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DEATH, POWER, VIOLENCE, AND NEW SOVEREIGNTIES

Do not be deceived by the multiplicity of sounds that ring and jingle like laughter. . . .
Death speaks with a thousand whispers, but a single voice. —ROGER MAIS

We must complete our life before our death. —MICHEL FOUCAULT

If any detainee refused to comply with a lawful order to weed, the plan was that two warders should be allocated to that detainee and, by holding his hands, physically make him pull weeds from the ground . . . once such token work had been performed by the detainee he would have considered that he had broke his Mau Mau oath which had, by superstitious dread, previously prevented him from cooperating.

—REPORT OF THE COMMITTEE TO INVESTIGATE DISCIPLINARY
CHARGES AGAINST OFFICERS OF THE KENYA PRISON SERVICE

I WANT TO THANK all of you for coming, particularly those of you who have been following the series. We can now safely say that one of the critical questions that these lectures continue to focus on is what one may call the constituting of subjectivities. To keep the various threads of these lectures clear, I want to quickly draw some connections between the first two lectures and this one. I have been arguing that in our present moment empire as power has established a trajectory in which it seeks to become a totality. Part of empire's drive today is to capture desire in order to create a political field of regularity for our subjectivities. From within the framework of this drive, self-regulation functions as a form of domination.

This self-regulation is integral to what I will describe as the political field of regularity, which occurs under the sign of *freedom*. This freedom is typically called *liberty*, and so I have argued that we currently live under a configuration of power that operates as an *empire of liberty*.

My second major thesis has been about the possibility of democracy's being an empty signifier and how sometimes it has been conceptualized as lack and an entity that must be filled. In this regard democracy becomes a series of prefixes that then define what is being fulfilled (representative democracy, direct democracy, and so on). Focusing on American democracy, I have argued that the social structures of racial slavery as historical wound mean that the story of democracy told by Tocqueville in *Democracy in America* is woefully inadequate. Instead I have suggested that W. E. B. DuBois's *Black Reconstruction* offers a richer and more productive account of the possibilities of democracy in America, not only because he pays attention to slavery but because he makes an attempt to unearth historical knowledge of the slave's understanding and practices of freedom. This attempt opens up a different narrative of democracy and its relationship to freedom, suggesting another form of democracy that DuBois called *abolition democracy*. It is of course critical to my main argument to note that democracy is an important element of the empire of liberty. However, this is a democracy of political equality and voting, a democracy that constitutes itself as a form of political life that we may call *constitutional representativeness*.

In the second lecture, I also began to turn to the body. With this third lecture, I wish to foreground this concern. If the empire of liberty operates through signs of democracy and liberty within a political field of regularity, it has not abandoned violence. Hence in this lecture I want to pay some attention to this matter. I will be doing so from three perspectives. First, I pay some attention to issues of genocide. Second, I look at the question of torture and its possible relationship to the empire of liberty. Then in the final segment, I make an ethnographic shift to review the practices of violence in

the postcolonial space of Jamaica, and I leave behind a bit of my preoccupation with empire. I make this detour because the question of violence is a complex one and should be examined from many angles. All three of the topics that I review are different in many ways, but, by looking at them together, I seek to understand violence not simply as an action of instrumentality, nor as a practice that works through a means-end logic, but as one face of power that in some instances becomes power itself. Having presented a map of this sort, let me open my reflections with a few remarks on the most spectacular kind of violence, genocide.

Genocide

We know that the term genocide was coined in 1944 by Raphael Lemkin from the Latin *genos-cide*. Translated, it means the killing of a race. Genocide is about the systematic deployment of death as perpetual motion. As an interview with one of the killers in the Rwandan genocide makes clear: “During that killing season we rose earlier than usual, to eat lot of meat, and we went up to the soccer field at around nine or ten o’clock. The leaders would grumble about latecomers, and we would go off on the attack. Rule number one was to kill. There was no rule number two. It was an organization without complications.”¹ Conventionally defined as the systematic killing of a race, genocide entails actions calculated to bring about the physical destruction of the entirety of or a significant section of an identifiable human population. Genocidal actions are not random acts of violence, and they require political organization, mobilization, and ideological justification. In other words, there are always political objectives involved in genocide, including the creation of an order in which a so-called other is murdered and thus bodily expelled from the polity. When thinking about the emergence of the word *genocide*, we should note that Lemkin regarded genocide as connected to colonialism.² There are many reasons for this. One is of course that colonial power operates by physically re-

moving human populations, murdering large groups and constructing racial hierarchies. Colonial power was always about race and space, and colonialism was embedded within the framework of a racial, biologicistic conception of world history in which some human populations were not necessary for the survival of the fittest or for civilization. Those unsuitable could be, and were, expelled from the polity or might remain as inferior beings dominated by those considered civilized. Hannah Arendt makes the point that genocide assumes that some human beings are superfluous. We have noted that this assumption has its source in Europe's colonial past, making the idea of superfluousness one of the ideological justifications necessary for genocide. In the past century, the world has witnessed many genocides, including the 1904 genocide of the Herero people in the nation-state of Namibia by colonialist Germany, the Armenian genocide occurring from 1915 through 1918, the Holocaust, and the Rwandan genocide of 1994. In this lecture, I am not going to focus on each of these genocidal events; instead, I wish to pay some attention to a few thinkers who have reflected on the relationship between genocide and power.

For Hannah Arendt, the event of genocide occurs in conditions under which power is attempting to exercise itself as a totality. She makes the additional point that genocide occurs when power seeks to eradicate human plurality. Arendt notes that genocide is about trying to create the conditions for "a total explanation of the past, total knowledge of the present and total and absolute predication for the future."³ In this drive for totality, there is slippage and eventual collapse of the distinctions between history and nature. The result is a fusion of the laws of history and the laws of nature into a unitary movement.

It is this drive for totality that interests us. What are its features and how does it reproduce itself into violence and the making of death? Genocide requires spectacle, and even though we may find this difficult to grasp, it also needs mass participation, even if the individuals who engage in genocidal activity act out of fear for their own lives.⁴ And

here the participation is at two levels. The first level requires the tacit support of significant segments of the population, particularly when genocidal action is actively carried out by a specially created group or in designated locations. The second level occurs when significant segments of the population themselves become killers. As difficult as it is for us to contemplate, given our moral antipathy to genocide, it is within the spectacle of violence enacted through genocide that we begin to understand death as a flow and the creation of death-worlds. Therefore, even though violence and in particular genocidal violence seem to exist beyond the human imagination and, sometimes, beyond our comprehension, we have an obligation, in the words of Susan Sontag, to “take in what human beings are capable of doing to one another.”⁵

As we think about genocide, and thinking about genocide is something we must do, let us spend some time with the statement of the general who was responsible for the Herero genocide. When discussing his methods and rationale for this genocide, General Lothar von Trotha, the key figure of the genocidal campaign, stated, “The exercise of violence with crass terrorism and even with gruesome murders is my policy. I destroy the African tribes with streams of blood and streams of money. Only following this *cleansing* can something new emerge, which will remain.”⁶ What General Trotha stated with stark clarity is that genocidal violence is about cleansing, the creation of an order based on a notion of purity. Whether it is the extermination of an ethnic group or a religious group, the purpose is to cleanse the social body. In order to do this, the social order to be purified must have within it a population that can be killed with ideological legitimacy. So there are now two things that we should reflect on for a while.

Foucault tells us that historically sovereign power exercised its sovereignty through a right over life. He notes also that when, in nineteenth-century Europe, this right was transformed into the right to “make live and let die,” it still belonged to the sovereign. What genocidal violence does is to *disperse* that right over life. It is true

that genocidal violence is done on command and is therefore organized, but its logic is to create the conditions under which murder becomes a legitimate form of activity and a new world of death can be constructed. This new death-world is partly constructed by the state that organizes the genocide but also assumes a different legitimacy when murder is enacted by the significant segments of a population. Listen again to an interview with a Rwandan killer: “The intimidators made the plans and whipped up enthusiasm; the shopkeepers paid and provided transportation; the farmers prowled and pillaged. For the killings, though, everybody had to show up blade in hand and pitch in for a decent stretch of work.”⁷ Killing now becomes a day of work. It is viewed as part of an everyday fact of life within what was called in Rwanda the “killing season.”

Arendt, in her report on the Eichmann trial, pays attention to the ordinariness of Eichmann. She writes that despite all the efforts of the prosecution, “everybody could see that this man was not a ‘monster,’ but it was difficult indeed not to suspect that he was a clown.”⁸ When killing becomes ordinary work, the “banality of evil” is established. These two cases, which we have briefly referred to here, one of a quasi-state official and the other of an ordinary subject, demonstrate the ways in which murder becomes ordinary. And, as always is the case at the level of action, language is central to making death and murder everyday realities. Again we listen to a Rwandan who participated in the genocide: “We had to work fast, and we got no time off, especially not Sundays—we had to finish up. We cancelled all ceremonies. Everyone was hired at the same level for a single job—to crush all the cockroaches.”⁹ Cockroaches, this was the name given to the Tutsis. This was the marker that made them different, less than human. We should also note that the speaker does not talk about killing cockroaches but instead about crushing cockroaches, evoking a different image. One crushes a cockroach as an insect, to get rid of it, to clean one’s house of possible contamination. Here language is used to mask murder, as acts of genocide become work. The substitution and masking operating

here are important in the creation of a legitimate death-world for those enacting murder.

When writing about the Holocaust, Arendt details the processes by which it was enacted. She writes:

Last came the death factories—and they all died together, the young and the old, the weak and the strong, the sick and the healthy; not as people, not as men and women, children and adults . . . not as good and bad, beautiful and ugly—but brought down to the lowest common denominator of organic life itself, plunged into the darkest abyss of primal equality, like cattle, like matter, like things that had neither body nor soul, nor even a physiognomy upon which death could stamp its seal.¹⁰

The violence of genocide is performed by creating conditions in which death is absolute. There is no redeeming feature to death for those who die by genocidal violence. Some time ago, Franz Kafka made the point that “death and only death” gives meaning to life. But genocidal death is a death whose finality is of one who has no life. Thus, while at many funerals we speak of the life of the deceased in a ritual that marks life, and then we mourn, in the death of genocidal violence there is no life to mark, since all life has been erased to create the conditions of the violence. For those murdered in what Primo Levi calls “gigantic death machines,”¹¹ death is the final act in a subject’s inability to be, while for those who enact the death chamber or the killing season, death by genocidal violence is about purification. Levi writes, “Even the manner of killing (chosen after careful experiment) was openly symbolic. The gas prescribed and used was the same used for disinfecting ships’ holds and sites invaded by bugs or lice.”¹² In this process of purification through the creation of a death-world, new boundaries are created and maintained by terror. Arendt compellingly suggests that genocidal violence is integral to totalitarian terror. However, this terror is often not outside the law but functions inside it and is given legitimacy as authorized death.

So how do we grapple with genocidal violence and its relationship to power? Regarding violence, Arendt makes the point that violence is the opposite of power. She notes further that when “violence appears, power is in jeopardy.”¹³ Splitting power and violence into two distinct entities, Arendt argues that although they are distinct, “they usually appear together.” Here Arendt is working with a conception of power in which political authority has a legitimate monopoly on force. In this paradigm, violence is an instrument that follows a means-end logic. However, what happens when this kind of violence is not only an instrument but an integral part of a regime of rule, when death and terror (not fear) become the singularity of power? What happens when death is not the means-end but the actual process itself? Or to put this another way, what happens when power operates as surplus power in a mode of regular consistency, when violence and death are not interruptions of routine but are themselves the routine? In such situations, there is no gap between means and ends. Violence does not become an expression of power but takes on the mantle of power itself. I would argue that the event of genocidal violence and the colonial project practice violence as power in similar ways. For the former, the performance of power as violence has historically been of relatively short duration, while for the latter, power as might as right, power as the sword, operates historically over a longer time frame. The matter of temporality is important, but not as a means of comparison of relative oppression, of deciding which system or event was more evil. (Such a discussion has no real meaning or substance. On what basis do we compare piles of dead bodies?) Instead, when thinking about the sword of colonial power and about genocidal violence, we need to examine how technologies of violence are codified, reappear, and repeat themselves.

When Hannah Arendt critiques Frantz Fanon on the issue of violence, she fails to recognize that certain kinds of violence collapse into power. Arendt’s reading of Fanon’s chapter on violence in *The Wretched of the Earth* is superficial because she argues that Fanon

agrees with “glorified violence for violence’ sake.”¹⁴ Any serious reading of Fanon suggests that this is not so, but that is not the point of this lecture. Rather, regarding Arendt’s assessment of Fanon, I suggest that what was at work in her thought was the absence of the body as a possible site within the political field. At the sites where violence operates as power, not only is death perpetual motion, but the regular crushing of life from the body becomes the crushing of animated life. Thus death has a political purpose when it becomes the ultimate negative ground of the human. To put this another way, a regime of extreme violence has to enact regular practices of death because its purpose is the absolute negation of the human life-form in its plurality. The killing of the body, whether in the intimate spaces of the villages of Rwanda or in the death camps of the Nazis, makes the body upon which death is visited a materiality and a surface, confirming what Mary Douglas makes clear, that there is no “body that does not involve at the time a social dimension.”¹⁵

I would argue, therefore, that because of this social dimension, Foucault’s statement that the “body is also directly involved in a political field” is accurate. Elaine Scarry makes the same point about pain and torture. She observes that “it is the intense pain that destroys a person’s self and world.”¹⁶ Thus, when power acts upon the body, the primary aims of torture are to destroy the “meaning-making capacity of the tortured and . . . to replace it with the meanings of the torturer.”¹⁷ Thus the body as animated life becomes an object to be seized and mastered. Regimes of extreme violence dominate through a form of power that operates in the flesh.

Let me summarize my main argument before I move on to the issue of torture. I have suggested an interpretation in which violence is not an instrument of power but instead, in extreme regimes (for example, a state that practices genocide), is a form of power that itself creates a death-world. This is of course a different conception from that found in the conventional social science literature on the subject. In this literature, beginning with the work of Max

Weber, a preoccupation with power centers on notions of political authority, political obligation, and a command-obedience model, or, as in the work of Talcott Parsons and others, on power as a “specific mechanism operating to bring about changes . . . in the processes of social interaction.”¹⁸

Michel Foucault disrupts these conceptions of power and argues that it may be productive to ask “What happens?” in order to “undertake a critical investigation of the thematics of power.”¹⁹ By asking how power is exercised in contexts of extreme regimes, I have posited the possibility that violence, particularly genocidal violence, is power. Of course this position runs counter to Foucault’s position, since he makes a distinction between a relationship of violence and one of power, which he says “bends, it breaks, it destroys, or closes off all possibilities.”²⁰ For Foucault the capacity of power is based upon a relationship in which a subject emerges. His is an attempt to understand the liberal project. On the other hand, I wish to suggest that bending, breaking, destroying, and closing off all possibilities also demand a certain kind of relationship, one in which total domination through force is an objective. In this regard, it is important to remember that one way to examine power is not to separate its methods and actions from its outcomes. Here I am not speaking about intent but rather about practices. It is through these lenses that I have suggested another way to think about the relationship between violence and power.

Second, I have also argued that one objective of this kind of power is to create a political order based upon purification. Third, I have suggested, as have Arendt and others, that the technologies of genocidal violence are to be found in colonial power. We need to begin to see and think about genocidal violence, as unthinkable as it is and as difficult as it may be to contemplate, in order to find language to describe how it operates as a form of power that is not an aberration but one possible, logical consequence of power that can be deployed on the body by crushing it. Let me now turn to the issue of torture and to contemporary features of an empire of liberty.

Torture and Violence

In 1982 the liberal political theorist Judith Shklar posited that cruelty was “irrevocably” the first vice.²¹ She noted that “cruelty as the willful inflicting of physical pain on a weaker being in order to cause anguish and pain . . . is a wrong done entirely to *another creature*”²² (emphasis in original). Shklar then suggested that one element of liberalism was its avoidance of cruelty. Since the onset of the so-called war on terror, the issue of an extreme form of systematic cruelty—torture—has opened up a series of discussions and debates. In the debate, one line of thinking has emerged that has forcefully argued for the necessity of “dirty hands.”²³ The central assumption of this argument is the idea of the ticking bomb. Put simply, this idea holds that the extraction of information and necessary intelligence in order to avert a disaster might require methods of torture. David Luban has pointed to a liberal theory of torture in which the argument of necessity creates grounds for the reinterpretation of laws.²⁴ Luban accurately notes that the “self-conscious aim of torture is to turn its victim into someone who is isolated, overwhelmed, terrorized, and humiliated . . . to strip away from its victims all the qualities of human dignity.”²⁵

There are two other elements of torture, pain, and the cruelty of humiliation that we should examine. Elaine Scarry has made the point that “in serious pain the claims of the body utterly nullify the claims of the world.”²⁶ In the context of torture and interrogation, the purported purpose of pain is to break the individual. The purpose is to make the body unable to resist. Thus it is not an accident that the various memoranda written by members of the Bush administration justifying torture often did so under the rubric of counter-resistance techniques. We should note that in perhaps one of the most bizarre examples of how some members of the Bush administration viewed torture, the former secretary of defense issued handwritten approval for what were called aggressive techniques of counter-resistance. In his approval of the proposed aggressive techniques, Donald Rums-

feld wrote, “However, I stand for 8–10 hours a day. Why is standing limited to 4 hours?”²⁷

Foucault observes that the decline of the public spectacle of execution in Europe coincided with the formal disappearance of torture, thus making “punishment . . . the most hidden part of the penal process.”²⁸ The removal of torture from the public realm created a whole set of new technologies of punishment. Foucault writes, “Physical pain, the pain of the body itself, is no longer the constituent element of penalty. From being the art of unbearable sensations, punishment has become an economy of suspended rights.”²⁹ Even though punishment has been separated from physical pain, I want to suggest that the practices of punishment as torture haunt us today. It may be important to think about torture not as a practice that occurs during interrogation but as a form of punishment of a body that has been excluded from the mainstream.³⁰ This means that in the so-called war on terror, the victims of torture were punished both for who they were and for what the torturers perceived that they had done. To practice torture, a set of discursive procedures has to be followed, since subjecting bodies to pain requires that they be excluded from the norm. A series of arguments promulgated by the Bush administration was central to the creation of the conditions for torture in the contemporary empire of liberty. At the core of these arguments were the conceptions that Afghanistan was a failed state and that members of the Taliban militia or those associated with it did not have to be accorded the rights of the Geneva conventions. The words of the memorandum on this matter make clear the reason why this was not considered necessary. The memorandum declares that a failed state constituted a “condition of statelessness and therefore was not a High Contracting Party to the Geneva Conventions for at least that period of time.”³¹

The point I wish to make here is that circumstances of torture, like those of death and genocidal violence, require the creation of a set of discursive premises rooted in hierarchical systems of human classification. These grounds have a history and a set of practices

that we need to remember; otherwise we see torture and forms of violence as aberrations rather than as possible outcomes of historical logics that may haunt a society. For example, when we grapple with torture in American democracy, it is important that we reflect on the judgment of Chief Justice Roger Taney of the U.S. Supreme Court in the *Dred Scott* case, in which he declared blacks as “having no rights that whites were bound to respect.” In a very important sense, the historical wound of racial slavery continues to be central to the constitution of questions of punishment and torture in American democracy.

In his introduction to Colin Dayan’s book titled *The Story of Cruel and Unusual*, Jeremy Waldron noted that “when we abolished slavery, we did not abolish it unconditionally, but with the Thirteenth Amendment qualification that slavery is okay for prisoners.”³² In her book, Dayan successfully argues that the “ghost of slavery still haunts our legal language and holds the prison system in thrall.”³³ What is interesting is that much of the current debate about torture ignores this ghost.³⁴

One of the themes running through these lectures is colonial power. I have attempted to suggest that we cannot think adequately about modernity unless we understand that there was an intimate relationship between coloniality and modernity. So intimate was this relationship that I, together with others, have spoken about a historical process that may properly be called “colonial modernity.” From this perspective, I want to close my discussion of torture by reflecting briefly on the Algerian War of Independence.

The controversies over the meaning of one of the fiercest armed struggles for national liberation continue to swirl in our contemporary politics. After the tragedy of 9/11 and the discussions about mounting a war on terror, Gillo Pontecorvo’s remarkable film *The Battle of Algiers* became required viewing at the Pentagon. What we are less aware of on this side of the Atlantic is that in February 2005, the French government proposed a law under which French school curricula would be required to depict French colonialism in

a positive light. At the same time, the French state rehabilitated members of the Organization de l'Armee Secrete, some of whom had been convicted for crimes during the Algerian War of Independence. My point here is that, in many ways, the event of the Algerian War is a marker within the twentieth century. It is a marker that will not be fully settled until questions about colonial power and its relationship to torture are settled in some fashion.

In the nineteenth century, Algeria was invaded by France, and by the 1870s it was a French colony. In the 1950s, the Algerians launched a war against French colonial occupation. In May 1958, French paratroopers surrounded the Casbah with the objective of breaking a widely supported strike and destroying, where possible, the internal leadership of the National Liberation Front (FLN). The key French general in charge was Jacques Massu. It is now widely acknowledged that in this war torture was a common practice. In a remarkable work on torture practices during the war, Marnia Lazreg writes, "Nevertheless, the professionalization of torture conveyed the message of its acceptance as a war weapon on par with training and shooting. . . . torture was thus pulled out of the shadowy semantic domain in which it lived, and thrust into the forefront of everyday life. . . . it reached deep into the military body."³⁵

All the discursive procedures were put in place as the Algerian body was punished. It has been recognized that torture did not yield massive intelligence information during this war. Lazreg observes that "the systematic use of torture during the Algerian War did not help to win the war. . . . The Algerian case reveals that the democratic state is in constant danger of allowing its pre-democratic core to emerge and engage in violations of laws."³⁶ In the American case, and, I would argue, in the French case as well, there is no return to any predemocratic status of what constitutes an imperial state. An imperial state functions through many repertoires but is not a democratic state unless democracy is narrowly defined as political equality for those populations that belong to the mother country. We therefore need to see torture as one form of violence that is practiced

and deployed by power, not as an aberration, but as one of power's possible logics. In many ways, I have been arguing for us to understand these moments and practices as both contingent and historically shaped.

I now come to the third segment of this lecture. I hope to make some points about violence and power by presenting the results of an ethnographic study on the practices of violence in the postcolony of Jamaica. If, in the first two segments of this lecture, I focused on violence that is sponsored and instigated by the state, I now examine violence that is enacted by a group loosely called the urban poor. This shift in focus is necessary in part because my preoccupation with subjectivities requires thinking about agency as a material practice. Here I am always reminded that Friedrich Nietzsche once remarked, "the doing is everything." In thinking about this shift, it has become clear to me that violence enacted by non-state actors can become, as Allen Feldman observes, "a self-legitimizing sphere of social discourse and transaction points."³⁷ What I think is important within this sphere is the way in which the social ontological question about life is posed. So now let us turn to the Caribbean.

Violence in the Jamaican Postcolony

Violence is perhaps the single most discussed and vexing issue in many Caribbean societies today. The number of individuals killed in Jamaica and St. Lucia, the bomb attacks in Trinidad, and the growing number of persons violently killed in Guyana speak not of a mundane crisis in the Caribbean postcolony but of a crisis we have yet to name. This is not a crisis of hegemony or the end of the Bandung project, nor can it be understood, as I suggested a few years ago, as one of "language, life and labor."³⁸ Crisis as phenomenon morphs and, if not resolved, takes on a life of its own, reproducing itself in different forms. In such contexts, one element of a conjunctural crisis can become a long-term feature of a society, shifting some of the central grounds and practices through which a human

community reproduces itself and its ways of life over time. When reflecting on violence in Jamaica and its relationship to power, I am working through power's capillary forms of existence, as a force field that exists in ways other than its conventional state forms. As I review these forms, I suggest, following Foucault, that power is a productive force. Thus, within the urban Jamaican space that I will describe, power operates productively, creating geographical spaces of violence and death while remapping sovereignty.³⁹

The construction of these geographical spaces not only sustains subjectivities but does many other things, only two of which I will mention. First, it forces us once again to rethink the relationship between violence and power. Second, it forces us to think about the complexities of subaltern counterhegemonic practices, the genealogy of those practices, and their capacity to change.

Power, Coercion, and Hegemony:

From Racial Slavery to Tutelage (The Jamaican Case)

It is neither the intention nor the purpose of this lecture to engage in an extensive unraveling of the history of nineteenth-century Jamaica. However, because my arguments about the relationship of power to violence suggest a series of shifts in how Jamaican society is conventionally studied, so it is important to review a few critical elements in the historical construction of power in Jamaican society.

The abolition of racial slavery in colonial Jamaica was a watershed for the forms of rule deployed by British colonial power. Racial slavery under British colonialism combined four kinds of violence. Achille Mbembe has observed that colonial sovereignty "rested on three sorts of violence . . . the founding violence . . . [the violence of] legitimation . . . [and] the third form of violence . . . falling well short of . . . 'war,' [recurring] again and again in the most banal and ordinary situations."⁴⁰ However, in those instances in which racial slavery was combined with colonial power, power also rested on a fourth leg of violence. If colonial power conventionally ruled through projects of civilization, violent conquest,

tutelage, or assimilation, racial slavery required a kind of absolute domination in which the body of the slave was not only property but a thing, a *res* that was outside the social and political mechanisms of the community. The slave existed in what Orlando Patterson has called a state of “social death.” However, as I have stated before, the slave’s human life was reduced. This reduction was not “bare life” but rather life made superfluous.⁴¹ All this we have rehearsed before, so W. E. B. DuBois’s succinct formulation in *Black Reconstruction* that Atlantic slavery represented a form of domination that rested on the “submergence below the arbitrary will of any sort of individual” continues to serve us well.⁴²

As a form of domination, the system of racial slavery deployed technologies of rule that targeted the slave body. The objective of this kind of power was not to turn human beings into subjects but into objects and things. In this context, violence was deployed to break and destroy, to remove possibilities and to act immediately upon the person through the body.

The abolition of racial slavery shifted this mode of power in the colonial Caribbean, changing its terrain from a singular focus on the body to an art of creating subjects. But we should not be too sanguine about this shift because, as Diana Paton has pointed out, the shift did not mean the end of certain kinds of punishment. Flogging was reintroduced in the 1850s, and the treadmill became a common feature of plantation life in the postemancipation Caribbean.⁴³

There were two principal technologies of colonial rule in Jamaica’s postemancipation period, besides colonial violence. The first was Christianity (hence the extensive deployment of Christian missionaries during the period), and the second was the vigorous attempt to turn the ex-slave into a wage laborer. Combined, these two forms of rule sought to create a moral culture that was modeled in part on an imaginary Victorian male respectability, what Horace Russell has called so felicitously the “Christian Black.”⁴⁴ The creation of this subject provided the ground for power to act outside of naked violence. Power became, in the words of Michel Foucault,

a condition for the “management of possibilities.”⁴⁵ It is of course now well documented that the ex-slaves captured the Christianity of the missionaries and produced a number of Afro-Christian religious practices.⁴⁶ The emergence of the religious practices of Myalism and Zionism, what the late Phillip Curtin described as the Africanization of the 1861 Christian Revival, was a process in which Afro-Jamaican subaltern subjects staked out a new ground for fashioning their own humanness. Central to this was the emergence of what Diane Austin-Broos has called a *logic of affliction*. Writing about revivalism, she observes that it was:

not simply a “mixing” of elements but rather a redefinition of the form of Christianity that the missionaries had brought to Jamaica. . . . [it] was not simply a nativistic movement . . . it was rather a complex of rite and belief that sought to sustain the *logic of affliction* by assimilating elements of Christianity to it⁴⁷ (emphasis mine).

Two things about this logic of affliction are critical. Over time this logic became an integral part of a series of narratives about the meanings of black suffering in the New World. These meanings were eventually bolstered by a reinterpretation of the biblical story of the Exodus.⁴⁸ Second, the logic of affliction reemerged in various periods in the political language of the Jamaican subaltern as “sufferers” (noun). At this point we are running ahead of our story, but we should note that one of the main features of the present is the erosion and aggressive rejection of this logic by many young males. Indeed I would argue that currently the logic of affliction has been superseded by a different understanding of the Afro-Jamaican subaltern self.

The strivings of Creole nationalism culminated in the island’s political and constitutional independence in 1962. However, it is critical to observe that, at the level of the Afro-Jamaican subaltern, while Creole nationalism consolidated itself into a national, state form and proclaimed national sovereignty, the politico-religious doctrines and practices of Rastafari offered an alternative. Rastafari

emerged from three sources: an international, diasporic, black religious tradition; a series of contestations between elements of revivalism and early black religious doctrines that reread the Bible in order to discover the causes and meanings of black suffering in the New World; and, finally, growing gender conflict between Afro-Jamaican male subalterns and females who joined in Pentecostalism and revivalism.⁴⁹ This latter group was located socially as exploited domestic workers in middle-class homes.⁵⁰ Rastafari was to play an important role in the radicalization of the Jamaican political moment in the 1960s. Indeed it was the central force behind the cultural forms that made powerful attempts to refashion popular culture. But Rastafari was not the only source of subaltern rebellion, because alongside it emerged the figure of the *Rude Bwoy*.

The Rudie

Garth White, in his seminal essay on this figure, observes that the “Rude Bwoy is that person, native, who is totally disenchanted with the ruling system; who generally descended from the ‘African’ in the lower class and who is now armed with ratchets, other cutting instruments and with increasing frequency nowadays, with guns and explosives.”⁵¹ Perry Henzell’s film *The Harder They Come* provides us with a visual representation of this figure. The film puts together the two male subaltern exemplars of early postcolonial resistance in Jamaica, Rastafari in the figure of Ras Daniel Heartman and Ivan in the figure of Jimmy Cliff. Both are rebellious, but the terms of their rebellion are different.⁵² For Ivan, rebellion is captured in the song “You Can Get It If You Really Want,” while for the Rastafari, rebellion is captured by the stoicism of the plaintive song “Many Rivers to Cross.”

It is accurate to point out that violence was part of the repertoire of rebellion of the Rude Bwoy. However, I want to suggest that this was not just the internalized violence of Fanon, nor the violence of the lumpen proletariat preying upon itself and its community, but rather violence as a strategic instrument that was deployed as an

end. In *The Wretched of the Earth*, Fanon notes that violence is a force that makes the native “fearless and restores self-respect.”⁵³ For the Rude Bwoy violence was often a means of creating and safeguarding zones of black masculinity that were at odds with the hegemonic conceptions of the Jamaican nation-state. It was deployed to construct what the Caribbean intellectual George Beckford calls “a mode of life.”⁵⁴ It marked out a different set of normative terms for this subaltern group’s self-conception and in particular emphasized the notion of respect. I want to suggest that what was happening was the following: postcolonial Jamaican society was embedded within a hegemonic framework in which the black majority was viewed as outside, as the great unwashed who could not be trained or civilized. In a profound sense the class, color, and racial schema of Jamaican society located the urban and rural black underclass as unworthy. This was both an epistemological problem of framing and a problem of social ontology. Or to put the case in clear Jamaican nation-language, and in the words of the musician Peter Tosh, the Jamaican social system was a “shits-tem.” Inside that framework, dignity and respect were human qualities that male subaltern figures attempted to carve out for themselves. This was the overarching desire of the Rude Bwoy, a self-fashioning that would command respect and dignity on his own terms. But we know that all material practices are fluid. Over time the phenomenon of the Rude Bwoy developed into gangs, and many of them became attached to the Jamaican two-party political system. But there was no easy slide from rebellion to accommodation, incorporation, and eventual transformation into something else. When they were first courted by the political parties, many Rude Bwoys expressed ideas that drew from Rastafari doctrine and, in some instances, the Cuban Revolution. For example, the posters and iconography that decorated many of the small shack dwellings of members of this group ranged from pictures of Haile Selassie (the human-God figure in Rastafari doctrine), Che Guevara, Fidel Castro, and icons of the American Black Power movement to the Communist hammer and

sickle. When they became integrated into the two-party system, many initially saw themselves as warriors or soldiers. Integration into the two-party system was accomplished at two levels. First they became a protective force for communities that waged political war against each other. Second they became over time the central figures responsible for the distribution of various forms of public works, thereby embedding themselves firmly within the practices of political clientage. When this process had been consolidated, their transformation from rebellious figures into *political enforcers* was complete.

In general, therefore, it is safe to say that eventually the Rude Bwoy was transformed into a political-party warrior. It is at this point that we should turn to the understanding of political violence in some urban communities.

War, Violence, and Party Politics

In his 1977 study of violence and politics in Jamaican society, Terry Lacy argues that one of the critical issues facing that society in the 1960s and early 1970s was an “internal security situation.” He poses this dilemma as central to the prospects for political change. Lacy documents how the new ruling elite of Jamaica denounced “the general attitude of lawlessness; maintained armed vigil; called for flogging in schools.”⁵⁵ He then suggests that the group that he identifies as the lumpen proletariat was responsible for violence and that its activities created disquiet on the part of the new ruling elite. He notes:

This was what the national bourgeoisie called a “criminal” or “hooligan” element. Trench Town, Denham Town, Back O’Wall, Moonlight City—these names of parts of Western Kingston conveyed images of youth gangs, political gangs, Rastafarians, of Prince Henry’s gang, The Max gang, the Blue Mafia, The Dunkirk gang, . . . the Vikings or the Roughest and the Toughest.⁵⁶

Lacy ends his argument on violence by stating that the “lumpen—proletariat were the primary source of violence *against* the whole

political system whereas over the decade other social classes were the primary source *within* the system”⁵⁷ (emphasis in original). There is not enough time in this lecture to engage in arguments about the ambiguous radical or revolutionary agency of the so-called lumpen proletariat or the power of this designation for the urban Jamaican poor in a postcolonial economy. Instead I want to focus on violence from a different angle: not violence as an incipient force of insurgency but rather violence as a way of constructing rule in local communities and as a form of disorder deployed to produce and create order in a localized community space.

There is no longer any dispute in Jamaican political discourse over the historic links between the Jamaican two-party political system and the emergence of political war and a politics of violence. The current debate instead concerns the degree of continuing connection. One question has perplexed many commentators and radical activists. How was it possible for urban and rural oppressed groups to be so divided that they ended up engaging in violence against each other? Why was class solidarity so lacking and seemingly impossible to construct? There are many possible answers to this, but one lies in the two-party political system’s construction of the practice of mainstream politics. In this practice, not only was clientage a “mechanism by which to institutionalize a power structure” alongside a politics of scarce benefits, but the Jamaican political party system was also able to construct and maintain a politics of difference based upon one of the oldest political stratagems, the division of friends from enemies.⁵⁸

When developing his conception of the political, the conservative German legal and political theorist Carl Schmitt draws on Machiavellian notions of the political order and argues that “the specific political distinction to which political actions and motives can be reduced is that between friend and enemy.”⁵⁹ Schmitt continues, “the political enemy need not be morally evil nor aesthetically ugly. . . . But he is nevertheless, the other, the stranger; and it is sufficient for his nature that he is, in a special intense way, existentially something

different and alien.”⁶⁰ The enactment of a form of politics based on a dichotomy between friend and foe that organizes itself into difference is required in contexts in which violence is a necessary feature of political life. Especially intriguing in the Jamaican case was the ability of the two-party system to construct the difference between friend and foe in small, localized, geographical spaces. It is critical to note that these constructions were consistently reinforced by notions of belonging and were enacted through the political dramaturgy of songs, colors, party conferences, dances, popular music, and appropriations of the religious symbolism of both Rastafari and other Afro-Jamaican religious practices. For many who engaged in Jamaican political wars, their political rationale was primarily based on the politics of friend and foe. I now wish to illustrate this empirically by reporting briefly on a series of research findings. I take this tack because any study of violence requires a specific and concrete understanding of the ways in which those who have perpetuated violence and those who have been affected by violence understand it.

The Findings

In a small urban community that we will call Cascade Gardens, extensive ethnographic work was done with individuals who engaged in warfare and those who supported such warfare. One participant called Nigel (not his real name) summed up how violence and political war were viewed. He said:

The rationale behind it is that if we kill off one set then there won't be any votes. . . . Individuals growing up learned that the person who were [sic] fighting against you and you were fire shot at were *our enemy*. So if they saw us anywhere and hear where we stay they will kill us⁶¹ (emphasis mine).

Another person pointed out that the enemy (who lived a few blocks away) would behave similarly. Thomas (not his real name) stated that “Anybody who dem catch . . . Have to dead. You naw mek you enemy live. At that time I shared the same sentiment.”⁶² In

these contexts differences were rearticulated as reasons and rationales for war. Nobody admitted to fighting for a job, a house, or any scarce resource or benefit that was normally distributed by the Jamaican political system through clientage. Instead, people spoke about party, community, defense of self, and being a warrior. According to one person, “from you hear stone a lick pon you fence you know say you have fi bleach. A de same youth wah you cook with and you know and ting. So you go pon the corner.”⁶³ The construction of difference that was organized around practices of friend and foe, along with the reinscribing of this difference through rituals of belonging, meant, in the words of one community resident, “We now become instead of natural African people, laborities and PNP.”⁶⁴

There were, or are, two forms of violence in the Jamaican context. One was, or is, *political violence*, which reached its peak in the 1980 general election when over eight hundred persons died in an electoral contest fought like a civil war. The Jamaican poet Lorna Goodison has memorialized this event in the poem “Jamaica 1980.” She writes:

For over all this edenism
hangs the smell of necromancy
and each man eats his brother’s flesh
. . . We’ve sacrificed babies
and burnt mothers⁶⁵

Goodison’s poem captures the ways in which the so-called island paradise, the place of the sweet smells of plants and secret streams, becomes a place of death. In this land of death, differences constructed within subaltern groups now play out on a field of war. This is not genocide but death deployed as terror, as a tactic to destabilize the conventional field of electoral politics. I would argue that, nearly thirty years after this event, the tactics deployed in this political war repeat themselves in enactments of violence in Jamaica. I would also argue that the Jamaican political process has not had a full and open discussion of this traumatic event, and this in part

allows the event and its reverberations to linger on as a loud silence in the island's contemporary history.

The second form of violence to which I wish to draw our attention was, or is, a violence that links itself to the operation of power in small geographical spaces (lanes, streets, small communities divided into zones). Political violence and what I call *intimate violence*, or violence enacted in small spaces and conducted upon known bodies, are sometimes linked. But they must be understood differently. I would argue that the practices of political violence engender the other form of violence. I now turn to a discussion of violence and its relationship to power and death within the specific conditions of the Jamaican postcolony.

Violence, Death, and the Making of Duppies

Violence, as I have indicated before, is both a difficult and a slippery subject. Its primary enactment in terms of physicality and the infliction of pain involves assaults on personhood. As a practice violence is about spectacle. To be effective as order, it must first awe and then create fear. Even though violence kills or maims, sometimes its logic is not about death per se but about its deployment in the production of order. Genocidal violence seeks to cleanse and purify to create an order of purity. Torture aims to exclude and mark bodies, to further punish the excluded and mark difference. The violence in the Jamaican postcolony is also about order, but a specific kind of order. It is an order in which those already excluded perpetuate violence as representative enactments of their lives, which are already marginal in a society that marks them as not worthy. In other words, it is in part an enactment of lives that are not grievable.

We noted earlier in this lecture that Hannah Arendt suggests that violence is “ruled by the means-end category.”⁶⁶ Hopefully we have demonstrated that this framework for thinking about violence is inadequate. If, for a moment, we agree with Foucault about power and see it as capacity, as the designation of a relationship, rooted in

a network of the social,⁶⁷ then violence is not a means-end instrument but one aspect of power. In other words, violence is not just a technology of power or a premodern instrument that is negated through the creation of a disciplinary, liberal society. How does violence in Jamaican society illustrate this, and what is violence's relationship to death in Jamaican society? At this point in the lecture, we must confront the issue of sovereignty.

Achille Mbembe has suggested that the expression of "sovereignty resides, to a large degree, in the power and the capacity to dictate who may live and who must die."⁶⁸ Here of course Mbembe is pointing us to one of the chief features of sovereignty—its finality. In much of political philosophy, we have become accustomed to speaking of sovereignty as a form of rule, a power that is the final arbitral agent, independent of external influences. We should remember that the demand for sovereignty was also the great political call of the anticolonial movement and of subsequent demands for other forms of decolonialization. I wish, however, to complicate this conventional understanding of national sovereignty by shifting away from our rightly fierce claims for national and cultural sovereignties to suggest a meaning in which different forms of self-fashioning are critical to forms of rule. In other words, I want to remove sovereignty from the domain of rule constructed around the making of the nation-state and bring it to the ground of the local. By moving in this direction, I am suggesting that in those nation-states where hegemony has been broken we need to understand violence at the micro level.

As I make this shift, I want to suggest that sovereignty need not be a large-scale, national operation. In addition, since notions of belonging are integral to practices of rule, in many circumstances the enactment of belonging also operates at a micro level. Therefore I suggest that in many urban Jamaican communities there has been a shift in the grounds of belonging as the legitimacy of the post-colonial state has been eroded. One resident of Cascade Gardens put it well.

There was no money, there was no food, there was no hope. Politicians had failed. They don't see nobody to look up to, because as far as it go dem no cater for nobody. . . . everything drop, every man fe himself, everybody fe dem food. So everybody pon dem own.⁶⁹

It is within this space that other figures emerge: the area leader and, eventually, the *Shotta Don*.

In the early Jamaican postcolony, active subaltern currents operated in opposition to the hegemony and sovereign power of a native elite. These forces did not engage in huge rebellions but practiced a form of cultural guerrilla warfare, seeking to challenge the norms of citizenship and its values in what the late Rex Nettleford has called the "battle for space."⁷⁰ In this situation the Jamaican Creole nation-state did not fully establish its hegemony.⁷¹ A consequence of this failure was the state's inability to establish hegemonic notions of citizenship to which all classes and social groups could adhere. This in turn meant that, instead of a narrative of citizenship with its rituals of belonging practiced through different performances, these rituals of belonging and solidarity were practiced through community linkages inside politically controlled parameters. These practices were shaped by a social context of deep class and color divisions and by a discourse that emphasized "outside" and "inside," with the urban poor continually positioned as "dem de people down there." In the present situation, belonging occupies and works through micro spaces within communities. Within some of these micro spaces, the area leader and then the *Shotta Don* rules.

The Shotta Don: A Figure of Death

There are many features of the area leader who then becomes the *Shotta Don*, but two are critical for our current discussion.⁷² The first is that many area leaders mixed Rastafari symbols with black nationalism. The typical operational base of the area leader is organized around an economic venture such as a small shop. At many of these bases (they are called bases in popular discourse), murals

of Marcus Garvey, Bob Marley, and Malcolm X adorn the walls. Dances are frequently held at these locations. When the dances are held, persons from neighboring, opposing, and sometimes hostile political communities are often welcomed. The second feature of note is that the rule of the area leader functions through a set of community codes enforced primarily by male individuals. In this context violence operates in two ways. In the first the enforcement of the code itself can be violent.⁷³ Second, once “war” breaks out between communities, warriors take up their guns and engage in firefights, often to the death. So how does death function in these operations?

One striking feature of young men who engage in violence is their conversations with each other, in which they often ask each other, “how many duppies you mek?”⁷⁴ If, as Bataille argues, death is a form of destruction and a sacrifice that is irreversible, as well as a spectacle that haunts life itself, then for many males involved in violence death is a spectacle that affirms their lives. This is particularly so because in the middle of war or violence other life-affirming activities are uncommon. Listen to the voice of another resident of Cascade Gardens:

Yu have time when every Sunday, every Saturday, you have funeral inside ya. For years you don't have a wedding, because it is like a trend. This week Tom going bury, next week is John, so we making preparation for that funeral. People just dead, and some of we just take it like joke, and we dress up and go a de funeral. The funeral is like a fashion show. And the latest fashion go a funeral when somebody ask you a who dead, you ask: A who?⁷⁵

In such communities, young males expect death as an affirmation that they have lived, and the burial ritual is marked not only by fashion but by gun salutes at the graveside. However, it should be noted that this is not the general view of the community, even of those engaged in violence. As one young man called Marcus (not his real name) puts it, as he became more involved, he had “no feelings

at all” and “had to turn to God to seek answer due to vibes and tension.” It seems, therefore, that any radical transformation of Jamaica has to begin with the recognition that not only has Creole state hegemony collapsed but a new form of politics has arisen, in which organized communities operate outside the constitutional and juridical norms of the nation-state. This is not a situation of dual power as a prelude to revolution, because the radical subaltern self-fashioning that extensively drew on Rastafari and a politics of radical black nationalism has also collapsed. This collapse within subaltern geographical spaces means that the area leader is rapidly losing his dominance and is being replaced by the Shotta Don.

From Rude Bwoy to Shotta Don

In a song titled “Petty Thief,” which is also a remarkable commentary on urban Jamaican life, the dance hall DJ Bounti Killa observes that the petty thief is a predatory figure within the urban community and not a Rude Bwoy. The song notes the complete transformation of a postcolonial rebel figure (the Rude Bwoy) into a commanding *figure of vengeance* (the Shotta Don). This figure of vengeance both seeks to destroy and searches for ways to enter the mainstream of society. Two episodes were central to the formation of this figure of the Shotta Don, and ironically they both had to do with the failure of peace processes among urban subaltern groups. One of these peace processes was attempted in the 1970s, and the other in 1999.

In the aftermath of what is now called the Green Bay massacre of 1978, political enforcers from both political parties organized a peace treaty. The ambush killing of political enforcers by the Jamaican military shook many enforcers’ political ties. The two major figures in the peace effort were Claude Massop from Tivoli Gardens, the main Jamaica Labour Party (JLP) stronghold at the western end of Kingston, and Aston “Buckie” Thompson from the People’s National Party (PNP). The peace treaty was warmly welcomed by many of the political enforcers and had the backing of promi-

nent individuals, in particular Bob Marley. The peace process was organized and managed by a council that met regularly at the Ambassador Theatre in West Kingston. Its advocates demanded a program of public works for the unemployed male youths of urban Kingston. In an outspoken speech at one of the rallies held in support of the treaty, Buckie Thompson declared: "After peace now, we want to see improvement in living conditions. We want work in general and government must put more in youth programs." Echoing this call, another individual stated, "Unity wonderful but we want better housing, better living standard for all people whether JLP or PNP. We cannot allow politicians to come into West Kingston and divide the youths anymore. The situation must remedy."⁷⁶ Individuals close to the process have pointed out that many of the discussions at the Ambassador Theatre centered on the possibility of a new political party of Rastafari to be funded with Marley's money. This peace process did not last and was buried with the killing of Massop in Jamaica and Thompson in New York.

Some individuals who attended the various peace council meetings recalled in interviews with me both the promise of the treaty and its example. Twenty-one years later, in 1999, some of these figures made a second attempt. However, if the first peace treaty was driven by a desire for unity in the face of certain death at the hands of state forces, the second one was driven by two elements: the economic activities of individuals who had used their positions as political enforcers to garner state resources and a growing feeling in many urban communities that violence had taken its toll.

The second peace process was not as centralized as the first. There was no central advisory council, although various attempts were made to pull the leadership of communities together into a combined peace movement. However, it was clear that in the twenty-one years since the collapse of the first peace movement, many urban communities had become balkanized. Wherever peace was declared because of the exhaustion of a community, criminal activity declined. These activities included rape and petty theft.⁷⁷ In community spaces

where peace was enacted, forums of community justice emerged. These forums were sometimes organized to include individuals within the communities who were seen as elders or who enjoyed some amount of respect. Elements of black nationalist ideas and Rastafari were again used to undergird declarations of unity and peace.

In one community, the peace process encouraged classes in radical black history and the development of a literacy program. However, in all the communities peace was unstable. Peter Tosh had declared at the peace concert in 1978 that there would be no peace without justice. The second effort at peace collapsed for two reasons. The first was the inability of the peacemakers to provide economic development in communities. The second was the emergence of a generation of young males called *Shottas*, who did not buy into either of the two main ideologies of radical subaltern Afro-Jamaica, Rastafari or radical black nationalism. These Shottas challenged many area leaders, became leaders themselves, and engaged in predatory activities. The emergence of this avenging figure is the main sign of the crisis. The figure of the Shotta Don does not seek to explain and understand his social location by reference to any logic of black suffering. For this figure, the Jamaican postcolony is itself a predatory state, and the ways of contesting it that are rooted in subaltern rebellious cultures have all failed. There is only one way out, to obtain enough capital through extortion, government contracts, and haulage business to influence the formal, two-party system.

The Shotta Don as an avenging figure establishes rule in communities by the force of death. In such circumstances, death is not a rupture but a norm to be deployed. Violence becomes the foreclosure of possibilities and is arbitrary. In those contexts, local rule is about the absolute power of death. Also, violence must now be brutal in a special sense, and, significantly, rape becomes a regular feature of violent attacks.

What are we to make of this figure of the Shotta Don and his reconfiguration of violence and power? There are many similarities

in the ways in which death and pain are deployed in all three circumstances that I have described. But there are vast differences with regard to violence as purification. If genocide enacts a death-drive of purification and torture enacts violence as punishment then, for the Jamaican, Shotta Don violence creates fear primarily in order to rule. In all of these cases, violence either becomes power or is enacted as power. In each case, the human is negated. In a recent essay, Judith Butler asks about the establishment of the familiar “as the criterion by which a human life is grievable.”⁷⁸ It seems to me that, both inside the empire of liberty and in some sites of the post-colonial world, we are faced with this question of the human. This is not the question, who are we? Instead the question is, what are we? Or to put this another way, what makes us human? The question is forcefully brought home to us by the various enactments of violence as power. In such a context death becomes, not a boundary, as Aristotle once said, but the very horizon of life. And security, not freedom, shapes how we live. Is this what we want?