

THE APORIA OF POWER

Crisis and the Emergence of the Corporate State

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Abstract: This article focuses on the debates over the Río Blanco mining project in Piura in northern Peru. Using Tsing's notion of 'friction', I explore the complexity and global connections in this case and show how the actors engaged universal categories to pursue their agendas. I argue that the campaign against Río Blanco is an example of indigenous mobilization in contemporary Peru because the local protestors invoked the global term 'indigenous', although they mobilized as peasants and as *ronderos/as* (civil defense patrollers). Their decision to campaign as peasants, however, illustrates the continued relevance of class in a contemporary global context. By using their peasant identity strategically in combination with their regional identity and their identity as marginalized peoples, the local population of Piura gained a more powerful voice.

Keywords: bureaucratic processes, corporate state, crisis, globalization, nation-state, reterritorialization, violence, war machine

Within the current dynamic of history we are witnessing the construction of original political and social forms. This is particularly so regarding the state or the hitherto dominant political form of the nation-state, which, in the argument here, is giving way to a new kind of political assemblage that might be called the 'corporate state' (see Kapferer 2005a). The emergence of the corporate state is associated with globalization processes that are widely linked to the decline of the nation-state as a centralizing commanding institution of territorially defined power. However, I will argue that globalization is integral to the emergence of the corporate state, being both the condition and effect of the other. If globalization, as numerous commentators suggest, appears to undermine the nation-state, it is a process that is also giving rise to new state assemblages that are increasingly of a corporate state kind.

Broadly, my discussion extends from Karl Polanyi's ([1944] 2001) *The Great Transformation*, in which he discusses the historical development of the idea of



the self-regulating free market. The 'great transformation' effected a disembedding of the market or economic forces of accumulation and distribution from their integument within the institutional orders of society. Exploring anthropological and historical evidence, Polanyi describes economic functions as being achieved, for example, through religio-political institutions, such as the temple system of ancient Egypt, or, until recently, the ritually based caste orders of India, or the symbolically and kin-mediated processes of the Melanesian *kula*. The economy and the market, however, did not act as such. Trade is historically everywhere in existence, but where it appears to have acted independently of social controls and religio-political orders, it was often conducted by populations who were externalized, marginalized, and sometimes radically demeaned as, for instance, the Jews in Europe. According to the great transformation, the notions of the economy and the market attain a heightened conceptualization, as a result of being disembedded from their social and religio-political constraints (thus the idea of the free and self-regulating market), and increasingly achieve determining import. That is, the economy and the market are conceived of as having independent force and value and are regarded as being primary in the very constitution of the social. In many ways, the great transformation of Polanyi's interpretation describes what is widely recognized as modernity, in which the economy and its associated technologies are regarded as paramount and the source from which everything else derives.

The Great Transformation was published as World War II drew to a close. Polanyi believed that many of the conditions that had led to the war and to the destruction and human devastation that grew in its wake were connected to the development of the idea of the self-regulating free market and, simultaneously, the efforts in the political sphere to curb both its socially disruptive effects and, through the oligarchical operation of the political, to gain or maintain authority and position by controlling the economic. This gave birth, in Polanyi's analysis, to the era of the nation-state or a period of nationalist capitalism that resulted in extremes of human suffering, such as those brought about in the Soviet Union and under the various European fascisms. Here I must stress that Polanyi's argument emphasizes the symbiosis of state-political forces with that of the market: the nation-state is not a consequence, effect, or reaction to the market but rather its key instrument. Through the mediation of the political order of the nation-state, the social world is transformed in order to create the circumstances within which the market can rise to determining potency. The economy and the market are not pitted against the state so much as tightly embroiled in it. State forces are those that both fetishize the market and are engaged in processes of restructuring social orders so that the market can expand. In this dynamic there were the seeds of a further transformation.

In many ways, the invention of the economy and the market started out as a relatively autonomous phenomenon that was disembedded from society and, most importantly, controlled by the political. It then evolved to the point that the political became subordinated to and controlled by the terms of the economy and the market. This has led, I shall broadly argue, to the transformation of the political itself, a restructuring of the nature of the state and of the

social order commanded by the state. Moreover, the economic and the market have become re-embedded in society and in the political, but in a way that is very different from before. Rather than being shaped by the society in which they were inseparably submerged, they have become themselves the very shape of the political and of society. This is the crux of the political assemblage that I address as the corporate state; it refers to a process in which there is a radical rearrangement of the very nature of the social and of society. As Stephen Gude- man (2009) explains, there has come about a re-embedding of the economy and of the market in society. However, what I assert as a distinction is that if a re-embedding has occurred, it is of a radically different kind in the context of the great transformational processes that Polanyi describes. Effectively, the re-embedding is rather a sociologizing of the *idea* of the economy and the market. What had been isolated and conceptualized as distinct and given heightened autonomy has in fact been reconceived as the essence of the social. The market becomes the principle of social processes. This orientation is established through political processes that in themselves recognize their own constitution in the dynamics of the economy and the market. The idea of the corporate state that the following discussion is oriented to explore suggests that the market and the conceptualization of the economic are not so much resubmerged in the social and the political but become their very constitution and form. The political and the social—society itself—are not founded in the economic, as many arguments dubbed as economistic might assert; instead, they are, in themselves, shapes of the economic and of the market or the various guises of the economic.

The notion of the corporate state that underpins my discussion is that it represents the transmutation of the political into the economic and is also the instrument for the realization, as well as the transformation, of the social being of humanness into an economic being—not in the last instance, as Althusser might have said, but in the first instance. In this sense, there is no distance between the economic and the social. The latter is not determined by the former; rather, the economic and the social are thoroughly identical.

I pass off these considerations in what immediately follows and will return to them in the conclusion of this article. For the present, I wish to discuss some of the processes leading up to the emergence of the corporate state as a dominant force in forming the political and, with this, social orders. I shall do so by examining the dynamics of state processes, often in the context of war and violence. These phenomena and the various shapes that they take put forward some of the key distinctions that I want to make between the nation-state, on the one hand, and the emerging dominance of the corporate state, on the other hand.

Here I should make it clear that my overall position is not that the state essentially or necessarily is the cause of war and violence (and there are many excellent approaches that assert this), but that war and violence assume much of their shape in the socio-political and ideological dynamics and organization of state power, as well as in the wider environments of state practice. **In other words, the character of war and violence, as well as policies oriented to their control, is shaped through state practices that are integral to its particular dynamics in the contexts in which it is located and to some extent creates.** To put it another

way, the very methods and procedures whereby states achieve and legitimate the domains of their control and power are integral to the kinds of violence that are produced both by state orders and by those in reaction to them.

The State and the War Machine: Dynamics over Form

With regard to both nation-states and corporate states, I conceive of ‘the state’ in general, non-specific terms as a self-reproducing, totalizing constellation of forces whose collective dynamics might be conceptualized as a politics machine directed toward creating and shaping relations in socio-cultural fields that are relevant to the reproduction of state power. Moreover, the dynamics of the state are oriented to achieving an exclusive and overarching determining potency in the diverse sets of social relations in which the state is situated. State agents and agencies achieve this through numerous procedures, among them the incorporation, regulation, exclusion, marginalization, or suppression of communities, organizations, or other kinds of socio-political orders (including competing state entities) that may be present in the environment of the state. Some of the typical political techniques that the state, its agents, and its agencies use to ensure these outcomes are, first, territorialization (not necessarily geographical but the bounding and controlling of regions or spaces of interest); second, social coding and redifferentiation, usually of a bureaucratic kind; and, third, control of subjectivities, as well as their capture and production, relative to the hegemonic interest of those in command of state agencies.¹

In the foregoing, I follow **Deleuze and Guattari** ([1972] 2004, [1980] 2004), who suggest that such dynamics are intrinsic or immanent in all social and political assemblages, regardless of whether or not an actual state order exists. In their view, the state dynamic is counteracted by that of the ‘war machine’: each dynamic is bound to and implicit in the other, but with its own distinct (violent) potential. Altogether different in principle, the war machine dynamic is rhizomic and open-ended, characterized by a relational and structuring process that spreads out laterally and horizontally in all directions. Both dynamics are apparent in most social processes, although they will manifest in diverse ways relative to the historical, cultural, and other contingencies of a particular context or situation. These kinds of dynamics draw their conceptual distinction through contrast. Thus, the state dynamic is hierarchical (an apical tree-like process), vertical, and bounding (territorializing), whereas the war machine is thoroughly ahierarchical (radiating across a number of nodal points, often unconnected), acentered, and relatively non-systemic or counter-systemic in a closed or bounded sense. The relations and structuring of the war machine create and generate the flow of its socially forming energy along spreading networks, blurring or over-running bounded, territorialized, or categorized entities. The war machine is a deterritorializing dynamic when brought into relation with the state’s tree-like processes.²

In Deleuze and Guattari’s approach, these dynamics co-exist, perdure, and are intertwined,³ but not in the dialectical sense of either a Hegelian or Marxian

kind, perspectives which Deleuze and Guattari seek to avoid. Thus, the two dynamics are irreducible to each other. Neither are they dissolvable nor capable of being synthesized, in a Hegelian sense, into a third term that is either their singular base or ultimate resolution. One of Deleuze and Guattari's central arguments is that these processes are potentially mutually annihilating—and, in their full emergence in the context of each other, realize thoroughgoing destruction. This clash is of the nature of the neutralizing effect caused by the coming together of two positive forces.⁴

What Deleuze and Guattari conceptualize as the dynamics of the state and war machine I regard as key aspects of the structuring logics involved in contemporary empirical contexts of globalizing and state processes. The dynamics, of course, assume varied accents and significance in the particular cultural and social constructions and situational contingencies that make up the flux of history. It is my concern here to outline dimensions of the logics of the state and war machine dynamics as these may be contemporarily apparent.

Here I should emphasize that the approach to the state that I am articulating is one that stresses dynamics over form. Further, they are dynamics that should be distinguished from the institutional orders of actual states and from those political or social phenomena that may be seen as antagonistic or resistant to actual state controls. Thus, the concepts of state and war machine are not concrete oppositional terms. They refer to dynamics that can appear together and in a diversity of mixtures in any realized political practice, whether that of the bureaucratic institutional apparatuses of the state or of resistance organizations that challenge state orders. Actual historical states may give greater prominence to the dynamics of the war machine (and not just in military enterprises or in processes of conquest) at specific moments of (re)formation or at particular sites of their extension. Examples from the past might be Ottoman Turkey or China after the decades-long Mongol invasion. In the case of Ottoman Turkey, the imagination or mythos of the state has many of the features of what Deleuze and Guattari would describe as the dynamics of the war machine (see [Fosshagen 2006](#)).

The dynamics of the war machine are very much part of what I will describe as the shape of the practice of emerging corporate states. I shall suggest that a feature of corporate states is that the rhizomic dynamic moves from a position that is more external or peripheral to state processes to one that is more at the heart of the state, as well as having more overt state-like ordering effects throughout national territories. Moreover, in many ways, the hegemonic forces of control that are both directly and indirectly associated with state power, if often more hidden, become intensified. **In the emergence of corporate states, there is a reterritorialization of the orders created in nation-state formation** in order to align with the ideological objectives of corporate states. This results in a greater flexibility and openness, which drives a particular crisis of control reflected in the use of borders as filtering mechanisms (e.g., acting in response to the shifting corporatizing demands of changing state-ratified interests) and an increasing obsession with security.

Much of what I discuss concerning a distinct corporate state dynamic is anticipated in [Deleuze's \(1992\) "Postscript on the Societies of Control,"](#)

although I stress that such societies are effectively intensified by—and to a degree produced through—the emergence of the corporate state assemblage. The societies of control emerge in the context of the decline of nation-states and replace or overtake the disciplinary societies explored by Foucault. The argument here follows a similar course, although focusing far more explicitly on the question of the state and the shifting relation between the kinds of dynamics examined by Deleuze and Guattari in the movement from nation-states to corporate state assemblages. I concentrate on the processes of transition and how the articulating dynamics of the different state actions considered here are vital to the creation and response of certain kinds of social and political effects.

Overall, my argument is not one that is for or against the state per se in relation to issues such as violence and war. Neither is it directed to ascertaining some kind of idealistic hierarchy of socio-political forms defined in terms of their propensity to inflict the suffering and devastation of violence and war. In my opinion, dictatorships are more likely to engender harm than democracies, although this is by no means a given. Democratic populisms are vulnerable to sliding into autocracies, a potential that [de Tocqueville \(2001\)](#) indicated for the United States. The totalitarianism of socialist and populist European states in the twentieth century achieved the peak so far of human devastation. The colonial states and the violence with which they subdued the majority of their subjects are also stark examples of this potential of human destructiveness. The Athenian democracy wreaked extreme destruction upon the states and societies in its environment, a fact that Thucydides observed at the time. Sahlins (2004), in an analysis of the factors leading to the defeat of the Athenian democracy in the Peloponnesian wars, offers an ironic commentary on the current democracy-inspired adventure of the US and Britain in Iraq. John Gray (2007) most recently has attacked utopian idealisms of human liberation and peace, mainly of the doctrinal sort, as themselves leading to annihilating consequences, a view also expressed by Adorno (1973) in general regarding idealisms. In my perspective, what is conceived of as ‘the state’ has innumerable potentialities, whose realization for the benefit or destruction of human populations is empirically contingent.⁵

The Crisis of the State and the Aporia of Power

Like any social or political assemblage, the state is in a continuous process of formation. This is so because the state, with its structures and practices, is a social fact created in social processes to which it is constantly subject. Forces both within and external to the domains of state sovereignty demand that state orders, in the disparate contexts of their practice, must be constantly adjusting to shifting circumstances, events, and situations. The constant formation of the state (its dynamic assembly) is intensified by what largely defines it, that is, its nature as an assemblage drawn to power and intrinsically oriented to the monopolization and/or regulation of power.⁶ Such monopolization is distilled in the idea of the state’s capacity to command the greatest violence—the

principal condition of state sovereignty, as Hobbes ([1651] 1991) made clear. But power is continually emergent in social processes that can never be completely controlled or circumscribed by state-oriented or supervised apparatuses or practices. Because power arises in social processes that are not necessarily controlled by the state (and are often an outcome of the very attempt of state agents and institutions to exert such control), the state may be regarded as being in a constant crisis. This crisis may be viewed as a kind of paranoia that is endemic in states, particularly those totalitarian states given to complete command of the social, thus ensuring a constant source of potential challenge or resistance to state authority.

The state as a focus of constant crisis—virtually, the specter or imaginary of crisis, even where the state is non-existent—is evident across time and space (see Clastres [1974] 1989). This is unavoidable insofar as the state is the crucible of power in all its disguises (see Gledhill 2000). But the crisis of the state achieves a particular intensity in modernity and especially in revolutionary and post-revolutionary Europe and the Americas. This is manifested by the questioning of the legitimacy of sovereign power and its relation to human misery and oppression. Ancient debates were reinvigorated (and continue to be so), achieving mass appeal as they were given impetus in processes of secularism fueled by the religious reformation, the Enlightenment argument, the development of scientific rationalism, and industrialization and urbanization.

What may be typified as the ‘modern state’ emerged from the challenges to the various formations of the state during the intensification of its crisis, especially in Europe but also in the US. In the reconfiguration of state orders that ensued, the state was effectively redirected as an assemblage thoroughly geared to the production of society. Thus, the modernist state in Europe and in the US was oriented to the production of society as the ‘society of the state’. This was evident in ideological representations of the state, such as those that declared the order of society as being dependent on the power of the state. Thomas Hobbes’s *Leviathan* ([1651] 1991) ideally depicts the state as the condition for the existence of a harmonious society, whereby the state controls and mediates the conflicting and fractious elements of society that the power of the state encompasses. Written at the time of the English Revolution, and still a major reference in discussions concerning the architecture of the state, *Leviathan* expresses what most modern states claim to be their central function: both ordering and protecting the social.⁷ The nation-state, still the globally dominant form, marked common identity—or the creation of peoples or individuals similarly oriented to the production of a common community, despite surface differences—as the cohering principle of its society of the state.

Foucault’s works that are devoted to comprehending the modern state demonstrate how institutional practices had the effect of habituating the state in the person and in routine social practices (see, e.g., Foucault 1991).⁸ In effect, Foucault’s argument might be seen as also theorizing how the interests of ruling groups largely in control of state apparatuses are met through processes not immediately associated with state power. The general point is that in modernity the state not merely became a transcendent entity but also became

hegemonically involved, as Gramsci ([1973] 1996) had already developed, its agents and agencies active in the invention of the ideological practices of everyday life in support of the reproduction of state power.⁹

I stress two points. First, the modern state, its agents, and its institutions became consciously oriented to the creation or production of the very society in which its sovereignty was defined and, furthermore, engaged the citizenry to perform this task through a variety of discursive practices. Power and control became an effect of social production in line with state interests. This applies as much to democracies as it does to dictatorships. In other words, the activity of the agents and agencies of the state in social production and the creation of its moral order—and in varying degrees the involvement of the citizenry—can be seen as a major strategy for addressing forces that may challenge or resist the state.

Second, and arising from the first, the violent power that is at the heart of the authority of the state was distributed through a variety of state and non-state disciplinary practices involving education, the family, and work, among others. Not only were such practices supported by the ultimately violent power of the state, but also they reinforced the state's overall authority, further allowing the state to become the central force in the production of the social and of society. The very notion of the social contract between the state and society, so vital in the legitimating of state power, is further grounded in such processes and is itself a major ideological instrument for the production of the society of the state, whereby the crisis of power at the heart of the state may be averted or reduced.

It should be noted that while the violent, physical power at the center of the state is concealed or suppressed in less forceful disciplinary practices, it is nonetheless an ever-present capacity that underpins state order and is far from being looked on as a last resort. This aspect has led Agamben (2005: 40) to argue for the centrality of the 'state of exception' in analyzing the nature and practice of state power, the state of exception marking "a threshold at which logic and praxis blur with each other and a pure violence without *logos* claims to realize an enunciation without any real reference." However, through the establishment of state agencies, institutions, and practices (including state-supported ideologies) of social production, the state's controlling and ordering function is often augmented and dissipated, as well as transmuted, into what Bourdieu ([1977] 1992: 190–197) has called a 'symbolic violence'.

Modern nation-states have commanded and directed social production through bureaucratic institutions and related practices of cultural (re)invention. Both accentuate what I have referred to as a state dynamic, especially when applied in conjunction. The modern state took its current form largely through the development of a rational bureaucratic system. Its logic—what Handelman (2004) describes as a bureaucratic logic—principally involves a process of coding or recoding populations according to the way that personal attributes fit with predetermined categories that are relevant to the bureaucratically defined problem at hand. In this process, for example, dimensions of the person that are constituted in the fluidity of social action and are often contextually relative

become assigned to the more fixed categories of a bureaucratic order (see Kapferer 1988). The nature of their everyday social production is interrupted or subverted by state-authorized bureaucratic processes. In the recoding of the state dynamic, abstracted bureaucratic categories may then be regrounded through a variety of institutional practices (educational, medical, organizational, etc.), which now often assume a factuality that they did not previously have. In other words, state-bureaucratic processes are engaged in redrawing social realities in such a way that they may generate a relatively original habitus, or what I, following Marx, have referred to as the society of the state.

The authoritarian, oppressive, rigid, and dehumanizing—indeed, violent—potentialities of state-bureaucratic practices have been widely discussed (see, e.g., Bauman 1989; Scott 1998). The Holocaust, the Stalinist pogroms, and the Pol Pot massacres demonstrate the extremes of human annihilation that state-bureaucratic machineries have facilitated. But I stress that modern state-bureaucratic processes, as a particular exemplar of what I refer to as a state dynamic, have an impetus to create the conditions for human destruction. A factor, of course, as Arendt ([1951] 2004, [1963] 2006) and others have stressed, is the abstract, rule-governed rationalism of bureaucratic processes that can appear to have an energy of their own, resulting in actions that are often anti-humanitarian while allowing human agents to avoid responsibility for those actions. However, I focus upon the logic of inclusion/exclusion of bureaucratic processes and their fixing of relatively unambiguous boundaries in order to produce a legible, ordered, and striated space. Added to this is the tendency of bureaucratic processes to classify according to discrete categories that can assume a purity of typological abstraction. They function not only as categories but also as indicators for action, without taking into account situated complexities. The abstract is made concrete through the power of the state. The social terrain bureaucratically mapped in this way can ‘force the abstract as the real’, creating or inventing social communities of a particular category, not only systematically simplifying complexities in the recoding, but also effectively freezing them in the category (or identity category). This forcing of the abstract as real can generate a resistance that itself frequently engages the same categorical logic of the imposed bureaucratic dynamic. Broadly, the kind of bureaucratic dynamic outlined here not only operates a symbolic violence, a violence of the category, but can also be a critical factor in the generation of actual physical destruction, potentially influencing a particular shape to the violence.

Shapes of Violence in the Regime of the Nation-State

The extent of ethnic violence and racism in contemporary nation-states provides support for this argument. British colonial bureaucratic coding in India laid some of the groundwork for the shape of the communalism that burst forth so destructively at the time of partition in 1947. Undoubtedly, political and religious passions drove the violence. But these were distilled in bureaucratic categories that had been instituted by the power of the colonial state and

were exacerbated by hastily drawn-up and bureaucratically decided territorial assignments. **The bureaucratic categories of the current Indian state** with regard to the ‘depressed classes’, that is, the ‘scheduled castes’ (*dalits*) and the ‘scheduled tribes’ (*adivasis*), involving various entitlements, act as a filter for the violence of movements that are formed in resistance and reaction to the state. One cruel paradox (among many) is that bureaucratically realized categories allow for the recognition of disadvantage and inequity but simultaneously may compound that disadvantage.

Kerala is an example of a state within India that has in many ways successfully attacked some of the key socio-economic structures producing disadvantage. In the process, this has accentuated the difficulties of certain maximally excluded and depressed communities, principally, the *dalits* and *adivasis* (see **Raman 2005**), whose situation continues to be affected by the imaginary force of caste ideology despite redressive socio-economic changes and strong anti-caste rhetoric. In Kerala, a certain public silence surrounding the matter of caste has occurred that enables its contemporary discriminating force to gain a subterranean potency (see Jayaseelan 2010; Vadakkiniyil 2009).

The ethnic civil war in Sri Lanka owes some of its direction to the bureaucratic coding of the colonial period and its post-colonial extensions. British rule was facilitated through the bureaucratic designation of distinct cultural communities and socio-political regions, which were, in varying ways, given degrees of autonomy within the colonial state. The colonial process was one that sought control by capturing within the colonial order a variety of cultural and historical processes and subordinating them to the hegemonic interests of the colonial state (see Kapferer 1988, **2002**; Roberts 1979). In so doing, the colonial authorities accentuated earlier divisions, giving them new significance in the colonial order and effectively politicizing dimensions that previously did not have this import.

Thus, religion was politicized both in its capacity to organize resistance to colonial power and as a means of social ordering in terms of the political rationalism of the colonial state. In effect, the latter—that is, the subordination of the religious to the political, or the creation of the religious as an arena of politics within, rather than against, the state—was intended to defuse the religious as a challenge to state control. In Sri Lanka, the colonial government placed all religions in an equal relation to the state, thereby reducing the status of Buddhism, the religion of the majority, by putting it in an equivalent position with other religions (and, in so doing, facilitating the emergence of a religious identity that was vital to the birth of political consciousness). Buddhism was thus effectively subordinated, along with other religions, to the authority of the Church of England, the denomination of the ruling group. The effect was to radicalize the Buddhist clergy and to turn them into representatives of the Sinhalese in a nationalist struggle that continued well after independence and became a major force in the subsequent ethnic war between the Tamils and Sinhalese.

The colonial society of the state also intentionally suppressed class forces and encouraged ethnic and caste communalism. The authorities prevented the formation of political parties and instead put into place a system of representation

based on ethnicity and caste. To a considerable extent, the forces of class assumed a dominating ethnic and religious character, thus galvanizing a form of nationalism that was radically and ethnically divisive.

In the post-colonial years, the communalist direction already implicated in the bureaucratically constituted colonial society of the state was pursued further in a nationalist attempt to assert Sinhala hegemony over the Tamils. Much of this was (and still is) oriented to the reproduction of the class power of communally supported elites and gathered increasing force, leading to the 1983 anti-Tamil urban riots. These precipitated 30 years of communal war, which was brought to a savage conclusion at the end of 2009 by the **extermination of the Tamil Tigers**, the major agency of violent Tamil opposition to Sinhala domination. In the aftermath of the war, the state dynamic is engaging the bureaucratic orders to re-create a society of the state in which Tamils are for the most part excluded, unless they accept, in effect, an inferior position in realities subordinated to Sinhala hegemony. However, in this specific case, the bureaucratic orders, it must be noted, are in the process of taking a more corporate form, operating far more intensely than before in the familial and managerial interests of a new elite that is detaching the state from its previous colonial/imperial nexus and affiliating itself more closely with China. Numerous other examples can be given of modern nation-states in which the role of bureaucratic processes established the basis upon which war and other forms of human suffering were built. Prunier (1995) has demonstrated how the 1994 ethnic extermination in Rwanda took its direction through a colonial bureaucratic fixing and hierarchializing of ethnic difference. **The well-known case of apartheid in South Africa, which began in colonial times as racial segregation but became official state policy in 1948, is another example.**

Bureaucratic processes assume particular force in the social assembly and regulative dynamics of modern states and, indeed, can inhabit the conventional thought processes of the citizenry (a 'thinking' as much as a 'seeing' like a state), thus giving form to state violence. In Sri Lanka, government forces rooted out insurgents by using the logic of bureaucratic categories or social indicators (e.g., age, caste, village) to identify potential threats. This magnified the extent of the human destruction and defined the nature of state terror. The bodies of victims were often dumped on the margins of human habitation, an action that symbolized simultaneously their exclusion from the social order commanded by the state (indicating their threat to it as well) and the reterritorializing discourse of state violence (see Kapferer 1997). Variations on this Sri Lankan example are common worldwide.

While the efforts of modernist states and especially nation-states can be conceived of as attempting to overcome the crisis of power by constituting the social order upon which their power feeds, this is ultimately an impossibility. This is so, I maintain, because the social and its complexity (that which is contained in the abstraction 'society') are enduringly emergent and always in excess of anything that the agents of state order might imagine. The aporia of power is based on the impossibility of the state, in the end, to constitute, control, and order society. Neither the bureaucratic overcoding or recoding

of social identities and relations into the categories of state ordering nor the engagement or expansion of institutional agencies (e.g., educational, religious, penal) for the capture, production, or confinement of citizens can enable those who dominate the state, or those who act or guard its interests, to contain completely the social within the machineries of the state or finally to subordinate the social to superordinate power. The dynamics of social generation are such that it always, if not immediately, will escape controlling institutions of state power and be capable of establishing potentially rival centers. Modernist states, similar to other state assemblages throughout history, are always vulnerable to such internal crises. This comes about as a consequence of their own organizing logics and especially when in a mix with other dynamics, for instance, such as that of the war machine, as described by Deleuze and Guattari ([1980] 2004). In their understanding, the dynamic of the war machine is ultimately antithetical to state processes, even though it might be captured into the impetus of state forces.

Rhizomic Processes and the Orders of Nation-States

The nomadic, rhizomic dynamics of the war machine often complement the destructive potency of modern states, who use it to advance their own deterritorializing and reterritorializing interests. Forces that arrange themselves against modern states repeatedly take a rhizomic form, deliberately refusing to submit to the spatializing, territorially containing aspects of state dynamics. Paramilitary organizations (e.g., the Jinjaweed in the Sudan), often promoted by states to counteract resistance movements, regularly assume rhizomic tactics, mirroring those of the organizations that they oppose. The Israeli Army, operating in Gaza, has in fact engaged Deleuze and Guattari virtually as a training manual for the Israel Defense Forces (IDF) (see Weizman 2007). The IDF adaptation of the rhizomic dynamic of the war machine involves military units smashing through walls of houses, suddenly breaking into living areas, and then breaking through walls adjacent to the living space of neighboring families. Given the housing arrangements in which the dwellings of lineage members are closely abutting, the Israeli military units parallel in their movements the rhizomic patterns of Palestinian kinship. Effectively, a state terror courses along the lines of relatedness, invading the very social dynamics of everyday support and security for Palestinians, which is also likely to be the basis of Palestinian resistance. In Israeli use, the state terror of the military—already organized in terms of a bureaucratic logic—amplifies its own deterritorializing potential when used against Palestinians by combining it with the deterritorializing potency of the rhizome. I suggest that this may be even more destructive than the conventional Israeli method of simply bulldozing and clearing away space, a tactic relevant to a state dynamic. This is so because in the Israeli instance the use of the war machine strategy attacks the very process of Palestinian social and political formation—that of kinship relatedness. Such radical rhizomic deterritorialization is combined, in the building of the wall

sealing off Palestinian settlements, with a reterritorialization and intensification of Israel's bureaucratic coding processes.

As the foregoing exemplifies, state and war machine dynamics can, and generally do, co-exist in state systems. The rhizomic dimensions of kinship and lineage can bolster elite control that operates independently of bureaucratic or state dynamics. Indeed, it can be the force for capturing state power, as is clear in so many contemporary and historical contexts, and is vital in directing the violent force of the state. But these elites can undermine the authority of those in control of state apparatuses, especially in modernist contexts of bureaucratic rationality where the rhetoric of corruption (a thoroughly state discourse) renders such states vulnerable.

The political economy of many past and above all contemporary states is rhizomic, particularly where trade and consumption assume predominance over production. This is all the more so when production itself is decentered, as in the cyber-mediated forms of industrial production (sometimes referred to as 'Toyota-ism') that are dislocated from state-regulated territories. Building on Deleuze and Guattari, Hardt and Negri (2000: 327) conclude that "[t]he transcendence of modern sovereignty thus conflicts with the immanence of capital." The nesting of rhizomic processes within state processes and their capacity for synchrony mask the potential of a mutual negativity—indeed, a destructive conjunction—that is the enduring crisis of the state. The current global financial crisis, for example, might be regarded as an instance of the rhizomic forces of the market subverting the controlling and regulating dynamic of the state.

Globalization and the Intensification of Crisis

What is generally glossed as globalization, both past and present, has distinct rhizomic war machine properties, as well as affinities with some uses of the concepts of network and notions of assemblage that have gained momentum in relation to contemporary globalization. The engagement of these concepts reflects the kinds of social relations and connections, as well as their labile, shifting character, that express critical dimensions of globalization and, most importantly, constitute a further crisis for the nation-state, to which it is forced to adjust. This is particularly so for relatively recent nation-states that have superficially achieved their autonomy from imperial and colonial control.

Common descriptive features of contemporary globalization include its contravention (transgression) of the territorial integrity of nation-states, its threat to their autonomy (especially fiscal, for international transactions can escape financial regulations), and its counteraction (an example of Deleuzian rhizomatic processes) against the authoritarian, hierarchical ordering that is characteristic of state control. Post-colonial and post-imperial states have confronted an increased crisis of control and have been vulnerable to autonomous or secessionist movements, usually of ethnic and religious kinds. Civil wars have become a dominant form of conflict, and in some contexts (especially Africa and Latin America) a process that I have called 'wild sovereignty' (Kapferer

2004a)—in which the sovereignty of the state is challenged and a diversity of effectively warring groups becomes established—is occurring. Joxe (2002) has discussed this as a proliferation of ‘cruel little wars’.

The growth in the phenomenon of warring fragmentation in post-colonial states has occasionally been discussed in terms of the concept of failed states, which, in my view, is rooted in a theoretical grasp of state processes from within the perspective of the nation-state. Furthermore, it is grounded in what could be termed a statist mythos of post-colonial national autonomy that hegemonically disguises the continuing dependency and vulnerability of superficially autonomous territories, which rely on political economic forces that are often centered in the former colonial and imperial metropolises. The structure of international aid often exemplifies this relation.

But the failed-state orientation insufficiently examines the ways that globalization can interrupt the capacity of states to engage in practices of creating and reproducing the social order, thus inhibiting their ability to maintain political control. A positive example of this concerns the circumstances that brought the apartheid regime of South Africa to an end. I refer to the civics programs initiated at local levels by organizations that were parallel—and often superior—to those of the ruling regime. Inspired by political activists and external agencies, these organizations, often taking the form of NGOs, created alternative forms of rule, generating or supporting social orders that were antagonistic to and subverted the bureaucratic state mechanisms.

New communication technologies and the opening of cyberspace—initially, at least, independent of state controls—not only made possible the circumvention of regulations vital to state political and social reproduction but also opened up arenas of cyber-social formation and connection. This enabled social collectivities, often constituted on the basis of identity, to form and to express mutual interest relatively free of state intervention. The capacity of nation-states to impose the creation of the society of the state was reduced. Cyberspace further facilitated the expansion and sustenance of on-the-ground movements of autonomy and resistance. First Nations, indigenous groups, and other minorities, such as the current *dalit* and *adivasi* movements in India, have engaged the Internet with success in promoting their diverse causes. Ethnicity might be said to have achieved, through the Internet, a new kind of concretization within virtual space, a reality of its own—a form of territorialization that escapes and supersedes that which is grounded in geographical space.

The development of global cyber or virtual communities is implicated in the maintenance of intra-national state and anti-nation-state violence and war. In Sri Lanka, the nationalist and ethnic Sinhala-Tamil war drew much of its energy from diasporized members of the ethnic categories. Much of this diasporization had its roots in the imperialism of the past but gained further impetus in globalization,¹⁰ which was further fueled by the social dislocations caused by the ethnic war and the largely forced migration of many Tamils to India and Western countries in order to escape the destruction of war. The war found sustenance in cyberspace. It mediated material support for the Tamil war effort, and the news briefings through blogs on the TamilNet Web site effectively challenged

official government war reporting. Counter-Tamil propaganda through the Sinhalese diaspora and the growing control and use of cyberspace by Sinhala and the government were factors that assisted the successful final push of government forces against the Tamil movement for autonomy.

Other factors, such as the emergence of Chinese power and the ability of the Sri Lankan government to shift away from a post-colonial dependence on the West, were more immediately effective in ending the Tamil resistance, at least momentarily. Nonetheless, the US-led ‘war on terror’ resulted in the proscription of the main Tamil movement as a terrorist organization, effectively cutting off most of its external material support. The significance of control over information and especially cyberspace was evidenced in the restrictions imposed by Sri Lanka on NGOs and foreign correspondents who sought access to the war zone. With the end of military operations, the Sri Lankan government, following China, is currently exerting greater control over the Internet, subjecting it to government censorship and restrictions. In other words, the government is attempting to deny the new spatializations and trans-territorial or anti-territorial potentials of cyberspace.

Of course, cyberspace is no longer free space, due to increasingly successful efforts by governments to bring it under control. It is now, perhaps more so, a major agency in the pursuit of state interests, including that of war. Several recent conflicts expose a cyberspace war, fought alongside the physical battlefield, in which hackers and other so-called cyber-warriors are involved. A case in point is the Second Intifada in 2000, when pro-Israeli hackers shut down Hezbollah’s Web site, while pro-Palestinian hackers took down both the main Israeli government Web site and that of the Israeli Foreign Ministry. All in all, over 100 Web sites were manipulated or disabled (Denning 2001).¹¹ In mimicking the actual, physical battlefield, the virtual attacks and battles within cyberspace are seemingly propelled by the rhizomic logic of a destabilizing war machine. As such, this cyber warfare seems to represent the formation of non-territorial communities and a corresponding non-territorial warfare. However, by aligning itself with—or being aligned by or directed from—nascent or actual state formations, the transcending (and some would still argue emancipatory) potential of much of this type of cyber warfare seems to be only partly rhizomic. Moreover, the massive use of digital or information warfare (Mandel 2007), the alignment of the blogosphere with formal political entities (Williams et al. 2005), and the increasing presence and control of cyberspace according to **state and corporate interests**¹² suggest that, in a Deleuze and Guattarian sense, the encroaching state presence must be seen as striating smooth space—also in the context of cyber wars and political conflict.¹³ In other words, in contemporary processes, rhizomic and state dynamics are being brought into greater complementarity.

Perhaps the clearest instance and most commented dimension of globalization and its effects on state orders is the current war on terror, with its resultant heightening of state security concerns. These indicate the development of new forms of violence and war that are conditioned in globalizing forces (Kapferer 2004b). But the general direction of my present argument is that the forces of globalization are integral to reconfigurations of the state, which becomes the

vital agency in the restructuring of social realities wherein the dynamics of globalization—especially the expanding, innovative intensity of its cyber technologies—are crucial. As an extension of Polanyi, the processes widely described as globalization are driven in state practices that have themselves been transformed into a corporate form that forces a greater complementarity and, indeed, centering of rhizomic dynamics with that which Deleuze labels the ‘arboreal’.

The Corporatization of States and Globalization

Globalization and the cyber networks that contribute to its current intensity are implicated in the changing circumstances of state political orders. As I have noted, Polanyi saw that the North American and European nation-states were organizations for the restructuring of social life that gave force to further capitalist formations. Western nation-states and their colonial and imperial expansions were vital in effecting a great transformation in the patterns and structures of social existence within which the dynamics of capital grew and thrived. In Polanyi’s analysis, the nation-state, aided by a variety of nationalist ideologies, carried out major processes of social structuring that were vital for the flowering of capital and the further changes in all domains of human existence that it was to bring about. But while it propelled capital expansion, the state also attempted to offset—through regulation, in fact—the social consequences of its fetishism of the self-regulating market. An inherent opposition between the hierarchical dynamics of the state and the rhizomic anti-state potentials of the market was thus sustained and intensified.

While the two dynamics are closely linked, they nonetheless have a mutually negating potential, evident, for example, in the Great Depression and, most recently, in the sub-prime collapse and the current recession. However, in the former situation the political was able to achieve some regulative and redistributive control over the economic and to protect against socially disruptive processes. This measure of control appears to be far more difficult in the most recent financial crisis, which, I suggest, is due to the emergence of the corporatized nation-state, in which arboreal and rhizomic forces display particular conjunction, giving the corporate state distinctive processes and tensions. In such a situation, the political (as this is concentrated in official state apparatuses) has less rein to exert hierarchical control over the potentially subversive effects of rhizomic dynamics that economic processes may intensely manifest and that can achieve expanded force in the social and political reconfigurations (i.e., reterritorializing) occasioned by the corporatizing of the state. I underline that the corporate state in the discussion here gives force to economic processes and is not a simple function of them. My usage of the concept of corporate state both indicates the particular force of the economic in its processes and refuses a simple reduction of the corporate state as a mere expression of the contradictions of capital or as a product of the economic (as this is typically defined as independent of the social) and the material that operates outside state social mediation. The corporate state, in my usage, is first and foremost a

socio-political assemblage through which what can be conceived as economic forces achieve particular articulation.

Many of the terms of the Hobbesian society of the state that are integral to the nation-state are suspended or suppressed in the corporate state. Within the nation-state, dynamics of a rhizomic sort were/are maginalized, often achieving their specific dynamic potency at the perimeters of nation-state extension and expansion. Within the domain of the nation-state, hierarchical ordering was/is at the center of its invention and the arrangement of its socio-political realities. The corporate state, post-Hobbesian in its assemblage, overtly abandons such a project, asserting the positive value of rhizomic-like structures and co-opting them to implement erstwhile institutional functions and state practices. The corporate state opens up, as it were, delimiting its formal operations and transferring its work to both private and public institutions, or making space to be filled by non-governmental organizations that perform former bureaucratic state functions. In the corporate or corporatizing state, the dynamics are more inclusive than exclusive. In the reterritorializing processes of the corporate state, that which was outside comes inside. What was controlled, regulated, and subordinated according to the terms of an ordering hierarchy is brought within the political machineries of state or is effectively enabled to contest or to replace them.

The consequences of such reterritorializing processes are various and potentially highly disruptive, productive of forms of violence and war that are both part of the transition to corporate states and potentially endemic to their specific assemblage. This appears to be the case in post-Soviet Russia and its post-imperial satellite states in both Central Asia and Eastern Europe. Rigi (2009) describes the war and violence of certain such states as ‘chaotic domination’, which may be indicative, if paradoxically so, of the way that some corporate states exert their control and dominion. Their ordering is founded on the social and political fragmentation that has been brought about by their combination of arboreal and rhizomic processes as a dynamic of control. This would appear to be the case in the corporatizing reconfiguration or reterritorialization of Iraq.

But I note that the social disruptions of corporate states, as well as their potential for violence, are a dimension of their articulation into encompassing global processes. This is an aspect, I suggest, of a decentering of the institutional organization of power—a consequence of the redistribution of power, either forcefully or voluntarily, to other bodies, both within and outside the national territory of the state. Formal state organs may insist on their sovereignty, but this is threatened, for example, by claims to sovereign authority (or their contestation or subversion) made by non-state orders, such as banking, engineering, industrial production, and mining. Here might also be included charitable, ecological, and religious organizations. Rhizomic in structure and spread around the globe, they can function either as relatively independent nodal points of controlling power or as the often covert, neo-imperializing forces of dominant metropolitan states. Although different in shape, there is an underlying similarity between the continuing imperializing moves of North America and Europe and those more recently evident in China’s expansion, following its own specific corporatization. Broadly, I am positing that

the corporatization of the state further facilitates globalizing processes, such globalizing being integral to the augmentation and, in many instances, the realignment of power within corporate states. The corporate state brings to the fore a diversity of different organizational structures that are oriented to the social ordering of people in relation to different kinds of material circumstances and political and social contingencies. It totalizes by means of organizational variation, in contrast to the nation-state, which tends to control through an insistence on uniformity or the repetition of a particular bureaucratic ordering structure through all levels of state order. Achieving its own systemic organization in the corporate state (an assemblage of often different organizational modes in relatively loose interconnection), diversity, rather than uniformity, becomes a potentially totalizing instrument of the corporate state order.

The corporate state does not exist above society in a Hobbesian sense, making society possible, as it were. Rather, the corporate state forms more overtly as an assemblage with other social institutions and organizations that, in the circumstances of the nation-state, might have been understood as being defined by and subject to state control and order. The emergence of the corporate state is a combination of, on the one hand, the sinking of state institutions within the ongoing fabric of social orders and, on the other hand, the assumption of what could be seen as state functions—including those of social control—by agents and agencies that previously might have been more the subject of state control and regulation.

In North America and especially Europe, the rhetoric of individual agency and empowerment and policies of community responsibility and the privatization of hitherto state services are both ideological dimensions of the dismantling of the nation-state and integral to the construction of the corporate state. Power is redefined as less abstract and more personalized and apparently accessible. The agents of authority and control are presented as partners in a common project with their clients or consumers. State power is relatively decentralized and distributed across many agencies throughout a social terrain that was once regarded as external to the offices of state and government, previous interconnections notwithstanding. The power of the state becomes more hidden, or is made less visible, while the boundaries between state and non-state agents and agencies are increasingly blurred. In this corporatization of the state, controlling or dominant power from all areas or factions of the national socio-political terrain are drawn together, having the potential effect of augmenting and extending power. In such circumstances, oligarchic power is likely to be expanded through an assemblage network of shifting alliances, often dictated by particular localized concerns or interests.

Here I expand that a drawing together of state and rhizomic dynamics in processes of the emergence of the corporate state involves what may be described as a totalizing by inclusion rather than by exclusion (the latter being a dimension of nationalism in the circumstances of the nation-state). Such inclusion can be conceived of as a response to what I discussed earlier as the general and enduring crisis of the state (perhaps any kind of state throughout history), which is ontologically given to control over the circumstances of the

reproduction of its defining concern—power. Neo-liberal ideological discourse is an expression and a means for achieving this. It is an ideology organic with the construction and emergence of the corporate state and, as North American and European contexts demonstrate, is in full force across the political spectrum. While in the West neo-liberalism was overtly ushered in by rightist governments (e.g., Reagan in the US, Thatcher in the UK), it should be viewed as an ideology produced out of a particular crisis of the state and, I think, should be delinked from a dualistic political conception, usually of the Left/Right variety, which persists in much commentary. What is described as neo-liberalism gives ideological force to structural shifts of corporatization that have long been in process (before Reagan and Thatcher) and effected, as I have said, through transformational processes already at work in nation-states.

In neo-liberal ethos and the expression of greater democracy and transparency, there is more than a suggestion that the totalitarian and sometimes racist exclusionism of nation-states is overcome in processes of corporatization. But, of course, the corporate state (as illustrated by various such state assemblages in the recent past, such as fascist states) is no less open to exclusionism and other autocratic potentials. As corporate states emerge from nation-states, ethnic nationalism and other forms of hierarchialization and exclusion persist, although they may change register, often facilitated by a rhetoric of freedom and liberation.

The corporatization of the state in countries such as England and India has seen a greater increase in the gap between the rich and the poor, complete with its social exclusionary effects, which is very probably a consequence of the corporatizing reconfigurations of state practice. During the course of a 30-year ethnic war against secessionist Tamils, Sri Lanka was transforming (perhaps as a partial effect of the war) from a nation-state into a corporate state, with new rhizomic forces of caste and family alliance (other than those connected with the colonial past) capturing the apparatuses of state and further subverting the various principles upon which state offices and functions had been based. Bureaucratic and legal orders are being made into overtly effective instruments of oligarchic control and reterritorialization. Following the destruction of Tamil resistance, controlling agents of the corporatized Sri Lankan state are redrawing the internal ethnic and social delineations of the state in line with popular sentiment, but no less in the oligarchic interests of those who are in command of state machineries.

The totalitarian potential of corporate states (as in Sri Lanka) receives some substantiation in discourses of security and surveillance. Escalating extraordinarily since US President George W. Bush's declaration of the war on terror, citizens throughout the globe have accepted an exponential rise in surveillance intrusions—usually organized by private companies—into their everyday and personal lives. In its corporatizing, the state is intensifying its controls over the citizenry, even as claims are being made for its democratizing and liberalizing effects. The extension of security concerns and surveillance is not merely a response to terrorism, I contend, but is brought about by a crisis of control due to reterritorializing processes that affect the structures of life of local populations.

The corporatization of the state has effectively given corporate bodies (business, financial, engineering, extractive, and manufacturing companies) increased roles in the social reorganization of populations in connection with both production and consumption. Through the restructuring of the state, the economy can be said to have achieved a determining intensity which surpasses that achieved in nation-states. This is so because those now in command of economic practices have gained greater control over regulatory mechanisms that formerly placed limits on many of the socially disruptive potentials of new developments. It is through the corporatization of the state that the economic is enabled to gain ascendancy over the political and the social. Indeed, within the corporate state, the assertion of the economic—and the disciplining of the social in terms of the economic—is a major hegemonic force and is tied to reterritorializing practices.

There are widespread efforts to get the public to participate in corporate-like practice, indeed, to participate mimetically in what seems to be identical action—playing the market, investing pensions, becoming ‘stakeholders’. Rhetoric espousing individual liberation from the oppressive shackles of the nation-state is often employed in this process. In countries where poverty is of considerable issue (and always potentially subversive of ruling groups and state power), there are anti-poverty programs that, quite aside from their potential benefits, constitute a new kind of disciplining—a regimen of support for the corporatizing state. An example is micro-credit. Targeting particularly women—who in certain regions, such as southern Africa, are disadvantaged by the long-term migration of men to regional centers, cities, and overseas countries in search of work (see Wolpe 1972)—common practices involve the ‘schooling’ of participants in activities of investment, the taking of loans, and the calculation of interest. In both rich and impoverished countries, an illusion of participation in seemingly beneficial practices is produced. Yet, in a cruel paradox, these practices are involved in the very reproduction of disadvantage (see Lazar 2004).

Reimagining the Corporate State and the Social Realization of the Economic

Much intellectual discourse is widely synchronic, both consciously and unconsciously, with the reconfiguration of states into the assemblage of the corporate state. It often expresses a neo-liberal discourse despite an intention to do otherwise. I refer specifically to shifts in sociological thought, such as Lord Giddens’s ‘Third Way’, which was ideologically integral to the corporatizing process of Tony Blair’s New Labour in the UK.

Approaches that assert an interpretation of the social as shifting assemblages formed through the intermeshing of network ties—as in Latour’s (2005) actor-network theory or in DeLanda’s (2006) rhizomic (and Deleuzian) notion of organismic interconnections—match the way that business or scientific corporations appear to operate. This does not deny the potential sociological value

of these perspectives, in the same way that analytical orientations born in the high modernist period of the nation-state (such as those of Durkheim, Marx, and Weber) continue to yield major insights on contemporary matters. **Theories are able to transcend the historical circumstances** of their construction and express, in their own conceptual abstractions, dimensions of the realities upon which they claim objective or realist reflection.

A frequent observation underlying state formation in modernist and postmodern times is the emphasis on individualism linked to a growing economic determinism. Polanyi (and numerous others, notably Louis Dumont in anthropology) pursued this point. This certainly seems to be the case even more so in the context of the emergence of the corporate state. Commanding rhetoric that is associated with business and management—such as efficiency, strategy, negotiation, targets—and a choice/consumerist focus lend further support. In this and in the circumstances of the corporate state, the conception of the social and its structural process is becoming thoroughly grasped in terms of an individualism that frequently asserts essentialisms of a biological and psychological nature that are gathered together in an overarching economic discourse. The economic is the most inclusive discourse in the sense that its dynamics are vital across hitherto different or relatively distinct registers of human-related action. Economic and business-management metaphors are in a commanding position. Furthermore, they have been naturalized—that is, they have achieved a truth level more thoroughgoing than mere assumptions. Even more, there has been a subtle (or not so subtle, depending on one's perspective) shift wherein the economic is not at the root of the social, but *is* the social. It is the lens through which social action is to be comprehended, both by scholars and, I contend, among the lay public.

Polanyi argued that in the context of the great transformation and the development of nation-states, the idea of the economic was socially disembedded. Gudeman (2009) has observed that this is so only up to a point, for the contemporary context concerns the re-embedding of the idea of the economic. He notes (as does **Steiner 2009**) that much sociological/anthropological theorizing embeds economic assumptions in the very production of ethnographic description. In this way, evidence is thoroughly constructed (often in ways oblivious to analysts) to support the veracity of economic concepts—their confirmation presented as universally intrinsic to the social. This has been a long-standing criticism offered by anthropologists such as Dumont and Sahlins. The extension I would make here is that the economic is not re-embedded in the social so much as the idea of the social and sociological understanding has been thoroughly reconfigured into economic terms. This has happened elsewhere, notably in biology, where varieties of economic argument have become intrinsic to the description and understanding of biological—and these days genetic—processes (see **Prindle 2009**). The ideological dimensions are so ingrained that they are not seen as such.

Insofar as it is constituted in the circumstance of corporate state assemblage, a society of the state is thoroughly economic, even though it is conceived as being thoroughly sociological. This is not a re-embedding of the economic in

society, as Gudeman suggests, but rather an embedding of the social within the economic. It is an intensification of what Polanyi was observing, a dissolving of the economic so as to become the social.

Concluding Comments

The assemblage of the corporate state is emerging from within the context of the nation-state and, depending on local contingencies, is likely to take different shapes. This present discussion has been informed by North American and European experience, and there is reason to believe that some of the dimensions I have outlined are likely to be different elsewhere (e.g., with regard to China, see Arrighi 2009). One feature of the emergence of the corporate state in the West is the break from Hobbesian notions of the state or ideas concerning the social contract of the state, whereby the state gained legitimacy either through its institution of society or its contract to safeguard the social. By and large, these projects of the state are being abandoned, although traces remain, for example, the role of the state as a guardian of social morality. However, even this is being deflected to international bodies that are relatively impotent, freeing those in command of the state to pursue a more egregious pragmatism. My example here is Sri Lanka, where the impotence of UN humanitarian intervention was displayed in the largely state-mediated abuses against an unarmed civilian population in the closing stages of the recent war. In some aspects, the state and its various machineries worldwide are oriented to erecting protective barriers around the instruments of state/corporate power, thus forcing a growing division between state-corporate-oligarchic potencies and instruments, on the one side, and society or the social masses, on the other. The latter are in effect becoming more disenfranchised (even as they are declared more democratized), their protests and electoral actions achieving little to modify the political and oligarchic course of those in control of state machinery.

Ross Douthat summarizes excellently the tenor of my broad discussion here about a process that is being facilitated by what I have described as the corporate state and the particular dynamic that it expresses. In an op-ed column in the *New York Times* dated 16 May, Douthat (2010) states:

This feels like a populist moment. Americans are Tea Partying. Greeks are rioting. Incumbents are being thrown out; the Federal Reserve is facing an audit; Goldman Sachs is facing prosecution. In Kentucky, Ron Paul's son might be about to win a Republican Senate primary. But look through these anti-establishment theatrics to the deep structures of political and economic power, and suddenly the surge of populism feels like so much sound and fury, obscuring the real story of our time. From Washington to Athens, the economic crisis is producing consolidation rather than revolution, the entrenchment of authority rather than its diffusion, and the concentration of power in the hands of the same elite that presided over the disasters in the first place.

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Notes

1. An important argument for the territorializing dynamic being crucial to the state is made by Scott (1998) in his analysis of modernist state planning schemes and their effects in countries as diverse as Russia, Brazil, and Tanzania. As a central element of organizing, disciplining, and surveillance, social redifferentiation by bureaucratic means was central to and evident in the establishment of the colonial state (see, e.g., Anderson 1991; Appadurai 1996). The formation and production of subjectivities is also a central dynamic in a Foucauldian vision of power, the state, and its workings. Foucault ([1997] 2003: 45) argues that in an analysis of domination and power, one should be “showing how actual relations of subjugation manufacture subjects.”
2. The term ‘war machine’ suggests that it is a dynamic oriented to war. This is not what Deleuze and Guattari intend. War machine or, perhaps less ambiguously, rhizomic dynamics assume annihilating properties in their relation with state dynamics. The destructive potential of rhizomic dynamics is realized when it confronts the bounding, categorizing, spatializing forces of state-like dynamics. Rhizomic dynamics have no essential or inherent warlike orientation.
3. Examples and imagery of the nomad and the state are used extensively to analyze the dynamics of war machine and state. The directionality of the war machine in its nomad form against the state is central: “The war machine is that nomad invention that in fact has war not as its primary object but as its second order, supplementary or synthetic objective, in the sense that it is determined in such a way as to destroy the State-form and city-form with which it collides” (Deleuze and Guattari [1980] 2004: 418).

4. For an empirical example, see Kapferer's (1997) study of insurrection in Sri Lanka.
5. Buck-Morss (2009) has presented an interesting argument to counter certain notions regarding democracy, such as that of Agamben (2005), who maintains, in his discussion of the 'state of exception', that democracy is given to totalitarian potential. Based on an analysis of Hegel's *Elements of the Philosophy of Right* in the context of the revolutions in Haiti, Buck-Morss suggests that it is the failure of democratic forces to democratize thoroughly that lies at the root of their self-defeat. Haiti, in her argument, attempted a thorough democratization that, of course, was ended by Napoleon's intervention. More generally, she contends, the failure of democratic regimes in Europe and elsewhere came about because they did not thoroughly democratize but denied or disguised the continuation of great inequities, such as slavery. It is the persistence of such inequity within democratic systems that is the root of their defeat and inclination to totalitarianism. In other words, as Buck-Morss discusses for Europe, the Enlightenment discourse, while liberating in the abstract, refused to address the enduring existence of slavery in its midst.
6. The directionality or *telos* of the state toward oneness and against multiplicity, its concentration of power, and its verticality have been consistently argued by Clastres (1974: 105; [1974] 1989), in terms of state versus non-state societies and in the relations between ethnocide and the state.
7. For two recent contributions discussing *Leviathan*, see Joxe (2002) and Hansen and Stepputat (2005).
8. However, in other works, especially the 1977–1978 lectures contained in *Security, Territory, Population*, Foucault ([2004] 2007) expands his analyses of government to encompass the political techniques and workings of the state in more detail.
9. For Gramsci ([1973] 1996: 52ff.), the unity of the ruling groups within the context of the state, the state's organic relations to wider societal and political institutions and arrangements, and the corresponding non-unity of what he terms the 'subaltern classes' are central elements in understanding how elite/class interests, the state, and the wider society are interwoven.
10. The class force of contemporary Sri Lankan elites owes much to the British colonial period, when prominent families were able to build political and economic power by establishing themselves in imperial metropolitan centers, such as London, Paris, and New York. The aggrandizement of local power was aided by the resources and opportunities afforded by these multiple locations in foreign parts. Globalization is continuing and expanding this process.
11. This manipulation of Web sites, sometimes referred to as Web 'defacement', is a growing trend—both in international political conflicts and among activists who are critical of, for example, globalization and the expansion of capitalism—in what is often called 'cyberconflicts' (Karatzogianni 2004).
12. Examples of state and corporate control over the Internet include Google's deal with China to censor the software and application of its search engines (Healy 2007) and the government of Burma's recent shutdown of Internet access in a time of crisis in order to quell opposition (BBC News 2007).
13. For incisive critiques of the relation of the Information Age to war and US dominance, see Virilio (2000, 2002).

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