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Zones of indistinction - security, terror, and bare life

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> Today it is not the city but rather the camp that is the fundamental biopolitical paradigm of the West. (Agamben 1998: 181)

The image of the city that proliferates as an object of libidinal investment in recent blockbuster movies is that of a jungle. 12 Monkeys, for instance, depicts a city under invasion from vegetation and animals, the former residents of the Zoo, in the aftermath of a biochemical attack. In the emerging "urban jungle" the law is privatized, chaos is the rule, and city dwellers are forced into underground caves in search of safety. The archetypal link between civilization and barbarism is thus reversed: city life becomes a state of nature, and terror rules, filling inhabitants with an omnipresent fear. This fear is not the fear of punishment that follows the transgression of the law but stems from knowing that there is no law to transgress. Here we have the underlying fantasy behind contemporary urban life: the city is an unpredictable and dangerous site of survival, an "urban jungle". And then of course the hero, the benevolent guerrilla of 12 Monkeys, reenacts the founding myth of civilization/society, creating zones of safety just as the sovereign did in Hobbes' *Leviathan*. Through their decisionist act, a distinction between the law and chaos, between humanity and bare life, is established.

Historically, the city has been imagined as a disciplinary space entrenched by "walls", originating in the act of inclusion/exclusion. Entrenchment establishes a clean-cut distinction between insiders and outsiders, between the subjects and the outlaws. The "outside" is

distinct from the city, but it becomes so primarily through a sovereign act dividing the urban from the non-urban.

The question is whether this idea is still adequate to describe the contemporary city, which is no longer characterized by an inside/outside distinction but by a multiplicity of cross-border flows in every direction. Today, disciplinary enclosure seems to be only one among three organizing principles of urbanism. The contemporary city is also organized according to the principles of "control", based on the regulation/coding of flows, and naked violence, "terror". Concomitantly, what needs to be theorized is the way in which discipline, control and terror co-exist in today's imaginary and real urban geography. We elaborate on this point by stressing the paradoxical relationship between inclusion and exclusion. Following Agamben (1998), we argue that most city life today is situated in "zones of indistinction". We open up with the prototype of spatial indistinction: the camp.

1. The camp

Agamben's *Homo Sacer. Sovereign Power and Bare Life* (1998) can be read as a treatise on the construction of geo-political space. Its primary claim is that the concentration camp is the hidden matrix of the modern, its nomos (Agamben 1998: 166). The camp was originally an exceptional, excluded space, entrenched and surrounded with secrecy. However, the production of "bare life" (life stripped of form and value) is gradually extended beyond the walls of the concentration camp today as the inside/outside distinctions disappear. The argument is not that contemporary spaces are characterized by the cruelty of the German camps (although camp-like structures such as detention centers are spreading quickly) but that the logic of the camp tends to be generalized throughout the entire society (Agamben 1998: 20, 174-5).

Carl Schmitt argued that the "nomos of the earth" is constituted through linking localization (Ortung) and order (Ordnung) to each other: order is conceptualized in spatial terms, as homes, towns and nations; on the outside, disorder reigns. Agamben agrees, but insists on an ambiguity: in the "state of exception" the link between localization and order breaks down, which has been the case since ancient Greece. The concentration camp, however, emerged when the unlocalizable (the state of exception) was granted a permanent and visible localization (Agamben 1998: 20).

 "To an order without localization (the state of exception, in which law is suspended) there now corresponds a localization without order (the camp as permanent space of exception)" (Agamben 1998: 175). The location of the "unlaw" (state of exception) within law transforms society into an unbounded and dislocated biopolitical space. Sovereignty is no longer exercised *in potensia*. The camp signals that the state of exception has become the rule, illuminating how sovereignty works and how a political space is constructed and delimited. In short, the camp illustrates a logic writ large; in Kierkegaard's words, later appropriated by Schmitt: the exception explains the general as well as itself (Agamben 1998: 16; 1999: 48).

Sovereignty works through an act of *abandoning* subjects, reducing them to bare life. The homo sacer and the sovereign are two symmetrical figures: "the sovereign is the one with respect to whom all men are potentially *hominess sacri*, and *homo sacer* is the one with respect to whom all men act as sovereigns" (Agamben 1998: 84). Bare life is not necessarily a life stripped down to its biological existence although the Muselmänner living in the camps are reduced to just that (Agamben 1999: 41-86). Bare life is the life of the homo sacer, of those who can be killed without sacrifice (Agamben 1998: 8). The homo sacer is neither human nor divine. The life of the homo sacer belongs to humans in so far as it cannot be sacrificed and does not belong to it in so far as it can be killed without the commission of homicide (Agamben 1998: 71-74, 81-85). The homo sacer is inscribed in a zone of indistinction situated between the zoē, the natural life common to humans, Gods and animals, and the bios which is the life proper to humans (Agamben 1998: 1).

One of the homo sacer's first instantiations is the werewolf: neither a beast nor a man, dwelling within both without belonging to either; the werewolf is an outlaw that can be killed without the executioner facing any legal sanctions (Agamben 1998: 104-105). Banned and excluded from the city, the werewolf is forced to survive in the forest. This uncivilized state

does, however, not exist prior to civilization. The outlaw, and the forest, is established through *the ban*, through a sovereign act creating both civilization and the state of nature (Agamben 1998: 6). Which allows us to reformulate the relationship between the forest and the city, between nature and civilization. The obvious point of reference here is, again, Hobbes:

> the state of nature is not a real epoch chronologically prior to the foundation of the City but a principle internal to the City, which appears at the moment the City is considered tanquam dissoluta, "as if it were dissolved" (in this sense, therefore, the state of nature is something like a state of exception). Accordingly, when Hobbes founds sovereignty by means of a reference to the state in which "man is a wolf to men", *homo hominis lupus*, in the word "wolf" (*lupus*) we ought to hear an echo of the *wargus* and the *caput lupinem* of the laws of Edward the Confessor: at issue is not simply *fera bestia* and natural life but rather a zone of indistinction between the human and the animal, a werewolf, a man who is transformed into a wolf and a wolf who is transformed into a man – in other words, a bandit, a *homo sacer*. Far from being a prejuridical condition that is indifferent to the law of the city, the Hobbesian state of nature is the exception and the threshold that constitutes and dwells within it. (Agamben 1998: 105-106)

The Nazi concentration camp is an obvious but not the first example of Hobbes' state of nature. Reduced to animal existence, the Muselman had no other concerns than survival (Agamben 1999: 42-43). The camp was placed outside the rule of law: the guards could punish the prisoners randomly, without taking any consequences for their acts, just as the murder of the werewolf was not considered homicide (Agamben 1998: 31). However, the camps relied upon the prior legalization on *Schutzhaft* (Agamben 1998: 167) and the inhabitants were denaturalized according to legal procedures (Agamben 1998: 132). The exclusion of the Jews, the Gypsies and other enemies of the state took place from within the realm of law; it was a case of "inclusive exclusion", that is, sovereignty was not established after the state of nature. The state of nature is nothing else than "the being-in-potentiality of the law" (Agamben 1998: 35-36). The originary sovereign act establishes this ground zero of civilization through an act of "abandonment" of (form of) life, reducing subjects to bare life (Agamben 1998: 29).

During the Weimar years, article 48 of the Weimar constitution was used several times and for long periods to establish a state of emergency (*Ausnahmenzustand*). On February the 28th, when Hitler came to power, he issued a decree for the protection of the people and the state by suspending some basic rights and liberties. The concept of the state of emergency was not mentioned, but the decree remained in force until the end of the Nazi rule, and it thus became permanently impossible to distinguish between the rule and its exception (Agamben 1998: 168). It was a "Night of St. Bartholomew that lasted twelve years" (Drobisch & Wieland 1993: 26; quoted in Agamben 1998: 168).

The sovereign is the one who decides over the state of exception (Schmitt 1922: 19-22; Agamben 1998: 15-16). But this thesis should be read in a non-etatist manner: we do not begin with the sovereign who decides on the state of exception; on the contrary, the one who can declare a state of exception is sovereign. The sovereign establishes the distinction between inside and outside: between law and unlaw, between the sovereign and his subjects, etc. In this respect, the idea that the camp is the nomos of the modern calls for further attention. On the one hand, the camp emerges as a spatial distinction between the inside and the outside. Yet, to say that this biopolitical construction is the nomos of modernity implies that *all* subjects are reduced to bare life: they become subjects with reference to a fundamental distinction between the sovereign and his subjects. *This* conceptualization is only indirectly spatial, which is also why statistics, rather than spatial enclosure, is fundamental to the biopolitical paradigm. The subject of statistics is free to move but reduced to one aspect of its being, to its gender, income, education, or merely to a subject of politics, or in Agamben's words, to bare life. In this sense, the outside of the camp reflects the inside: sovereign power reigns on both sides of the divide as potentiality and as actuality. In other words, the distinction between inside or outside, between freedom and oppression, citizens and Muselmänner should not deceive one. Modern biopolitics as a whole reduces the citizen to bare life (to Foucault's "docile bodies") addressed through statistical instruments.

Modernity creates a zone of indistinction not so much between inside and outside (of the nation, the town or the home) but by cutting through every subject and the political. The modern subject is simultaneously a subject and an object, subject and subjected. As a member of the "people" the subject becomes both a legislator and an object of legislation (Agamben 2000: 30). The rights won by individuals in their struggle against state authority pave the way for the inscription of lives within state power, hence laying the foundation of the power from which they wanted to liberate themselves (Agamben 1998: 121). The struggle for rights enables a biopolitical paradigm to reduce subjects to bare life.

> Everything happens as if, along with the disciplinary process by which State power makes man as a living being into its own specific object, another process is set in motion that in large measure corresponds to the birth of modern democracy, in which man as a living being presents himself no longer as an object but as the subject of political power. These processes – which in many ways oppose and (at least apparently) bitterly conflict with each other – nevertheless converge insofar as both concern the bare life of the citizen, the new biopolitical body of humanity. (Agamben, 1998: 9)

Modern sovereignty does not only work according to the disciplinary logic of exclusion. Disciplinary confinement, and thus exclusion and normalization constitute only one of the three spatial principles embodied in the camp. The camp is also a space of control organized according to a science of flows, manifesting a biopolitical paradigm à la Foucault. Control does not demand the delimitation of movement but rather abstraction and speed. Significantly, the Nazi regime used the human instinct for survival to make the Jews carry out their own destruction. The Nazi sought to destroy the Jews step by step, making them opt for the "least evil" option each time, which paved the way for the greatest evil. In the camp, there was no space for rest, reflection and comfort: work, finding something to eat and survival were parts of a daily battle, which meant that the prisoners were in permanent movement. What interrupted their controlled flow was terror. In contrast to discipline and control, which operate, respectively, in terms of enclosure and flow, terror functions against the background of fear related to uncertainty, insecurity and unsafety. The prisoner could be hit, at any time, by the guards' anger, the greatest terror being the "showers". Terror immobilizes through fear. It is thus disciplinary without the spatial confinement of discipline and the functional regularity of flows. Let us now investigate these three paradigms – discipline, control, and terror – focusing on how the attempts at escaping from one form of power sediment other, more advanced forms of power.

2. Discipline

Bentham's *Panopticon Writings* (1988) and Foucault's *Discipline and Punish* (1977) describe the production of bare life, placing a spatial emphasis. Regarding Bentham's panoption, Jacques-Alain Miller stresses that:

> The apparatus is a building. It is circular. There are cells around the circumference, on each floor. In the center, a tower. Between the center and the circumference is a neutral, intermediate zone. Each cell has a window to the outside, so constructed that air and light can enter, but the view outside is blocked; each cell also has a grilled door that opens toward the inside so that air and light can circulate to the central core. The cells can be viewed from the rooms in the central tower, but a system of shutters prevents those rooms or their inhabitants from being seen from the cells. The building is surrounded by an annular wall. Between this wall and the building there is a walkway for sentries. There is only one entrance or exit to the building or through the outer wall. The building is completely closed. (Miller 1987: 3)

It is significant that the panopticon was invented as a universally applicable diagram of surveillance to be used in all institutions, e.g. schools, hospitals and workhouses as well as in prisons (Bentham 1995: 31-34). In each case the institution was to be organized around the gaze of a central authority "seeing without being seen"; the inmates could not, and should not, know when they were under the scrutiny of the central authority (Bentham 1995: 34, 43). This threat of being seen by an omnipresent gaze all the time was to make the inmates survey themselves (Bentham 1995: 43).

Bentham was a utilitarian obsessed with maximizing utility and minimizing costs. Punishment was to be accepted only when it served a higher goal: more utility (Bozovic 1995: 3; Miller 1973: 10). The function of punishment was not revenge or an act aimed at inflicting the same amount of pain on the doer as suffered by the victim. The feeling of pain could not be compensated for (Miller 1973: 10). If, however, punishment prevented others from acting out similar wrongs, then the overall utility would increase (Bozovic 1995: 3). In this sense, the panopticon was to remind the outsiders of how much their utility would decrease if imprisoned (Bozovic 1995: 4). The building should be visible form all over the town, preferably built on a small mountain. It should be non-transparent and dark. As the prisoners internalized the gaze of the authority, the citizens would internalize the risk of imprisonment. The ban could strike all – again, sovereignty reigns in potensia, omnipresent yet not necessarily real or actual. "It is the apparent punishment, therefore, that does all the service, I mean in the way of example, which is the principal object. It is the real punishment that does all the mischief" (Bentham 1988: 170; quoted in Bozovic 1995: 4).

Bentham insists that people in the surrounding town should be convinced that the prison was a real institution. Likewise, the prisoners should be certain that the person in the central tower was not a wooden replica; the best way to sustain the fiction of the omnipresent gaze was, in other words, to have a real panopticon signaling the potentiality of a ban (Bozovic 1995: 7). When the prison was opened to the public, the prisoners should wear masks corresponding to their crimes – the mask was more real than what it concealed. The mask ensured that the criminal looked repelling so that the visitors did not feel pity for him in an irrational way. Also, the mask ensured that the punishment achieved the right (rational) goal, and only this goal. If the prisoners could be recognized after their release, a further irrational punishment would be enforced: the public might avoid the ex-prisoner, inflicting pain on him and thus reducing his utility.

> Guilt will thus be pilloried in the abstract, without the exposure of the guilty. With regard to the sufferer, the string of shame will be sheathed, and with regard to the spectators, the salutary impression, instead of being weakened, will be heightened, by this imagery. The scene of devotion will be decorated by – why mince the word? – by a masquerade: a masquerade, indeed, but of what kind? Not a gay and dangerous, but a serious, affecting, and instructive one. (Bentham 1995: 100)

The panopticon sought to manipulate the visual image to maximize utility; fictions built into a spatial design could have real effects. Its primary goal was, therefore, not confinement but the manipulation of self-consciousness. Bentham was interested in creating a God-like effect in the minds of both prisoners and citizens (Bozovic 1995: 14-15; Miller 1973: 5). Above the inspector's lodge a chapel was to be placed and through a vicar, visible through the windows above the cell door, God should make his presence felt in the prison (Bentham 1995: 41). Certainly, Bentham was a materialist who knew that rituals created beliefs and not the other way around, and he was well aware that his materialist theory of religion was a potential scandal. Thus he apologizes for using the word "omnipresence": of course God is the only one who can be all present, and truly sovereign (Bentham 1995: 45).

The panopticon was above all an apparatus, a machine, an engine (Bentham 1995: 31); and in many ways it was a forerunner to other self-sustaining systems. As the guard surveyed the prisoners, the public surveyed the contractor; the contractor surveyed the other contractor through competition, etc. (Miller 1973: 8-9); "all by a simple idea in Architecture!" (Bentham 1995: 95). Through this simple idea, power over the minds of fellow men could be obtained without "unpopular severity, not to say torture – the use of *irons*" (Bentham 1995: 49). The guiding idea is self-governance. Inside the panopticon the walls need to be thick preventing escape, in the penitentiary house they may be thinner and in the hospital maybe just a cloth will do (Bentham 1995: 77). Outside the panopticon one does not need walls; they can be invisible as the moral law. Outer walls exist to generate inner walls. When the guard becomes the super-ego, people may very well be given their "freedom" for they will discipline themselves. The prisoners in the panoption, and the citizens living outside scared about the risk of imprisonment, are both reduced to a bare life. The prison signals, as the forest previously did, the potentiality of abandonment and hence the omnipotence of the sovereign power.

Bentham never saw his ideas realized, but they were, for instance in totalitarian states, which replaced the prison guard with "the party" with secret agents, informers, etc. Bentham's philosophy was totalitarian: everything could be reduced to and measured according to its utility (Miller 1973: 5). What Bentham wanted was total control and transparency. One could go further, as Agamben does, and claim that the central authority could be "the People", that biopolitics does not necessitate a totalitarian party. Bentham invented the homo sacer (see Miller 1973: 23-24).

Reading Bentham this way, one's attention is turned to non-spatial forms of power. The panopticon is a technology constructed to make people internalize the sovereign gaze. Sovereignty becomes omnipresent through invisibility. The mystery of power is founded in this paradoxical relationship between absence and presence. The sovereign shows himself only through his acts of abandonment, which is also why the "outsiders", the citizens, can be disciplined without confinement. What looks like an engine producing welfare (utility) turns up as an apparatus reducing people to bare life.

This ambivalence was utterly visible in the panopticon regarding the function of the "speaking-tubes". A system of tubes had to be installed, linking the inspector's lodge and the cells so that the authority could hear the slightest whisper, command every single prisoner through his speaking trumpet (Bentham 1995: 36, 112). The omnipresent gaze thus finds its parallel in "walls with ears". Yet the same technology could be employed in hospitals, replacing the guard with another authority, the doctor. In the hospital:

> the use of the tin *speaking-tubes* would be seen again, in the means they would afford to the patient, though he were equal to no more than a whisper, of conveying to the lodge the most immediate notice of his wants, and receiving answers in a tone equally unproductive of disturbance. (Bentham 1995: 84)

In Kafka's short story, "Der Bau", the nameless animal that narrates the story is obsessively engaged in building an inexpugnable burrow. The burrow however turns into a trap with no way out. Agamben asks: "isn't this precisely what has happened in the political space of Western nation-states? The homes – the 'fatherlands' – that these states endeavored to build revealed themselves in the end to be only lethal traps for the very 'peoples' that were supposed to inhabit them" (Agamben 2000: 140).

As confinement becomes a trap, masters and slaves become interchangeable. The prisoners of the panopticon are slaves restricted in all aspects of their being in a gigantic calculation of utility. Inversely, the patients are masters whose slightest whisper works as a command. Or is it the other way around? Who is surveying whom? Who is the sovereign? The more one tries to understand the panopticon, the harder it becomes to distinguish between master and slave, subject and object, inside and outside, and reality and fiction: the terms merge into each other and enter into a zone of indistinction.

3. Control

> While […] the disciplinary establishments increase, their mechanisms have a certain tendency to become 'de-institutionalized', to emerge from the closed fortresses in which they once functioned and to circulate in a 'free' state; the massive, compact disciplines are broken down into flexible methods of control […]. Sometimes the closed apparatuses add to their internal and specific function a role of external surveillance, developing around themselves a whole margin of lateral controls. (Foucault 1977: 211)

Foucault operates with two images of discipline: first, the enclosed institution "on the edges of society, turned inwards towards negative functions" and, second, a dispositif that improves the exercise of power "by making it lighter, more rapid, more effective" (Foucault 1977: 209). It is the latter image that Deleuze (1995) employs to discuss the emergence of post-disciplinary "societies of control" today, insisting that contemporary technologies constitute a new social topology, in which the geographical/institutional delimitation of discipline, that is, the inside/outside distinction, has become obsolete. As against the persistent image of discipline as an "anti-nomadic technique" that endeavors to "fix" mobilities (Foucault 1977: 215, 218), power itself goes nomadic today.

In control societies, one no longer moves from one closed site to another (family, school, barracks, prison, etc.) but is increasingly subjected to free-floating, nomadic forms of control (Deleuze 1995: 178). Inclusion and exclusion take place through continuous, mobile forms of surveillance as is the case with electronic tagging, risk management in relation to "networks", or cross-border regulation with respect to divergent sets of flows of subjects and objects. Whereas discipline worked as an "instrument of immobilization", post-panoptic forms of power target the conduct of mobile subjects (Bauman 1998: 51-2). Neither demanding nor promising normalization they engage in pre-emptive risk management (Rose 1999: 234).

Control is digital, it translates everything into the logic of codes and passwords, and thus transgresses the duality of mass and individual. "Individuals become '*dividuals*,' and masses become samples, data, markets, or '*banks*'" (Deleuze 1995: 180). Focusing on biosurveillance methods through access to tissues, fluids and images available from the body itself, control transforms "the body into a password" (Lyon 2001: 75). Post-panoptic power can interpellate the subject in absentia through electronic lists (see Poster 1996). Regulating a fluid and endlessly divisible, fractal, "multitude" rather than "peoples", control produces a hybrid, metastable subjectivity that no longer corresponds to stable identities of the disciplinary society (Hardt & Negri 2000: 331-2). In this sense control brings with it an infinite intensification of discipline in a smooth space devoid of enclosures; control is discipline without walls, a mobile form of discipline that regulates humans and non-humans "on the move" (Lyon 2001: 63). Nomadism was once a critical tool against discipline, a "line of flight" out of the panopticon, but control society captures nomadic "war machines", accommodating them for its own purposes (see Deleuze & Guattari 1987: 387).

Moving from "exceptional discipline" to "generalized surveillance" (Foucault 1977: 209), control extends the logic of the camp. With intensified and direct biopolitical access to bare life, control "knows no outside" (Hardt & Negri 2000: 413). Its logic transgresses the binary logic of the inside/outside distinction for it is a "decentered and deterritorializing apparatus of rule" (Hardt & Negri 2000: xii). Modern discipline had played upon the distinction between inside and outside; post-modern control, in contrast, constitutes an "ou-topia", a non-place (Hardt & Negri 2000: 190). When there is no outside left, the zone of indistinction opened up by the camp becomes the smooth space of control, a generalized space of indistinction. Which turns discipline itself into a simulacrum: in control society "prisons are there to hide that it is the social in its entirety, in its banal omnipresence, that is carceral" (Baudrillard 1994: 12).

The city as a complex technological artifact illuminates the logic of control. Systems of control are urban phenomena; cities constitute nodal points in mobile societies of surveillance, and even cyberspaces are congested "around conventional urban areas" (Lyon 2001: 53-4). Yet this is misleading because the "conventional city" no longer exists. The contemporary city is no longer founded on the divide between its "intramural" population and the outside; "it no longer has anything to do with the classical oppositions of city/country nor centre/periphery" (Virilio 1997: 382, 390). The city of control is an immanent space, a reticular ou-topia, sharing with all other networks a "fibrous, thread-like, wiry, stringy, ropy, capillary character that is never captured by the notions of levels, layers, territories, spheres, categories, structure, systems" (Latour 1996: 370). It is Rem Koolhaas' fractal "generic city", which "cannot be measured in dimensions" (Koolhaas 1995: 1251). With Derrida, the city of control cannot be Whole; with Baudrillard, it cannot be Real; and with Virilio, it cannot be There (see Koolhaas 1995: 967).

The new urbanism refuses "meticulous definition", "the imposition of limits" and a "definitive form" (Koolhaas 1995: 969). Tom Nielsen (2000) has coined the concept of "surplus landscapes" to conceptualize this "formless" city. What was hitherto formless, the indistinct zones in-between centers and peripheries, now tends to extend to the whole landscape, including the city itself. Transgressing its limits and its inside/outside divide, the city is becoming an indistinct space: a "camp". Bataille had contrasted the solid forms of "architecture", that is, homogeneity or the law, with "fluidity", that is, heterogeneity or transgression (Bataille 1997: 128). The generalization of the "formless", of the camp, is the normalization of Bataille's utopia. Hence the main attraction of the generic city "is its anomie" (Koolhaas 1995: 1251). The generic city is, in a sense, the "ecstasy" of the city: "If, in fact, the

era of transgression has ended, it is that things themselves have transgressed their own limits" (Baudrillard 1988b: 82).

Does the generic city, then, consist of an undifferentiated fluidity? No. There are three imperatives of control. First, control is all-inclusive on the basis of an undiscriminating universal notion of right fit for the generic, smooth space. But, secondly, it involves a moment of re-differentiatiation, e.g. in terms of informational or cultural identities, which functions as an apolitical impetus for identification. This differential moment is followed by the management of differences through "circuits of movement and mixture" that replace the disciplinary enclosures (Hardt & Negri 2000: 198-9). Flows of "dividuals" are channeled or blocked in prescribed ways (e.g. one is not expected to sleep in a shopping mall), "submitted to a system of interior/exterior traffic control" (Virilio 1997: 381). In "Traffic in Democracy", Sorkin writes:

> Flow seeks to increase speed (and save time) by prioritising the faster means of movement. Safety is often foregrounded as the reason for this system of preferences; the potential for danger, confusion and slow-down resulting from the undisciplined mix gives rise to elaborated structures for vetting what traffic engineers call 'conflict' between modes. Typically, this means slower vehicles yield to faster ones and pedestrians to all, walkers deferring to cars, cars to trains, trains to planes, and so on. Modern city planning is structured around an armature of such conflict avoidance. (Sorkin 1999: 1-2)

Conflict and danger arise when flows intersect in unexpected, unwanted ways; flows are "purposeful, repetitive, programmable sequences of exchange and interaction between physically disjointed positions" (Castells 1996: 412). If functional flows cannot connect with or bypass one another, the traffic control is broken down, of which Baudrillard allegorically writes:

> all over the U.S, they have adapted the sidewalks to afford access to motorized handicapped persons. But the blind who used to be guided by the curbs are disoriented, and often are run over. So they came up with the idea of a handrail for the blind along the street, but then the handicapped get caught on these rails in the wheelchairs […]. (Baudrillard 1990: 30)

Further, a paradoxical consequence of mobility is immobility, and this paradox marks the city of control, in which sedentariness/inertia is more a post-mobility situation than one that precedes mobility. "Sedentariness in the instant of absolute speed. It's no longer a sedentariness of non-movement, it's the opposite" (Lotringer & Virilio 1997: 68). Thus, "the generic city is sedated, usually perceived from a sedentary position" (Koolhaas 1995: 1250). In Virilio's account, the life of Howard Hughes, one of the most mobile people in the 20th century and a famous producer of transportation (cars) and transmission (movies), epitomizes life with speed. Hughes was a person obsessed with speed but he ended up a technological monk in Las Vegas, without getting out of bed at all, avoiding all external stimuli. He spent his last fifteen years shut up in a single room, watching films, always the same ones, trying to create a private world of inertia. Hughes was a mobile person who "lost the world" (Lotringer & Virilio 1997: 76-7). Along similar lines, Sorkin mentions Walther Hudson, the world's fattest man, who was forever confined to his bed:

> Hudson's 'luxurious' occupation of physical space bore a striking resemblance to the delimiting privileges of the global elite, who circle the globe with effortless efficiency immobilized in their business-class seats, strapped and wired in […]. This global movement system trades access for privacy: constant surveillance is the price of 'freedom' of movement. Ironically, this surveillance is at its most Draconian for those with the greatest 'rights'. World travelers, for example, are subject to microscopic attention, their activities recorded, correlated, and made available to an enormous invisible government of customs authorities, shadowy credit agencies, back-office computer banks, market research firms, private security companies, advertisers, database gatherers an endlessness of media connections. Pull out your Amex card and we know exactly where you are. Turn your home security system and we know

you've left. Order a special meal and we know there's a non-smoking Muslim in seat 3K. (Sorkin 1999: 8-9)

Kafka's "Der Bau" again, but this time in the form of permanent movement that pacifies and leads to inertia. Control is a line of flight that escapes disciplinary entrenchment, but it has its own discontents, bringing with nomadic forms of repression, and turning the freedom of movement into a new form of sedentariness. What kind of a line of flight, then, can emerge in societies of control? What happens, when the codes of the flows break down?

4. Terror

The great transparency of the world, whether through satellites or simply tourists, brought about an overexposure … [which] led to the need to surpass enclosure and imprisonment. This required the promotion of another kind of repression, which is disappearance. (Gansters had already invented it by making bodies disappear in cement.) (Lotringer & Virilio 1997: 87)

Within the disciplinary diagram of exception, a single central authority watches individuals immobilized on the "edge" of the society; with the diagram of control (e.g. the global market), multiple, deterritorialized authorities watch the mobile "dividuals", the multitude, through generalized biopolitics. Yet control is prone to immanent problems. As flows traverse the surface of control society, their complex global interdependencies bring forth an inherent danger, that any problem at any singular point may potentially have direct effects on all other points. In other words, the virtual center of control society can be accessed from any point, because every point is potentially its center, and thus any crisis in control society may lead to an omni-crisis (Hardt & Negri 2000: 58, 340). The nightmares of the disciplinary society were entropy (lack of centralized co-ordination) and sabotage (opposition); in control society, "the passive danger is noise and the active, piracy and viral contamination" (Deleuze 1995: 180). "Noise" emerges as a problem of miscommunication between the codes and the programs of the horizontally differentiated function systems (see Luhmann, 1989). The "viral", on the other hand, emanates in the form of metastasis and remains indifferent to control, bringing with it transparency (disappearance).

Transparency is a flattening process characterized by the exacerbation of indifference and the indefinite mutation of social domains (Baudrillard 1990: 7, 50). When everything becomes political, politics disappear; when everything becomes sexual, sex disappears; when everything is social, the social disappears, and so on. With the obscenity of the transparent, "there is nothing but the dilation of the visibility of the things to the point of ecstasy" (Baudrillard 1990: 55). As is the case with pornography, extreme visibility leads to the loss of the invisible (seduction). Control society is in this sense not a scene but obscene, off-scene: social change tends to lose its historical dimension, information ceases to be an event, physical geography is cancelled by networks, the political is foreclosed in transpolitics, and the real implodes into simulation. In short, transparency is the answer to the question: "Why does the World Trade Center have two towers" (Baudrillard 1988: 143)? The twin towers of the WTC were perfect parallelepipeds whose smooth surfaces merely mirrored each other, confirming the irrelevance of distinction and opposition in a postmodern world. Canceling out difference, upon which politics is based, the WTC was a symbol of transpolitics: an obscene system in which dialectical polarity no longer exists, a simulacrum, where acts disappear without consequences in indifferent "zero-sum signs" (Baudrillard 1994: 16, 32).

Yet for all that transpolitics is not a peaceful order: the foreclosure of the political and the implosion of the social provoke new, obscene forms of violence: terror, which is not a product of "a clash between antagonistic passions, but the product of listless and indifferent forces" (Baudrillard 1993: 76). No wonder that it is terrorism, naked violence, that has demolished the WTC. Transpolitics and terror, mirroring each other in a smooth space of indistinction, are the twin faces of control society.

Because control society is a virtual order, a simulacrum, its "hysteria" is the production of the real (Baudrillard 1994: 23). Hence the reality-TV show *Big Brother* is "the tragicomic reversal of the Benthamite-Orwellian notion of the panopticon society in which we are (potentially) 'observed all the time' (…): today, anxiety seems to arise from the prospect of not being

exposed to the Other's gaze all the time" (Žižek 2001b: 249-51). Transparency is the source of anxiety of control society. When the real/social disappears, the extreme disenchantment with life becomes an object of perverse desire, invested in the hope that the real will return when the veil of simulacrum is lifted from everyday existence (Baudrillard 2001, Diken & Laustsen 2001). And terror is a traumatic intervention of the "real" into the virtual, symbolic "reality" (see Žižek 2001), hinting at the contours of the "real" behind it: the "desert of the real itself" (Baudrillard 1994: 1).

> If there is any symbolism in the collapse of the WTC towers, it is not so much the old-fashioned notion of the "center of financial capitalism," but, rather, the notion that the two WTC towers stood for the center of the *virtual* capitalism, of financial speculations disconnected from the sphere of material production. The shattering impact of the bombings can only be accounted for only against the background of the borderline which today separates the digitalized First World from the Third World "desert of the Real." It is the awareness that we live in an insulated artificial universe which generates the notion that some ominous agent is threatening us all the time with total destruction. (Žižek 2001: 4)

Terror confronts the *Matrix* of control society, the truth of which is "the de-materialization of 'real life' itself" (Žižek 2001), as a real catastrophe: "terrorism is always that of the real" (Baudrillard 1994: 47).

The figure of terrorism is the hostage, an anonymous figure that occupies a radical state of exception beyond exchange and alienation (Baudrillard 1990: 34-5). Beyond the principle exchange, the hostage is a truly sacral fetish object, a naked, formless body, which is absolutely convertible: anybody and everybody can be a hostage. Killing a hostage sends no messages; it does not have any political efficacy or meaning. Terror is "an event without consequences (and always leads to a dead end)" (Baudrillard 1990: 40).

The situation of the hostage no longer can be related to the idea of freedom based on individual responsibility (discipline) or to the instances of security based on risk management through "objective systems" (control). In stark contrast to both situations, terror does not place responsibility in a definite actor or system; it can hit any individual, without any systemic instance being objectively responsible for it. The absolute convertibility of the hostage brings with it a new constellation of responsibility. Replacing individual and systemic violence with spectacular anonymity, terror generalizes responsibility through the logic of the hostage. Anybody can be hit; thus everybody is blackmailed by (and responsible for) terrorism, which:

> insinuates a wholly different type of relation to power than that based on the violence of interdiction. The latter had a specific referent and an object, and therefore transgression of it was a possibility. Blackmail, however, is allusive, and is no longer based either on an imperative or on the utterance of a law … but plays on the enigmatic form of terror. (Baudrillard 1990: 42)

Every war is "original" because every war re-defines the enemy, but with terrorism the enemy remains unclear; terror is a "formless war" (Lotringer & Virilio 1997: 173). It creates a zone of indistinction – a "camp". Not only terror but also the contemporary (trans)politics of security has much in common with the camp.

> Today we face extreme and most dangerous developments in the thought of security. In the course of a gradual neutralization of politics and the progressive surrender of traditional tasks of the state, security becomes the basic principle of state activity. What used to be one among several definitive measures of public administration until the first half of the twentieth century, now becomes the sole criterium of political legitimation. (Agamben 2001)

The immediate cacophony of discourses in the aftermath of Sept 11 was eo ipso a struggle for hegemony; and the discourse of security in a very short time span articulated its rivals within its own horizon. As security is becoming the dominant discourse, it is today redefining what it means to be a subject subjected to power. Yet there is a paradox in this: the instruments of security and control are fluidity, liquidity, and speed, but politics requires time for reflection and dialogue. Speed and politics form a self-destructive relation: speed is

beyond politics, "exceeding politics, speed blinds it" (Lotringer & Virilio 1997: 86-7). Power based on the speed of flows escapes political territories, disengaging itself from the agora (Bauman 1999: 87).

Forms of life and forms of security are interrelated; security creates society as much as society creates security (Dillon 2001). Yet in contemporary society, which is increasingly drawn into the orbit of security and terror, this relationship is overlooked. Hence "There Is No Alternative": it is a "moral duty" to wage war against terror, whose definition, however, is obscenely indistinct (e.g. Bin Laden: created by CIA and wanted by FBI). The threat against civic culture is, therefore, janus-faced: terrorism and the (trans)politics of security must be thought of together. Both operate in a smooth space, both speak the language of deterrence ("if you do not…"), and both are inherently opposed to the law. Security can easily turn into a perversion: terror.

> The thought of security bears within it an essential risk. 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. (Agamben 2001)

When the police and politics merge, and when the difference between terror and state disappears in obscenity, they start to justify each other, terrorizing the political itself by transforming it into a hostage: the state of emergency. Significantly in this context, the discourse of security conceptualizes the "networks of terror" in timeless frames devoid of casual explanations, and seeks an "infinite" justice fit for the smooth network space, trying to control the disorder through risk management. In other words, it does not seek political solutions to political problems, and "in the absence of an original political strategy […] the state becomes desocialized. It no longer works on the basis of political will, but instead on the basis of intimidation, dissuasion, simulation, provocation or spectacular solicitation. This is the transpolitical reality behind all official policies: a cynical bias towards the elimination of the social" (Baudrillard 1993: 79). When blackmail, intended as a pre-emptive form of action (where is the next war going to take place to prevent war?), becomes the law, "society" implodes into the state, both ordinary and political violence turns into terror. The camp is symptomatic of both security and terror.

No wonder that, with control and terror, urban politics too is depoliticized, and the disciplinary interest in "social justice" (Harvey 1973) and "collective consumption" (Castells 1977) tends to disappear. Yet, ironically, as the production of security is fast becoming the key factor that is transforming the city, the city itself is assuming the status of an object "beyond control" (see Koolhaas 1995: 969). Nevertheless this invites not more politics (à la Bauman and Virilio, for instance) but post-politics: thus, contemporary urbanism has to "dare to be utterly uncritical"; in the "chaos" of the generic city, control is an illusion (see Koolhaas 1995: 969, 971).

> There is in this image an aggressive assertion of something beyond human control: a restless, if impersonal hostility, an antagonism whose source cannot be located entirely in the human, in the common antagonisms of social life. It is as if we were suddenly placed on the side of *Das Ding* and viewing human life … with respect to the Real. But where lies the inhuman *Das Ding*, there is always its human agent. Lacan called it 'Sade'. (MacCannell 2000: 67-8).

Transpoliticization leads to the image of a Sadist city, against which the "citizen" only can assume the passive role of the Sadean victim. With its gated communities and ghettoes (the camp), close-circuit cameras (the obscene), communication and information technologies (control), terrorists and psychopaths (naked violence), and anthrax in the mail (the viral), the contemporary city prescribes security as a life style (see Davis 1990: 226-336). As exception becomes the rule, the "urban" (law) turns into a "jungle" (perversion), assuming a capacity beyond human control. The "urban jungle" is a zone of indistinction, in which the figure of the citizen meets the homo sacer in a struggle for survival.

Nicolas Rose's depiction of the contemporary ghetto is a case in point. Because psychiatric care is now being reorganized around "community", he writes, the fate of early asylums in Britain has become a problem for authorities. And the solution has been to sell these sites of enclosure to private developers who then turn the buildings into luxury apartments. Consequently, the early panoptic spaces acquire a new meaning:

> In a reversal that would be laughable if it were not so sad, these are no longer promoted as measures to secure the community outside from the inmate. They are advertised in terms of their capacity to secure the residents of these luxury conversions from the risk posed to them by that very community […]. High walls, closed circuit video cameras, security guards and the like can now be reframed and represented as measures that will keep threat out rather than keep it in […]. Outside the walls, danger lurks […]. (Rose 1999: 248-9)

In the disciplinary era, exception was enclosed inside the panopticon, and the "ghetto" of those defined as "other" constituted a "camp" in the form of an island of disorder midst order. In control society, there emerges a smooth space of discipline beyond the ghetto walls. Yet, at the same time, due to the problems of noise and the viral, anarchy spreads, too. As "disorder" is generalized across the smooth space, the disciplinary situation is reversed; what has hitherto been exceptional becomes normality. Consequently, there emerge islands of order amidst disorder. These "gated communities" refer to particularistic orders (e.g. cultural, ethnic or class-based), where risks are sought to be minimized in secured zones of discipline, while outside, in the "urban jungle", horror lies in wait.

In short, we are witnessing a cyclic process of creating spaces of indistinction: discipline followed by control, followed with terror, and the return of discipline as the reversed panopticon. This return of discipline is nowhere as evident as in gated communities, which express nostalgia for safety "as if" the terrors of the outside "could be erased from memory". This impossible desire is precisely the aim of their design (see MacCannell 1998: 108). However, as safety and security are seen as absolute achievements, the price to pay is high: the return of discipline, the burrow becomes a trap. Disagreement is suppressed, antagonisms are denied, the accidental is sought to be prevented through pre-emptive risk management. The gated community is an iconic expression of the transpolitical security state. As a "post-war" outcome, "it is also, ironically, the completion of the fascist ideological assault on the modern city as one filled with democratic promise" (MacCannell 2000: 74).

5. Escape

Discipline establishes sovereignty by creating zones of exception through confinement, a logic in which it proves difficult to sustain the difference between the master and the slave, between the free subject and the inmate for they are all subjects of a bare life. Control reverses this, realizing the fantasy generated by the disciplinary society, that of breaking through the wall. Free movement becomes a necessity. However, this gesture brings with it an even more sinister, mobile power. Then, again, master turns into slave, Subject into subject of bare life. "Freedom" of movement (along strictly regulated flows) coexists with confinement and fixation; sheer movement leads to inertia. Thus the utopia generated by control society is that of an unregulated, anarchic flow.

Terror emerges in this sense as a utopia specific to control society, as its line of escape. It invests in insecurity, uncertainty and unsafety, turning citizens into hostages, to *homi sacri*. In the transpolitical war against terror, the state extends exception as a permanent state along a totalitarian line (of flight from terror). The fantasy generated by terror is, in other words, based on the promise of security, certainty and safety. Which brings us back to disciplinary entrenchment as protection against terror. Discipline opens the space for control, control for terror and terror for discipline.

Then, discipline, control and terror do not merely create zones of indistinction in a chronological order. What is interesting is how escape from discipline enables control, how from within control society terror emerges, and how the territorial logic of discipline resurfaces in the aftermath of terror. Discipline, control and terror co-exist, they contain within themselves elements of one another, and their topologies often overlap/clash, which is why it is difficult to "distinguish" one form of power from another and why the space of power must be that of a zone of indistinction.

Clearly though, as one moves from one "camp" to another power becomes increasingly more difficult to escape. Thus, "[c]ompared with the approaching forms of control in open sites, we may come to see the harshest confinement as part of a wonderful happy past" (Deleuze

1995: 175). It is relatively easy to escape discipline, finding a line of flight; with the transpolitics of control escape becomes difficult. "There Is No Alternative" is the order-word of the control society, in which politics is foreclosed, and this provokes transpolitical violence, terror, as a suicidal line of flight. And when the logic of terror and state power merge, when power becomes obscene, there is nowhere to escape. It's over, that was it, curtains. But then, is this not precisely the conclusion demanded by the transpolitics of security? Is there really no genuine possibility of escape?

All dispositifs of power "are defined much more by what escapes them or by their impotence", insist Deleuze & Guattari (1987: 217). There is always a line of flight, but all lines of flight have their own dangers. This is, we think, extremely relevant to recall in the control society, which makes escape infinitely easy, and infinitely dangerous. A line of flight can always become re-stratified; a line of flight deterritorializes, but only in order to invent new territories, longing for safety: discipline. Or, it can turn into a line of death, into total de-stratification: terror, "the line of flight crossing the wall … but *turning to destruction, abolition pure and simple*" (Deleuze & Guattari 1987: 229). Terror is the result of an intense line of flight wanting self-destruction and "death through the death of others" (Deleuze & Guattari 1987: 230).

Only if a line of flight can preserve its immanence, its creative potentials, it can remain truly "nomadic" in the Deleuzian sense. In this respect the definition of nomadism and its relation to mobility is crucial. Nomadism is related to deviation, however slowly, from fixation or the linear movement of flows (Deleuze & Guattari, 1987: 371). It is by deviation and not necessarily by physical movement that the "nomad" creates another space. It is no surprise, therefore, Deleuze, who is often criticized for "romanticizing" mobility, is not so keen on traveling. "You shouldn't move around too much, or you'll stifle becomings", he writes, adding with reference to Toynbee: "the nomads are those who don't move on, they become nomads because they refuse to disappear" (Deleuze 1995: 138).

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