

**THE SACRALIZATION OF TIME:
CONTEMPORARY AFFINITIES
BETWEEN
CRISIS AND FASCISM**

This thesis is submitted for the degree of Doctor of
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In memory of Artur Eduardo Martins Nunes.

Declaration

This thesis is entirely my own work and it has not been submitted for the award of a higher degree elsewhere. None of the sections have been separately published. The thesis is 60429 words length excluding bibliography.

Abstract

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This thesis investigates how crisis relates to fascism by taking into account the role of desire and salvation in response to a situation of crisis. This thesis argues that, in desiring salvation, human experience of time, as crisis, resolves itself into two forms of fascism - ideological and molecular - and two forms of crisis - as a temporality of decision or/and as a temporality of indecision. The relation between crisis and fascism is mainly analysed in the light of three historical periods of crisis in Portugal's contemporary history: the advent of the financial dictatorship (1926), the Carnation Revolution (1974 to 1975) and the financial bailout (2011). These historical periods are further contextualized on the macro and micro-levels, dialoguing with other empirical material that goes beyond the spatial and temporal delimitations of Portugal as a nation-state. In methodological terms, the thesis aims at exploring analogical inferences between examples by recovering the concept of signature as its method of analysis. The idea of using the concept of signature as a method entails seeing how examples produce affinities with each other and how they are displaced from one semantic field to another as well as how they create unpredictable analogies between them. Thus, the thesis explores possible analogies between the examples by means of the signatures of sacralization and profanation: while sacralization concerns the move of concepts, objects and bodies from the earthly, profane sphere to the theological and sacred sphere, profanation implies exactly the opposite movement. The two signatures structurally organize the thesis in two parts: while the first part consists in showing

how crisis sacralizes the human experience of time, the second part points towards the profanatory praxis of crisis as a salvific temporality.

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Introduction

Writing about crisis challenges the basic process of writing. Writing on crisis is writing without a narrative. Although crises are signposts for writing narratives, writing exclusively about crisis as such is a hard task. One can write and read about modernity thanks to revolutionary crises but it is particularly difficult to write about time in a revolutionary crisis. When writing *about* crisis offers crystal clear narratives of certainty, writing *of* crisis is usually missing. As soon as one starts investigating a crisis event, the very borders of the disciplines that one is familiar with seem insufficient to grasp at least a part of what *happens* in crisis. Researching crisis thus requires not only interdisciplinary work but also openness to creatively problematizing the very epistemological boundaries that guide one's research problem.

This project reflects the pursuit of embracing rather than denying the uncertainty of crisis. As a research project, it started from a research interest in discourses of exception and the impacts of the 2007 financial crisis in Portugal. However, it became evident along the years that this research could not rely in one single episteme let alone a case study. Moreover, mere procedural empiricism could not even do justice to that case study. The more one writes about crisis, the more one sees relations between phenomena and concepts that are constantly effaced by the idle talk on crisis. Ten years ago, when the financial crisis was discursively announced in the media, an army of liberal economists were ready to explain it to the ignorant masses that were too dull to understand the wonders of the capitalist system. As also happens with civil disobedience in liberalism, it is just a question of time until that same system gets reformed by *critical* economists (See Lapavitsas 2012).

However, the rationalization of crisis by these critical economists seemed to miss the very crude experience of the great altar of sacrifice that was being demanded on the sinful humans. In countries such as Portugal that experience was suffocating not only because of the generalized impoverishment of the working population but also due to the ascetic practices imposed on the debtors (see Stimilli 2017). Debt collection became the disciplinary exercise of a social totality. Capitalism *as* religion, as simple as it can be, was the dominant sacralization of those times. Marxian oriented research (see Mattick 2011; Varoufakis 2011; Seymour 2014), for instance, was important to demystify the neoliberal discourse on the financial crisis but it hardly touched on the critique of capitalism *as* a critique of religion. Moreover, this form of reasoning is still marginal in the analysis of the 2007 financial crisis. Capitalism and religion continue to appear as two unrelated phenomena, religion being too off-topic to the all too serious political economic analyses. However, as soon as relevant genealogical work about the financial crisis *as* a debt crisis started to make its way to the public sphere and academia, the analysis of capitalism as religion regained its relevance (see Lazzarato 2012; Graber 2011; Stimilli 2017). Interestingly enough, major canonical works in social sciences could never dispense with such an *elective affinity* between those domains (see Weber 1992; Löwy 1992). This project thus starts from this elective affinity between capitalism and religion, understanding capitalism not as a secularized form of religion but *as* religion itself. In other words, the present investigation privileges Benjamin's fragment *Capitalism as Religion* (Benjamin 1997) rather than Weber's *Protestant Ethic of Capitalism* (Weber 1992) and the sociology of religion in general. This means that the sacralization of capital rather than the secularization of religion will methodologically guide this research (see Diken 2016a).

While exploring relations between capitalism and religion in the light of the 2007 debt crisis, Portugal's governments during the crisis led to an increasing problematization of the potential relations between crisis and forms of authoritarianism. Writing on crisis is a hard task but it gives a privileged insight to long forgotten or effaced analogies between not so pleasant ideas. If something became visible during the debt crisis, it was the authoritarian character of debt collection in southern European countries. Consequently, it was unsurprising that the Portuguese Constitution became central to the political conflict during the Troika¹ bailout (Ferreira and Pureza 2013: 250). Governmental economic policies started to be scrutinized by Portugal's Constitutional Court. As soon as the question of the exceptionality of the Troika bailouts became interrelated with the debt crisis, the contemporary political myth portraying authoritarian forms of rule as extraneous to the normal functioning of western liberal democracies started to collapse. The research problem of this project is then here formulated: to what extent does crisis, as a temporality, relate to fascism? Thus, this thesis explores the relations between the concepts of crisis and fascism. It does this through the comparison of distinct historical paradigms of crisis, namely the Portuguese fascist reaction to a regime crisis in the early 20th century and the contemporary liberal responses to the 2007 financial crisis.

In this investigation, however, the relations between fascism and crisis do not resonate immediately from the suspension of constitutional rights or lawless repression. Rather, the conceptual history of crisis already reveals that crisis, in its juridical sense, is foremost about salvation (Kosseleck 2006: 359). For instance, fascist leaders were aware of this aspect as their national messianism promised salvation from crisis. In

¹ Troika was the name given to the joint action of the International Monetary Fund, the European Commission and the European Central Bank during the bailout of Portugal in 2011.

other words, economic crises, but also broader civilizational and moral crises, could be overcome as long as the ideal of a purified nation was accepted and pursued by the population. However, it becomes problematic to make sense of national salvation in the post-war crises of liberal democratic regimes. Moreover, how can such an idea of national salvation, dear to the brutal fascist regimes of the past, still be accepted by the population and actively promoted by liberal democratic states? This question thus requires a reconceptualization of crisis but also of fascism after the catastrophic national salvations of interwar and post war fascisms.

In other words, fascism was hardly conceived as an alien phenomenon to bourgeois liberal society except for left-wing reformism (Rodrigues 2008). The liberal myth of conceiving fascism as a barbarian ideology at the gates of the Empire is all too convenient for governments that rule by abruptly cutting salaries, increasing homelessness, brutally repressing demonstrations and attacking workers' rights. As long as the portrait of the stereotypical fascist leader addressing the *masses* could be recalled, liberal governments could present themselves as democrats. It then becomes an intolerable taboo to problematize the myth of fascism as something alien to the very normal functioning of liberal democracies. Such conception of fascism as an evil that breeds outside the borders of liberal democracies is primarily caused by an understanding of fascism as ideology. Defining fascism as ideology interprets fascism at the level of political representation and identity. In this project, however, the relation between crisis and fascism is not explored in a way that understands fascism only as ideology. Although fascism is revisited in the historical and ideological variety of Portuguese fascism, this project privileges an understanding of fascism less as a historical and ideological phenomenon and more as a permanent phenomenon that permeates and constitutes the very social life of capitalist societies (Evans and Reid

2013: 3). In this respect, Deleuze and Guattari's (2014) understanding of fascism decisively addresses how human desire for repression produces the capitalist social formation. Deleuze and Guattari approach fascism from the perspective of human desire and, in this process, they do not see it as alien to liberal democracies.

In this understanding of fascism, humans are not seen as the passive and immediate victims of external repression. Quite the contrary, following Deleuze and Guattari's (idem) micro-politics approach, they desire their own oppression as much as they desire to be saved from crisis. Before individuals crystallize their authoritarian identity, producing and reproducing authoritarian social formations, fascist desiring machines (subjectivities) initially flow in a suicidal line of death towards self-annihilation (Deleuze and Guattari 2013: 270). In this sense, the fascist desire for self-repression anticipates and is the concomitant of governmental national salvation.

Beyond the fascist drive for self-annihilation, the idea of saving oneself from crisis can also be thought of as a security matter. To put it simply, as a temporality, crisis implies a moment of decision that will possibly resolve the impasse. In contemporary biopolitics, where economic rationalization overcomes any other rationality beyond preventive dispositifs to contain catastrophes, crisis flows in reverse, signposting individuals through constant threats without a way out. In such a void of permanent instability the very moment of decision to solve the instability of crisis is denied to the majority of individuals. This aspect leads to the highly complex ambiguity of the present liberal democratic order when it comes to securitizing capitalist societies: while constantly deploying technologies of security to prevent catastrophic events, crisis is made permanent and without possible solution. As this research will problematize, for historical and political reasons European governments cannot aim at putting an end to the current temporality of permanent crisis. Solutions for crisis have

become a dangerous lexicon after Western messianism saw one of its most brutal sacralized forms emerge in twentieth century fascist barbarism. In itself, this finally leads to an aporia: while technologies of security prevent catastrophic events from unfolding, those same securitized societies induce an eschatological landscape of permanent civil war across the globe.

Thesis Outline

This thesis is organized in two parts: the first part investigates crisis from four dimensions: theology, politics, language and experience. The second part closes the thesis with a chapter on the refusal of those four dimensions. From the first chapter until the last chapter a process of conceptual dissemination unfolds: concepts and relations between them will be spread out to the following chapters and find new relations with new concepts. This means that all the chapters gradually intersect with each other in an ascending order, the research problem working as the vector that crosses, holds and uncovers elective affinities between concepts and phenomena.

This research starts by investigating the theological underpinnings of crisis as a temporality of security. Drawing on the latest research on debt and crisis from a genealogical perspective, this project aims to contribute to an approach to crisis outside mainstream economics and political economy. Chapter 1, Theology of Crisis, explores the relations between crisis, capitalism, religion, debt and fascism. The meaning of these concepts will acquire their specificity as the chapter unfolds. These concepts will be discussed by crossing theology with crisis. This will imply a reevaluation of capitalist processes, such as debt collection, as a paradoxical sacred profanation of capital (Diken 2016a: 111). The chapter also explores all the affinities between those five concepts under the paradigm of *oikonomia* (see Agamben 2011). This theological paradigm can be defined as a permanent salvific management of unpredictable events (Agamben 2011: 50). Thus, *oikonomia* marks the passage of political theology to economic theology (Esposito 2015: 204). As a consequence of this shift, politics, in the classical sense, is now fully *oikonomized* under capitalism.

This crisis economization of the social under the theological paradigm of *oikonomia* is then explored in relation to Spinoza's (1993) formulation of god as activity.

Chapter 2, Politics of Crisis, starts from the theologically defined katechontic crisis (the endless crisis) and relates it to the Arendtian problematization of politics as freedom. In other words, it problematizes how the temporality of the katechontic crisis embodies a politics of deterrence. This politics of deterrence is further discussed with the paradigm of civil war. Following Agamben's reflection (2015), the paradigm of civil war as constitutive of politics will be problematized in contrast to Arendt's understanding of politics as freedom. Subsequently, it will be explained how politics finds an affinity with the unpolitical in the paradigm of *oikonomia*. This affinity emerges from the anarchical principle underlying the salvific management of *oikonomia*. The last section of the chapter explores the spatial dichotomy between sacred spaces and profane spaces. This dichotomy between two kinds of spaces aims at problematizing liberalism as the creator of freed spaces from autocracy in the light of the previous discussion of politics as freedom. The sacred space of politics as freedom relies on the exclusion of the profane field of slavery. It will be argued that this exclusion of the profane spaces, however, entails a paradoxical relation of dependency with them as it was the case with the colonial empires. The section concludes with a reflection on the production of contemporary sacred spaces under societies of control.

Chapter 3 introduces the understanding of crisis as a dispositif of security. After briefly reviewing the different theorizations of the concept of dispositif, the chapter analyses the security dynamics of the dispositif of crisis in the first speeches of Salazar as a finance minister. The analysis addresses the emergence of a katechontic temporality at the core of the salvific politics of the 1926 financial dictatorship.

Consequently, the relationship between finance and the katechon of Salazar's idea of national salvation is explored with the importance of collective sacrifice: only through millions of micro sacrifices can the nation be saved. Such an idea of national unity through millions of micro sacrifices finds a parallel in Jünger's (1998) understanding of total mobilization. As it will be shown, Salazar's financial dictatorship had a continuity with war in its very effectivity in biopolitically mobilizing the entire population. That financial total mobilization, where *every* Portuguese was called on for an individual but also collective sacrifice, was part of the larger project of *national rebirth*. The *care of the self* that entailed individual salvation was then subsumed to national salvation. This same idea of total mobilization for national salvation will also be analysed in relation to the 2011 bailout crisis. The analysis of media texts from that period will problematize the security dynamics of the dispositif of crisis: on one side the *eschaton* of the national bankruptcy and on the other the restrainer of the Troika loan.

Chapter 4 concerns the phenomenological dimension of crisis as a nihilist separation between humans and the profane world that they inhabit. Crisis is problematized as a temporality that sacralizes such relation by purporting a state of submission towards a transcendental world. In this sense, crisis reveals itself as a nihilist temporality that either leads humans to a radical denial of the profane world or to acceptance, not of the profane, but the permanence of fear and passive nihilism of societies of control. Thus, two forms of experience of crisis are taken into account: crisis as decision and crisis as indecision. While the first corresponds to the Modern conception the latter corresponds to the Post-modern experience of crisis. Theoretically, this twofold experience of crisis is explored through Marx's (1991) investigations on *the Law of The Tendency of the Rate of Profit to Fall* and Taube's (2009) indagation on Modern

eschatology. Based on this theoretical apparatus, the chapter aims at a critique of the figure of the militant during the most recent cycle of protests in Portugal in the middle of the 2007 financial crisis. It does so, by showing the preventive political action of a nation-wide activist platform that staged protests against the Troika. This is particularly important to break an apologetic discourse of social movements against austerity, especially in Portugal, that does not question the limits of social activism limited to representational politics (Fernandes 2017; Cairns et al 2016). Moreover, the representational form of social activism still enforces the nihilist dualism at the origin of the experience of crisis. By doing this, this sort of activism falls prey to the dispositif of crisis in its salvific aim. The chapter then concludes with a reflection on militancy without salvation from crisis, that is, a rejection of the nihilist separation between crisis and the militant without the latter necessarily falling into a passive submission to capitalist exploitation.

Chapter 5 signals a shift from the previous chapters' analysis by focusing on the refusal of the phenomenon of crisis by looking at its ontology, praxis and communitarian aspects. The main argument is that refusing crisis entails a refusal of salvation and, consequently, a refusal of fascism. From that moment of refusal of crisis, time is experienced as *kairos*, a contingent temporality that breaks chronological time through revolt. As an example of revolt, the chapter analyses the conflict between *kairos* and salvation in the light of the Kronstadt commune and its repression. It then explores how fascism can also develop from *kairos* at any possible moment in capitalist societies, thus pointing to rejecting the ideological stance of fascism as historically defeated by the capitalist liberal order. Instead, the Spanish Civil War Exile (1936-1939) exemplifies how the capitalist liberal order compromised the defeat of fascism by preserving the human exclusion of concentration camps. The

second section of the chapter concerns the praxis of refusing crisis as well as the correspondent ontology of refusing salvation. By shifting an ontology based on identity to an ontology based on relation, salvation cannot take place as there is no constituted subject or identity to be saved from crisis. Through this ontological shift, temporality is desacralized from crisis and experienced in a profane way.

Ambulant Realities

The present investigation builds upon the remaining traces of the twentieth century's defeated revolutions and revolts, in bureaucratic paperwork, dictator's speeches and corporate media articles in the middle of a financial crisis. Reducing, packing and *schematizing* those rather heterogeneous fragments of time through pre-established analytical categories compromise the creative process of assessing those fragments and the temporal discontinuities that they enact. Keeping their materiality, without simplistic and prejudicial academic empiricism, retains the vagueness, arbitrariness, unpredictability, unsafety and unhealthy realities that create the social totality of crisis. It became clear in the way I was comparing those fragments with each other that the challenge of this research was in my increasing disaffection with the prevalent desire for cleanliness in the social sciences (Law 2004: 9). As a relatively honest social scientist would not deny, the decisions and choices to be made on the crudest quantitative empirical research, the statistics and schemes to be later created, have their inescapable vagueness and arbitrariness, emotional charge and morals. Admitting that bias, as qualitative researchers usually tend to, cannot ethically and politically solve the problem that the way one deals with reality produces reality. When it comes to research on crisis this becomes a paradox. If one does not want to enact crisis then one cannot produce its reality. The possibility of such a reproduction of crisis in reality raises acute epistemological and methodological questions.

Being crisis a disruption of epistemologies, it is surprising how the categories of analysis and results are blind to their foundational axioms, methods and data in research on crisis. The outcome of such uncritical stances is an impoverishment of reality enactment. A *procedural* methodological approach to the social produces

procedural societies: a sad and monochromatic reality of surveys, interviews, focus groups, ethnography and discourse analysis. Furthermore, this *reality* is interpreted as if it is separated from the subjects that analyse it. Those subjects, researchers, are seen as autonomous from reality. However, as Foucault (2007) argues, human sciences accompanied the emergence of dispositifs of security. Data gathering and the analysis of such data aims at preventing the spread of disease, famine and other social catastrophes. They aim at producing a *reality* of security. A form of salvation is enacted through creating such a reality.

This project approaches its empirical material from a different angle since it problematizes one major dispositif of security: the dispositif of crisis (see chapter 3). That angle, that is, the epistemological frame that orientates the project, finds its closest definition in Deleuze and Guattari's concept of "nomad science" (Deleuze and Guattari 2013: 420). Nomad science (or *minor science*) is best defined as a problem oriented model of research in opposition to a theorematic model of science (idem: 421). Instead of theorematic solidifications from inductive and deductive processes of inference², nomad science relies on a "hydraulic model" (idem: 421). Nomad science is a science of flows and becoming in opposition to a "royal science" of static and statist templates (idem: 425). In this sense, nomad science exteriorizes itself from the State's royal science which means that, in Deleuze and Guattari's terms, it presents as the epistemology of the war machine (idem: 420)³.

This kind of epistemology does not close the problem that it opens in a template to be reproduced by the state. The methodological distinction that Deleuze and Guattari

² From the particular to the general and vice-versa.

³ The section that defines and problematizes nomad science starts with the following III proposition of the *Treatise on Nomadology*: "The exteriority of the war machine is also attested to by epistemology, which intimates the existence and perpetuation of a 'nomad' or 'minor science'" (Deleuze and Guattari 2013: 420)

make between “reproduction” and “following” mirrors the distinction between royal science and nomad science (idem: 434). While royal science treats disperse phenomena as variables to be isolated in a “constant form”, nomad science escapes from such concentration by *following* the flows of the raw material (the data) that one is entangled in and indistinct from (idem: idem). In other words, nomad science, as an ambulant epistemology, extends its *logos* in a de-territorialized manner (idem: idem). In contrast, royal science aims at re-territorializing reality towards a “conceptual apparatus” (idem: 435). This re-territorialization of reality in a conceptual apparatus brings the necessary “safety” to the social (idem: idem). As metaphorically explained by Deleuze and Guattari (idem), the falling of the Orléans and Beauvais Gothic cathedrals in the thirteenth century exemplifies how “safety”, a discourse of security, is extraneous to the practice of nomad science. The process of Gothic construction is a singularity in itself, an open ended problematization in contrast to the template *production* of the buildings of royal science (idem: 429). Thus, the example of Gothic construction points to a nomadic form of doing things without a securitarian way of enacting realities.

This ambulant practice of *following* phenomena, however, should not be seen as less capable of enacting realities. Despite its methods being different from the methodological procedures of royal science, nomad science can enact ambulant realities. Once again Deleuze and Guattari (idem: idem) offer another metaphor from Gothic construction: while royal science privileged separate templates for cutting stone, the Gothic journeyman or scientist cut stone through squaring. This latter method implicates the mason in the process of cutting stone without reproducing a pre-given template.

Thus, instead of working my empirical material into a fixed set of procedures, I aim at creating analogies between them as well as between them and different temporal and spatial settings. This means that I do not analyse my empirical material in order to extract a general rule from their specificity or start from a general rule and then analyse them thoroughly to confirm or refute it. In other words, I do not follow inductive or deductive forms of knowledge but an analogical form (Agamben 2010: 19). Thus, the analogical form consists in exposing the singularity of each example and, thereby, making visible the analogy between them but without extracting a universal scientific rule from that process (idem: 31). My focus is on the creative attractions and relations themselves, the *in-betweenness* that the chosen fragments potentially trigger within themselves and with other temporal and spatial phenomena - a form of methodological collage.

Consequently, *following* phenomena implies enacting creative associations between times, spaces and fragments which gives meaning to this problem oriented investigation. Instead of *producing* rigid delimitations of time through periodization and fenced spaces through sovereigntist spatial constructs, the present investigation grounds itself in discontinuity (Foucault 2002a). In this sense, history becomes relevant to this thesis as an object of analysis that crosses all the chapters. Rather than having just a chronology of events, the whole point is to integrate that context into the analysis through examples.

The analogical method that I use in this research proceeds through a basic process that consists in making sense of examples by isolating them and putting them into contact with other examples. As Foucault (2002b) and Agamben (2010) argue, this mode of investigation finds its origins in the theory of *signatures*. The analogical form of knowledge, the very process that analogy puts into motion, defines the meaning of

signatures (idem: 76). Signatures cannot be confused with concepts or signs that refer to a specific object. Rather, signatures are processes which make a given sign intelligible through its resemblance with other signs (idem: 57). Such processes are neither hermeneutical nor semiotic but originate in-between them (idem: 59). In other words, their sense does not come only from reference to the world of objects, neither can a sign convey meaning as sign only (idem: 61). As Agamben put it: “signs do not speak unless signatures make them speak” (idem: idem). In this sense, this investigation is less concerned with interpreting statements, fragments and examples as referring to a specific object or referent but rather in the temporal and spatial dynamics that they jointly convey with each other. This process is effected through signatures.

Therefore, this thesis investigates its examples by means of the dialectical interplay of two key signatures: sacralization and profanation. The act of sacralizing means semantically *moving* signs, that is, objects, times, spaces and bodies to a sacred sphere (Agamben 2007b: 73). Turning something sacred is achieved by means of sacrificial practices (idem: 74). Consequently, analysing processes of sacralization in a given social formation entails looking at its rituals of sacrifice. In the capitalist social formation these sacrificial rituals follow economic processes of subjectivation which aim at fracturing and dispossessing individuals from their rapport with the world. One fundamental sacrificial subjectivation in capitalism consists in the transformation of the human being into a salaried worker which effectively means fetishizing the body as a commodity. The sacrifice of turning one’s body into a commodity realizes capital’s sacralization of the world – the worker’s salary will buy and consume other commodities and capital will be invested in producing new commodities by investing and transforming human labour into a commodity (the labour force). Thus, the

understanding of capitalism *as* religion finds its full expression in the commodification of the world for it separates and moves bodies and objects to a sacred sphere by means of ritual sacrifices.

The analysis of examples of sacralization entails looking at how sacrifices are individually and socially conducted. More specifically, looking at the empirical materials involves seeing how they discursively perform sacrifice and, in this way, separate humans from their temporal use of time. Methodologically speaking, the investigation looks at the processes of sacralizing (separating from) time achieved through media, politics and economic discourses on crisis. The sacrifice is exerted on and by the individuals themselves as long as they cannot make use of their time beyond the capitalist mode of production (idem: 84).

Thus, sacralization enforces a specific relation between humans and their environment which produces a reality based on consumption which, inevitably, inscribes their experience of time in a crisis-prone economic system (idem: 82). This understanding of consuming the world is at the origin of a theological conflict between the Roman Catholic Church and the Franciscan order (idem: idem). The Church had to abolish the Franciscan notion of use that presupposed the non-recognition of private property (idem: 83). Franciscans used objects without recognizing them as their property, that is, they did not sacrifice themselves so that objects and themselves could be fetishized as property. In this sense, the profanatory use is a form of praxis that aims at removing things from the sacred sphere to the common sphere. As a signature, profanation plays with sacred objects, such as commodities, so that new uses can be found (idem: 87). For example, children's role-play with objects and their ability to invest their toys with life profanes their fetishization as commodities or as useless objects (idem: idem). The profanatory relations that human beings establish with objects, but also

spaces and temporalities, will be the object and the method of analysis of the last chapter (Refusal of Crisis). This is done by looking at examples that *play* with the experience of a temporality such as crisis. The examples in Chapter 5 remove and play with crisis thereby returning time to the profane use and enjoyment of the commons. Thus, the profanation of crisis consists of experiencing time as “pure means” and not as goal-oriented (idem: 87). On the contrary, the sacralization of time is fundamental to understanding crisis as moving towards a moment of salvific decision that will rescue capitalism (idem: 80).

Historical Context

From the British Ultimatum to the Fascist Coup (1890-1926)

Portugal's modern history cannot be properly contextualized without considering the Portuguese colonialism that persisted until the mid-seventies of the twentieth century. A brutal form of imperialism, maintained through slavery, massacre and segregation of entire populations, especially in South America and Africa, constitutes Portuguese modernity. As one of the first countries to inaugurate the colonial and imperialist expansion of the European zone, Portuguese imperialism throughout the world was marked by time-space specificities. Mirroring what Santos (2011: 403) defined as a "semi-peripheral country", Portugal's imperialist state depended economically on other European empires. The complex position of Portugal's colonialist state, with its metropolis semi-peripheral to the European zone, exhibited capitalist progress as a temporality dictated by the imperialist European centre that Portugal tried to keep up with. The very concept of semi-periphery hardly escapes such capitalist temporal frame between *delayed* and *civilized* societies in the European zone. It is not surprising that this perverse temporal scheme of progress easily skips over the barbarism of the intensive exploitation of colonial zones which coincided with the advent of liberalism and modern warfare (Mbembe 2017).

At the end of the 19th century, the contradictions inherent to the semiperipheral Portuguese empire became evident in the European *scramble for Africa* (Santos 2011: 411). Thus, the Berlin Conference of 1884, that rationalized the colonial rule of the western powers in Africa, brought a decisive deadlock to Portugal's colonialism. The peak of that major crisis came with the British Ultimatum (1890) that put an end to the

Portuguese colonial project of unifying, in a single region, Angola and Mozambique, both colonies of Portugal at that time. The British Empire had the colonialist project of creating a single zone from Cairo to Cape Town (*Cape to Cairo Red Line*) spatially colliding with Portugal's colonialist project (the so-called *Pink Map*). Without the military capacity to defy the British Ultimatum and with no effective and intensive colonization of Angola and Mozambique, The Portuguese state withdrew from its colonialist project. Such an imperialist defeat was translated into a cultural crisis within the Portuguese elite who would be obliged to reflect, in Santos' words (2011: 411), on the "subalternization of Portugal" in Europe: the paradox of a colonialist empire which was also on the periphery of the European zone. The discourse of Portugal as a semi-peripheral society, that the British Ultimatum made clear to its intelligentsia of the end of the nineteenth century, continues until the present day. Although such discourse is now intertwined with economic and sociological discourses, it still provokes and reproduces the temporal logic of capitalist progress and, consequently, Portugal's delayed modernity. For instance, at the end of a major study on the composition of Portugal's capitalist class (Costa et al. 2011), drawing on several social sciences in order to explain the evolution and development of Portuguese capitalism, the authors of that important study conclude their narration of Portugal as a nation in the following way:

The delay, the conservative modernization ... the guarantee by the State of all processes of accumulation and their distribution between major fortunes, delivering oil business to some and electricity, highway business and public private partnerships of hospitals to others, all this shows how the Portuguese bourgeoisie historically failed modernization, attacked democracy, hated progress and kept inequality stable.

The owners of Portugal are the fundamental historical problem of Portugal.

(Costa et al. 2011)

The paradoxical position of the Portuguese empire as a *semi-peripheral* oppressor within the European zone increasingly reflected a malaise and a divide within the Portuguese elite. The “excess of diagnosis” of the past, which Santos (2011: 400) refers to, has thus led progressive intellectuals to embrace a melancholic attempt to catch the train of Modernity’s progress up until the present day as the above extract exemplifies. Although the positivist hope of socialism and capitalist enterprise against the backwardness of the Catholic Church and the monarchy abolished the monarchic regime in Portugal⁴, the first Portuguese Republic would continue to endure successive political and economic crises where republican governments systematically suspended constitutional rights (Cerezales 2011: 229). To the Europeanized intelligentsia of Portugal, which included colonialist and racist intellectuals as well as politicians, the country suffered from a chronic *delay* that prevented intensive colonization of its overseas territories precisely due to its decayed Past⁵ (Santos 2011). Modernity had a pace that Portuguese capitalism could not afford to keep up with.

Alternatively, reactionary intellectuals in Portugal responded to this cultural crisis by embracing anti-modern stances that aimed to undermine the Republican regime (Trindade 2013: 256). More than emphasizing imperialist ideas towards the colonial past, they adopted an anti-politics discourse towards an idealized countryside (idem: 255). Many Portuguese nationalist discourses have their origin in this idealization of

⁴ The regicide of King Carlos I by the anarchists in 1908 marked the dead end of the monarchy in Portugal and the emergence of the Republican regime in 1910 (Cerezales 2011: 205).

⁵ The diagnose of the decadence of Portugal led, for instance, Antero de Quental, the Portuguese leading figure of XIX socialism in Portugal to diagnose the causes of decadence in the imperialist expansion itself (Quental 2008: 87).

the bucolic countryside through the refusal of political discussion and Republicanism (idem: 258). This refusal, however, was a nihilist one: their criticism of republican life and politics circumscribed by the capital aimed at an authoritarian salvific redemption of an idealized apolitical life (idem: 267). To a certain extent, these anti-republican intellectuals could not but idealize the countryside as they were living and writing from the capital too (idem: 255). In some cases, these intellectuals actually moved to the countryside to find the *purity* of nature but that was the very particular countryside of the privileged who would live and write bucolic poetry in villas surrounded by social misery (idem: 261).

However, the supposedly harmless anti-political *politics* of these intellectuals ideologically nurtured the authoritarian fascist manoeuvre that would bring the sixteen year period of the First Republic to an end on the 28th of May 1926. The anti-liberal right-wing conservatives fostered a nationalist discourse of the *decayed nation* that had to cure itself from the democratic disease of the party politics of republicanism (Rosas 2013: 27). The trope of a sick national body, corroded by liberalism and class war, was fundamental to the authoritarian appeal for a new political order (idem: 26). In this respect, the sixteen years of the First Portuguese Republic were turbulent not only because of the internal struggles of the party system but also because of the successive economic crises and the spectrum of revolution that haunted the Portuguese bourgeoisie (Costa et al 2011: 118). An increasingly combative proletariat was constantly putting obstacles to the stabilization of capitalist accumulation (idem: 115).

However, while the First Republic (1910-1926) was, constitutionally speaking, a liberal democratic regime, it increasingly appeared to be functioning as an oligarchy, especially with the approval of the Electoral Law of 1913 (Chorão 2010: 323). In a

country where the majority of the population was illiterate, the Electoral law of 1913 restricted even further the right to vote of male voters who now had to know how to read and write and to be at least 21 years old. From an electorate of 846,801 registered voters in 1911, the new electoral law reduced the electorate to 397,038 registered voters in 1913 (*idem*: 324). In addition to this restriction of voting rights, the First Republic regime faced several armed insurrections that led to permanent political instability (*idem*: 321). The repression of the urban labour movement (one of the Republicans' main allies against the monarchic regime) increasingly isolated the republican parties from the working class thus contributing to the fall of the Republic (Costa 2012: 72).

It is within this social turmoil that the military coup of the *28th of May*, in 1926, would be justified as the salvific remedy to cure the national crisis (Rosas 2013). In a certain way, the coup attested to the peculiar nature of the Portuguese fascism. One of its most interesting aspects lies in the relatively weak national-syndicalist movement among the many far-right tendencies in Portugal (Pinto 1994: 306). This specificity of Portuguese fascism has led some historians, such as Griffin (2009: 192), to consider that Portugal never had a proper fascist regime since the Blue-shirts (the Portuguese variety of the Black-shirts) never managed to successfully take control of the state apparatus. In addition, it would take seven years before Salazar, the catholic academic-politician, emerged as a dictator in Portugal and effectively dominated the state and imposed the new constitutional order of the *Estado Novo* (New State) after the *28th of May* military coup. Salazar would increasingly gather support from the capitalist elite as the *financial* messiah from Coimbra University. Predictably, Salazar had a strong ally in the Catholic Church, emerging as the intellectual leader of the *Centro Católico* - one among several organized factions of the reactionary right-wing

movement struggling for power after the coup. So, the political origins of Portuguese fascism gathered an assemblage of political and cultural influences that made it a particular case among the European fascisms of the first half of the twentieth century. Inspired partly by Mussolini's corporatist state, it developed its own specificities, especially in Salazar's view on the role of the *people*. As it will be further explored in Chapter three (Language of Crisis), Salazar rarely paraded with the masses, except at crucial moments of the regime where he needed their glorification (Rosas 2013: 33). With such a rhetorical strategy of invisibility (see Chapter three), the Portuguese fascist regime would develop a kind of authoritarian elitism, sceptical of the masses role in doing politics (idem: idem).

In parallel with the internal political struggle and affirmation of Salazar as the national Messiah, the armed forces aligned with the new situation brought by the coup faced the opposition of working class organizations and what was left of progressive republicanism. Thus, the key reason that explains the fascist coup in Portugal: the urgency of the national bourgeoisie to recover the profit rates that were being permanently threatened by the working class (idem: 81). Portuguese capitalists knew that the only way to recover their profit rates was through the reduction of labour costs (idem: idem). This could only be done through intensive repression and the progressive abolition of independent trade unionism as well as other political organizations that could defend labour rights. Thus, from 1927 to 1931 there was a de-facto undeclared civil war in Portugal where civilian armed struggle tried at all costs to stop the consolidation of the fascist regime (idem: 78). That insurrectional opposition to the coming fascist state, the *Revirvalho*, was a heterogeneous field, encompassing part of the army, left-wing and non-collaborationist republicans, anarchists, communists and socialists (see Farinha 1998). During this period of armed

revolts and barricades, the fascist army progressively conquered the streets through firing squads, mass imprisonment and deportations (idem: idem). After all, what was at stake was the reorganization of the Portuguese state under a particular form of authoritarian nationalism. To achieve that nationalist project and defeat the offensive of the labour movement in Portugal, conservative politicians and capitalists could not rely any longer on the old liberal regimes to save the capitalist order (Costa et al. 2011: 119). Their only chance to rejuvenate the *nation* was to militarily overthrow the Liberal regime and look for an authoritarian solution to the political crisis of Portugal's First Republic, especially after the military burden and social costs of the First World War as well as the severe impact of the 1921 economic crisis.

The end of the Fascist Regime and the Revolutionary Process of 1974-1975

After strategically adopting a neutral stance during the Second World War, Salazar's fascist government opened several warfronts in the colonies against the emergent African independence movements (Mateus 2012: 45). From 1961 onwards, the regime would endure a thirteen year long colonial war that hastened the fall of the regime (idem: 33). The overthrow of the fascist regime in 1974 and the subsequent revolutionary process cannot be well understood without taking into account the impact of the colonial war both in the African territories and in Portugal's European zone. Unable to reform itself towards a neo-colonial political solution, Portugal's Empire could not, in this sense, follow the decolonization strategy of the British and the French empires (idem: 35). Increasingly isolated from the geopolitical alignments of the European zone, the *Estado Novo* was starting to crack from above and below, that is, from a now experienced and recomposed workers' resistance movement and from the capitalist and political elite that wanted to modernize industry, agriculture and services (Noronha 2012: 105). Above all else, the colonial war divided the army as the fascist regime was politically, socially and economically unviable in the short term. This meant that the fascist regime in Portugal, following the path of the defeated fascist regimes of the Second World War, finally accepted its suicidal eschatology.

Despite the increasing burden of the colonial war, Portugal's dictatorship underwent a period of economic growth during the first years of Marcelo Caetano, the dictator who substituted Salazar in 1968 (Salazar would die of a stroke two years later). This period also saw an increase of labour conflicts which Caetano's government tried to pacify, for instance, by conceding more freedom of activity to trade unionism (idem: 101). From the end of the 1960's decade until 1974, the regime faced an escalation of labour

conflicts, with important strikes being carried out in major companies operating in Portugal (idem: 102). The growing inability of the regime to deal with the activity of labour organizations and workers' struggles made Caetano use the old tactics of repression of Salazar's *Estado Novo* (idem: 104-105). Nevertheless, police violence would be insufficient to deal with the workers' organizations (idem: idem). Even so, the dictatorship did not concede anything to the population. Rather, the fascist regime was powerless before the explosion of conflicts that the very modernization of the relations of production inevitably brought to the territory (idem: 105). The corporatist regime had reached its historical limits within capitalism, both in the European and colonial zones.

So, in the vespers of the 1974 revolution, the fascist regime simply did not have a salvific solution for its own suicidal enterprise in the African colonies. The colonial war revealed to the whole world the decadent and racist Portuguese government in complete denial of the new geopolitical order. This led the Security Council of the United Nations to condemn Caetano's government in 1972 (Mateus 2012: 53). Thus, the exhausted Portuguese colonialism lost the *tolerance* of the United States of America in the geopolitics of the Cold War as the U.S ambassador in Portugal warned Salazar in March 1961 (idem: 35). Salazar promptly refused the U.S offer of *aid* to decolonize the last Empire of the already dead European pre-war order (idem: 36). Consequently, the *delay* of Portuguese capitalism, its location at the margins of the European capitalist temporality, was partly translated into a brutal colonial war that would compromise the welfare of entire populations until today (idem: 52). The *white terror* in Angola, Mozambique, Guinee Bissau, St. Tome and Cape Verde was finally being challenged by other nation-states and, above all, by African military organizations of the independence movements.

It is within this context that, on the 25th of April of 1974, a group of left leaning and low ranking officials successfully interrupted the bloodshed of the suicidal fascist state and put an end to 48 years of fascist dictatorship in Portugal. The military manoeuvre did not face any substantial resistance from the regime. The long-awaited decolonization of the decayed empire would finally put an end to the Portuguese colonialism. Any federalist dream to include those territories in a commonwealth simply did not have the support of the population and the Movement of the Armed Forces (MFA). The trauma of the colonial war as well as the return of the Portuguese living in the ex-colonies (the *retornados*) exposed, once more, the consequences of fascism.

From that day, the MFA triggered a revolutionary situation that would decisively reshape Portugal's society and initiate a radical democratization of the whole country (Rosas 2012: 253). Between April 1974 and November 1975 the fascist elite trembled in the face of the workers' uprising: the country's fascist elite would stage coups, practice economic sabotage and organize violent attacks on communist headquarters to avoid facing imprisonment, exile and the expropriation of fortunes. To summarize, the entire fascist corporatist state of the *Estado Novo* was totally dismantled by popular revolt through mass street demonstrations, the taking over of management of factories and services, the expropriation and collectivization of *latifúndios* in the south and in the creation of a revolutionary army force (idem: idem).

As the revolutionary events unfolded, the country increasingly faced a dual power situation: workers' organizations engaged in an overt anti-capitalist struggle as much as the MFA tried to negotiate with the various actors that were exerting influence on the revolutionary process. Strikes, occupations of workplaces, kidnapping of managers and expulsion of former fascists from the workplaces were common responses of the

popular revolt (Noronha 2012: 107). The balance of violence between workers' organizations, political parties, the armed forces and the MFA measured the intensity of the revolution. Moreover, the revolutionary process showed that the state had lost the monopoly on violence, especially when part of the armed forces were actively refusing the orders of the military hierarchy and supporting workers' actions such as land occupations. This is why the revolutionary process of the Carnation Revolution, with its own rhythms and paces, cannot simply be interpreted as a unilateral constituent process towards a future social contract. Conceiving things in such a dynamic inevitably leads to a historiographic narrative that privileges elite *agency* where the majority of the population is effectively excluded from the flows of the revolutionary temporality (Pinto 2008: 1027). To a certain extent, the first attempt to conceive a political *agency* that could initiate a constituent process within the revolution could only be perceived after the call for a constituent assembly in 1975. In this sense, the first ballot call to elect the represented leaders of the political parties brought unavoidable conflict between two conceptions of democracy and their respective forms of legitimacy: the parliamentary democracy of the political parties and the revolutionary democracy of workers' organizations and self-management (Rosas 2012: 274). It is no surprise that political parties on the centre-left and right-wing spectrums would pursue the political control of the revolution precisely through the national assembly (*idem*: 278). From then on, the leaders of the major centrist political parties would start their campaign against those who did not find legitimacy beyond the revolutionary form of democracy. With the voting results of the Constituent Assembly giving a majority to the political parties of the centre, the revolutionary process was marked by an unsolvable internal conflict of legitimacy (*idem*: 277). It is out of the scope of this section to reflect on the reasons or

circumstances of why the population decided to retreat into reformism. Collective exhaustion from intensive militancy or fear of the monstrous events that were unfolding and radically changing the landscape of the country, the *people* decided to vote for restraint. However, these social interpretations and categories of analysis do not rightly apply to revolutionary processes precisely because there was no social contract yet. Despite the reformist results of the Constituent Assembly, the revolution paradoxically radicalized to the point where the population met the classical vertigo of revolution or counter-revolution.

Thus, the period from 11 March 1975 to November 1975 corresponds to the *Hot Summer* of class war in Portugal (Varela 2012: 143). Commonly referred as *PREC* (on-going revolutionary process), this period of contemporary Portuguese history can be characterized as the typical revolutionary situation: a body of non-hierarchical military forces, the militarization of political parties and civilians as well as workers' control of companies (idem: 158). These aspects of the revolution gain more consistency especially after fascist and right-wing conservatives plotted a military coup on the 11 March 1975. The unsuccessful coup paradoxically reinforced the power of the radical left, more akin to an intensification of the revolutionary process, as it became clear that far right-groups, allied with conservative sectors of the army, were prepared to mount a reactionary takeover of the country. As a response to this threat, the provisional government of that time actively engaged in the radicalization of the revolution by starting a series of nationalizations as well as promoting workers initiatives such as land and urban occupations (Pinto 2008: 1030). In the meantime, powerful organizations emerged out of workers' actions, as was the case of the shantytown dwellers who came to occupy social housing and thousands of private properties in the cities (idem: 1029). Lisbon, for instance, experienced an explosion of

residents' commissions which forced the provisional governments and the MFA to issue law decrees that could respond to their demands (idem: idem). Housing became a priority and a consensual topic all over the political spectrum. As far as the movement of land occupations is concerned, the land reform revolutionized the south of Portugal, with the creation of cooperatives in self-management regimes and extensive land occupations (Piçarra 2012: 86). Moreover, the urban and land movements were not dependent on the provisional government (idem: 1028). Rather, these movements imposed the pace of the revolution. Political parties and the military had to negotiate with them as dependents (idem: idem).

In line with these radicalized actions that reacted to the failed far-right coup, a few days later, on the 14 March of 1975, the Council of the Revolution decided to nationalize the entire banking system of Portugal (Noronha 2012: 113). Once again, the MFA would depend on the workers to block the economic sabotage that the fascist elite was plotting from the first day of the revolution: picket lines blocked bank managers and administrators' access to money safes (idem: 109). Bank workers tracked all bank activities and capital movements which would become decisive in denouncing the funding of conservative and far-right parties by the financial elite as well as the elite's strategy to intensify the economic crisis, by means of exerting credit blackmail on small and medium companies, legitimizing, in this way, the authoritarian response to crisis (idem: idem). The nationalization of the banks in 1975 meant a radical break with the fascist and endogenous elite rule that benefited from a regime based on cheap labour and the decade-long brutal repression of the workforce. That same elite could not but seek exile or face imprisonment during the revolution. Moreover, the nationalization of the banking system, initially supported by all main

parties, was a purely strategic measure to redefine the Portuguese state in a highly unstable situation (idem: 113).

This statist control of the banking system, however, cannot be detached from the intensification of the revolution by the workers' movement. As said before, the revolution did not have a centre from which state power emanated. Any attempt to problematize the highly complex power dynamics of the Carnation Revolution based on a well-defined framework of social analysis will necessarily fail to do justice to the unpredictability of the social conflicts that each revolutionary event imposes at the epistemological level. The highly heterogeneous constellation of left-wing organizations clearly exemplified this situation where the plurality of revolutionary actors prevented any attempt to draw a univocal interpretation of the revolutionary process. It is important to remark that, in the case of Portugal, the questioning of Stalinist orthodoxy was held against the Portuguese Communist Party who had become the main political party organizing the Portuguese antifascist resistance until the 1960s (Fontes 2012: 162). With events such as the Chinese Cultural Revolution, May 68 and the Hot Autumn of 1969 in Italy, the reformist orthodoxy of the PCP was finally being criticized from both within the party and outside its zone of influence (idem: 161). Thus, the heterodox origins of the left in Portugal resided in the critique of the PCP as well as in the political emphasis on armed struggle and insurrection against capitalism.

Much of these radical left-wing political parties were created by exiled antifascists in Paris, the capital of post-war Portuguese emigration. There, they had their own press, ranging from producing overt anti-fascist propaganda to scientific articles that were distributed around the Portuguese communities in Europe as well as inside Portugal (Pereira 2013: 108). These political parties would highly influence the Portuguese

student movement, breaking the ideological dominance of the PCP in the colleges and universities. The radicalism of these political parties, such as the militarized Revolutionary Party of the Proletariat/Revolutionary Brigades (PRP/BR), directly confronted the fascist regime through actions sabotaging military equipment for the colonial war (Fontes 2012: 164).

At the outset of revolution in 1974, these political parties and collectives had decisively broken the hegemony of the PCP over the antifascist and anticapitalist resistance, as they amounted to a similar number of militants as the PCP (idem: idem). Unsurprisingly, the PCP was initially opposed to any workers' industrial action or revolts that were out of its political control, positioning itself against independent workers' organizations during the revolution (idem: 166). Strategically conflicting with the other left-wing parties, the PCP had a direct influence and control of some elements of the MFA. The PCP tried to maintain a reformist front on the provisional governments and seek a form of capitalism under the total tutelage of the state apparatus.

So, after the failed coup of the 11th of March 1975, the radical left had also to face the conflict of legitimacy that the election results of the constituent assembly brought to the revolution. The elections already reflected what would be the party system in Portugal for the liberal democratic years to come: the two centrist parties obtained the majority of the votes while the PCP obtained 12,5% and the Christian Democratic party 7.6% (Fontes 2012: 174). Under this scenario of *moderation*, the far-left spectrum elected one Maoist militant (from the UDP) to the Constituent Assembly (idem: idem). Therefore, it would be tempting to see the elections for the Constituent Assembly as the disappointing but democratic solution of the revolutionary process. However, the Council of the Revolution, the political organ of the MFA, prohibited

two radical left parties and one conservative party from participating in the electoral process (Mailer 2012: 133). One of those parties, the Maoist MRPP, faced increased repression such as the arrest of 400 militants accused of “military crimes” on May 1975 (idem: 175). The conflicts within the left and the tension rising between reformist and revolutionary positions seemed to be paving the way to an inevitable civil war scenario especially when the headquarters of left-wing parties, including the PCP ones, started to be violently attacked by the organized far right in the north. Moreover, the political conflict between the PCP and the moderate PS within the MFA became evident when a group of officials, the *Group of Nine*, close to the PS published a program in favour of a parliamentary solution for the revolutionary crisis (idem: 176). From that overt fracture within the MFA, the antagonism between revolution and parliamentary democracy developed to the counter-revolutionary coup of the 25th of November 1975.

During the 1975 *Hot Summer*, the MFA split contributed to the escalation of the tension between reform and revolution. Part of the military forces started to refuse to obey the hierarchy of the military institutions such as the MFA. Political parties appealed for the distribution of weapons so that workers could defend the revolution from the coming fascists. While this may seem purely revolutionary fever, it should be emphasised that the left was haunted by the Pinochet coup in Chile two years before. Militarised parties, such as the PRP/BR and the Movement of Left Socialists (MES), had their slogans clear: “Portugal will not become the Chile of Europe” (Mailer 2012: 217). In response to the growing militarisation of the left and the soldiers’ rejection of institutional hierarchy, the Socialist Party leader, Mario Soares, militarily backed by the *Group of Nine*, affirmed in a demonstration on November 23rd that he was not afraid of civil war as the party had weapons too (idem: 220). In the meantime, the

creation of *United Soldiers Will Win* (SUV), a rank and file military organization, proclaimed a revolutionary discipline in opposition to the military hierarchy. Territorially, the country seemed to reflect the long-awaited conflict between the conservative north regions, constituted by small land owners under the strong influence of the Catholic Church, and the southern regions of the recent land reform, expropriations and workers cooperatives.

A military operation then unfolded on the 25th of November under the command of Ramalho Eanes whose elite military forces, the commandos, occupied several strategic positions. A state of emergency was then declared at 4pm (idem: 221). One of the captains belonging to the Continental Military Command (the COPCON), the military organization of the MFA, diverted 1600 automatic rifles to the PRP/BR which went underground to prepare an armed insurrection against the coup (Fontes 2012: 177). However, the upsurge never happened as one of the revolutionary captains of the MFA and former leader of the COPCON, Otelo Saraiva de Carvalho, decided not to take a position on that front (idem: 178). Workers in Lisbon still raised a few barricades but the reflux was already on its way (Mailer 2012: 221). Political demobilization had started before the coup and, apart from a few conflicts in Lisbon and four civilian deaths, the revolutionary left could not offer any consistent resistance. What followed after the coup was the more than expected purge of the revolutionary left to pave the way for triumphant liberal democracy: revolutionaries of the military forces and workers were arrested or left the country (idem: 225).

Thus, the 25th of November marked the end of the last left-wing revolution in Western Europe in the 20th century, that is, the last revolutionary attempt to create a communist society without free market capitalism and state capitalism. However, the resonance of the Carnation Revolution provoked a crisis effect in southern Europe dictatorships

with regime changes following in Spain and Greece (Varela 2012: 8). Moreover, the Carnation Revolution could not be erased with a counter-revolutionary coup: despite the decades-long attempt of right-wing factions to demonize the revolution in the media, as well as in certain academic circles, the exception of the *Carnation Revolution* remains the foundation of the democratization of Portugal's society (Rosas 2012: 282-283). In 18 months of social unrest, the revolution destroyed the fascist state and what was left of its repressive apparatus. Undoubtedly, the intensity of the social struggles and the radicalization of the population during the revolution has become a heated ideological battlefield in present times of crisis (idem: 251). In part, the revolution explains how Portugal still remains an isolated case in Europe where far right parties (and centre parties) and movements keep challenging the old centrist politics of liberal democracies. Not one single politician from the far right has managed to be elected for the Portuguese parliament until the present day.

From the Foundation of Liberal Democracy to the Financial Crisis (1976-2007)

After the elections for the Constituent Assembly, the Constitution of the Third Portuguese Republic was finally approved in 1976, sealing the social contract of Portugal's liberal democracy. The new Portuguese Constitution, especially in its first version, still reflected the revolutionary ethos of the Carnation Revolution. Through the years of Portugal's liberal democracy, governments reformed the revolutionary *excesses* of the Constitution. These reforms mirrored the broader context of deindustrialization and subsequent financialization of western capitalist economies as capital's response to the economic crisis of the early years of the 1980s (Varela: 2013: 97). A constitution that overtly defended the socialization of the means of production and wealth as well as the abolition of exploitation and oppression among people - the 9th Article of the Constitution – was clearly at odds with the neoliberal governmentality imposed on western capitalist societies. Such conflict between socialist and liberal ideas crosses the very constitutional foundations of the liberal democratic regime, reflecting both the legacies of the revolution and counterrevolution (Gaspar 1990: 16-17). Thus, the constitutional amendments can be interpreted as the political effort of the economic and political elite to come to terms with the revolutionary *imprint*. Despite the 25th of November counter-revolutionary coup preventing further revolutionary radicalization, the very concrete social struggles of the revolutionary process still played a role in setting limits to exploitation under the renewed economic liberalization of Portuguese society. For instance, workers did not stop mobilizing against austerity measures of the late 70s and early 80s (Accornero and Pinto 2015: 495). In this respect, it is important to mention that the Portuguese economy was in a deep crisis that ended with an IMF bailout in 1978, and

a second one in 1982 (idem: idem). Unsurprisingly, 1982 was the year of the first general strike in the new liberal democrat regime. However, it was only a question of time before governments suspended the *socialist* ethos of the constitution through introducing policies for the liberalization of the labour market and so on (Varela 2013: 101).

Liberal politicians finally got their first opportunity to reform the 1976 Constitution on the 12th August 1982 under a right-wing majority government and with the support of the Socialist Party (Guedes and Pereira 2013: 27). The first reform was of particular importance as it dismantled the institutions created during the state of exception of the revolution: the Council of Revolution was dissolved and replaced by the Constitutional Court and the State Council (both composed of judges and elements from the national elite chosen by the two most voted political parties) (Gaspar 1990: 21). The balance between the military and the democratic authorities also underwent a major change: the approval of the Law of National Defence and Armed Forces included the Armed Forces in the hierarchical structures of the regime's institutions (idem: 22).

However, the stabilization of the liberal democratic regime was only achieved in 1989 with one other major constitutional amendment (idem: 24-25). The *Serviço Nacional de Saúde* (National Health Service) was not universally free anymore but *partially* free; the principle that nationalizations were irreversible, the references to the land reform and the socialization of the means of production were also removed from the Constitution (Varela 2013: 101). This constitutional reform somehow reflected the gradual integration of Portugal into the European Union from 1986 on. During the late 80s and early 90s economic growth boosted major investments in public infrastructure as well as the recomposition of the dominant political and economic groups (Costa et

al. 2011: 265). In this context, free-market policies made advances through the deregulation of the labour market: outsourcing, generalization of non-paid internships, self-employment and reduction of collective contracts (Varela 2013: 102). Thus, Portugal's European integration should be seen as a highly ambivalent process: on the one hand, it partly contributed to the much needed modernization of Portugal's semi-peripheral economy and its definitive break with a backward isolationist stance, raising the living conditions of the population as the sudden improvements in health care can attest⁶; on the other hand, European integration restrained the revolutionary state of exception and the ethos of workers' establishing radical change beyond the frame of the capitalist social formation.

During the 1990s, labour conflicts such as strikes and protests did not occur at the same frequency as in the previous decade, as the absence of a single general strike during the whole decade attests to (Accornero and Pinto 2015: 496). Based on Accornero and Pinto's figures (2015: 497), the number of strikes and the respective levels of workers' participation started to decline from 1992 onwards. Political demobilization will then become a major trend of Portuguese workers until the first waves of the 2007 financial crisis. The demobilization of workers is also seen in the sharp increase of abstention rates in the elections: while in 1975 the abstention rate was 8.5% of the registered voters, in 2011 the same rate was 41.9% (idem: 498).

It is within this sort of liberal *end of history* that covered up the revolutionary times of the Carnation Revolution, reduced to its pacified yearly celebration as a nostalgic march in Lisbon, that the 2007 financial crisis shook Portuguese society. At the end of the first decade of the 2000s, the Portuguese economy was in line with the western neoliberalization of the social: privatizations of public companies and the deregulation

⁶ As an example, the infant mortality rate in 1960 in Portugal was 77.5%. In 2016 the infant mortality rate was 3.2% (Pordata 2007a).

of the labour market followed by a defensive strategy of the trade unions to try to maintain, at least, some worker's rights (Varela 2013: 103). Youth employment precarity and unemployment had become the norm through the general adoption of *recibos verdes* (zero hour contracts) already introduced by the Portuguese government in 1976 (Law Decree 781-76).

However, it is usually forgotten that the 2007 financial crisis also had a juridical dimension, marked by what Ferreira and Pureza (2013: 250) identify as a tension between two forms of constitutionalism: the constitutionalism of exceptionality and that of the rule of law. These two were expressed in the judicialization of austerity policies (*idem: idem*), namely, the Constitutional Court was called on by political parties and by the President of the Republic to decide on the constitutionality (or lack thereof) of the austerity policies included in the State budgets of 2011, 2012 and 2013 (*idem: 260*). Despite the vacillation of the Constitutional Court decisions in favour or against the austerity policies, the juridical exceptionality of the crisis was always present in them: the Constitutional Court legitimized austerity policies as an exception – “activism of exceptionality” – or considered them unconstitutional – “activism of the rule of law” (*idem: 260*). What this judicialization of politics shows is in fact the implication of juridical exceptionality in the on-going economic crisis (*idem: 252*). Political conflict occurs in the threshold of the juridical order, where the executive power proceeds to law reforms imposed by the Troika (*idem: 253*).

The social antagonism that erupted during the 2007 crisis can also be understood as a broader response to the re-entrance of juridical exceptionality through the ideology of austerity. The social contract established after the constituent process of the PREC is now being dismantled (Varela 2013:103-104) by another form of exceptionality. An increasingly marginalised population continued to lose political power and reacted to

that loss through mass demos, protests, the creation of activist platforms and building occupations between 2010 and 2013.

The shockwaves of the 2007 financial crisis had its expression in the sudden rise of unemployment in Portugal, emigration (higher than the worst years of the dictatorship) (Pordata 2017b), generalized cuts in the already diminished public sector and privatization of key state companies (Fernandes 2017: 172). One of the crisis *peak* was the third intervention of the IMF in Portugal along with the European Central Bank and European Commission (the so-called Troika). But for what matters here, these regressive waves of the financial crisis coincided with a period of revolt and social upheaval in the Mediterranean Basin, which may have been symbolically triggered by the immolation of the Tunisian Muhammed Bouazizi in 2010 (Accornero and Pinto. 2013: 1).

After two decades of trade union demobilization and a very low percentage of activist mobilization (idem: 6), the anti-austerity cycle of social struggles brought, once more, activist subjectivity onto the stage of liberal protest in Portugal. The traditional forms of labour dispute are commonly represented by the two trade union confederations – UGT and CGTP - one under the influence of the Socialist Party (centre-left social democratic party) and the stronger of the two under the influence of the Portuguese Communist Party (a Marxist-Leninist party). Both trade unions saw the re-emerging of activist platforms that managed to produce their own media and respective logistics and networks which allowed them to organize protests relatively outside the traditional organized labour institutions. These activist platforms often made calls in support of general strikes organized by the trade union confederations although the opposite rarely happened. A pact of non-overt hostility was rarely broken between the confederations and these platforms.

These major activist platforms differed from each other in their tactics and ideological positions. It is hard then to define them as they evolved through the cycle of struggles, adapting to the new conflicts, extinguishing their structure and often rebranding themselves with a change of political strategy and internal politics. The public discourse of the activist platform that I chose to analyse in this chapter is inscribed in this dynamics of activism that took place in the aftermath of the Eurozone crisis and the Troika bailout. The *Que se Lixe a Troika* (Screw the Troika) emerged after the dissolution of the *15 October* platform that had emerged from the worldwide call to celebrate the start of the Spanish *Acampada* in the Plaza del Sol in Madrid. 15O was a highly heterogeneous platform of activists that tried, for the first time, to concentrate the antagonistic discourse of the streets into an activist platform. The 15 October 2011 in Portugal was marked by an attempt to invade the parliament which went against the plan of the platform of simply staging a protest. The police cordon was effectively broken after people started to shout “invasion” and protesters ran towards the parliament doors only to be stopped by a new line of armed riot police. While protesters were crossing the police cordon, one of the protestors jumped onto the demonstration organization's pick-up truck to use the loudspeaker system to call on everyone to occupy the parliament building (Gaspar 2011). The organizing collective switched off the loudspeaker system to silence him and, after a few minutes, one activist started to tell everyone to sit down on the spot instead. That evening there was a police charge and some people were detained. The 15O activist platform would not recover from its internal conflicts arising from the events of that day although it still managed to schedule a few more protests.

Screw the Troika was, then, the new representational façade of this activist platformism. Some activists left for good while new activists joined but, an important

detail, under restricted admission (Marçal 2013). The centralization of the anti-austerity activist discourse could then finally be achieved. The Screw the Troika platform appeared in the political scene with a call for a mass protest on the 15th of September 2012. The planning of the demo coincided with a major state policy to reduce the income of workers by doubling the *TSU* tax (a universal tax to be charged for social insurance) for all workers and companies. While it undoubtedly managed to mobilize a mass demonstration equivalent to Mayday in 1974, the first celebration without fascist repression, the platform could not manage to change its strategy for the coming months. Centralizing their strategy in a group of activists, the platform could not move beyond the traditional ways of representing social unrest. After their continuous political mobilization during the year of 2012 and the first months of 2013, the platform lacked any consistent strategy that could provoke the resignation of the neoliberal government in charge. As a result, a rapid demobilization took place from their last protest on the 3rd March 2013 that has continued until the present day.

Theology of Crisis

Introduction

This chapter is about the theological dimensions of the concept of crisis and its relation to the phenomenon of fascism. I will argue that revisiting the semantic evolution of the concept of crisis implies looking beyond its still dominant meaning in economics and other social sciences. As Koselleck has shown, the idea of *economic crises*, dating back to the capitalist expansion of the 19th century (Koselleck 2006: 389), is a relatively recent meaning in the long history of the concept of crisis. Nonetheless, crisis, as a central concept of Modernity, still kept a form of reasoning behind the idea of *decision*: the primary theologico-juridical meaning of crisis (idem: 359). Since the concept of crisis started to semantically mix both economic and medical meanings of curing social and economic diseases (idem: 390), the distinction between economic prescriptions to cure capitalist crises and the glorification of capital became increasingly blurred. For instance, by criticizing neoliberal governmentality, social scientists researching on capitalist crises aim at capital's salvation by promoting epistemological legitimacy to regulated exploitation, thus spreading, in Toscano's words, "a melancholia of reformism without reform" (Toscano 2014: 1028).

In this chapter, I advance that such indistinction between the salvation and glory⁷ of capitalism puts fascism at the centre of the on-going European crisis: saving the economy of a *nation* or of the *Eurozone*, while at the same time glorifying them

⁷I borrow this concept from Agamben's *Kingdom and Glory* (Agamben: 2011). According to Agamben (2011), the *spectacle* of liberal democracies – its media apparatuses and the creation of a public sphere – is a secularization of the Christian concept of Glory. Glory/media is crucial for liberal governmentality: since a sovereign cannot exert power on its own, glory is the apparatus that realizes sovereignty.

through the media, means that a government must be unconstrained by social contracts and constitutions, constantly adapting to unpredictable events. This is, roughly speaking, the fascist economisation and corporatisation of the social.

The meaning of a crisis in which economists and politicians should make a *decision* and prescribe a cure is also increasingly assuming a peculiar temporality of salvation: a permanent delay of decisions to, paradoxically, save national or global economies.

So I will argue that an understanding of permanent crisis requires unravelling the relations between fascism, sovereignty and economy, that is, understanding crisis and fascism as embedded in the Christian *oikonomia* paradigm of sovereignty that underlies the relation between sovereign power and the economy of a nation-state (Agamben 2011).

To address the question of fascism, I am following Deleuze and Guattari's definition of fascism based on their investigations on the *micro-politics of desire* (Deleuze and Guattari 2004). The reason why I opt to choose Deleuze and Guattari's *molecular* interpretation resides in the awareness that fascism, as the macro-political ideology of a fascist state, was defeated militarily in the 20th century. However, fascism evolved and adapted within a triumphant liberal consensus, implying a reformulation of the concept as well as making the distinction between a molecular perspective on fascism and the fascist suicidal state (although the latter can be a consequence of the former and both do not exclude the prevalence of one against the other). Deleuze and Guattari bring to the fore, then, the still open philosophical question, as La Boétie (1975) posed, of why oppressed humans desire their own servitude.

To put it differently, I am focusing less on understanding fascism(s) as a variety of macro-political ideologies and soteriological states and more as desiring processes

inherent to the capitalist mode of production⁸. This kind of strategic line of inquiry tries to avoid reductionist clear-cut oppositions or equivalences: liberal democracy vs. fascism or fascism = liberal democracy (Guattari 2009: 161). What is at stake is rather showing the complexity of their affinities and discontinuities and, to give justice to Guattari's essay title, why and how every now and then "everybody wants to be a fascist":

We must abandon, once and for all, the quick and easy formula: "Fascism will not make it again." Fascism has already "made it," and it continues to "make it." It passes through the tightest mesh; it is in constant evolution, to the extent that it shares in a micro-political economy of desire itself inseparable from the evolution of the productive forces. Fascism seems to come from the outside, but it finds its energy right at the heart of everyone's desire.

(idem: 171)

So Deleuze and Guattari's micro-politics of desire conceptualizes fascism as molecular (idem: 171), bringing the advantage of perceiving it in a multiplicity of dispositifs which precisely correspond to the domestication of productive forces in capitalist societies. To this extent, molecular fascism can be defined as the investments of desire to produce surplus value, that is, producing value from living labour-power (Marx 1990: 766). Guattari argues that this dynamic and constantly mutating molecular fascism that colonizes every productive and reproductive aspect of human life today inevitably brought a split in anti-fascist political strategy: if fascism

⁸ Desire is a core concept in Félix Guattari and Gilles Deleuze works which will be frequently referenced throughout this chapter. Inherited from Spinoza, especially from their exegesis of his *Ethics* (Spinoza 1996), desire, according to Guattari and Deleuze, is the sole productive instance that creates the social.

turned out to be molecular, then Leninist and social democrat parties will not necessarily be opposed to fascism in its molecular forms (Guattari 2009: 158).

To conclude this introduction, I will briefly give an outline of this chapter. In the first section, I will investigate, with a paradigmatic example from the Portuguese media, the dynamics of the salvific economy in discourses of the debt crisis during the 2011 Troika (International Monetary Fund, European Central Bank and European Commission) bailout of the Portuguese state. In the second section, two more examples will be used to investigate the discourse of crisis in the recent anti-austerity political parties in Greece and Spain. In the third section, I will draw on the Spinozan concept of God to problematize how capitalism colonized the immanent idea of God as defined in *Ethics* (Spinoza 1998).

Debt, Angels and Violence

As would be expected, there were several *crisis narratives* of the Troika bailout in the Portuguese press. For the purpose of this chapter, I am focusing on the *narrative* of national salvation: the urgency of a salvific decision to end the sovereign debt crisis that was threatening the corporate body of the nation-state. An opinion maker of the Portuguese daily economics newspaper, *Jornal de Negócios*, on the day after the Portuguese Prime Minister's bailout request (6-4-2011), summarizes that particular crisis narrative in the following way:

Whatever the political belief might be, this is a vital moment for the emergence of new solutions for the Country. Citizens must regain hope which cannot be built on the basis of the arguments that has led us to the rupture. We must know, pragmatically, how to put aside everything that divides us; we cannot be involved in disputes about secondary questions: an economic and financial rupture of this dimension demands brave and national answers that, sacrificing the present, can open to us the paths of future progress with the awareness that we are in front of an economic and social modification with lasting effects.

(Marrão 2011)

No matter how banal and familiar this narrative seems to be, it succinctly shows how the bailout put the emphasis on security and debt collection. *National sovereignty* was in danger and, therefore, exceptional measures, sacrifices, were required to save the

nation. Logically, the threat of national bankruptcy put forward increasingly exploitative measures for debt collection to prevent the *catastrophic* event.

Debt collection can indeed be seen as a fundamental apparatus⁹ of security during the bailout period. I follow Foucault's understanding of apparatuses of security as networks of risk management and event prevention for the sake of the maximization of productivity (Foucault 2007: 6). Furthermore, dispositifs of security will continuously produce the figure of the population as the biopolitical *target* of security technologies towards capitalist accumulation (idem: 65). Debt collection, for instance, requires surveillance of the population within a specific sovereign territory. Consequently, these technologies of security will track how sovereign debt collection is managed and extracted from a population, for instance, via central banks and governmental policies.

With the growing importance of the sovereign debt crisis, the concept of debt was unsurprisingly recovered and well received in recent criticisms of capitalism¹⁰. But as Marx (1990: 183) had already noticed, debt arises from the simple circulation of commodities when their *alienation* from the producer (worker) does not follow the temporal realisation of prices. Therefore, circulation produces the very basic relationship between creditors and debtors. However, understanding debt from an exclusively *critical* political economy perspective fails to acknowledge, as with crisis, its theological meaning and how debt in capitalism relates to Christian theology and

⁹ I take the Foucauldian perspective to understand the concept of apparatus. Foucault defined apparatus (*dispositif*) as a network of different kind of elements (discourses, objects, law decrees, buildings and others) which strategically answers to an historical emergency (Foucault 1980: 194-196). Therefore, an apparatus necessarily produces and conditions knowledge. In Foucault's words: "the apparatus is precisely this: a set of strategies of the relations of forces supporting, and supported by, certain types of knowledge (idem: idem). These networks of knowledge produce specific subjectivities which are indistinct to them (idem: idem).

¹⁰ Lazzarato (2012) and Graeber's (2011) works being clear examples of such revival of the debt concept.

vice-versa. Obviously, Marx was aware of the importance of religion in the shaping of crisis temporalities (Kosseleck 2006: 244).

To think about the theological underpinnings of debt in capitalism, one needs to address the importance of the time regime produced by debt: capitalism, while being debt-driven, deprives debtors of historical time to redeem their guilt (Harmacher 2002: 85). By producing a divine temporality that blocks historical time through the debt-guilt nexus, commodity exchange and labour exploitation presuppose a creditor-debtor relationship which closes temporal possibilities for political action (Lazzarato 2012: 71). The reproduction of the labour force becomes subsumed in debt through constitutive processes of the self (idem: 104). More than the salary relation, debt collection requires an ethical investment in the self which poses a different measure of value (idem: 138): companies, workers, the unemployed and students undergo a continuous process of evaluation to make viable creditors' profit (idem: idem). Guilt becomes a social totality: the debt-guilt nexus entails a specific temporality where *everything that happens is guilt* (Harmacher 2002: 83) since everything produced and reproduced within the capitalist mode of production is captured by the dispositif of debt collection.

Needless to say, Harmacher's emphasis on the social totality created by the debt-guilt nexus relies heavily on Benjamin's definition of capitalism as a cult religion (Benjamin 1997: 288). In his fragment *Capitalism as Religion*, Benjamin argues that capitalism is a cult since it lacks a theology of its own (idem: idem): it sets an unmediated relation with unredeemed beings and things to be commodified without a discourse on God. That permanent and unmediated relation does not admit weekdays without commodity exchange but only an everyday Sunday Mass of wage labour and debt. From this radicalism of capitalist societies follows a universal denial of human

redemption: the social totality produced by guilt reaches the paroxysm of getting rid of a transcendental God in order to absorb him in the immanent guilt of every single human action (idem: idem). As the above opinion maker says (Marrão 2011), the present time needs to be sacrificed to save “future progress”. The beginning of historical time, made possible through political action, never unfolds under the rule of this cultist temporality.

In this way, the sovereign debt crisis oscillates between an eschatological dynamic, the bankruptcy of the state, and a katechontic dynamic (a temporal construal of security that delays the bankruptcy catastrophe with economic cures). When Benjamin defines capitalism as a cultic religion it is possible to infer this interplay of the eschaton and the katechon - two theological events that are interdependent in dispositifs of security (Dillon 2011). The interplay between these two temporal dynamics of security produces the salvific temporality of debt crisis: while the eschaton is the event that will put an end to the earthly world, the katechon delays the end of that same world (idem: 784). Capitalism as a cultic religion re-sacralizes the eschaton as a threatening temporal horizon, paradoxically imposing katechontic governmental technologies to prevent the eschaton (idem: 782)¹¹. So capitalism as a cult denies redemption for the indebted *souls* through the sacralization of *things* in a permanent cultic temporality: the circulation of commodity securities such as sovereign debt titles. Therefore, the temporality of debt crisis cannot be fully grasped without the process of sacralization inherent to commodity fetishism.

¹¹ The eschatology of the politics of security, for instance, construing threats from natural disasters to terrorism paradoxically sets the katechon of capitalism. So the eschaton entangles the katechon in capital's religious cult within the biopolitical order (idem: 789).

However, that immanent social production through debt sacralization is articulated with a transcendental production of sovereignty. Roughly speaking, factories, call-centres, hospitals, schools, universities, corporations are located in sovereign territories and their production of surplus value is made possible due to a resacralized conception of administration that preserves the unity of God: the articulation of economy, as God's task on earth, for divine monarchy (Agamben 2011: 42). In other words, the rise of contemporary liberal governmentality can be conceived as a re-sacralization of the theological relationship between Kingdom (sovereignty) and government (idem: 92).

According to Agamben (idem: 64), the conceptual repercussion of the *oikonomia* paradigm originated a split between being and praxis in Christian theology, making possible the appearance of free will and modern ethics (idem: 54). This specific division distinguishes Christian theology from classical theogonies (idem: idem). For instance, the tragedies of classical antiquity, where *fated* and powerless heroes cannot change their destiny before the gods' power, exemplify that division between classical theogonies and free will. Consequently, with this Christian theological split between being and praxis, power will also be conceptually altered: the figure of government will arise from this split, thus defining it as a figure without an ontological origin but an anarchic one (idem: 64). Once the salvific action of Christ created the split between ontology and action, government could not be founded in ontology anymore. Since this theological split, every government is conceptually constituted with a non-foundational and non-ontological character, legitimizing its power through praxis, not being. The government of *indebted souls* in the *oikonomia* paradigm is first of all

anarchic and managerial alike¹². Therefore, this paradigm cannot be defined in political terms. *Oikonomia* is rather an administrative and managerial conception of power, which introduces economic rationality as a “plan of salvation” (Agamben 2011: 18).

In this sense, liberal democratic governments are understood, first of all, as economic and not political, the outcome of an economic theology which requires managerial anarchy to govern *indebted souls* (idem: 64). As Agamben recalls, quoting a sentence from one of the fascist characters in Pasolini’s *Salò*, fascism intersects liberal democracies precisely because “the only real anarchy is that of power” (idem: idem). In a certain way, this recalls Arendt’s reflection on the relation between fiction and totalitarianism (Arendt 1979: 392). The anarchy of government is present in the creation of a fictional plot to manage *indebted souls*, the use of representation to make life as such appear in a threshold of indistinction between fiction and reality. The creation of a secret police to impose a domestic fiction of conspiracies is only the first step towards the camp’s materialization of total dominion (idem: idem). A theatre of total management is required to produce the ideal totalitarian subject. In Arendt’s view, the totalitarian subject is foremost characterized as someone who blurs fiction with reality (idem: 479).

Therefore, crises of capitalism occur within the governmental anarchy of the *oikonomia* paradigm, manifesting as crises of administrative praxis. A crisis becomes ostensible when the salvific character of *oikonomia* is menaced in its managerial exceptionalism. The genealogy of *oikonomia* thus reveals that it had a juridical

¹² As is obvious, the anarchy of *oikonomia* should not be confused with what is beyond its control, that is, the *Ungovernable* (idem: 65).

meaning of exception so that the government of God could adapt to all exceptional events:

The paradigm of government and of the state of exception coincide in the idea of an *oikonomia*, an administrative praxis that governs the course of things, adapting at each turn, in its salvific intent, to the nature of the concrete situation against which it has to measure itself.

(Agamben 2011: 50)

Recalling the initial narration of salvation by the Portuguese commentator, particularly when he states that “whatever the political belief might be, this is a vital moment for the emergence of new solutions for the Country” (Marrão 2011), he is foregrounding the need to *cure* economy through salvation, that is, fixing the governmental knot between *oikonomia* and sovereignty. The debt crisis is, in a certain way, a crisis of national sovereignty, a crisis of *Portuguese* capitalism. However, despite the growing sovereign debt of the Portuguese state, the IMF, ECB, banks and a network of corporations were making profits from the Troika memorandum (which means that surplus value was still being extracted from labour exploitation in Portugal without any major obstacle). In other words, there was no menace to the administrative praxis of the *indebted souls*. *Oikonomia* proceeds with its salvific exceptionalism. As the opinion maker says: “We must know, pragmatically, to put aside everything that divides us”. In other words, the sovereign *Country* is to be saved through the praxis of bureaucratic administration and that requires eliminating difference.

It is relevant now to address how the praxis of salvation is economically and bureaucratically administered through crisis. In Agamben’s (2011: 149) genealogy of

government, bureaucracy emerges as a modern sacralization of Christian angelology. Angels are both administrators and assistants, twofold figures who maintain the order (idem: 150) of the sovereign since the latter cannot exercise his regality - a *rex inutilis* (useless king) in Christian *oikonomia* (idem: 106). By creating a split between being and praxis, the economic paradigm of Christianity necessarily established the need for a managerial character, the angel, who could articulate the transcendental order of sovereignty within the immanent order of economy. In this way, a hierarchy could be set as the ordering activity of the government and its immediate consequence would be the sacralization of an earthly but sacred sovereign power (idem: 152-153).

To conserve the ecclesiastical hierarchy, angels need to sing “songs of praise” to God (idem: 147). Chanting to God was re-sacralized in the modern creation of a public sphere, the sovereign requirement of publicity to maintain its power. That is why Agamben states that “hierarchy is a hymnology” (idem: 156). The preponderance of media apparatuses in contemporary capitalism sets the present-day hymnology. It is in this sense that the modern machine of government reveals itself beholden to the originary publicity of the heavenly hierarchy. Therefore, governing as a power that can be exercised thanks to media publicity is enclosed in the paradigm of *oikonomia*: by orienting itself towards salvation, the anarchical government is dependent on angels’ administrative activity just until the Christian eschatological event unfolds. At that moment, after the eschaton, bureaucratic angels will lose their administrative role in orienting *indebted souls*. However, if *oikonomia* is historically leaning towards a moment of inoperativity¹³ - the eschatological event - capitalist crises can be

¹³ Inoperativity is a central concept in Agamben’s thought. In *The Coming Community* (2007a) it is expressed as the condition of whatever beings, that is, human beings living in a post-redemption situation where Christian salvation becomes irrelevant: “The truly unsavable life is the one in which

paradoxically construed as a delay of the end of capital's accumulation. However, it still needs to be explained what sacralized mechanisms of capital produce the katechontic temporality of salvation that delays the end of capital.

It is in this sense that some authors affirm that the market is the crisis itself (Negri 2013: 53). The bourgeoisie is constituted through crisis (idem: 53) precisely because it can only rule through a permanent state of exception where sovereignty follows the salvific anarchy of *oikonomia*. In other words, the salvation of the economy requires a constant crisis *in* circulation not *of* circulation (idem: 54). Such constant crisis is inherent to the processes of real subsumption – the endogenous integration of social relations in capital accumulation – which mostly characterizes the production of surplus value in Empire (Hardt and Negri 2001: 255). If there is no outside anymore to the labour exploitation of corporate multinationals and international organizations such as the IMF, ECB and EC, this also means that salaried work is everywhere now – surplus value arises from the reproduction of society itself, making indistinct both spheres of reproduction and production (idem: 255). This is why it is relevant to understand, for instance, use-value as *social* use-value (Negri 2013: 57) which puts into question the idea of a possible exogenous sphere of consumption today (idem: 57) precisely because Empire realizes the total colonization of life and society through real subsumption (Hardt and Negri 2001: 190). Empire could at that moment be conceived as the katechontic governmentality of capitalism (as a cult religion) since Empire constantly breeds “indefinite crises” or a permanent “omni crisis” to sustain itself (idem: 189).

there is nothing to save, and against this the powerful theological machine of Christian *oikonomia* runs aground” (idem: 6).

Conceiving crisis as an “omni crisis” (idem: idem), constant and rooted in the production of capitalist society, thus brings to the fore the theological meaning inherent to the concept of crisis (Koselleck 2006). In classical Greek, crisis is firstly understood as a political term (idem: 358), meaning a *decision* to achieve a certain *judgment* (idem: 359). From this meaning of crisis emerges its relation to law: crisis becomes a crucial concept of articulation between justice and the legal order. “Legal decisions” are taken on the base of an ideal of justice (idem: 359). In Koselleck’s (idem: 360) point of view, Christian theology will rely on this juridical meaning of crisis to conceive the *Last Judgement*: a God that will judge and save the world through true justice in an “ongoing trial” (idem: idem). From that point, a particular conception of historical time could unfold with the concept of crisis:

... The concept of crisis can generalize the modern experience to such an extent that "crisis" becomes a permanent concept of "history." This appears for the first time with Schiller's dictum: "Die Weltgeschichte ist das Weltgericht" ("World History is the Last Judgment"), the impact of which cannot be overestimated. Without actually taking over the term "Last Judgment," Schiller nonetheless interprets all of human history as a single crisis that is constantly and permanently taking place. The final judgment will not be pronounced from without, either by God or by historians in ex post facto pronouncements about history. Rather, it will be executed through all the actions and omissions of mankind ... The concept of crisis has become the fundamental mode of interpreting historical time.

(idem: 371)

This idea of human history as a constant crisis, an omni crisis - which already embodies the eschaton of the Last Judgement - necessarily marks a fundamental theological rupture in conceptualizing power either as mythical or divine. This is unravelled in Benjamin's *Critique of Violence* (1997): while mythical power institutes Law, giving rise to the juridical contract through violence and the relationship between guilt and atonement (idem: 67), divine power abolishes law and redeems guilt, rendering mythical power inoperative (idem: 249). Based on Benjamin's perspective, when an opinion maker (as is the case with the initial example) argues for a *Country's* salvation, he is appealing to the mythical power of sovereignty. Saving the country prevents any divine power that may turn capitalism inoperative and, consequently, national sovereignty. The consequence of the overthrow of national sovereignty by divine power would necessarily put into question the existence of the public sphere since, as was said before, sovereignty relies on publicity. It is interesting to consider, from this perspective, the theological resacralization of the opinion maker who *sings* and praises *the Country*: if sovereignty relies on the public sphere to keep its mythical power, the opinion maker appears to be a re-sacralized figure of the hierarchical angelology. Without an earthly sovereign to praise, the opinion maker or, in other words, this very peculiar angel, is rendered inoperative (loses his job).

So, in the eschatological event of the Last Judgement the angels' order on earth vanishes and the publicity of mythical power ceases to exist. Once again, modernity would secularize such Christian eschatological implications of the government paradigm through *final solutions* as a path to *solve* the *katechon* either conceived as the Empire (Schmitt) or the simple existence of Jews (Pettersen) (Agamben 2011: 7). While facing this dialectic between mythical power instituting law through a social contract and a re-sacralized Last Judgement, Benjamin questions what would be a

solution that did not end in a juridical contract (Benjamin 1997: 244). He does this by referring to the “sad spectacle” of the parliament as a product that forgot its origins in a human law that was instituted through power as violence (idem: idem). That is why Benjamin’s critique of violence is a critique of power understood within the dialectic of divine power and mythical power that can only institute human law through war (idem: 240). The critique of mythical power by Benjamin is all the more relevant precisely when he foregrounds “mere life” as that which human law cannot dominate anymore (idem: 250). In other words, divine violence redeems “mere life” by rejecting the fetishism of mythical violence and its idolatry of human law (Martel 2012: 51). Therefore, divine violence annihilates the foundations of the capitalist society by making impossible the existence of the market, commodities and legal fetishism. The redemption of guilt offered by divine violence is one of the weakest points of the capitalist cult.

However, divine violence can be, to say the least, a problematic concept to critique capitalism due to its political appropriations. To formulate it in another way, what distinguishes fascist mass murder from the divine punishment brought by divine violence may not be clear enough (idem: 76). As Foucault notes (2003: 57), opposed to the philosophical-juridical discourse, the formation of an historical-political discourse of social warfare to narrate events entails the notion of a perpetual war between the oppressor and the oppressed that will lead to a day of revenge:

Throughout the whole of the Middle Ages, and even later, the theme of perpetual war will be related to the great, undying hope that the day of revenge is at hand, to the expectation of the emperor of the last years, the *dux novus*, the new leader, the new guide, the new Fuhrer; the idea of the fifth monarchy, the third empire or the Third Reich, the man who will be both the beast of the

Apocalypse and the saviour of the poor.... it's the king of Portugal, lost in the sands of Africa, returning for a new battle and a new war which, this time, will lead to a final, definitive victory.

(idem: 57)

The messianism implicit in divine violence can and was re-sacralized in authoritarian final solutions. A sacralization process turns divine violence into a mythology of revenge; a “bastardization” of the divine (Martel 2012: 77) imposes a new order, a new Law. Divine violence becomes mythical violence. In the Portuguese context, which Foucault briefly mentions in the above excerpt, Sebastian, the sovereign king, who probably died in 1578 in Morocco, will revenge Portugal’s loss of sovereignty to the Iberian Union with the Spanish crown. A whole mythology of the *hidden* and *desired* king who will return in a foggy morning is going to shape sovereigntist and historical-political discourses in Portugal from the 16th century onwards.

However, if fascist exceptionalism poses the problem of the annihilation of mere, naked life by *bastardizing* divine violence, one necessarily needs to consider the importance of revolt against this dialectic of violence (idem: 115).

Since it does not promise a new legal order based on a constitution, revolt operates at the level of contingency where one is intoxicated and “seized” by the event (Diken 2016a: 96). It opens a whole temporary subtraction from the immanent capture of social relations by the salvific temporality of *oikonomia*. Theologically speaking, there is an interruption of the processes of the sacralization of life and a rejection of the guilt-debt nexus of the capitalist cult without falling into mythical bastardization. Recalling one last time the crisis narrative of the newspaper article (Marrão 2011), with revolt the “present” time stops being formally subsumed in “sacrifices” as soon

as the sovereign debt and the “hope on new solutions for the Country” falls with the de-subjectivization that the indebted souls face when escaping from the sovereign capture (idem). A disruption is produced in the administrative praxis where the course of things finally escapes the salvific temporality of the *oikonomia* paradigm.

Conflicting Sovereignties, Financial Capital and the Camp

As a crucial dispositif to discipline and/or control human bodies to increase their productivity through moral conduct, sovereign debt necessarily followed the biopolitical conflict between national and imperial sovereignties. This conflict between two forms of sovereignty is relevant to understand how and where sovereignty continues to exclude life as such in order to produce citizenship, and how emergent political movements or political parties in Portugal and southern Europe claim more national sovereignty as a solution for the debt crisis (Aguar 2012). This sovereigntist stance is in concordance with a focus on crisis as a political economic wrong - a disease to be cured (Koselleck 2006: 389) - and an interpretation of fascism as an ideological phenomenon only. In this sub-section I will address contemporary processes of sacralization through crisis by media and political discourses and explore how the sovereign exclusion of life remains uncriticised by these emergent actors of representational politics who end up reinforcing national sovereignty with its exclusionary political life.

Considering the outcomes at the level of representational politics with the emergence of political parties that gained power from the so-called *movement of the squares* and other anti-austerity protests in Southern Europe, discourses against financialization and neo-liberalism are even starting, in some cases, to challenge the centrist politics of those liberal democracies. Nevertheless, this parliamentary political strategy comes at the cost of maintaining or even reinforcing the salvific paradigm of *oikonomia* based on exceptionalism. In this respect, for instance, the now famous words of the former Greek finance minister of *Syriza* and a well-established opinion maker are clear-cut and explicit:

A Greek or a Portuguese or an Italian exit from the eurozone would soon lead to a fragmentation of European capitalism ... Who do you think would benefit from this development? A progressive left, that will rise Phoenix-like from the ashes of Europe's public institutions? Or the Golden Dawn Nazis, the assorted neofascists, the xenophobes and the spivs? I have absolutely no doubt as to which of the two will do best from a disintegration of the eurozone.

I, for one, am not prepared to blow fresh wind into the sails of this postmodern version of the 1930s. If this means that it is we, the suitably erratic Marxists, who must try to save European capitalism from itself, so be it. Not out of love for European capitalism, for the eurozone, for Brussels, or for the European Central Bank, but just because we want to minimise the unnecessary human toll from this crisis.

(Varoufakis 2013)

What is relevant to consider in Varoufakis explicit political claim is clearly the idea of trying "to save European capitalism from itself", in particular, the reasons why that seems to be a legitimate act. Minimizing "the unnecessary human toll" is the motive why capitalism should be saved. The two main reasons that he advances for not destroying European capitalism, the defeat of the "progressive left" and the growth of fascism, are sufficient to ground his claim for saving capitalism in the governmental regulation of *making live and letting die* (Foucault 2003: 247). However, it remains unsaid what would be a "postmodern version of the 30s", of fascism as an ideology, growing precisely from liberals, national socialists and Bolsheviks that all *saved* capitalism through authoritarian decisions. In the case of Portugal, saving capitalism after the end of the First World War meant saving Portugal through a fascist military

coup in 1926. In Germany, saving capitalism in the 1930s meant annihilating the revolutionary labour movement with the murder of workers at the hands of liberal democrats and fascists. In this way, saving an imagined community meant saving capitalism (Noronha 2013: 133), be it a western nation-state or a more *European* imagined community such as the European Union.

It needs to be considered as well that, according to Varoufakis, “European capitalism” is to be saved “from itself” (Varoufakis 2013). The fragmentation of European capitalism would mean a return to national sovereignty and, therefore, a *Greek* capitalism and a *Portuguese* capitalism. From this perspective, “saving European capitalism from itself” (idem) can be perceived as a claim against national sovereignty (as will be clear with the next excerpt, this ideological stance conflicts with the thesis of national sovereignty defended by the political leader of *Podemos* in Spain). Nonetheless, even if defending a European capitalism against national sovereignty, one needs to consider where the excluded lives dwell in this specific sovereign territory. In other words, where mere, naked life remains excluded so that European citizens can arise: the sovereign production of the camp as inherent to European citizenship. Thus, while saving European capitalism from itself means saving Europeans and not necessarily Greeks or Portuguese, this logic still operates within the sovereign relation of inclusive exclusion (Agamben 1998: 121-122), that is, the logic of producing camps (such as concentration camps, refugee camps and other instantiations) and excluding lives so that a nation and a people can be formed in a specific territory (idem: 179).

The defence of a European sovereignty contrasts, however, with a more national sovereigntist position defended, for instance, by Pablo Iglesias - the general secretary of *Podemos*:

But the crisis itself has helped to forge new political forces, most notably Syriza in Greece—which finally has a sovereign government, defending a social Europe—as well as Podemos in Spain, opening up the possibility of real political change and the recuperation of social rights. Clearly in present conditions this has nothing to do with revolution, or a transition to socialism, in the historic sense of those terms. But it does become feasible to aim at sovereign processes that would limit the power of finance, spur the transformation of production, ensure a wider redistribution of wealth and push for a more democratic configuration of European institutions.

(Iglesias 2015: 10)

In this excerpt from an article entitled *Explaining Podemos* (idem), included in the *New Left Review*, the relation between crisis and sovereignty becomes more evident. A “sovereign government” is considered to be necessary to face the “power of finance” (idem: idem). Moreover, sovereignty transforms production and will bring more “redistribution of wealth” (idem: idem). This widely spread argument against exploitation of sovereign debt seems obvious and necessary to politically challenge the dispositif of debt. However, advocating the return of national sovereignty implies remaining in the theological paradigm of crisis. Defending national sovereignty, even if against one of the essential dispositifs – sovereign debt – to exploit, discipline and produce surplus value in capitalism today, is not taking into account the fundamental activity of sovereign power in a nation-state: the production of camps and excluded lives or, as Agamben defines them, bare life (Agamben 1998: 181). If sovereignty is not put into question, crisis will continue its salvific appropriation of every event within the exceptionalism of *oikonomia* which will endlessly produce bare life. In fact,

it is precisely this concept, key to dismantling any attempt to criticize the dispositif of debt from a national sovereigntist perspective, which requires some attention now.

The concept of bare life is somehow indebted to Benjamin's notion of mere life mentioned before. Agamben elaborates a whole genealogy of the biopolitical conception of life as a critique of western politics which came to create a split between *bios* and natural life or *zoē*. Both classical Greek terms are understood from the Aristotelian canon. In that sense, *zoē* is the definition of life common to all animals on earth while *bios* is the qualified life which, according to Aristotle's *Politics* (1988), defines man as a *political animal*. Thus, man's *bios* is politics itself: it is the primordial characteristic of human life and that is why Agamben classifies *bios* as linguistic (since Agamben consider humans as the only species capable of producing language and therefore politics) and *zoē* as pre-linguistic (an attribute to all beings with the ability to produce language or not). Bare life is then the life of the *homo sacer* – a life that can be killed but no sacrificed (Agamben 1998: 8) - that dwells in a “threshold of articulation”: a place between culture and nature, *zoē* and *bios* (Agamben 1998: 181). This threshold is considered to be a zone of indistinction between law and fact (or between *bios* and *zoē*, respectively), a camp where law is useless and exception arises within the paradox of lawless law. This specific paradox is the elementary condition for the state of exception – the product of the politicization of life at the cost of the sovereign production of bare life, as in, for example, concentration camps. This is the paradox of sovereignty: it can only guarantee a political life, *bios*, by producing at the same time a non-political and excluded life (bare life) – an inclusive exclusion. It is in the light of this paradox that the defence of national sovereignty against finance needs to be addressed now. The problem with Iglesias' sovereigntist politics of *recuperation of social rights and wealth*

redistribution relies less in the possibility of a return to a planned economy than in the continuation of the sovereign production of bare life. Affirming social rights is not external to the inclusive exclusion of sovereignty: the rights of citizens are the territorial rights of an imagined community. After hypothetically resolving the economic crisis, the government remains within the paradigm of *oikonomia* precisely because God as capital continues to be praised and, consequently, the nation continues to be saved.

The implications of defending national sovereignty against financial capital are wider than the *recuperation of social rights* and *wealth distribution* advanced by Iglesias. In this respect, one of the repercussions of Agamben's critique of sovereignty consists in showing how the emergence of biopolitical instantiations of bare life blurs clear-cut distinctions between totalitarian states and liberal democracies (Agamben 1998: 121-122). This dichotomy between national sovereignty and finance is particularly interesting here since shifting the critique of labour exploitation onto finance is one of the discursive origins of fascism in Europe: interest speculation and rent are the enemies of the nation while only productive capitalists, engineers and managers should be praised (Bernardo 2015: 413). The critique of speculative capital as something opposed to industrious and productive capital was a dichotomy first diffused by the revolutionary syndicalist Sorel and his disciples (idem: 413). As became evident in Nazism, this dichotomy would be appropriated and finally formalized in the program of the German National Socialist Party, which set the death penalty for speculators and usurers, while creating benefits for small and medium companies, and industries as well as policies of sharing companies' profits with workers (idem: 416).

So what needs to be borne in mind is the sovereigntist trait of the dichotomy between finance and production precisely because it is still a dichotomy rooted in *oikonomia*. In this sense, fascism cannot be distinguished from liberalism in its constant crisis of saving national sovereignty since it does not cease to praise God as abstract capital and produce life that may be killed but not sacrificed:

... Nazism emerges decisively defeated from the war both military and politically but less so either culturally and linguistically in the sense that the centrality of bios as object and subject of politics is reaffirmed, even if it has changed to reflect a liberal influence, namely, in that the appropriation and the possible modification of the body is not on the part of the state but on the part of the individual owner of himself... In this sense liberalism ... turns the Nazi perspective inside out, transferring the property of the body of the state to the individual, but within the same biopolitical lexicon. Yet it is precisely the biopolitical characterization of liberalism that separates it from democracy.

(Esposito 2008: 141)

Without a critique based on the threshold of indistinction where bare life is produced by sovereignty, *oikonomia* continues the sacralization of life through the politicization of *bios*. Moreover, the financial capital that is criticized in Iglesias argument, as well as the whole ideological dichotomy between finance and production, remains uncriticised before the basic guilt debt nexus that capitalism as a religious cult implies. In this sense, there is as much debt and guilt in productive capital as there is in finance capital. Insisting on this dichotomy entails the promise of redemption through the

sovereign nation of productive capital but it does so through an undivided people. Not without reason, Agamben (idem: 148) refers to the biopolitical consequence of creating an undivided people within a nation-state as the product of the paradox of sovereignty mentioned above. In the still prevalent nation-states, people are juridical citizens characterized by belonging to their nation-state. A nation's people incorporate a dialectical identity of exclusion: national identity necessarily produced historical events of citizens being denationalized and their consequent annihilation in the twentieth century Europe, (Agamben 1998: 176-180).

Therefore, Iglesias is making a political interpretation of crisis in line with one of originary Marxism's Achilles' heels. His political analysis of crisis is made ultimately through geopolitics and not through labour struggle conflicts - *class* struggle gives space to *nations* struggle (Bernardo 2015: 509). As described before, this would be the theoretical and practical entry points of the fascism(s) to come (idem: idem).

Foucault (2003: 80) shows this transfiguration of labour struggles into struggles between nations in his lectures *In Defence of Society* where he traces the genealogy of race struggle. The historical discourse of race struggle is divided into class struggle and racist struggle. Defending society, its purity, becomes the goal of state sovereignty. When one of the parts of class struggle comes to constitute the mythical power (constituent power) in a sovereign rule based on a juridical order, it starts a racist struggle to purify that new society. Sovereign power in the contemporary management of populations does reveal all its exceptions based on racism, deciding what life must live or die (Foucault 2003: 253-264). Before, there were enemies fighting against each other; now there are threats (Foucault 2003: 216) or enemies within.

Thus, a correlation between bare life production and the totality of unredeemed guilt in capitalism approximates more the *oikonomia* paradigm to the initial definition of molecular fascism (a social process which is absent in Iglesias' and Varoufakis' arguments) than to the macro-political concept of fascism as ideology. The development of productive forces through a micro-political economy of desire is then inseparable from the very sovereign production of bare life by the permanent attempt to save capitalism from itself. Either by a European or national *people*, crisis continues to guarantee its associated market exceptionalism. Necessarily, if the market continues to sacralize life through, for instance, the dispositif of sovereign debt, molecular fascism continues to *channel* desire. The permanent temporality of crisis finds in fascism its perpetuation and not its resolution since capitalism remains in the *oikonomia* paradigm. Crisis reveals itself as a *katechontic temporality*, a permanent delay of the messiah's divine violence through re-sacralization and bastardization in mythical violence; a sovereignty paradigm which is spread through apparatuses and respective subjectivities, institutions and knowledge (Foucault 1991: 102).

Spinozan God as Capital: Beyond the Eschaton/Katechon Duality

Economists have a singular method of procedure. There are only two kinds of institutions for them, artificial and natural. The institutions of feudalism are artificial institutions, those of the bourgeoisie are natural institutions. In this, they resemble the theologians, who likewise establish two kinds of religion. Every religion which is not theirs is an invention of men, while their own is an emanation from God.

(Marx 1955: 54)

As addressed before, the permanent re-sacralization and bastardization of a divine decision reveals itself as the salvific temporality of crisis in the capitalist cult - crisis is the market itself and so it assumes a katechontic temporality to deter its latent inoperativity. However, Benjamin's indagation of capitalism as a cultic religion without transcendence raises a fundamental question regarding the specific conception of God as capital. Conceiving the production of capital as something not static but traversed by constant flows of exchange and debt, entails an idea of God in a radically different way from how he was conceived before and within Modernity. The immanence of how capitalist reproduction operates necessarily reveals the original character of this religious cult: the commodification of objects and human beings as labour force paradoxically made sacralization and profanation indistinguishable (Diken 2016a: 111). The *profanation* of objects metamorphosed in commodities, their removal from common use unexpectedly reveals their sacralization in capitalism: the

fetishism of commodities. On another level, the promise of Fukuyama's *end of history* and the subsequent refusal of any eschatological horizon, resulted in one other paradox: the sacralization of the market and liberal democracy (idem: 155). In this sub-section I will argue that such paradoxical indistinction between profanation and sacralization of the capitalist cult colonizes a conception of God which can be found in Spinoza's *Ethics* (1998). The ambivalent conception of God in Spinoza's *Ethics* illuminates the way how god in capitalism sacralizes as well as disrupts the process of commodification and leads to the profanation of organized religion.

Spinoza's God has a non-sovereignist and non-anthropomorphic character (idem: 10). God is synonymous with nature and infinitely reproduces itself *in* itself (idem: 14). The third definition of the first chapter "of God" in *Ethics* sets that dynamism: "By substance I understand what is in itself and is conceived through itself, that is, that whose concept does not require the concept of another thing, from which it must be formed" (idem: 1). There is an infinite self-actualization of God in infinite cause-effect relations in constant motion: God as an activity. This non-anthropomorphic activity also challenges the notion of an individual subject as a crystalized ontological entity, dissolving him in relations of motion and rest where the exchange of affects between things defines the particular assemblage of a body and a mind¹⁴. Body and mind are two distinguished finite modes which define Spinozan parallelism in *Ethics*: they flow in parallel though they are the same thing, only expressed in different ways (idem: 35). To every existent thing corresponds an identical idea of exactly that thing: both are part of the same substance – God (idem: idem).

¹⁴ The notion of affect is central in Spinoza's *Ethics*. In the third chapter, affect is defined as an action (Spinoza 1996: 70). So affect is an "affection": an action which empowers or disempowers a body which is affected by another body. This dichotomy between "positive" and "negative" affects will be described along the whole third chapter of the *Ethics*. For example, love and hate, pride and scorn and others are dichotomic affects.

By admitting these parallel flows of the world, the theological paradigm that distinguishes Kingdom from government is abolished for there is now immediacy between God, the human body and mind. Nazi fascism, for instance, appropriated this notion by homogenising the Führer, the party and the people (Agamben 1998: 76). The salvific state of exception, for instance, rejects as much as possible juridical mediation from institutions since it implements a rule of lawless law to respond to crisis events. Insofar as the capitalist cult can sacralize (while profaning) bodies, objects in a constant crisis to produce surplus value, fascism and liberal democracy rely on capital (god as activity): the endless and closed circle of production and circulation of commodities for the sake of capital accumulation.

In this way, capital (reproducing itself *in* itself) either in fascism or in liberal democracy concentrates all the parallel flows by appropriating and organizing the production of desire (Deleuze and Guattari 1984: 11). God/capital is a “miraculating-machine” (idem: idem) since it registers in its surface the unorganized flows of desire as an attempt to fetishize and sacralize the inherent schizophrenic flows of the production of desire (idem: idem)¹⁵. However, from this perspective, God cannot be capital, but only in the form of money itself, since the latter circulates with the energy that runs through machines: capital’s divinity is to be found in this infinite circulation and not in the codification of desire in Capital’s “body without organs” - a non-productive instance (idem: 10-11)¹⁶. Needless to say, desire assumes a preponderant role in the capitalist cult as the producer of the real (idem: 31), streaming infinitely

¹⁵ An essential entry point to Deleuze and Guattari’s work is definitely their effort to depathologize schizophrenia (Braidotti 2010: 242). Deleuze and Guattari intertwine desire and schizophrenia, the latter being a positive *condition* for desire disobedience and flows towards creativity against the disciplinary constraints of capital.

¹⁶ The body without organs is a concept highly developed in *Anti-Oedipus* (1984) where Deleuze and Guattari state that they borrowed it from Artaud (idem: 9). The body without organs can be defined as capital when it encodes the flows of the desiring machines against them (idem: 10).

from one machine to another, producing the social: “the social production is simply the desiring production under certain circumstances” (idem: 33). Consequently, man’s desire, understood as an “appetite together with consciousness of the appetite” (Spinoza 1996: 76) is his essence since he strives to preserve his own being when he is conscious of what is good for him after (and not before) he desires something (idem: 33). Desire thus implies a movement, an action regardless of man’s constitution (idem: 100). Obviously, such a constitution is not static but constantly fluid. As Spinoza notes regarding love as joy:

Very often it happens that while we are enjoying a thing we wanted, the body acquires from this enjoyment a new constitution, by which it is differently determined, and other images of things are aroused in it; and at the same time the mind begins to imagine other things and desire other things.

(idem: 103)

Seeing capitalism as a paradox which renders indistinct sacralization and profanation indistinct thus suggests the twofold paradoxical movement in the dynamics of desire framed by Deleuze and Guattari (2004: 37): while capitalism radically affirms the decodification and deterritorialization of desire’s flows in the form of money-capital against pre-capitalist systems of codification, it nonetheless tries, at all cost, to re-codify, to re-territorialize them in the family, the state and the nation (idem: 38). In these dynamics of capitalism a fundamental question arises, once again, regarding authoritarian responses: *why everyone wants to be a fascist*, in other words, the very questioning of fascism from a Spinozan understanding of desire as social production (idem: 33). Moreover, Spinoza’s conception of God helps to foresee the relation

between desire and the re-sacralization of God as activity in the capitalist cult. Capital, in this sense, approximates liberalism and fascism.

By crossing the governmental paradigm with the state of exception, *oikonomia* finds its salvific adaptation to the events of the social not from the *ignorant* masses eluded by dictators but actually from the productive role of desire in producing and then *defending* purifications of societies.

Politics of Crisis

Introduction

Who but the police and armed forces that coexist with democracies can control and manage poverty and the deterritorialization-reterritorialization of shanty towns? What social democracy has not given the order to fire when the poor come out of their territory or ghetto? Rights save neither men nor a philosophy that is reterritorialized on the democratic State. Human rights will not make us bless capitalism.

(Deleuze and Guattari 1994: 107)

The previous chapter provided a definition of crisis as a distinctive temporality: crisis inherently impinges on the katechon, a permanent delay of a final decision which materializes itself through recurrent mythical bastardizations. Such process reveals itself in constant crises and their role in perpetuating the salvation of economy, sovereignty and politics. This chapter aims to show how crisis as katechon entails problematizing contemporary politics from two distinct perspectives: micro-politics of desire (Deleuze and Guattari 2014) and politics as freedom (Arendt 2005). The reason why these conceptions are chosen and not others is due to the fact that both make sense of politics in relation with fascism and totalitarianism.

Two historical periods in Portugal will be investigated to contextualize the above conceptions:

(1974-1996) the period that goes from the revolutionary process after the fall of the dictatorship to the year of the amnesty for the imprisoned militants of leftist military organizations).

(2010-2013) the period of the last wave of protests: the case of the 14th of November 2013 general strike in Lisbon.

In the first historical period, newspapers interviews and pamphlets will be analysed in light of the political paradigm of civil war. Following Agamben's hypothesis that politics is not to be found in the *polis* but in the dynamic tension between the latter and the *oikos* (Agamben 2015: 17), it will be criticized Arendt's thesis of politics as freedom from such field of tension. The empirical material used in this chapter poses the problem of civil war and amnesty in the context of anti-fascist militant actions during the last years of the dictatorship, the on-going revolutionary process and the following foundation of liberal democracy.

In the second historical period, I will focus on a specific event: the 14th of November general strike in 2013. This day is particularly relevant to discuss and criticize Arendt's conception of politics as freedom. Witness texts will be considered in order to understand how crisis problematizes politics as freedom.

Politics as Freedom, Civil War and the Micro-Politics of Desire

Trying to define what politics is about seemed crucial for XX century thinkers such as Hannah Arendt for whom politics was to be thought and revalorised in terms of freedom against the phenomenon of totalitarianism. According to Arendt's reading of political thought in classical antiquity, freedom, as the outcome of politics, arises when a space is created outside the necessity realm of the *oikos*, the kinship of the family (Arendt 2005: 95). For freedom to be realised, the realm of necessity – food, shelter, procreation - needs to be fulfilled by the autocracy of the master over slaves, women and children (idem: 117). Men are free only when they are released from the state of necessity of their household. Slaves will *free* men to politics. In this sense, politics is the end of the household autocracy. Politics is an end for a predisposition for freedom (idem: idem) and that is, broadly speaking, the condition for citizenship and equality to arise between citizens (idem: idem). However, such understanding of politics is not an axiom in the Aristotelian canon which Arendt's relies most: she criticizes the common interpretation of Aristotle's conception of man as a political animal as a misleading interpretation. There is no substance or essence of politics since politics is not a-historically given: man *can* be a political animal (idem: 116) but always at the doors of totalitarianism.

Arendt thus starts from this conception of politics to argue that totalitarianism is, first of all, a phenomenon which destroys the conditions of politics (idem: 97); the autocratic master penetrates the public space and turns himself into a bureaucrat of an “administrative machine” that takes control of the state (idem: idem), as if the *polis* was a household to be managed. Totalitarianism is, according to Arendt, an apolitical phenomenon mainly because it denies political action as *archē* (rule), that is, the

possibility of a beginning, an action through speech within equals that have in common their political life (idem: 124). Speech as a form of action that can begin in spontaneity is the condition of being free (idem: 125-126). By imposing a philosophy of history with its historical necessity, totalitarianism subtracts *men* in humanity and their power to politically act with spontaneity is sacrificed in the altar of historical forces beyond their control (idem: 126). Instead of keeping the household (*oikos*) as a means to make possible politics as freedom (as an end), politics becomes a means to meet a transcendental historical necessity. Secularized forms of messianism, for instance, are one example of a philosophical-historical necessity of the humanity. In other words, when politics becomes a means, it turns into a necessity for a few enlighten despot/philosophers or a mere technique to achieve a transcendental goal (idem: 135). For Arendt, unsurprisingly, the disappearance of politics is always at the order of the day, especially since the discovery of the atomic bomb and the emergence of totalitarianism obliged to question if politics still has any meaning at all (idem: 110). It is facing the permanent gruesome possibility of total physical annihilation that the recovery of politics as freedom by Arendt needs to be contextualized and not from a benevolent framing of politics with law and justice (idem: 118). To put it simple, politics as freedom is not about egalitarian democracy (idem: idem). Freedom can arise as long as an oligarchy is able of freedom of speech (idem: idem). Totalitarianism which does away with politics as freedom, the possibility of *archē* and spontaneity, can even legitimate an oligarchy as long as politics functions as a katechon of a fascist messiah.

It is important, however, to contextualize how politics as freedom arises from a specific relation between citizens (on the basis of an excluded private sphere of necessity and slaves) within the actual completion of the world market and the

expansion and dominance of real subsumption processes of accumulation (Hardt and Negri 2001: 190): If capitalism produced workforce as commodity and debt through circulation on a global scale, then, as Arendt notes, capitalism created a permanent state of necessity dependent on seeking *economic ends aimed at increasing wealth* (Arendt 2005: 117). Politics as freedom, in this phase of the Empire, is rather incompatible with capitalist subsumption since humans cannot be free from its processes of real subsumption. Capitalism implies the substitution, at least partially, of slavery for wage labour but it is not so clear how politics can become an end of economic imperatives, necessity, and finally step outside the autocracy of the *oikos* in capitalism. Politics, in this perspective, can only be conceived as a household management autocracy - a blatant contradiction in the classical conception of politics.

According to Arendt, Christianity is at the core of such process of conceptual challenge in politics (idem: 136). Christians renounced the Greco-Roman canon of freedom when they rejected the public space of politics: instead, they advanced a community to be managed according to Christian ideals of goodness and love for the other (idem: 137). As soon as Christians entered the public space, then *hypocrisy* (idem: idem) necessarily arisen since their communitarian holiness was lost when their form of life was captured by publicity (idem: idem). It is not until Augustine that this anti-political character of Christianity will be thought and, consequently, enable for the first time a Christian politics, that is, a redefinition of the relation between freedom and politics (idem: 139). Freedom meant freedom *from* politics and not *through* politics anymore. Politics was now about the *many* insofar as a *few* would free the *many* from the burden of politics (idem: idem). Such redefinition implied a major change: the secularization of the secluded space destined to the faithful, a space of retreat from politics, will originate a public space itself, a community based on the

Christian ideal of love for the other but which is not political for the *many* only for the *few* (idem: idem). Such expansion of a Christian community is at the root of modernity's colonization of the public by the private realm of the Christian faithful, having consequently depoliticized, in the classical Antiquity perspective, the territory of the capitalist nation-state. Citizens would finally be free from politics to maximize the capitalist production for a "happy life" (idem: 142). The intrinsic managerial principle of government can here be identified in the redefinition of politics and freedom by the Christian community. The political figure of government becomes responsible for the management of a permanent state of necessity where life, production and property are equated with freedom and not politics (idem: idem).

However, Arendt still finds in modernity a possible meaning of politics through the concept of foreign policy (idem: 144) which was clearly not political in the Greek *polis* (idem: 129). Foreign policy is conceived as an end to preserve freedom within a sovereign territory while in the Greek *polis*, politics was suspended when a city-state was menaced by other city-states and command took the place of politics. So, politics, from this angle, did not change from the classical to the modern conception even if - Arendt's concession - the content of freedom radically altered when women, for instance, underwent through an unprecedented process of political emancipation from the household sphere (idem: 144). However, what modernity brought as a major contradiction with the possibility of total annihilation of mass destruction weapons (idem: 145) was the undermining of politics by politics itself (here understood as foreign policy). From that historical moment, the prevalence of foreign policy as politics put to the fore the "naked existence" of life as such:

we might even assert, with considerable justification, that the fact that contemporary politics is concerned with the naked existence of us all is itself

the clearest sign of the disastrous state in which the world finds itself – a disaster that, along with all the rest, threatens to rid the world of politics.

(idem: idem)

Therefore, the spectrum of human annihilation *can* exclude politics as freedom: the preservation of human life becomes the only necessary rationale of politics (idem: 146). Therefore, the redefinition of politics as a deterrent of mass annihilation readjusts politics in the crisis temporality of a katechon – a constant delay or bastardization of a final decision. While politics, in the Greek sense, was only suspended in case of a war emergency (idem: 117), with the spectrum of mass destruction, politics as a means to freedom becomes permanently suspended, emergency turns into norm, and political action (*archē*) is no longer possible.

This process of depoliticisation in liberal democracies, a crisis paradox where war emergency is made permanent so that the spectrum of mass destruction can be endlessly delayed, implies reconsidering what paradigm of war is this and what are the dynamics of depoliticisation as well as politicisation of liberal democracies. Agamben (2015), for instance, conceives civil war (*stasis*) as the political paradigm which underlies such dynamics of politics. In this sense, there is a resemblance between *stasis* and the state of exception (idem: 16). Unsurprisingly, Agamben conceives civil war as a *threshold of indifference*:

In the stasis, the killing of what is most intimate is indistinguishable from the killing of what is most foreign. This means, however, that the stasis does not have its place within the household, but constitutes a threshold of indifference between the *oikos* and the *polis*, between blood kinship and citizenship.

(idem: 11)

Such fracture is the place where politics reveals its intrinsic movement between the *oikos* and the *polis*, between depoliticisation and politicisation, respectively. Therefore, civil war cannot be defined as being grounded in the private realm of the *oikos* (idem: 16) and this is the major contribution of Agamben to reassess both civil war and politics. In fact, the Agambenian conception of politics as emerging out of a threshold of indifference puts into question Arendt's understanding of politics as emerging exclusively from the *polis*. Recalling Agamben's conclusion in *Homo Sacer* (1998), politics, in this sense, has always been biopolitics precisely because life was always the object of the sovereign capture. *Stasis* is rather the dynamics of such capture of bare life between two extreme poles (*oikos* and *polis*): politics as *stasis*. The idea that politics shares a common ground with citizenship thus needs to be revised for the politicisation of citizenship, which sets the latter as the main social identity in politics, conceptually occurs later in the 5th century BC (Agamben 2015: 13), which means that politics does not have an a-historical substance or an essence in the *polis* or in the *oikos* (idem: 17).

Politics thus arises from a permanent mediation between the *polis* and the *oikos* (idem: idem). That "zone of indifference" defines civil war. In modernity, civil war is equated with terrorism when life as such (bare life) becomes the object of politics (idem: 18). Following Foucault's genealogy on sovereignty and biopolitics, Agamben reads politics in modernity as a permanent civil war. Contemporary sovereignty operates within the logic of terror (idem: 18) for the exclusion of lives to the zone of indifference is the very process of politicisation of a *political* life (Agamben 1998: 179).

Originally, civil war always implied the future pacification of the conflict through *politics*. When conceiving politics as civil war, another political concept inherent to

the process of politicisation needs to be addressed: the amnesty (idem: 15). The following excerpt is part of an interview to a judge commenting on the last amnesty act in Portugal (1996):

The amnesty has the consequence of purely and simply erasing the crimes committed. It is as if the people who committed them never had done anything. In an absolutely high criminality case as this one, I did not accept and will never accept such idea. I would defend, at most, a forgiveness of part of the sentences. For forgiving is one thing, forgetting is another¹⁷.

These words are from Martinho de Almeida Cruz, the judge of one of the most polemical trials in the history of liberal democracy in Portugal: the FP-25 trial¹⁸. More important, these words are from 2010, thus still reflecting the fracture of the zone of indifference created by the revolutionary process in Portugal during 1974-1975. The 1996 Amnesty appears here as the regime attempt to resolve that fracture through forgiving and forgetting of terrorist crimes by the leftist military organization FP-25. The amnesty was approved by the majority of the parliament and the President of the Republic. As it will become clearer with this and other examples, the duality of forgiving and forgetting is crucial to understand contemporary politics and terror.

According to Agamben's genealogy of civil war, it is essential to take into consideration the role of memory in the concept of amnesty. Within the classical Greek tradition, amnesty "is an exhortation not to make bad use of memory"

¹⁷ <http://www.dn.pt/portugal/interior/nao-aceitarei-nunca-a-ideia-da-amnistia-1548280.html>

¹⁸ The *FP-25 case* was a judicial process that started in 1984 and ended with the last condemnations of some of their militants on the 6th of April 2001. The FP-25 (*25th of April Popular Forces*) was a military organization that appeared on the 20th of April 1980 as a response to the progressive liberalization of the economy in Portugal. The FP-25 was the military force of a far left coalition (FUP). Between 1980 and 1987 the FP-25 committed 17 homicides, 66 bomb attacks and 99 bank robberies in Portugal. In 1996 the Portuguese parliament approved an Amnesty proposed by the President of the Republic for all the condemned, except for those who committed blood crimes.

(Agamben 2015: 16). Ultimately, amnesty is the last attempt of a regime to politicize the remains of the civil war through an imposed social amnesia (idem: 16). However, the above example is inscribed in the rupture that modernity will operate in the civil war cycle of “forgetting” and “forgiving”: civil war is to be avoided at all costs in the prevailing liberal consensus but, paradoxically, to be remembered through constant trials that go back to that fracture (idem: 16).

The next newspaper interview starts from the perspective of one of the condemned militants, a historical leader of the PRP-BR¹⁹, in one other trial regarding the actions of this party during the revolutionary period:

[Journalist] If you would go back in time, what would you differently?

[Carlos Antunes] After the 25th of April, I never believed that our difference with the reformism would be so profound. I knew what was at stake but I admitted several times to do alliances with the PCP (Portuguese Communist Party). But I never thought that they would collaborate on the 25 of November, in the triumph of the counter-revolution. It is a fact that the base of the PC did not collaborate, but its central committee did. The correlation of forces was so but so favourable to the left, that it was almost a shame how the 25 of November could be set with a bunch of mercenaries. It was necessary to surprise and divide the space of the workers so that it could be possible.

¹⁹ The PRP-BR (*Revolutionary Party of the Proletariat – Revolutionary Brigades*) was founded in 1973 (Fortes 2012: 164). Contrary to other parties, the PRP-BR always advocated direct action to fight against fascism. Responsible for several sabotage actions against the military apparatus of the colonial war, it was a kind of party-army organization (idem: idem) which, as it happened with other political movements and parties during the last years of the dictatorship, emerged as a reaction to the progressive abandonment of armed struggle and the adoption of “class alliances” by the PCP (idem: 163). On the eve of the 25th of November, the coup that ended the revolutionary process (*PREC*), PRP/BR goes underground with one thousand G3 machine guns to prepare the “armed insurrection” (idem: 177). The PRP-BR was later dissolved in 1982.

We, with the political-military direction we had, officials ready for that process, and simultaneously with the SUV²⁰, that were a very considerable force inside the military barracks, it was not necessary to give a single shot. Just to stay calm and say “let them come, we will solve the problem”. It was necessary the implication of Otelo²¹ in this. The Otelo who speak a lot against the PCP but, in truth, did an agreement with Cunhal²² on the vesper of the 25 of November. It was necessary this kind of behaviours to let that thing triumph. Millions of people were ready to change the country. And here we are. “The Europe with us” and, as you can see, “the we” stayed like this²³.

By comparing the two examples, one can initially perceive a shared *ethos* in the dichotomic pair of the judge and the culprit: the resentment brought by political treasury (the exception of the amnesty in the case of the judge and the triumph of the counter-revolution in the case of the revolutionary militant). Both show an affinity which defines civil war as politics based on two obligations: the compulsory participation on the civil war and the obligation to forget that previous engagement (Agamben 2015: 15).

²⁰ The SUV – “United Soldiers Will Win” - were an anti-capitalist and anti-imperialist military force that emerged during the last months of the PREC, rejecting the hierarchy and authority of the army controlled by the MFA. According to their manifest of September 1975, their main purpose was the formation of the “popular revolutionary army” (SUV 1975: 20).

²¹ Otelo Saraiva de Carvalho was part of the MFA movement that organized the 25th of April military coup. During the revolutionary period he became responsible for the COPCON – the military unit of the MFA. Otelo represented, until the 25th of November, the revolutionary and military left within the MFA. During the 25th of November coup, the revolutionary left put in Otelo the hope for a military response. The “resentment” and “treasury” of the revolution became somehow personified in Otelo for his last-minute retreat on that day. Otelo will be arrested for five years under the liberal democrat regime, being accused of belonging to the FP-25, an accusation that he has always denied until today.

²² Álvaro Cunhal was the general secretary of the Portuguese Communist Party from 1961 to 1992.

²³ <http://expresso.sapo.pt/cultura/as-bombas-nao-fazem-milagres=f866813>

What cannot be tolerated in this political paradigm is the abandonment of the cycle between civil war and amnesty, revolution and counter-revolution, betrayal and resentment. The concept of *atimia* resonates the punishment of those who do not take part in civil war with the loss of their civil rights (idem: 12). In this sense, the period that goes from the 25th of April military coup until the formalization of the new constitution of the republic (1976) can be characterized as a situation where *atimia* was the a-juridical condition of the whole population. Militants from all political spectrums were trying to politicize that same population since the revolutionary process opened a threshold of indifference where *polis* and *oikos* became indistinct. The dual power situation during the revolutionary process was a consequence of that indistinction triggered by the military coup²⁴.

From an historical manifest of PRP-BR during the PREC, entitled *Armed Insurrection Against the Civil War* (1975), it is possible to see how complex the question of civil war became at that time. Militants from the military left, such as the ones from PRP, considered the *hot days* of the revolutionary process as menaced by the spectrum of civil war but not actually a civil war scenario yet:

Contrary to the civil wars of our past, this is not about putting two armies of workers serving two factions of the aristocracy or of the national bourgeoisie. What the bourgeoisie is trying to do here is misleading part of the workers population, making it assume the interests of the bourgeoisie and, in that way, trigger a war against the proletariat. But contrary to their wishes, social-democracy and right-wing fascists do not have (in this *hot summer*) an army in

²⁴The constituent process opened by the coup d'état originated a dual power situation: the MFA was not the only political agent. In fact, the population reacted to the military coup and engaged in a parallel process of radical democratization of the society by taking control of the means of production while, as referred before, an non-hierarchical military force (the *SUV*) emerged from the army and escaped the political control of the MFA (Varela 2013: 81).

Portugal. If they want to confront the proletariat, they have to resort to mercenaries in Spain or simply invaders from NATO or USA.

(PRP-BR 1975)

There is this reference to the XIX century liberal civil war in Portugal (1828-1834) which is then used to distinguish it from a Marxist-Leninist conception of civil war where the bourgeoisie acts against the interests of the proletariat (Lenin 1972)²⁵. The Marxist-Leninist conception is rather different from the Agambenian one previously discussed. From the Leninist perspective, civil war is a class war between the proletariat and the bourgeoisie which somehow illustrated the *hot summer* of 1975 in Portugal. In fact, there were no armed battles between the two sides yet. However, the economic elites were financially trying to sabotage the country (Noronha 2012: 112) while staging failed military coups (Fontes 2012: 173) and fascists started to attack the buildings of democratic organizations (idem: idem). This process happened with the background of the Chilean fascist coup two years before as well as in the generalized political turmoil in southern Europe, for instance, Spain, Greece and Italy. However, within such conception of civil war, one cannot grasp the politicisation and depoliticisation processes and how actually civil war continued in liberal democracy through terrorism. For instance, the creation of the FP-25 in 1980, as a reaction to the defeat of the revolutionary left, maintained the zone of indifference inherent to politics as stasis. Although the FP-25 was a micro-phenomenon in terms of support by the working class (as some of their militants admitted) the terrorist actions led by that army group during the 1980's kept the fracture of civil war and, consequently, the

²⁵ “This experience, similarly to the experience of all European revolutions, from the end of the eighteenth century on shows that civil war is the sharpest form of the class struggle, it is that point in the class struggle when clashes and battles, economic and political, repeating themselves, growing, broadening, becoming acute, turn into an armed struggle of one class against another” (Lenin 1972).

production of politics. In 2001, the year of the last sentences on FP-25 militants, Bush's administration began the global war on terrorism.

Admitting that politics is inextricable from stasis, as Agamben describes, implies addressing processes of politicisation and depoliticisation within the tension between the two extremes of *oikos* and *polis* as well as within the temporality of crisis as a deterrent to its own end. As advanced in the first chapter, the theological paradigm of sovereignty in contemporary liberal democracies reveals itself in *oikonomia* – the permanent management of events and conflicts by angels which turns itself into the katechon of the second coming or, to put in a secularized form, the permanent delay of the final days of capitalism by hierarchy, media and bureaucrats. Such process can be interpreted as the total economization of the *polis* (idem: 17) - the depoliticisation process of the city where citizenship falls into the authoritarian family kinship of the *oikos*.

According to this hermeneutics of western politics, the economisation of the *polis* is realized through angelology, the modern creation of bureaucracy (Agamben 2011: 149). As seen before, Arendt refers to this process as the dominance of an “administrative machine” over politics as freedom (Arendt 2005: 97). In the *Origins of Totalitarianism* (Arendt 1979: 186), Arendt reveals a fundamental link between bureaucracy and racist extermination during the imperialist expansion of capitalism. Bureaucracy enabled imperialist expansion and the creation of a *rational political community* based on organized massacres in the colonies (idem: idem). If imperialist expansion founded political communities which presupposed the administration of mass murdering, then administrative machines are eschatological machines too: when the *polis* is economized, bureaucracy is dominant and the anarchy of governmental power (Agamben 2011: 64) sets in motion the messianic bastardization of the Second

Coming. Arendt exemplifies such bastardization with the Nazi state administration of extermination camps (Arendt 1979: 443). However, one also needs to consider the implications of the pervasiveness of the realm of necessity and bureaucracy in liberal democracies, particularly during events of exception where government becomes anarchic without any constitutional constraints.

As it happened in other contexts during the recent cycle of struggles coming from the event of squares in the Mediterranean region, the 14th of November 2012 general strike in Portugal is a rather relevant case to reflect on the relation between bureaucracy and governmental anarchy. On that day of strikes all over Europe, a demonstration took place in the parliament square (*S.Bento*) where the police ended up charging in the parliament surrounding area. Such charge evolved into a riot police chase in the city, particularly in public transports stations. Arbitrary arrests were made around the city streets (including minors); physical and moral abuses occurred against citizens in the Monsanto Court. Police prevented lawyers to contact detainees in prison; it was denied medical assistance in the jail where people were severely injured and the detainees were obliged to sign blank pages of accusation as a condition to leave the prison. The witness text that I will deal with now was widely spread in the social media at that time. This text is relevant here especially because it exemplifies how in situations of exception where legal rights are suspended, the governmental power foregrounds a bureaucratic machine as a central mechanism of its own anarchy. In other words, police arbitrariness goes hand in hand with paperwork:

Arrived at the Court, I was searched two more times and, barefooted, put in a cell with four more people, one of them with injuries on his head and back, with blood falling on the cell. Another one, a minor, with 15 years old, was released with distress by the police officers when they realized of his illegal

detention. I asked for the phone call I had the right to. They answered me that "there are no phones here". I insisted with different police officers that always denied me that right.

None of the police officers that detained me and searched were identified, having taken off their police board with their names on. None of the police officers in the court were identified.

Hours later I was called to a room where I was co-opted to sign an identification form with my personal details but in blanket on the "local, hour and reason of detention" section. I asked an officer about this which he said it was a normal procedure, that they would fill the rest "to match with the other detainees' info". I insisted not feeling ok to sign a form that would be filled afterwards. The police officer, then, wrote the local of detention but refused to put the hour and reason of detention. It was subtly told me that it would be enough to sign and I would be free. Co-opted, I signed.

They took me to the street, to the doors of the court, where, released, I confirmed that I didn't have the right to my phone call.

My lawyer was prevented to enter in the court while I was there; she was prevented to see the papers I have signed. Arrived outside the court, I asked the police officers to give me a copy of the identification form I had signed, or that they showed it to my lawyer. This access was denied with the argument that "I wasn't detained anymore."

I left without any accusation or explanation of what had happened.

(Rede 14N: 2012)

By considering such description of a Kafkaian grey zone of politics, where fundamental rights, for instance, having access to a lawyer are suspended, one can grasp a glimpse of the process of politicisation in liberal democracies as grounded in an anarchical principle: politicisation in liberal democracies is, in fact, an antinomy where the political implies the unpolitical anarchy (Balibar 2014: 168) of the administrative machine. This is what Balibar defines as Arendt's theorem (idem: 170). Signing blank pages of accusation, being coerced by unidentified police forces, paradoxically share the same anarchical conditions for politics to emerge. In this sense, legal rights are groundless in as much as they are a human invention (idem: 167). Legal rights create the *human* of those same rights (idem: 168) as well as the creation of lawless grey zones for non-humans. As contradictory as it may seem, Arendt's conception of politics as freedom entangles its own dissolution for it has an antinomic dynamics between anarchy and *archē*. As a response to this antinomy, Arendt underlies the importance of civil disobedience as "the test of truth of democracies" (idem: 178). There is only democracy if and only if civil disobedience can be constantly institutionalized (idem: idem). Civil disobedience thus saves politics from itself, that is, from its own suspension (idem: 176).

However, considering the witness text below, one need to question who disobeys the law well before considering the institutionalization of civil disobedience of citizens. The state, its repressive apparatus, is posing the *political risk* of denying active citizenship (idem: idem). However, the anarchy of government does not draw a clear line between citizenship production from non-citizens and this is what Arendt seems to avoid discussing. While this witness was captured by riot police in a public transport station, other zones of the city remained politicised and therefore

strengthening citizenship through politics. So the antinomy between archē and anarchy produces the very democratic institutionalization, posing the question if politics as freedom lies on an antinomy or an affinity with anarchy.

Deterring the Suicidal State: Fascism and Logistics

One of the problems in conceiving politics from an Arendtian perspective that relies heavily on binary conceptual relations, such as the one between *oikos* and *polis*, lies in the failure of considering fascism as a micro-political movement beyond the deceiving ideological and macro-historical perspective, that is, the molar perspective only (Deleuze and Guattari 2014: 258). If considering how crisis implies a constant delaying, a deterring movement that, from time to time, sees the bastardization of messianism in fascism, then the molecular perspective of desire necessarily needs to be considered since it foregrounds the productive side of the social and, consequently, of fascism. In this sub-chapter I will argue that the production of the social in capitalism requires bureaucracy, a global triage and logistics which characterize the permanent deterring movement of crisis. That deterring movement seems to bridge with the understanding of fascism from a molecular politics perspective.

Deleuze and Guattari, although in a different manner from Arendt, also position their conception of politics aligned with war. However, a perspective that takes into account the production of the social through desire, the molecular side of it, needs to distinguish totalitarianism from fascism as two different phenomena. While totalitarianism needs to be located at the level of state apparatuses, in a way that it is possible to refer to a Nazi state, fascism implies what Deleuze and Guattari define as a war machine: a nomos against the *polis* (idem: 412), a nomadic movement against the State apparatus and ready to capture it. So a war machine precedes the geometry of the state as Deleuze and Guattari suggest with the example of the migrant barbarians and the Roman Empire (idem: 260). The migrant barbarians move in lines of deterritorialization as well as of reterritorialization, they form a *stateless war machine*

but also reinforce the empire, integrating themselves into its state war machine (idem: idem).

The totalitarian state, the macro black hole, appropriates the war machine with its micro black holes of everyday fascisms - corporations, families, marriages, friendships and others. This is in fact the molecular trait of fascism in constant quantum flows that produce the social through desire. It should be reminded here that desire is not a sort of instinctive energy but the product of interactions that could potentially derive into fascism (idem: 251). The result or segment of such assemblages of quantum flows - the war machine – can consequently capture the totalitarian State (idem: 269).

However, Deleuze and Guattari propose a redefinition of the fascist state not as totalitarian but as suicidal (idem: 269). Fascism emanates not from a capture but from an *intense line of flight* (idem: idem) leading to destruction and death. The line of flight becomes a *line of death* (idem: 268); desire, although not motivated by a death drive, is assembled towards mass annihilation, revealing one's suicide by the death of others (idem: 269). The translation of such suicidal State is to be found in total war – war for the sake of war:

So-called total war seems less a State undertaking than an undertaking of a war machine that appropriates the State and channels into it a flow of absolute war whose only possible outcome is the suicide of the State itself ... it was this reversion of the line of flight into a line of destruction that already animated the molecular focuses of fascism, and them interact in a war machine instead of resonating in a State apparatus. A war machine that no longer had anything

but war as its object and would rather annihilate its own servants than stop the destruction.

(Idem: 270)

Considering such implication of total war as a main characteristic of the suicidal state, it is important to conjecture about the consequences of such death drive in contemporary liberal politics. Whitehall (2013: 66), for instance, questions if total war as become politics itself. The way Whitehall sees this transformation of total war into politics is through logistics (idem: 67). More than focusing exclusively on the effects of warfare, the “theatre of war” can no longer be distinguished from the logistics of the population consumption, for total war to be permanent it requires pacification through industries of care, food or entertainment and, of course, the working day. From this perspective, it is only a step ahead to Whitehall’s development of the concept of “emotional logistics” (idem: 67-68). War is indistinguishable from the management of population less from war machinery than war’s “logistical creation and management of the self” (idem: 68). This is to some extent closed to the idea of the cycle of combustion engine pointed out by Arendt (2005: 155): a dialectic of modernity between construction and destruction through constant explosions to fulfil the drive for *progress* (idem: idem). According to Arendt’s historical perspective, it is possible to find this logic of engine explosions precisely in the destruction of German cities in the aftermath of the second world war and in Germany’s still dominant economic role today – a lag of economic progress could then be seen in those countries that were not so heavily bombed (idem: 156). Unsurprisingly so, Arendt

does not criticize such logic of engine explosions, only their historical appropriations by totalitarian ideologies (idem: idem).

So the same process that builds houses and creates a population to be managed is the same that annihilates it. Arendt admits that this is a process unleashed by humans that do not control that process anymore, in the sense of *archē*. Otherwise put, the sovereign hand in this drive for progress is now powerless especially since the atomic bomb and the possibility of mass annihilation (idem: 157). Political action, *archē*, was eradicated through the logistics of total war. Whitehall will frame this problem by questioning the relevance of the Schmittian conception of the political by means of the dichotomy between friend and enemy (Whitehall 2014: 70). Considering logistics as pre-emptive, that is, the legitimation of logistics through the immediacy of management of resources and planning before the sovereign decision (idem: idem), Logistics as total war is a complete process of depoliticisation; in Arendt's perspective, *archē* is emptied; in Schmitt's perspective, sovereignty as exceptional decisionism becomes powerless:

The technological component of the global triage further depoliticizes and displaces the decision. The further the act of deciding is pushed into the automatic functioning of ever-emerging networks, the more insignificant the action becomes and the more difficult it is to politicize. The decision, as such, is no longer an exception awaiting the sovereign prerogative.

(idem: idem)

Thus, the pre-emptive characteristic of global logistics increasingly puts into question the conceptualization of a political theology, that is, a secularized politics in the king's body (Raschke 2015: 146). Sovereignty cannot embody in any sovereign – the Word

made flesh is now the *empty tomb* of politics (idem: idem). Consequently, if Arendt's definition of politics as freedom is kept in mind at this point, logistics exposes the totalitarian depoliticisation of the *polis* in the pre-emptive management that characterizes the former. In other words, this means that the dominance of the pre-emptive character of logistics in total war imposed a shift from saving the *polis* to saving lives. In a certain way, this is the limit of Arendt's and other historical approaches to totalitarianism, including fascism. The latter does not need a *polis*, a *totalitarian* state, propaganda or a charismatic leader to flow as a war machine ready to produce the social. The two notions of fascism proposed by Deleuze and Guattari, be it the Body without organs in *Anti-Oedipus* or the cancerous body in *A Thousand Plateaus*, both engendered by desire, show, in a certain way, how conceiving fascism merely as an ideology, with its historical instantiations, cannot entirely explain how fascism arises from bureaucracy and the administrative machine. In this sense, politics as freedom is not necessarily an *antidote* to fascism precisely because it cannot block the logistics that makes the marketplace work and, therefore, the necessary freedom between equal peers to generate politics. The paradigmatic dichotomy between *oikos* and *polis* becomes irrelevant before the very fascist micro-politics of desire. Moreover, one may question at this stage if the concept of politics and its revalorization is actually relevant at all when the temporality of crisis as a permanent deterrent of mass annihilation reproduces and is reproduced by the total economisation of the *polis* through total war. Neither a revalorisation of politics as freedom nor the actual liberal household autocracy avoid the sacralization of bare life.

The Liberal Sacred Spaces of Politics

In this section I will argue that the two paradigms of politics previously addressed, politics as freedom and micro-politics of desire, cannot be fully understood without grasping their respective spatial constructs. While the idea of freedom in politics presupposes a marketplace where citizens can generate freedom (Arendt 2005: 119), the notion of micro-politics of desire grasps the end of the confinement spaces of disciplinary societies and the subsequent spatial constructs of societies of control (Deleuze 1992). I will also argue that the katechon, crisis, sets the temporality of a permanent global society of control.

Understanding politics as freedom implies, first of all, a spatial separation of the political space from other spatial constructs such as instantiations of the *oikos*. Such separation sacralizes the space of politics. However, the community of citizens who freely debate together entails the existence of a profane space (Losurdo 2011: 299). As Losurdo (*idem: idem*) argues, liberalism will materialize this separation between sacred communities and profane spaces through colonial expansion, imposing itself in the primitive accumulation of profane colonies by sacred metropolises with their parliaments in, for instance, Portugal, and other Western European countries. The sacred space of politics cannot be entirely *free* if profanation is not kept at distance. However, this purification of a sacred space may compromise the political and reveal the hypocrisy of such *freedom*: the private sphere of the household and civil rights were constantly suspended by racist laws and State surveillance in order to keep the *purity* of the sacred community and prevent miscegenation, for instance, in the United States of America (*idem*: 300).

Paradoxically, the whole necessity of sacralizing the political space was stronger in liberal countries, such as in England after Reformation or in the Low Countries of the Dutch Revolution, since they kept a closed tie with religious puritanism and messianism influenced by Old Testament writings (idem: 309). The *chosen people* that conquered Canaan became secularized in the political and spatial community of liberalism in clear opposition to the profane space of slaves and nature (idem: 310). Such indistinction of humans from nature in the profane space of colonies points out, according to Losurdo, to one of the major paradoxes in the liberal ideology: if liberals revolted against European empires and against absolute monarchies, theorizing and effectively limiting state power, they were, nonetheless, increasingly reducing human lives to slavery (idem: idem). The sacralization of the spatial construct of politics as freedom that Arendt will later oppose to totalitarianism historically materialized in the properties of free liberal slave-owners.

However, such process of spatial sacralization should not be conceived as static and victorious in terms of having avoided any kind of profanation. Slave revolts were influenced by the *Exodus* as it happened in 1800 revolt in Virginia with a slave leader being called the “new Moses” (idem: 311). Therefore, the sacred space in liberalism will be expanded with, for instance, the abolition of slavery laws in the 19th century and the increasing participation of excluded lives in the sacred space of liberal politics. Such profane appropriation of the sacred space and culture of liberal slave owners (idem: idem) by the slaves themselves reminds Arendt’s notion of civil disobedience and the role it plays in legitimizing politics and government. Liberal societies cannot give out an increasing politicisation of excluded lives if the city is to be saved through institutional recognition of civil disobedience. In other words, the process of spatial politicisation in liberalism and in actual liberal democracies turns

out to be the same process of spatial sacralization. Although liberal democracies tended to expand the sacred space to the shores of profane spaces, the separation between what is conceived as the political life and the excluded life (bare life) is still present. Even though Arendt shows an apparent antagonism in the importance of civil disobedience to *test* democracy, her reevaluation of politics is likely to reproduce the inclusive exclusion of politics that Agamben unravels in his project, that is, the *way* of doing politics that excludes some sort of humans outside the *polis* to construct its politico-sacred space. Regardless her recognition of civil disobedience as a tool to reform *democratic* regimes, Arendt does not criticize the astuteness of civil disobedience in reproducing identity politics that continuously excludes humans from sacred spaces. The notion of politics as freedom and its theologico-spatial constructs thus show an intrinsic opportunism: politics becomes a process of taking advantage from spatial exclusions by an endless political negotiation of thresholds between who is a citizen, who is still waiting to become one and who will never be a citizen precisely because he or she has already a sacred body dwelling outside the *polis* in a threshold of indifference, a space of exception.

However, despite the sovereign mechanism of theological and spatial exclusion of liberalism still being prevalent, one needs to historically contextualize that process in actual liberal democracies. Deleuze's *Postscript on control societies* (1992) has the advantage of underlying the shift of disciplinary, confined spaces to the permanent open places of modulation (Deleuze 1992: 4). While confinement characterized the network of institutions in disciplinary societies (schools, factories, prisons, hospices), since the period of post-war control societies increasingly abolished the institutional walls of precepts and gave rise to the barriers of passwords and codes (Deleuze 1992: 5). If discipline is eased in a control society, individuals cannot be formed out of

masses. The total economisation of the *polis* abolished its space and with it, the individual (and the citizen) is now diluted in databases to be managed (idem: idem). The question here is then not how politics is secularized but actually how this new capitalist phase of accumulation based on the dominance of the code shifted politics and theology towards economics. As the Deleuze saying goes: “we’re told business have souls, which is surely the most terrifying news in the world” (idem: 6). The process of sacralization of space is transferred from politics to economy. In this aspect, It is interesting to note Deleuze’s reference to Kafka’s *Trial* and the importance it sets to the specific temporality concerning this sacralization and the juridical which becomes very close to the temporality of crisis advanced before: *limitless postponements* (idem: 4).

One needs now to address the spatial constructs arising from the change of sacralization from politics to economics on the basis of the spatial organization of societies identified by Foucault (2000): the emergence of apparatuses of security to maintain and increase circulation in the *milieu*. By milieu, Foucault discovers a new spatial and temporal relation of the sovereign with the territory which is at the origins of apparatuses of security. The milieu is defined by events controlled through security, that is, the management of those same events in a territory:

The specific space of security refers then to a series of possible events; it refers to the temporal and the uncertain, which have to be inserted within a given space. The space in which a series of uncertain elements unfold is, I think, roughly what one can call the milieu.

(Foucault 2000: 21)

Managing permanently *series of uncertain elements* in constant causal relations (for example, if streets are not cleaned, there will be more risk of diseases) means that the sovereign recognizes a *nature* to be measure, rationalized both in territory and in the human species. More than obliging and imposing a social contract on the people, Foucault reveals the contribution of the physiocrats in the XVIII century in constructing instead a population to be managed and fulfil its desire with an anti-scarcity system to prevent revolts (idem: 33). A major difference between the disciplinary space and the space of security here resides: the management of the population requires centrifugal apparatuses of security (idem: 45), that is, networks that are permanently expanding in their assimilation of *uncertain elements* of nature, while disciplinary apparatuses are centripetal, generating a regulated, concentrated and protectionist space (idem: idem). Two spatial constructs that political economy will use as models to define laissez-faire or protectionist policies, respectively. The emergence of the centrifugal space of security thus moved the pendulum of sovereignty from politics to economics. As Foucault notes, the physiocrats naturalized economics into *physics* – the object of politics in modern societies (idem: 47). Such process of expanding a space of security, argues Foucault, is named liberalism (idem: 48).

Foucault understands liberalism in *Security Territory and Population* (Foucault 2000) beyond a mere assemblage of ideologies appearing in the eighteenth century. Liberalism, according to Foucault, is a *technology of power*, the deployment of apparatuses of security to manage the circulation of commodities (idem: 49). This is what freedom in liberalism means for Foucault: an assemblage of apparatuses of security to manage the circulation of the market as/in the town (idem: 64). Since the space of security is permanently expanding (the creation of the world market being

one of the consequences of the deployment of apparatuses of security), the increasing colonization of security in modern societies will, as Deleuze rightly predicted, gave birth to control societies. In this way, the increasing predominance of the town as market between the seventeenth and the beginning of the eighteenth century (idem: idem) is the first historical instantiation of the sacred space of liberalism precisely because it is when the circulation of commodities, the creation of the population/people divide and the birth of the government shifted territorial sovereignty to the market economics of the town. If circulation becomes the priority in the sacred spaces of liberalism, then phenomena such as epidemics and scarcity need to be managed to allow the maximum profitability coming out of the population. The territory of the prince and his *safety* are not at stake anymore but the *security* of the population (idem: 65). It is less a problem of subjects obeying the laws of a sovereign than managing and governing the *physics* of bodies in a given space. Interestingly enough, the genealogy of the concept of population has a spatial dimension. The managerial space of security finds its first discursive appearance in catastrophic desertification of territories (idem: 67). A raw and massive desubjectification movement of depopulation is actually what is called population (idem: idem). War, famine and epidemics necessarily put in the forefront the physics of human bodies. According to Foucault, the textual existence of the first mortality tables in eighteenth century England are precisely caused by major epidemics (idem: idem). Therefore, what becomes visible with Foucault's genealogy of the concept of population is the dependence between the desert and the market. In order for human bodies to be managed, allowing an intensification of commodities circulation, a movement of desertification needs to spread in a centrifugal process. The expansion of the town as

market breaks the walls of disciplinary and confined spaces at the cost of the increasing desertification of control societies.

In this sense, the *endless postponements* of control societies, their specific temporality of a crisis paradox, historically confirm a spatial response to fascism in the twentieth century. The expansion of the desert (market) was the necessary outcome of the total politicization of fascist societies in the twentieth century. In *the Birth of Biopolitics* (2010), Foucault clearly draws the genealogy of neoliberalism as the only legitimate governmentality to rebuild a former fascist state (Foucault 2010: 84). In fact, here lies the great paradox of post-war crises in neoliberal governmentality: more than a set of political economy laissez faire policies, neoliberalism, as a specific governmentality, introduced a temporality of a permanent crisis that worked as an emergency break in the eschatological time of the fascist suicidal state. A temporality of economic growth will be the only possible after the dead-end of the temporality of history (idem: 86). Consequently, only the desert of the world market would expand and allow the sacralization of liberal spaces exclusively through economic reasoning. The outcome of this spatial sacralization is precisely the still dominant liberal consensus which rose above the mass graves of twentieth century fascism:

There is a permanent genesis, a permanent genealogy of the state from the economic institution ... This economic institution, the economic freedom that from the start it is the role of this institution to guarantee and maintain, produces something even more real, concrete, and immediate than a legal legitimization; it produces a permanent consensus of all those who may appear as agents within these economic processes, as investors, workers, employers, and trade unions.

(idem: idem)

Obviously, such consensus is also the product of the victorious *state phobia* of neoliberalism, what Foucault called an *inflationary* critique of the state or, better put, a *critical commonplace* (idem: 187). It is in this context that Foucault will distance his interpretation of totalitarianism from a liberal view: totalitarianism not as the expansion of the administrative and bureaucratic state, but as a *non-state governmentality* of the party (idem: 191). This political institution gaining a predominant role in the nineteenth century, the political party, is, according to Foucault, at the origin of totalitarianism (idem: idem) and its take-over of state governmentality (idem: idem). Foucault's interpretation of the creation of totalitarian regimes is close to Deleuze's and Guattari interpretation of fascism in *One thousand Plateaus* as a war machine exogenous to state apparatuses. The fascist party as a war machine transforming a line of flight into a line of death. Therefore, neoliberals and fascists were in fact only useful adversaries of each other. Both criticized state governmentality, redefining the sacralization of their own spatial constructs beyond the mere liberal sacred space: in fascism, the total politicization of society; in neoliberalism, the total economisation of society.

Language of Crisis

Introduction

This chapter analyses the dynamics of security in two crisis events in Portugal: the rise of the fascist dictatorship and the March 2011 financial bailout of the state by the IMF, the European Commission and the European Central Bank. As previously addressed, such dynamics of security unfold between two politico-theological events: the katechon and the eschaton. This means that crisis is constantly engendered by their continuous tension: while katechon prevents the solution of crisis, the eschaton accelerates it. In order to analyse how this dynamic diachronically operates and builds up the temporality of crisis in Portugal during different periods, I will draw on the concepts of *dispositif* and historical ontology (Foucault 1980, Hacking 2002).

The notion of *dispositif*, a key concept in Foucault's work, has been reworked and reinterpreted by authors such as Esposito (2006), Agamben (2009a), Deleuze (2007) among others. Esposito, for instance, has brought such term to the fore in relation to crisis (see Esposito 2007). Esposito understands the *dispositif* of crisis as a metaphysical machine constituted around the thought of Valery, Husserl and Heidegger (idem: 22). The main idea is that these authors create a philosophical necessity of nostalgia for an origin in order to recover the political (idem: 29). The teleological movement of Modernity's temporality of crisis operates a reactionary counter-movement in search for *lost origins* and *golden ages*. Once recovered, they would initiate the political: *telos* meets *archē* (idem: 24). However, the intersection between the two terms is problematic: as Esposito rightly points out, fascism can be framed through such immunitarian logics (idem: 29).

Agamben's understanding of what a *dispositif* is about attempts to effectuate an archaeology of such concept, approximating it to the Trinitarian paradigm of *oikonomia* (Agamben: 11): the Latin translation of the Greek term *oikonomia* is *Dispositio* (idem: idem) which will etymologically lead to the word *dispositif* (idem: idem).

With Deleuze's (2007) interpretation of *dispositifs*, there is, expectedly, an all geometrical description of lines and machines. As a first definition, Deleuze argues that a *dispositif* is a "multilinear whole" (Deleuze 2007: 338). Such "multilinear whole" is always conflictual, with discontinuous lines, sedimenting and fracturing that same whole (idem: idem). Thus analysing a *dispositif* is closed to drawing "cartography" (idem: idem). According to Deleuze, such mapping of lines consists in "regimes of utterances" (idem: 338). A line is an utterance. This aspect of pragmatics of language is particularly important to the analytical framework of this chapter. In other words, a *dispositif* is partly concerned with what words can do. However, my aim in this chapter is also to show *how* words can do what they do: from a Foucauldian perspective, I then investigate the rules that make possible the production of utterances and objects of knowledge in such regimes (Foucault 2002a: 37). In this way, I will focus less on *hidden* and covered meanings behind utterances and focus more on their immediate and given surfaces. There is less concern on criticizing conservative ideologies during the financial dictatorship and the bailout and more on the rules of performativity of such regimes of utterances.

Two regimes of utterances are put into conflict in this chapter: the one belonging to the crisis and consolidation of the fascist regime in Portugal (1926-1933) and the one on the more recent crisis of the third bailout period (2011).

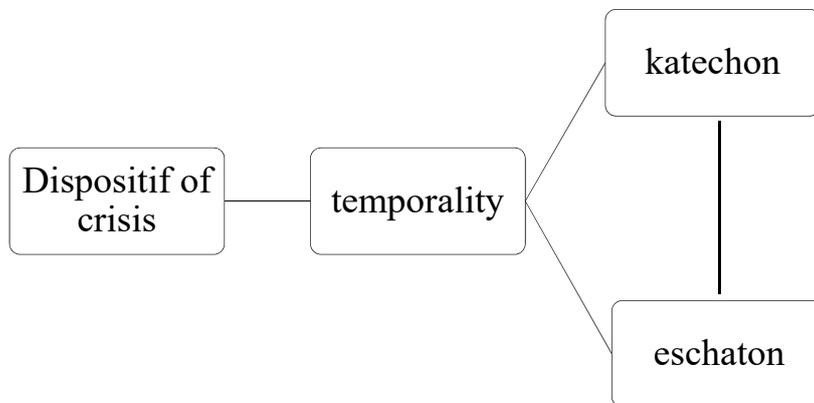
I will show in this chapter how the dispositif of crisis operates to produce a temporality from media and political texts. As advanced before, Foucault defined dispositif as a group of texts and practices that works as a response to an historical emergency (Foucault 1980: 194-196). It's a strategic interplay of a variety of elements, such as discourses, which produces knowledge into certain ways and not others (idem: idem).

A dispositif, as it is easy to see in Foucault's uses of the term, reflects a governmental praxis which is managerial in its immanent principle of governing subjects (idem: idem). Foucault was also concerned on how such assemblages of power/knowledge – the dispositifs - would produce a subject to be governed and guided through a conduct. So a dispositif produces a particular kind of subject through power and knowledge (idem: idem).

However, when thinking crisis as a dispositif, what subject can here be produced? In other words, when the historical emergency becomes the dispositif itself in late capitalism, what is left to be produced in terms of subjectivity? The dispositif of crisis can be included, therefore, in that type of paradoxical dispositifs that sets desubjectivation and not subjectivation as its main knowledge/power production (Agamben 2009: 20).

Since it responds to an historical emergency, a dispositif of crisis also sets a temporality of security. The dispositif of crisis normalizes the crisis threat, the abnormal, optimizing the risk of a catastrophe, strategically evaluating and measuring the potential and menacing event (Foucault 2007: 6). The strategic interplay of the dispositif of crisis as a response to an historical emergency, a crisis, operates within

the already mentioned theological categories of the katechon and eschaton. Such categories produce the temporality of crisis:



Visual 1. Dispositif of crisis

In this way, the texts which I will analyse are part of a security's response to prevent the unfolding of a re-sacralized eschaton. As textual elements of a dispositif, they are strategically put into place to enforce a specific conduct through crisis. They produce a katechontic regime of truth to prevent an ultimate financial and social chaos. A dispositif of crisis is, in this sense, a dispositif of security.

The security temporality of the dispositif of crisis can be described as following: an endless interplay between a postponed eschaton through a katechontic response (for instance, security policies) (Dillon 2014), thereby producing a specific rule of crisis temporality.

So this chapter will approach the dispositif of crisis in two historical ontologies of crisis temporality: the administrative dictatorship of Salazar and the 2011 bailout. Historical ontology is a term coined by Foucault (Foucault 1997: 130). According to Foucault (idem: idem), historical ontology revolves around three "axes": knowledge,

power and ethics. In such term resides a crucial frame on the conceptualization of power dear to Foucault: power as a productive aspect of subjectivities. Thus knowledge produces particular subjectivities that continuously produce power through conduct.

The concept *historical ontology* is relevant as it implies a methodological approach of historical discontinuity, that is, the avoidance of teleological reasoning typical of philosophies of history which, as Arendt warns (2005: 126), can easily turn into time machines of *totalitarianism* by deleting the agent's archē. So, this chapter is not methodologically concerned with establishing a univocal continuous line of causality between events where one can extract a transcendental, theological and teleological rule and explanation of crisis. In a certain way, this empirical way of approaching texts acknowledges the very basic premise of the contemporary historical ontology of control societies in late capitalism. There is no transcendental historical continuity but temporal constructs for the present, to recall Deleuze's anti-teleological premise, that reveal themselves as "limitless postponements" (Deleuze 1992: 4).

Empirical Material

The empirical material of this chapter is constituted by political speeches, pamphlets, press releases and conferences. The first sub-chapter analyses political speeches from the Portuguese dictator Salazar from 1926 to 1934.

The second sub-chapter analyses three types of texts: IMF press releases, press interviews and press conferences; newspaper articles from three Portuguese daily newspapers: *Jornal de Negócios* (daily economics newspaper), *Público* (daily

generalist newspaper) and *Correio da Manhã* (daily tabloid); and two political speeches from the former Prime-minister and the former President of the Republic during the Troika intervention in Portugal.

The corpus of media texts timespan goes from two weeks before to two weeks after the official request of the Troika bailout in Portugal (6th of April 2011), that is, between 23rd of March 2011 and 20th April 2011. The corpus is constituted of 420 497 words of online newspaper articles. They were collected directly from the search boxes of the newspapers websites. The corpus is constituted by written texts only. I selected for the analysis all the corpus articles under the umbrella *sovereign debt crisis*.

The selection of these genres follows my intention to have a variety of texts that could bring contrastive insights from their analysis. However, in line with what was said before (see *Ambulant Realities* section), this analysis assumes a sceptical view on inductive and deductive processes of textual inference. In other words, the analysis is not concerned in extracting a generalizable rule from particular cases and vice-versa (Agamben 2010: 21). For instance, by interpreting the speeches of Salazar I am not saying that they define the temporality of crisis in *Salazarism*, as well as I am not trying to say that a corpus of newspaper articles from the 2011 bailout period can define the temporality of crisis in that period. It could not be otherwise as an economic crisis can bring an epistemological crisis too, necessarily affecting the rules and legitimacy that produce knowledge on crisis (Davies and McGoey: 2012).

The Fascist Temporality of Crisis: The Katechontic Dispositif of Security

... The clarity of statements and counting has exerted a strange seduction.

(Salazar 1961: 25)

Michael Derrick, a reviewer of the 1939 English translation of an anthology of Salazar's speeches, concludes his apology for a southern European dictatorship with the following words:

It is remarkable that these should be the words of the head of the Government of a European country today; and it must be a solace to many to whom it seems as if Europe is tottering on the brink of self-destruction, to know, by reading this book, that in one corner of Europe at least, there is already the first herald of a new Christian European order ... Mr Broughton, the translator, is worthy of the gratitude of all English Catholics for making available to them the thought of one of the most remarkable men of the age.

(Derrick 1939: 634)

I want to start this chapter by focusing on the idea of a “herald of a new Christian European order” in the figure of Salazar: the Christian head of Portugal's government as a signal of salvation when Europe is “on the brink of self-destruction”. Historically, this is not a surprising idea as Salazar came from a right-wing catholic background (*Catholic Centre*) particularly active in Portugal's politics (Rosas 2015: 50). Salazar was the dominant intellectual personality of the catholic right wing faction in Portugal

before the 1926 military coup that took him to power (idem: idem). This aspect is important to understand why Salazar is not seen, in the reviewer's perspective, as a force of self-destruction but of continuity. The far right nationalism of Salazar differs from the far right nationalism of Germany at that time: Salazar, for instance, will persecute the Nazi-fascist *blue shirts* Portuguese leader (Pinto 2000). The new order of Salazar is to be rather understood as a restrainer of evil and heresy – either understood as communism or as the financial and social anarchy of liberal democracies. However, the new order necessarily required the overthrow of the first republic parliamentary regime. There is no order without disorder, no immunity without evil (Esposito 2011: 63)²⁶. This is what will be argued in this sub-chapter: the restraining temporality - the Katechon - of a new Christian order was dependent on a temporality of crisis. The disorder is to be solved with a security's financial order embodied in the finance minister Salazar.

In his first volume of speeches (1926-1934) - and particularly those which were written while he was a finance minister – Salazar employs a strategic narrative of sacrifices and salvation to face the event of crisis (Gil 1995: 29). Thus, in his speech entitled *The National Problems and the Order of Their Solution (1928)*, Salazar homogenizes finance and religion in the following way:

But let us not have illusions: the service reductions and expenses imply restrictions on private life, sufferings. We will have to suffer in shorten salaries, rising taxes and scarcity in life. Sacrifices, and big ones, we are already making them until today and unfortunately lost for our salvation; let us

²⁶ “But most important – for how it fits perfectly into the immunitary paradigm of *religio* – is the way this takes place, the manner in which evil is restrained: the katechon restrains evil by containing it, by keeping it, by holding within itself ... The katechon antinomically assigns a nomos to anomie, thus restraining its catastrophic unfolding (Esposito 2011: 63)

do them now with a defined finality, integrated in a common plan and they will be salutary sacrifices.

It is the painful rise from the Calvary. I repeat: it is the rise from the Calvary.

Men may die on top of the hill but nations will be redeemed.

(Salazar 1961: 18)

Sacrifice is what transforms heretic individual bodies into sacred corporate bodies such as nations. The Calvary, the apotheosis of that sacrifice, is first of all a financial punishment to achieve national salvation. Shortening salaries, rising taxes, that is, economic exercises of mortification, will save the nation. The illusions would be deterring sacrifices and, consequently, the national salvation. However, according to Salazar, not all sacrifices lead to salvation. This is his messianic message: economic sacrifices rationally oriented towards national salvation are the “salutary” sacrifices and not others. The theological coherence of this narrative lies in the acknowledgment that sacrifices have a theological reasoning. Thus the sacralization of sovereignty – the nation redemption - through individual mortification is coherent with the Christian managerial paradigm of *oikonomia*. The symptom of totalitarianism in the total *oikonomization* of the social identified, for instance, by Arendt (2005), is visible in the mortification of economic cuts in individuals’ lives for the redemption of sinful nations. When Salazar in his first speech formulates a hierarchy of the problems of the nation, he starts by setting the financial problem as prior to the social and the political ones. The debt and the deficit – finance - subordinate politics. In other words, capitalism is a salvific economy since debt entails individual mortification – cuts to reduce the deficit and pay the sovereign debt - for the promise of a nation’s redemption.

For Salazar, however, there is a *politics* of sacrifice. In his speech *Politics of Truth, Politics of Sacrifice, Politics of the Nation*, there are two meanings of such politics of sacrifice: the necessary and inevitable sacrifice of the present generation and the equal share of “imposed restrictions for the common salvation” (Salazar 1961: 33). These sacrifices are justified, according to Salazar, by dividing the population into two classes: the debtors and the creditors (idem: 32). The sacrifices are to be made on the incomes of the population and not on the already sacrificed capital as the latter is the “base and factor of future economic progress” (idem: 32-33). All this mortification is imposed in the name of currency stabilization and, consequently, public assets (idem: 33).

Sacrifices and the apparent apotheosis of a national rebirth do not take part as irrational exercises of the financial dictatorship. Rather, for Salazar, scarcity and those same economic and financial exercises build the redeemed corporate body of the nation as it gives them the rationality of means and ends that the anarchy of party politics and democracy could not give. Notwithstanding, the Portuguese are overtly criticized by Salazar as too “emotional”, “irrational” and “lacking objectivity” (idem: 26) in a “country of feelings” (Gil 1995: 16). Speaking to a military audience some years after the military coup, Salazar subtly criticizes the social parasitism that can undermine the military virtues by living at the costs of the State without discipline (Salazar 1961: 105). Thus financial mortification of the sentimental and irrational Portuguese must rebirth the fascist corporate body of the nation.

Nevertheless, Salazar’s “paranoia of rationality”, as Gil defines it (Gil 1995: 15), will meet the financial mysticism of the expert, *the sorcerer of finance* as he was commonly called (Rosas 2013). Portuguese are portrayed as ignorant but they can understand the mysticism of finance experts (Gil 1995: 12). This is the rhetorical node

of the financial dictatorship: the explicit use of a technological expertise to render political actors invisible. The “rhetorics of invisibility”, as Gil (1995: 36) names it, not only promotes invisibility as an equivalent of death by narratives of salvation but also through the desire of death so that salvation can be achieved: “Men may die on top of the hill” (idem: 30).

According to Griffin (2015: 18), this is a main trait of a fascist temporality. The nationalization of eternity implies individual mortification through a paradoxical fusion of myth with technology (idem: 16). In Salazar’s speeches, instead of the cult of aviation, there is the cult of finance. Above else, the bureaucratic characteristic of fascism is expressed in these speeches in the financial management of the household. This is, according to Griffin, “Fascism’s temporal paradox” (idem: idem). The accelerative rationality of finance cannot do without the mythical backwardness of the “nationalization of eternity” (idem: 18).

So the eternalization of the corporate body of the Portuguese nation is dependent on individual sacrifice. There is a circular movement in this temporality. It starts from the demand of sacrifice of every single citizen (to embody and incarnate the corporate body of the nation) until the rebirth of the fascist bodies in osmosis with the organism of the eternal nation. In his speech “the national problems and the order of their solution” Salazar emphasizes such individual sacrifice:

Furthermore, it should not be thought that the Finance Minister can avoid them [sacrifices] and do alone the necessary savings; he can do less more than *cuts*. The savings must be done by all who are in charge of the services, whoever they are: big savings from major readjustments or small savings from the recovery of small things. It is these small savings, multiplied by thousands, by

millions, that will allow the Finance Minister to keep the same services with fewer expenses.

(Salazar 1961: 18)

Millions of small savings can form the corporate body. This process of corporate embodiment is, in Salazar's above perspective, entirely metonymical. The finance minister is only empowered if embodied by thousands, millions of small individual savings, that is, millions of sacrificial exercises in services and households. In order to give objectivity and make sacrifices "salutary", the metonymical performativity between the finance minister and the millions of Portuguese requires a revolution in the administrative bureaucracy of the nation. Unsurprisingly, Salazar constantly criticizes in his first speeches the irrational disorder of public administration which needs to be totally subdued to the discipline of the financial dictatorship (Salazar 1961).

In light of this Salazar's metonymy, Ernst Jünger's (1998) concept of total mobilization assumes a particular relevance. The entire social body is called to regenerate itself through a financial total mobilization. This has, of course, the well-known aesthetics implications of *l'art pour l'art* applied to a technological cult for the sake of the cult itself. The paranoia of economics rationality becomes self-fulfilling. To use Jünger's (1998: 128) words, total mobilization "is far less consummated than it consummates itself".

Now, what Salazar achieves with such technocratic and economicist total mobilization – a depoliticized corporate body – is the indistinction of war and peace conceptions. A revolution in bureaucracy entails preemptive anarchical power. The Schmittian definition of the sovereign as the one who decides on the exception is – if not wrong –

at least in need of balance with the corporate preemption of any financial dictatorship. The exception of sovereignty can be understood as organically preemptive in its salvific narrative, always capturing the events through bureaucracy (Agamben 2011: 50). The necessary salvation to form the fascist corporate body, its salvific adaptation, requires metonymical performativity, anarchical in its principle, precisely to let the osmosis between the dictator and the population take place in a sovereign territory.

Benjamin's (1979) caustic review of Jünger's collection of essays *War and Warriors*, where Jünger's *Total Mobilization* essay is included, highly criticizes Jünger's fascist aesthetics of war for the sake of war, shedding light to such indistinction of war and peace that Salazar's political narrative of salvation implies. Salazar's total mobilization is a mobilization of *peace and security* (Katechon) in class war times in Portugal. The fascist New State would only stabilize after a cycle of failed general strikes and military opposition²⁷. At the end of Benjamin's review a metonymy of an airplane full of gas bombs meets the tabula rasa of administration defended by fascist bureaucracy:

As war engineers of the ruling class, they [warriors] were the perfect complement to the managerial functionaries in their cutaways. God knows their designs on leadership should be taken seriously: their threat is not ludicrous. In the person of a single airplane full of gas bombs such leadership embodies all the absolute power which, in peacetime, is distributed among thousands of office managers – power to cut off a citizen's lights, air and life.

(idem: 128)

²⁷ The last attempt of anarcho-syndicalists, liberal-democrat republicans and communists to defeat the fascist New State through an insurrectionary general strike failed in 18th of January 1934 (Rosas 2013: 83).

Benjamin brings that peace and war indistinction of total mobilization to the fore: warriors as office managers or office managers as warriors have both the power to annihilate life. The incisive insight of Benjamin's metonymy consists in putting clear the organicist contiguity between gas bombs and paperwork. In this sense, financial operations, such as reducing the deficit by means of *millions of savings* in services and households, are entirely biopolitical: it is the total management of the population that is in question. Therefore, such metonymy can unmask, at the textual level, Salazar's political speeches as "civilized documents of barbarism" (Benjamin 1969: 256).

Financial rationality thus seems to operate within the void of Thatcher's fearless dictum of *there is no such thing as society* (Žižek 2008: 140). Such void, the awareness of the ontological fragility of a thing called *society*, is to be filled with the corporate body of the nation. Political identities respond to such unbearable void (idem). The psychoanalytic concept of fantasy helps to understand how desire is key in Salazar's composition of the *Portuguese nation*. Moreover, how desire and sacrificial exercises acquire relevance for nation building.

Actually the total economization of the territory through a financial dictatorship is inscribed in the Christian libidinal economy (idem: 130). The secularization and re-sacralization of the passion of Christ in the financial Calvary of the corporate body (*the redemption of the nations*) is, according to Žižek, the proof that God loves us by sending Jesus to suffer for us, since love is "an interpretation of the desire of the Other" (idem: 129). The Christian love enables the creation of the corporate body as long as a Calvary leading to Crucifixion, death, can fill the void of the absence of love – the very basis that allows Christians to interpret desire by covering the void.

While Žižek reads this psychoanalytic concept of fantasy in a fascist society which constructs itself through the exclusion of the Jew, in Portugal's variety of fascism, *fantasy* mainly excludes the very Portuguese in the paranoiac conspiracy of who can be the potential *social parasite*, the too emotional, and the inefficient bureaucrat. Of course, there are those heretics of materialism who are putting in danger the *western civilization values* – the communists. But in these finance minister speeches, the materialist heretics are not the major enemy and even less the Jews. The enemy within is the sinful *indebted soul* that needs purification through the financial mortification of sacrifices.

In this way, economic sacrifices can be understood as a technology of the self (Foucault 2000). According to Foucault's typology of technologies, the technology of the self consists in altering and transforming the self for a future state of that same self (idem: 225). Foucault will trace a genealogy of such type of technology in two historical ontologies: the "care of the self"/"know yourself" of Greek and Roman Antiquity and the Christian asceticism of self-abnegation (idem: 224). But it is the latter which is relevant here as it is concerned with salvation: the corporate body of the nation, its metonymical performativity, is produced by ascetic practice. Thus, the demand for individual sacrifices is more biopolitical than ideological. It is more concerned with a form of life than with rhetoric. Persuasion is secondary to the rule turned into life and life turned into rule by the total mobilization entailed in the metonymical performativity of the corporate body of the nation: in this sense, the temporality of the corporate body unfolds as a form of preemption rooted in chauvinistic backwardness. It is no surprise that in the preface of his 1st volume of speeches Salazar defines his politics as following:

I always advocated an administrative politics as clear and simple as a good housewife can do – mundane and modest, that consists in rightly spending what one has and not expending more than one’s own resources.

(Salazar 1961: 11)

Salazar definition of a housewife politics reveals the inherently contradictory role of politics in total mobilization (if politics exists in total mobilization at all). Politics becomes the “mundane” and “modest” management of the household (idem: idem). Preemptive security becomes politics and not *archē*: one should never live beyond one’s means. In other words, politics becomes a set of precepts on how to administrate one’s life. And, as it was analysed before, this housewife politics was to be pursued through a specific type of spiritual exercises of mortification: *economic* sacrifices. Housewife politics, the management of the household, implies the Christian form of asceticism through self-abnegation (Foucault 2000: 238) so that the corporate body of the nation can be saved within the *oikonomia* paradigm of sovereignty. Therefore, such technology of power, a housewife politics, necessarily intertwines with a technology of the self, to recall Foucault’s terminology, which resembles the Christian rite of *exomologesis* (idem: 243).

According to Foucault (idem: idem), *exomologesis* can be understood as a performance of recognition of the sinner self that needs to be publicly mortified. Once more, *exomologesis* appears as another Christian signature that moves a household private ritual into a public performance (idem: idem). In this sense, the public performance of the sinner implies the recognition of a sinful past: a temporality of crisis is produced at the level of the subject since the mortification of the present is required for national salvation. The permanent management of *oikos* by a *housewife*

politics, an instance of the *oikonomia* Christian paradigm, would save Europe from self-destruction.

2011 Bailout and the Sovereign Debt Crisis

On the day of the third bailout in the history of Portugal's liberal democracy, an article from the tabloid *Correio da Manhã* presented the "foreign aid" as an inevitable movement of the market. A movement which could not be restrained:

The Country is really on the brink of bankruptcy and will not escape this black hole without foreign aid. The prime-minister turned the question of resistance to the IMF as the central point of his campaign. It is an expensive error for a Country which already pays pornographic 5 years interests above 10%. It is not worthy to fight against the market with windmills.

(Pereira 2011)

The above quotation summarizes the crisis temporality of the 2011 bailout to be found in the newspapers: there was a threat of bankruptcy, thereby justifying the "foreign aid". Such threat was posed by the unstoppable movement of the market where all the attempts to stop it were mere Quixotesque *windmills*. It is this performativity and the temporality produced in it that I want to focus in this sub-chapter. In other words, how the eschaton of bankruptcy and the katechon of "foreign aid" temporally framed the dispositif of crisis.

Metonymical Performativity of the Corporate Body

With the so-called "foreign aid" Portugal was supposed to function, in the words of Christine Lagarde, as a "counter-fire", a restrainer of the sovereign debt crisis assaulting the Eurozone. The Troika (IMF, ECB and EC) was seen as the saviour of

the nation. Fear of bankruptcy triggered the urgency of a national salvation delivered by Troika. The contiguity between the subjects and the sovereign, that is, the relation between multiplicity and the nation, was intensified through a dispositif of security - the dispositif of crisis.

During the bailout the metonymical contiguity between subjects and the corporate body of the nation was reframed. This contiguity was mainly established through austerity as an ascetic practice of induced individual sacrifices - spiritual exercises to produce the austere and indebted body of the subject within the vector towards national salvation. Austerity was more a technology of the self than a mere conservative ideology. The metonymical performativity between the subjects and the corporate body through sacrifices implied movement, individual actions. Such movement produced and was produced by a temporality:

And that's the question for the current generation of Portuguese, but it's also a question for your children. I mean, it's not possible for a country to spend more in a long period than what it can afford. That has been the case for Portugal. It's not my role to blame anybody, but it has been the case. You have to go back on track in one way or another. It's going to be painful. That's why, at the same time, we need to avoid that it will happen again and that's why growth policies are so necessary.

(International Monetary Fund 2011)

The above words are from Strauss-Kahn, the former IMF management director, on a TVI interview on the week after Portugal's government official request for an external financial assistance. The above example illustrates the broader narrative of the bailout: the *sinful* past judges an already doomed present which needs to be sacrificed for the

salvation of future generations. Similar to the previous historical ontology, the painful and sacrificial path of the “current generation” is necessary to “get back on track” for *our* “children’s” salvation. As in Salazar’s speeches, the temporality of crisis is here directed towards salvation. Through penitentiary and ascetic exercises the corporate body of the nation can be saved from bankruptcy.

Since the present time is seen as inevitably lost for salvation, Strauss Khan insists on the urgency of growth policies. Answering to a journalist question on what austerity measures Portugal should adopt Strauss Kahn replies by dismissing such badly connoted idea of “austerity” measures and renames them as “growth measures”.

According to Strauss Khan, growth measures imply increasing competition, productivity and fiscal policy (as he above suggests with the claim of Portugal spending more “than what it can afford”).

Such lack of growth also appears in the bailout narrative by Poul Thomsen, Portugal’s IMF Mission Chief, on a conference call in 20 May 2011:

As we said before, even during the good years, Portugal was hardly growing.

In addition, Portugal has a significant need for fiscal adjustment ...

(idem)

After summarizing that fiscal adjustment, Thomsen concludes with a similar narration to Strauss Khan’s one:

So let me just conclude by saying this is not going to be an easy program.

There is going to be a difficult period of adjustment, and the economy is going

to be in recession until early 2013 when we expect recovery to start taking hold.

(idem)

However, the sacrifice is here translated into an economics scenario of national recession: a necessary sacrifice at the level of the corporate body of the nation to prevent its own bankruptcy. Recession thus appears as a re-sacralized spectacle of the Calvary. The paradox of the bailout reaches its climax when the eschaton becomes immanent by the national saviours of the IMF. In other words, the bailout programme accelerates the eschaton by delivering recession. This “national effort” (idem) of self-induced recession becomes, paradoxically, a katechontic temporal strategy to prevent bankruptcy. In this way, the economic recovery becomes something to *expect* after an induced recession, a false promise of sovereign debt redemption after crisis.

Such path for salvation is also present in the speeches of the elected right-wing prime-minister and the President of the Republic after the bailout (June 2011)²⁸. As it could be expected, the times of urgency of the bailout were explored for political purposes and, once again, the security character of the crisis came to the fore. The movement of the metonymical performativity between the subjects and the corporate body shares similar traits from the previous examples: the death threat of the corporate body was underscored so that the long period of sacrifices inscribed in the program of the government could be justified. The formation of the corporate body was, once again, dependent on sacrifices. However, there are some differences in the naming of such

²⁸ The center-left prime minister resigned on the 23rd of March after a majority of opposition MPs voted against the government’s economic plan. Thus, two weeks before the Troika bailout, Portugal’s government was constitutionally restricted to management functions only (186° Constitution article). The prime minister resignation was followed by a general election call. On 20 June 2011 the Liberal Democratic Party PSD won the general elections, forming a right-wing coalition government with the Christian Democratic Party CDS-PP.

sacrifices. In the Prime-minister speech, for instance, there is a preference to use “savings” instead of the negative connotation of sacrifices:

In the same way that we will all have to do more and better with less, we will all also have to save even more. Increase savings has converted in an economic imperative of first order for the recovery of the Portuguese economy.

(Coelho 2011)

There is one time, however, when Coelho employs the word “sacrifices” in the speech:

No one will be left behind. The incommensurable value of a human person’s dignity obliges us to take care of the most vulnerable and a fair distribution of the costs and sacrifices linked to the crisis overcoming and to the change project of the Government policy.

(idem)

Differently from the previous examples of Salazar’s speeches, this speech underlines the primacy of life as such in the liberal risk cost measurement of security. No matter how threatened the nation seems to be regarding bankruptcy, there is the population principle of “making live and letting die” (Foucault 2003: 247). Although *Portugal* still needs to be redeemed from its sinful past of indebtedness, it is not legitimate anymore to render the “human person” invisible as it happened during Portugal’s

financial dictatorship of 1926-1933. However, the temporality of crisis is still fuelled by sacrifices towards national salvation in neoliberal governmentality²⁹.

The same goes for the President of the Republic's speech. Cavaco Silva also attempted to soften the image of sacrifices to be imposed on. Moreover, he makes an appeal for a fairer redistribution of sacrifices. In his view, those sacrifices are the biggest since the dawn of Portugal's liberal democracy. And, as he rightly knows, the more one sacrifices for the corporate body the more higher the organicism between the subjects and the sovereign is required:

No one is immune to the crisis. Each one of us will be called to give his contribution to overcome the present adversities.

Each Portuguese has a portion of responsibility in the future of his country.

We are together in this common plan that we share centuries ago.

It is with proud that we want to continue Portugal. To do that, we must start to work together from now on.

(Silva 2011)

This is how the speech ends. As it is clear from the start, it makes an explicit appeal for national unity as it is the case with the prime minister speech. While in the prime-minister view, "no one will be left behind", in the president of the Republic "no one is immune to the crisis". However, the total mobilization of the sovereign debt crisis crosses both nationalist appeals. It is also interesting to note the recovery of a mythical

²⁹ Passos Coelho would be reelected four years later, becoming more explicit regarding his salvific mission of the past: "Four years ago I took the role of prime-minister of a government which had in its front the task of saving the Country of a social and economic disaster of unimaginable proportions. We were living times of national emergency ..." (2011)

past in both speeches. Thus two conceptions of past time affect the temporality of crisis: the mythical past of the nationalization of eternity of the corporate body and the sinful past of the sovereign debt crisis. In this respect, the prime minister makes an explicit link between the sovereign debt crisis and this banal mythical past of the Portuguese *empire*:

Before the complexity of the problems we face, before the complexity of the European conditions and the on-going big changes, it could be that we are now on “seas never sailed before”. But faithful to our most noble traditions we say with conviction that crossing ‘seas never sailed before’ never scared the Portuguese.

(Coelho 2011)

Passos Coelho employs a commonly quoted verse (“seas never sailed before”) from the XVI century epic poem *Os Lusíadas* which poetically narrates Portugal’s history until the *discovery* of Europe’s shipping route to India. What is important to retain in the use of this quote is its textual context: this mythical past of “sailing seas never sailed before” is ingrained in the entrepreneurial corporate discourse in the speech itself: *innovation, creativity, competition* and this kind of corporate jargon limit and produce the futurity of the bailout crisis.

In the prime minister speech one can also see similarities in the temporality of crisis narrative. For instance, one finds the *sinful* past of low growth and indebtedness of the *nation* in need of realpolitik in the present. Starting his speech by saying that “we are and we will always be realists” and developing the idea of his government as the trigger of “change”, Passos Coelho will stay faithful to the crisis narrative of the past

that turned impossible other political solutions that could differ from a program of national asceticism.

The crisis moment to decide for such an ascetic path came, according to Coelho, with the recognition of “hold habits” exhaustion in the way Portugal’s state and society were relating to each other. He further revives the nationalist metonymy. The corporate body of the nation rises from the ashes of such exhaustion:

My Government will be the agent of such change, of a desired change by the Portuguese, in a great collective plan for which we convoke citizens, economic agents and social institutions to engage with.

(Coelho 2011)

Creditors and Debtors in the Press

The sovereign debt crisis in the Eurozone engendered a fracture in the population of Portugal’s sovereign territory. During the period of the 2011 Troika bailout, the media in Portugal presented, on a daily basis, such divide between creditors and debtors.

As with the previous IMF press documents, the analysed newspapers articles follow the same security’s temporality of crisis. The main eschatological narrative can be easily inferred from the newspapers sub-corpus: facing the menace of apocalyptic sovereign debt crisis, Portugal’s government requested a bailout to the IMF, ECB and EC to prevent the end of the nation.

However, in the analysed newspapers it is clearer how nationalist discourse is engendered by the legitimated form of exploitation of sovereign debt. One is

dependent on the other and vice versa to produce surplus value. There is sovereign debt as long as there is a national sovereign to burden the debt. The indebted man is already a *homo nationalis* and vice-versa:

In case of being necessary to ask for help, and I hope not, it's a Country's and not an A, B or C government's problem or even a caretaker government. Ask for help is a hypothesis and I hope that it won't happen again but if necessary it's better to have a consensus between the different parties.

(Félix 2011)

Such consensus will also be recognized by the IMF as a primordial condition for the success of the financial assistance program. In terms of sovereignty, the corporate body is produced within the threat of not being able to continuously looking for a possible redemption of its debt. So at the level of the sovereign debt, it is the corporate body of the nation to whom the debt is charged before the individual indebted man. A national consensus is required to properly collect the sovereign debt.

However, the national consensus can only be produced by constant mass repetition, that is, national consensus needs to become a re-sacralized refrain³⁰, a ritualization of language use (Virno 2015: 57). In this sense, the indebted corporate body of the nation is produced by the very repetitive and performative character of the dispositif of crisis in the media. The corporate body becomes indebted through the secularized liturgy of the financial markets. Such liturgy is performative since it has its own economics

³⁰ Guattari makes an interesting relation between the implicit ritualization of refrains through rhythm and cadences. Capitalism produces standardized refrains, temporalizations of everyday consumption (Guattari 2011: 108). "Capitalist refrains" are, according to Guattari, investments of desire captured by semiotic assemblages such as newspapers (idem: 111).

experts who are entitled to decipher markets signs. Above else, the liturgy of the financial markets *does things*:

The request for aid has already helped to calm down the downgrading tendencies of the rating agencies. The Portuguese aid request was seen as a very positive sign by the market, in the sense that the sovereign debt crisis of another Eurozone economy is being treated.

(Major 2011)

Rather than a sign of weakness, the apparent passivity of the market and rating agencies reveals, instead, omnipotent entities which economists, experts, journalists and politicians should appease and “calm down” with sacrificial offers. The market becomes a transcendental entity that interprets signs. The corporate body of the nation needs to perform bailouts and sacrifices to be read by the market. Such hermeneutics consists in making the indebted corporate body of the nation continuously performing language rituals for the market. That ritualization of language is always unstable and imbedded in risk as the market never speaks in his words. Fortunately, the bailout was seen by the market as a “very positive sign”: the crisis was finally being “treated”.

However, the “market” may decide to privilege reading some signs and not others. As previously said, at the time when Portugal was about to request a Troika loan, the Finance minister of France, Christine Lagarde, said that Portugal would work as a “counter fire” of the sovereign debt crisis. It is interesting to note that the purpose of such utterance was to counter-argue Shaeuble’s utterance that Greece may need to restructure the sovereign debt. It is the market, however, which has the final word:

Despite of these successive declarations, the bond market has preferred to give emphasis to yesterday's Wolfgang Shaeuble interview and has strongly penalized the interests of Greece's sovereign debt crisis.

(Pedro 2011)

Despite its transcendental ontology, the bond market has preferences that are materialized in Greece's society: the rise of sovereign debt interests. In other words, the ritual sacrifice of Portugal's bailout did not have enough illocutionary force to counter-argue Shaeuble's utterance. Moreover, the possibility by the market to prefer certain utterances enforces temporal boundaries of a regime of utterances on a given sovereign territory. The economic texture of those boundaries is architected by finance; the latter understood as a particular representation between the present of money and future promises of profit (La Berge 2015: 48). The above penalization of debt interests is, after all, the realization of such future promises of profit, enclosing the crisis temporality within the racist creditors and debtors fracture of population.

Such temporality arising from the fracture between creditors and debtors signals a shift on how to read these media repetitive rituals and refrains of finance: the very temporality of finance shifts linguistic phenomena to phenomenological performativity (idem: 49). Such temporal dynamics imply considering this financial reasoning as a narrative and, therefore, producing its own dominant materiality: the management of population, the *oikonomization* of the corporate body of the nation through sovereign debt. As La Berge argues (idem: 52), finance can be *represented* and, therefore, be considered as an aesthetical phenomena. Therefore, narrating a story of how Portugal asked for a bailout in 2011 produce the temporality of the crisis dispositif. The media examples given along the chapter can be read as narratives of

the bailout period. However, apart from discovering *hidden* meanings in such narratives, it is important to look at their surface repetitiveness, their daily refrains and how such reduces language use to repetition in the media (Guattari 2011: 111). This performativity of finance excludes every possible dissonance in its narrative and temporality. The over reductionist narrative of finance through repetitive media refrains prevents profane refrains and temporalities. As Guattari puts it:

With the school, military service, and the ‘entry into life’ through large-tiled, bleach-scented corridors, our refrains have been purified, asepticized.

(idem: 112)

So, newspapers that tell stories about bailouts produce a temporality which necessarily materializes on the individual basis of media consumption. The “entry into life” entails not only collective capitalist refrains in schools and military apparatuses but also reading on-line newspapers. One becomes an indebted man if one is captured by the narratives of the bailout. In order to do so, one needs to engage with the narrative of the bailout by *reading* it. While repeatedly reading newspapers articles on crisis and bailout, the reader is subsumed in the particular temporality of crisis that such refrains of the media produce: one becomes part of a sign to be read by the market.

Rationalities of Crisis

Newspapers articles on the bailout reflect an assemblage of rationalities that produce the temporality of crisis during the 2011 bailout. Two forms of rationality set in motion that temporality: the preemptive rationality of risk management and the rationality of ignorance (Davies and McGoey 2012: 66). Both forms of rationality

established the rules of the regime of utterances in the historical ontology of the 2011 bailout. Such rationalities of *oikonomization* actively depoliticized subjects by excluding any political control over the temporality of crisis.

The *oikonomization* of the political presupposed the inevitability and hopelessness of a no-future *disease* in the corporate body. In this sense, the time flows of the temporality of crisis were produced as unstoppable during the bailout period. The relentless narration of the bailout tried to track the contagion of the sovereign debt of Portugal to other sovereign territories. Two time flows of the temporality of crisis were produced regarding the contagion risk: the katechontic prevention of the Troika loan request and the eschatological acceleration of the prime-minister resignation. The following example illustrates the first type time flow:

According to the German security company [Allianz], the possibility of contagion of the sovereign debt crisis in Europe was blocked by the aid request of Portugal. Now that Portugal asked the European Union and the IMF for help, the dissemination of the sovereign debt crisis in Europe will be blocked.

(Negócios 2011)

The second type of time flow of the contagion risk can be exemplified as follows:

We still have some distance to go before we put an end to the sovereign debt crisis, said Bosomworth. ‘We still have an over-indebtedness crisis, a competitiveness crisis and a problem of credibility (of policies) and a problem of flexibility’, he summarizes. ‘As long as these problems keep still, we face a risk of contagion. And we may enter into a situation of political fatigue.

(Caetano 2011)

To summarize, the first example narrates the security prevention of disease dissemination while the second narrates the continuation of the disease and the evaluation/explanation of risk management involved in such tracking. Both examples, however, show a temporal discontinuity in the risk management from previous crises. As the 2011 bailout in Portugal is inscribed in the 2007 financial crisis, it is relevant to locate it in the new forms of uncertainty and futurity engendered by such financial collapse (Tellman 2016: 67). According to Tellman (*idem*: 75), such discontinuity in the financial futurity inverted the role of fear in previous crises: future is no longer a “promise” but a “threat”. While Keynes, for instance, criticized post 1929 capitalists for being too frigid and loosing “animal spirits” towards the open future of profit (*idem*: 73), the 2008 financial crisis aftermath follows a promethean discursive effort to shield economies against uncertainty and risk starting from the 1973 oil crisis and 1987 crash (*idem*: 75). The promethean trait of risk management rationality to tackle uncertainty reveals, however, an epistemological crisis on knowledge *about* crisis. The 2011 Portugal’s bailout is, in this sense, the spectacular failure of preemptive rationality to prevent sovereign debt interests to rise to historical maximums in April 2011. There is in such preemptive rationality the totalitarian fiction of predicting futurity. Such fiction, however, is already being criticized and acknowledgeable in the on-going historical ontology of money: the discursive formation of such historical ontology is based on the recognition by financial regulation institutions, such as the IMF, that financial catastrophes are necessarily part of financial futurity (*idem*: 77). Indeterminacy resides only on the specific time and location of the catastrophic event. This shows how finance regulation interrelates with security.

Such permanent knowledge failure in avoiding the crisis event bridges with the other kind of rationality involved in the production of crisis: the rationalities of ignorance

(Davies and McGoey 2012). These rationalities presuppose two sub-genres of ignorance: strategic ignorance and social ignorance (idem: 67). Strategic ignorance can be defined as an argumentation strategy to redeem experts and bankers in their implication in triggering the catastrophe (idem: idem). Social ignorance departs from the relativistic perspective in Hayek's thought regarding financial crises: centralized regulation will never be accurate enough, therefore, no one should be accounted for their responsibility in financial crises (idem: idem). At the core of neoliberal thought relies this scepticism of economic knowledge to prevent crisis to happen (idem: idem). This scepticism on technological rationality to predict crises produces the rationality of induced social ignorance.

Recalling the above second example, Andrew Bosomworth, a manager of Pimco (a worldwide investment management company), is talking about the contagion risk of Portugal's crisis to Spain after the Portuguese Prime-minister decided to resign in March 2011. In a way, this example shows the rationality of social ignorance at work. Uncertainty is taken for granted when Bosomworth enumerates a hydra-style crisis with several heads ("over indebtedness crisis", "competitiveness crisis", "problems of flexibility" and so on). Within the temporality of the sovereign debt crisis there is scepticism enough on economics knowledge rationality to deviate the futurity of finance from fear and threat of contagion. This is a characteristic of the historical ontology of money during the 2007 financial crisis: as Tellman argues (2015: 76), the 2008 historical ontology conceives and acknowledges money as already debt. If money is socially constructed as debt, finance is detached from the open futurity that characterized money historical ontology in the XX century (idem: idem).

The Pimco manager concludes his explanation of the *hydra* crisis by warning that risk might be political after all. Not solving the sovereign debt crisis might lead to

“political fatigue”. Despite the banality of such sentence it still exposes the radicalism of the preemptive rationality of total economization inherent in the temporality of crisis. The consequence of such preemption is the reification of politics as an illness of the impotent corporate body. Politics is denied from archē through the very banal explanations given by investment company managers and experts. In the end, such explanations are more than necessary to produce value. And that is the great irony of these media refrains: the uncertainty and fear of catastrophe of the refrains set the pace of value production. Uncertainty thus constitutes the nodal point between media refrains of the sovereign debt crisis and security. All the crisis repetitive mourning triggers fear simulations as a lever to commodify futurity. The temporality of crisis reveals itself again as a projection of the eschaton to set forth katechontic technologies to produce surplus value. As De Goede et al. (2014: 413) argue, security preemption engenders commodities through “uncertain futures”. Financial speculation around uncertainty finds an affinity with preemption (idem: idem).

Experience of Crisis

Introduction

This chapter deals with how human beings experience crisis. While experiencing crisis individuals perceive and feel things in ways that are different from when they do not feel threatened by an unpredictable future. The moment of a crisis is felt, talked and seen as a rupture that causes present and future uncertainty. Crisis brings a temporality of instability to people's lives: can the debt be repaid? Can the *nation* survive? Can the far-right be defeated in the next general elections? All this type of questions presupposes a moment in the future when crisis will finally be over, for good or bad. However, what happens when such experience of crisis as a temporality of instability becomes the norm? In other words, what happens when it is not possible to make any decision to overcome a love crisis, a debt crisis, a political crisis and so on? Asking what happens when a crisis cannot be overcome means asking what an experience of a permanent instability is. As some authors argued (Allones 2012; Bauman 2012; Kosselleck 1988; Ricoeur 1988), this is simply one way to define Modernity. However, Modernity was experienced as a permanent instability of *crises* that found their moments of decision towards progress, but not in a total, holistic *crisis* (Ricoeur 1988: 11). Allones (2012: 112) brings this problem to the extreme: is it still possible to talk about crisis, then, if the basic element that constitutes it – decision – is removed from its meaning and experience?

It is expected that this time of crisis where “there's nothing else to decide” (idem: 132) shatters institutions, political formations and political subjectivities that were created with the advent of Modernity. If the idea of progress, so dear to Modernity's

notion of crisis, gave place to an ever present of indecision, how can politicians continue to convince people to vote for them? The ambivalence of a crisis where nothing can be decided can be seen as the overcoming of authoritarian rulers who want to decide too much on people's behalf but, at the same time, the impossibility to put an end to a permanent present time. In Spinozan terms (1998: 81), without the "doubt" brought by unpredictable and threatening futures that modern crises offered before, what is left is not confidence but despair. Thus, fear has become a dominant affect in societies of control where security dispositifs are prevalent. Without modernity's crises based on the political power of decision, it is the very idea of history that is also put into question: how do we construct a past if the very notion of crisis, fuelled by progress, is questioned to the limits by the broken promises of the Enlightenment (Adorno 2010: 32)? Here then the fundamental question that this chapter aims to address: what is an experience of crisis without history?

This a-historical aspect of the permanent crisis inevitably reshaped political antagonisms. Modernity's social emancipatory legacies are clashing with this time of endless indecision in two ways: while rightly criticizing the complete fall of societies into total economization, left leaning traditions often attempt to politicize societies with the modern referents of state, people and nation. So, the attempt to bring back history to the political scene is not without risk as Modernity's referents are highly problematic for they often made possible the political bridges between progressive political identities and authoritarian forces (see Chapter 1).

Nonetheless, the human need to *criticize* crises, in all its varieties, is what makes an experience of crisis possible: while criticizing a moment of crisis one tries to separate herself from such moment while, at the same time, being seized by such moment of

crisis³¹. Individuals oppose themselves to a temporality of crisis because they want to separate from it as it causes fear not knowing what the future might bring them next. However, they can only do that if they do not lose sight from the thing that they want to criticize. By not losing sight from crisis, I mean not only rejecting a passive and cynical complacency towards a time of an endless indecision but also the act of excluding from the start any possible material redemption of this world. If the refusal of this earthly world is based on the idea of a transcendental world, then the separation from the earthly world takes place.

So, from the desire of individuals to criticize their times of crisis arises an attempt to look for *better times*. In such process of *criticizing crisis*, human beings constitute themselves as political subjects that try to free themselves and the others from the shackles of an oppressive temporality. They become political subjects in crisis because politics, in modernity, can only occur when human beings can *act* and *decide* on how and when a crisis can be solved in history (Allones 2012: 28-29).

However, individuals' political subjectivation - the creation of a political identity – can risk turning an experience of crisis into an existential fracture between their identity and the world. Politics can turn into a form of separation, a religion (Gentile 2004: 338), and unable to profane itself - to bring back politics to the common use. Hans Jonas (1963: 338) refers to this fracture as a *nihilist dualism*, that is, a separation between human beings and *physis* (nature) caused by the spiritual need to look for salvation in a transcendental world. Emerging at the origins of modern nihilism (idem:

³¹ The entanglement of a judgement that one wants to do on a *critical* moment reflects the shared conceptual history between crisis and critique. In modernity this entanglement will be manifested, for instance, in the XVIII century criticism of the western Absolutist State: “Does the Absolutist State still rule? Or has the new society been victorious? That is the question that arises here. The indirect stance no longer suffices. The critical process is coming to an end. A decision is unavoidable but has not yet been arrived at. The crisis is manifest – it lies hidden in the criticism” (Kosseleck 1988: 103).

320), the nihilist dualism can be traced back to the idea of salvation in Gnosticism (idem: 335)³².

So an experience of crisis can also be driven by a death drive towards the *annihilation* of the earthly world for the sake of a transcendental salvation in an outer world (Diken 2009: 3). As the permanent civil war of the twentieth clearly shown, the *nihilist* experience of crisis was, time to time, historically translated into fascist messianic leaders who were willing to annihilate this world for a racial purified one (Griffin 2007: 316).

To summarize, I understand an experience of crisis as a field of tension between two major vectors: one that sacralizes politics (that *separates* politics from the common use) and one that profanes politics (returns politics to the common use): sacralizing politics risks creating the nihilist dualism where the element of decision of crisis reveals itself in fascist messianism; profaning politics is a condition to oppose any form of fascist messianism. The formation of political subjectivities that *act* against the imposed crisis temporality happens in this field of tension.

One thing that needs to be explained at this stage is why focusing on political subjectivities is relevant to investigate what an experience of crisis is. Foucault's late works such as *Discipline and Punish* (1977) and the *History of Sexuality* (1998), which deal with subjectivity formation of human beings, offer an answer to that question. Foucault's interest relied heavily on practices of resistance to power and less so on power itself (Foucault 1982: 780). Power, for Foucault, does not have an essence – it is immediately action upon “possible” actions (idem: 789). Human

³² Jonas briefly summarizes gnostic eschatology in the following way: “there is past and future, where we come from and where we speed to, and the present is only the moment of ‘gnosis’ itself, the peripety from the one to the other in a supreme crisis of the eschatological ‘now’ (idem: 335).

resistance to a succession of actions aims at liberation from oppressive institutional rationalities. Since these institutional rationalities produce a specific subjectivity that oppresses human beings, resistance happens at the level of their subjectivation. So, in an openly Foucauldian way, I am not going to analyse power as such but the resistance of human beings to particular forms of subjection during the Troika intervention in Portugal. I will argue that these forms of subjection are, in fact, forms of desubjectivation, that is, they temporally push human beings to their own *desindividuation*.

To this end, this chapter will be organized in two sections: the first section will deal with the conflict between forms of subjectivation and forms of desubjectivation in capitalism. It will discuss the conflict between a humanist critique and a machinic critique of capitalism. It will then discuss the entanglement between subjectivation and desubjectivation from two discourses of crisis temporalities and its respective examples: Marx's *Law of the Tendency of the Rate of Profit to Fall* and Taubes's theological critique of capitalism.

The second section will analyse the 2011 troika bailout in Portugal with particular emphasis on the discursive practices of anti-troika activism during the Troika bailout. I will analyse the activist platform *Screw Troika* (QSLT) by looking at its discursive processes of political subjectivation. More specifically, I will focus on how this particular form of activism politicized part of the population through a politics of national liberation based on the idea of *popular sovereignty* against the Troika and the government.

I will analyse pamphlets and media texts from the QSLT blog from 2012 to 2013 centred on two genres of protest calls: public autobiographic texts posted on the blog and collective texts of the activist platform.

The analysis will cover texts from 2012 and 2013 protests organized by the QSLT: the protests of 15 September 2012, 3 March 2013 and the 26 October 2013. I look at six main categories in the QSLT blog to address the relation between political subjectivity and crisis: decision; citizenship; constitution; will of people; democracy; salvation; revolution.

The first posts were published on the QLST blog in 2012. As said before, it all started with a call for a mass demo against the Troika on the 15th of September 2012 by known political activists and left-wing *engagé* celebrities from journalism, universities and arts. Overall, there was an attempt to radicalize the political rhetoric against the troika by depicting an economically impoverished population.

The In-Between Temporality of Crisis

The notion of crisis in Modernity is originally linked with the idea of time as history (Bauman 2012: 110). Modernity inaugurated a revolutionary rupture with previous ontologies and respective temporalities, at the cost of subsuming them in capitalist and accelerative rhythms of social reproduction (Rosa 2013: 68). With the predominance of machinery in capitalist societies, politics increasingly lost its autonomy from the total economic acceleration of globalization (idem: 221-222).

A conflict necessarily emerged between national political subjectivities and capitalist laws and tendencies based on machinery (Marx 1991b: 258). Technological rationalization of capitalist social formations is, in this way, always two folded: subjectivation and desubjectivation processes produce capitalist social formations, that is, they are produced in a conflict between *archē* and *techne*. *Techne* (technology), however, came to colonize the political space and brought with it a new form of ontology. Metaphysics is then well alive but in what can be named as a “technological civilization” (Severino 2016: 150). Thus, the machinic ontology of capitalism can be criticized from a humanist critique: an autonomous, political subject that resists technological predation. By *humanist critique*, I mean analyses of capitalist exploitation processes that conceive human action as able to regulate capitalist accumulation. In other words, analyses that are based on the axiom that capitalism can be regulated by political subjectivities in its continuous accumulation, thus avoiding (or at least delaying) the moment when capital will stop being able to rely on labour to produce surplus-value. It is also the case with some contemporary critical theory that has not yet done away with a conception of politics heir of the Aristotelian link between language and politics - man is a political animal as long as it produces

language (Lazzarato 2014: 58). In this sense, Zizek, Butler and *theorists of immaterial labour*, for example, are still prey of the linguistic turn where linguistic performance is seen as the dominant dispositif of the construction of the social (idem: idem). Therefore, such theoretical inquiry risks falling into the nihilistic dualism between objects and subjects, missing the focus on the capitalist production of subjectivity beyond and before such particular semiotic dispositif of human language.

In this sense, the humanist critique of capitalism is, in its turn, criticized precisely from a machinic perspective. If machinery creates its own signs that produce the material conditions of capitalist social formations on an everyday basis, the ontological status of the subjects cannot be distinct any longer from machinic ontology (Lazzarato 2014: 83). In this way, subjects *are* immediately machinic (idem: 91). Instead of relations between subjects and machines, this line of critique advances “humans-machines relations” (idem: idem). More specifically, this means that the separation between subject and machines in the humanist critique is put into question by the dominance of asignifying semiologies in capitalist production of subjectivity (idem: 62). In Guattari’s perspective (2016: 16), asignifying semiologies are systems of signs that do not have the immediate goal of producing meaning through human language. In a certain way, these systems of signs can relate to human language but not in terms of their effectiveness (Guattari 2016: 39). For example, the money flowing in capitalist circulation is one example of an asignifying sign (idem: 16).

Broadly speaking, Guattari names all this machinic production as *machinic enslavement*: assemblages of asignifying semiologies that operate at a non-representational level (Lazzarato 2014: 27) and, consequently, produce a *language of logistics* where the production of subjectivity is not the main outcome but “dividuals”, “cogs” and “data” (idem: 25). Machinic enslavement assumes a rather diagrammatic

functioning (idem: 39). From the simple act of driving a car (idem: 89) to the act of withdrawing money from an ATM or, in a darker tone, having one's body processed as data on a security agency database, the human body that performs daily actions is crossed as much by signifying semiologies as asygnifying semiologies (idem: 88). In this sense, machinic enslavement is not exclusionary of subjectivation. Rather, it sets the asygnifying *ground* for any possible political subjectivation in capitalism (idem: idem). Thus, the machinic approach problematizes the humanist critique where the ontological status of subjectivity remains transcendental; in other words, the idea that a being autonomously experiences crisis as a representational object. In this way, the humanist critique is primarily concerned with signifying semiotics. The very processes of desubjectivation inherent in the commodification of the entire social under capitalism are side-lined before the signifying semiotics of human language (idem: 66).

Consequently, instead of just focusing on subjectivities' production through signifying semiotics, one should rather dismantle such humanist ontological premise and incorporate the concept of machine not as a tool or prosthesis to be handled but as an assemblage of bodies and signs in motion and in endless interactions. To use a Guattari's term, the machinic approach interprets crisis as *diagrammatic* and not as merely representational (idem: 41). In brief, the machinic approach argues that without a theoretical investigation of the machinic production and reproduction of capitalist societies, the production of subjectivity falls into an ontological idealization of a pure political subject (idem: 90).

Marx's *Capital* Volume 3 (1991b: 258) chapters on the *Law of the Tendency of the Rate of Profit to Fall* (LTRPF) are a macroscale example of the entanglement between signifying and asygnifying semiologies in capitalist societies. Starting from its very

naming, this law in capitalism already contains a temporal paradox in its formulation (*Law of the Tendency*) that is, a temporal indeterminacy (tendency) defined precisely by its temporal determinacy (law). The LTRPF, considered to be one of the crucial keys for Marxian crisis theory (Heinrich 2013: 25), thus reveals two forms of crisis temporalities in conflict. On one hand, the tendency of the rate of profit to fall is exactly that: a tendency that does not presuppose a final collapse of capitalism since there are countertendencies that can stabilize or even contribute to the increase of the rate of profit (Marx 1991b: 339-348); on the other hand, there is also a law in such tendency. This shows a necessary and general crisis of capitalism, its historical limits being fatalistically dictated by the accumulation process itself. So the two conceptions of crisis are bounded in *the Law of the Tendency*: crisis as tendency and crisis as law or, respectively, crisis as indecision and crisis as decision. The crux of the problem, then, is how to think crisis as *in-decision*, in the in-between of the two temporalities. In this sense, Marx's three chapters on the LTRPF on volume III of *Capital* (1991b) are the starting point to investigate the *in-between* of the two temporalities of crisis.

The chapters are traversed themselves by a hermeneutical conflict between a representational level of capitalism and a diagrammatic non-representational level which the LTRPF develops in. The representational level encompasses all the counteracting influences that delay or prevent the rate of profit to fall (described below) and define it as a tendency. The diagrammatic non-representational level includes the law itself in its concrete expression on the falling rate of profit. While neither the law nor its respective counteracting influences can be separated from each other, the interaction between both poles operates within a logic of security. The counteracting influences restrain the catastrophe of the law. Hence, this interplay

between tendency and law operates as a dispositif of security, that is, a dispositif that maximizes productivity.

According to Marx (1991b: 259), the technological development of capitalist “machinery” produced more commodities with less labour time. As Marx shows through several examples in chapter XIII, the proportion between constant capital (the machinery) and variable capital (the capitalist investment on “hiring” workers) changes along the years (idem: 258). This is, after all, *the law of tendency of the rate of profit to fall* in capitalism: the increase of constant capital and the decrease of variable capital (due to the capitalist development of machinery) will require less and less quantities of labour time and, consequently, reduce surplus-value since this one arises from unpaid labour time; profit obtained from unpaid labour time will then necessarily decrease as workers employ less labour to produce commodities; consequently, the value in commodities is reduced as less labour time is contained in them (idem: 259): the rate of profit will finally decrease until profit becomes impossible³³.

This tendency inherent to the capitalist mode of production, as Marx explains, poses a social problem of “relative surplus population” (idem: 277). The less living labour is required (due to the increasing productivity facilitated by the increase of constant capital), the more living labour becomes disposable. In this way, the *final crisis* of capitalist accumulation, which the LTRPF points to, is posed along an increasing useless and “disposable population” (idem: idem) or industrial reserve army. However, the creation of a relative surplus population will put pressure on workers’

³³ However, the organic composition of capital may still rise with the increase of constant capital through capitalist technological development and investment (idem: idem).

salaries and will consequently work as a counteracting influence of the LTRPF as surplus value *may* be higher with lower salaries. In chapter XIV, where Marx further describes the “counteracting influences” of the LTRPF, the relative surplus population counteracting influence appears as a surprisingly short section. Marx links the increase of relative surplus population with the development of labour productivity in a given country (idem: idem). This basically refers to the teleological movement from manual work to machine work of capitalist production (idem: 278). To compensate this automation and the increase of a disposable population, Marx refers to the production of luxury as an escape of the TRPF since, unexpectedly, its variable capital is “unusually higher” (idem: 279) than in other lines of production.

It is in chapter XV, though, that Marx will deal more extensively with the relative surplus population question and reach the crux of this symptom of the LTRPF (idem: 290). The surplus population is the result, among other factors, of the intensification of labour exploitation through mechanisms of relative surplus value, that is, technical and machinery improvements to increase labour productivity at the cost of variable capital reduction³⁴. The conclusion is Marx’s razor sharp statement in this chapter: “the real barrier of capitalist production is *capital itself* (idem: idem)”.

However, the relevance of the LTRPF to actually prophesize on the *last days* of capital can be put into question by the persistence of a regime based on surplus value. Since Marx wrote *Capital*, the question of artificial over-population persists until today: as Smith et al (2012) argue for the case of the U.S economy, the structural crisis of capitalism was felt again in the 2007 crisis as the previous capitalist mechanisms of compensation were located in the sphere of circulation. Financial titles

³⁴ This means that the higher the organic composition of capital the higher the relative surplus population.

such as sovereign debt bonds somehow masked the long term demise of productive capital based on living labour (idem: 69)³⁵. The long term inability of governments in the Eurozone to prevent the rise of sovereign debts without a ruthless attack on entire populations via austerity measures also revealed this long term demise of productive capital. The Southern Europe debt crisis is the clear and unavoidable paradigm of the capitalist deadlock: the desperate attempt to keep the rate of profit bears the cost of a growing disposable population. Therefore, this explains why the production of political subjectivities is conceptualized as a form of resistant “agency” to the desubjectivation of disposable populations ensnared by unemployment and precarity (Standing 2011: 157).

Jacob Taubes (2009) somehow addressed the eschatological tendency of capitalism along with the political subjectivity that inherently resists its desubjectivation into naked life. Taubes’ work deserves to be discussed as an example of how theological discourses on the antagonism between political subjectivities and crisis enforce the nihilist dualism. These discourses sacralize revolutionary politics, thereby neutralizing all its potential in the logic of a nihilist subject who will save the world. In his reading, Taubes problematized the interdependence of the inherent collapse laws of capital and the revolutionary subject who accelerates it. It is intriguing, however, that Taubes discusses Marx eschatological thought by emphasising the law of surplus value without mentioning the LTRPF. As claimed by Taubes, the law that Marx discovered was the one of surplus value accumulation that will necessarily lead to an end of capitalism but only through the revolt of the martyred proletariat. For Taubes,

³⁵ Such aspect can also partly explain how banks in Portugal collapsed and were subsequently bailed out by the state, leading to the IMF intervention in 2011 and following austerity measures to “back” the bailout. However, my focus is not to offer empirical explanations of the 2007 crisis in Portugal but rather how Marx’s analysis of the LTRPF is useful to consider the relation between subject and this particular crisis in capitalism.

capital finds its inescapable limit, first of all, in the embodied Christ of the proletariat. Furthermore, Taubes reads *Capital* as a re-sacralized book of revelations:

The socioeconomic apocalypse of *Capital*, the revelation of the last things, the dull rumble of impending catastrophe is audible throughout the inventory of socioeconomic analyses, as the dramatic tension rises from chapter to chapter.

(idem: 187)

Considering *Capital* as revealing the inherent flaw of the capitalist mode of production, it logically follows from such premise that the proletariat, as the martyred body of Christ, will redeem society through its own dissolution (idem: 185). In a certain way, the messiah Proletariat/Christ is the law itself which will radically de-subjectify in lawlessness.

In other words, in Taubes reading of Marx's eschatology there is no space for bargaining ratios of proletariat exploitation for capitalism reveals itself as a social economy towards salvation (idem: 184). Taubes quotations from Marx's works underlie this destitute element of Marx thought: the impossible redemption of the exploited within capitalism since there is an inherent antagonism between the existence of the proletariat and a society based on surplus value (idem: 186). The Christian temporality of salvation thus becomes evident in Taubes reading of Marx: the proletariat operates the shift from the fatalist realm of necessity generated by capital to the messianic realm brought by Christ. The modern sacralization of the apocalypse finds its way in the eschatological event of a classless society (idem: 187).

Interestingly enough, Taubes interpretation of Marx's eschatology is made foremost through a debate with Kierkegaard critique of communism. Kierkegaard argues, from a Christian point of view, that the proletariat redemption is a form of superstition for

the crisis cannot be solved from an earthly ground (idem: 189). While Kierkegaard agrees with Marx in his historical diagnosis on the 1848 year of upheavals in Europe signalling the eschatological trait of capitalism, Kierkegaard *prescribes* instead the remedy of religiousness (idem: 191). Taubes does show how Kierkegaard is aware of the “dangers” of communist sacralizations when social catastrophe sacralizes into a religious movement (idem: 190). In other words, Kierkegaard is concerned with a communist eschatology overcoming Christian eschatology. Taubes exemplifies this sacralization with the communist subject who turns out to be a demon dressed with the vests of the Apostles of a profane religion that rejects salvation in the outer life (idem: 191). Kierkegaard thus opposes the subject of the martyr to these demonic apostles as the only possible figure of redemption in his Christian asceticism (idem: 189).

Therefore, despite both being located at opposite poles, Marx and Kierkegaard insights on capitalism and eschatology reveal the conceptual crossing of decision with crisis, giving birth to a historical teleology that calls for a eschatological solution of Modernity’s temporality (idem: 192). Both affirm an eschatological dimension in Modernity by pointing to a salvific decision where the subject plays a fundamental role in the temporality of crisis. However, these subjects of crisis do not have the role of withdrawing from the call of decision by making capitalist exploitation viable and regulated. The proletariat, the communist demon or the martyr are accelerative subjects of the world to come, messianic bodies that already mark the doom of capital. Their stances run against any attempt of crisis subjectivation as a process of constituting a political identity that could maintain temporal indecision and, consequently, regulate capitalism.

Therefore, despite his gesture in signalling the revolutionary character of the communist in opposition to Kierkegaard’s martyr, Taubes maintains this opposition

within theology and turns revolution into a discourse of salvation. In other words, the communist suffers an eschatological subjectivation, falling prey of a political theology exegetic exercise; communism becomes a secularization of Christian messianism in the Christ/proletariat but the Christ/proletariat fails to be profaned in this world. The profane critique of Marx, in his constant ironic play of theological ideas and reasoning, is effaced by Taubes when he opposes Kierkegaard's eschatology to Marx's *eschatology*. In this sense, Taubes is an example of how a theological discourse of revolution is bonded to the nihilist dualism.

People, Population and the Exhausted

In 2012 a group of Portuguese activists created the platform Screw the Troika (QSLT) with the aim of organizing a mass demo against the Troika intervention. Under the banal slogan “something extraordinary must be done”, The QSLT strategy centred on the typical political relation between action and time. In other words, politics as archē (beginning) opens the time of politics:

It’s urgent to take back our days, our days after all, they have always been ours, but we have been forgetting that, soothed as we are by the sirens sing of the markets, the ratings, the memorandum, the exceptional measures, the palace coups. And so it is necessary to do it here in Lisbon, but also there, on the country, and beyond, in Europe and further away, in the entire planet. It is necessary to do extraordinary things, globally. For it is necessary to interrupt this time of no such thing, suspend the evilness of these dark days, abort this avalanche of a nullified future that politicians’ austerity and the greed of the bankers and speculators brought us for the last meal... For such reasons, on 15 September, I will be on the streets to do extraordinary things with everyone that wish different days. Extraordinary different days.

(Raposo 2012)

In the above excerpt, politics follows the traditional understanding of action as the remedy to fight against a “time of no such thing” - a crisis temporality of radical indecision with a “nullified future”. “Extraordinary things” must then be done to abort the “dark days” of the ever present of austerity. Hence the call for the 15 of September is seen as the urgent opening of brighter and “different” days where “we” will take

back our lives from the markets.

One other activist relies on a similar critique of such endless present of crisis. To put an end to the “end of history”, political action is required since it decides upon the direction of the events:

I never believed in the End of History. I never believed that there is a stage in this world whose goal exempts us from books and writing and live the rest of our days according to a submissive and amorphous conscience ... This is the trigger that takes me to the demonstration on the 15 of September: I believe that my actions determine my existence and the way of the events”.

(Aleixo 2012)

Both protests calls mirror this classical conception of politics as freedom (see Chapter 2). Consequently, politics depends on a subject that acts and has the power to decide on what to do: the political subjects *speak* and, therefore, they become political by opening the future for an event. They actively produce a crisis temporality of decision with their speech, where the “we” talks and acts to decide on what to do next against a crisis temporality defined by endless indecision: “... My actions determine my existence and the way of the events”.

However, to what extent the political event that both activists appealed to back in 2012 - the mass demonstration – could have challenged the endless present of the debt crisis? In other words, how could a spectacular form of politics create a rupture in the crisis temporality of indecision?

A solution was found for this dilemma on the day of the nation-wide protest (15th of September 2012): a QSLT activist read a text announcing that not only “we did an

extraordinary thing” but we are also “doing extraordinary things” as nearly 1 million people protested on that day (Que se Lixe a Troika 2012). It follows from this reasoning that the more people protest on the streets the more extraordinary the protest becomes. However, this quantifying principle of protests does not seem enough to refute the evidence that this protest did not change much of the present social reality no matter how “extraordinary” that day was. The deceiving aspect of the demo as incapable of bringing any major change resulted, then, in more protest calls (the appeal for the support of the 14th of November “general strike” and a protest on the day of the state counsel). After all, the “extraordinary thing” of the 15 of September was not enough to suspend the “dark days” of the Troika memorandum yet:

This demo is the start of many other things.

It is urgent to have a mobilized and awaken citizenship.

It is urgent to take the change in our own hands.

Our protest and our encounter can and should be made in all places of our lives: in work, in the neighbourhood, in school, in home.

From one last time, let’s show that we know how to unite”. Let’s engage actively so that no one (un)govern us anymore.

It is urgent to disobey.

When there is no respect for the people, when there is only imposition and lies, when there is only measures applied against the will of the people and unelected institutions decide on everything, it is time to say: No!

(idem)

Even if the demo supposedly brought the beginning of “many other things”, it did not bring the so necessary and “urgent” political change. What is striking in this excerpt (and it can be said of the whole text of a collective that advocated the protest’s

organization and planning) is the contradiction of announcing a beginning without change, that is, a decision without politics. The notion of a temporality of crisis towards a moment of decision is still prevalent in the urgent call for an “awaken citizenship” and disobedience (“it is urgent to...”) but it is already undermined by the acknowledgement that doing something extraordinary is not possible yet. In other words, the moment of decision is subsumed in the crisis temporality of indecision that the collective criticized before.

In addition, the postponement of doing “extraordinary things” remains dependent on the “will of people”, revealing a major conflict at the heart of the modern conception of biopower: that one between the *population* to be controlled through the dispositifs of security, such as the sovereign debt, and the sovereigntist concept of *people* (Foucault 2007: 44). Hence, from the QSLT perspective, the problem is not the government itself but that someone can govern us *badly* by acting against the will of the people. The concept of “people’s will” is, then, quintessential to the political subjectivation, hereby discursively reproduced by the QSLT. Its political struggle against the troika consists in rebuilding the broken social contract of Portugal’s liberal democracy by showing that “we know how to unite”. The making of “extraordinary things” thus contains the promise of re-establishing the basic sovereigntist principle of the Portuguese Constitution that institutes Portuguese sovereignty in the concept of people³⁶. In Guattari and Deleuze terms (2014: 502), the deterritorialized disposable population becomes reterritorialized through people’s will in a centrifugal wave towards the centre of the despotic state formation.

³⁶ As the article 3, first item, of the Constitution states: “1. Sovereignty is single and indivisible and lies with the people, who exercise it in the forms provided for in the Constitution.” (Constitution of the Portuguese Republic 2015: 9).

In this sense, from the activists' call to "do something extraordinary" to the aftermath of the not so extraordinary protest, there is a crucial ambivalence in how crisis subjectivation temporally develops and produces the political subjectivity of the *people*. The *people* initially produces itself through an eschatological time flow just until the promise of doing something extraordinary falls into the postponement of rebuilding the social contract. Within such postponement, the promise of a people's salvation from crisis can be kept as future protests will continue to be scheduled. Therefore, QSLT limited its political action within the crisis temporality of decision: the whole political tactic of a platform scheduling and planning "the" day when things will be "extraordinary" was fundamentally based on the production of a *people* as a collective political subjectivity who could *decide* when crisis should be over. However, this strategy came with a price: the diagrammatic, asignifying semiotics of crisis remained uncriticised and, consequently, the indecisive temporality of crisis.

As Rosa Luxemburg had already criticized those "who put the mass strike in Germany on the calendar on an appointed day" (Luxemburg 2008: 116), the constitution of an a-priori political subject that decides the "perfect order" of the mass strike in advance by scheduling "the" day and the "regulation of sacrifice" from the workers does not follow an objective investigation of social antagonism (*idem*: 120). Luxemburg does show an acute sense of the complexity involved in the mass strike, her reflections remaining exceptionally pertinent today: a strike, in her perspective, is not an isolated event that can be "decided" by political leaders or something to call for (*idem*: 128). The general strike flows without subjectivation. It lives through the objective and complete exteriority of a movement's flows that makes it possible (*idem*: 117). The strike is an inevitable contingency and, therefore, cannot be planned and conceived as a method of struggle (*idem*: 118). Luxemburg thus offers a critique of subjectivation

in light of the revolts that preceded 1905 Russian Revolution: in *The Mass Strike* (2008), Luxemburg meticulously describes the complexity and violence of the numerous social struggles happening in the Russian empire before the revolution; she argues that centralized political decision under such periods of antagonism cannot simply follow the spontaneous and rapid pace of the events (idem: 128).

The previous reflections of Rosa Luxemburg offer insights for an interpretation of the 14 of November 2012 general strike call by the trade union confederation CGTP and the QSLT. This general strike was marked by scenes of police brutality in Lisbon (Graça 2015). These happened after a march towards the parliament square where protesters threw rocks to a static police line for hours(idem). The protest was broadcasted live by Portuguese TV channels with particular focus on the police tactic of staging a spectacle of rocks (idem). TV cameras also filmed a police officer with a loudspeaker on a chair saying unheard words to a multitude of thousands, staging the future argument that protesters were warned by the police of the coming charge (Meireles and Rodrigues 2012). The charge suddenly irrupted from that police line shortly after the announcement.

On the day before these events, the QSLT platform published a call for the general strike on its blog. The whole text is centred on the need to change politics and to stop another state budget based on sacrifices:

We will be many around the planet expressing the will to stop the course of these suicidal policies solely based on austerity, on the blind fulfilment of budget cuts and on the disinvestment of people dictated by the leeches of the big financial groups.

(...)

We stop because we want really to change direction. Because we want to build solutions where everyone can live in democracy, with equal rights and hope in the future. We stop because we want to stop this extremely violent State Budget, approved by MPs that escape from the People and proposed by rulers that hide from the People that they say to represent.

And because a general strike is not a strike against our boss, it is important that all workers, shopkeepers and small and medium businessmen and business women, stop the country to show to this government that it is already enough!

(Que se Lixe a Troika 2012)

As this excerpt shows, Luxemburg's reflections on *scheduled* general strike calls are particularly relevant for this case: the transformation of a general strike into a political tactic is still being used by social movements and labour organizations. QSLT, for instance, explains why, how and who should stop working on the general strike. Not only the day of the protest but also the political subject is decided in advance: "workers" "shopkeepers", "businessmen" and "businesswomen". All the sacrificial calculus is thus regulated in advance. The general strike has its pre-established subjectivation. The strike was effectively put in the calendar despite the later pace of the events on that evening could not be predicted.

However, this *class alliance* between workers and small and medium businessmen revealed the paradox of a call to a general strike to stop production while, at the same time, affirming that the general strike is not against "our boss". Quite the contrary, small and medium capitalists should join the strike too. In a country where the majority (99.9%) of the bosses own small and medium non-financial companies (INE 2017: 24), that is, where the majority of the workers are actually exploited in small

and medium businesses, this general strike should, in QSLT perspective, serve other purposes than an organized response of workers against the daily exploitation in their workplaces. In their perspective, workers and bosses should unite to save the country against the “leeches of the great financial groups”, backgrounding the exploitation of the “bosses”. “The hope in the future” should, once again, arise from people’s will. As it is obvious, in people’s will, “bosses” and “workers” nationally merge in a community to be saved from finance “leeches”.

On the aftermath of the general strike, the QSLT published on its blog a press release condemning the police terror: police charge, illegal detentions and severely injured people arrested without medical care³⁷. According to the QSLT, only a small group of people were throwing rocks and other objects at the police so the charge was *unproportioned* and did not have the purpose of preventing violence as the police *tolerated* the throwing of rocks for hours. In this sense, QSLT will argue that the police forces undermined the country’s rule of law:

For we know that there is no democracy with repression and trappings to what sustains the rule of law, we denounce the strategy, clear and predictable, of coercion by the police forces. If peacefully contest austerity was a crime, we would all be criminals by the simple fact of saying that we do not agree with it. For we refuse to fall on the trap of those who want to turn our ideas into hostages of stones and sticks, we will keep going out to the streets, as we always did: giving our face for what we believe, and peacefully. We have more than stones as arguments, and it is why they won’t silence us, neither with sticks neither with lawsuits on crimes that we haven’t committed.

³⁷ This episode of police violence is analysed in more detail on the second chapter.

It becomes clearer in this excerpt that QSLT finds refuge in the liberal rule of law to defend the right to protest “peacefully” against austerity: since it is legal to peacefully protest on the streets, the police forces necessarily suspended the rule of law by indiscriminately repressing all protesters. However, while QSLT rightly assumed that government’s austerity measures were against the Constitution, it never recognized that this same Constitution was their political limit on what could be done against the Troika. For instance, if peaceful protests are repressed by the police, who suspends the rule of law and the right to protest as a Constitutional right, the legal apparatus is no longer a *safe net* but actually the extension of the state capture via its centrifugal waves (Deleuze and Guattari 2014: 502). The lawsuits targeting protest organizers were an example of such paradox of the legal apparatus to suspend itself and extending the exception into norm.

At this stage, it is important to understand then why the primacy of the rule of law is used by the QSLT as a political tactic against the government and the Troika. A possible reason behind this political tactic resides in the militant nostalgia for the origins of Portugal’s liberal democracy as the product of the overthrow of the fascist regime that triggered the Carnation Revolution as well as the following counterrevolutionary coup in 25th November 1975. However, in this nostalgia for the origins of the liberal democratic state, the implication of the liberal rule of law, for instance, in suspending itself in lawless police repression remains uncriticised. The QSLT, due to its principle of defending the legal order, could not question how the rule of law produces and is produced by sovereign lawlessness (Agamben 1998). A clear example of this paradox is the defence of *popular sovereignty* while this same sovereign *people* elected a pro-Troika and austerity government that precisely

suspended people's *democracy*.

It is not part of the scope of this analysis to discuss whether this lack of interrogation of the rule of law was a political tactic of the platform to maintain social struggles institutionalized within the parliamentary struggle, in other words, a tactics of transferring and transforming social unrest into a media dispositif (*counter-hegemony*) strong enough to bring argumentative *evidence* of mass discontent to parliamentary opposition. However, the circumscription of the social struggles against the Troika and austerity into a geopolitical mixture of inter and national politics (*the people* as well as *the peoples* of the oppressed *Southern Europe*), necessarily led the social movements struggles in Portugal to a dead end. The only possible tactic within a politics based on the nostalgia of the origins of the rule of law would be the glorification of the tactics themselves: the spectacle of mass demonstrations and the glorification of the sovereign *people*. Any other form of politics *outside* the staging of "people's sovereignty" would potentially fracture the very political institutions that constitute the liberal constitutional order in Portugal.

Thus, the next QSLT call for a mass protest on the 3rd of March 2013 would inescapably bring the last cycle of social struggles in Portugal to a spectacle of defeat. Once more, it is used as a trope the quantitative fetishism of the 1 million people protesting against the Troika, converging in the collective will of the *people*. However, there was a spatial difference from the previous protest. This time the march would not end in the contentious place of the parliament square but in *Terreiro do Paço* square where a mass concentration effectively took place but without political antagonism. What followed after the march was then a discursive event where QSLT leaders sang revolutionary songs from a stage while protesters waved white rags and scarfs, in a redemptive ritualization that brought the defeatism of a movement that

could not even trigger the government resignation. An entire political strategy set on the prevalence of a strict relation between language and politics managed to merge a heterogeneous movement of contestation into the corporate body of the nation. The time to do “the extraordinary things” gives space to the nostalgic time of the “*o povo é quem mais ordena*” (“the people is the one who rules”)³⁸, closing the possibility, paradoxically, of revolutionary ruptures that could bring antagonistic and alternative temporalities to the in-decision of crisis.

Consequently, QSLT insisted on the same strategy in this day as it did in other protests before: the call is made through appeal texts of several activists and known *progressive* celebrities until the day of the protest. Two days after the concentration the QSLT publishes a text narrating how extraordinary and “historical” that day was. This same text presents such “historical” day as a response to the unprecedented measures of the PSD-CDS PP coalition government. The QSLT accuses the government of being silent and ignoring the popular indignation while the whole world spoke about it. The text concludes, once again, with another call:

In the middle of this deafening silence, what does the President of the Republic say? The same as the government: nothing. He joins the wilful government’s scorn for citizenship. On Saturday, the streets of this country (and not only) were full of hope. And this hope translates, at least for now, into a clear demand: resignation! Those who do not listen such tide of will are self-proclaimed accomplices of these policies and must bear with the consequences. We will not forget that, in democracy, it is the people who rules.

³⁸ A verse from *Grandola Vila Morena*, the famous song that passed on the National Emission and gave the sign for the Army Forces Movement to start the coup d’état against the Fascist state.

In QSLT view, the streets were full of “hope” that was translated in a demand for the government’s resignation. As QSLT recognized in this same text, this government was without precedent, that is, it ruled against the Constitution. Thus, this form of governing was also translated into the impoverishment of the population through austerity measures. Within such background, the idea of hope and its translation into a call for action (the government’s resignation) entails the future salvation of the “people” since the “people is the one who rules”. However, “hope” produces a nihilistic temporality that continuously projects salvation, which can remain, nonetheless, unfulfilled: in fact, the coalition government did not resign by the “people’s will” before the next general elections. “One million people” on the streets did not make the government resign but QSLT militants continued with their “hope”. It could not be otherwise: the rejection of salvation would entail questioning the very conception of community, shared by the QSLT, as a national corporate body shaped by a Constitution that states that the people is the sovereign. The rejection of this corporate sacralization could be dangerously translated into hopelessness of unsaved bodies, escaping the liberal sovereign capture. “Hope”, a key concept for the constitution of messianic communities as sacralized in nation states, reveals itself then as a dispositif of security, producing its discourses and respective subjectivities. When the corporate body was menaced, as it was the case with the Troika intervention and the right wing conservative coalition, *fear* of bankruptcy and, consequently, loss of sovereignty went along with “hope”. QSLT (and its left wing militants) discursively oscillated within those two affects, reproducing itself as a machine of security in its drive towards the country salvation: national sovereignty was in danger and “extraordinary things” had to be done so that the nation could be saved from the

Troika and the government that ruled against the Constitution.

After the protest on the *Terreiro do Paço* square, QSLT made two more protest calls, one in June and one other in October in 2013. None of these protests managed to bring the previous adhesion of the population. While the government and the Troika continued its austerity and privatization policies until the next general elections, the QSLT did not make a public reflection of its decreasing activity and the social movements in general until today. The 2nd March 2013 was presented as “an historical day” when from that day onwards, the conservative government of PSD and CDS-PP saw no major threat from the streets. Fear and “hope” effectively gave place to tiredness of years of relentless salvific activism in trying to create a mass political subject based on the sovereigntist idea of “people”. In other words, scheduled and planned protests performed by this type of activist platforms subjectified the “tired” activist of crisis.

Deleuze (1995: 4) reading of Samuel Beckett works is important here as it offers a conceptualization for this social process in the dichotomic pair between the “tired” and the “exhausted”. The tired, in Deleuze’s view, is someone who is unable to temporally realize an activity but, after some rest, she will recover and continue to make things possible to achieve a certain end (idem: 3). Interestingly enough, an activist of the QSLT published a text to call for the October protest. This autobiographic text describes the activist tiredness with the tiredness of the institutions and the “people” itself:

Tired of these analysts and commentators. Tired of media that nothing mediates. Tired of these trade union federations and these bosses. I am also tired of the pushes of those who are tired like me. I am tired of disputes for the

all mighty tiredness. For the vanguard of tiredness. For the ports that we don't block, for the bridges that we don't march, for the parliaments assemblies that we don't siege... I am tired of the tiredness of protest.

Even tired of this people. I am really tired.

...

But after so much tiredness always comes the same question:

And so what? Are you going to give up?

And for such reason ... I will be on the streets tired of being tired and fighting for a different world, always!

(Raposo 2013)

Regardless the activist criticism of what it could be called the bureaucratization of the liberal democratic order coming from trade union confederations, bosses, media, protests and the "people" itself, the activist concludes that he is "tired of tiredness" and, for that same reason, he will be on the streets "fighting for a new world".

Only superficially, the will to participate in a protest, while one is already tired of protesting, could be considered a paradox. As Deleuze rightly puts it, being tired does not exhaust the possible (idem: idem). This will to protest, however, entails the endless circularity of being "tired of tiredness" and, consequently, being tired of that new generated tiredness. The criticism of bureaucracy paradoxically generates more bureaucracy if one remains in the vicious circle of tiredness and recovery.

The exhausted, however, does things "for nothing" (idem: 4). In a way, it is possible to say "I am tired of protesting" and keep doing things but saying "I am exhausted of protesting" is a contradiction in terms that makes it ungrammatical. For Deleuze, being "exhausted" implies the fragmentation of the "I" (idem: 5) and the inexistence

of a political end. Deleuze essay can be roughly summarized as a revitalization of the “exhausted”, thereby criticizing social processes based on exclusive disjunctions. In doing so, it builds a critique of politics as *archē*, that is, a politics of tiredness based on cycles of means and ends. In this sense, activism in liberal democracies can always deal with tiredness as long as tomorrow there will be streets to “struggle for a new world”. But activism in liberal democracies cannot survive exhaustion as the latter entails the dissolution of the “I” in inclusive disjunctions, in being needless of goals and objectives, abolishing the real through combinatorial and serial existence. Deleuze’s description of the “gait of Watt” (a Beckett’s character) exemplifies this exhaustion:

A way of walking is no less a refrain than a song or a little coloured vision: an example among others is the gait of Watt, who moves east by turning his bust towards the north and throwing the right leg towards the south, then the bust towards the south and the left leg towards the north (...) it is a matter of covering all possible directions while nevertheless going in a straight line.

(Deleuze 1995: 10)

To summarize, exhausting the possible through endless combinations of words and movements without direction and leaders, eventually generating a metalanguage (idem: 6) where words do not realize worlds but themselves only (idem: idem), a particular kind of silence (idem: 7) where crisis stops its subjectivation. The exhaustion would then abolish the separation between subjects and crisis; a symbiosis between bodies and crisis where salvific politics could not take place and would affirm the disjunctive synthesis of crisis in the subjects themselves.

Therefore, such Deleuzian conception of exhaustion destabilizes the Aristotelian

“political animal”, that is, an anthropological conception that puts emphasis on man’s “gift of speech” to define what politics is about (Aristotles 1988: 3). Recalling a brief Agamben’s hypothesis (Agamben 2009: 14), language is the first dispositif to separate things from the common use and that entails the sacralization of politics.

This effacement of crisis subjectivation can be translated in the rejection to save ourselves from crisis, refusing to act as a countertendency to the law of the rate of profit to fall. It is in these grounds that Holloway, for instance, affirms that “we are the crisis of capital and proud of it” (Holloway 2016: 63). This means as well that the Marxian notion of disposable population of capitalism breaks its link with capital’s social relations. The jobless, the precarious workers and the useless refuse to be victims that passively accept a salvific transcendence (Holloway 2016: 55). Moreover, the proudly “we” reclaim their own existence as disposable population. If the “we” effectively refuse their own social reproduction in capital’s mode of production, a we *mechanically* enslaved by capital’s a-signifying and signifying semiotics, the rate of profit will necessarily fall and increase the intensity of crisis. The “there is no alternative” chorus gives place to a there is no salvation for capital. The play of social inevitabilities changes sides as the sacralization of politics by means of centripetal waves towards the state (Deleuze and Guattari 2014: 502) gives place to intense centrifugal waves away from the state (idem: idem).

This puts into question what sort of political subjectivation takes place in such symbiosis with crisis. To a certain extent, the centrifugal waves, moving away from the centre, fragment the unity of the sovereign people into singularities of the war machine. Subsequently, the war machine releases itself from the despotic capture and its force impels towards nomadism, rejecting the overcodification of both signifying and a-signifying semiotics of capitalism.

Refusal of Crisis

Introduction

As it was previously argued, crisis as a modern and post-modern temporality is intrinsically connected with the problem of fascism (which can admit different interpretations: either as an ideological phenomenon or/and, in Deleuze's and Guattari terms, as a process constitutive of society through desire). In this chapter, I will argue that a refusal of crisis entails a refusal of fascism. This affinity between both terms – crisis and fascism - does not mean, however, that living in crisis necessarily presupposes living under a fascist state. But what my historical and empirical examples showed before is that fascism can run through the crisis flux of salvific narratives of capitalism. Recalling the Portuguese form of fascism (See chapter 3), in order to *save* a nation-state from a period of economic crisis, financial dictatorships are imposed on liberal societies. In this sense, a refusal of crisis is also a refusal of salvation. This negation of salvation entails refusing one of the basic premises of the concept of crisis in modernity: the historical time of progress. Thus, a conflict with the medical and theological roots of crisis emerges in the praxis of refusal: a remedy or a decision will not save us from catastrophe. In a Benjaminian sense (Benjamin 1969: 257), modernity's progress is always one single unredeemed catastrophe and not a series of events.

Unsurprisingly, contemporary biopolitics of security (Dillon 2015) attempts to *save* capitalist societies from the event, be it a catastrophe or the end of capitalism. However, a refusal of crisis cannot simply offer a *cure* from crisis. Refusing crisis is not about prescribing medication developed by well-established political economists

on their last effort to regulate and, consequently, prevent the event. Regulate crisis and refuse crisis are two different praxis. To think about refusing a temporality such as crisis implies recognizing that capitalist societies are based on a basic paradox where the concrete biopolitical reproduction of life – the actual - entails emancipatory possibilities too – the virtual (Diken 2012: 5). Not considering the virtual aspect of capitalist societies will not offer more than conservative attempts to manage the intensity of those emancipatory possibilities. In fact, the latter are already visible in capitalism today (Marcuse 1970: 64). So, remaining on the actual without considering the virtual tacitly blocks any refusal of the everyday capitalist accumulation prone to crisis. Historically speaking, this dynamics between the actual and the virtual can be seen in the concessions that capitalists were forced to make to the working class during the fordist, “blue collar” crisis in western Europe: capitalists had to concede that they could not accumulate without increasing the autonomy and the automation of workplaces facing revolt from workers who were refusing work and actual revolutions (Hardt and Negri 2011: 291-292). The perversion of such concessions and the following counterrevolution were, of course, violent enough: workers autonomy and increasingly collective and immaterial labour meant precarity and forced migration (idem: 289-290). But this also came at the cost of capitalists compromising with the necessary autonomy of workers from strict factory discipline and fordist regulation. Despite the neoliberal takeover until the present day, the *virtual* left its footprint in the social.

Thus, recognizing the virtual aspect of the social implies that a temporal difference potentially fractures the temporality of permanent crisis. The refusal of crisis occurs, then, as a suspension of its transcendental conception of a linear and nihilist progress towards salvation. Therefore, this chapter will deal with such suspension of crisis in

three dimensions: the first section will consist in exploring revolt's temporality of *kairos*. The second section will explore the ontological formation along with its corresponding praxis of crisis refusal. And the third section will deal with the spatial dimension of that ontological formation and praxis of refusal by investigating its communitarian possibilities.

The Refusal of Chronos

The permanence of revolt is undoubtedly part of the social constitution of capitalist societies (Diken 2012: 11). As one of the actualizations of the virtual (idem: idem), revolt can be defined as a refusal of bodies to engage in the legitimized rules of chronological time where capital accumulation, as a crisis prone temporality, dictates people's lives. One possible entry point to address revolt as a praxis of refusal of crisis is thinking about its particular temporality. Diken (2012: 26) argues that revolt's temporality is a Nietzschean redemptive repetition. This form of repetition, in Diken's understanding, is not to be confused with the *bare repetition* of passive nihilism where nothing changes and bodies inhabit a valueless world without events (idem: 84). On the contrary, the Nietzschean redemptive repetition is the event itself, the opening of revolt's temporality where nihilism is refused and the virtualization of societies confronts the actual of bare repetition (idem: 26). Its redemption is an ontological becoming in revolt (idem: idem), the Nietzschean eternal return (idem: idem). So, this form of profane redemption differs from the Christianity's ideal of redemption where salvation is made transcendental. Above else, revolt refuses religious nihilism as it is an affirmation of life within the world and not outside of it (idem: 24-25). Whenever a revolt *happens*, it is the very idea of salvation in a transcendental world that is refused.

That refusal of salvation through human bodies in revolt disentangles them from the temporal regime of crisis that they are obliged to submit on an everyday basis. This partly explains the unpredictability of the *situation* of refusal as an event that comes out of nowhere. It could not be otherwise as revolt and its temporality of repetition break with the temporal flow of crisis and its promise of salvation. Such conception of revolt's temporality as repetition finds its equivalent in the *kairological* temporality as

recent theoretical investigations have revealed (Negri 2013; Diken 2012; Agamben 2005) Revolt as *kairos* can then be defined in the following way:

As the temporal dimension of the event, Kairos signifies the timing of actualization, that is, the recognition, articulation, and decision to seize the moment.

(Diken 2012: 34)

As the above definition indicates, *kairos* temporally signals the social “actualization” of emancipatory possibilities, contained in the virtual sphere, through the seizing of the moment (*idem: idem*). This seizing of the moment necessarily occurs within the dialectical process of an event: one seizes the moment as much as one is seized by the moment. And this is what the above definition refers to regarding the “decision to seize the moment”. It goes without saying that this form of decision to seize the event in *kairos* is diametrically distinct from the form of decision contained in crisis. While in *kairos* decision marks the discontinuity with chronological temporalities, decision, in crisis, follows the flux of chronological time through narratives of salvation. In this sense, the salvific or messianic elements contained in crisis are absent in *kairos* (*idem: idem*). As revolt breaks with chronological temporalities, the decision to seize the moment is necessarily contingent (*idem: 41*). The temporal contingency of *kairos* refuses authoritarian decisions as the transcendental temporality of crisis is refused in revolt. However, an action of refusal might not immediately lead to an event (*idem: 48*). There needs to be fidelity to the act of refusal. Only then the scission of the event becomes possible (*idem: idem*).

Consequently, the temporal contingency of revolt as *kairos* operates within two poles: on one hand, there is intoxication of “being seized by the event”; on the other hand,

there is strategy in “seizing the event” (idem: 94). The absence of one of these dimensions compromise revolt (or revolution) and turn it into counter-revolt:

But since Kairos means both seizing and being seized, it is easy to fall on either side: trying to seize the moment without being seized by it, or being seized by the moment without a strategy to seize it.

(idem: 99)

Politically speaking, this dialectic between strategy and intoxication can be translated into the historical debate between spontaneity and centralism (idem: idem). Lenin, for instance, is the paradigmatic figure of this particular entanglement between strategy and intoxication (idem: 94). In the Leninist sequence, *kairos* is opened through the vanguard party’s decision to seize the moment with mass revolt (idem: 95). As far as refusing to be complacent with the existing state of things can be considered an inhuman action, the Leninist decision to seize the moment implies a leap into the “inhuman” (idem: 96). However, the Leninist party as the vanguard of the workers movement historically and strategically failed to destroy the capitalist state (idem: 98). Already with Lenin, centralization and the increasing hostility to forms of revolutionary organization, that could keep the intoxication of the revolutionary event alive, could only lead to the repression of revolution, the event itself, well before Stalinism.

In this sense, the Kronstdadt commune is one of the many tragic examples of this repressive separation of organization from intoxication. Shortly after the end of the Russian civil war, the victorious Bolshevik regime faced a series of revolts due to the continuity of what Lenin coined as *war communism* (Avrich 1970: 31). During the civil war, the Bolshevik leader ordered the compulsory requisition of food and other

supplies to maintain the Red Army alive during the war (idem: 9). The nearly collapse of the Russian economy during the civil war obliged the Bolshevik government to increasingly centralize power to avoid an uncontrollable military unrest in a country devastated by famine. Demonstrations and strikes against the Bolshevik government were then suppressed by brutal military force (idem: 38). Active repression against workers refusal to work for the Bolshevik regime lead to imprisonment and execution (idem: 50). Briefly speaking, this is what war communism consisted in peacetimes. The Kronstadt uprising and the creation of its commune in March 1921 brought the *crisis* of war communism to a peak (idem: 34). Strategically unable to deal with the communist demands of the fundamental democratic element of the October Revolution – the Soviets (communes) – Lenin could not but ordered the suppression of the Kronstadt soviet.

Thus, capitalism was finally saved from crisis since strategy and intoxication became a dichotomy instead of an aporia that could keep the intense contradiction between both terms (idem: 105). What followed was the transformation of the vanguard party into a state apparatus (idem: 99). From then on, the counterrevolution expressed in the prevention of the revolutionary intoxication that previously brought the event of revolution. State capitalism under Lenin and, later on, Stalin, was partly the counterrevolutionary solution to the capitalist crisis of the XX century global civil war. From Russia to the far end of Western Europe, Kronstadt, as a paradigm of the closing of the event, would find its instances in those territories where communism was as much a possibility, a breach of the actual, as a necessity to refuse the chronological time of salvation that would lead to authoritarian and salvific *decisions*.

The fascist appropriation of chronological time, expressed through an idea of a salvific decision that will redeem the chosen “People” for the sake of the nation, has

its own social dynamics. Within a crisis temporality, fascism can also be problematized from the disjunctive synthesis/aporia of intoxication and strategy. A “fascist intoxication” (idem: 101) corresponds to a phase of fascism when the strategy of the fascist party is not incorporated in the state apparatus yet. The “desire for intoxication” in fascism does not lead to a materialist and profane redemption but to limitless repression and, ultimately, a radical nihilist decision to clean the impure world through total war (Diken 2012: 102). In other words, there is a sadistic enjoyment of repression (idem: 105) on sacrificing one’s body for an abstract purified community. If at the eyes of dictators, such as Salazar, fascism can be considered as a “national revolution” (Salazar 1962: 144), this means that fascism strategically takes advantage of the event against chronological time. In this sense, fascism does not have, at least during the event, a merely ideological political end (Diken 2012: 104). There can be a fascist intoxication of the event without strategy and contrary to any political rationale of means towards an end. However, the opportunism of fascist movements and militants in seizing and being seized by the event, that is, in refusing the chronological time of crisis in *kairos*, becomes evident, after all, in their embracement of capitalist accumulation (Diken 2012). Deleuze and Guattari (2014: 269) conceptualization of fascism rightly addresses such *eventual* characterization of fascism through war machines. Therefore, expressing the ambivalence of *kairos*, fascism, as desiring flows of war machines, appears as a Janus face of Modernity, a counterrevolutionary and virtual possibility, a perversion of a communist revolution.

This understanding of fascism within the aporia of intoxication and strategy, beyond the mere chronological time of crisis, has the benefit of questioning victorious historical narratives and stereotypes that are wilful to label fascism(s) as an anomaly of the capitalist liberal order (Landa 2010: 115). Thus, considering fascism within a

kairological temporality brings to the fore the biopolitical affinity that more than often western liberal democracies shared with forms of fascist authoritarianism both within and outside their sovereign territories (idem: 328).

The Spanish Civil War Exile (1936-1939) is paradigmatic of such biopolitical affinity. During the final years of the Spanish Civil War (1936-1939), thousands of civilians and anti-fascist revolutionaries that managed to escape Franco's army by crossing the French border were just about to be detained at the border and sent to concentration camps in French territory (Berdah 2009; Thomas 2001: 855; Preston 2006: 319; Hannant 2017)³⁹. Trapped between Salazar's fascist regime in Portugal and the rise of Franco's dictatorship, the *no-man's land* revolutionary of the civil war became a refugee in liberal France. In this sense, the recurrence of fascism reveals that the problem lies in sovereignty and how it puts to the fore the naked life of both revolutionary and refugee independently from ideological and political identities of sovereign territories. As a witness of the *Septfonds* concentration camp recalls:

Some of the most humiliating treatment was received at the hands of the camp commander, a French colonel ... The colonel would say, 'Listen you lot, you say you have fought for a workers' Republic but are you aware that you are here taking food from out of the mouths of French workers? You must choose where you want to go because we can't keep you in France' ... When they [French police] asked me 'Well and you, do you want to go? Don't you want to return to Spain?' ... 'For the moment I'm choosing France. It's said that France is the Mother of Liberty, the Rights of Man and all those things; don't

³⁹ France at that time, 1939, had not been invaded by the Nazi army and the Vichy regime was not ruling yet.

they still count for something?’ ‘But France can’t carry on with this burden; you are like parasites, you are destroying French economy’.

(MacMaster 1990: 128)

David and other refugees were obliged to undergo a daily demoralizing triage by the French authorities in the camp with the aim of getting their consensual deportation back to Franco’s Spain. David memoir raises important questions regarding the veiled cynicism of concepts such as liberty and Rights of Man before those who are made inhuman at the threshold of politics. Moreover, the French colonel is not without an economic rationale for such demoralization – Spanish Republicans who fought for a “republic of workers” are taking the food from “French workers”. In such a simple dialogue the core contradiction of liberal democracies is revealed in all its intensity. The Rights of Man and liberty end whenever there is a camp with refugees. This means as well, that the camp, in its threshold of indistinction, in its lawless area, suspends the temporality of chronological time of crisis. The republicans who sought exile in France were the unsaved humans, the undesirables, as they would not fit for any political purpose. Curiously enough, when Germany invaded France in the 10th of May 1940, the same French authorities of the camp would start promising full citizenship rights to the Spanish refugees if they were willing to join the French army (MacMaster 1990: 140).

Another crucial hint in David’s memoir is the economic character of the refugees’ exception. In the colonel’s perspective, they are parasites not necessarily because they fought for a political ideal contrary to his own but because they disrupt the capitalist economy of a sovereign state. Insulted as “parasites”, these exiled republicans are not seen as antibodies to reinforce the immunization of the community against Fascism.

Rather, the antibodies are the authorities of the camps, the colonels, immunizing the community against external diseases (Esposito 2011). Fascism had already succeeded in liberal democracies through immunization well before the Vichy regime.

Despite the long counterrevolution of authoritarian capitalist societies that defeated the Leninist sequence of intoxication and strategy, by fixing anew the regime of wage labour and slavery, *kairos* remains an infinite finitude, a possibility of certainty, in its temporality of repetition. However, *kairos* also remains an ambivalent temporality as long as the aporia of intoxication and strategy in seizing and being seized by the event continues to be appropriated by fascists.

Praxis and Ontology of Crisis Refusal

A really new political dimension becomes possible only when we grasp and depose the anarchy and the anomy of power. But this is not only a theoretical task: it means first of all the rediscovery of a form-of-life, the access to a new figure of that political life whose memory the security state tries at any price to cancel.

(Agamben 2013a)

After the defeat of the Leninist sequence that failed to uphold the disjunctive synthesis of intoxication and strategy, the eschatological revolutionary crisis gave place to a permanent counterrevolution of state capitalism and free market societies. Such endless crisis, where its exception becomes the norm, is no longer the crisis of the state of exception (Agamben 2013a). As Agamben alludes to in one of his recent lectures on the 2007 crisis (idem), a paradigmatic shift is in march where this endless crisis signals the shift of the paradigm of the state of exception to that of the security state (idem). That paradigm shift towards the security state shadows the predominance and the accomplishment of the theological paradigm of *oikonomia*. Before investigating the ontology and praxis of refusing a permanent crisis, it is necessary to investigate the contemporary landscape of liberal governmentality under the paradigm of the security state.

To begin with, security, as Foucault's lectures disclose (2007) is nothing more than the managerial and quantification of *biological* life for the maximum profitability. As

Foucault also noted (idem), the extraction of profit becomes possible with a spectrum of a constant catastrophe kept at bay. Security measures turn life into species being – biological life - and, consequently, restrain any catastrophic event. Population is born out of this dialectic between the restrainer and the catastrophe or, in theological terms, between the Katechon and the Eschaton. Thus, in today's societies of control, the former cannot exist without the latter. Dispositifs of security operate within this temporal mechanism. Social sciences, for instance, objectify human bodies as population contributing to a regime of power knowledge where prevention and risk assessment of social wrongs extend the security state along its territory.

However, what is kept at bay is not only the catastrophe but a particular ontological dimension which would only emerge in biological life as a life excluded from politics. However, this same biological life becomes the object of *biopolitics* in the paradigm of *oikonomia*. Life as such, the life dwelling on catastrophe, becomes the paradigm of forms of life through the increasing prevalence of dispositifs of security in liberal capitalist societies. The paradigm of the security state, then, takes this logic to the extreme: biological life in *oikonomia* becomes the result of desubjectivation processes within the permanent crisis temporality. This process of desubjectivation, generated by a multiplicity of dispositifs, such as the smart phone, impedes any political subjectivity to be formed against the governmental machine (Agamben 2009: 22).

As Foucault revealed, security has its own genealogy. Current technologies of security operate within a temporality marked by a radical contingency (Dillon 2015: 102) which differs from early biopolitical technologies based on the emergence of statistical quantification (idem: 103). In a way, radical contingency defines the permanent crisis as the reappearance of the Baroque (idem: 102). This neo-Baroque

temporality admits infinity only through the lens of factual finitude of human beings (idem). In this sense, the paradigm of the security state abandoned the cyclical modern temporalities of crisis and now manages the infinity of finite and factual biological life. Contingency is elevated to necessity and, consequently, becomes the new transcendence (idem: 102). In this sense, security is not to be seen as a “cage” but as an opportunity for “unleashing one’s potential” (idem: 103). So, the paradigm of the security state is bounded through the triangle of contingency-biological life-security (idem: 104). Risk is its main technology of security (idem: 99).

Having described the temporal manifestations of the state of security within the edges of this triangle that dominates contemporary biopolitics, it is now possible to problematize a new sequence of the disjunctive synthesis between strategy and intoxication. As a starting point one can ask the following questions: what is the praxis of refusing the neo-Baroque crisis? What kind of ontology corresponds to such refusal?

Firstly, to investigate the conceptualization of a praxis of crisis refusal it is important to start from the capture of human decision by the dispositif of crisis (see chapter 3). In other words, one needs to conceive such praxis of refusal as recovering a relation with time that has been captured by the temporal regime of capitalist accumulation. In other words, refusing crisis cannot be a singular or collective action oriented towards redemption of a crisis through more capital accumulation. Moreover, that redemption may assume the radical nihilist form of the fascist suicidal state (see chapter 2). As seen in chapter 3, the dispositif of crisis sacralized human decision through, for instance, the fascist appropriation of philosophies of history which leads to the sacrifice of lives for the sake of nation perpetuity. Subsequently, the praxis of crisis

refusal necessarily entails the antagonism between a human immanent decision and a transcendental decision that puts an end to crisis⁴⁰.

Jean Luc Nancy's interpretation of the concept of decision in Heidegger's *Being and Time* (1962) is particularly relevant here as it alludes to such antagonism between a transcendental decision towards a decisive finality and what he names as a *decision of existence* (Nancy 1993: 83). This latter form of human decision is defined as existence as such (idem: idem) in its mundanity and everydayness: a form of existence as immediately experienced by human beings (idem: 87). Conceiving this form of decision in all its profanity, however, does not imply a pre-action to exist, that is, an action *to decide* to exist (idem: 104). One exists as such in decision (idem: 101).

In this sense, the decision of existence is diametrically opposed to the transcendental notion of decision entailed in crisis. This means that Nancy's decision of existence is decoupled from a chronological notion of crisis that temporally construes subjects and their respective political identities in national and transnational forms of citizenship. As Allones sustains (2012: 28-29), citizens live in crisis and are constituted by it to the extent that they can have the power to decide or judge upon public matters. On the opposite spectrum, the decision of existence advanced by Nancy is distinct from political will as it is detached from chronological crisis. This discontinuity from crisis happens through the existence of beings as such. A particular kind of human action is, in this way, disclosed:

The passivity of decision cannot be identical to just any passivity – but it also cannot be a dialectical coupling of activity and passivity. The act of decision

⁴⁰ Following what has been argued so far regarding the paradigm of the security state, this latter form of transcendental decision is endlessly postponed in the (permanent) Neo-baroque crisis.

has, precisely, the highly singular property of an action that is not an action “on” the given world or an action outside the world; rather, it is the action of thrown Being right in the world.

(Nancy 1993: 88)

In Nancy’s paradoxical view, the act of decision is a passive action that harmonizes being with the world. As the separation between the subject and the world can only be possible with the “dialectical coupling of activity and passivity”, such passive action consists in realizing an existence without the instrumental and nihilist appropriation of the world (see Severino 2016). As a result, that paradoxical form of passive action materializes itself as a praxis of crisis refusal since it rejects deciding on the basis of “an action ‘on’ the given world”, that is, a purely goal oriented action within chronological time. Deciding *on* the world is precisely what every decision to solve a crisis needs to undergo and, subsequently, inscribing that decision in the chronological time that will cyclically bring the next crisis. So, an entry point to problematize the refusal of the neo-baroque crisis is through human modes of existence that refuse to remove bodies and things from their common use, that is, a *form-of-life* that refuses to commodify objects and humans by passively affirming the immanence of their decision of existence:

All living beings are in a form of life, but not all are (or not all are always) a form-of-life. At the point where form-of-life is constituted, it renders destitute and inoperative all singular forms of life. It is only in living in a life that it constitutes itself as a form-of-life, as the inoperativity immanent in every life.

(Agamben 2015: 277)

Traversing the entire Agamben's *Homo Sacer* project, this crucial opposition between capitalist forms of life and a form-of-life lays the groundwork for a praxis of crisis refusal. In this sense, a form-of-life appears as an ontological formation of refusal of capital and risk that reproduce the neoliberal subjectivity (Dillon 2015). To the ontology of radical contingency that defines contemporary biopolitics of security, Agamben's work opposes the ontology of a life indistinct from its form (habit). Such indistinction arises from the very *use* of bodies and things as an inappropriable common (Agamben 2015: 93).

Recent theoretical investigations on the concept of use rightly point to this ontology of the inappropriable (idem: idem). In capitalist societies things cannot be used unless they are first appropriated as commodities. Conceptually speaking, to refuse the appropriation of things requires more than rejecting the consumption of things in the market. It is also necessary to use them as if they were not individual property. In such use of things, that is, in the abolition of a relation between humans and things without the fetish of commodities, the common becomes inappropriable. In this perceptual exercise of not recognizing things beyond their inappropriable commonness, the refusal to appropriate human lives and objects finds its affinity with the concept of use. At this stage, the practice of refusal finds its innermost intensity in the conflict between refuse and use as the first is a negativity and the second one a positivity profaned from the governmental machine. Refusing crisis, in this sense, implies a profane relationality between non-commodified bodies and objects and, in that relationality, the basic capitalist fundamentals are unrecognized and, consequently, its inherent crisis.

Initially, the Franciscans were the paradigm of a human life that uses the world without possessing it (Agamben 2013: 124). In such use of the world, power as

potentia cannot be conceived as constituent. Rather, to use things and life is entirely *destituent* (Agamben 2015: 277). This requires thinking about work, for instance, independently from goals and instrumentality (Agamben 2015: 12). This kind of life, that cannot be indistinct from its use, also finds its negative instantiation in the slave life who, living as working for the sake of working, does not have a goal – the body is indistinct from use (idem: 20). The slave life is then the capture of a human body dwelling in a zone of indifference (idem: 22). Consequently, the slave does not *work* in the modern sense of the term. Rather, the slave body is used by the master's body as much as the master's body uses the slave's body: there is no instrumental mediation between subject and object (idem: idem). Therefore, the paradigms of the Franciscan monk and the slave exemplify the possibility of a non-salvific and non-teleological relation with the world. In this perspective, their bodies strategically refuse the salvific temporality of crisis in an immediate and non-wilful intoxication through use. During the strategic refusal of crisis through the use of one's body, a life emerges indistinct from its form and is rendered inoperative. Use, as non-instrumental tactic to re-establish the plane of profanation against capitalist sacralization, finds, in this way, Nancy's decision of existence. There are no *souls* to be saved as they are already lost for good.

One other example of an ontological formation of crisis refusal can be traced back to the Punk movement of the twentieth century. As an urban secularization of the Franciscan form-of-life, Punks, with their rigorous ritualistic formalism, found a path to abolish a life separated from habit (Agamben 2013b). The *no future* temporality of punk (Berardi 2011: 24) embodies a form-of-life that rejects capitalism's *lifestyles* (or forms of life), refusing any spiritual exercises of *care of the self* for one's salvation (Foucault 2000). In this way, punks explicitly exposed and abolished the modern

capitalist distinction of public sphere and private sphere through their presence in high streets with bondage vests that modernity enclosed in the privacy of the boudoir (Agamben 2015: 92). Such blurring of the public and the private dismantled the central distinction in Modernity between the *polis* and the boudoir: the division between politics and the Modern *privacy* of the household disappears (idem: idem). The use of bodies was released right into the streets of everyday consumption of commodities and wage labour. In this sense, the event of a punk form-of-life made the capitalist and national chauvinist symbols of the national corporate body fall apart (Fournier 2016: 92). The punks' refusal of the passive nihilism of the 70's neoliberal society playfully deconstructed those same conservative and even fascist symbols that were at their origin. According to Fournier (idem: 94), the highly controversial adoption of the Nazi swastika by the punk movement in the United Kingdom, as well as the constant reference to the European civil war in punk rock songs during the late seventies, showed that not all classes benefited from the war against Nazi Germany (idem: 98). The political and social scandal of the punk swastika was, as controversial as it is, the profanation of a militarist self-pride and piety for the victims that the new liberal capitalist order was trying at all cost to legitimize itself through (idem: idem). The cynicism of capital's continuous exploitation of the working class, with its chauvinist and nationalist liberal consensus after the long European civil war, was being challenged for the first time by the no future youth, dwelling in the ruins of war. Thus, the parody of the historical hypocrisy of the triumphant liberal democracies came along with the parody of fascism. The perversion of the oppressor's symbols becomes the *arms* of the oppressed:

It [punk swastika] meant, history books to the contrary, that fascism had won the Second World War: that contemporary Britain was a welfare-state parody

of fascism, where people had no freedom to make their own lives – where, worse, no one had the desire. And it meant that negation is the act that would make it self-evident that the world is not as it seems ...

(Marcus 2001: 110)

Thus, the Franciscan use potentially reappears in modernity whenever the distinctions that produce citizenship, private property and national sovereignty are effaced. In other words, *punks* withdrew from the corporate body of the nation by refusing capitalist forms of life and symbols of national citizenship. Punk, in this sense, was a fundamental paradigm of refusal of the neo-baroque temporality embedded in a permanent crisis. In their habit indistinct from their life, through rigorous rituals of refusal, as in a sadomasochist encounter where one plays with socially determined roles (Agamben 2015: 108), Punks posed the question of a new use of bodies that could potentially emerge as decision of existence, that is, as the relation itself that turns indistinct a life separated from the world (idem: 58):

Use is the form in which habit is given existence ... And if habit is, in this sense, always already use-of-oneself and if this latter, as we have seen, implies a neutralization of the subject/object opposition, then there is no place here for a proprietary subject of habit, which can decide to put it to work or not. The self, which is constituted in the relation of use, is not a subject, is nothing other than this relation.

(Agamben 2015: 60)

This “neutralization of the subject/object opposition” that shifts ontology from the subject/object relation to the relation itself, such as in the master/slave relation, thus signals the facticity of what can be named as an inappropriable life (idem: 81). This

ontological shift can be better simplified and clarified through Marxian terms: what is at stake in this ontological shift is the detachment of a commodity's exchange value from its *use* value. A commodity, such as human bodies turned into workforce, loses its value if it does not have an owner. Life becomes use value only. Consequently, the previously commodified body can only return to the common use of profanation.

However, as it succeeded with the Franciscan paradigm, the punk rediscovery of the *use-of-oneself*, its radical counter-conduct, was appropriated by capital, effectively transforming it into a lifestyle and an identity. What followed was the reinstatement of living labour - a new form of a care of the self. Subjectivity is reinstated and bodies subjected again to a temporality of salvation. The paradox of this subjectivation is simple: "the right to have no rights" (Agamben 2013b: 124). Thus, capital developed here the same strategy to neutralize punk counter-conduct as the Roman Church Curia did with the Franciscans. The punk youth revolt against the end of future, unemployment and precarious work paradoxically became pacified by the capitalist culture industry. In this sense, "embodied radical critique" opened itself to reformism (Stypinska 2017: 80) and it proceeded that way through a subjectivation line towards individual salvation: one performs and lives according to a permanent crisis which, in the end, might simply mean getting paid to work and passively accept the subjectivation of debt apparatuses (see chapter 1).

Therefore, the ontological shift that any possible re-emergence of use of bodies entails necessarily problematizes the late Foucauldian investigations on resistance emanating from the orders of discourse themselves (Rossi 2016: 141). What Agamben brings to the fore with the concept of use is precisely the opening of an ontological formation that rejects subjectivation from orders of discourse. Moreover, the more it refuses it the more it affirms a non-transcendental idea of freedom emanating from a political

subject. Resistance through subjectivation is definitely not on the order of the day but the abandonment of those logics that perpetuate power through life made into a work of art. The affirmation of an ontological formation outside the orders of discourse themselves does not necessarily entail an “ethereal region” of freedom: the unrecognition of property can happen through desubjectivation from orders of discourse as the Franciscan paradigm revealed. However, Foucault’s aestheticization of existence opens itself to transcendental conceptions of power and the subject, Above else, such aesthetical strategy hardly perceives politics outside paradigms of sovereignty that modernity inherited (Agamben 2015: 108).

Community without Utopia

The ontological shift operated by the Franciscan use assumes a spatial dimension. One can say that this spatial character of use is one of its main distinctions from the concept of care which is a praxis necessarily enclosed in a temporality of salvation: the care of the self and its technologies create subjectivities through social and individual practices towards an idea of individual salvation. The care of the self will be re-sacralized in capitalism where the practice of sacrifice, for instance, will be key to legitimize the corporate body of the nation. As analysed in chapter 3, Salazar, the Portuguese fascist dictator, discursively appropriated this salvific discourse of care and turn it into the national and sacrificial exercise of a financial dictatorship. In this sense, the destituent praxis of use refuses any praxis of nationalist salvation.

This distinction between use and care is necessary to investigate the idea of community. Use, first of all, does not mean that there is no relation with time. What the relation of use or, better put, what use *as* relation and its ontological shift presuppose is a different temporalisation of existence. This section will then problematize the idea of a community without salvation, that is, a community without crisis.

In a lecture entitled *The End of Utopia*, Marcuse (1970) briefly addresses the fallacy of temporalizing, in a transcendental sphere, the possibilities (and not utopias) of a society freed from scarcity and necessity. For Marcuse (1970: 63-64), the emancipation from the planned scarcity of the capitalist mode of production is a present possibility and not a utopia. That potentiality of emancipation refuses utopian discourses that tend to remove the virtual character of capitalist societies, that is, the already present possibility to change a regime based on alienated labour (idem: 64).

Such perspective of negating utopia is immediately at odds with reformist and salvific projects. Here, Marcuse is fully relying on the revolutionary outcome of Marx's Law of the Tendency of the Rate of Profit to Fall (LTRPF) within an emancipatory politics (idem: 66). To put it briefly, the LTRPF means that, in the long term, capitalist technological development will render human labour incapable of producing surplus value and extinguish alienated labour (see chapter 4). Therefore, utopian discourses are aligned with the political cynicism of subtracting the virtual from the actual: they construe emancipation as unachievable or postponed until the *right* social and political conditions allow the radical transformation of capitalist societies.

According to Marcuse (idem: 65), this immediacy and potentiality of radical transformation already contained in capitalism needs to be thought in parallel with the problem of individual and social needs. As needs are historical and socially construed, capitalism, while being historically determined as a specific mode of production, produces its own social and individual needs (idem: idem). For instance, the alienation of human labour into abstract labour will produce a regime of necessity based on the increasing accumulation and quantification of needs. To a certain extent, salary will allow the capitalist workforce to reproduce itself *within* the quantification of needs but also *against* them. This social ambivalence of capitalist societies means that humans will desire their own repression through their construed needs within a repressive society (idem: idem). These needs, however, are developed and shaped along with the technical possibilities that are actualized through human labour under capitalism (idem: 66). Hence, the crux of the virtual within a society based on abstract labour and capital accumulation: (non-capitalist) technology can shift human needs from a quantitative difference to a "qualitative difference" (idem: 69).

Such “qualitative difference” requires that liberal subjectivities end their own reproduction through autonomous and “individualized” needs (idem: 67). In Marcuse’s view, needs are a “social productive force” (idem: idem). Such social productive force contains in itself the negation of liberal individualized needs of repressive societies. As humans are increasingly excluded from alienated labour, a pressure for other forms of needs put into question the very sustainability of societies based on the primacy of individualized needs. In this respect, the LTRPF exemplifies how wage labour is increasingly obsolete: Marcuse sees the eschatological dynamic of the LTRPF not as catastrophic tendency but as an opportunity to liberate human beings to a “new way of existence” (idem: 65). The abolition of surplus and alienated labour is a technical possibility that will eventually originate qualitatively different needs as part of the process of refusing “what exists” (idem: 69). This refusal of “what exists” consists in negating the struggle for one’s own survival through salary, competition, repression and war (idem: 67). However, Marcuse does not see this refusal as a primitive denial of technology developed in capitalism. The technical possibilities are always ambivalent and historically determined in capitalism: the improvement of technologies that increasingly automate production, potentially liberating large parts of the population from material subjection to alienated labour, are the same that can increasingly enslave such population (Agamben 2015: 79).

In addition, such refusal of “what exists” can induce a circular reasoning. The refusal of “what exists”, that is, of individualized needs according to a capitalist lifestyle, requires itself a revolutionary need that can trigger that refusal. Marcuse answered to this question raised among the lecture’s audience in the following way:

You have defined what is unfortunately the greatest difficulty in the matter.

Your objection is that, for new, revolutionary needs to develop, the

mechanisms that reproduce the old needs must be abolished. In order for the mechanisms to be abolished, there must first be a need to abolish them. That is the circle in which we are placed, and I do not know how to get out of it.

(Idem: 80)

However, such problematization of revolution in the above answer, by means of a major need that would trigger the refusal of capitalist society as a repressive society, is still dependent on the liberal individualization of needs. In a certain way, Marcuse actually offers an escape of such “circle” when he claims that repressive forces can only be refused during the process of revolution itself (idem: 64). This means that only when the event of negation of “what exists” allow for the actualisation of the virtual, can individualized needs be changed to a new “social productive force” (idem: 67). This implies perceiving liberation within a disjunctive synthesis of strategy and intoxication and not as a circularity of affirmation and negation of needs. Once again, one seizes as much as one is seized by the event (Diken 2012: 34).

Based on Marcuse’s reflections, one can say that the refusal of capitalist forms of life presupposes the end of utopia conceived as an unachievable mode of existence freed from, in Marxian terms, the alienation of surplus labour. Marcuse’s defence of the immediacy of liberation based on the possibility of the “scandal of qualitative difference” (Marcuse 1970: 69) thus opens itself to the envisioning of a community without utopia but in the immanence of redemptive repetition. Such immediacy of a community without utopia inherently refuses the abstraction of salvific temporalities. A community without utopia is, in this sense, a community that refuses salvation after the overcoming of crisis. Consequently, the untying between community and salvation

puts into question the corporate body of nations as it relies on a managerial and economic paradigm of salvation – *oikonomia*.

This re-sacralization of salvation through the corporate body of the nation-state follows, in its turn, a rationality of immunity: the corporate body is constituted through the protection of the community as a living organism against other living organisms (Esposito 2013: 130). Consequently, immunity materializes itself in the division of territories through spatial borders which in the past, extended as it was to the whole society through its *dispositifs*, transformed biopolitics into the thanatopolitics of Nazism (idem: idem). Therefore, the paradox of the antibody that will protect and save the corporate body of the nation can become the destructive virus of the community as it was previously exemplified by the Spanish civil war exile in France.

As Esposito argues (idem: 129) this paradox between immunity and community poses the problem of the originary void that initially constituted every communitarian formation. Every community will try to cover, prevent and fight against the original violence of the *nothing* that pre-existed its social contract and its triumphant Leviathan (Esposito 2010: 140). However, this relation between community and the nothing that undermines it splits the concept of community into two possible interpretations: On one hand the Hobbesian perspective denies any form of community before and beyond the Leviathan (idem: idem). On the other hand, community is the refusal of the sovereign violence of the Hobbesian community.

According to Esposito (idem: 140-141), Hobbes' Leviathan signs the origin of the political nihilism that will dominate the liberal conception of sovereignty in its rejection of the dangerous nothing before and beyond the Leviathan state. The

contradiction of affirming community against a disruptive nothing is visible in the return of nihilism itself (idem: 142): the sovereign needs to annihilate any borderless “commons” in order to affirm the absoluteness of a community based on a collective social totality. The fear of unrestrained civil war (stasis) through its several polymorphous crises (Refugee crisis, economic crisis, climate change crisis and so on) unavoidably finds in the building of walls its salvific immunity. As Esposito puts it: “Never were so many walls erected than after the fall of the great symbolic wall of Berlin” (Esposito 2013: 132). Thus, it is important to reflect on the sovereigntist solutions to crises not only as a communitarian response to globalization but also through the immunization system that follows that same response (idem: idem). What passes through every sovereigntist solution, such as building walls to separate territories, is precisely the “immunitary crisis” that every national and sovereign corporate body currently faces (idem: idem). In these attempts to overcome an immunity crisis, the biopolitics of security may eventually turn into thanatopolitics, that is, an unrestrained politics where the immunity system annihilates the very community that it was meant to protect.

Community, however, can also be defined precisely through that “non-belonging” and “interval of difference” (Esposito 2010: 139). This latter interpretation of community is here worth of an extensive reflection as it spatially grounds the necessary ontological shift described in the second section and the temporality of *kairos* addressed in the first section of this chapter. In this perspective, Esposito defines community not as the mass of subjects that would form a collective identity but as the relation itself between the subjects:

We could say that the community isn't the *inter* of *esse* but rather *esse* as *inter*, not a relation that shapes being [essere] but being itself as the relation.

(idem: idem)

Instead of trying to fill the void of the nothing, this interpretation of an ontology of relation as community is the affirmation of that space that does not actualize in a sovereign territory. The dispossession of not belonging is, paradoxically, what brings the common that the sovereign community rejects: community is always based on being “with” and, in this transfer of the *munus* (which means gift), the common is appropriated by a collective identity such as the *people*. The difficulty of socially thinking such *nothing* in a positive affirmation reveals how entrenched the Hobbesian paradigm of community still is in contemporary liberal societies. Every attempt to prevent the event of crisis remains within discourses of security that, consequently, emanate immunity responses from the national corporate body. The development of risk technologies, for instance, to prevent and manage crises and catastrophes becomes *risky* in itself due to its excessive immunity (idem: idem). In a Foucauldian wording, communitarian discourses always contain the potential nihilist dissolution of the very subjectivities that they produce precisely through the dispositifs of security that respond to *national threats*. Crisis temporalities arise from this fusion of community with security discourses in their dispositifs of immunity to clean the territory from *parasites*.

As a result of these *excesses* of security, the nihilist version of community falls easily into authoritarian governments. This is the reason why it is urgent to problematize communitarian ontologies that temporally and spatially refuse territorial sovereignty through the praxis of common use. In this respect, Nancy's (2010: 150) reflection on

the relation between human existence and the common in communism is a breakthrough. As investigated in the first section, If *kairos* is considered the temporality that refuses a permanent crisis of bare repetition, the actualization of the common cannot be communism merely conceived within an historical continuity (idem: idem). The suspension of the neo-baroque temporality of the permanent crisis breaks with that historical continuity that crystalizes commun-*ism* as a political ideology (idem: idem). What Nancy unveils in the common of communism is the universal prepositional character of communism, that is, its *cum* without the suffix *ism*. Such prepositional existence that Nancy sees in communism as indistinct from the common necessarily collides with the long gone *real socialism* of state capitalism. Neither private property nor public/state property is recognized within such prepositional existence. The praxis of such prepositional existence - the use of the common - becomes necessarily a refusal of the commodification of affects, objects and bodies into capitalist workforce.

Such existential refusal of the “present state of things”, the destituent praxis of a form-of-life, casts doubt upon the strategy of translating the social dynamics of bourgeois revolutions into proletarian revolutions (Tronti 1976: 273). In other words, social democracy imposed the idea that the proletariat would historically need to *seize* the capitalist state and economically manage it until socialism could be finally reached (idem: idem). Tragically, this orthodox and reformist interpretation of history was strategically submitting the labour movement to the bourgeois revolution as the motor of “progress” (idem: idem). A particular interpretation of social struggles and its respective strategy is thereby conveyed: not the refusal of “what exists” but the better management of “what exists”, not the abolition of the exploited but the improvement

of the conditions of the exploitation, not the refusal of crisis through repetition but the submission to capitalist historical leaps through crisis.

Conclusion

The present research investigated affinities between crisis and fascism through a constellation of times and spaces that disclosed a paradigm of salvation in contemporary capitalism. Meanwhile, the relevance of this study has become self-evident. For instance, ten years after the 2007 capitalist crisis, 88 members of the German far-right AfD party were elected to parliament for the first time since the military defeat of the Nazi suicidal state (Connolly 2017). However, when this project started to take shape, the affinities between crisis and fascism had to be constantly justified as if liberalism, historical and ideologically speaking, prevented fascism and did not flourish in racist regimes of slavery (Losurdo 2011; Landa 2012). The problem with this persistent amnesia is that the authoritarian responses of contemporary liberal governments go unchecked. Thus, the Portuguese or Greek governments could always be democratically legitimized as long as the *People* freely voted for those who oppressed them during the Troika bailouts. In this way, the constant overthrow of constitutional and legal rights during the Troika bailout periods could still claim to be democratic under sovereign exception. In other words, the previous defence of salvation through the austere and sacrificial *care of the self* was seen as a democratic exercise and not a disciplinary subjectivation towards a fascist black hole (Deleuze and Guattari 2014). According to this liberal narrative of crisis, the molecular entrenchments of micro fascisms in the processes of debt subjectivation did not have anything to do with authoritarian household politics.

Since 2007 formal states of emergency have spread out across European nation-states. While the Paris terror attacks allowed Hollande's government to formally declare a state of emergency in France, the same state of emergency allowed heavily armed

police to repress any defiance of governmental policies. On a broader scale, military forces patrolling the streets are today less unfamiliar in the daily urban landscape of European metropolises. Offices, tourists and armed forces all inhabit the same urban tissue, while the multitude may revolt from time to time against the no future horizon of endless debt, precarity and repression. In other words, the thin layer separating large scale debt collection from the war on terror and its dispositifs of security has finally been ripped apart in the contemporary landscape of total mobilization.

However, until recently fascism was perceived as something of the buried past. As a consequence of this glorious narrative, fascism became sacralized, strategically separated from a flawed capitalist Modernity: there were no charismatic leaders in the Eurozone, no threatening fascist movements, apart from the all too convenient and abhorrent straw man of Greece's Golden Dawn. Liberalism was here to stay; it just needed to be saved with neo-Keynesian policies against austerity.

As far as the Portuguese case is concerned, the salvific politics of crisis has shifted to the left of the spectrum as much as it has turned the austerity page. Contrary to the conservative remedy for crisis, the left-leaning salvation from crisis is not to be achieved only through collective sacrifice but also through left-leaning growth and redistribution policies. Thus, the recent "Portuguese Experiment", resulting from an informal coalition between the Socialist Party (a centre-left party), the Left Block (a New Left party) and the Portuguese Communist Party (a Marxist-Leninist party) after the 2016 General Election (Martins 2017: 44), is an example of left-leaning salvific politics. Unemployment fell, salaries and pensions went up and the bailout tranches are already being paid back in advance (Antunes 2016). Even the Standard and Poor rating agency revalued Portugal's sovereign debt as now rising above its previous rating level of "garbage" (Tavares 2017). Economic and political commentators see in

Portugal how capitalism can still be saved from crisis, despite its having been one of the worst affected economies of the 2007 financial crisis (see Jones 2017). However, as this investigation has problematized from the start, remaining in the salvific temporality of crisis cannot do away with the *dispositifs* of security such as debt collection: despite having turned the page of austerity, the Portuguese left-leaning governmental coalition continues to pay *religiously*, in advance, the Troika loan (Lusa 2017). The relationship between the Troika and the indebted population remains politically unchallenged.

In line with this apparent turning of the page of the 2007 crisis and its more predatory neoliberal governmentality, the re-emergence, at the mainstream level, of fascist war machines in Eastern Europe and north Atlantic societies came as a surprising shock to the liberal order. The recent upsurge of far-right movements and parties appears to be a barbaric invasion into the very function of liberal democratic politics. Academically speaking, this runs under the euphemism of “right wing populism” (see Wodak, KhosravNik and Mral 2013). Nonetheless, the word *fascism* is being heard again as a threat to security and well-known historians of fascism have started to question whether Trump’s political views are fascist or not, even if relying on parodic analogies between Mussolini’s and Trump’s jaws (Mann 2017). Overall, these analogies between right-wing populists and fascists can be highly productive but they elude the problematization of our liberal democratic regimes as constitutive of fascist war machines (Alliez and Lazzarato, 2016).

However, the epistemic surveillance of the fascist barbarian constitutes itself as a technology of the *dispositif* of crisis: analyzing, measuring and tracking the potential fascist threat may successfully prevent a fascist salvation but, in doing so, molecular fascisms are *permanently* tolerated within the western capitalist social formation. In

other words, the *pharmakon* of security against ideological fascism paradoxically engenders fascist conduct: the very process of democratic immunization against fascism presupposes the sovereign exclusion of bare life as exemplified by the exiled Spanish Republicans detained in French concentration camps on the brink of World War II (see Chapter 5) or, more recently, the lawless submission of entire populations to public debt collection during the sovereign debt crisis.

Findings

Consequently, the analogies between crisis and fascism led me to develop a critique of salvific politics in liberal democratic regimes. As seen in Chapter one, the theological paradigm of *oikonomia* presupposes a form of crisis that permanently delays salvation through endless and debt-driven managerial exception. In this particular sense, the temporality of crisis corresponds to the theological figure of the Katechon, a preventive temporality of the eschatological event (which can be exemplified through the constant threat of Portugal's bankruptcy). In this sense, the katechontic delay of the Day of Judgement inscribes crisis within the temporal frame of security – the permanent prevention of social, political and economic catastrophes.

However, it was still necessary to investigate how such a securitized temporality of crisis spatially unfolds within the sovereign paradigm of *oikonomia*. In this sense, Arendt's warning of the suspension of politics by contemporary capitalism, as well as totalitarianism, points towards a spatial politics of deterrence: politics can only aspire to border a space of freedom through the dominant role of foreign policy. However, such a transformation of politics into deterrence undermines the very classical political subjectivation based on a space of freedom separated from the naked life of

the *oikos*. With the rationale of security based on deterrence, that is, the permanent prevention of mass annihilation through foreign policy, there is no space *for* politics *as* freedom. Thus, the intensification of security technologies may have got rid of any illusion of keeping traces of the classical conception of politics as freedom in contemporary biopolitics. Consequently, the retreat of politics as freedom in capitalism comes at the cost of extending new forms of naked life to previous spaces of freedom. Politics is totally *oikonomized*. However, this diagnosis should not fall into nostalgia for politics as freedom. Foucault's genealogy of neoliberalism explains how the classical conception of politics as freedom was and still is problematic to defend, especially after the fascist suicidal states of the twentieth century. The reconstruction of western post-war democracies under a purely economic rationality could be the only justification for the existence of pre-war nation-states. However, this interpretation of neoliberalism as a dispositif of security that aimed at preventing authoritarian states could not but generate its own authoritarian market rule. To prevent fascism, neoliberalism engendered its own molecular fascisms under the total *oikonomization* of capitalist social formations.

It is no surprise then that analogies could be found between the two historical ontologies of crisis analyzed in the third chapter. There are, undoubtedly, discursive dissimilarities between Salazar's national salvation, where *men must die* to perpetuate the nation, and the sacrifices imposed under the Troika bailout. However, within the biopolitical securitized politics of turning life into naked life, for the sake of productivity, non-profitable subjects may become worthless for marketization. Thus, the Troika, under the Portuguese Memorandum, could establish those boundaries of who is worthy of being saved or not based on creditor-debtor subjectivation. Despite the 1926 Portuguese fascist revolution and the 2011 bailout being at odds in terms of

their discursive conditions of possibility, salvation through the idea of a responsible and austere *housewife politics* is still required for the formation of the national corporate body (see Chapter 3). In other words, one's individual sacrifice is always metonymically performative as well as economically driven in both historical ontologies. Recalling Guattari's essay (idem 2009: 171), fascism passes through the "tightest mesh" as much as desire constitutes economically viable, exploitable and, consequently, endlessly indebted bodies to capital.

However, as it was problematized with reference to Marx's *Law of the Tendency of the Rate of Profit to Fall* in chapter 4, the reverse of not being worthy of exploitation fuels capital's paradoxical *law of the tendency* to bring surplus value to a halt. The total economisation of life in neoliberal governmentality does not only have the effect of subjectivizing everyone by means of 24/7 spiritual exercises of entrepreneurship. Rather, more than ever, today's capitalist crisis contains a value crisis that induces the creation of what Marx defines as relative surplus population: in spite of the political attempts to restore salvation in the Eurozone, as can be seen in the current "Portuguese Experiment", there is simply no salvation yet for the unemployed.

Consequently, this project also critically reflected on the anti-Troika activism during the 2011 bailout. The textual analysis of the QSLT anti-Troika platform problematized this kind of activism's desire for salvation: the desiring of a redeemed society within the boundaries of the modern referents of nation, people and salaried work. With such a desire for salvation, a cycle of tiredness and recovery from militant work led to a constant delay of social change. Paradoxically, the militant desire to *decide* and *cure* Portugal's debt crisis reinforced the temporal indecision of crisis by delaying such a cure. Without disentangling itself from salvation, the activist praxis shifted towards

the modern transcendental categories (nation, people and salaried work) thus endlessly regulating social conflicts within capitalism.

Furthermore, as a response to this impasse in the regulation of social conflict by the militants themselves, this project discussed Holloway's proposal of a new type of activism that rejects the dualism between those who are victimized by crisis and the object of crisis itself. To recall it, Holloway's lack of distinction between the victim and the crisis turns out to be the key strategy to dismantle salvation: "we are the crisis and we are proud of it" (Holloway 2016: 63). Thus, in this refusal of crisis dualism, Holloway discloses an affirmative phenomenology of crisis in contrast with salvation. If the intensification of labour exploitation and the increase of relative surplus population appear to be the two paradigmatic lines of the death of capital in crisis, then social emancipation can also be rethought from the refusal to save capitalism. However, while Holloway's anti-salvific proposal touches on the core of the *oikonomia* paradigm, it nonetheless lacks a strategy towards those who do not want to stop doing their *duty*. In other words, this militant strategy remains defenceless before fascist intoxication and its respective war machines as it does not take into account how fascism always promises salvation from crisis and, consequently, channels human desire towards repression. Holloway's claim opens a whole phenomenological way to refuse crisis and its temporal dynamics of salvation (and security) but it still lacks a counter-strategy against fascism. More specifically, in spite of paving the way for a "non-fascist life" too (Foucault 1984: 13), it cannot strategically contain the suicidal fascist state, that is, when the fascist war machine takes over the state apparatus. Strategically speaking, this is an open question that this investigation tried to develop further in the last chapter by primarily focusing on the materialist

temporality of *kairos* and the way it radically advances an ontological formation based on relation and not identity.

Starting from the premise that crisis, as a temporality of decision or/and indecision, entangles with fascism by means of salvation, the praxis of crisis refusal necessarily implies refusing fascism and vice versa. As seen with Holloway's example, the praxis of refusal opens a distinct phenomenology towards crisis where one refuses salvation. However, that remains an incomplete task if there is no ontological indagation of what that crisis refusal *is* about. Thus, the last chapter looked at this ontological question with paradigms of relational praxis - the Franciscan, the punk and the Spanish civil war revolutionary. From the collage of these paradigmatic figures, emerges a materialist remnant of a communist ontological formation. Consequently, these paradigmatic figures of naked life bring to the fore the very salvific flow that entangles crisis and fascism in capitalist modernity. Their extreme dislocation attested in concentration camps or in their refusal of the chronological time of capitalist modernity by means of revolution entails a temporal relation that refuses capitalist technologies of the self and, consequently, their temporal manifestation through a mode of production based on crisis. Eventually, they are figures of pure immanence that cannot be compromised by Modernity's capitalist teleology; they inhabit the Nietzschean temporality of repetition in an unmediated materialist redemption. Borderless creatures without national identity, their bodies are the unbearable scandal for any capitalist regime, be it fascist or liberal democrat, as long as they refuse to be securitized and commodified, that is, saved from crisis. Furthermore, their extreme precarity, as much as their potentiality, does not campaign or mobilize *for* communism. It is not a question of reterritorialization into a nation-state to contest their possible inclusion into the liberal public sphere by means of civil disobedience

as, for instance, Arendt would argue for. Their ontological formation is already relational and communitarian and this means that their praxis cannot be recomposed in the contingencies of nationalist and statist political will but as the profane necessity to live, as Foucault would say (*idem: idem*), a “non-fascist life” outside the chronological time of crisis.

Thesis Implications

In this way, this thesis aimed to uncover some theoretical implications of scholarly research on the concept of crisis. Moreover, it contributed to a more pluralist overview of the complex phenomenon of crisis beyond the dominant episteme of political economy. Problematizing crisis beyond political economy was possible due to the combination of theoretical work that potentially refuses the nihilist logic of constantly saving capitalism and oneself from crisis. However, combining the thought of Spinoza, Foucault, Negri, Deleuze and Guattari and, later on, Nancy and Agamben can only be possible to the extent that their epistemological differences are preserved. Thus, this thesis aimed at their combination in the first part of the thesis (Chapter 1 to Chapter 4) since the first part works as a diagnostic of the analogies between crisis and fascism (by looking at sacralization processes of crisis).

However, these theories cannot be combined when it comes to the investigation of the praxis and ontology of crisis refusal, that is, the last part of the thesis (Chapter 5). Strategically speaking, Negri’s, Deleuze and Guattari’s Spinozan works strive for the opening of democratic constituent processes that, at least in Negri’s case, find in the multitude the non-identitarian collective entity of singularities capable of defying Imperial sovereignty. Nevertheless, this process of constituting a political power

against the constituted power of the empire can itself fall prey to an immanent eschatology that promises redemption in a materialist communist solution (no matter how desired that can be in terms of social emancipation). As it becomes evident, this political strategy is in contradiction with the findings of the first part of the project. If salvation is what establishes the link between crisis and fascism, then, the problem becomes refusing eschatology as part of the problem. In this sense, Agamben's work on profanation is fundamental to think about rendering inoperative the sacralization of time as crisis, that is, its salvific flow. Moreover, Nancy's emphasis on a form of ontology and praxis without salvation sets the ground for thinking in communitarian terms without salvation. Thus, Agamben's thought on the destituent and praxis derived from the profanation of any form of political power is in clear opposition with the praxis of a constituent power that will end up constituting itself as the political power of the multitude.

Nevertheless, the intertwining of this heterogeneous theoretical work enabled the theological investigation of the concept of crisis which revealed to be particularly fertile in uncovering contemporary sacralizations in capitalist social formations. Above all, it problematized the eschatology of capitalism and how it brings crisis temporalities right to the centre of authoritarian decisions. These explorations were taken in the hope of shedding light on profane ways of experiencing time outside the authoritarian time regimes of crisis. Subsequently, the emergent affinities between crisis and fascism that this investigation focused on led to the conclusion that salvific and regulatory approaches to social inequalities caused by *economic* crises need, at least, to take into account the profanatory practices of refusal that bring to a halt subjectivation processes based on individual repression in the form of molecular fascisms and, ultimately, lead to authoritarian governments. Hence, decentralizing this

research on crisis in five epistemic fields allowed this investigation to move beyond the mere idea of crisis as a “financial” or “economic” social wrong to be fixed.

This move beyond salvific approaches to *economic* crises also posed a self-reflective methodological question to this research. While it became evident that the way salvific research on crisis implies a *decision* to *cure* a threatening situation, such as state bankruptcy, this research had to redefine the way it dealt with its empirical material and theories as soon as the political sacralization of salvation intersected crisis with fascism. Aiming at proposing another cure for crisis keeps the salvific intent and, consequently, re-enacts the dispositif of crisis. In other words, contributing to fix a social problem is a question of security. After problematizing the affinity between crisis and fascism through salvation, this research had to develop a methodological approach that could unfold a non-salvific analysis of the crisis events and examples that it dealt with. This aspect explains why the last chapter on the refusal of crisis was essential in order to withdraw from a salvific solution and explore a profanatory discourse of crisis refusal outside salvation and, consequently, security. However, this option does not mean that this investigation does not propose a *way out*, a line of flight from capitalist self-destructive eschatology. Its final proposal opens the methodological and epistemological question of how to conduct social science research, either on crisis as a total phenomenon or on crises as eventual phenomena, without falling into salvation. This project thus aimed to keep the tension between what Deleuze and Guattari defined as royal science and nomad science (see *Ambulant Realities* section in the Introduction) without resolving it into a conceptual rigidity ready to present the last salvific cure. By proceeding through analogies between paradigms and textual fragments, this research runs against re-territorializations in national and collective entities. It could not be otherwise since it refuses to perpetuate

modernity's flaws, such as fascism, by using the same biopolitical lexicon that potentially enacts them, that is, salvation.

Further Research

Initially focusing on the effects of the 2007 financial crisis in Southern Europe, with an emphasis on the Portuguese case, this research had to historically contextualize the phenomenon of crisis within that spatial context. As a country with a legacy of 48 years of fascist dictatorship, it was important to investigate its previous responses to economic crises, in particular fascist *decisions*, if any present indagation of fascism and crisis was to be addressed. Such an analytical choice of this investigation was revealed to be fundamental in order to investigate possible analogies for the present time of crisis. While I did this mainly through the works of Gilles Deleuze, Félix Guattari, Foucault, Agamben, Marx and Jean-Luc Nancy, Marxian thought is prolific on this relation between crisis and authoritarian forms of rule, bringing polemics and, with them, political, economic and social interpretations of this relation that are far from the simplistic liberal dichotomies such as capitalism versus fascism (Beetham 1983; Griffin 1998). Exploring these Marxian interpretations of fascism can enrich future conceptualizations of fascism and, subsequently, allow for sharper contrasts or analogies between different types of social, economic and political crises. In addition, that broader contextualization based on historical interpretations of fascist movements during the twentieth century could interrelate with a micro-level analysis of molecular fascisms.

On a theoretical level, Nancy's work can be further developed as a critique of the sacralizing processes of identity, community and subjectivity. Moreover, the focus on

relational ontology can be extended towards a sociological inquiry beyond salvation, in other words, a profane play with the above concepts so that they can materialize new common uses. The profanation of the sacred objects, spaces and, above all else, the rule of abstract time of capitalism can then unfold new uses of time as a pure means against the sacred teleology of crisis. In such a vein, the refusal to sacrifice human beings for the sake of fixing social problems that are caused by the very desire to fix them may contribute to the possibility of a communitarian life without fascism.

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