Chapter 1. Barricades Are Back

1. Arrighi et al. (1999: 1) introduce the term “antisystemic movements” to capture the struggles against the world system of historical capitalism. This move delimits antisystemic movements from social movements that identify the nation-state as the primary political structure, and, therefore, direct their formal organizations toward control, or at least influence, of the state apparatus (even though an ideological commitment to internationalism might also be articulated). In this book, I will speak about “antisystemic initiatives.” Besides my reservations about the category “movement” (see further on), the reason is that most “social movements” in history have contained antisystemic initiatives.

2. To be sure, reducing antisystemic initiatives to transgressive street politics or summit protest would be an analytical mistake. As Gerald Raunig (2007: 25–26) points out, the revolutionary project necessarily needs to contain three components: resistance, insurrection, and constituent power. Although potentially moving beyond, summit protests manifest above all the moment of resistance. However, potential for insurrection and constituent power—in the form of self-governance and autonomous spaces—are present. In focusing mainly on the moment of resistance through transgressive summit protest, I do not want to suggest that the other three components would be less important.

3. I am aware of the rich neo-Gramscian literature working with the conception of hegemony. Many neo-Gramscians largely have adapted their reading of Gramsci to the cultural turn of the Frankfurt School, who turned the focus of Marxist analysis to the reproduction of consensus in the cultural sphere. As Cleaver (2000: 58) points out, this perspective often results in a fetishization of domination and therefore negates the “dominated” as active historical subject. Moreover, it neglects the material base of hegemony (Strange 1987). In this book, I want to go back to Gramsci’s merging of ideational and material power in the concept of hegemony. This is to say, aside from any ideological project that might be involved, I am interested in how global hegemony is (re-)produced materially through power techniques responding to its contestation on the streets.
4. As opposed to economic liberalism, political liberalism denotes a political tradition having gained hegemonic momentum since the 19th century stressing civil liberties and the relative autonomy of civil society in relation to the state. Although liberal thinkers acknowledge conflictive interests in society, they believe politics to be about creating a political consensus that facilitates “a reflexive equilibrium” through an “overlapping consensus”: a thin form of public morals as opposed to thick private convictions (Rawls 1971). Rawls’s political liberalism is widely perceived to have delivered a satisfying answer to the “problem” of pluralistic societies. The strict division between the private and the public, the sociocultural and the political, the invocation of a neutral government perspective, and the focus on the individual, as well as the focus on a negative definition of freedom in the tradition of political liberalism have been criticized from various other political traditions (see Kymlicka 2002).


6. The federal court decided in 2007 that the Militante Gruppe cannot be considered a terrorist group. No charges were made against Holm, but by July 2010, the investigation was stopped.

7. Or, if one wants to include the terms emerging from subsequent epistemological struggles: alterglobalization movement, global justice and solidarity movement, the movement of movements, the anticapitalist movement, among others (see Eschle 2005).

8. Smith appropriates a term from Louis Althusser here, who introduces problematic to point out that the (discursive) organization of a field of investigation is larger than a specific question or problem (Althusser 1971: 31).

9. It was interesting to observe how activists themselves frequently absorb sociological discourses. During an activist conference in Germany, half a year after the G8 protests in Heiligendamm, many debates revolved around speculative questions such as the “influence on public opinion” or “the amount of newly politicized people.”

10. This implies a critique of structuralism and functionalism as reifying social structures, providing an explication of how the social is reproduced, but not how it can be transformed. People’s activities are reified as “social structure”; as John Holloway (2002: 137) points out, constitution and existence are separated, which contributes to a radical closure of alternatives.

11. Readers familiar with Latour and the actor-network theory might assume significant similarities between this approach and Smith’s institutional ethnography. However, the ontology as proposed by Smith is radically different from the ontology of actor-network theory. While Latour (1988) highlights the agency of objects as coordinating practices of various domains, Smith’s ontology starts with the Marxist assertion that history is the product of actual activities of actual people. Such a focus on practices thus centers on human doing and does not reify fetishized social relations by attributing agency to objects.

12. In a more recent work, McAdam et al. (2001) attempt to go beyond the tendency of categorization by shifting the focus of social movement scholarship
from structures to mechanisms and processes of contention. Richard Flacks (2003) points to the intrinsic danger of such attempts to reshape social movement studies into a coherent scientific field, which might take these studies further away from public relevance.

13. For a recent overview of the different social movement approaches, see della Porta and Diani (2006), Tarrow (1998), or McAdam et al. (1996).

14. In the case of police, this interview strategy turned out to be more difficult to implement. Although I tried to hold a number of interviews, some of them were being denied, others turned out to be useless in terms of getting to know tactical police operations (as opposed to police rationalizations of their own behavior). This lack of access provided another incentive to focus on the material organization of tactical interactions by analyzing institutional arrangements behind actual events starting from the protesters’ side of the barricade.

Chapter 2. Global Dissent: Tactical Trajectories

1. The Revolutionäre Zellen was a decentralized network of militant activists in Germany. Listed as a terrorist organization, this network was active from the 1970s till the 1990s. In contrast to the strict hierarchical organization of the RAF (Rote Armee Fraktion), these activists organized in small and local cells. Only after the arrest of Hans-Joachim Klein in 1999 for being involved in an attack on OPEC did investigators gain some insights into the organizational structures behind this network.

2. On http://www.spiegel.de/politik/ausland/0,1518,147502,00.html (accessed 27 May 2008). In 2008, a similar case occurred in the Netherlands. Wijnand Duyvendak, a member of parliament for the Dutch Green Party with a militant past in the squatter and the radical environmental movements, had to abdicate his membership in parliament after his involvement in some illegal, albeit non-violent actions, became public. Interestingly, he not only renounced violence during the ensuing debates, but also teleologically reorganized history by stating that violence was the wrong way and necessarily had to fail.

3. The French Revolution knows a similar founding myth: the storm on the Bastille. As van der Linden (1999) points out, however, the imagery surrounding this historical moment is highly heroifying. The Parisian insurgents stormed a Bastille that hardly functioned as a prison anymore.

4. Alberto Melucci (1989) makes a similar point when he describes how “submerged networks” provide structures of latency that erupt during periods of visibility. Also Saskia Poldervaart (2006, 2005, 1993) shows how utopian movements have provided a vast laboratory of alternative ways of organizing daily life, which often goes unnoticed in history books about contentious politics.


6. Post-neoliberal is a notion that is used to indicate how resistance against neoliberal policies is co-opted by institutions and corporations by absorbing the critical discourse in order to relegitimize neoliberal projects (Brand 2008).

7. Considering earlier historical episodes, such as the utopian socialists, Spanish anarchists, or council communists, it is certainly debatable how far the notion “new” is justified (see Waterman 2005).

8. These terms denote a shift from the stable long-term employment as characteristic for a factory-based Fordist economy to the mobile, flexible, and precarious labor relations of post-Fordist societies (Hardt & Negri 2004: 112).

9. Another example is Provo, a movement that started in 1965 to hold “happenings” in the center of Amsterdam in order to subvert the petit-bourgeois morality of a conservative Dutch society (Duivenvoorden 2008; Kempton 2007; Pas 2003; Mamadouh 1992). In a similar way, the Yippies in the US and the German Spassguerilla (fun guerrilla) used humor for disruptive public actions (Teune 2008; see also Jordan 2002).

10. Bombs were placed with faked letters claiming the attack for the radical left. Moreover, radical political groups were manipulated to incite outbursts so as to influence public opinion to favor authoritarian politics (della Porta 1995: 60). This resulted in an irreversible spiral of violence, also sustained by the emergence of urban guerrilla groups, such as the “Red Brigades.” Thousands of political activists were arrested for alleged suspicion of terrorism. Many years afterward, it was uncovered that a network called Gladio, consisting of high-ranking military and secret services, was behind many of those operations (Ganser 2005).

11. Peoples’ Global Action (PGA) is a global direct action network of grassroots activists and groups. Inspired by the Zapatistas, it emerged in 1998, and was an important coordination and communication tool for European activists in the early phase of summit protests. The ground of cooperation was set by five “hallmarks”: (1) A very clear rejection of capitalism, imperialism, and feudalism; all trade agreements, institutions, and governments that promote destructive globalization; (2) we reject all forms and systems of domination and discrimination including, but not limited to, patriarchy, racism, and religious fundamentalism of all creeds. We embrace the full dignity of all human beings; (3) a confrontational attitude, since we do not think that lobbying can have a major impact in such biased and undemocratic organizations, in which transnational capital is the only real policy-maker; (4) a call to direct action and civil disobedience, support for social movements’ struggles, advocating forms of resistance which maximize respect for life and oppressed peoples’ rights, as well as the construction of local alternatives to global capitalism; (5) an organizational philosophy based on decentralization and autonomy. On http://www.nadir.org/nadir/initiativ/agp/free/pga/hallm.htm (accessed 23 June 2009). Although the biannual European meetings continued after Genoa, PGA provided no ground for coordinating summit protests anymore. Instead, similar networks with other
names were established for this purpose, often adapting the five hallmarks as a working compromise. Central to the 2005 and 2007 G8 protests, the Dissent network agreed on also adapting the Peoples’ Global Action hallmarks.

12. However, social forum processes have been analyzed as having a potential for the formation of critical epistemologies and counter-hegemonies (Sen et al. 2004). Over the years, the direction these processes should take has been subject to stringent debates (della Porta 2009; Gautney 2009; Marcuse 2005; Conway 2005; Köhler 2005; Smith 2004; Fisher & Ponniah 2003).

13. Nongovernmental organization (NGO) is a fuzzy term for a diverse phenomenon. It is difficult to draw the boundaries. Most so-called NGOs receive government funding and are, thus, in the strict sense, not nongovernmental. One of the major critiques of NGOs, then, is that they are part of a state-managed opposition. Developmental NGOs are often criticized for destroying local grassroots movements by absorbing key organizers into paid positions (Biekhart 1999). NGOs in Europe reflect the process of institutionalization that many antisystemic initiatives of the 1960s and 1970s have undergone.

Chapter 3. Understanding Interaction Tactically

2. Latour (1988) uses the term “translation” for demonstrating how complex social problems are rendered manageable by moving them into a laboratory, and how they are made solvable by inserting laboratory-based cures into the social world. These solutions appear as having emerged in direct response to a socially demarcated problem. Maarten Hajer (1995) calls the process through which social problems become demarcated and manageable as policy problems “discursive closure.” Epiphenomena are defined as a legitimate problem asking for policy solutions.
3. Fillieule and Jobard (1998: 83), for example, suggest that the baton charge is the ultimate means for police when confrontation with demonstrators is absolutely unavoidable. One may wonder when a confrontation really starts. Does the use of tear gas and water cannons before a baton charge not constitute a moment of confrontation? Is the use of indirect force, such as encircling hundreds of demonstrators for hours as the police forces did several times during the 2009 protests against the UN climate summit in Copenhagen, a “minimum” use of force? Reiner (1998: 42) rightly points out that minimum force is a relative term that says more about the necessity of police to justify their behavior in liberal democracies than about the actual police conduct.
4. Other social movement scholars point out that the occurrence of violence is usually the outcome of an interaction process between protesters and police that does not begin with violent acts by either side (Schweingruber 2000: 383–384; Tilly 1978).
5. It is interesting to note that the self-fulfilling prophecy can also work the other way around: when crowds are not getting violent, it is frequently explained
by a successful policing style, without considering the possibility that it might not have been the (principled or tactical) intention of protesters to use violence.

6. The Crimethinc collective (2008: 110–111) points to an interesting consideration when suggesting that “The fact that the dominant crowd is also a mob, only a more entrenched and institutionalized one, may only be apparent from outside it—for instance, from the perspective of one of the looters. . . . when eighty million television sets go on in unison at the end of the workday, that’s an example of such a crowd in action.”

7. Waddington’s observation, however, shows that police categorizations are not always that clear. Police can, in principle, admit the “professional” approach of transgressive protesters: “Legitimate protest, linked to social problems and organised by people aiming to make themselves heard in order to solve the problems, is sharply contrasted to protests by ‘professional demonstrators,’ who upset public order because they enjoy provocation and revolt” (Waddington in della Porta & Reiter 1998: 25). However, such a distinction itself evacuates the political function of transgressiveness. As a result, this points to the ambiguity of “police knowledge” as an adequate category for analyzing police–protester interaction.


Chapter 4. Bodies That Matter: The Epistemology of Street Interactions


2. When demonstrations in Germany are accompanied by large numbers of police, protesters frequently pause marching for a moment and start to jump all together; this is done to prepare them—after a countdown—to run. This tactic forces the heavily armored riot police surrounding the demonstration to run as well in order to keep pace with the demonstration. What Hamburg’s police probably tried to prevent was not jumping but running.

3. Italy was not the only country in Europe where the Zapatista uprising had great impact. In line with the Zapatistas themselves, many European activists stressed that Zapatism is not a theory, but an “undefinitely [sic] re-adaptable method.” On https://aktuell.nadir.org/nadir/initiativ/agp/free/genova/busload.htm (accessed 13 November 2007).


6. In Italy as elsewhere, the rapid spread of unprotected labor is denoted as “precarization.” Since the twenty-first century the European Euromayday network reclaims the first of May for “precarious workers,” which resulted in a number of successful simultaneous mobilizations in many European cities (Dorr 2007).
10. Ibid.
11. The Tute Bianche were criticized a few times for actually negotiating about the terms of the clash, and for an elitist and hierarchical organizing structure (Becky 2001: 72). Moreover, some groups from the insurrectionalist spectrum criticize the Tute Bianche for their supposed reformist agenda based on Hardt and Negri’s approach in Empire and Multitude (Mutines Séditions 2004). However, the Tute Bianche themselves refute these accusations on http://www.nadir.org/nadir/initiativ/agp/free/genova/busload.htm (accessed 13 November 2007).
17. See also the film Tactical Frivolity, by Maren Girgensohn (2001; Mirabelle Productions) about the UK Pink & Silver group traveling to Prague.
23. Ibid.
27. Produced by the federal police Baden-Württemberg and the special police organization BAO Atlantik, this *Handbuch zum Nato-Gipfel am Oberrhein* was meant for internal police use, but was found on the streets by someone who put it on http://media.de.indymedia.org/media/2009/04/246698.pdf (accessed 1 April 2010).


32. In the film *Rebel Colours* (Indymedia Centre Prague 2000).


35. The use of the color pink also upsets the tradition of red flags of traditional left-wing demonstration, and in this way also provokes socialist groups by using a color that is consideredapolitical.


37. Violence is only discussed here insofar as it relates to the epistemology of black bodies. Whereas chapter 7 deals with violence as a political foundation of social relations, here, I deal with violence as a phenomenological category.

38. The pleasure of the confrontational politics of black blocs is underlined by the Infernal Noise Brigade, a Seattle-based street protest brass band, aiming to support street confrontations with music until their disbandment in 2006. The Infernal Noise Brigade, among others, took part in the 2000 IMF/WB protests in Prague and in the 2005 G8 protests in Gleneagles.

39. US activists I spoke with suggested that police in the US might shoot immediately—with live ammunition—when being attacked, so that this would explain the absence of offensive tactics by black blocs. Moreover, US police have a broader arsenal of so-called less-lethal weapons (e.g., taser guns).

40. Historically, the assertion that violence in contentious politics is reserved for men is false. Rowbotham (1974) provides a historical account of women’s participation in (violent) upheavals.

41. Identifying black bodies as either male or female would only serve police purposes. For this reason, I would object to Jeffrey Juris’s argument that black blocs forge “radical identities” (Juris 2005). Rather, they forge antisystemic activity. Participation in black blocs is not predicated on the logic of identity but on instrumental (tactical) considerations concerning the efficacy of protest.

43. The reverse is likewise true: political protests that do not involve confrontational black bodies are often ignored by mass media as a non-event. A telling example is the December 2007 demonstration against the Treaty of the EU in Lisbon that attracted more participants than the famous 2003 demonstrations in the same city against the proposed war in Iraq. The demonstration proceeded without major incidents. But the day after, hardly any European newspaper even mentioned the protests.

44. *Berlusconi’s Mousetrap*, by the Irish Independent Media Centre (2002).

45. In the end, whether or not black bodies and riots distract from the actual message is a difficult discussion. Two things should be kept in mind, however. First, media reports during protest events largely leave out whatever the political content is, emphasizing instead the amount of violence that occurs. Second, only after a summit protest does media coverage shift extensively to analysis of the reasons behind the protests and the legitimacy of dissent.

46. A recent publication demonstrates that this correlation between summit protests and broken windows works. The title of Desser and Lieven’s (2009) book translates as “Broken Windows: Alterglobalists Ten Years after Seattle.”

47. See, for example, the film *Gipfelstürmer: Die blutigen Tage von Genua* (Westdeutscher Rundfunk 2002) about the wide-scale police infiltration during the 2001 G8 protests in Genoa.

48. Insurrectionalist tendencies in Italy are a good example of this latter tendency. Because of their belief in the strength of spontaneous uprisings, they refused to participate in the resistance against the G8 summit in Genoa (Anonymous 2001).

49. Walter Benjamin (2002: 462) opposes the “dialectical image” to that of the “wish image,” the former realizing the unfulfilled promises of the past in the present—in order to unveil the transitory nature of history. The “wish image” is based on a fetishized conception of history and relegates the desire of a historical rupture to the future. As Anthony Auerbach (2007: 11) points out, the dialectical image in Benjamin’s thought is more a constellation against reality than of reality. I will use this interpretation of the dialectical image as a constellation against social reality that uncovers the conflictive character of black blocs.


Chapter 5. “Leave them no space!”: The Dialectics of Spatial Interactions

1. BlockG8 was a temporary action alliance, pushed by the Interventionistische Linke (Interventionist Left), a post-autonomist coalition engaged in a broad process in order to prepare consensual mass blockades that would effectively disrupt the (logistical) flows of the G8 summit.
2. The most telling scene happened in Cancún, Mexico, during the 2003 WTO Ministerial meetings; protesters pulled down a huge part of the fence with ropes and tree trunks. Once the fence had collapsed, they declared that their act of resistance was accomplished, and did not walk into the suddenly accessible space.

3. The considerations behind the choice for this name demonstrate Neil Smith’s (1992: 62) point about spatial metaphors tapping directly into the question of power. Kavala is the name of a northern Greek city that is supposedly called “the white city on the Sea.” Abramowski saw a certain analogy since the Kempinski complex at the seashore in Heiligendamm also consists of mainly white houses and is on the sea (BAO Kavala 2006: 4). Besides, the color white raises the connotations “clean” and “order.” Activists welcomed this name for several reasons. On the one hand, they immediately gave this police department the nickname “Krawalla,” which refers to the German word Krawall, meaning riot. On the other hand, a few weeks before the summit started, activists organizing an information tour in Greece about the upcoming protests found out that the Greek city Kavala was actually not considered to be the “white town,” but the “azure town.” Moreover, and perhaps even more embarrassingly for the police, the activists learned that in colloquial Greek, kavala—meaning originally cavalry—is used for referring to sexual intercourse. Activists seemed to have taken the invitation quite literally, and spray-painted “Fuck G8” on the walls of Rostock.


7. The fence not only resulted in interactions between protesters and police but also between police and local inhabitants. Especially for those living inside the perimeter fence their freedom of movement was severely restricted during the first week of June. Swimming at the beach was prohibited during those days, and also entering with a vehicle was strictly regulated. Inhabitants had to register their cars beforehand in order to receive permission for access, were checked each time again at the gate, and were accompanied by police forces from the gate to their house during the week of the G8 summit.


9. To make the analogy with German history even more delicate, the group Jewish Voice had announced a manifestation next to the fence for the June 6, 2007, in order to make a link between the fence and the wall being built between Israel and Palestine. After the restriction introduced by the general directive, this manifestation was only allowed to take place with a maximum amount of 15 participants, all of whom would have to identify themselves beforehand to the police. Jewish Voice refrained from doing so.
10. Not all meetings were moved to a rural site, however. Since the protests in Prague, the WB and the IMF, in fact, never came back to Europe for a major meeting. The EU stopped holding major meetings in the member state currently holding the presidency, confining itself instead to meetings in Brussels.


12. The fact that, after the 2007 G8 summit in Heiligendamm, a number of summits were organized again in large cities hints at the possible success of summit protesters in making rural areas in Europe too complicated and costly for authorities’ security operations.

13. Two special brochures—"The World Meets Mecklenburg-West Pomerania. G8 Regional Information Guide" and “The Place to Be: Mecklenburg Vorpommern. Best of Northern Germany”—were even made in order to present Mecklenburg-Western Pomerania as an idyllic and innovative region. The last page of the latter brochure shows a map placing Heiligendamm in a network of cities such as Rome, Paris, and London. In addition, a special spot for advertising the region on television was fabricated, with the slogan: “Ideas need space,” on https://gipfelsoli.org/Multilanguage/Heiligendamm_2007/Heiligendamm_2007_deutsch/Regierung_und_Mainstream/3121.html (accessed 23 January 2009). For a moment, it looked as if the symbolic dimension could be countered by activists, when they presented the fact that the avenue toward the conference hotel was once declared the most beautiful parkway by Adolf Hitler, who was also still mentioned as a citizen of honor in the register of a nearby town. These historical details were widely taken over by the world press and initiated a small scandal about the relation between German history and the political symbolism of the summit’s venue.


15. What happened to boats that attempted to enter the zone anyway one could observe during a symbolic banner action of Greenpeace. When trying to enter with five boats, the Greenpeace activists were brutally pushed aside by police boats.

16. The German police are organized in independent state police units (Länderpolizei) and a federal unit (Bundespolizei), the latter mainly being in charge of national border control.

17. The 1997 Amsterdam EU meeting incorporated the 1985 Schengen Agreement signed by five European Community member states into the mainstream of EU legislation. The Schengen Agreement establishes a space of 25 European countries without internal borders.


19. Major protest events took place during the meeting of the 2007 G7 minister of finances in Essen in February, during a meeting of the ministers of environmental issues in Potsdam in March 2007, and during another meeting of the financial ministers in Potsdam in May of the same year.

21. This became clear through studying the dossier of Andrej H. and other persons targeted by the investigations around the Militante Gruppe. A summary of the dossiers can be found on http://autox.nadir.org/buch/auswertung_11_07.pdf (accessed 26 March 2010).

22. The official reason given for the house raids in Munich was a flyer against the NATO security conference being held in February 2007. This flyer established a link between the anti-militaristic mobilization against the security conference and the mobilization against the G8. The flyer was entitled “Attack the Security Conference and the G8,” and the authorities took this as a call to commit criminal acts: on http://www.autistici.org/g8/files/siko_flyer.pdf (accessed 24 May 2007).


24. Tellingly, none of the activists or organizations searched was convicted and the German Federal Court even declared the searches illegal. Still, often for several months, most of the concerned persons and organizations were without their personal computers, hardware, books, and other belongings that had been confiscated.

25. The police later tried to retrieve the device, but the concerned person could successfully avoid this by saying that he had found it on his private property and that there was no evidence that it belonged to the police.


28. The front row carried a banner saying “Fuck Schengen,” a rather humoristic statement for foreign activists being enclosed in a country that just had abandoned the Schengen Agreement for a few days in order to reintroduce strict border controls; see the film GBG 2001—An Impression (Trojan TV 2001).

29. Here we see that contention over space is not always defined by police–protester interaction. As Zajko and Béland (2008: 731) point out, spatial dynamics are also shaped by conflicts that occur between protesters pursuing different goals and dissimilar tactics. Also a spatially organized diversity of tactics thus poses certain challenges. As Hurl proposes, “The segmentation of space is contingent upon the power of groups to maintain boundaries. The struggle to occupy and transform space has been an antagonistic process” (Hurl 2005: 53).

30. See the film Legitima Diffesa (Legal Forum 2005).

31. Noakes et al. (2005: 38) claim that “strategic incapacitation” is one of the new tactical innovations of protest policing. One has to consider, however, that strategic incapacitation is a mechanism that is at work in most police protester interactions. Furthermore, incapacitating the flows of summit meetings through their blockades and sieges, summit protesters apply this tactic as well.
32. In Genoa, the police fired 6,200 tear gas canisters, 20 gunshots, and wounded several hundred protesters. Among the used tear gas was also the dangerous version of CN gas, which is not allowed for warfare according to the Geneva War Conventions (in Andretta et al. 2003: 33).

33. Surely this is not to say that, for example, there was no tear gas used in Evian and there were no (mass) arrests in Prague.

34. The raids were covered as part of a search operation for weapons. Police claimed to have been attacked before. The only weapon found were Molotov cocktails that had been planted by the police during the raid, as the subsequent trials revealed.

35. The police encirclement was, however, not the only reason for the absence of actions during the second day. This was also the day of the terrorist attacks in London, which resulted in a widely shared feeling among protesters present at the camp that disruptive actions should not take place during that day.

36. The bikes were part of a broader initiative to provide action bikes for protesters in order to enable more rapid circulation. Maybe police tried to prevent this by confiscating the bikes. Two years later, at the 2009 UN climate summit in Copenhagen, the police raided the place where all the action bikes for a special bike bloc were stored, the day before the action.


38. Exposing their experience on Indymedia, the Workers’ Solidarity Movement from Ireland provides an interesting example. According to their report, they have been moving with several groups through the region for two days, hiding in the woods in order to erect several barricades on strategic points on their way through the no-protest zone. On http://www.indymedia.ie/article/83036 (accessed 28 March 2010).

39. In this respect, the 2009 NATO protests in Strasbourg marked an interesting adaptation in the authorities’ space control repertoire. Instead of huge perimeter constructions, the authorities worked with flexible no-go and no-protest zones. These shifting zones were partially enforced by barriers but above all functioned as reminders of the constant threat of being arrested while in the designated area.

Chapter 6. Psy(c)ops, Spin-Doctors, and the Communication of Dissent


2. In Italy there is a central website providing access to a lot of film material about summit protests on www.globalproject.info. For the 2007 G8 protests in Germany a network of video activists was set up called “G8-TV” on www.g8-tv.org. Also the UK-based Reel News and the Dutch Organic Chaos Productions are activist video collectives engaged in summit protests.
3. Activists are generally aware that police can use cell phones not only to intercept phone conversation but also to track the position of individual persons. While switching off cell phones prevents interception, the battery still sends signals, which means that intelligence services can potentially trace who is present at a meeting. Many activists, therefore, prefer to take out the battery during meetings, or, and this is the only real “secure” option, to leave their cell phones at home entirely. However, in the case of Andrej Holm (see chapter 1), police knowledge about this practice led to the accusation of Holm: because he left his cell phone at home, he attended a “conspiratorial” meeting.

4. These laws are connected to the obligatory measures proposed in the The Hague 5-year plan of the EU ministers of internal affairs. By 2009, all EU countries were expected to have implemented data retention measures and other forms of Internet surveillance. On: http://www.statewatch.org/news/2004/nov/hague-annotated-final.pdf (accessed 25 May 2009).

5. Another technological innovation that is used increasingly for the coordination of big protest events is Twitter, a networking tool that allows subscribers to stay in touch with text messages at rather low costs. However, during the time of this research this technology was not available yet.


8. At the 2005 G8 protests in Gleneagles, the name Dissent! network emerged for the first time. The British Dissent! network was founded on the five organizational hallmarks of the Peoples’ Global Action network. In several other European countries networks were formed under the same name. Because there was little continuity afterward, the German network had doubts about using the name. These discussions are documented in Dissent! Spektrum (2006).


10. This preparation group got its name from the German city Hannover where it met. Many activists involved in the Dissent! network criticized this coordination practice arguing that only certain NGO elites would have the time and money for traveling to these regular one-day meetings.


13. The proposal was to annex such a database to Europol or the Schengen Information System. In 2009, the Police Cooperation Working Party of the EU concluded that a database of “violent troublemakers” is desirable but unlikely in the short term, since the precise definition of this category remains unclear and an adequate database was yet to be found (Council of the EU 2009).
14. This was only revealed when several people from the Netherlands engaged in a legal procedure to receive the information on the basis of which their entry to Germany was denied during the time of the G8 protests. Several preparatory meetings between the Dutch (border) police, the German Bundespolizei (federal police responsible for border policing), and intelligence services of both countries took place a few months before the G8 summit (Bureau Jansen & Janssen 2009). Moreover, due to the massive inhibition of border-crossing in the context of NATO’s 60th anniversary in Strasbourg/Kehl in 2009 (at the French-German border) it became clear, that the German police was working with a database of protesters by bringing together the information gathered during Heiligendamm and other previous protests.


20. Certainly, summit protests are not the only context for police to evaluate their communication tactics. Backmund et al. (2008: 111–113) point out how the German police have started to copy the communication tactics used in the
annual protests against the nuclear waste Castor transports in Germany in the past years. These tactics, however, have themselves been influenced by the experiments with communication tactics during summit protests (resulting, for example, in the creation of Indymedia for addressing issues in these protests).

21. In the German police handbook for the 2009 NATO summit in Strasbourg/Kehl, there is even more explicit advice for individual police officers about how to deal with the press: “Assume that you will be filmed and/or photographed during the operations. These shots that principally show you while executing your duties have to be accepted. Take the opportunity to expose a positive image of the work you do.” On http://media.de.indymedia.org/media/2009/04//246698.pdf (accessed 1 April 2010; my translation).

22. Kavala was not, however, the only source of false reports. The media and press agencies violated journalistic rules by publishing and circulating unapproved news, often without naming sources. One example is a quote circulated by the German press agency DPA on Saturday the 2nd of June, according to which a speaker on the podium in the city harbor of Rostock said the following words when confrontations between police and protesters ensued: “We have to bring the war into this demonstration.” This sentence was quoted in many newspaper articles, television reportages, among other outlets, during the following week, although protesters and other people present rapidly corrected this misquotation. What Walden Bello, a well-known researcher for Focus on the Global South, said in his speech was: “without peace there cannot be justice. Two years ago they said: ‘Do not bring the war into the discussions. Just focus on poverty reduction.’ Then we say: We have to bring the war right into this meeting. Because without peace there can be no justice. In other words: Let us raise the cry ‘The United States and Britain out of Iraq!’ Let us raise the cry: ‘NATO out of Afghanistan!’” DPA admitted the mistake after three days, but never publicly admitted to the journalistic processes behind this crucial mistake (see also Backmund 2009).

23. Althusser’s (1971: 174) idea of interpellation is helpful here for understanding internalization. Althusser proposes that systems of meaning construct our sense of self in deep ways. His work deals specifically with interpellation by what he calls the ideological state apparatus: how do we come to speak within the limits of the categories of thought that exist outside us and that can, ultimately, be said to think us? In the case of summit protest, the categories of authorities interpolate protesters and, in this way, come to think them as “good” protesters or as “criminals.”


25. According to the government of Mecklenburg-Western Pomerania, the service number received 11,205 phone calls (Landesregierung Mecklenburg-Vorpommern 2007). The website was accessed 320,000 times (Kavala press release 91 on 8 June 2007). It was hosted on the server of the regional police and was
out of operation only a few weeks after the G8 summit. On www.polizei.mvnet.de (accessed 7 June 2007).

26. As I learned during a debate at the Berlin Perspektiventage, January 17, 2008, with the local party member of the German left-wing party Die Linke van Loh, a local initiative against the privatization measures in Heiligendamm appeared to have been inspired by the summit protests, including the possibility of using blockades and civil disobedience for their local struggle. This is precisely the “virus” of summit protests authorities attempt to contain.

27. As the manager of the retail association North-East, Heinz Kopp, indicated in an interview, many retail sales were confronted with profit losses of up to 80 percent without any chance for compensation (dpa report 27 July 2007). The representative of the Ministry for Agriculture Gernot Haffner, on the other hand, estimated the costs resulting from the damages of fields around Heiligendamm to be approximately 32,000 Euro (caused by protesters and police crossing the fields). On: http://www.stern.de/politik/deutschland/G8-Gipfel-Bilanz-Meck-Pom-Gipfelsch%E4den/596306.html (accessed 31 March 2010).

Chapter 7. “A revolt is a revolt is a revolt”: Violence, Law, and the Exception


2. I disagree with the reading of Hans Achterhuis (2008: 598), who argues that the seduction emerging from Benjamin’s text of taking violence as the “final solution” reveals its utopian character. Achterhuis comes to this conclusion by conflating the hope for a final break through divine violence with the endless circle of law and (mystical) violence. However, in my view, Benjamin did not propose that law and violence constantly follow each other, but that legal orders are always predicated on—and finally expressed through—violence. Divine violence breaking with the legal order is not so much a utopian hope for the future as a project that emerges from the unfulfilled promises of the past, namely, a world free of domination.


6. See also the film Global Protest—The Battle of Prague (Marc Silver & Nick Hillel, BBC, 2000).


8. A film produced for the trials after the 2001 G8 in Genoa makes this argument convincingly by splicing together the video material of street interactions
with the recordings on police radio. Accordingly, the film is entitled *Legitima Diffesa* (Legitimate Defense).

9. Hardt and Negri (2004: 7) point out that the idea of the “state of exception” as a temporary suspension of the constitution and the rule of law, similar to the concept of the state of siege and emergency powers in the French and English traditions, emerged in the German legal tradition. State of exception is not the same as state of emergency. As Carl Schmitt points out not every state of emergency equals a state of exception (Schmitt 1984: 18–19). On the other hand, Agamben (2004: 34) convincingly demonstrates how the theory of emergency is easily transposed into a theory defending the exception of a single case. He argues that the theory of emergency does actually not suspend the law, but exempts a single case from the application of the norm.

10. A good example are the so-called *Notstandgesetze* (emergency laws) introduced in West Germany in the 1970s (partly) in response to the student upheavals.


13. In the German context, the comparative difference between two national judicial systems sometimes inhibited a straightforward prosecution. In one case, the German judge did not consider the evidence provided by Swedish authorities sufficient for a charge of “rioting.” Instead, they wanted to charge the concerned person with passive armament (due to the body protection the person wore as part of the Tute Bianche). This corpus delicti, however, did not exist in Swedish law, upon which the accusation had to be based. These differences complicated the coordination of legal prosecution between the two countries. Being in force since August 2003, the absence of a European arrest warrant (allowing the arrest and transfer of criminal suspects in the EU) posed a clear challenge to the authorities’ prosecution efforts.


17. Although not sentenced, after Genoa three high-ranking police officers were removed: Araldo La Barbera (head of the antiterrorist unit Ucigos), Francesco Colucci (head of the Genoa police), and Ansoino Andreassi (vice-head of the Italian police and member of the G8 security commission).


19. As documented in the material used for the ensuing trials, police used systematic abuse, sleep/food/water deprivation methods, denied medical attention,
and fired tear gas. Gianni de Gennaro, the national police chief, admitted that his men used “excessive force” and abused detainees in custody (in the film The Diaz Raid, UK Indymedia, 2001).

20. These numbers are based on the reports of activist legal teams of the respective summits (for the 2003 G8 in Evian I did not find reliable numbers). Since the legal difference between detention and arrest is different in every country, I have not differentiated between these two forms of imprisonment.

21. The development of preemptive mass arrests was fully confirmed by the 2009 UN climate summit protests in Copenhagen, where nearly 2,000 protesters were arrested, about 900 of them during a mass arrest at the first demonstration. These arrests were covered by a newly introduced law package allowing for preemptive arrest.

22. After the 2007 G8, the German Bundesrat decided to install a EU database of “violent summit protesters.” The proposal to annex such a database to the Schengen Information System was discussed in the Council of the EU and subjected to further investigation; on http://www.statewatch.org/news/2008/apr/eu-troublemakers-7544-08.pdf (accessed 1 April 2010).

23. In the original registration six marches with different starting points are mentioned: an “antiracism bloc,” a “global justice—agriculture bloc,” an “antifascism bloc,” a “peace bloc,” an “antineuclear bloc,” and a “queer-feminist bloc.” All of the marches were supposed to take a different route in order to arrive in front of the G8 venue in Heiligendamm, with an estimated amount of 1,000 to 2,500 participants.

24. Röttgers could fall back on previous experiences with the legal aspects of public assemblies; during the regular protests against nuclear transports in Germany, she issued several general directives that functioned as ban orders.

25. The presence of US president Bush was seen as a potential danger because he and the US, in general, function as “the concept of the enemy” for many states and organizations. The presence of other states also involved in the military operations in Iraq and Afghanistan, also depicted as posing a threat. To make its case, the directive also lists previous summit meetings disrupted with riots and blockades: the 1999 WTO protests in Seattle, the 2000 WB/IMF protests in Prague, the 2000 EU summit protests in Nice, and the 2003 and 2006 G8 protests in, respectively, Evian and St. Petersburg. The analysis of action plans by other groups calling for blockades (such as the BlockG8 and the Dissent! networks) was supposed to corroborate the threat of the Star-march turning into a transgressive or violent event (without clarifying the connection to terrorism). A series of G8-related property attacks executed clandestinely in the year before the G8 summit was also mentioned as relevant but without providing any evidence between these events and the organizers of the Star-march.

26. In 2011, the regional administrative court in Schwerin decided that the prohibition of the Star-march was unlawful. However, the court’s decision did not condemn the manipulated police reports about the security situation, nor did it compensate the protest organizers for the money that had been spent on the higher appeal at the German Federal Constitutional Court.
27. Before the 2009 UN climate summit protests in Copenhagen, the Danish government prepared an entire law package, namely, by forbidding masking during public assemblies and, in cases of suspected criminal activities, permitting preemptive arrest.

28. According to Kavala, 10 of the 87 registered assemblies were forbidden, 4 of them through the general directive (BAO Kavala Press release 91 “Polizei zieht positive Einsatzbilanz,” 8 June 2007).

29. Next to the Tornado fighter jets there were 12 state airplanes of the G8 countries based in the military airport of Laage. The German navy in Kiel admitted that the US was involved in the maritime security concept and that two US warships would be relocated temporarily to the Baltic Sea. Both ships contain a crew of 370 navy soldiers and are equipped for air defense and maritime surveillance. The radar can reach 100 targets at a time and has a reach of 200 sea miles. On: http://www.ostsee-zeitung.de/archiv/index.phtml?Param=DB-Artikel&cID=2639163 (accessed 20 August 2007).


32. An interesting detail about the employment of the military boats is that, after the rail tracks turned out to be constantly occupied by protesters, they were used 82 times to transport journalists from the official press center in Kühlungsborn to Heiligendamm (Komitee für Grundrechte und Demokratie 2008: 129–130).


34. “Souverän ist, wer über den Ausnahmezustand entscheidet” (Schmitt 1984: 11).

35. The Italian political philosopher Giorgio Agamben (2004) elaborates on Schmitt’s conception of the state of exception by incorporating his perspective on the biopolitical production of life. He sees the state of exception as the central paradigm of ruling, becoming evident in the current “world-wide civil war” (Agamben 2004: 2). And just as does Schmitt, Agamben defines the state of exception as a borderline concept. The biopolitical dimension of the state of exception, according to Agamben, lies in the fact that the suspension of law results in an inclusion of “bare life” into the reach of legal power. Sovereign power necessarily rests on injustice: on bare violence and the imposition of law. In the state of exception, bare life directly confronts sovereign power.