetition, that is, repetition without real political change. As noted before, productive repetition resurrects past events, while bare repetition takes an empty form of history, the consequence of which is ‘farce.’ The farcical character of neoliberal post-politics and religious fundamentalism derives from the fact they both produce non-events within the confines of the given; they are both characterised by the absence of revolutionary events. In the end, therefore, they do not provide an all together different perspective on

social change and everybody returns to the same position as in the beginning. Neoliberal post-politics versus terror: such is the wager, since no other exists. Although they are opposed, both spiteful terrorism and neoliberal post-politics are Siamese twins of sorts, as they both agree “on the meaninglessness of reality, or rather its essential unreality, which inspires either passive withdrawal or violent destruction” (Critchley, 2007: 6).

6.6 Consequences

In this dissertation I theorised the depoliticised conditions of late capitalism through what I have come to call a ‘neoliberal and militarised post-politics’, and through it I addressed key debates on governmental social regimes of neoliberal post-politics, the inseparability of neoliberalism and war/militarism, and the historical/geographical unevenness of global capitalism. I argued that ours is a neoliberal post-political society that cannot imagine radical social change as an ‘event.’ Using Marx’s *The Eighteenth Brumaire of Louis Bonaparte* as a model, I found also that there are some resonances between Marx’s analysis of the French counter-revolution and the assumptions underlying neoliberal and militarised post-politics. In so doing, I offered an original topological analysis that makes the following critical interventions: an exploration of how the much-discussed social regimes of sovereignty, discipline and control relate to each other in the production of neoliberal governmentality; an analysis of

the affective logic each regime entails and how they inter-relate; a proposal for a fourth regime, 'terrorism', and a theorization of its associated affect, 'spite.' Through my empirical discussions I put social and cultural theory in conversation with Karl Marx, Friedrich Nietzsche, Gilles Deleuze and Michel Foucault, as well as Slavoj Žižek and Walter Benjamin, all of whom I contextualise as crucial to understanding contemporary neoliberal governance and radical politics.

And so we have moved from neoliberal and militarised post-politics to radical politics as an 'event.' So how can one theorise an intimate relationship between critique and revolution in neoliberal and militarised post-political society? Before proceeding, let us, at this point, summarise the relationship between four social regimes and their affective structures. As I argued throughout the dissertation, neoliberal and militarised post-politics is a moving target. And the same goes for social regimes and their associated affects. The established social regimes and the corresponding affects are means to, and methods of, neo-liberal post-politics. This line of thinking enables us to question and interpret the dynamics of social regimes and their relation to neoliberal and militarised post-politics mentioned so far. So the aim is to discuss concepts from the point of view of the dissertation, focusing on truths, tendencies, and affects each regime produces. Any social regime, any sociality, contains within itself all the four social regimes, just as it contains within itself all the four affects. In other words, the aim is to construct a perspective on the social by illustrating a

dynamic field of forces between social regimes and the corresponding characteristics.

Modernity has traditionally understood the social as an 'ordered' and 'stable' process. Deleuze, however, views the social as a contingent process, incorporating hybridity and ambivalence into modernity itself. If modernity seeks to purify the social, Deleuze seeks to impurify it. Whereas modernity emphasises the ordered aspects of a differentiated sociality, Deleuze moves beyond differentiation and depicts the social from the point of view of de-differentiation.

'Sovereignty', for instance, implies a process, a radical contingency rather than a state of being without dependence on territory. Sovereignty is a social regime, a set of contingent governmental practices and rationalities, where 'cruel manifestations' of the modern state manifest itself. As such, it endlessly attempts to 'appropriate', or 'capture', countermovements and utilise them for its own purposes. In doing so, it employs a 'regime of violence' which creates its counter-affect, resentment. Sovereignty signifies an eternal vengeance, whereas resentment refers to a passive, powerless emotion. However, resentment also gains an astonishing potential for unproductive violence when it encounters sovereign vengeance. Put differently, resentment can easily be radicalised into spite, whereby victims of the state terror can become enemies of the state. The victims of sovereignty do not, cannot forget. After all, what defines

objects of resentment is their weakness, their technique “for remembering things” (Nietzsche, 1996: 42).

We are witnessing in sovereignty also the revival of ‘cruel manifestations’ such as torture by depoliticising conflicts via permanent states of exception. In this sense torture and the state of exception are inextricably connected. Intimately connected to a liberal way of war, torture is not only the most privileged actualisation of sovereign political power, but also a form of sovereign exceptionalism. Cruel and contingent practices and the state of exception are thus fundamental to the operation of political sovereign power as a social regime as well as neoliberal and militarised post-politics.

However, sovereignty is not simply the only social regime that constitutes neoliberal and militarised post-politics. ‘Discipline’ is our second social regime where neoliberal governmentality as a grid of intelligibility, is born and takes shape. The birth of neoliberalism goes hand in hand with the market, with its competition between self-governing subjects in which everything can be bought and sold. This, however, does not mean that we have left behind state sovereignty. Rather, disciplinary neoliberalism is a social regime in which sovereign political power is still present. Whereas sovereignty puts cruel manifestations into play, declaring states of exception, neoliberal governmentality emphasises the individual as a homo economicus that is motivated by neoliberal self-interest. Sovereignty plays

at the potentiality of the ban, while disciplinary neoliberalism acts both on virtuality and actuality. Whereas sovereignty declares the state of exception, discipline is based on high levels of normalisation upon life so that the neoliberal order is maintained and thus remains intact. In this sense disciplinary neoliberalism is a social regime constructed to make individuals internalise the sovereign gaze, creating docile, yet free, bodies that are governed by a culture of competition as an *eidos*. The primary goal of disciplinary neoliberalism is, therefore, the extension of free-market policies to all aspects of society. Neoliberal biopolitics necessitates free trade and competition rather than a totalitarian party that adopts individual freedom understood as 'economic freedom' from a *given* menu.

Moreover, sovereignty puts death into play, addressing bodies from the angle of fear and danger. With neoliberal governance fear becomes a productive affect, an organising force, that secures and pacifies a life to make life live. With disciplinary panoptic, in short, fear becomes a productive aspect of everyday life, individually and collectively. For it is essential for defusing revolutionary events. In this way a biopolitics of fear not only becomes essential for producing docile-species bodies but also for preventing revolutionary events from occurring. The biopolitics of fear is a necessary condition of neoliberalism because it converts fearful bodies of the sovereign into productive subjects of neoliberalism. This, however, tells only part of the story. Neoliberal biopolitics should also be viewed as a political eschatological katechontic response whose aim is to defuse the

idea of the event. Thus, when we analyse neoliberal biopolitics, we should also pay attention to its theological reasoning because how to delay radical structural change is motivated by ‘secularised theological concepts.’ And neoliberal biopolitics is one of them. As an eschatological katechontic response, neoliberal biopolitics is a preemptive counterrevolutionary principle whose mission is to keep ‘the threat of the event’ at bay.

‘Control’, our third social regime, is a heterogeneous order that incorporates hybridity, flexibility and an axiomatic of decoded flows into the heart of the social. Thus neoliberal control is discipline without walls, regulating subjects and objects on the move. In the process, ‘freedom of movement’ (along the regulation of each and every type of circulation which is ‘good’ or ‘bad’ to the liberal way of life) coexists with disciplinary surveillance and the mechanisms of normalisation. Neoliberal control works by codifying the flows, again, arguably targets bodies, but in a very different way by reducing them to codes and passwords. With neoliberal control the individual is replaced by the ‘dividual’, who is governed through multiple systemic codes and inscriptions. Nevertheless, the main affect that pertains to neoliberal capitalism is cynicism, which continuously reinforces and (re)produces perpetually infinite mechanisms of surplus-enjoyment based on the figure of homo economicus. Whereas disciplinary panoptic works through instruments of correction and normalisation, neoliberal control works through preemptive indifference, a contemporary biopolitical mechanism, whose aim is to prevent any disruptive event

whatever from occurring. Disciplinary panoptic sustains the political economy of neoliberal capitalism, while the society of control produces hybrid and reflexive subjectivities that are governed through free-floating surveillance as is the case with preemptive risk management in relation to 'networks.' Whereas disciplinary neoliberalism manages and regulates individuals qua homo economicus, neoliberal control targets the conduct of "mobile" subjects (Bauman, 1998: 51-2), accommodating them for its own purposes.

Moving from disciplinary panoptic to "generalised surveillance" (Foucault, 1977: 209), the biopolitics of control extends the power of neoliberalism. With preemptive risk and security mechanisms and circulation which have direct access to life, neoliberal control "knows no outside" (Hardt and Negri, 2000: 413). Whereas disciplinary panoptic is about constituting a differentiation between an inside and outside, neoliberal control focuses on the conditions that constitute unknown unknowns. Thus, it is precisely the virtual that now serves to consolidate neoliberal control. Since unknown disruptive events are the problem, the becoming of the body becomes one of the organising principles for the society of control to wage war on whatever threatens the neoliberal order.

And finally there is 'spite', which corresponds to a fourth social regime: 'terrorism.' Despite its hegemony, however, the lack of conflict and antagonism does not make neoliberal control a peaceful social regime.

Instead, it has its own discontents, bringing with it a new form of repression with a vengeance: that of terrorism. With sovereignty, neoliberal post-politics governs the population through cruel manifestations of the state within spaces of exception. Within disciplinary panoptic, neoliberal governmentality produces docile and obedient subjects through agents/agencies of fear and market mechanisms that facilitate competition as an eidos. With neoliberal control (the global capitalist market), multiple governmental rationalities monitor the mobile individuals through generalised biopolitical surveillance. Yet, this creates immanent problems, bringing forth a suicidal line of flight that is indifferent to neoliberalism. When the political is foreclosed through the very proliferation of neutrality and cynicism, this provokes a 'fatal' violence to emerge, expressing a radical nihilist passion that can find truth only in nothingness, in spiteful terrorism. In today's society terrorism has become normalised as a fourth social regime which sustains, rather than challenges, 'business as usual.' Thus, what previously appeared exceptional has become the rule in everyday life. Neoliberal and militarised post-politics finds a perfect enemy in terrorism where politics is reduced to "insecurity" (Huysmans, 2006), and in which political problems are presented as military necessities. Neoliberal post-politics and spiteful terrorism are thus the twin faces of contemporary society, embodying a non-dialectical, complementary synthesis, a synthesis between passive and radical nihilism. In other words, cynicism and spite together form a vicious cycle, a synthesis, in which neoliberal post-politics generates the violent *passage à*

l'acte and thus mimics the very force it tries to ward off, spiteful fundamentalism. Rather than a political act, the fantasy of a salvation through terrorism should thus be seen as bare repetition, that is, repetition without difference or real events. Spiteful terrorism is 'pure chaos' that does not produce anything.

Sovereign political power produces subjects of *ressentiment* that are rendered reactive and obedient through cruel acts and practices. The subject produced by disciplinary panoptic is that of the *fearful* subject, who is not a passive subject but an active one, continuously reproduced through normalisation and free-market regulation. With neoliberal control, we have the *cynical* 'dividual', governed through codes and passwords as well as the infinite diachronic temporality of surplus-enjoyment. The figure of the subject produced by terrorism is that of the *spiteful* individual, who destroys the existing, sensual world in the name of a true, other world. When the difference between terrorism and state terrorism disappears, they start to mimic each other, without bringing radical political change. In other words, they do not seek to find political solutions to political problems. Therefore, the key to understand both neoliberal and militarised post-politics and spiteful terrorism is bare repetition, that is, an inability to create immanent values, a new way of life.

Neoliberal and militarised post-politics, then, is a dynamic field of forces, which consists of differentiation and de-differentiation, hybrid networks as

well as lines of death. It is not an ontological term, but an expression of changing and contingent social regimes, rationalities and affects that are historical and political in formation. What is at issue here is how these four social regimes and associated affects interact with and differ from each other. Sovereignty, discipline, control and terrorism do not merely follow a chronological order. What is interesting is how sovereignty enables discipline, how disciplinary panoptic enables biopolitical control, how from within neoliberal control spiteful terrorism emerges, and how terrorism normalises state terrorism. To put it in other terms, sovereign political power opens the space for disciplinary neoliberalism, disciplinary neoliberalism for neoliberal control, neoliberal control for spiteful fundamentalism and spiteful terrorism for state terrorism, or the politics of security. In order to continually justify itself, neoliberal and militarised post-politics accommodates spiteful terrorism, transforming it into a public spectacle.

As seen throughout the dissertation, the basic movement corresponds to the two poles of revolution and counterrevolution. Taking life as its point of departure, both in thought and in practice, neoliberal and militarised post-politics is a principled counterrevolutionary logic that aims at defusing the fear of the event. Thus there is a constant struggle between neoliberalism and revolution. There is the fear of revolution that there is neoliberal and militarised post-politics. If neoliberal and militarised post-politics stabilises, radical social change as an event destabilises. Neoliberal

and militarised post-politics refers to a given social situation, while revolution is marked by paradoxical lines of flight that escape organisation and centralisation.

And as a line of flight, the desire for revolution has its own dangers. In this sense there is a crucial difference between revolutionary violence and spite, or between the deconstruction of the actual, or, what Deleuze (1990: 182) calls “counter-actualization” as a moment of becoming, and the nihilist destruction of the actual, that is, spiteful destruction as anti-actualisation. Hence the task of revolutionary violence: to redefine itself by resisting spiteful destruction. After all, creative destruction is not the renunciation of the world. Revolutionary violence is not only a “direct, brutal violence of *l’action directe*” (Žižek, 2006: 311). What is significant in this context is the preservation of the link, of the ‘surface’, between the actual and the virtual. In contrast, spiteful destruction is anti-actualisation, an assault on the actual. Spite in this respect is “a pure plane of abolition or death”, or a plane of “regression to the undifferentiated” (Deleuze & Guattari, 1987: 270). The problem of revolution, then, is to avoid ‘pure chaos’, while, at the same time, to establish a plane of immanence, that is, “to acquire a consistency without losing the infinite” (Deleuze & Guattari, 1994: 42). The idea of deciding about creative destruction is revolutionary politics par excellence, as an immanent exception.

Importantly, none of these social regimes and the corresponding characteristics exist in a pure form; each type simply seeks to mark out the consistency of a concept and is valid only to the degree that it provides a critical tool for analysing concrete dispositifs and modes of existence, which are by definition mixed states requiring a “microanalysis” of the characteristics they have and lines they actualize (see Deleuze, 1995: 86). In this sense, each social regime can be taken up into another social regime, like, for example, the return of sovereignty in the neoliberal control society. Within one social regime we can always find a coextensive functioning of different social regimes and their associated affects.

To sum up, every social regime is connected with the other social regimes in a specific way without one determining the others. Within discipline, tendencies toward neoliberal control constantly coexist, just as within control, tendencies towards sovereignty and discipline coexist. In this sense, one no longer has to follow the succession of sovereignty, discipline, control and terrorism; they develop alongside of it throughout neoliberalism. Any social regime contains within itself all the four characteristics and the corresponding affects that are actualised in varying degrees. However, the regimes and affects characterising neoliberal and militarised post-politics do not mean the end of politics, only its reconfiguration. The central question, then, is how one can theorise the intimate relationship between radical critique and revolution in neoliberal and militarised post-political society. This is examined in the last chapter.

Chapter Seven

Critique as Divine Violence, Divine Violence as Critique

7.1 Introduction

In the previous chapter, I theorised spite as a fourth affect. Drawing on Dostoevsky's *Notes from Underground*, I suggested that today, spite (and related affects resentment, fear and cynicism) plays a major role in relation to the 'social.' I found also that spite corresponds to a fourth social 'regime', terrorism, which uses pain/suffering against passivity and cynicism offered by neoliberal and militarised post-politics. Furthermore, I argued that spite is not to be seen as a political act, for it refers to a will to nothingness that no longer creates new values. However, the regimes and affects characterising neoliberal and militarised post-politics do not completely foreclose the possibility of radical politics. The central question, then, is how one can theorise radical critique and revolution in neoliberal and militarised post-political society.

What gives rise to neoliberal post-politics is also what gives rise to alternative social and political imaginaries for radical politics. The

possibility of radical politics exists within neoliberal post-politics. Or, to say this differently, the possibility of revolution exists within counterrevolution. And in so far as the contemporary regime of governmentality is neoliberal, neoliberalism constitutes the problematic of critique today. Ours is, after all, a neoliberal society in which the idea of revolution seems to be ignored. And so this chapter is an attempt to retain the belief in two interrelated ideas: revolution and critique. It focuses on the intimate relationship between revolution and critique, arguing that radical critique within social and aesthetic theory is strictly inseparable from the concept of revolution.

Critique in contemporary neoliberal capitalism represents a troubling paradox. On the one hand, we are free to 'criticise' everything. Today, we are constantly critical. On the other hand, contemporary critique functions as an impotent and 'disengaged' gesture, which sustains, rather than challenges, the hegemonic relations in a given political constellation. Against this background, the chapter argues that critique can be approached via two lines. First, critique locates politics on the basis of the interaction between the virtual and the actual; it implies a virtual aspect, a spectral dimension in all sociality that cannot be reduced to actual social space and chronological time. Second, critique is the paradoxical constitution of politics through the relationship between strategy and intoxication without referring to a stable synthesis between them. In this context critique is a paradoxical concept, an indeterminacy, which can be

articulated in the context of 'divine violence.' Referring to a radically contingent time, critique has a creative and a divine dimension, for it enables a passage between the virtual and the actual. However, in order to be critical, one must first understand what critique means in neoliberal times.

7.2 Critique in Neoliberal Times

In *The Dreamers* (2003), a film by Bernardo Bertolucci, the conjoined twins Isabelle and Theo live at home in their ramshackle apartment with their relatively well-to-do parents. As two French petty narcissistic bourgeoisies who are madly and only excited by the movies, they are inattentive, almost blind, towards others, and have no meaningful insight into the complex socio-political climate of the world outside.

Matthew, however, is a provincial teenage American student who is also cocooned in a love affair with cinema. He meets Isabelle and Theo in a protest and is invited to move into their apartment while the parents depart France to take an extended holiday. Matthew joins them and gets easily seduced by the sadist twins, who usually sleep together and wander around completely naked. Closeted in their apartment, the trio lose contact with the real world, engaging in their hedonistic earthly pleasures as if the pursuit of them is the only goal in life. Outside, however, 'Paris is burning.'

Matthew soon gets bored, accusing the twins of being unworldly. He says, "There's something going on out there. Something that feels like it could be really important." But neither Isabelle nor Theo seem to care. It is at this moment that their window is broken by a brick thrown through outside their apartment and they realize that there is another world out there. After witnessing the protests and revolutionary events outside, the happy trio split up. Isabelle and Theo - once having been accused of being unworldly - join the protesters and become involved in violence by carrying Molotov cocktails, while the liberal Matthew disagrees with them over political violence and remains loyal to his self-proclaimed passivity.

The Dreamers is set in Paris, at the time of May '68 uprisings. And there is a big difference between then and now. However, it has a crucial resonance today. At its best, it mirrors the paradoxical relationship between passivity and violence that surrounded the events of May '68, which can be experienced now and in the future. Indeed, the greatest strength of the movie lies showing us that neither unproductive violence nor social passivity are the 'grave diggers' of neoliberal capitalism. For it needs both forms in order to continually justify itself. On the one hand, spiteful musings of May '68 (sabotage, meaningless violence) have repeatedly provoked an even greater state terror that invokes the impossibility of revolutionary events. In other words, spiteful terrorism resulted in a brutal backlash against revolutionary ideas (e.g. communism). But, on the other hand, some of the leftist critique of May '68 within social and aesthetic

theory, which is strictly inseparable from the concept of revolution, has become exquisitely incorporated - and depoliticised in “the new spirit of capitalism” (Boltanski & Chiapello, 2005). *The Dreamers* shows, therefore how the recuperation of May '68 prefigures, and indeed prepared the ground for, a contemporary political quietism, which is now embodied in neoliberal and militarised post-politics.

As Boltanski & Chiapello (2005) argue, there have been the two major types of critique of capitalism: “the social critique” based on the notion of inequality and exploitation characteristic of a capitalist economy, and “the artistic critique” based on concepts such as inauthenticity, ugliness and alienation of life. However, as Boltanski & Chiapello suggest, faced with a fundamental economic, social and cultural crisis in the 1960s and 1970s, capitalism had to respond by assimilating the concepts of individual liberty, anti-bureaucracy, and equality. Capitalism recognised the demands of the artistic critique, while it largely silenced the social critique (Boltanski & Chiapello, 2005: 190, 199). The recognition of the artistic critique, however, meant its incorporation by neoliberal capitalism. As a result, the new spirit of capitalism domesticated and thus accommodated the artistic critique, especially in the form of self-management and the institutionalization of art and its lifestyle, while sidestepping the demands of the social critique.

With the new spirit of neoliberal capitalism, critique is stuck into a paradox. On the one hand, we are witnessing an “immense and proliferating criticizability of things, institutions, practices, and discourses” (Foucault, 2003: 6). In this era of ‘unprecedented freedom’, we all, to a greater or lesser extent, sometimes more and sometimes less, find ourselves in an endless critique. This is the objective irony of neoliberal capitalism: nothing sells better than critique. Or, even more directly, the new spirit of neoliberal capitalism is anti-capitalist. Thus today everything can be politicized and discussed, but in a reserved way, in so far as our critique remains within the bounds of neoliberal dialogue. Consensus, not antagonism, is the essence of contemporary critique. On the other hand, the foundations, instruments and aims of contemporary critique turn out to be, to borrow Zygmunt Bauman’s (2000: 23) felicitous term, “toothless”; they support, rather than subvert, neoliberal capitalism. In other words, contemporary critique does not seek to transcend but to transform neoliberalism as neoliberalism.

Indeed, in neoliberal times critique no longer refers to radical structural change. It is unable to accede to a true creation that would disrupt the existing social order and constitute a new political scene. Contemporary critique becomes fundamentally outmoded, which no longer supplements the given situation with an ‘event’, with a subject that can create a new present beyond the temporality of neoliberal capitalism. Contemporary critique is, therefore, locked into an ‘atonic reality’, a hellish *Groundhog*

Day: we are left without a possibility of a radical change regarding the existing order. In this sense critique is incapable of breaking the shackles of neoliberal and militarised post-politics, for it is aligned with the meaninglessness of the present, with the resigned acceptance of ‘anything goes.’ Thus, a depoliticised radical politics, Marxism, and a Marx without revolution are no longer exceptional but part of a normality in contemporary society. Marx is acceptable only in so far as “the revolt, which initially inspired uprising, indignation, insurrection, revolutionary momentum, does not come back” (Derrida, 1994: 38). Differently put, Marx, Marxism, the revolt, uprising and revolutionary momentum can reappear as long as they speak the language of power and sustain the belief that it is possible to achieve real change within the boundaries of neoliberal capitalism. We have a softened, *decaffeinated* Marx and Marxism that no longer refer to revolutionary events.

Is critique useless then? Or should critique function like an ‘emergency break’ of neoliberal capitalism? What might constitute a form of critique that is antithetical to neoliberal and militarised post-politics? I contend that a *softened, decaffeinated* critique leaves nothing but to rethink the idea of revolution. Revolution, in short, has turned into an urgent task. In so far as neoliberal capitalism is characterised as ‘business as usual’, critique is a break with the given. Critique is an answer to the problem of neoliberalism. Thus neoliberal post-politics and the established social regimes – their penetration through one another, their assimilation of counter spaces –

must be critiqued, as an immediate task. This requires that one cannot accept the existing order *as it is*, including the reformist sides of neoliberal post-political promises. What needs to be recovered is the promise of emancipation. Together, a rational strategy and (a-rational) intoxication and a certain realism which would not fall into the trap of capitalist cynicism appear to become necessary values of an effective critique.

Since neoliberal capitalism is presented as the 'end of history', it relies on the denial of a radical, utopian dimension to politics and depicts the given reality as the only reality, pushing the idea of revolution to the background. While it sacralises the neoliberal market as an unquestionable, naturalised background, it also builds a moat around revolutionary possibilities so that they become redundant. However, social life can become a problematic, an object of critique and radical structural change, on the condition that people can imagine the possibility of a better world. As Bauman (1976: 35) had put it long ago, "all...events belong to the class of possibilities, which are not present in daily reality in any other way but ideally." Is it, then, possible to problematise an indeterminacy, an aporetic dimension to critique on the basis of this paradoxical coincidence, the simultaneous absence and presence of critique in contemporary post-political society? How can one revitalise – indeed, to reinvent – the idea of critique which inspires the idea of revolution as a genuine politics of emancipation?

Revolution is a style of thinking, it is “a question of life” (Deleuze, 2007: 234). To continue to take inspiration from the spirit of revolution, however, entails keeping faith in a radical critique, which contains within itself the possibility of its own self-critique, its “own transformation, re-valuation, self-interpretation” (Derrida, 1994: 110). “Proletarian revolutions”, Marx (1852/2002: 22) writes, “such as those of the nineteenth century, constantly engage in self-criticism, always stopping in their own tracks; they return to what is apparently complete in order to begin it anew.” This return, however, is not a *bare* repetition, that is, repetition without real events, but an always situated process that creates new values which belong to *this* world. This is why, for Marx, the proletarian social revolution can create its poetry “only from the future” (ibid. 22).

What we have here is revolution which is nourished on ‘ruthless and permanent criticism’ and a realistic understanding of the task at hand, a revolution which is the desire to create ever anew despite the misery of the present. If we want to witness the experience of revolutionary engagement in its pure form, we should return to May ’68, since it was “a demonstration, an eruption, of becoming in its pure state” (Deleuze, 1995: 171). In this sense, May ’68 was a flight from “normative causality”; it is a “pure event”:

“May ’68 is more of the order of a pure event, free of all normal, or normative causality. Its history is a ‘series of amplified instabilities and fluctuations’. There were a lot of agitations, gesticulations, slogans, idiocies, illusions in ’68, but this is not what counts. What counts is what amounted

to a visionary phenomenon, as if a society suddenly saw what was intolerable in it and also saw the possibility for something else. It is a collective phenomenon in the form of: 'Give me the possible, or else I'll suffocate...' The possible does not pre-exist, it is created by the event. It is a question of life. The event creates a new existence, it produces a new subjectivity (new relations with the body, with time, sexuality, the immediate surroundings, with culture, work...)” (Deleuze and Guattari, 2007: 234)

In this sense May '68 refers to something that interrupted 'social determinations', the normal flow of things. This is what makes May '68 a revolutionary becoming. Today we are more than ever in need of new revolutionary becomings because they open up new realms for experimental thought. What is needed is a move toward the painstaking work of constructing a radical critique, which remains tied to the idea of revolution. If the straightforward aspect of neoliberal post-politics is its negation of the domain of alternative social imaginaries, critique situates itself in relation to new possibilities given a utopian horizon. If counterrevolution is a belief in the existing society, revolution promises another society, world; it is a flight from the existing order of things. To put it bluntly, the more critique fails, the more it is compelled to find new lines of flight. Thus, critique must be immanent in the sense that it is based on the internal systemic contradictions of neoliberal capitalism. After all, if “fidelity” to revolution (Badiou, 2006) only emerges as the result of a struggle based on the “naming” of actual contemporary conditions, such naming depends on an analysis of neoliberal capitalism. Radical critique can have meaning only if it results “from the now existing premise” (Marx and Engels, 1998: 57). As such, it is valuable in so far as it transcends the

actual, that is, the finite, and links us to the virtual, the infinite (Diken, 2012: 158-164). In short, critique is valuable if it can have a dissensual relation to the actual. If revolution is at once a creative historical process (the actual) and an idea (the virtual), it refers to an event that is separated from the historical situation. In other words, critique cannot be reduced to history but is per definition 'untimely' in the Deleuzian sense of a philosophy of history, and the Benjaminian sense of an anti-historicist immediacy, which I will elaborate below.

In what follows I argue that critique is an 'untimely intervention', an indeterminacy, which can be articulated in the context of "divine violence" (Benjamin, 1999a). The paradoxical relationship between the actual and the virtual creates a dynamic disequilibrium, and it is this "perpetual disequilibrium" which "makes revolutions possible" (Deleuze, 1990: 49). The virtual is always related to the actual, to what is to come. It is the indicator of the fact that every social relation can become different, can be rethought and reactualised in other ways. Deleuze (1994: 10), for instance, argues that the virtual is always in relation to the event; history is a theatre, a virtual realm, where unknown potentialities and actors can produce radically new events. The event, therefore, brings about ruptures and imposes "interruptions at the very heart of social determinism and historical causality" (Deleuze, 2004: 199). It calls for the disruption of bare repetition of the existing order, of history. The recognition of unknown potentialities also entails the recognition of the virtual aspect of the event.

In this sense the virtual side of revolution is always to come not because it does act for future promises but because it is a break with the existing order, signifying the opening up of the actual to the virtual.

The event, in other words, cannot be thought of independently of the actual. The event can be a virtual problem but its varieties are also actualised in concrete historical situations. The event, therefore, cannot be separated from neoliberal and militarised post-politics. Since the dominant form of governance in contemporary society is neoliberal, the politics of event is set against neoliberalism. It has a virtual dimension but its possibilities are also actualised in contemporary neoliberal times. Differently put, the event is the virtual because it refers to unknown possibilities and subjectivities, while at the same time the actual because it also expresses itself in concrete situations. What matters, therefore, is an interactive surface between the virtual and the actual. Critique as divine violence is what corresponds to the two (actual and virtual) series, enabling an interaction between them.

7.3 Cheerful Separation

As I argued above, in contemporary society concepts related to social change such as individual liberty, economic freedom, nomad, rhizome, hybridisation, desire, and displacement no longer signify resistance to, or escape from power; their critical potential seems to be assimilated,

domesticated and thus accommodated by neoliberal capitalism. Thus, 'increasing social change' does not mean 'freedom', but bare repetition, which corresponds to the immanent, axiomatic logic of neoliberal capitalism. Indeed, neoliberal capitalism does not oppose but asks for constant critique; it does not necessarily mean extinguishing critique, but it means pseudo-critique that does not radically challenge the very foundations of the existing order. In the society of neoliberal control, for instance, one never finishes learning. Rather "continuous assessment" becomes an imperative (Deleuze, 1995: 179). Permanent critique and thus permanent assessment have turned into dispositifs for neoliberal and militarised post-politics in which everything is constantly criticised and assessed, but nothing really changes radically.

In this sense, what is accommodated by neoliberal capitalism is not so much *emancipatory* critique, but rather the *revisionist* critique which reduces dissensus to an apparatus that generates consensus. In other words, neoliberal capitalism signifies the revision of dissensus that is at the heart of radical critique; its counterrevolutionary aspects revolve around recuperating dissensual ideas and thoughts. Despite revisions, however, critique cannot be fully assimilated. *Decaffeinated critique* – this is what neoliberal capitalism means in the context of critique. However, critique is marked by antagonism rather than consensus and agreement. If dissensus is constitutive of critique, any consideration of the relationship between critique and politics has to come to terms with the question of change.

What is then needed is a new form of critique that takes emancipation as its main point of departure. This, however, entails siding with infinity, the event. In so far as critique takes the emancipatory side, it must separate itself from the consensual neoliberal governmentality. Radical critique is the 'enemy' of the bonds the existing order offers; it continues to live within these bonds (the laws, morality etc.) in order to destroy them. To paraphrase Deleuze (1983: 106), a critique "that saddens no one, that annoys no one", is not a critique. In this sense critique is against liberal dialogue.

Indeed, critique should provoke thought rather than dictate consensus. Critique is another name for disagreement, a disagreement on consensus. Consensus takes as foundational the inevitability of neoliberalism as an economic system, and free market capitalism as an unquestionable, naturalised background. All we can do is, therefore, accept the dominant ideology of capitalism as it is, and limit our hopes and ourselves by not imagining 'the end of capitalism.' Ultimately, what capitalist consensus amounts to is the elimination of revolutionary events and the naturalisation of neoliberalism. This is why radical critique always starts with questioning the consensus in a given social space. Contrary to neoliberal dialogue and consensus in which "all values have already been created" (Nietzsche, 1961: 55), the point of critique is to question the value of existing values with the aim of creating new values. If consensus allows one to 'criticise' in a given political constellation, radical critique targets the

given framework of sensibility. If consensus is the impossibility of a true event regarding the 'given' situations, radical critique is the ability to radically challenge that givenness and to fight for a new and better one. Consensus plays a given game, whereas critique does change the game itself. Consensus "justifies" the givenness, while radical critique interrupts the existing order of things, which is none other than "the police distribution of the sensible" (Rancière, 2010: 212).

If neoliberal capitalism is shaped by a life of fundamental meaninglessness governed by an infinite extension of the market ideology, critique makes sense if it is critical of its own historical present, the given order of the sensible, and it can do so relating itself to another time. Critique can have meaning if it can refer to the infinite by keeping a distance from the infinite extension of capital and enacting fidelity to the event. Hence the fundamental task of critique is to think the exception, "to be in the exception in the sense of the event" (Badiou, 2009c: 13). That is, critique "becomes worthy of the event" (Deleuze: 1990: 148, 151), reversing the conditions that determine us and relates itself to emancipation. Critique, in other words, can have meaning if it can take side with the revolutionary event, which is not reducible to modern history as a linear process but refers, above all, to the possibility of disrupting the entire model of linearity.

As is well known, orthodox historical materialism conceived of historical time as a mere mechanical, evolutionist process. Revolution was therefore seen as the end-point of progress and of historical determinism. In this way, the historical time of revolution was reduced to a 'homogeneous, empty time', providing the temporal space for scientifically predictable revolutionary events. But one of the most prominent thinkers of revolutionary time, Benjamin, however, rejects any vulgar determinist, evolutionist notion in progress, stating that the "homogeneous, empty time", or modernity, is an "eternal return of the same", which speeds towards disaster. The present, or modernity, is the time of "hell", the very "hell" one should escape: "hell is not something which lies ahead of us—but *this life here*" (Benjamin et al, 1985: 50).

The revolutionary moment, by contrast, is made up of interruptions of progress, breaks and transformations. And only redemption (revolution) can cut off – arrest - the flow of 'empty and homogenous' time. Benjamin calls this time "now-time", or messianic time - a fulfilled time comprised of continuous flow of events: "history is the subject of a structure whose site is not homogeneous, empty time, but time filled by, the presence of the now" (Benjamin, 1969: 261). Messianic time is different from absolute chronometric time; it is the 'emergency break' of the empty, chronological time. Thus only messianic time is true revolutionary time, a time that we ourselves are in contrast to a vulgar empty and homogeneous time in which we are only reduced to mere spectators, and fearful of the future.

Messianic time is the time of political intervention, of disruption: the disruption of the entire model of linearity. Thus messianic time, *kairos*, is a “seized” *chronos*, an undetermined period of time:

“In which man, by his initiative, grasps favourable opportunity and chooses his own freedom in the moment. Just as the full, discontinuous, finite and complete time of pleasure must be set against the empty, continuous and infinite time of vulgar historicism, so the chronological time of pseudo-history must be opposed by the cairological time of authentic history.” (Agamben, 1993: 104-5)

Messianic time, then, is the appropriate time to act or to make political interventions, which consists solely in both the perceiving and the seizing of the moment (Dillon, 2008b). If official history tends to be the history of the victors, ‘the tradition of the oppressed’ also carries in it signs and symptoms of another dimension, an interaction between past and present events, by which history is affiliated with universal redemption. And only redemption can contain the “true picture of the past”, for that involves taking each event in consideration, that is “the entire history of mankind” (Benjamin, 1969: 255). In this sense revolution “is a tiger’s leap into the past”, which enables human subjects to fulfil some historic task by linking the present to the whole of history, that is, the time of the virtual (ibid. 261), Here one should shamelessly repeat the lesson of Marx’s *The Eighteenth Brumaire of Louis Bonaparte*: if history repeats itself, first as a tragedy, then as farce, it is not a reason for political impotence and enjoyment in (self-)destruction. Marx (1975: 179) asks: “Why does history take this course?” He answers: “So that humanity should part with its past

cheerfully.” To put it in yet another way: farce is there, history repeats itself, so that the subject can cheerfully destroy it. Critique as divine violence constitutes an opportunity for such a separation.

7.4 The ‘Divine Violence’ of Critique

There is, in this respect, an intimate relationship between radical critique and ‘violence.’ After all, all creativity, all freedom, necessitates violence - but which violence? Violence is an ambivalent concept. It is, in one guise, a promise of creative destruction. In another, it can turn to spite, which destroys in the pursuit of nothingness. In a world in which politics has been shown to be dependent upon a neoliberal and militarised global capitalism of structural inequalities, a politics centred upon the possibilities of the relation with ‘liberal democracy’ is insufficient. Indeed, one can argue that its subtle foreclosure of politics, and its refusal to accommodate radical socio-political conflict and antagonism through the moral castigation of all radicalism as ‘bad’, as ‘terrorism’, belongs to a specific politics, which does crucial violence to politics and justice. And, as argued before, so-called critical potential of contemporary society seems to be assimilated by capital’s processes of abstraction of future commodity value. Put differently, neither aesthetic nor social critiques are the ‘real enemies’ of neoliberal capitalism. For it is capable of generating moral support in what criticises it, appropriating and accommodating what opposes and challenges it (Boltanski and Chiapello, 2005: 27).

Unlike neoliberal paradigm, radical critique refers to another temporality, the event. If radical critique is a forceful act of tearing “the past from its context, destroying it, in order to return it, transfigured, to its origin” (Agamben, 1999: 152), then, critique should move ‘beyond good and evil’, that is, to act. This leap, therefore, necessarily brings with it the negation of existing values and the creation of new ones. The task of radical critique is indeed to be violent, but also to avoid spiteful destruction. In other words, the question is how to distinguish creative violence from unproductive violence, which is spite. Hence the importance of Benjamin, who differentiates divine violence from mythic violence:

“If mythic violence is law-making, divine violence is law-destroying; if the former sets boundaries, the latter boundlessly destroys them; if mythical violence brings at once guilt and retribution, divine power expiates; if the former threatens, the latter strikes; if the former is bloody, the latter is lethal without spilling blood. [...] Mythical violence is bloody power over mere life for its own sake, divine violence is pure power over all life for the sake of the living.” (1999a: 297)

The concept of divine violence continues to have a potent hold on revolutionary politics, while it has also been subject to serious questioning (Agamben, 1998; Derrida, 1992; Diken, 2009; Evans and Reid, 2013; Žižek, 2007a). One context for this discussion is the ongoing debates concerning the notion of divine violence as ‘bloodless annihilation.’ As Agamben (1998: 64) notes, Benjamin’s divine violence has a “capacity to lend itself to the most dangerous equivocations” that prompts Derrida to approximate it – “with a peculiar misunderstanding – to the Nazi ‘Final Solution.’” It must be emphasised from the outset that Derrida approaches divine violence

with suspicion. He (1992: 62) tells us that Benjamin's "Critique of Violence" is "too Heideggerian, too messianic- or archeo-eschatological" (ibid. 62). For Derrida, Benjamin does not offer sufficient ground to distinguish his messianic literalness from the most horrible deeds that come from human agents. As a result, Benjamin's divine violence risks falling into the "worst" (Nazism, the Holocaust) (ibid. 63).

Derrida says, for example, that the crucial aspects of Benjamin's essay leave open a temptation "to think the holocaust as an uninterpretable manifestation of divine violence insofar as divine violence would be at the same time annihilating, expiatory and bloodless." "When one thinks of the gas chambers and the cremation ovens", writes Derrida (ibid. 62), "this allusion to an extermination that would be expiatory because bloodless ... one is terrified of this interpretation that makes the holocaust an expiation and an indecipherable signature of the just and violent anger of God." How to read Derrida's reaction and divine violence in the light of the Nazi extermination of the Jews? One could say that Derrida's critique of Benjaminian divine violence is controversial to say the least. Derrida seems to be saying that, since divine violence will continue to be confused with *actual* violence, we should embrace the immanence of justice, which is marked as 'justice-to-come.' In other words, justice itself remains to-come in the future to continually remind ourselves that our just decisions are in fact not justice and that justice can never be fully realised, that justice is always to-come.

For Derrida, any sense of actual violence (and justice) always holds the potential for grave dangers, for it can lead to the type of violence that is, in fact, merely a spiteful destruction. In order to avoid such dangers that can repeat cruel sovereign acts, Derrida thus (partially) moves away from the Benjaminian interpretation of messianism. The question, therefore, is whether Derrida's reading of divine violence does justice to Benjamin's divine violence. Derrida's warning about divine violence and Benjamin's messianism suggest we need to proceed with more caution, and avoid recklessness in *action*. However, his understanding of divine violence is prone to problems. At this point, Walter Benjamin's distinction between mythic violence and divine violence might be helpful. Benjamin (1999a: 297) argues that divine violence is the antithesis of mythical violence "in all respects." The key difference is that mythical violence is "bloody capture" of the mere life of human beings in a *novel* way, whereas divine violence intervenes into that capture and destroys our creaturely attachment to the rottenness of the law. We see here that mythical violence is at the origin of both law-making and law-preserving violence, the origin, that is, of nothing less than the sovereign law.

In other words, mythical violence, or the violence of sovereignty in Schmitt's sense, is linked to the 'state of exception' in which the law suspends itself in order to establish the conditions for constitutional normality. Divine violence, on the other hand, is revolutionary violence that expresses life in a "nonmediate" way. For Schmitt, the state of

exception is the political moment *par excellence* of an existing legal order. For Benjamin, conversely, a real state of exception must be established against the normalisation of the state of exception, calling for an end of time, an end which is performed by the existing legal order, by sovereignty. Benjamin's true exception is nothing else than revolutionary violence, which emancipates bare life from the state of exception that lies at the basis of normality tied to the state.¹⁵ In this sense, a bare life that is entirely subjected to sovereign power can also be conceived as a form of redemption in which the subject becomes capable of breaking out of captivity of the sovereign law. Precisely in this sense, Schmitt's state of exception is preservative and protective, designed to maintain or fortify the violence of state power, grounding it in sovereign decisionism. By contrast, Benjamin's revolutionary violence seeks to overturn this captivity, the violence of state power. Schmitt is a fascist, Benjamin revolutionary. Revolution and sovereign violence are thus intimately connected. This is why Benjamin (1969: 255-59) takes as his point of departure the "state of

¹⁵ Worth noting is that the concept of bare life is mentioned but not properly addressed in Derrida's critique of Benjamin.

exception” that has not become, but always was “the rule” in history and of history:

“We must arrive at a concept of history in accord with this insight. Then we shall see clearly that our task is to bring about the actual state of exception, and thereby we will improve our position in the struggle against Fascism.”

Along the same lines, Benjamin (1999a: 295) tells us that “lawmaking is power-making, assumption of power, and to that extent an immediate manifestation of violence.” Mythical violence in this respect takes a stand on God’s side; it becomes a human version of God. Put simply, mythical violence is sovereign violence which is God come to earth. Divine violence, by contrast, is anti-idolatrous (see Martel, 2011: 164). It does not acknowledge the truths, myths we ascribe to God’s sovereignty but serve to undermine them. Giving Korah as a Biblical example – a biblical scene in which an idolator rebelled against God’s sovereignty and then was swallowed by the earth along with his followers - Benjamin (1999a: 297) argues that:

“It [divine violence] strikes...them without warning, without threat, and does not stop short of annihilation. But in annihilating it also expiates, and a deep connection between the lack of bloodshed and the expiatory character of this violence is unmistakable. For blood is the symbol of mere life. The dissolution of legal violence stems...from the guilt of mere natural life, which consigns the living, innocent and unhappy, to a retribution that ‘expiates’ the guilt of mere life—and doubtless also purifies the guilty, not of guilt, however, but of law.”

What we see here is nothing other than a form of revolutionary violence, for it removes idolatry, namely God, and the law and political authority it produces (Martel, 2011: 163).

Benjamin's analysis of divine violence is sharp and vivid. While 'not drawing an exact parallel' to his time, present-day readers will find striking analogies in contemporary society. We live in an age of neoliberal biopolitics in which entire human ways of life (e.g. stateless peoples, sans-papiers, poor youth, women, homosexuals, immigrants, and urban others) are excluded from political and civil life in order to be included in the realm of neoliberal capitalism. The mythical violence of neoliberal capitalism today has become more apparent in the war against terrorism, along with the biopolitical violence of power regimes and the violence of the free-market. In this way bare life of human beings, "life not worthy of being lived", has become entirely subjected to neoliberal biopolitics, which is to be differentiated from the rest of society and eventually exterminated or left to die (Agamben, 2004: 37). Entire human ways of life are, in short, suspended in the 'willed' state of exception that lies at the heart of neoliberal capitalism. The question that concerns us, therefore, is the redemption of bare life from this mythical violence of state sovereignty, of capital. Put simply, a bare life that is captured by neoliberal biopolitics can nevertheless be a form of revolutionary event in which human beings are capable of escaping the captivity of capital. In this sense divine violence is the means for a biopolitical struggle between capital and revolution. Trying

to emancipate bare life from the captivity of neoliberal capitalism, divine violence is not an event that happens at some future point in linear time, but refers to the arrest and the disruption of the entire model of linear and homogeneous time - in our case this means neoliberal capitalism - in which the agent is transformed through a process of revolutionary becoming. Divine violence makes it possible for the agent to restructure the actual within the 'perspective of the virtual' without God's transcendence. Refusing to reify law's sovereignty, divine violence, in other words, enables us to reread the world without the certainties of the truths that we usually would otherwise ascribe to God, the capital and state power.

Let us turn to Derrida and, once again, ask his question: What if the Holocaust was "an uninterpretable manifestation of divine violence?" At this point, I contend that Derrida does interpret Benjamin's concept of divine violence literally rather than a signification. In so far as mythic violence seeks to side with the existing order, with sovereignty, it requires signs and traces that are realized in bodies and inscribed on the subjects. Simply put, mythical violence needs signs to produce its own existence; it is a means of state sovereignty. Divine violence, on the contrary, creates spaces where signs and myths are destroyed in favour of revolution. It is precisely in this sense that the Holocaust should not be thought of as an "uninterpretable manifestation of divine violence" (Derrida, 1992: 62). The Holocaust was the culmination of mythic violence because it was codified and externalized by a state that rapidly absorbed military, economic,

political, and social power to commit genocide. It was, in short, the exercise of a State's coercive power, which showed how legal violence itself could become a tool for revenge, a troubling manifestation of spite itself. Divine violence, on the other hand, is not reducible to pure destruction of reality; it is essentially grounded in the problem of creative destruction, with the question of an ethical subject, of divine justice. And justice is destructive in the sense that it opposes "the constructive ambiguities of law" (see Benjamin, 2005: 456). Divine justice disrupts the entire model of linearity, the means-end relation as the natural representation of the mythic continuum of history.

Divine justice removes myths and idols, including state sovereignty and 'liberal democracy', not to create new ones and worship them. In short, it does not refer to any transcendent Law or God. "This cannot be conceded. For the question 'May I kill?' meets its irreducible answer in the commandment 'Thou shalt not kill'" (Benjamin, 1999a: 298). Benjamin is careful to identify that the commandment is to be understood neither as a positive prescription (or an empty principle) nor as an absolute sovereign authority, but "as a limit with which one must struggle", whose written form turns out to be indispensable in resisting the lure of the imaginary and the blind submission to power it encourages (see McNulty, 2007: 36-7). That is, the commandment should be viewed as "a guideline for the actions of persons or communities who have to wrestle with in solitude and, in exceptional cases, to take on themselves the responsibility of

ignoring it" (Benjamin, 1999a: 298). Attempting to define radical act which is neither that of a suicidal spiteful violence, nor of absolutist sovereign violence, Žižek (2008b: 162) also says of divine violence as the unsupported act, "made in absolute solitude, with no cover from the big Other." As an unsupported act, the risk of reading and assuming divine violence is fully the subject's own (ibid. 485).

Divine violence aims at changing the situation as a whole. Spiteful destruction, by contrast, involves identification with the given, which is entangled with the systemic violence of the existing social order. Unlike spite, Benjaminian divine violence is truly liberatory when the event can be 'interpreted', as the intervention of a decision. In fact, Benjamin's notion of time and history shares a curious resemblance to Deleuze's conception of time and the event. This useful comparison allows us to understand how Benjamin, like Deleuze, sees time and history as a perpetual movement or becoming, oriented toward revolutionary change with regard to the virtual and the actual. Both thinkers try to escape a linear, determinist notion of time that points toward the untimeliness of revolution that cannot be reduced to the empty nature of chronological time. We need Deleuze because his concept of the virtual takes us to the heart of revolutionary events which occur in the form of two series: the actual and the virtual. The event has an actual existence but its virtual potentialities are irreducible to its actual state of affairs. Deleuze's virtual is an indicator that every relation and every society can change because events have a virtual

dimension. In this sense, the event is a break with the existing order, opening up the path of the actual to the virtual. We need Benjamin because his critique of historicism, his dialectical perspective enables us to grasp revolutionary events. The time of revolution is, for Benjamin, Messianic time. In this sense, he distinguishes the time of the event from the empty time of history, the consequence of which is bare repetition, or history as a pile of non-events that produce no difference. And we need to consider Benjamin and Deleuze together because their understanding of revolutionary events is not subordinated to the linear understanding of time, either spatially or historically. It is 'outside' of the directional, determinist movement, pointing toward a spectral, virtual aspect. Echoing Benjamin's dialectical image, Deleuze and Guattari (1994: 112) write: "it [the future] is the infinite Now, the Nun that Plato already distinguished from every present: the Intensive or Untimely, not an instant but a becoming." Though Deleuze gives too much importance to the concept of becoming than Benjamin does, it is safe to say that Benjamin's task to "brush history against the grain" (Benjamin, 1969: 392) refers to revolutionary change both in theory and practice that seems to be closely related to Deleuze's becoming.

Benjamin, like Deleuze, sees revolution as an 'untimely' intervention that disperses the historical continuum, allowing the agent to seize and to be seized by the moment. Two points are of crucial significance here. First, revolutionary or divine violence has an actual existence, while at the same

time it contains within itself possibilities for change, which links it to the domain of the virtual. Importantly, these possibilities, virtual potentialities are not abstracted from the real, but “are real without being actual” (Deleuze and Guattari, 1987: 94). That is to say, the virtual indicates the infinite potentialities for new emergent actualisations. Second, since society also has an actual existence, what matters for divine violence is the surface between the actual and the virtual. This surface, in other words, refers to a double serialisation, which contains two kinds of events: virtualisation and actualisation, or ideal events and actual events. The two series, however, should not be thought of as “equal” events (Deleuze, 1990: 37). Rather the virtual aspect of new emergent possibilities is always in relation to its actual aspect. Thus the virtual and the actual are intimately connected.

To put it bluntly, there “must be at least two multiplicities, two types, from the outset” (Deleuze and Guattari, 1994: 152). Like Benjamin who emphasises the interaction between past (the time of the virtual) and the present, the two types of multiplicities (actual and virtual) in Deleuze are not distributed on a *single* line but continuously enables interaction, a continuum of sorts between the virtual and the actual (ibid. 152). In both Deleuze and Benjamin, therefore, an actual “state of affairs” cannot be separated from the whole of the past, the time of the virtual (Benjamin, 1969: 255; Deleuze and Guattari, 1994: 156). The virtual, for both Benjamin and Deleuze, does not lack existence but only needs an actualisation

process. Put very simply, events, for them, are already in our world, practiced in the shadow of the existing order. There is no other place from which an event emerges. And this reciprocal movement means a subject which is always in a state of becoming.

The actualisation process is in two forms. First, the agent actualises the event by seizing the moment, unknown potentialities. The event's unknown potentialities occur always in the present in which the past and the future of the event are interpreted with respect to its embodiment (actualisation), that is, a present, at which the truth of the event is grasped by the actor, made present (Deleuze, 1990: 150, 152). Thus divine violence connects two opposing paths: the past and the future, what has been and what is to come (Nietzsche, 1961: 178); a contracted moment in which the virtual and the actual come together; a contracted moment "in which the present, the past and the future merge together." This connection is of course the gateway to the present moment (Diken, 2012: 27, 35). Second, the interpretation requires a subjectivity, which, too, is transformed in the process of interpretation. As a result of acting, the actor becomes "worthy" of the event through a process of "counter-actualization" (Deleuze, 1990: 148, 151). In other words, the physical actualisation of the event is accompanied by the actor through a process of counter-actualization. In actualisation the subject seizes the moment, the event as unknown potentialities, whereas in counteractualisation the event seizes the subject that is longer determined by historical conditions but determines the

conditions that determine her. With the two sides of the event – actualisation and counteractualisation - there emerges freedom and a ‘free subject’ who “grasps the event and does not allow it to be actualised as such without enacting, the actor, its counter-actualisation” (ibid. 152). To reiterate, divine violence addresses the ethical subject that is its principle; it refers to ethics as being worthy of what happens to us (ibid. 149).

In this sense, divine violence is not necessarily a religious experience because it is *always in the world*. It does not wait for some magical intervention; it itself is an intervention into time, the moment, the present, in order to change the course of history in favour of revolution. Thus divine act prepares for the event even though its date of arrival remains unknown. Divine violence, then, is an untimely intervention into history with a view to bringing forth a new society. For this reason, Benjamin’s messianism has to be seen in conjunction with his Marxism, a revolutionary philosophy committed to the event. This aspect is what seems to be missed or overlooked in Derrida’s critique. In Benjamin’s revolutionary politics, divine violence is intimately connected to human action. Divine violence signifies “a Messianic cessation of happening” (Benjamin, 1969: 263); it is thus characterised by a cessation of myths and idols as well; human actors prepare the way for revolutionary action to fill the space of cessation. Divine violence and purposeful human action are two sides of the same coin. It is this connection that makes divine violence manifest itself in *this world, in the here and now*.

In this way human actors become able not only to alter their creaturely attachment to the existing order and God-sovereigns, but to rethink their approach to questions of law and justice as well. Divine violence is what stands against norms of the given, of sovereign spectacle. When the central narrative of the existing order and sovereign authority is disrupted, we find that we cannot passively wait for a justice that never arrives. The divine manifestations in this world are not fragments of futurity, of an impossibility we can await without expectation. Aiming to redeem the oppressed past, divine violence does not act for future promises; it is found in present-day-life (Benjamin, 1999a: 297). In this sense, every moment is of crucial importance because there is a “peculiar revolutionary chance” in every historical moment which is “grounded on the right to enter the formerly closed past” (Benjamin, 2003: 402). That is to say, an ‘intoxicating’ component that results from being ‘seized’ by the moment lives in every moment of revolutionary subject. However, an intoxicated subject is never good enough. For “...to place the accent exclusively on it would be to subordinate the methodical and disciplinary preparation for revolution entirely to a praxis oscillating between fitness exercises and celebration in advance” (Benjamin, 2005: 216). Intoxication and revolutionary strategy are thus inextricably linked. Critique as divine violence is as much about the intoxicated subject as it is about strategy. While one “seizes the moment”, one must also be “seized by the moment” (Diken, 2012: 35-6). In short, strategic timing of the event and fidelity to the event constitute a double necessity. This is why revolution cannot be thought of without the

perspective of 'history', that is, from the perspective of 'objective' facts and interests. "Whatever leads to revolution belongs to the meaningful time of real history" (Sloterdijk, 2010: 65). The course of this history is analogous to a combination of strategy and intoxication. If there is no "desire", there can be no "seeing" (see Žižek, 2007b: 5). If there is no intoxication, there can be no revolutionary event.

Consequently, true political intervention consists of the two dimensions of *kairos*, strategy and intoxication, in a materialist context. And, as shown above, here lurks danger. So long as the desire for revolution remains unsatisfied, it results in a feeling that "everything deserves to pass away" (Nietzsche, 1961: 162). Or, with Deleuze and Guattari (1987: 229), a line of flight can lose its creative potential and become a line of "destruction, abolition pure and simple, the passion for abolition." This is precisely what happens in spiteful destruction. What is at issue here is the ambivalence of divine violence. While mythic violence "will be recognizable as such with certainty", divine violence, "the expiatory power of [divine] violence is invisible to men" (Benjamin, 1999a: 278). Divine violence, then, is best characterised as an aporia, not an antinomy. As a strategic predicament, as an immanent exception, as a revolutionary act that makes political interventions, any experiment with divine violence involves a radical undecidability because it is 'beyond measure' in that it has a virtual dimension, an excess in relation to actual relations of power and domination (Dillon, 2008b: 11). Even though Derrida consistently argues

that the aporia must be lived through, he seems to neglect an important aspect of divine violence: that of the passage between actualisation and virtualisation. Divine violence is as much about actualisation as it is about virtualisation. It is as much about the disruption of the given which is actualised in concrete situations, as it is about a contingent decision that aims to transcend actualisation. In the lack of a contingent decision, of a strategic calculus, divine violence can always become a violent force of despair, of destruction. If divine violence is essentially aporetic, and the essence of the aporia is not passive but performative, there is neither passion nor freedom without the experience of aporia. In this sense one cannot escape aporias; they must be lived through. "What is excessive in the event must be accomplished, even though it may not be realized or actualized without ruin" (Deleuze, 1990: 168).

If divine violence consists in a radical contingent decision which is a sign of the virtual, it necessarily involves the suspension of the given. In this sense, the actuality of divine violence cannot be infinitely deferred. The aporia must be lived out. After all, divine violence is valuable only in so far as its virtual aspect is not exhausted. And there is always a passage from the virtual to the actual. It is in this way that the whole time, the time of the virtual, becomes a transformative potential, which is no other than relating the actual to the virtual. Revolutionary chance is present in socially specific constellations, which are "'historical objects', politically charged monads, 'blasted' out of history's continuum and made 'actual' in the present"

(Buck-Morss, 1991: 221). Radical critique envisions creating spaces where the virtual historical transformation and the actual meet in revolution. In this way the 'spirit' of the past is animated and embodied in the present. The past recalled (the virtual) and the present perception actualised in concrete situations is transformation through repetition with no conclusion to historical time. Thus radical critique can emerge out of repetition, not against it; it is a repetition that creates "something that has never yet existed" (Marx, 1852/2002: 10). It is, in short, a productive repetition which produces something new, a resurrection of the past events.

As such, radical critique remembers the past (the spectre) in order to avoid the mistakes of the past (the ghost) (Diken, 2012: 84). For the past is fully real, a virtual hole, not a closed sum of political events. What we have here is a critique which repeats not an aspect of the past but a recognition that puts the actual and the virtual, strategy and intoxication into interaction. Combining in the right measure both revolutionary intoxication and strategic predicament, what matters for critique as divine violence is the 'surface', the mediation between the actual and the virtual, which is precisely what disappears in spiteful destruction. The true difficulty, and the task of radical critique, however, is to link together divine violence and its outcome, without falling back on spiteful destruction.

Chapter Eight

Conclusion: The Militancy of 2011 and the Time of Revolution

“There has never yet been human life, but always just economic life.”
(Bloch, 2006: 18)

Recall the moments in Times Square, where Occupy Wall Street activists were confronted by police. New York Police officers attacked with batons, pepper spray and horses in order to prevent the protesters from gathering in Times Square. Police officers' rage was understandable, for in Times Square, we witnessed angry protesters who turned the world upside down. What Occupy Wall Street suggests is that people are no longer determined by capitalist excess, but determine the conditions that determine them. It shows the interaction between the virtual (a philosophical ideal, revolution) and the actual (angry protesters) that is at war with visible reality (neoliberal capitalism). Occupy Wall Street, therefore, represents a movement in which the stability and the certainty of neoliberalism became yesterday's bad memory. Times Square, the capital of consumerism and the capitalist spectacle, makes a powerful setting for Occupy Wall Street's struggle: “shiny walls of towing glass, the citadels of corporate entertainment, dazzle among the giant screens” (Jones, 2011).

But, in Times Square, no one looked entertained. Rather the capitalist imperative to enjoy ceased to exist and was replaced by genuinely angry and determined human beings who did not protest just against austerity, corruption, or corporate greed, but against the *system* itself. They put neoliberal capitalism in the dock. As the protests have made clear, market fundamentalism and a universal fear of state power are insufficient answers to the question of how to sustain a global order. Everyone knows that Occupy Wall Street and its slogan “We are the 99 percent” against the profiteering 1% tells the truth, the truth of the system coming to an end. It politicises, visualises, and expresses the fact that ‘We are not all in this together. Let us awake to the destruction of the present!’ It reflects, in other words, a radical shift, a radical critique that focuses on the internal dynamics of the system, for the phrase focuses attention on massive inequality and injustice that characterise neoliberal capitalism.

Occupy Wall Street and the alternative political possibilities it has revealed may yet prove to be a catalyst for radical structural change. That is not the point. Occupy Wall Street is a turning point in history, not only because it succeeded in putting neoliberal capitalism at the centre of debate, which so recently seemed the only game in town, but also because it has illustrated “how political engagement with reality can rekindle the imaginative possibilities” (Sparrow, 2012). Occupying a place day and night, surrounded by crowds shaking the ground with a joy of togetherness and friendship, is a change, already happening and shared.

Neoliberal capitalism has dominated the world over the last three decades. Margaret Thatcher claimed that “there was no alternative to capitalism.” After the fall of the Berlin Wall free-market capitalism ruled universally, the communist alternative turned out to be impossible, and Francis Fukuyama (1992) declared history’s end in which liberal democracy, or neoliberal capitalism seemed incontrovertible. Bill Clinton and Tony Blair, the pioneers of neoliberal post-politics, led the left to embrace ‘free-finance’ friendly Third Way politics. As a result, ours has become a world in which people can easily imagine the end of the world but not that of capitalism (see Žižek, 2009: 78).

What we see in Times Square is the end of that consensual neoliberal order, which is going out of joint. What we see collapse is neoliberal capitalism, which declares that ‘the greatest happiness of the greatest number’ is only possible through the existence of an unfettered market economy. In a naïve expectation of a ‘just justice’, what we get instead is neoliberal and militarised post-politics, a network of cruel and militarised social regimes that has come to define politics in contemporary times. In short, it is neoliberal capitalism which has clearly emerged as the name of *the* problem. What we see rise instead is nothing other than radical critique that is inseparable from the concept of revolution. If neoliberal capitalism is the problem, revolution is the answer. After all, revolution is an idea that never disappears.

In this sense, 2011 was a turning point in history, a year of a revolutionary becoming. Together with the Occupy movement, the world witnessed six revolts, in Tunisia, Egypt, Bahrain, Libya and Québec. Specifically, what made the Arab revolts unexpected was not only the collapse of western-backed corrupt and cruel dictatorships, but the fact that they occurred at the hands of the people, notwithstanding Islamists, who demanded freedom and justice. The Arab people have been consistently portrayed as ‘savages’, ‘barbarians’ who are not ready for democracy. However, they have shown us what democracy is. What we could and should learn from the Occupy movement and the Arab uprisings is that we aren’t powerless, depotentialised; we have a choice. The *event* is not far away. Central, then, to the Occupy movement and the Arab uprisings is the idea of event, which enables an opening to the virtual within the actual. The uprisings have demonstrated that history is a theatre, a virtual potentiality where human actors can produce new events. In short, the event occurs between us, the people, who have been silent for a long time – “people, who are present in the world but absent from its meaning and decisions about its future” (Badiou, 2012: 56). Thus they have illustrated how the notion of people is an invitation to commitment to the event. One cannot but recognise the thread of radical critique, the link between its moment and its place. The Occupy movement and the Arab revolts signal the arrival of an era in which the politics of hope extinguishes the politics of fear. The people are no longer silent and fearful. It is the governments, their repressive technologies and the universal surveillance state that are afraid of the people now.

Put simply, nobody predicted these revolts. They truly were 'events' in the sense that they marked the beginning of a new era in which radical critique extinguishes revisionist or decaffeinated critique. OWS and the Arab revolts recentred radical critique on struggle against neoliberal capitalism. They showed that neoliberal capitalism doesn't work.

How should we read the sign of this process? Quoting the French historian Andre Monglond, Benjamin (1999b: 482; see also Žižek, 2012: 128) writes: "The past has left images of itself in literary texts, images comparable to those which are imprinted by light on a photosensitive plate. The future alone possesses developers active enough to scan such surfaces perfectly." OWS and the Arab revolts are such signs from the future, referring to a dialectical image in the Benjaminian sense rather than making a vulgar historical claim that revolution has already fully actualised. Hence "we should turn around the usual historicist perspective of understanding an event out of its context and genesis" (Žižek, 2012: 128). Revolutionary events cannot be understood in this way: instead of analysing them from the usual historicist perspective, we should affirm the interaction between the actual and the virtual, an interaction which enables us to see OWS and the Arab revolts as signs from an utopian future "which lies dormant in the present as its hidden potential" (ibid. 128). Referring to a Proustian dimension, Deleuze (1989: 39) argues that "people and things occupy a place in time which is incommensurable with the one they have in space." The magical word in this respect is in place which is here, whose time is not

the chronological empty time but the now-time, the time of the emancipated future, the future of revolution. After all, revolution is an ongoing process. Thus we should strive for a delicate balance between the virtual and the actual without falling back upon either passivity or spiteful violence. As mentioned before, what matters is the interaction between signs from the future and “the radical openness of the future”, for it contains unpredictable and contingent potentialities. In short, revolutionary signs from the future should be seen as signs from a future full of potentiality, which will become actualised if we remain open to that future and read these signs as guides (Žižek, 2012: 128).

In Occupy Wall Street and the Arab revolts, masses seized the moment and were seized by the moment. What we have here is a resurgence of political will – a kind of revolutionary intoxication which is inextricably connected to strategy. What’s more, the space of the event is not reducible to the empirical space. One should never underestimate the political power of place because it can become a space of critique, dissensus and collective resistance to build new, potential worlds. Zuccotti Park and Tahrir Square resistances have demonstrated that people can clearly use places to house political energy. While the free movement of capital exists as an invisible abstraction, occupying a place is exceedingly concrete, a visible presence at the spaces of hope. The politics of hope, it seems, finds “shelter nowhere but in the tents pitched on public squares” (Bauman, 2012: 14). Instead of the market, or competition, the protesters depend upon cooperation;

instead of reckless individuality, they rely upon collective solidarity. In short, Zuccotti Park and Tahrir Square are indications of how places are common grounds; they haunt the imaginations of people who can build a consciousness toward existence. The place is intimately connected to the event:

“In the stride of an event, the People is made of those who know how to solve the problems brought about by the event. Thus, in the takeover of a square: food, sleeping arrangements, watchmen, banners, prayers, defensive actions, so that in the place where it all happens, the place that is the symbol, is kept for the safeguarded for the people, at any price. Problems that, at the level of the hundreds of thousands of risen people mobilized from everywhere, seemed insoluble, all the more that in this place the State has virtually disappeared.” (Badiou, 2011)

After all, an event is valuable in so far as it transcends the empirical space, and links us to the virtual, the untimely. The topological space of the event is the space of creative destruction. The space of the event is, in short, one in which the new eternally returns. It is at this point that the importance of Occupy Wall Street and the Arab revolts should be situated, as they epitomised the very antagonism between the empty, chronological time (of measurement) and the virtual (immeasurable) time, the ‘time for revolution.’ In their struggle, the mediation between the virtual and the actual was of crucial significance. Their resistance had an actual existence, while at the same time contained within themselves possibilities for change, which linked them to the domain of the virtual. Their struggle, in other words, involved a double serialisation, which contained two kinds of events: virtualisation and actualisation.

The actualisation process was in two forms. First, since the virtual (idea) and the actual (the protesters) were inextricably bound to the event, the demonstrating masses actualised the event by seizing the moment, unknown potentialities. Reading the signs in the given situation, they grasped the moment of opportunity by a strategic decision. Theirs was, in short, an untimely intervention in which the past and the future merged together; a contracted moment where the virtual and the actual came together, rectifying capitalism's injustices and inequalities and imagining a different future. This was of course the gateway to the present moment, revealing a non-linear time in which unknown possibilities are not pre-given but created with revolutionary action.

Second, by means of an interpretation (reading the symptoms, signs available in the existing situations), the occupiers were, too, transformed in the process of interpretation. As a result of acting, they became worthy of the event through a process of counteractualisation. Put differently, the physical actualisation of the event (Zuccotti Park, Tahrir Square) was accompanied by the demonstrating masses through a process of counteractualisation. In actualisation they seized the moment, the virtual as domain of political possibilities, whereas in counteractualisation the moment, the event seized them. Consequently, they were able to determine the historical conditions that determined them for a long time. With the two sides of the event - actualisation and counteractualisation - there

emerged freedom and 'free protesters' who grasped the political event as a revolutionary becoming.

In their upheaval and disruption, time was experienced intensively: in their tent cities some kind of elemental process took place where the living fabric of life was transformed into the experimental commune. Their struggle was exactly to transcend the empty, chronological time, transforming the places into a virtual centre in which new potentialities emerged. There was incessant political debate. Both Zuccotti Park and Tahrir Square created an immense impetus for the intentional acting of a revolutionary subjectivity ('the struggling, oppressed classes'). Everything was shared, from space, thoughts to beds and food. Developing a culture of dissent and confrontation, the protesters shared ideas/thoughts, avidly discussing them, mobilising a life around an idea. As a result, Zuccotti Park and Tahrir Square became a microcosm of debate, a profusion of ideas, a site of encounters, which enabled the occupiers to organise a life around an idea in the service of a *moment of awakening*. In a sense, this historical awakening was an escapist logic, but it was not an escapism which seeks to hide from the world. Rather it was an escapism from hell, the very hell of neoliberal capitalism, which followed through into escape from the present.

Concomitantly, the protesters not only struggled against neoliberal capitalism, but also against the 'dirty tricks' used by the governments. Mobilising the repressive state apparatus of the police and armed forces, the govern-

ments did everything to savage the occupiers, smear their opponents, and manipulate, channel, and repress the participants' tremendous energy, thus illustrating what Alain Badiou (2012: 18-9) calls "zero tolerance" for the occupiers and other participants and "infinite tolerance for the crimes of bankers and government embezzlers which affect the lives of millions." Despite all these difficulties, the demonstrating masses' appeal must be understood at the level of strategy and revolutionary intoxication, which are keys to a transformed relationship with the world, a revolutionary becoming.

What we've learned from the Occupy movement and the Arab revolts is that neoliberal capitalism is not the only alternative, conceivable economic system - in short the realisation that there *is* an alternative. Before 2011, one couldn't even imagine an alternative to neoliberal capitalism. But the revolts showed that we can now at least imagine new political possibilities. In short, they finally managed to break the 30-year stranglehold of neoliberalism that has been placed on our thoughts and imagination, a counterrevolutionary thought which has been writing the history of human relations as market relations for over 30 years.

There remains one issue to be clarified however. The militancy of 2011, it seems, didn't itself have the force necessary to topple the existing social order. As I argued before, today even great successes can be contained and neutralised by neoliberal capitalism. Thus, it is not enough to reject neolib-

eral capitalism; one should also begin to think seriously about what kind of system we desire instead of capitalism. Since neoliberal capitalism has appeared as the name of the problem, it seems the time had come to think about new political possibilities: the very nature of neoliberal capitalism, fear, money, debt and inequality; to ask what 'capitalism' is actually for. What social system can replace capitalism, what idea can replace it? These are the questions that we all need to ask; questions that should prompt us to think about new political possibilities and search for new emergent forms of organisations such as communism.

The crisis of neoliberalism caused us to think politics might be possible. That realisation should deepen and enrich us. Thus we should begin to imagine and experiment with what is possible, since the virtual bears no relationship with the existing order. After all, freedom is valuable in so far as it can mean experimenting with the link between what exists and what happens. If the protests are to become more than 'hapless carnivals', if they are to become a catalyst to change the world, eventually we will undoubtedly have to confront a new form of organisation. Given that we have only just emerged from the neoliberal counterrevolution, it is safe to say that it will take time. So the key will be to sustain the story of Occupy and the Arab revolts through a new political organisation that is as intoxicated as it is open to new emergent possibilities. So we need to do so patiently, respectfully and always in relation to strategy and hard work, the very features that made revolution what it is.

Of course nothing in the long run is only going to be changed by just occupying space. And we still do not know where OWS and the Arab revolts will lead, for we are dealing here not with a *determinate* historical event which cannot be explained by economic and political causality, but the *event as a process* that is still going on. But they will only have an effect on the established order if they match with a new subjectivity that combines both revolutionary intoxication and strategic predicament. Only on this basis can it be possible to translate the new subjectivity into action that offers 'resistance.' For OWS and the Arab revolts to succeed in the long term, the creative and divine dimension of radical critique needs to be put to work, rather than translated into power's language. Only in this way can revolutionary change be effected without falling back upon either passivity or unproductive violence.

In this respect both sides of kairos - strategy and intoxication, seeing and desire, knowledge and faith - are crucial. Strategy without intoxication is useless as intoxication without strategy, that is to say, spiteful destruction which creates nothing new. Revolving around the permanent crisis of its strategic aporia, radical critique establishes a link between the actual (a strategic calculus) and the virtual (revolutionary intoxication), a link which makes it possible for the new subjectivity to positively cause a rupture, to destroy its creaturely attachment to neoliberal capitalism. In short, both sides of kairos are vital for radical critique. What matters is to keep them in relation. And finally, the aporia of critique must be overcome in *praxis*,

which is not reduced to empty, chronological time. The time of critique as divine violence has no 'proper time.' The time of divine violence as critique is never chronological time. And if radical critique still persists, refuses to disappear in the new spirit of neoliberal capitalism, this is because radical critique as divine violence inhabits a present in which "time stands still and has come to a stop" (Benjamin, 1969: 254).

The Occupy movement may have been evicted, the spirit of the Arab revolts may have been 'stolen.' But these burgeoning movements have demonstrated that 'no one can evict an idea whose time has come.' That idea, I suggest, is communism.

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