

STRUCTURAL VIOLENCE AND BIO-POWER

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ABSTRACT

STRUCTURAL VIOLENCE AND BIO-POWER

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In this thesis the concept of structural violence has been elaborated along with its position vis-à-vis Foucault's theory of bio-power. Considered as an alternative to the mainstream accounts of violence, that only sees violence as a physical, visible, intentional, and intersubjective act of harm, a more comprehensive understanding of violence, involving the concept of structural violence, is championed throughout. The concept of structural violence is put forth as an alternative view for recognizing invisible though equally fatal instances of violent actions. It is then combined with Foucault's accounts of power, and especially his concept of bio-power. It has been maintained that two concepts overlap greatly, especially in Foucault's accounts of neoliberal power. In the last chapter, this argument is supported by examples taken from different case studies conducted by different authors that reflect the violent effects of neoliberal practices.

Keywords: Violence, structural violence, Foucault, neoliberalism.

ÖZ

YAPISAL ŞİDDET VE BİO-İKTİDAR

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Bu çalışmada yapısal şiddet kavramı ve onun Foucault'nun bio-iktidar kavramı karşısındaki durumu incelenmiştir. Şiddeti sadece fiziksel, görünür, kasıtlı ve sujeler-arası bir zarar verme eylemi olarak gören anaakım şiddet kavramsallaştırmalarına bir alternatif olarak ortaya çıkan ve yapısal şiddeti de bünyesinde barındıran kapsamlı şiddet anlayışı tez boyunca savunulmuştur. Yapısal şiddet kavramı görünmeyen ama aynı şekilde öldürücü olan şiddet eylemlerini ayırt etmek için alternatif bir görüş olarak öne sürülmüştür. Sonrasında da Foucault'nun iktidar anlayışıyla, özellikle de onun bio-iktidar kavramıyla, birleştirilmiştir. Bu iki kavramın büyük ölçüde örtüştüğü iddia edilmiştir ve bu özellikle Foucault'nun neoliberalizm kavramsallaştırılmasında ortaya çıkmaktadır. Son bölümde, bu argüman neoliberal pratiklerin şiddet içeren yönlerini yansıtan vaka incelemelerinden alınmış örneklerle desteklenmiştir.

Anahtar Kelimeler: Şiddet, yapısal şiddet, Foucault, neoliberalizm.

To my beloved parents

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CHAPTER 1

INTRODUCTION

...the poor person does not exist as an inescapable fact of destiny. His or her existence is not politically neutral, and it is not ethically innocent.

The poor are a by-product of the system in which we live and for which we are responsible. They are marginalized by our social and cultural world.

They are the oppressed, exploited proletariat, robbed of the fruit of their labor and despoiled of their humanity. Hence the poverty of the poor is not a call to generous relief action, but a demand that we go and build a different social order.

Gustavo Gutiérrez, *The Power of the Poor in History*

¡Hoy decimos basta! Today we say enough is enough! To the people of Mexico, Mexican brothers and sisters: We are a product of 500 years of struggle—first against slavery, then during the War of Independence against Spain led by insurgents, then to promulgate our constitution and expel the French empire from our soil, and later [when] the dictatorship of Porfirio Díaz denied us the just application of the Reform laws and the people rebelled and leaders like Villa and Zapata emerged, poor men just like us. We have been denied the most elemental education so that others can use us as cannon fodder and pillage the wealth of our country. They don't care that we have nothing, absolutely nothing, not even a roof over our heads, no land, no work, no health care, no food, and no education. Nor are we able freely and democratically to elect our political representatives, nor is there independence from foreigners, nor is there peace or justice for ourselves and our children.
Comandancia General del EZLN, 1993¹

¹ Cited in P. Farmer, *Pathologies of Power: Health, Human Rights, and the New War on the Poor*, (2005, p. 93).

There is no need to discuss the existence of suffering; everybody can agree that it exists. The issue is the attitude that we have towards it. The first excerpt above reflects a particular approach to the suffering caused by poverty. It does not dismiss poverty as a natural bi-product of human existence, nor does it blame the poor for their sufferings, like it was them who caused it by their laziness. It treats poverty as a social phenomenon, caused by the system we created and still maintain. After all, poverty is not a relative term. It is an absolute one. Poverty is a social status (Sahlins, 1972). It “is not a certain small amount of goods, nor is it just a relation between means and ends; above all it is a relation between people” (ibid, p. 37). Just as we can cure many diseases in existence, we can also cure poverty. The world’s most primitive people were not poor, even though they had very few possessions, which amounted to all the things they needed.

Poverty occurs when some in a society cannot fulfill their most basic needs when others have more than enough for a country to thrive. There are three condition of poverty, according to Steven Lee (2009): one must not be poor voluntarily; “one must be poor in a society where others have significant wealth” (ibid, p. 324); one’s possessions must be so meager “that significant harm to him or her results or tends to result from that lack” (ibid, p. 324). As can be seen from this formulation poverty is something that is avoidable; and as much as it is avoidable, it is also morally wrong. To clear the matter, poverty is wrong not because in itself, but because of the results it leads to: “higher risk of disease, shortened life spans, stunted mental and emotional development, and inadequate opportunity to lead a meaningful life” (Lee, 1999, p. 9).

Here are some statistics relating to the gravity of the effects of poverty in real life. According to Forbes² 2,208 men and women in the world have a total wealth of \$9.1 trillion, while the total GDP of Sub-Saharan Africa – the poorest region in the world – in 2016 was approximately \$1.5 trillion³. This means that those 2,208 billionaires own what one billion Sub-Saharan Africans can produce in six years. The number of undernourished people in the world was

² <https://www.forbes.com/billionaires/#71e874d0251c>

³ <https://databank.worldbank.org/data/reports.aspx?source=2&series=NY.GDP.MKTP.CD&country=SSF>

approximately 821 million in 2017⁴. This amounts to 10.9 percent of the world’s population. And, unfortunately, this number has been increasing since 2014. The number of stunted children, who are too short for their age due either to long periods of inadequate nutrition, or repeated infections, or both, was 150.8 million in 2017⁵. FAO says that “[i]n 2017, 7.5 percent of children under five – 50.5 million – were affected by wasting,” which is a condition characterized by low weight for a person’s height, and which “consequently put[s] them at a higher risk of mortality”⁶. 3.1 million children who are under the age of five die each year due to poor nutrition⁷. Since nobody in their sane minds would like to suffer undernourishment or let their children die or suffer from stunting or wanting due to malnutrition, it is safe to conclude that these are all bi-products of excessive poverty. Natural disasters such as extreme heats, floods, storms and droughts are also major contributors to world hunger⁸. The causality between famines and world hunger is not surprising; but what is interesting is that the number of extreme climate-related disasters has nearly doubled since the early 1990s⁹, which indicates the incontrovertible human influence on nature. As Osmani (2000) points, “[m]odern famines are... almost always the result of specific entitlement failure on the part of some vulnerable groups rather than a generalized catastrophe befalling the entire population” (p. 284).

Moreover, more than 3 million people die due to vaccine-preventable diseases each year, half of whom are children¹⁰. Unemployment also can cause intense suffering. According to Schwebel (1997), in a study made in United States, it has been found that “with a 1% rise in unemployment, homicides...

⁴ <http://www.fao.org/state-of-food-security-nutrition/en/>

⁵ <http://www.fao.org/state-of-food-security-nutrition/en/>

⁶ <http://www.fao.org/state-of-food-security-nutrition/en/>

⁷ <https://www.foodaidfoundation.org/world-hunger-statistics.html>

⁸ <http://www.fao.org/state-of-food-security-nutrition/en/>

⁹ <http://www.fao.org/state-of-food-security-nutrition/en/>

¹⁰ <https://www.chop.edu/centers-programs/vaccine-education-center/global-immunization/diseases-and-vaccines-world-view>

increase[d] 5.7%; suicides 4.1%; admissions to mental hospitals, 4.3% for men and 2.3% for women; and deaths from stress-related disorders, almost 2%” (p. 339).

When any of these conditions are present in a person’s life and, most importantly, when they are due to an avoidable cause such as poverty, some scholars see parallels between these end results and acts of violence. Both situations end up harming the victims, physically or psychologically and both are avoidable. Violence too is a social phenomenon and happens as a result of relationships between individuals. However, one might argue that there are fundamental differences between harms caused by structural causes such as poverty and harms caused by intentional acts or threats of violence. For that reason, to emphasize the specificity of the structural or institutional causes of the former, these scholars tend to term it as “structural violence”.

Poverty is a major, though not the only factor for structural violence. To put it simply, structural violence emerges when the conditions of the social system that we breathe in harms either directly, through neglect, or via creating hindrances for a person to live a life worth living. This phrase “a life worth living” might be a bit confusing. My suggestion is to take the Universal Declaration of Human Rights as guidelines for it, and, thus, to define structural violence as the violation of a person’s human rights. When taken as a guideline, human rights violations can help us reckon when acts or conditions of structural violence takes place, since human rights violations do not happen on their own. As Farmer points:

Human rights violations are not accidents; they are not random in distribution or effect. Rights violations are, rather, symptoms of deeper pathologies of power and are linked intimately to the social conditions that so often determine who will suffer abuse and who will be shielded from harm. (2005, p. 7).

For that reason, the discussion of human rights and structural violence goes hand in hand. However, even with the combination of these two concepts, we cannot explain the underlying networks of power that determine who to thrive and who to harm. This is the point where Foucault will be helpful for us. Foucault takes power not in the traditional sense, exemplified in the works of Machiavelli

and Hobbes; as a commodity which can be owned and transferred and gives its owner the capacity to rule over and dominate others, but as a decentralized strategy, “an unending and shifting struggle, a movement that makes some dominant over others” (Oksala, 2011, p. 160). He discards this “negative” conception of power, which does nothing but prohibit; and emphasizes the productive, hence “positive,” aspects of power. Power intervenes; it traverses the whole social body; it collects forms of knowledge and creates discourses. Discourses on how to behave, what to believe in, what to do in one’s life, what to wear, what to eat, etc. Power determines what is “true” and what is “false”.

Power, then, is a network of relations, involving not two extreme sides as dominant and dominated, but as a continuum of relations where the ones who are dominated by some might, in turn, be the dominators of others. There is no clear separation between victims and perpetrators. Within this complex picture of power relations, the concept of structural violence fits perfectly, since perhaps the most important feature of it is that there are no clear perpetrators committing the act or initiating the condition of violence. This does not mean that there are no one responsible, but that finding and condemning those who are responsible are extremely difficult. Another important characteristic of structural violence is that it often ends up causing other, more direct forms of violence to spring up, such as personal violence or state violence. This argument, in turn, supports Foucault’s theory of power as a network of relations without a clear distinction between victims and perpetrators.

Power does not work through same mechanisms all the time, says Foucault. With the coming of modernity, a transformation took place in the nature of power that was exercised by the states (Foucault, 2003). Prior to modernity, sovereign power was the *modus operandi* of states. This power was certainly not omnipotent, as is represented in classical works by Hobbes or Machiavelli. It was severely limited, and worked through rare spectacles of violence, as in public executions. With modernity, however, new mechanisms of power emerged.

“Bio-power,” being one of those new mechanisms of power, emerged in the eighteenth century. Unlike sovereign power, it did not operate on individuals,

but it dealt with the population. Unlike disciplinary power, it did not operate through disciplinary measures; but through regulations. It intervened in the birth and mortality rates, worked to deal with old age, disabilities; i.e. it worked towards increasing the standard of living of the population and towards obtaining an average point to compensate for the variations within the general population (ibid, pp. 245-246). It was a power to “make live”.

Bio-power, however, is Janus faced. “Make live and let die” is how Foucault explains bio-power’s working mechanism. On the one hand, it is a power that encourages life; but, on the other hand, it kills through indirect measures, rather than using brute force. It creates fragments within the population and between populations. It delineates who is worthy of saving and who is not; who needs hospital services, and whose sufferings could be tolerated; who needs benefits and good working conditions, and who needs to be worked till death. Foucault calls this mechanism of fragmentation racism, but whatever it is called, its rationality is to justify states’ murderous functions: to protect my population, I have to let the “other” die.

Structural violence overlaps with this schema of bio-power; at least with its murderous half. Bio-power’s schema of excluding some to benefit others is what creates structural violence. Individuals and segments of populations are excluded from bio-power’s capacity to “let live” when they are left unemployed, receive bad education, meagre pays, and insufficient health-care services. Structural violence results from the power relationship between states and individuals and between individuals, which takes the shape of “bio-power”. Inequalities are embedded within the structure via power relations. And as the power relations create structural violence, the latter feed in to the former by weakening the excluded segments of society.

The neoliberal era includes good examples for the mutually enhancing relationship between (bio)power and violence. As welfare states disappeared, an implicit decision has been made on who “deserves” to receive better health-care, education, and working conditions. As economic growth became the primary aim of states, in many third world countries, millions of people had to be “sacrificed”. Bio-power is still effective; the aim of states is still to increase the

welfare of the population. However, the population is fragmented to such an extent that the poor are violated for the interest of the rich.

The main argument that constitutes the backbone of this thesis is that structural violence and Foucault's conception of power, especially his term "bio-power," complement each other so that they increase each other's capacity of explanation as cognitive tools. Having an attitude that mirrors the Zapatista movement's outcry against the centuries long structural violence they have suffered that is reflected in the second excerpt quoted above, I claim that structural violence is real and should be properly acknowledged. My main aim in this thesis is to bring people's attention to all the *avoidable* sufferings in the world caused by structural conditions, by labeling them as "structural violence" and by using Foucault's theory of power to emphasize the mechanisms of coercion and consent that lurk behind those structures. To do that I will start the first chapter with the discussion on violence, structural violence and human rights. In the next chapter I will describe Foucault's theory of power and his different types of power and explain what kind of relationship each has with the phenomenon of violence. In the third chapter I will bring together the two theoretical schemes within the discussion of neoliberal governmentality and in the last chapter I will conclude.

CHAPTER 2

DEFINING VIOLENCE

2.1 Introduction

The concept of “violence” is a notoriously troublesome subject to conduct research upon. Since it does not have *a* definition but multiple. Some, even, are in contradiction with each other, as can be discerned from the multiple forms that violence takes in different contexts: physical violence, psychological violence, public violence, domestic violence, institutional violence, structural violence, cultural violence, symbolic violence, divine violence, and etc. (De Haan, 2008). This ambiguity of “violence” makes it impossible to come to an agreement on what exactly it is.

In this cacophony, though, there is one thing almost all authors seem to agree upon: the lack of research on the subject of violence. Starting with Arendt, many authors (see Coady, 2008; etc.) complain about the insufficiency of the amount of texts written on violence. They explain this situation by giving reference to an indifference on the part of social scientists towards the phenomenon of violence. However, through extensive research, this thesis will argue that this may not be the case. If anything, there is an excessive amount of “noise” when it comes to violence. This “noise” though, far from being explanatory, further complicates the already ambiguous field of research. What is needed is no longer a multitude of texts – since we have achieved that – but an improvement in the quality of the written materials, which can be achieved through thorough contemplation on the part of the authors, since the reason for the above-mentioned ambiguity is the taken for granted quality of violence in the first place.

Violence is a word commonly used in daily language. It fits to a place in our common sense, thus steering authors who are working on the subject of violence to take violence as a given. In other words, without much contemplation, authors understand from violence its commonsensical meaning and therefore build their research on such a definition. In certain cases, there may not even be a definition offered; the closest sentence to a definition would be the statement “I know when I see one” (Schinkel, 2013, p. 312). This approach, however, is not a product of sound social science. Using the commonsensical definition may seem appropriate, but it has its own disadvantages¹¹ (Schinkel, 2010). Most importantly, academic research on violence is never neutral. It is a political practice, and the stances authors take regarding violence reflect their political orientations. Therefore, the concept of “violence” requires extensive elaboration when conducting academic research on it. The tendency not to define violence, or to define it in “politically neutral” terms are already political moves. As Zygmunt Bauman comments,

Virtually all writers attempting to come to grips with the phenomenon of violence find the concept either under-, or over-defined, or both. They also report in other writers (if they not display it themselves) an amazing reluctance, or ineptitude, to resolve the confusion and put things straight. Above all, they find in the texts they read plenty of understatements and half-truths, a lot of embarrassed silence, and other signs of shamefacedness. (quoted in Schinkel, 2010, p. 17)

Having said these, this chapter will specifically focus on the definition of violence. In the current debate on what violence is, there are roughly two sides: the “minimalist” definition and the “comprehensive” definition¹². These two categories roughly represent two opposing political stances regarding violence. The minimalist definition takes violence as a forceful, physical, intentional infliction of harm by a perpetrator on another person’s body. It is generally

¹¹ This will be discussed under the II. Minimalist Definition section below.

¹² There are several other labels for “minimalist” definition in the literature on violence: “narrow,” “positivist,” “physicalist,” “restricted,” and etc. I went with “minimalist” – which is also used by Bufacchi (Bufacchi, 2005) – for I believe it best reflects the contrast between the two definitions. For a detailed examination, see V. Bufacchi, “Two Concepts of Violence,” *Political Studies Review*, vol.3 (2005), and Id. *Violence and Social Justice*, New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2007

regarded as the “standard definition of violence” due to its aim to reflect the commonsensical usage of the term (Ricci, 2016, p. 10). This view strives to provide a definition of violence that is straightforward and unambiguous, though its success on this matter is debatable, at best. The comprehensive definition, on the other hand, does not find this narrow understanding of violence satisfactory and aim to go beyond these commonsensical definitions. The concept of “structural violence,” the hallmark of comprehensive definition, is of utmost importance for this thesis, for it represents the harm done to human beings by the violent structures within societies. The reason I am engaging in this debate on what violence is, is to revitalize the concept of “structural violence”; because even though it has its deficiencies, structural violence has much to offer us in regard to understanding the intricate relationship between power and violence.

Below, these two perspectives will be scrutinized. First the minimalist definition will be presented along with its deficiencies and criticisms. Then, comprehensive definition will be debated in detail. The latter can present us the relationship between power and violence much more clearly than the minimalist definition could. In order to further clarify the relationship between power and violence the concept of human rights will be introduced. The last part of this chapter will try to connect this chapter with the next, in which the concept of structural violence will be situated within the framework of Foucauldian power relations. Before going into the literature review, though, a quick look at the etymology of violence is beneficial for further clarification.

2.2 Roots of “Violence”

2.2.1. Force and Violation

In the current debate, opposing sides define violence with either “force” or with “violation” and claim that the other concept is either insufficient or inefficient to be a proper definition of violence. Those who define it with force do not accept the “violence is violation” definition and find it an incorrect way to define violence. Those who define violence with violation, on the other hand, partly accept the “violence is force” definition, but claim that it is insufficient.

To the latter, violence cannot be solely explained with force because it need not involve force; therefore, violation stands up as a better definition for the subject at hand. In its roots, however, violence has connections with both those concepts.

The word violence originates from the Latin noun *violantia*, meaning vehemence and impetuosity (Bufacchi, 2007, p. 14; Schinkel, 2010, p. 19; Winter, 2009, p. 30). And that noun relates to both the verb *violare*, the origin of the verb “to violate,” and to the noun *vis*, meaning force. The etymology of the term shows that the word violence involves two main themes: force and violation, resulting with the confused state of the debate in the current literature.

Those who define violence from the point of view of force broadly take violence to be a visible, intentional, and most importantly *forceful* act which visibly and physically harms another person or his/her property. Some may even go as far as claiming that rape is only a violent act when it involves physical acts that accompany rape, such as beating, choking, or etc. (Riches, 1989). In other words, if a rape victim has been drugged, or in any other way not physically harmed, the act is not considered to be a violent act per se. For what is harmed in that situation is not that person’s physical being, but his/her psychological integrity, and any harm exclusive to the latter is not considered within the framework of violence. This may sound preposterous to some, but when violence is equated with force, certain acts have to be excluded from that category. In Audi’s words “[m]urder... is a clear case of violence if carried out by drubbing, but at best a borderline case if carried out by calm and unresisted poisoning resulting in rapid, fearless, and painless death” (2009, p. 139). Some other excluded cases are killing or harming by intentional omission, killing by deadly gas, and kidnapping.

Some writers who define violence on the basis of force, include certain psychological abuses within the category of violence, on the condition that the abuse is highly vigorous and sharp (Audi, 2009). The notations – highly vigorous and sharp – indicate the visibility and the forcefulness of the situation and therefore integral to the definition. Sometimes writers consider damages to animals and nature as violence as well, but this is the extent of the expansion of

the minimalist definition. Beyond this starts the margins of the comprehensive definition which approaches violence from the point of view of “violation”.

Basically, violation is crossing limits. “To violate something is not only to hurt but to transgress, to overstep a limit, infringe upon something, and exceed a boundary” (Winter, 2009, p. 31). To think of violence in terms of violation rather than force allows us to expand the definition of violence and to add non-subjective, non-physical, and non-intentional forms of abuses to the category of violence. Some may be suspicious of the necessity to add those cases to the category of violence, but, hopefully, its importance will be evident in the following pages.

As a last remark in this section, an etymology of violence would be incomplete without any reference to the word “gewalt,” the German word for “violence”. Actually, translating “gewalt” as “violence” does not do justice to the whole meaning the word has in the German language. The word has a semantic duality: it means both violence and power (Hanssen, 2000; Schinkel, 2010, pp. 20-21). Etymologically speaking, the word “gewalt” originates from the old Germanic word *waldan*, which means “to reign, to control” (Schinkel, 2010, p. 20). The duality of the word was further enhanced in the Middle Ages when *gewalt* was translated both as power, *potestas*, and violence, *violentia* (Schinkel, 2010, p. 21). This duality of the word still continues today, as can be seen in Benjamin’s groundbreaking essay “Zur Kritik der Gewalt”, in which he first and foremost tried to elaborate the relationship between power and violence, both of which are conveyed by the word *Gewalt* (Hanssen, 2000). As this text aims to investigate the relationship between power and violence, the semantic duality of the term *Gewalt* becomes important for the task at hand.

2.2.2 Violence: Normative and Descriptive Usages

In their discussions, many authors give reference to the descriptive usage of “violence” and “violent” and criticize the comprehensive definition through it. To them, it is essential to limit the meaning of the word violence in order to do academic work; because otherwise things will get out of the scholars’ hands,

since the English language uses the noun “violence” and the adjective “violent” in many occasions, most of which are not even remotely related to the “actual” meaning of violence. Some examples of these descriptive usages are “a violent storm,” “violent (impassioned) words,” “do[ing] violence to a scriptural text,” and “violence of pain” (Wade, 1971, p. 370). It is clear that the expressions do not try to convey, in their usage of violence and violent, the same meaning conveyed in the phrase “acts of violence” such as murder, maiming, and bodily injury (ibid). The reason for this crowd of meaning is that in the former cases the words have been used descriptively, while on the latter case the word violence is used normatively: “an action may be violent (descriptively) and not be a case of violence (normatively); ...again, an action may be a case of violence (normatively) and not be itself an action that is violent (descriptively)” (ibid, p. 370). Sports like boxing and hockey are clearly violent, but as to whether or not they are instances of violence, one can at most say that they are borderline cases. The high level of consent involved, and their entertaining aspect erode their violent quality in the normative level, though they are still violent in the descriptive level. Another example commonly given is in reference to severe medical operations. A surgeon using immense force while operating on a patient may seem violent; but, clearly, it is not a case of violence. Conversely, killing with poison may not seem violent at all, but to most, it is a clear case of violence.

So, perhaps, for argument’s sake, it is better to distinguish “violent acts” from “acts of violence,” reserving former for describing the quality of an act, and latter for normative cases of violence. These two dimensions of violence are not mutually exclusive, though; they can occur simultaneously. For instance, an act of violence, can be and occasionally is violent, although not necessarily so (Harris, 1980, p. 16; Bufacchi, 2007, p. 13). The point is to distinguish normative acts of violence from purely descriptive acts in order to avoid a confusion in meaning.

Evidently, the most important aspect of violence is its normative aspect (ibid, p. 370). Violence is not a neutral word; it is a morally and politically charged word. When we say an act of violence has been done to someone or something, we do not simply make a statement. Rather we make a normative

statement, involving moral values and judgements. Certain authors, whom Winter classifies as “positivists”, disclaim that violence is a normative subject and claim that any researcher working on this particular subject has to take violence as an observable fact, a direct, visible, and intersubjective infliction of physical harm, without any of its extended dimensions, such as psychological, symbolic, structural, or cultural violence (Winter, 2009, p. 33). Taking violence normatively, according to them, is an attempt “by those on the political left to politicize social research” which results with social science diverting from science into metaphysics (ibid, p. 33). The critique of Winter for these positivists is insightful enough to quote here:

The argument relies on a (usually tacit) positivist epistemology that, irrespective of the well-known criticisms by authors as different as Nietzsche, Adorno, Kuhn, and Feyerabend, conceives of science as the study of observable phenomena, denies the possibility of knowledge of unobservable objects, and insists on a fact/value distinction. (ibid, pp. 33-34)

Whether they claim that violence is unnatural (Aristotle), or it is natural and therefore unpolitical (Hobbes), or it is mute and instrumental and hence anti-political (Arendt), the common idea among all these points is a clear demarcation of violence from politics. However, even the very act of defining violence is political. Including structural causes of violence, such as malnutrition, insufficient health services, and poverty, when and if they are avoidable, into its meaning is an active political decision¹³. By including them into one’s definition of violence one scandalizes these acts, gives them the feeling invoked in an act of murder. The consequences are the same, and as Engels mentions, why should they be treated differently in the first place?

When one individual inflicts bodily injury upon another, such injury that death results, we call the deed manslaughter; when the assailant knew in advance that the injury would be fatal, we call his deed murder. But when society places hundreds of proletarians in such a position that they inevitably meet a too early and an unnatural death, one which is quite as much a death by violence as that by the sword or bullet; when it deprives thousands of the necessities of life, places them under conditions in which they cannot live—forces them,

¹³ Structural aspects of violence will be the main discussion point in the following pages.

through the strong arm of the law, to remain in such conditions until that death ensues which is the inevitable consequence—knows that these thousands of victims must perish, and yet permits these conditions to remain, its deed is murder just as surely as the deed of the single individual; disguised, malicious murder, murder against which none can defend himself, which does not seem what it is, because no man sees the murderer, because the death of the victim seems a natural one, since the offence is more one of omission than of commission. But murder it remains. (cited in Winter, 2009, p. 213).

It seems that, what positivists intend to do is to aestheticize violence. This idea is inspired from Walter Benjamin's critique of the Nazi regime and of how they conducted their propaganda through movies and other forms of art, in his famous article "The Work of Art in the Age of Mechanical Reproduction" (Benjamin, 2015). Benjamin accused the Nazis for aestheticizing politics (ibid, p. 235). In this sense, what positivists do here is aestheticizing violence. They draw attention to the spectacular violence, bloody violence, which is visible, physical and intersubjective. They point to the overt forms of violence and aver that we need to consider these and only these as violence, thereby concealing other forms of violence which are covert, non-subjective, and/or psychological (Winter, 2009). Against this, politicizing violence means uncovering its links with power relations, to see how from the political it springs and how it enhances the political in return. The second chapter of this thesis will be mostly preoccupied with this statement; but before that, different definitions of violence have to be further elaborated and discussed.

2.3 The Minimalist Definition

As stated above, the minimalist definition of violence is the "standardized" definition within the literature. The scholars that subscribe to this point of view, strive to define violence in a clear-cut, unambiguous manner, and abstain from including non-subjective, non-physical, and invisible acts to their definitions of violence, for fear of complicating the matter. The basic tenets of the minimalist definition are: (1) focusing on visible and intentional acts; (2) prioritizing the

act, the performance (the perpetrator's point of view) over consequences (the victim's point of view); (3) not considering omissions as actions, and therefore not considering harm done as a result of an omission as an act of violence; (4) and lastly, seeing violence solely as an instrument, a mean used to achieve a specific end. In the rest of this section, first, these tenets of the minimalist definition will be discussed, and their failures criticized through arguments directed towards them. Second, the legitimist definition will be introduced, which is also a type of minimalist definition, but with a twist, and criticized not via the common points mentioned before that, but with arguments directed against the peculiarity of the legitimist definition itself.

2.3.1 Violence as the Dark Side of Force

Adopting a positivist view within social sciences is neither uncommon, nor unpopular. When it comes to studying violence, we can see that the positivistic approach is praised and adopted by many scholars¹⁴, who believe that in order to engage in sound social science researchers have to have clearly defined concepts. Of course, even a concept as complex as violence would not be an exception to this rule and should have clearly defined boundaries and have as little borderline cases as possible. To achieve such a clear definition of violence, it has to be narrowed down solely to visible, physical, inter-subjective and immediate incidents.

Most importantly, though, violence has to be defined as a *specific* type of force, which offers the possibility to constitute violence and force as separate phenomena, while helping the scholars to acknowledge the shared essence of the two concepts. For example, according to this logic, while killing someone by stabbing them is both an act of violence and a use of force, pushing someone to save them from a car crash is not a case of violence, although it may involve force. Therefore, the aim of the distinction brought forth here between the

¹⁴ e.g. Betz (1977), Coady (2008), Keane (2004), Spierenburg (2008), and Audi (2009).

concepts of “violence” and “force” is to respect the difference between constructive force and destructive force.¹⁵

The minimalist definition generally goes like this: violence is the application of *physical force* on a person’s body, by another person, with the *intention* to harm. An archetype of this can be found in Dewey’s writings (Dewey, 2009). He sees violence as a type of force, just like power is; but what differentiates these distinct phenomena is the manner in which they are used. Power is an efficient and creative use of force (or energy), while violence is a wasteful use of force (or energy) (ibid). “Energy becomes violent when it defeats or frustrates purpose instead of executing or realizing it... when its outcome is waste instead of production, destruction instead of construction, we call it not energy or power but violence” (ibid, pp. 6-7). So, on one end of the spectrum lies power and on the other, violence. In the middle, there is what he calls “coercive force”. It is basically the arena of law and therefore, uses force in the most efficient and economical way to get the least possible waste (ibid, p. 12).

The crucial point of Dewey’s arguments lies on violence being a distinct type of force, which is the essence of all definitions that fall under the category of “the minimalist definition.” Violence is presented in all these definitions as “the dark side of force”. Another archetype of the minimalist definition is given by The Oxford English Dictionary. Violence is, according to the OED,

the exercise of physical force so as to inflict injury on, or cause damage to, persons or property; action or conduct characterized by this; treatment or usage tending to cause bodily injury or forcibly interfering with personal freedom.

Similarly, the definition given by the World Health Organization treads on the same ground:

¹⁵ There is another consequence of distancing violence from force, however. Force is, first and foremost, a neutral concept. It can be used for both good and evil purposes. Violence, on the other hand, involves bad, or even evil connotations. It is a *prima facie* wrong concept. This normative dimension of violence becomes especially clear when contrasted with an ostensibly non-normative, non-evaluative concept like force (Bufacchi, 2007, p. 21). There emerges, as a result, a paradox within the minimalist definition tradition: these scholars, while praising the benefits of taking violence as a non-evaluative concept, claiming the need to define it “more soberly, with less normative flourish” (Keane, 2004, p. 35), criticizing the left for emphasizing the normative dimensions of violence and, therefore, “politicizing” social sciences, implicitly situate violence as a normative concept when they distinguish it from force

The intentional use of physical force or power, threatened or actual, against oneself, another person, or against a group or community, that either results in or has a high likelihood of resulting in injury, death, psychological harm, maldevelopment or deprivation (WHO Report on Violence and Health, 2002, p. 5).

Coady is also among those who affirm the thesis, “violence is (a type of) force,” by defining violence as “positive interpersonal acts of force, usually involving the infliction of physical injury” (Coady, 2008, p. 23).

These are all the foremost examples of the minimalist definition of violence, and as mentioned before, there are certain common points between these definitions that constitute the core of the minimalist definition. These common points allow scholars to include in their definition some acts of violence, while excluding other. Below, some of these definitions will be evaluated with respect to these common points.

2.3.1.1 Visibility and Intentionality

First, the minimalist definition perspective reduces violence to a visible, physical, and immediate force, and by doing so it rejects concepts like psychological violence, cultural violence, symbolic violence, structural violence, and etc. on the grounds that these concepts only cause to confuse the meaning of violence. From this perspective, these intangible, abstract concepts are unfit to be categorized as violence. “There is no psychological or covert violence” says Betz, “simply because all violence is necessarily and by conventional definition overt or physical” (Betz, 1977, p. 342). However, some in this tradition, like Audi, still believe in the merits of including psychological violence to their definitions (Audi, 2009). The argument is that the somatic and the mental cannot be thought as mutually exclusive; a harm to the one of them has effects on the other (Winter, 2009, p. 34; Ricci, 2016, p. 3). Therefore, not all violence need harm a person’s physical body; psychological harm also counts as violence (Audi, 2009). Others in this tradition, however, do not agree with this line of thinking. The logic is that if they were to include psychological violence in their definition, as Audi does in his unconventional definition that

still runs along the lines of “violence as force,” they would risk obscuring their meticulously crafted definitions. They cannot have that; because, perhaps the only credible argument they have against the comprehensive definition is that the latter extends the definition of violence to such a degree that it comprises everything, and therefore, becomes meaningless (Betz, 1977; Coady, 2008; Keane, 2004; Spierenburg, 2008). Betz, for instance, blames Garver, a major figure in the comprehensive definition tradition, for “spiritualizing” violence to such an extent that it becomes “unrecognizable” (Betz 1977, p. 343).

However, psychological violence (or any other concept mentioned above) need not be obscure. For starters, it is not invisible. One can see the psychological effects of an act of violence as well as the effects of a fractured rib: they both have symptoms. A rape victim not only suffers the beating and the penetration; she/he also suffers psychologically, and the psychological aspects of the event are generally more catastrophic than its physical aspects (Jackman, 2002). Anyone who has read Brison¹⁶ (2009), who shares her own experiences as a rape victim in her academic work, can attest to the fact that a traumatic event can broke a person both physically and psychologically by destroying the self.

Similarly, structural violence is also not invisible. Although this concept will be discussed in detail down below, for now it can be said that this particular statement can be shown to be true with two simple but devastating examples: sexism and racism. From different restrooms for different races, to the enormous opportunity gap between the sexes, the symptoms and, most importantly, the effects of racism and sexism are visible throughout the entire society that harbors them. Although they may not involve constant direct physical violence, the threat of violence they beget can have devastating effects, similar to those resulting from direct physical violence, on the people they repress and marginalize. I believe it is clear from these examples that both psychological violence and structural violence are as visible and harmful as physical violence,

¹⁶ See S. J. Brison, “Outliving Oneself” in *Violence: A Philosophical Anthology*, ed. by V. Bufacchi (2009).

and there is no need not to consider them under the category of violence.¹⁷ As Scheper-Hughes and Bourgois says:

Violence can never be understood solely in terms of its physicality – force, assault, or the inflection of pain – alone. Violence also includes assaults on the personhood, dignity, sense of worth or value of the victim... Focusing exclusively on the physical aspects of torture/terror/violence misses the point and transforms the project into a clinical, literary, or artistic exercise, which runs the risk of degenerating into a theater or pornography of violence in which the voyeuristic impulse subverts the larger project of witnessing, critiquing, and writing against violence, injustice, and suffering. (Scheper-Hughes & Bourgois, 2004, p. 1).

Another aspect of the minimalist definition of violence is to consider *intentionality* to be a major aspect of violence. In the literature, violence is generally thought as an intentional act. Keane defines violence as “the more or less *intended*, direct but unwanted physical interference by groups and/or individuals with the bodies of others” (Keane, 2004, p. 35)¹⁸, and Spierenburg

¹⁷There is still some merit in the above-mentioned criticism, though not in the way they intend it. Definitions including psychological violence can be vague, although this is not because the definition includes it. Take Audi for instance. His three-part definition is, I think, unique in its genre in trying to be as specific as possible, though failing to be so in the end. He says “[v]iolence is the physical attack upon, or the vigorous physical abuse of, or vigorous physical struggle against, a person or animal; or the highly vigorous psychological abuse of, or the sharp, caustic psychological attack upon, a person or an animal; or the highly vigorous, or incendiary, or malicious and vigorous, destruction or damaging of property potential property” (Audi, 2009, p. 143). The problem with this definition is with the words vigorous, sharp and malicious, and not with the inclusion of psychological violence. These are, as Bufacchi points, vague and subjective concepts making his definition – or better yet, description – vague as well (Bufacchi, 2007, p. 25). In the end, however, the point is not whether or not the concept of psychological violence is vague, but how one constitutes one’s definition of violence. In case of Audi, it is the above-mentioned words that make the whole argument somewhat vague, not the inclusion of psychological violence.

¹⁸The minimalist definition puts great emphasis on the lack of consent in an act of violence. Some authors (such as Keane) stress that an act of violence is an “unwanted” application of force onto people’s physical entities. The word “unwanted” denotes the lack of consent on behalf of the victim and seems plausible enough to be included in a definition of violence. However, consent is a highly problematic word. Think about a wife who claims that she consents for the beating she endures from her husband. How about Chinese women who practiced footbinding because it was the acknowledged beauty standard of the day? How about duels done between two consented individuals that results with one of them dead? All of these instances, although they involve consent on behalf of the victim, are instances of violence. In the first, the husband is the perpetrator, in the second, the culture, and in the third, the opponent. But, under the heading of consent, there is a phenomenon whose status involves much controversy: self-induced violence. “It involves consent; therefore, it is not violence” cannot be a valid argument, as mentioned above; so, suicide, euthanasia, self-flagellation or any other self-induced harm should

“include[s] into the category of violence all forms of *intentional* encroachment upon the physical integrity of the body” (2008, p. 17) (emphasis is mine). However, in certain instances, the rule of intentionality has to be relaxed, because there are instances of unintentional violence (Bufacchi, 2009). Foreseeability should be as important as intention when it comes to defining violence. Many deaths that occurred during the construction of the Burma Railway are proof to this. The treatment of the Japanese army towards the forced workers, who were comprised of Allied prisoners of war and Southeast Asian civilian labor, resulted with many deaths, although many of them died as a result of terrible working conditions, rather than as a result of direct actions on behalf of the Japanese army. These deaths were foreseeable, but may not be intended, and not including these deaths within the premises of “violence” is a major sign of intellectual incompetence.

Psychological violence can also be intentional, as in the example given by Garver, in which a young girl kills herself as a result of severe coercion from her parents who demanded her to kill her beloved dog with a pistol, because she had spent the night out with a man (Garver, 2009, pp. 175-176). There is no physical violence here, neither parent directly kills the girl, nor causes her any physical injury; though, there is severe psychological violence, so much so that the girl ends up killing herself. No wonder after the event the father says “I killed her. It’s just like I killed her myself” (ibid, p. 176).

Of course, intention is an important factor in determining whether an act is violent or just an accident. The point is not that all acts of violence need to be intentional. There are unintentional but foreseeable events, which should also be considered as acts of violence. A very common example is driving under the influence of alcohol (Bufacchi, 2009). It is foreseeable that risks of an accident happening while the driver is drunk are much higher, compared to when he/she is sober; and when deadly or injurious accidents happen, the law holds the drunken driver responsible for the damage, for he/she should have foreseen the

also be included under the category of violence. This argument does not posit, however, that these instances are necessarily bad or wrong. Remember, violence is only *prima facie* wrong; meaning it can be justified. And to me, euthanasia, for instance, is a perfectly justifiable act.

event, and should have not driven his/her car. I think in this instance too we can say that the driver, being the perpetrator, did violence to others, albeit unintentionally.

Some may argue that there is a difference between intentionally killing someone and unintentionally, but foreseeably, causing them to die, in terms of moral weight attached to each. But this also is not necessarily so as is evident in the case of the Burma Railway or in any other case of forced labor and slavery. A slave owner, who severely exploits his/her slaves can foresee that his/her treatment towards them may cause their premature, but undesired death, for, in that event, the slave owner also loses a part of his/her assets. In this case, the death of the slave is clearly no accident, and the suggestion that this death carries less moral weight on behalf of the perpetrator than if he/she were to kill the slave directly, is highly debatable. For one thing, watching someone die slowly over a certain amount of time can be said to be much more “evil” than killing someone with a prompt urge. However, the debate on the moral weight of intentional and unintentional acts of violence is very extensive, and, therefore, beyond the scope of this thesis. For that, not wishing to claim to have a conclusive assertion, there will be no further discussion on this matter.

2.3.1.2 Perpetrator’s Point of View

Second, the minimalist definition approach allows scholars to configure violence from the point of view of the perpetrator. In other words, the scholars that follow the minimalist definition point of view focus on the act rather than the consequences. Because what is “real” and visible is the act, they argue that although victims’ point of view is important in a criminological sense, for the purpose of using in the definition of violence, it is too subjective (Kilby, 2013). However, when it comes to a subject such as violence, not including the perspective of the victim is simply flawed logic. On certain occasions, only victim’s perspective determines whether an act is an act of violence or not. For instance, many scholars do not consider inter-marital coerced sex as rape, which, according to the victims, clearly is (Singh, Sharma & Dubey, 2018). Focusing

on the perspective of victims also helps us define cases of severe exploitation as violence. Slavery, racism, sexism... these are all institutionalized forms of violence, and in certain cases only visible when looked from the victim's perspective. In a racist society, the possibility of violence is always present, and this threat imposes psychological violence upon the receiving part of racism. To be fair, the threat of violence is not the same as its act; but as far as its consequences are concerned, they are not so different. Take mock executions, for example. These are events in which a prisoner is made to think that their or another person's execution is imminent. The rituals applied in these events include blindfolding, making the prisoners dig their graves, recount their last wishes, firing blanks or shooting near at the victim. The only difference between mock executions and real executions is the act of killing. Every experience up to that point is the same; and considering the fact that the act of killing puts an end to victim's sensual experiences, from a consequentialist perspective, the effects that the two leave on a person are the same. From a perpetrator's perspective, though, this conclusion is harder to reach, since there are no visible forceful acts that can be described as "violent"; but the victim's perspective clearly shows that there is little difference between the two in terms of the effects they leave upon the victim's body and psyche. Therefore, it is of utmost importance to use both perspectives, rather than only using the perpetrator's, for it will allow us to recognize certain acts of violence.

2.3.1.3 Omissions

Third, there is a discussion in the literature of violence about whether omissions could be considered as acts of violence. Since omissions are not acts per se – omission by definition mean abstaining from doing an act – some, especially the proponents of the minimalist definition, claim that they cannot be considered as "acts of violence" (Miller, cited in Bäck, 2004, p. 228). Against this, there are others, mostly from the comprehensive definition camp, who posit that omission is a specific type of act, which may or may not result with violence (Bufacchi, 2009; Garver, 2009). There is no denying that neglect can be as

deadly as direct killing. A neglected infant would die in a matter of days. Nevertheless, does this make neglect an act of violence? Miller's answer is no, "since neglecting cannot be done with great force" (cited in Bäck, 2004, p. 228). However, neglect, or more generally omissions, too, can be seen as forceful events by looking at the effects they muster (Bäck, 2004). Bufacchi says "in terms of doing violence, there is no difference between a direct action and an omission" (2009, p. 48); but we simply cannot say that all omissions are acts of violence. So, how to differentiate an omitting action – purposefully done, with a violent result – from a simple inability to act? The important point, Bufacchi (2009) says, lies in these: alternativity and foreseeability. The perpetrator has to have an alternative to the omitting action and he/she should be able to foresee the results of that omitting action. In the case of exploitation, for instance, the perpetrator, being the employer, has both: he/she can, most of the times, improve the conditions of work, and he/she, being a human being, can also foresee the effects of hazardous working conditions. As a result, we can say that the employer's omitting act of not changing the harmful working conditions of the workers should be considered an act of violence.

2.3.1.4 Instrumentality

Finally, instrumentality covers a significant part in the literature on violence. Winter reminds us that although there is generally a lack of agreement on how to define violence among political theorists, "there is one aspect of violence that is rarely contested: its instrumental status" (Winter, 2009, p. 16). Arendt, being one of the forerunners in this discussion, takes violence solely by its instrumental character, with the aim of distinguishing it from power (Arendt, 1969).

She argues that perhaps the biggest mistake in political theory, both traditional and critical, was the reluctance to distinguish the two, seeing both in an endless circle, continually generating each other. To Arendt, not only violence and power are different phenomena, they are also antithetical to each other. Neither can promote nor generate each other; although, sometimes, they appear

together. This, according to Arendt, is what confuses these thinkers into thinking that violence is the extreme form of power, though, it is perfectly clear to Arendt that violence is not the extreme form of power; on the contrary, violence is the antithesis of power (Bernstein, 2011). “[W]here the one rules absolutely, the other is absent” (Arendt, 1969, p. 56). Take totalitarian regimes, for instance, where violence rules absolutely. Those regimes are examples of the rule of One against All, in which every opposition is silenced, everyone is treated as disposable, the political and the public disappears, and with them power, since there are no opportunities for collective action anymore (ibid). What creates power and political life is the ability to speak; when this is taken, power disappears and violence reigns. In that event, there seems to remain no difference between humans and animals, and thus humans become disposable. Nazis did not consider Jews as human beings capable of reason and feelings, but as garbage in need to be disposed. The reason for this, Arendt posits, is the instrumental character of violence. Arendt never provides us a proper definition of violence. From her definition of power and her comparisons of violence and power, do we understand what she means when she talks about violence. Within this ambiguity, however, there is one thing she insists on fervently and that is the instrumentality inherent in violence. It might not be entirely wrong to put forward that she defines violence completely from its instrumental character. What she means from instrumentality is that while power serves no end and it emerges for its own sake, violence always serves something other than itself (ibid). In other words, violence always serves as a mean to achieve an end (Winter, 2009, p. 19). This means-ends relationship is absent in power; where power exists, human beings are not treated as means to an end, but where violence rules, they most certainly are¹⁹.

However, instrumentality is a tricky concept to identify violence with. “To regard violence instrumentally... is not merely to treat it as a means to an end, but to consider it a silent tool that has an entirely contingent and purely functional relation to its purpose” (Winter, 2009, p. 22). Instrumentality is only

¹⁹ This distinction is the reflection of the distinction between Kantian categorical imperative and hypothetical imperative, which relies on utilitarian calculation.

a subset of the means-ends relationship; to consider something as instrumental is more than to consider it as a mean used to achieve a certain end (ibid). An instrument is a tool, ready to be disposed when it has served its purpose. To regard violence instrumentally, is to regard violence as a “dumb tool,” devoid of any meaning outside of the end for which it is used (ibid).

Acts of violence often are embedded in circuits of meaning. They are symptoms to much deeper problems in societies. As Winter avers, “practices of violence are always vehicles of meaning; they signify. Violence is never just an instrument; it always carries a meaning which overflows any functional dimension” (2009, p. 63). This expressive function of violence is distinct from its instrumental function: while the latter signifies its use as a means towards the achievement of an end, the former emphasizes the delivery of a message involving anger, hatred or even an identity (Hastrup, 2003, p. 312; Ray, 2011, pp. 9-10; Wieviorka, 2009, pp. 87-90). The expressive function of violence confuses means with ends, and in extreme conditions, violence becomes an end in itself. However, in most acts of violence instrumental and expressive functions appear together. Public lynching of black people in the south of U.S. is a testimony to this double function of acts of violence. The photo of the lynching of Lige Daniels in 1920 shows the smiling faces of his murderers posing underneath the black boy hanging from a tree. The hanging was carried due to the allegations that Daniels, who was 18 at the time, killed a white woman with no apparent reason, without a proper trial and against the pleading of public officials. After the murder, in accordance with the tradition of public lynching, perpetrators gathered under the branch from which Daniels hanged, posed, and later turned this photograph to a postcard to be distributed as a souvenir. Even though we can find a reason for the act of violence if we were to dig too deep – the allegations that Daniels killed a white woman – the overwhelming quality of this act of violence is its expressive function. The lynching expresses the supremacy of the white people and gives the message to anyone who would dare mess with them that there will be retributions. Unfortunately, the lynching of Lige Daniels was not one of the rare lynching occasions; similar but much more

draconian events took place in the south of U.S., whose principal aim was not to punish, but to express hatred.

2.3.2 Conservative Definition: Violence as the Illegitimate Use of Force

In the preceding pages I described the minimalist definition and how it presents violence as “the dark side of force.” I have also listed the crucial points addressed with the definition, along with some criticisms directed at them. Below I will introduce a definition, which also constitutes violence as a type of force, but with a twist. This definition draws a clear line between the two with reference to legitimacy. These scholars (such as Wilkinson and Wolff) constitute force as the legitimate use of coercion, primarily monopolized by states, and violence as the illegitimate use of coercion, usually done against them. This Weberian account of force/violence is highly popular among conservative writers. When violence is defined in this manner, these scholars tend to favor the state against revolutions, insurgent movements, riots, etc.; in other words, they tend to favor the status quo against any demands to change it. Consequently, state violence is seldom recognized as such within this view; instead, it is called “reactive force” – reactive against an act of violence – or, simply, “force.”

This doublespeak stems from states’ claim of legitimacy. Early on in the state making process, European monarchs carefully drew the line between legitimate and illegitimate uses of force, which resulted with the heads of state monopolizing the means of violence and declaring illegitimate any use of violence by the rest of the subjects (Tilly, 2002; Weber, 2002). Asides from their claim of legitimacy, states have “*de jure* authority” meaning they have “the right to command and to be obeyed” (Wolff, 1969, p. 604). Against the legitimate commands and acts of the state, any act is deemed illegitimate, and if they are intentional, forceful, and harmful, a use of violence. As a result, violence becomes, according to this view, “illegitimate and unsanctioned acts of individuals or groups of individuals intended to inflict injury on others” (Girvezt, 1975, p. 185), or “the illegitimate or unauthorized use of force to effect decisions against the will or desire of others” (Wolff, 1969, p. 606). If the act of violence

is political in nature, i.e., if it is directed against the state or the government in the hope for procuring change, it becomes “a considerable or destroying use of force against persons or things, a use of force prohibited by law and directed to a change in the policies, personnel or system of government, and hence to changes in society” (Honderich, 1976, p. 98). Violence, in this view, is still a type of force, but with a deeper line drawn between them: violence is the name given to the illegitimate use of force; or, vice versa, force is the name given to the legitimate use of violence (van den Haag, 1972).

This line of thinking, though, is flawed in several ways. Most importantly, the argument that only non-state agents engage in violence, while states use force, is, simply, not true. States engage in violence too. History is filled with examples to prove this. “The most destructive and extensive instances [of violence] in recent history have been state organized and sanctioned. States have organized violence both as a means of punishment, but also of entertainment and glorification of its power” (Ray, 2011, p. 7). Of course, not all forceful acts of the states are violence, and not all violent acts of the states are bad. As mentioned before, violence is only *prima facie* wrong, meaning, it is justifiable. Violence can be both necessary and appropriate under certain circumstances, such as using non-homicidal violence while opposing to a dictatorship, or while subduing a suspect, before he/she could achieve his/her attack on innocent civilians. The important point is, as Robert Holmes asserts, “those who defend the state, or who defend war, cannot ease the burden of justifying the killing and the destruction war and the state entail by denying that it constitutes violence” and these supporters cannot and should not “substitute less emotively charged words like ‘force’ and ‘coercion’ for the term ‘violence’” (Holmes, 1991, p. 50).

One may notice that some authors under this tradition²⁰ accept the fact that states sometimes engage in violent activities. Otherwise, how could they explain the wars started by the USA, or the Holocaust, or the brutal treatment of the IRA members by the Thatcher government? This perspective assumes that one can label acts of states as violence whenever states engage in illegitimate use of force, as when police officials use unsanctioned force on protestors or when a

²⁰ Such as Wilkinson, cited in J. Ladd (1991).

country enters into a state of exception in order to remove the limits of law on state action (Wolff, 1969, p. 606). It should be reminded that the definition of violence that these authors support is not that “violence is the illegal use of force,” but “the illegitimate use of force”.²¹ After all, if one defines violence as any illegal use of force, how can one acknowledge what Nazis did to Jews was violence? It was in their laws, under the name of “The Final Solution”. Therefore, if one defines violence done by the states as extra- or illegal activities one cannot claim that Holocaust was an act of violence. The perspective of legitimacy seems like the better alternative here, which turns violence into any illegitimate use of force. Legitimacy differs from legality in that what is legal does not have to be legitimate, and what is legitimate is not always legal. However, then again, what is legitimacy?²² How can one determine what is legitimate and what is illegitimate? As Ladd points, the answers to these questions are highly relativistic and they involve ethnocentric interpretations (1991, p. 30). It is important therefore, to define violence, not as a matter of legality or legitimacy, but as a broader schema, which, consequently, can involve both legitimate and illegitimate instances of violence. This is one of the aims of the comprehensive definition.

2.4 The Comprehensive Definition

Under the umbrella concept “comprehensive definition,” lies definitions that do not reduce violence to “physical, visible, intentional, inter-subjective and destructive force”. Although different scholars come up with variegated accounts, there is still a common theme that binds these definitions: the concept of *violation* (Bufacchi, 2007). As was the case with force in minimalist definition, scholars under this tradition, define violence as “violation of ...”. The blank space is often filled with “rights,” though some scholars bring a unique

²¹ See Ladd for a discussion on the legalist and legitimist views on violence.

²² For a detailed examination of legitimacy and violence see R. P. Wolff, “On Violence,” *The Journal of Philosophy* (1969).

perspective to their definitions of violence, like Bufacchi, who defines it as a “violation of integrity,” (Bufacchi, 2007) or like Ricci, who defines it as a “violation of human potential” (Ricci, 2016).

Aside from the theme of “violation,” the basic premises of the comprehensive definition can be summed up as follows: (1) acts of violence are not limited to physical acts; psychological acts can also be violent; (2) intentionality is not a decisive feature of an act of violence; unintentional, but foreseeable acts can also be considered as acts of violence; (3) omissions are not excluded from the category of violence; there are “omitting acts” (Bufacchi, 2007, p. 50) that can result with violence; (4) acts of violence are not always visible; situations involving invisible – or naturalized – instances of violence, creating an environment of fear, such as racism or sexism – “culture of terror” in Mick Taussig’s words (1989) – and unrealized acts of violence, such as threats, should also be considered under the category of violence; (5) an acting subject is not necessary for an act of violence; there are non-subjective acts of violence, stemming from the inequalities inherent within a structure.²³

Having pointed the basic tenets of most definitions under the category of comprehensive definition have, it should be noted that what interests us most in the context of this thesis is the concept of structural violence. The aim of this section is to introduce the concept of structural violence and to defend it, while acknowledging that it has deficiencies. The first sub-section will be devoted to the significance of using a comprehensive definition. Here, reasons for choosing an extended definition of violence over the minimalist definition will be stated. The next sub-section will deal with the theme of *violation* and the idea “violence as violation of human rights” will be elaborated. After this, the concept of structural violence will be introduced and elaborated, and lastly the thesis will turn back to the issue of violation and defend the idea of “structural violence as

²³ This summary of the basic tenets of the comprehensive definition is based on Galtung’s account of the distinctions inherent in violence, which will be mentioned below. Although Galtung’s list is more comprehensive and clearer, I think his account does not effectively reflect the common tenets of the comprehensive definition. I, therefore, reformulated and refined his list to use here.

human rights violations,” which will hint at where the second chapter will take us.

2.4.1 Significance of the Subject

There is a widely held belief that violence has declined over the last four centuries. Norbert Elias and Steven Pinker are foremost thinkers in this line of thought. The idea, basically, is that through the process of modernization humanity experienced a decline in the rates of violence. Writers propose different reasons for this general pacification process. For instance, in Elias’s case it was the monopolization of violence by centralized states and the emergence of elaborated self-control mechanisms that resulted with the pacification of the upper classes (Elias, 2000; Ray, 2011). His theory, called “the civilizational process,” is as follows (Elias, 2000; Ray, 2011): as modern states emerged, they acquired a monopoly over the means of violence and pacified their subjects. Meanwhile, as more people began to live in cities, the scope of civil society expanded and there emerged a modern personality, which was calculative, reserved, and self-regulating. Manners in social interactions became crucial as intolerance towards violence and brutality increased, which in turn resulted with decreased aggressiveness in public interactions and, hence, decreased levels of interpersonal violence. According to Elias, this process started somewhere around the sixteenth century, and continues to this day. When met with suspicion and criticism about the compatibility of his views to the 20th century, Elias and his team coined the term “decivilizing period,” to explain the horrors of the Nazi regime, and argued that this is only a period of backlash within a more general period of progress (Ray, 2011).

Similarly, Pinker defends an overall decline in the levels of violence, but he claims that this decline has been going on since at least 10.000 years (Pinker, 2011). The first trend towards pacification, according to him, occurred during the transition process from hunter-gatherers to agricultural societies about 10.000 years ago. Then came Elias’s civilizing process in the transition from early Middle Ages to modern Europe. There was again another pacification trend

that came with the Age of Enlightenment, which witnessed the ascendance of “reason” and a general questioning of forms of violence, such as slavery, torture, and dueling, which were up until then socially sanctioned (ibid, p. 12). The last three processes happened during the last seventy years. The first one was the “Long Peace” between the developed states that the world has witnessed after the end of the World War II; and the second trend was the worldwide declining levels of organized conflicts – such as wars, civil wars, terrorist activities, or genocides – after the end of the Cold War (ibid, p. 12). Lastly, Pinker counts the “Rights Revolutions” as a part of the overall pacification process, in which violence against marginalized people and ethnic minorities have received worldwide criticism and thereby decreased, no less thanks to the Universal Declaration of Human Rights in 1948 (ibid).

The writers who defend the argument that violence has been decreasing, at least since the late Middle Ages, are, of course, not limited with Pinker and Elias. However, there are certain misconceptions that these authors share and I would like to mention a few. First, it is not necessarily true that as humans began living in settled communities, rates of violence have decreased considerably. Many anthropologists argue otherwise: “In the evolution of *Homo sapiens sapiens*, it is likely... that coercion and violence as systematic means of organizational constraint developed especially with the increasing socioeconomic complexity and potential for political hierarchy afforded by substantial stored food surplus and food production” (Knauff, 1991, p. 391). The idea behind the argument that the transition from Paleolithic to Neolithic saw a pacification process is the innate aggressiveness attributed to human beings. The Hobbesian view of the state of nature as nasty, brutish and short is the archetype of this idea. According to this view, the inhibitors for violence are seldom available in pre-modern societies: state structures are either non-existent or, when they exist, they either cannot or do not inhibit people’s violent tendencies (Ray, 2011). Furthermore, the modern personality, which relies on reason and self-control in his/her actions in public, is a rarity, resulting with people succumbing to their whimsical urges. However, it is not because of an uncontrollable evolutionary urge that human beings resort to violence. Violence

is a social phenomenon, it occurs in social settings. If the social environment is relatively egalitarian, we can observe low levels of violence; but, in inegalitarian societies, where the government is relatively oppressive, levels of violence would be much higher. This becomes apparent when one compares violent crime rates at the USA, where income distribution is relatively inegalitarian, and Norway, one of the most egalitarian countries of our era. While the former has high rates of delinquency, crime in the latter is almost non-existent.

Second, the assumption that pre-modern societies were significantly more violent than those in the modern era is very common, albeit misconceived. Siniša Malešević, by distinguishing between three different levels of analysis – “the micro (interpersonal and intra-group) violence, the mezzo (the inter-group and intra-polity) violent actions, and the macro (inter-polity) forms of violence” (Malešević, 2013), argues otherwise: “If we take a more careful look at these three levels it is possible to show that the pre-modern world, and in particular the so-called ‘Dark and Medieval Ages’, were in most instances significantly less violent than the modern era” (ibid, p. 274). Levels of interpersonal violence, what he calls micro-level violence, do not demonstrate dramatic changes over time (ibid). Micro-level violence has always been a rare phenomenon, since humans usually tend to avoid violence whenever they can (ibid, p. 276). As to the mezzo and the macro level, he argues that the modern era is a witness to the escalation of bloodshed. What authors like Elias and Pinker see as the reason for the decrease in violence, the centralized nation states, Malešević sees as the source of this escalation of violence. As nation states accumulated means of violence in their hands, they increased the scale of damage that can be done in a single act of violence. For instance, when taken up by the Nazi regime, rationality and instrumental thinking, hallmarks of modernity, has proved to be very successful in mass murder (Bauman in Ray, 2011, p. 45). One should remember that genocide is a creation of modernity and,

the availability of organizational and infrastructural means for undertaking such a gigantic task and the prevalence of a depersonalized yet highly rationalized ethic and logic that conceive the annihilation of huge groups of people as the most efficient way of implementing a particular ideological blueprint. (Malešević, 2013, pp. 281-282)

Amidst all arguments that even visible physical violence has not decreased with modernity, some, like Steven Pinker (2011), can still maintain that there has been a continuous, gradual decline of violence over time. This is because these scholars focus almost exclusively on visible violence. However, it would not be an overstatement to say that violence has gone under a metamorphosis in the last four centuries (Holmes, 2009, p. 271). It has become invisible, rather than visible; domestic rather than public; and structural rather than personal. Foucault observes some of these transformations in *Discipline and Punish*: his account of how punishment as public spectacle has been replaced by disciplinary techniques proves the transformation of violence from visible to the invisible. Just as this transformation from public executions to prisons does not entail that there has been a decrease in the levels of violence within the punitive system, the general metamorphosis of violence from violence as spectacle to invisible violence does not entail a general decrease in all levels of violence. As Malešević says, “although in modernity violence has become less publicly visible, it is, in fact, much more prevalent” (2013, p. 285).

Therefore, what social scientists ought to do is to include invisible and normalized acts of violence in their analyses and to expose them whenever necessary. Violence, as a subject, has many aspects and “aspect-blindness” reflects the political stance of the author in question (Schinkel, 2010): “For not noticing violence when it nonetheless exists... is to silently condone it, to ratify and legitimize it. The violence of not defining violence is a violence that is necessarily overlooked by the social scientific industry of violence-research” (ibid, p. 17). As mentioned before, defining violence is a political exercise. When dealing with a problem one ought to know what it is, and if violence is the problem and structural violence is not counted as a part of it, then of course, the responsible institutions will not be dealing with the latter. Moreover, of course certain authors will profess that violence has significantly declined in the last couple of centuries. However, as Johan Galtung says, “too little is rejected when peace is held up as an ideal,” if we consider violence to include only visible physical acts. To sum up, there may be times that levels of violence has fluctuated, but the idea that it has steadily declined over centuries is

misconceived. Structural violence is an aspect of violence and it is real; its effects and threats are real, and we, as social scientists, should include it in our analysis.

There is another reason that makes structural violence a significant subject to study and that is the interchangeability of different forms of violence with each other, famously put by Pierre Bourdieu as “the law of the conservation of violence”: “You cannot cheat with the *law of the conservation of violence*” says Bourdieu, “all violence is paid for.... The structural violence exerted by the financial markets, in the form of layoffs, loss of security, etc., is matched sooner or later in the form of suicides, crime and delinquency, drug addiction, alcoholism, a whole host of minor and major everyday acts of violence” (Bourdieu, 1998, p. 40). This relationship between structural and direct violence is crucial because it brings a completely new dimension to the question how to avoid violence. It means that implementing measures to eradicate direct violence has no real effects unless those measures are supplemented with ones directed against structural violence. The chronically oppressed and neglected are often ones that commit violent crimes and organize armed conflicts (Winter & Leighton, 2001, pp. 99-100). Imprisoning those who committed these crimes will have little effect if structural inequalities that lead to these crimes are not addressed. In addition, those inequalities can be addressed; structural violence is not fate. “As insidious as structural violence is... it is not inevitable” (ibid, p. 101). There are numerous strategies that can be used against it such as, “reclaiming neighborhoods, demanding social justice and living wages, providing prenatal care, alleviating sexism, organizing globally while celebrating local cultures, and finding non-militaristic avenues to express our deepest spiritual motives” (ibid, p. 101). But first we need to accept its significance and be ready to deal with it.

2.4.2 Violence as Violation

As mentioned above, there are two sides in the debate on the definition of violence. Those who define it from force and those who define it from violation.

In the preceding section, those who take violence as force were elaborated. To sum up, those who define violence from force see violence as a physical, visible, intentional, interpersonal and instrumental act that is done to another person's body. Those who define violence from violation, however, take this view to be much too simplistic. The criticisms towards the "violence as force" side have been pointed out above and can be summarized as follows: (1) body and psyche cannot be neatly separated; the damage done to one can have effects on the other, therefore, psychological violence, which can be both invisible and non-physical, is a type of violence; (2) violence need not be intentional; foreseeability is more important when it comes to determining whether an act is an act of violence or not; (3) omissions can have the same consequences as acts, and therefore should not be removed from the definition of violence; (4) violence need not be interpersonal; there are instances in which there are victims but the perpetrators are unaccounted for (structural violence) (5) and, lastly, violence is not just an instrument used by rational agents in pursuit of ends; violence can be done for the sake of nothing but itself.

If one agrees with these criticisms, then the "violence as force" argument loses its validity, and the "violence as violation" argument steps forth as a better alternative. But one may ask, "violence as violation" of what? There are many answers to this question, but the most popular one is "violation of rights." Unfortunately, the phrase "violation of rights" is not clear for there are different types of rights – legal, personal, natural, human, and etc. – and proponents for each of them. This thesis champions the "violence as violation of human rights" argument, due mostly to the practical advantages it has over other violence as violation of rights arguments. As will be mentioned below, human rights correspond to something in real world; they are grounded in social reality; and they also have the capacity of legal sanctioning.

One of the most prominent supporters of this view is Jamil Salmi, whose aim is to come up with a definition of violence that is devoid of any cultural perceptions or ideological connotations. Careful not to imbue his "value free definition" with neither liberal nor Marxist tenets, he takes violence as "any avoidable action that constitutes a violation of a human right, in its widest

meaning, or which prevents the fulfillment of a basic human need” (2009, p. 312). With this definition he is able to expand the meaning of violence to include subcategories such as direct, indirect, repressive and alienating violence, while allowing violent acts resulting from omissions and mediations – which are acts whose effects occur in mediated, not immediate forms such as all forms of ecocide that harm human beings – to be properly acknowledged (Salmi, 2009).

The most prominent scholar in this field, though, is undoubtedly Johan Galtung. He is such an influential figure that his studies on violence and peace are still very popular, especially amongst radical opponents of globalization (Bufacchi, 2007, p. 22). His definition of violence and introduction of the concept of “structural violence” to social sciences paved the way for many groundbreaking studies²⁴. In this thesis too, he occupies a central place, although his theory is not taken as is. There are certain weaknesses in his theory on violence, and they, alongside with the problems of the general view “violence as violation of human rights,” will be mentioned after their further delineation.

Galtung defines violence as “present when human beings are being influenced so that their actual somatic and mental realizations are below their potential realizations” (Galtung, 1969, p. 80). To be more precise, he claims that violence exists when people are hindered from reaching their full potential by direct or indirect means: “violence here defined as the cause of difference between what could have been and what is” (ibid, p. 80). According to this definition, “everything that hinders individuals from developing their capabilities, dispositions or possibilities counts as violence” (Winter, 2009, p. 4). That’s why sometimes Galtung refers to the condition of structural violence as “structural injustice” (Galtung, 1969, p. 84).

The decisive factor that helps Galtung label an act as violence is whether the act is avoidable or not. Whenever an act is not avoidable no violence is present, such as the case of deaths resulting from earthquakes or tsunamis; however, if the resulting harm could be avoidable, even in such cases as natural

²⁴ Such as Scheper-Hughes and Bourgois (2004) *Violence in War and Peace*, V. Bufacchi (2007) *Violence and Social Justice*, S. Zizek (2008) *Violence*, P. Farmer (2005) *Pathologies of Power*, and Y. Winter (2009) *Beyond Blood and Coercion*.

disasters, via procedures of early warning and etc., we can reasonable say that violence is present, argues Galtung. Although human rights are not mentioned in this definition, they fit perfectly in this narrative, because they represent the ultimate potential of human beings. Therefore, if we take violation of human rights to include “any obstacle or impediment to the fulfillment of a basic need” (Bufacchi, 2007, p. 22) Galtung’s and Salmi’s accounts appear coterminous.

Galtung further examines violence and avers that it has six dimensions, each involving opposing elements: 1) physical and psychological violence; 2) negative and positive approach to violence; 3) an existence of an object hurt, or not; 4) an existence of a subject who acts, or not; 5) intended or unintended violence; 6) manifest or latent violence (Galtung, 1969, pp. 81-84). Within these, the basic distinction between acts of violence is whether they are personal/direct or structural/indirect. The other dimensions are auxiliary. The important point is that all these types of violence are dangerous for human beings and all should be given appropriate attention. Focusing solely on physical, interpersonal, and manifest violence is, according to Galtung, a disservice to humanity. Peace is not a unidimensional condition, says Galtung, that vanishes when violence is removed from sight. There are many latent and undetectable types of violence; therefore, our efforts should be made to achieve “positive” peace, which is the absence of both direct and structural acts of violence (ibid, p. 99).

Despite its popularity among critical scholars, this definition has certain weaknesses, the major one being its use of the concept “potential.” Not only is this concept vague, it also carries a value judgement. After all, what is potential? How is it determined? There can be two answers given to these questions. First, “potential” can be said to be determined with reference to a universal truth, to which every human being should strive towards. The problems start with the word “universal.” A universal view of human beings, usually centered around the theme “human nature,” gives an ahistorical representation of humanity. In line with a Foucauldian critique of violence, which this study aims to do, I reject any notion of transcendental knowledge or a universal human nature. The universality that Western societies claim to uphold is a product of historical and cultural processes that took place in a specific time and place. Claiming a certain

view is universal assigns an immense amount of authority to that view and it can often lead to a situation that is the exact opposite of what was claimed as universal in the first place. The fact that democratic states, who allegedly do not go in to war with each other, are number one weapon traders affirms this claim. One has to remember that genocides are creations of modernity, the same modernity that considered all human beings to be of equal worth, deserving respect and tolerance (Malešević, 2013). This does not mean that there are no “truths” that can be upheld by the totality of humanity; but “can” and “are” form very different propositions. After all, saying “human rights are universal and must be upheld by every nation” is not the same as saying “human rights can be upheld by every nation, if they were to decide to it.”

Second, “potential” might be said to change in accordance with time, space, and culture one is in. This proposition is also problematic for it leads one to cultural relativism. Although this notion had enjoyed a long history in anthropology, the idea that every culture is “a law unto itself and answerable to nothing other than itself” is not helpful in trying to minimize violence. Cultures are, after all, products of human beings, and like all social systems they too can have parts that can be harmful to human beings. And, as all systems, they too are susceptible to change. Claiming that every culture is a law unto itself, silently condones the acts of violence intrinsic to that culture. Therefore, both a universal view of human nature and cultural relativism are problematic views, which lead to the conclusion that the concept of “potential” is inconvenient to use with reference to violence.

There should be a middle ground between thinking in terms of universals and cultural relativism. If we think of them as occupying two ends of a continuum, the perspective of this study would be in the middle: acknowledging the historicity and locality of notions, while supporting claims against violence that are reasonable to human beings. And that is where the notion of human rights steps in.

When one speaks about human rights, one generally refers to the laws delineated in the UN’s Universal Declaration of Human Rights that was formulated in 1948. The history of the formulation of human rights is much too

long to sketch for the purposes of this thesis; but, in order to briefly state, we can say that human rights are based on the “natural rights” tradition that emerged in Europe in the sixteenth century²⁵. At the beginning, the idea of human rights was laden with exclusions; certain races, religions, minorities, and genders were excluded from the status of “human being.” Slowly, over time, the concept has evolved to take the shape that it has now mostly because of the resistances these excluded groups made and the concessions they demanded. Still, however, even though many states involved in their constitution promises to respect and protect human rights, this respect often does not go beyond a lip-service to human rights (Freeman, 2002). And, the UN, as the supranational institution to make sure these rights are protected and respected, has failed to prevent many violations of human rights that led to catastrophes (ibid, p. 52). However, many researchers still see human rights as a useful concept to employ especially in defying power structures and acts of violence; though, of course, there is wisdom in acknowledging its weaknesses and problems.

The legitimacy and universality of the concept of human rights are usually attributed to the concept of human dignity. A life with dignity is basically assumed to be a life above the level of bare life²⁶, “enjoying the minimum conditions necessary for a life worthy of a human being” (Donnelly, 1989, p. 41). This dignity is said to be inherent in every human being, constituting the essence of human nature. But, since we reject the notion of “human nature” and a humanism – which gives precedence to the subject over the power relations that surround it – that logically follows it, the concept of “human rights” seems unusable for the present enquiry.

²⁵This is not generally agreed upon in the literature on human rights. While certain writers claim there is a rupture between natural rights and human rights, certain others argue that the tradition underlying human rights goes back to Anaximander, who is the first philosopher ever to write on the subject of “justice” (Douzinas, 2000).

²⁶ The bare life that is mentioned here is the Greek notion of bare life that is a life that is no different than an animal’s, barely holding on to life, with necessities scarce in supply. This notion is also in opposition with the Greek concept of “good life,” that connotes a life in which there are no worries about necessities, and human beings have enough time and energy to live a virtuous, dignified life.

Furthermore, the professed universality of human rights seems to arouse the suspicions of many scholars, and not without reason. Marx expresses his disdain for the rights of man in these words:

None of the supposed rights of man... go beyond the egoistic man, man as he is, as a member of civil society; that is, an individual separated from the community, withdrawn into himself, wholly preoccupied with his private interest and acting in accordance with his private caprice. Man is far from being considered, in the rights of man, as a species-being; on the contrary, species-life itself – society – appears as a system which is external to the individual and as a limitation of his original independence. The only bond between men is natural necessity, need and private interest, the presentation of their property and their egoistic persons. (Marx, 1978, p. 42)

Žižek further points that “‘human rights’ are, as such, a false ideological universality, which masks and legitimizes a concrete politics of Western imperialism, military interventions and neo-colonialism” (Žižek, 2005, pp. 128-129). Many critics of human rights share Marx’s and Žižek’s disdain towards them and refuse to see them in any other way than tools in the hands of the powerful to repress the powerless. On a global scale, developed core uses human rights to influence and, if possible, directly govern the “barbaric” periphery; and on a local scale they are “the right of the white, male property-owners to exchange freely on the market, exploit workers and women, and exert political domination” (ibid, p. 129). Overall, the usefulness of the concept of human rights is controversial among social scientists, and not the least mitigated by this issue with intrinsic universality of human rights.

However, the concept of human rights does not have to be based on human dignity and universality does not have to be an intrinsic quality of human rights. Human rights can be made universal via their acceptance by everybody. If it is not intrinsically universal, though, the question arises, what will legitimize human rights? What will make people accept it and demand their governments to respect, protect, and fulfill their human rights? The answer is given by Lyotard (1993). We cannot take for granted that there is a dignity in and a “correct” way to live for every human being; but we can safely assume that every human being is different from one another. This difference is precisely what is common in

everybody: “What makes human beings alike is the fact that every human being carries within him the figure of the other. The likeness that they have in common follows from the difference of each from each” (Lyotard, 1993, p. 136). Therefore, “to kill a human being is not to kill an animal of the species *Homo sapiens*, but to kill the human community present in him as both capacity and promise” (ibid, p. 136). People carry the figure of the other in themselves. This is not like an essence of human nature present in human beings, but like a capacity to empathize with others, to see and understand what the other is going through, and to feel what the other is feeling whenever you put yourselves in the other’s shoes. This is a capacity of human beings and this is what makes human rights legitimate and universalizable.

Even if the problem with regard to “universality” is over, however, some authors still are skeptical of the utility of the concept of human rights. First, there are concerns on the theoretical scale. Arendt’s very influential paper provides a valid criticism to human rights in this regard (Arendt, 1973). She points that human rights are only applicable for those who already hold civil rights. In other words, if a person were to lose his/her government’s protection of his/her civil rights, they simultaneously lose any person or institution willing to protect their human rights: “The moment human beings lacked their own government and had to fall back upon their minimum rights, no authority was left to protect them, and no institution was willing to guarantee them” (ibid, p. 292). Her conclusion is that the “bare” human being, who lost everything but her humanness, is expelled from the human community. As a result, no matter how much we claim that human rights are universal and transcendental, they are in practice “unenforceable,” says Arendt (ibid, p. 293).

Fortunately, Rancière saves us from the ontological trap that Arendt puts us. By claiming that the “Rights of Man” are the rights of those who have no rights, Arendt turns human rights into an empty concept, says Rancière (2004). He proposes to see the Rights of Man not as the rights of those who have no rights; neither, as the rights of those who already have rights, i.e. citizens; but as “the rights of those who have not the rights that they have and have the rights that they have not” (2004, p. 302). What he means is that human rights are the

rights of those who are deprived of their rights, but who still have them by virtue of their humanness. They are the rights of the political subject, who is deprived of them, but who will rely on them in their struggle against power structures (ibid). These “surplus subjects,” who are “uncounted,” left or pushed out of power structures, aim to create a space of “dissensus” (ibid, pp. 305-306). The reply of power structures to this objective is to create a space of “consensus,” by inviting these subjects within the space of power structures to be homogenized, and, as a result, to close the space of politics. Politics is precisely the struggle between the “surplus subject,” whose human rights are violated, and power structures existing within any society; and human rights is a major part of this struggle. Claiming that they are unenforceable, because they are the rights of those who do not have any rights, depoliticizes this struggle. Human rights are the rights of those who do not have any rights, and they are there for them to use in their struggles against power.

Second, concerns on the practical scale: whether all human rights are feasible to respect, protect and fulfill? To answer this question, one needs to break down human rights to its constituent parts. The first generation of human rights are called liberty rights and they include civil and political rights (Freeman, 2002, p. 47). These comprise the rights to life, liberty, equality, and security; to self-determination and non-discrimination; to a fair trial, asylum, and vote; with freedom from torture and enslavement; and freedom of thought, conscience, religion, expression, and association. These rights are the ones most people mean when they are talking about human rights. Then, there are the second generation of human rights, namely the economic and social rights, also known as equality rights (Freeman, 2002, p. 47). These comprise rights to work, plus to just and favorable conditions of work, to form and join trade unions, to social security, to subsistence, health, and education²⁷. Although in the literature human rights are deemed to be indivisible, the economic and social rights are usually thought as secondary, and their fulfillment is compulsory not in the sense of civil and political rights, but only to the ability of the state to protect them.

²⁷ There is also the third generation of human rights, which are called solidarity rights (Freeman, 2002, p. 47). These include rights to development, peace, and a healthy environment (ibid).

While it is believed that every state is able to respect, protect and fulfill civil and political rights, most states, especially developing ones, are expected to realize economic and social rights progressively, if at all; because it is argued that it is not feasible to expect countries to realize these rights, that cost a lot, in a short time.²⁸ The feasibility critique, in general, “proceeds from the argument that even with the best of efforts, it may not be feasible to arrange the realization of many of the alleged economic and social rights for all” (Sen, 2004, p. 347). This critique, though, can be refuted with two arguments.

First, the issue of feasibility needs a shift in perspective. Of course, when the power relations at work in the current capitalist globe are preserved, protection of economic and social rights are almost impossible to achieve. There are simply no finances. However, the issue of feasibility is as much related to resource allocation as it is to the existence of financing mechanisms. It is not about how much this is going to cost the world, but how the existing resources in the world can be reallocated and redistributed, because there are more than enough to fulfill the basic necessities of everyone in the world.

On a side note to that, we can add that feasibility, in itself, should not be an argument to refute the legitimacy of economic and social rights in the first place. As Sen argues,

[t]he understanding that some rights are not fully realized, and may not even be fully realizable under present circumstances, does not, in itself, entail... that these are, therefore, not rights at all. Rather, that understanding suggests the need to work towards changing the prevailing circumstances to make the unrealized rights realizable, and ultimately, realized (Sen, 2004, p. 348)

²⁸ Some writers extend the argument and argue that it is not feasible to expect the complete realization of these rights even in developed countries. For instance, the discussions on “basic income,” which is the minimum amount of money sufficient for fulfilling necessities, given to anybody on the ground of their humanness, involve a cost analyses done to measure the effect of a basic income scheme on the national and global economy. Although there is a lack of agreement, the general idea is not that basic income schemes would be too costly and therefore, harmful to national economies (Henderson, 2015), but that this is just a matter of resource allocation; basic income schemes are totally doable, they only require political will and proper management (e.g. Sheaen, 2012; Walker, 2016). For a detailed examination see T. Piketty, “Capital in the Twenty-First Century,” (2014).

Second, the issue of feasibility is not confined only to economic and social rights (Shue, 1980; Sen, 2004, p. 348). It is argued that because civil and political rights are negative, they entail negative duties on the duty bearer; i.e. all the duty bearer, generally the states, have to do is refrain from infringing the right and, thus, the right will be protected (Shue, 1980, pp. 36-37). In addition, since economic and social rights are positive, they entail positive duties on the duty bearer, namely, they require funds, institutions and schemes dealing with securing these rights, such as social security, relief packages, hospitals, and schools. The logical conclusion from this negative-positive comparison, then, is civil and political rights should be prior on any government's concerns, and, "then, any remaining resources could be devoted, as long as they lasted, to the positive—and perhaps impossible—task of providing for subsistence" (ibid, p. 37). This positive/negative dichotomy, though, does not do justice to the nature of these sets of rights. Civil and political rights, the so-called negative rights, are more positive than they are often assumed to be, and economic and social rights are often more negative than they are assumed to be (ibid, p. 37). Henry Shue is worthy of quoting here:

It is impossible to protect anyone's rights to physical security without taking, or making payments toward the taking of, a wide range of positive actions... [On the other hand] a demand for the fulfillment of rights to subsistence may involve not a demand to be provided with grants of commodities but merely a demand to be provided some opportunity for supporting oneself. (ibid, pp. 37-39)

For every human right – or for any right for that matter – there are three corresponding duties: respect, protect, and fulfill (ibid, p. 52). Duties to respect entail duties to avoid depriving someone of the content of their right; duties to protect involve actions to protect from deprivation; and, lastly, duties to fulfill entail duties to aid those who are deprived. Both civil and political rights and economic and social rights entail all three duties; it is not that the former only entails duties to respect and the latter only the duties to fulfill. Therefore, the protection of the former may accrue as much cost as the latter would, which leads us to our conclusion that neither feasibility nor unenforceability of human rights should hinder us from using human rights in this critique of violence.

All in all, human rights have major advantages when it comes to defining violence. They are grounded in social reality. They are comprehensive enough to include the avoidance of every aspect of violence without being vague, and they have the capacity of legal sanctioning. These advantages put human rights at the center of this thesis, and their violation at the center of the definition of violence. There will always be borderline cases debated among observers about their quality of being acts of violence; but the important point is to have an overall idea of it, to know where to look, and to observe its effects in social interactions. After all, what is intended in this study is to bring forth the political quality of violence, by merging it with the concept of human rights, which is a perfect tool to be used by the poor and the exploited masses in their defense against the power relations they are in.

2.4.3 Structural Violence

Structural violence is a challenging concept to study, because of its alleged invisibility. Though, thankfully, there are still scholars who are up for the task. The definition of structural violence differs slightly in different scholars' accounts, but in this thesis, it will be taken to denote the physical or psychological harms suffered due to ongoing mechanisms of existing power relations. Admittedly, there are slight differences between stereotypical acts of violence and structural violence, such as the latter is more of a condition than an act. It may last for a long period of time, and because of this, it is quite often normalized within the general framework of life, so much so that it becomes the order of things; it "sustains the very zero-level standard against which we perceive something as subjectively violent" (Žižek, 2008, p. 2). In other words, it becomes invisible. Vis-à-vis structural violence, what remains visible is "spectacular" violence: such as terror attacks, enraged husbands killing wives and children, news about rapists and pedophiles...; archetypes of the "violence as force" argument. Spectacular violence (physical, visible, inter-subjective, and intentional acts of violence) takes the attention away from what is lurking underneath, causing structural violence to pose as social stability and order, and

thereby concealing it from view (Ricci, 2016, pp. 59-60; Winter, 2009, p. 69). Structural violence then becomes “the (apparently) non-violent background, the very stage on which individual acts of subjective, physical violence take place and from which the conditions for them to take place are generated” (ibid, p. 60). This invisibility, however, does not mean that structural violence does not exist, nor that its effects are impossible to discern.

My aim is to assign a moral and a political status to injuries resulting from routine everyday practices and interactions, such as economic exploitation, cultural oppression, racism, and sexism, by merging them under the concept of “violence”. Violence is always a social phenomenon. It occurs within social practices. Theories relying on the innate aggressiveness of human beings naturalize violence and make any discussion on its elimination futile. Taking violence as a moral concept, on the other hand, breaks this naturalness of violence and emphasizes its preventability. Consequently, calling structural conditions “violence” emphasizes the fact that these practices, which acquired the status of “fate” over time, were created by human agency, and therefore can be altered or eliminated. Standing against these practices and recognizing the violence in them are political acts par excellence. Structural violence is the perfect concept in this sense: it delegitimizes certain social practices by scandalizing them with the word “violence” and can be used as a tool in the hand of the sufferers.

To understand the concept of structural violence one should explore different accounts of it provided by different scholars. First, Johan Galtung, since he is the one who introduced the concept. Galtung defines violence as the gap between a person’s potential and actual mental and somatic realizations (Galtung, 1969). Above we have mentioned the six dimensions of violence in Galtung’s text. The most important distinction among these for the purposes of this study is the one between an existing subject and a non-existing subject. When there is a subject who perpetrates the act, he calls it personal/direct violence; but, when there is no clearly identifiable subject responsible for the act this is termed as structural/indirect violence and attributed to the silent mechanisms of power structures, rather than to specific individuals (ibid). The

examples he gives for structural violence are: exploitation A (to starve or waste away from diseases), exploitation B (to live a long life in a state of permanent misery laden with malnutrition and illnesses), impending consciousness formation, penetration (“implanting the topdog inside the underdog”) and segmentation (“giving the underdog a very partial view”), impending on mobilization, marginalization (“keeping the underdog on the outside”), and fragmentation (“keeping the underdogs away from each other”) (Galtung, 1990, pp. 293-294).

Even though it was Galtung who introduced the concept of “structural violence” to the literature of social sciences, the idea that the harms accrued by the operations of the system should be treated as violence is not entirely novel (Winter, 2009, p. 4). Marxist critiques of political economy are generally centered around this idea, implicitly or explicitly. Even though Marx’s own writings are ambiguous on the subject of violence, Engels’s lengthy quote given above is the quintessential example of the concern with violence or force in Marxist circles (Winter, 2009). Especially Gramsci’s works can be interpreted as recognizing the necessity of both direct and structural violence in maintaining a capitalist structure, only he does not term these conditions as we do but as “coercion” and “consent”.²⁹ Žižek too recognizes the need to acknowledge structural violence, only he calls it systemic violence. He defines it as the “catastrophic consequences of the smooth functioning of our economic and political systems” (Žižek, 2008, p. 1). Bourdieu’s concept of symbolic violence is also a variation of the concept of structural violence, although, with a significant difference that will be discussed in the following pages. All in all, Bourgeois’s and Farmer’s “structural violence,” Scheper-Hughes’s “everyday violence” and “invisible genocides,” and Taussig’s “culture of terror” all convey the same meaning: the harmful consequences of existing relations of power that seem invisible to us, either because they are hidden, or because they have been normalized, i.e. hidden in plain sight. The aim of this thesis is to see the violent

²⁹ Winter provides an interesting rendition of violence in Marx’s and Engels’s account. He takes their use of the concept “violence of things” to convey the meaning of “structural violence.” For a more detailed examination see Y. Winter, “Beyond Blood and Coercion” (2009)

effects of these relations of power and try to outline how violence and power relations interact. This will be the task of the second chapter. Although, before that, some obscure points need to be further elaborated.

First of all, what is this “structure” that seems to be taken for granted in all these descriptions? What is meant by claiming that the cause of a form of violence is the “structure” that we live in? These questions lead us to the discussion on the subject of structure-agency that is too complex to delve into in this thesis. Nonetheless, a general answer could be given: from “structure” one should understand historically given, human-made elements of the social fabric (political, economic, social, cultural, and technical mechanisms) that comprise the network of power relations and that constrain agency (Farmer, 2005, p. 40).³⁰ Poverty, racism and sexism are examples of such power relations, for they constrain the actions of agents experiencing them. This does not mean that agents are just peons who do not have the ability to act but are only acted upon and have no power whatsoever in influencing these structures. One has to remember that human agency was what created these structures in the first place. However, giving too much credit to human agency, underestimates the suffering caused by these somewhat rigid structures of social reality. We need to understand the interactions of subjects within existing power relations, and one form this interaction takes is called “symbolic violence” in the literature.

Bourdieu coins this term to indicate the normalization of and the silent consent for the conditions of structural violence (1998). Symbolic violence is a subtype of structural violence, though the “violence” in it is contestable (Schinkel, 2010, pp. 190-191). According to Schinkel, the way Bourdieu defines the concept highlights the “symbolic” not the “violence” (ibid, p. 191). Symbolic violence is an internalization mechanism. It is the knowledge embodied in dominated persons. “It manifests itself in the acceptance of domination by those dominated” (ibid, p. 189). It primarily legitimizes structural violence by

³⁰ Natural factors are excluded from the domain of “structure,” although if there are human made mechanisms that cope with these natural factors, such as famine prevention practices, tsunami alerts, etc., we can include them within the structure as well.

masquerading it as the normal state of affairs. A neat summary of what it is can be found in Bourgois:

[Symbolic violence is] developed by Pierre Bourdieu to uncover how domination operates on an intimate level via the misrecognition of power structures on the part of the dominated who collude in their own oppression to the extent that every time they perceive and judge the social order through categories that make it appear natural and self-evident. (Bourgois, 2001, p. 8)

Symbolic violence emerges as a result the power relationship between dominant and dominated positions, the latter accepts the position one is in and perceives it as the natural course of life. Symbolic violence demonstrates one of the many effects that structural violence has on subject trapped in power relations.

This brings us to the second element of ambiguity: who is responsible for structural violence? Is no one responsible for the plight that hundreds of people are in? Are all politicians good willed agents, who cannot do anything against the workings of the structure no matter how much they try? Are we all responsible in contributing to the continuance of the “structure,” even by doing nothing? This line of thinking that is prevalent in Ricci (2016) makes it impossible to find the culprits of structurally violent conditions and lead them to be thought as natural givens. I am not denying the responsibility that lies in each and every human being when they help to preserve the relations of power existing in any society, even by doing nothing; but I think that the phrase “everybody is responsible” is not helpful. If everybody is responsible, that means nobody is really responsible, and nothing can be done to eradicate the existing set of affairs, which puts us in a hopeless vicious circle. But one also needs to recognize the fact that in structurally violent situations, since there are no explicit subjects responsible for them, finding those who are responsible very difficult.

A hypothetical example can further clarify this point³¹. Imagine a village that predominately engages in agriculture. Most of the people who live here are owners of small farms, and ten people who do not own their own farms work on others’. One day a multinational company decides to buy these lands to produce

³¹ This example is inspired by the hypothetical village example in Henry Shue’s book *Basic Rights* (1980).

tomatoes and buys all the land from owners in exchange of fair prices. And, because the multinational company produces with machines, it only needs four people to labor. The rest of the ten people who labored previously are now unemployed and they cannot find any other employment. Suppose that the partners of these people who recently became unemployed are also not working. In a short time, these people lose the ability to look after themselves or their dependents and face many problems that they did not have to deal before such as malnutrition, diseases, or premature deaths. The proponents of an expanded definition of violence, including of course Galtung, agree on the premise that these people are victims of violence. The workings of the existing economic system hurt these people in a way that they cannot make basic necessities. The answer to the question “who is responsible?” though is harder to answer. Is it the multinational company which bought the land and employed only four people? The usual answer is no, because they were only doing what is profitable for them, which is what commerce is all about, and they gave a fair price for the land. Then, are the previous owners of the land responsible for not foreseeing their fellow villagers’ plight? No, because that land was their property, and they are allowed to do what they want to with that property. Lastly, is the government, who allowed such a transaction to take place, responsible? Again, no; because the government has good reasons to allow that transaction, the most important of which is to attract investment into the country. At first sight, it seems that nobody is responsible for the plight of those people, and that no one can be easily identifiable as the perpetrator. However, if we believe that there is an act of violence here, and if it is avoidable, which in this case it surely is, we can say that the existing set of power relations and those who can have an influence on it are responsible for allowing such situations to emerge. All the parties in this transaction, act with the principle “I do not care,” not with “do not harm.” The multinational company is responsible for actively maintaining such an unequal economic system. The government is responsible for putting economic growth above its citizens’ well-being. And, lastly, the former owners of land are responsible, though perhaps not equally responsible, for putting their profit above everybody else’s survival. In the end, this example shows how

interconnected human beings are within power relations that end with structural violence, and how difficult it is to find those that are responsible who are nonetheless there to keep the wheels turning.

Another dimension of this example is the interconnectedness between structural violence and direct violence. As the recently unemployed face troubles in finding any means to secure their livelihoods, they are forced to resort to crime and violence in order to earn their living. Structural violence turns into direct physical violence, which, in turn, exacerbates the conditions of structural violence. Bourgois describes how this transition occurs within the crack commerce scene in East Harlem, New York among the Puerto Rican immigrants. There, he argues,

extreme segregation, social inequality and material misery expressed at ground level in interpersonal conflicts that the socially vulnerable inflict mainly onto themselves (via substance abuse), onto their kin and friends (through domestic violence and adolescent gang rape), and onto their neighbors and community (with burglaries, robberies, assaults, drive-by shootings, etc.). (Bourgois, 2001, p. 11)

For that reason, it is not enough to only focus on the acts of direct violence when trying to minimize violence, but one should target the underlying injustices that create an environment violence flourishes in. This may require an entire reshaping of how we think about violence; not seeing acts of direct violence as individual events, but as interconnected acts within a whole environment that creates the underlying conditions, namely, structural violence.

As to the connection between human rights violations and the concept of structural violence: when violence is defined as avoidable human rights violations that harm individuals, structural violence becomes violation of human rights perpetrated by no clearly identifiable persons/institutions. Human rights violations are, according to Paul Farmer, “pathologies of power” (2005). They are symptoms of underlying violent systems such as racism, sexism or class-based societies.

But, how do power structures operate? Why do these human rights violations, the pathologies of power, occur? How can we make the connection between structural violence and human rights violations in real life? These

questions will carry us to the second and third chapters of this thesis. The second chapter will predominately deal with the question of power. and in the third, the current neoliberal era will be examined, and examples supplied to show the interconnectedness of power relations and violence that occur as “pathologies of power.”

CHAPTER 3

POWER AND VIOLENCE

3.1 Foucauldian Account of Power

Foucault's account of power is markedly different from the liberal and the Marxist accounts of power. In fact, he builds his understanding of power on his criticism of those accounts. According to Foucault, the liberal account corresponds to what he terms as "the juridical model of sovereignty" (2003). This view takes power as a commodity that can be owned, transferred, or acquired, through force or contract (Foucault, 2003, pp. 13-15; Foucault, 1980, p. 88). Represented by the scholars of the liberal tradition, such as Hobbes, Locke, and Weber, power is considered as a possession, a type of wealth that can be owned and lost (ibid, p. 13). This unidimensional account of power, according to Foucault does not do justice to the complexity of the concept. On the contrary, he says, these accounts are guilty for an "economism in the theory of power" (1980, p. 88). And the Marxist tradition is no better. Marxist scholars reduce power to such an extent that it becomes secondary to economy:

[T]he role of power is essentially both to perpetuate the relations of production and to reproduce a class domination that is made possible by the development of the productive forces and the ways they are appropriated. (ibid, p. 14)

The whole reason of existence of power, in the Marxist account, is to enhance the capitalist economic conditions of exploitation (ibid, p. 14). As a result, power becomes subordinate to economy: either a mirror image of economy, where it can be owned and exchanged like a commodity, or a condition for the perpetuation of existing economic relations. This conclusion leads Foucault to ask the question: "Is power always secondary to the economy?" (ibid, p. 14) Can

power be thought as something other than a commodity, other than a substance that can be possessed by one or a group of people?

In his search for a non-economic analysis of power Foucault decides that power is not a substance; it only exists in action (Foucault, 1980, p. 89). It is a certain type of relationship between individuals (Foucault, 2006, p. 208). It exists within relations. It generates them and is a result of them. In his words: "Power is not something that is acquired, seized, or shared, something that one holds on to or allows to slip away; power is exercised from innumerable points, in the interplay of non-egalitarian and mobile relations" (1978, p. 94). Its characteristic feature is that it acts on actions. It does not directly act on human beings, but on their actions. In other words, power is what determines other people's conduct, and it only exists in relationships between individuals or groups. It is not a capacity; it does not "stem from aptitudes directly inherent in the body or relayed by external instruments," though there might be a certain interdependence between power relations and objective capacities (Foucault, 2001, pp. 337-339). Power is a network of strategies, tactics, and techniques that appear in social settings. It does not denote a total control over the dominated; it is not a privilege of a select few. Even though it is not distributed in a democratic fashion, it is spread to the whole social fabric. It circulates. It is not a unidimensional relationship that a dominant part can enforce on the other. Everybody can both be subject to and be the relay of power relationships (Foucault, 1980, p. 98; 2003, p. 30). Individuals "are not only its inert or consenting target; they are always also the elements of its articulation" (Foucault, 1980, p. 98). That's what he means when he says power circulates. Even the person who seems to be at the bottom of any social hierarchy, can be in a dominant position relative to someone else, perhaps his wife or children.

Furthermore, power, according to Foucault, is not necessarily bad or evil. Otherwise, his view would turn out to be extremely pessimistic, for he says that power is everywhere (1978, p. 93). Not because it is omnipotent, able to bring everything under its inviolable unity; but because "it is produced from one moment to the next, at every point, or rather in every relation from one point to another" (ibid, p. 93). So not only is power not bad in and of itself, it can also be

productive. Its sole purpose is not to repress nor to limit. Though in almost all the analysis made on power (excluding Arendt) it is taken as repressive (Foucault, 2003, p. 15). Power in scholarly analyses, is usually thought as a negative, prohibitive force that works with the logic of rules and censorship (Foucault, 1978, pp. 83-84). This legal understanding of power sees it as an impediment on freedom and claims that it is tolerable as long as it can successfully hide its mechanisms (ibid, p. 86). However, this representation of power, according to Foucault, is still “under the spell of monarchy. In political thought and analysis, we still have not cut off the head of the king” (Foucault, 1978, pp. 88-89). This kind of analysis is also prevalent in Marxist accounts in which power is seen as the basis of the superstructure, having only a complementary status with respect to the infrastructure, namely, the economic sphere. Power’s role in this framework is either to aid the economic superiority of the ruling class, or to prohibit subjects from doing anything else than the economic relations compel. But, says Foucault, this “wholly negative, narrow, skeletal conception of power, one that has been curiously widespread” does not represent the whole aspects of power (2006, pp. 152-153). If power were to be anything but prohibitive, how could dominant ones guarantee the obedience of all those who are in dominated positions?

What makes people accept power is not its absoluteness, nor its ability to hide itself, but its ability to produce (ibid, p. 153). Power produces things, pleasures, and discourses, and its capillary vessels extend through the entire society. The ability of power relations to conduct actions is only one aspect of their productive dimension. They also produce discourses, forms of knowledge that designate true from false. So much so that Foucault claims that “there is no power relation without the correlative constitution of a field of knowledge, nor any knowledge that does not presuppose and constitute at the same time power relations” (1984, p. 175). What he means is not that power relations distort knowledge to present something as true which is actually false. In other words, discourses are not ideologies, created for distorting reality and manipulating consciousness. “Truth” in Foucault is not something that determines whether a statement conforms to objective reality, but it is rather “the ensemble of rules

according to which the true and the false are separated” (1984, p. 74). What is needed to be done is not to determine which discourse is true and which is false, and, thereby, the solution is not to change people’s consciousness and try to make them see that what they believe is wrong; but to see how the differentiation of “true” knowledge from “false” affects human beings. Discourses produce truth and they are entangled with power relations. Therefore, what needs to be done is to see “historically how effects of truth are produced within discourse which in themselves are neither true nor false” (Foucault, 1984, p. 60).

Truth’s effects are that it makes you do something. This is what he means when he says power acts on action. You would act in accordance with the piece of “true” information that was provided to you — irrespective of its actually being true. For instance, the “true” knowledge you had might be that the best way to get rid of the fairies in your closet is to dance naked in your bedroom. In this case, the effect that this piece of “true” knowledge had on you was to make you dance naked to *Smooth Operator* in your bedroom.

Every society that has ever existed have had its regime of truth, which is the mechanism of how power produces and sustains truth, and how truth, in return, produces effects of power and preserves them. The regime of truth includes:

the types of discourse which it accepts and makes function as true; the mechanisms and instances which enable one to distinguish true and false statements, the means by which each is sanctioned; the techniques and procedures accorded value in the acquisition of truth; the status of those who are charged with saying what counts as true. (Foucault, 1984, p. 73; 2006, p. 168)

Since every society has this network of power relations, the idea to bring an end to power is ludicrous according to Foucault. When he tries to discern the power relations inherent in our current society, he discovers that there emerged a new regime of truth in Europe starting from the seventeenth century and reaching its climax in the nineteenth. This regime of truth aimed, among others, to produce true discourses about a multitude of subjects, such as illness, madness, sexuality, and punishment. For instance, it determined what “correct” sexuality was and what deviant behaviors to avoid (Foucault, 1978). Homosexuality was

anathemized. The image of “correct” wife, “correct” mother was formed. Race was sexualized so that consensual sex between black men and white women came to be seen as rape; the sin of black man in so far as he desecrates the purity of the white “angel-like” woman. The masturbating child came to be seen as aberrant. All in all, whole set of power relations infiltrated sexuality, prohibiting certain behaviors while molding conducts to fit certain “truths.”

This molding of the conduct of human beings can also be put as “manufacturing subjects.” It has been mentioned above that we must look at the effects of power relations: how they conduct actions, decisions, how they limit or open possibilities, how they lead some to suffer while help others to thrive; all of which can be put under the question how subjects are formed. Foucault rejects the idea of an independent subject, able to make his/her own decisions, without any influence, with the help of his/her reason. The subject according to him is the result and the perpetuator of power relations that already exist prior to the formation of any subject. Power subjugates. It “applies itself to immediate everyday life, categorizes the individual, marks him by his own individuality, attaches him to his own identity, imposes a law of truth on him that he must recognize, and others have to recognize in him” (2001, p. 331).

The individual, therefore, is not power’s opposite (Foucault, 2003, p. 30; 1980, p. 98). Though this does not mean that there can be no resistance to power relations. Foucault insists that no power relation can exist without oppositions. Otherwise, it would not be power, but something else, akin to slavery. For any relation to be power it must not be absolute. Power relations are reversible (Foucault, 2003, p. 266), though they may sometimes seem as if they are perpetual. Foucault has been criticized throughout his career for being too structuralist, too rigid in the framework he builds in understanding how the world works, leaving no room for a radical change. But those who criticize Foucault on this account usually forget that the concept of power he formulated is Janus faced: it carries its own opposite – resistance – wherever it traverses. “Where there is power, there is resistance,” he argues and continues:

[T]his resistance is never in a position of exteriority in relation to power.... there is no single locus of great Refusal, no soul of revolt, source of all rebellions, or pure law of the

revolutionary. Instead there is a plurality of resistances, each of them a special case... by definition, they can only exist in the strategic field of power relations. But this does not mean that they are only a reaction or rebound, forming with respect to the basic domination an underside that is in the end always passive, doomed to perpetual defeat.... They are the odd term in relations of power; they are inscribed in the latter as an irreducible opposite. Hence, they too are distributed in irregular fashion. (Foucault, 1978, pp. 95-96)

And when we take resistance as an intrinsic feature of power relations, we can begin to the reason for why Foucault sees power essentially as a relation of force (1980, pp. 89-90). Rather than analyzing it in terms of contract or how well it maintains relations of production, Foucault analyses power in terms of an endless struggle. In *Society Must Be Defended* he examines different scholars' accounts of power, and scrutinizes the idea that power is war continued by other means (2003, p. 15; 1980, p. 90). This inversion of Clausewitz's famous proposition – war is politics continued by other means – means to see power as a perpetual battlefield, a continuous field of struggles that goes deep into the fabric of social reality. He further explains that

The role of political power is perpetually to use a sort of silent war to reinscribe that relationship of force, and to reinscribe it in institutions, economic inequalities, language, and even the bodies of individuals. This is the initial meaning of our inversion of Clausewitz's aphorism – politics is the continuation of war by other means. Politics, in other words, sanctions and reproduces the disequilibrium of forces manifested in war. (Foucault, 2003, pp. 15-16)³²

Even though Foucault in his later writings drops the analogy of war when analyzing power, the idea of power relations as the field of perpetual battle continues even in his most recent texts. The arguments that claim power circulates, is a network of strategies and is exercised refer to this idea of constant struggle.

So where does violence fit in in Foucault's analysis of power? The most straightforward answer to this question is that it depends. The relationship between violence and power depends on what type of power is dominant in a

³² Even peace becomes a form of war, according to this line of thinking; while the political war ending only with a final battle to come (1980, p. 91).

particular historical setting. Foucault claims that the dominant type of power in a particular society or era changes from time to time. For instance, in Europe sovereign power was preponderant from the Middle Ages to the sixteenth century, after which a shift in the fabric of social reality brought a shift in power relations which resulted with two distinct but related types of power: disciplinary power and bio-power. If we want to deduce Foucault's account of violence, of which he does not talk much, we need to look at each type of power and their respective bond with acts of violence and that is what this study will continue with down below.

3.1.1 Sovereign Power

Sovereign power is a specific type of power that existed for the most of human history. It is a type of power that is exercised within the borders of a territory and it bases itself to the person of the sovereign (2009, p. 11). It is a centralized and visible power (Altunok, 2007, p. 19). Not a calculative power in the sense of trying to get the maximum return from minimum expenditure, but it "permits the foundation of an absolute power in the absolute expenditure of power" (Foucault, 1980, p. 105). Moreover, sovereign power is exercised over land and its products, rather than over human beings in the form of labor (ibid, p. 104). It does not work with the logic of continuous surveillance, but with sporadic demonstrations, public torture being its quintessential form, since its centrality limits its capacity to go deep in the capillary veins of society.

Its most characteristic feature, though, is its right to decide over life and death, which basically boils down to "the right to kill." The sovereign could exercise his right to kill in two occasions according to Foucault. The first is that the sovereign could demand his/her subjects to die in battles that threatened his/her existence. The sovereign uses the right to kill in a subtler way in this occasion. In Foucault's words, "without directly proposing their death, he was empowered to 'expose their life'" (Foucault, 1978, p. 135). In the second occasion the sovereign exercises the right to kill in a more direct way: when he/she puts the offender to death as a punishment when any subject dares to

transgress the sovereign's laws or to rise up against him/her (ibid). Other than deciding whether a subject should die or not, the sovereign does not really have a lot of power over the way people live. The sovereign does not care how people live as long as they live in accordance with the law; so, the right over life or death can be reframed as right to take life or let live (Foucault, 1978, p. 136; 2003, p. 238)

As to the relationship between sovereign power and violence, we can say that there is a more or less straightforward bond between them. Sovereign power uses violence in its everyday operations. Though it legitimizes its usage of violence by giving references to concepts such as justice, law and right (Altunok, 2007, p. 19). Since sovereign power is visible, the acts of violence that it commits are generally also visible, physical and intentional acts. Though after the process of legitimization, the acts of violence that the sovereign power performs are concealed, made look like they are not acts of violence, or perhaps reframed as "acts of (legitimate) force."

As can be seen in the preceding chapter, reducing power to sovereign power is a common mistake in social scientists. If we limit ourselves to this narrow understanding of power, we can never grasp the whole dynamics between power relations and violence. We can only see violence as an instrument to be used in the hands of the sovereign, or, conversely, as an instrument to be used in defying the sovereign's laws. Therefore, if we want to move forward from this parochial vision of power and violence, we need to cut the head of the King.

3.1.2 Disciplinary Power

Foucault explains how in the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries there emerged a different type of power, completely incompatible with sovereign power that was centered not on the Earth and its products, but on constant surveillance over human bodies (Foucault, 1980, pp. 104-105). This new power was disciplinary power and its mechanisms were completely different from those of sovereign power. The strategies of the latter were mostly based on

spectacular rituals, while disciplinary power leaned on tactics such as efficiency or productivity that focused more on the detail rather than the grand picture (Foucault, 1984, p. 188; Altunok, 2007, pp. 15-16). This gave the ability to disciplinary power to penetrate society much better than sovereign power ever could (ibid). Its primary aim was to “rule a multiplicity of men to the extent that their multiplicity can and must be dissolved into individual bodies that can be kept under surveillance, trained, used, and, if need be, punished” (Foucault, 2003, p. 242).

To be more explicit, we can say that discipline is addressed to bodies (Foucault, 2003, p. 242). It aims to control and homogenize individuals, to fit them into their appropriate roles in the social hierarchy, and to exclude those who do not comply. Institutions such as schools or other mechanisms of power, such as the family or the police, exist in order to get individuals in line with the disciplinary society that they live in. And institutions such as the hospitals, asylums, and prisons take care of people who cannot or will not bow down.

The major tool in disciplinary power’s disposal is surveillance (Foucault, 1980, p. 102). This is obvious when one thinks of Jeremy Bentham’s panopticon, which is the quintessential form of disciplinary power. What is not obvious, though, is its invisibility. Disciplinary power renders its subjects visible rather than itself (Foucault, 1984, p. 199). The subjects have to be under constant surveillance, or, to be more precise, they have to feel like they are under constant surveillance for disciplinary power to work. Subjects who think that they are under constant surveillance internalize disciplinary power so much so that they become their own inspectors (Altunok, 2007, p. 17). In other words, the “visibility [of subjects] assures the hold of the power that is exercised over them. It is the fact of being constantly seen, of being able always to be seen, that maintains the disciplined individual in his subjection” (Foucault, 1984, p. 199).

Disciplinary power was pivotal in the establishment of market economy and the corresponding market society (Foucault, 2003, p. 36; Polanyi, 2001). In its formation, capitalism, or market economy in Polanyi’s words, required the commodification of land, labor and money, three fictitious commodities, which can never be fully commodified because human beings do not produce land –

land is provided to us by the Earth – they do not give birth to their children with the purpose of turning them into life-time laborers, and they did not invent money to sell it in the market, money is just a medium of exchange (Polanyi, 2001, pp. 75-76). These fictitious commodities, however, had to be commodified to ensure the completion of production chains that were essential to the capitalist mode of production. And for the commodification of labor, disciplinary power was essential as it gave the bourgeoisie the power to force the lower classes into working in factories. Disciplinary power is a compilation of strategies of power aimed to fulfill three criteria: to exercise power with the minimum amount of cost (not just economic, but political or even social as well), to receive maximum returns and keep the cycle of power running by continuously imposing disciplinary strategies in the institutions from which they receive their results, such as schools, armies, industries, and hospitals (Foucault, 1984, p. 207). “In short, to increase both the docility and the utility of all the elements of the system” (ibid, p. 207). As capitalist economy grew, disciplinary power relations spread from Europe to cover the face of the Earth, as they could be used in most diverse political regimes, apparatuses, or institutions (ibid, p. 211).

But, there simultaneously was a shift in society’s view towards the mad or the delinquent; and a corresponding shift in how to deal with them. The reason for this shift is not the increase in value of a human life that accompanied modernity. The bourgeoisie did not care about the delinquent, the mad or the sick; it cared about the power it has over them (Foucault, 2003, p. 33). The aim is not to rehabilitate the delinquent, exclude the mad or cure the sick. The aim is to “attach” these people to the wheel of power (Foucault, 2001, p. 78). The delinquent, the mad and the sick are excluded from society, no matter for how long, because they are to return when they are “normalized.” Disciplinary power works not with rules but norms (Foucault, 1980, p. 106). It creates a norm for human beings to act or be in accordance with and those who do not comply with this norm are excluded only to be reattached once they surrender to disciplinary power. This reattachment also enhances the “normality” of the rest of the society. Hence, another difference between disciplinary power and sovereign power: the latter prohibits, and what it does not specify as prohibited is permitted, while the

former marks what is obligatory and everything else that is not specified are prohibited (Foucault, 2009, p. 46).

Then, what is the relationship between disciplinary power and violence? If the former is the diametrical opposite of sovereign power, at first glance it seems as if disciplinary power and violence are mutually exclusive according to Foucault. And this is exactly what some authors profess: that Foucault believes with the emergence of disciplinary power and the regression of sovereign power, humanity entered into an era that is much less violent compared to the previous ones³³. The argument is that discipline destroyed the need to apply public spectacles of violence and aimed to maintain situations with more subtle ways. In other words, discipline destroyed the need for power to employ violence.

But this shallow reading of Foucault does not even begin to do justice to the author. Foucault does not claim that with disciplinary power humanity entered into an era that is considerably less violent than before. He puts forth that with disciplinary power, public spectacles of violence such as public torture or punishment became obsolete; but that is neither an indication for the overall decrease in the level of violence, nor it means that they are gone forever. Schinkel sums his intentions quite neatly in the following quote:

Foucault... sees in the coming of a disciplinary society simply another kind of violence, based on a more meticulous control over social subjects. This control was effectuated through classifications that were devised to subject individuals into disciplined subjects of society. This was a society that sought to discipline and to include, instead of to avenge and to exclude. (Schinkel, 2010, pp. 62-63)

Furthermore, the fact that state violence disappears from public gaze does not mean that it is altogether eradicated. The consequence of disciplinary power “was not that violence ended, but that it was enclosed within walls and removed from the public gaze” (Ray 2011, p. 54). Many social scientists recognize the resurgence of draconian measures in the twenty-first century, such as torture, in dealing with state enemies (Scheper-Hughes, 1997). Does that mean that

³³ For instance, see S. Walby, “Violence and society intro to an emerging field of sociology,” *Current Sociology*, (2012) and G. Altunok, “Şiddetin eleştirisi olarak iktidar: Arendt ve Foucault” *Dogu Bati* (2007).

disciplinary power has disappeared, and, maybe, sovereign power has taken its place? Types of powers, such as sovereign, disciplinary, and bio-power (which will be elaborated below) are not absolute. They are practical and historical. They can emerge and surpass all other strategies of power and be surpassed in return, which is exactly what happens to disciplinary power and therefore we can see a resurgence of torture as a legitimate tool of interrogation used by states USA after their declaration of “war on terror” following the 9/11. Though it is not sovereign power that replaces disciplinary power; it is bio-power.

3.1.2 Bio-power

A counterpart of disciplinary power, bio-power emerged somewhat later, though these two types of power were undeniably linked in their formation. Foucault explains how sovereign power could no longer organize the modernizing Europe, with its demographic explosion and continuous industrialization in the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries (Foucault, 2003, p. 249). “So much so that far too many things were escaping the old mechanism of the power of sovereignty, both at the top and at the bottom, both at the level of detail and at the mass level” (ibid, p. 249). First, disciplinary power emerged to take care of the details. By using surveillance and training, disciplinary power was applied on the individual body, so as to shape and mend the body to fit the appropriate norms of the disciplinary society. Hence, we see the formation of schools, hospitals, barracks, workshops, asylums and punitive institutions in the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries. These strategies formed what Foucault terms as the micro-physics of power, which is “a study of the forms and means of power focused on individuals and the details of their behavior and conduct” (Gordon, 2001, p. xxiv). For the mass level, however, a second type of power emerged, which is termed by Gordon as the “macro” physics of power (cited in Collier, 2009, p. 81), centered not on the individual body, “man-as-body,” but on the multiplicity of men, “man-as-species” (Foucault, 2003, p. 242).

Perhaps the best way to explain what bio-power is to compare its working mechanisms with those of disciplinary power. The most striking difference

between two types of power is, as mentioned above, that while disciplinary power is applied on individual bodies, bio-power is applied on masses or populations. The former disciplines, trains and uses surveillance and other direct measures in achieving its aims. The latter, however, regulates and coordinates. It does not use constant surveillance of individual bodies but uses more overall measures. Or, to put it more precisely, bio-power transforms disciplinary power's mechanism of surveillance of individual bodies into statistical estimates of an entire population. While disciplinary power tries to optimize each individual's capacities, bio-power tries to achieve or maintain an average level of optimal capacities in a population. Bio-power does not care about each individual conforming to the norm as disciplinary power does. Its aim is to achieve an overall level of compliance to the norm; because bio-power is not "centered on the body as machine" as disciplinary power is, it is "focused on the species body" (Foucault, 1978, p. 139).

Both these types of power, however, can be classified as "power over life" (Foucault, 1978, p. 139). Foucault claims that "starting in the seventeenth century, this power over life evolved in two basic forms; these forms were not antithetical, however; they constituted rather two poles of development linked together by a whole intermediary cluster of relations" (ibid, p. 139).³⁴ And, as power over life the point of origin for both these poles was what Foucault calls "pastoral power" (Foucault, 2009, pp. 123-128; Chomsky & Foucault, 2006, pp. 175-177; Foucault, 2001, pp. 332-335). The idea of pastoral power goes back to

³⁴ In the extensive literature on Foucault there is a debate on the exact relationship between disciplinary power and bio-power and Foucault's contradictory writings makes the nature of this relationship even more puzzling. Certain writers, myself included, choose to focus on Foucault's earlier texts on this issue, such as *The History of Sexuality* and *Society Must Be Defended*, and take disciplinary power and bio-power to be isomorphic, while acknowledging that Foucault's own account of bio-power shifted in his later lectures and writings, which posited bio-power and disciplinary power as opposites. Some writers, however, such as Thomas Lemke, point that the reason that made Foucault change his perspective was that he saw his previous account of bio-power as "one-dimensional and reductive, in the sense that it primarily focused on the biological and physical life of a population and on the politics of the body," and therefore choose to focus on take his later lectures, the *Security, Territory, Population* and the *Birth of Biopolitics*, to reflect his definitive opinion on the subject (Lemke, 2014, p. 63). Those who are interested in the debate can look at Stephen Collier's article "Topologies of Power: Foucault's Analysis of Political Government beyond 'Governmentality'", *Theory, Culture and Society*, (2009), where he provides an excellent summary of it.

“the theme of the king, god, or chief as a shepherd of men, who are like his flock,” found in ancient Mediterranean societies, and especially in the Hebrews (Foucault, 2009, p. 123). Pastoral power is based on the power a shepherd exerts on his/her flock with the aim of protecting and nurturing his/her sheep. The shepherd’s role in this relationship is to ensure the salvation of his flock by taking care of their health, well-being and security (Foucault, 2001, p. 333). But nurturing the whole flock does not mean that each individual can be sacrificed for the good of the flock; on the contrary, the shepherd also has to take care of each and every member of his/her flock (Foucault, 2009, p. 128).

Pastoral power is different from sovereign power; a sovereign has the say over his/her subjects’ lives, while a shepherd has to sacrifice him/herself, if necessary, for the good of the flock, which shows that pastoral power is ultimately a beneficial power. With Christianity pastoral power gained a new dimension as it became the working mechanism of Christian institutions. Though their aim was not to achieve the salvation of their believers in this world, but in the next one (Foucault, 2001, p. 332). In time, pastoral power evolved into a new shape as it was integrated into the political sphere of the modern Western states. This new swarm of tactics that the Western states start to use in the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries are grouped under the terms disciplinary power and bio-power by Foucault. As mentioned above, the former takes care of each individual, while the latter ensures the salvation of the population not in the next world, but in this one.

Bio-power is essentially focused on the population so much so that it can sacrifice individuals for enhancing the overall betterment of the population. In Foucault’s words: “The final objective is the population. The population is pertinent as the objective, and individuals, the series of individuals, are no longer pertinent as the objective, but simply as the instrument, relay, or condition for obtaining something at the level of the population.” (2009, p. 42). As the social structure people were in began to change from sixteenth century the old ways, originating in sovereign power, to deal with and manage human beings became obsolete, and, thus, new strategies were warranted. It was mentioned above that disciplinary power emerged in order to control individuals, to make them fit an

“appropriate” norm and to exclude others who refuse to do so. But as capitalism progressed, individuals were not the only element to be managed. Populations became the new economic and political problem; hence leading way to the emergence of bio-power. As governments sought ways to control and manage populations this new bio-politics required them to amass systematized data on them, from which “statistics” emerged. Governments kept records of marriages, birth and death rates, life expectancy, child morbidity, rates and frequencies of illnesses, endemics, epidemics and so forth (Foucault, 1978, p. 25). Foucault explains the transition neatly in his interview with Noam Chomsky:

Power had to be able to gain access to the bodies of individuals, to their acts, attitudes, and modes of everyday behavior. Hence the significance of methods such as school discipline, which succeeded in making children’s bodies the object of highly complex systems of manipulation and conditioning. At the same time, though, these new techniques of power needed to grapple with the phenomena of population, in short to undertake the administration, control, and direction of the accumulation of men... hence there arise the problems of demography, public health, hygiene, housing conditions, longevity, and fertility. (2006, pp. 160-161)

To sum up, bio-power introduced biological features and processes characteristic to human beings into the realm of power relations. Power’s primary role was no longer to destroy, to restrict or to kill, but to enhance, to organize, and “to invest life through and through” (Foucault, 1978, p. 139). As was the case with disciplinary power, bio-power also played an indispensable role in the formation and progression of capitalism (Foucault, 1978, p. 141). The economic scheme relied on controlling variables relating to population. Just as disciplinary power made individuals a part of this system, bio-power made sure the system functioned smoothly, and when it did not, it made sure that the system remained intact for the aftermath of the crisis. Biopolitical strategies,

also acted as factors of segregation and social hierarchization, exerting their influence on the respective forces of both these movements, guaranteeing relations of domination and effects of hegemony. The adjustment of the accumulation of men to that of capital, the joining of the growth of human groups to the expansion of productive forces and the differential allocation of profit, were made possible in part by the exercise of bio-power in its many forms and modes of application. (Foucault, 1978, p. 141)

This leads us to the next stage of our discussion, which is the nature of the relationship between violence and bio-power. If bio-power's primary role is, indeed, to enhance the living conditions of a population, what can be the relationship between the two concepts? In Foucault's words, "how can a power such as this kill, if it is true that its basic function is to improve life, to prolong its duration, to improve its chances, to avoid accidents, and to compensate for failings?" (2003, p. 254). Are bio-power and violence not mutually exclusive concepts as Arendt's power and violence are? And, therefore, can bio-power never lead to violence on its own, without any influence on it? But, then, how can we explain all the bloody wars, genocides, the holocaust, and all other brutalities that governments performed on their subjects in the last couple of centuries? Can we see them as the resurgence of sovereign power's right to kill, as some writers do?³⁵ When Foucault explains these brutalities in *Society Must Be Defended*, he does not put forth sovereign power as the culprit; he blames bio-power. Bio-political relations render the old right of sovereign to "take life or let live" obsolete; but, as opposed to this ancient right of the sovereign, bio-power introduces the right to "make live and let die," which can be just as fatal (if not more) for human beings (Foucault, 2003, p. 241). As mentioned above, bio-power's primary aim is to exert a positive influence on life, to enhance the living conditions of a certain population, be it nation, class or ethnicity. Though, this so-called "chosen" population does not represent the totality of humanity, let alone the totality of a nation. While trying to enhance the conditions of the "chosen" population, bio-power endangers the lives of those it considers "disposable" by disallowing their lives to the point of death (Foucault, 1978, p. 138). The disposable "other," which may be an ethnicity, a minority, another nation, or simply everybody else, may also pose a threat to the biological existence of the "chosen" population, so much so that the latter's government may demand its subjects to fight the wars it has started. However, the wars in bio-politics are not waged for the name of the king, but for the perseverance of the population itself. To sum up in Foucault's words,

³⁵ See G. Agamben, *Homo Sacer: Sovereign Power and Bare Life*, (1998).

this formidable power of death... now presents itself as the counterpart of a power that exerts a positive influence on life, that endeavors to administer, optimize, and multiply it, subjecting it to precise controls and comprehensive regulations. Wars are no longer waged in the name of a sovereign who must be defended; they are waged on behalf of the existence of everyone; entire populations are mobilized for the purpose of wholesale slaughter in the name of life necessity: massacres have become vital. (Foucault, 1978, p. 137)

The logic of bio-power justifies, and sometimes encourages, killing of millions on behalf of promoting life (Dillon & Neal, 2008, pp. 7-8). By killing Foucault does not actually mean murder as such, but “every form of form of indirect murder: the fact of exposing someone to death, increasing the risk of death for some people, or, quite simply, political death, expulsion, rejection, and so on” (Foucault, 2003, p. 256). And this is where Foucault’s theory of bio-power and Galtung’s theory of structural violence are linked. This does not mean that structural violence only occurs in power relations that are dominated by bio-politics. Structural violence can exist in any type of organized society. However, just as sovereign power relies more on direct violence or the threat of violence in maintaining power relations, bio-power relies much more on structural violence. On the outside it looks very beneficial. Bio-political strategies are used to promote life, enhance living conditions, and basically to maintain a continuous level of progress. But bio-power is Janus faced. Its whole working mechanism relies on identifying and effacing enemies that constitute a real or imaginary – does not matter – threat to the population (Foucault, 2003, pp. 255-256). And it works through the mechanism of race.

Foucault does not restrict the concept “race” to exclusively refer to the diverse biological entities of human beings, but generally uses the word to denote different groups of people divided by whichever trait, be it ethnicity, nation, religion, ideology, gender, or any other trivial attribute that people use to differentiate themselves or others. Therefore “racism” becomes the concept to differentiate the “superrace(s)” from the “subrace(s)” and to introduce a break between the two: “the break between what must live and what must die” (Foucault, 2003, p. 254). The death of the “other” in this scenario becomes

necessary not because in the sense that “his death will ensure that I live;” but in the sense that “the death of the other, the death of the bad race, of the inferior race (or the degenerate, or the abnormal) is something that will make life in general healthier: healthier and purer” (Foucault, 2003, p. 255). Therefore, racism in modern world becomes “the precondition for exercising the right to kill” (ibid, p. 256). It is not simply because sovereign power reemerges in the modern period that there are killings in the name of one’s country, as in Nazi Germany; but these killings occur because of the racist logic of bio-power. In other words, in extreme cases the bio-political strategies demand the utilization of the sovereign right to kill with a nuance: this killing is done not in the name of one’s king but in the name of one’s population. To keep my population alive and thriving, the other must be extinguished. And the Nazi Germany is the quintessential example of this bio-political logic.

We have... in Nazi society something that is really quite extraordinary: this is a society which has generalized biopower in an absolute sense, but which has also generalized the sovereign right to kill. The two mechanisms – the classic, archaic mechanism that gave the State the right of life and death over its citizens, and the new mechanism organized around discipline and regulation, or in other words, the new mechanism of biopower – coincide exactly. We can therefore say this: The Nazi State makes the field of the life it manages, protects, guarantees, and cultivates in biological terms absolutely coextensive with the sovereign right to kill anyone, meaning not only other people, but also its own people. (Foucault, 2003, p. 260)

The other side of bio-politics thus becomes “thanato-politics” (Dillon, 2008, p. 169). However, after *Society Must Be Defended*, we do not see further elaborations of bio-politics as a form of thanato-politics in Foucault’s analysis. He shifts his focus to his concept of “governmentality” which allows Foucault to focus his attention to bio-politics as a collection of strategies, networks of power relations, discourses, and forms of subjectification (Lemke, 2011, p. 173) rather than emphasizing its violent qualities. Also lacking in his analysis of bio-power is any reference to inequality, exploitation or capitalist domination. Perhaps this is due to his desire to distance himself as much as he can from the Marxist tradition (Fassin, 2011, p. 193). Nonetheless, this lacking transforms the

concept of “bio-power” from being highly representative of modern dynamics of violence into a concept that reflects the “grid of governmentality” of the modern society, namely the process “which has led to the development of a series of specific governmental apparatuses... on the one hand, [and, on the other] to the development of a series of knowledges” (Foucault, 2009, p. 108). Fortunately, the concept of structural violence can supplement this lack of references to the murderous function of bio-power and help to transform bio-power into a concept that can help us fully understand the dynamics of modern societies, and this thesis aims precisely to achieve that.

As mentioned in the first chapter, structural violence denotes physical or psychological harms accrued to human beings due to avoidable violations of human rights. And bio-power denotes a type of power that sees a certain part of humanity as “disposables” for the good of the rest, the “population.” Since according to Foucault modern politics is mostly run according to the principles of bio-politics, it is safe to assume that acts or situations of structural violence occur continuously. Human beings are sacrificed so that the “good guys” are not harmed. These choices might be implicit or explicit, but usually there are no apparent perpetrators putting these choices into effect. An example for the merging point of the concepts of bio-power and structural violence can be seen in the phenomenon of “collateral damage”. The NATO intervention in Kosovo and Serbia in 1999 provides a good case in point for this concept. In this intervention, in order to drop NATO casualties to zero a decision was made to fly NATO planes high enough to be protected from any enemy attacks. The results were heavy civilian casualties due to the fact that the bombings of the chosen targets were much less accurate (Fassin, 2011, pp. 192-193). Civilians were sacrificed to save American pilots and the results were termed as “collateral damage” (ibid).

A subtler example can be given from the AIDS epidemic in South Africa, the country that has the largest AIDS epidemic in the world³⁶. According to UNAIDS there are over 7 million people living with HIV in South Africa in

³⁶ <http://www.unaids.org/en/regionscountries/countries/southafrica>

2017. That amounts to an almost 20% prevalence rate in adults³⁷. An estimated 270.000 new HIV infections occurred in 2016 along with 110.000 AIDS-related deaths. And lastly, in 2016 alone an estimated 12.000 children were newly infected with HIV due to mother-to-child transmission. The numbers are staggering. Especially when one considers that in the last twenty years AIDS has transformed into a chronic but treatable disease, from being a death sentence. The reason for this is the treatment of AIDS patients with antiretroviral (ARV) drugs, which can control albeit without entirely eliminating the disease. Until recently, though, the majority of South Africans living with HIV could not access these drugs due to their excessive prices and the inability of public sectors to provide the much-needed drugs to those who cannot afford (Fisher & Rigamonti, 2005). Even today the number of HIV patients receiving ARV drugs only amount to 61% of all adults and children infected with HIV³⁸. I believe this situation is a result of a global regime of bio-power that relies heavily on structural violence on its working mechanisms. The “chosen population” in this scenario is pharmaceutical companies and the “disposable others” are the poor and insecure millions of people living with HIV who cannot afford drugs due to their high costs. The reasons ARV drugs are priced as high as they are, are twofold: first, because companies claim they require these high prices to cover their high R&D costs and to help them continue their researches; and second, because they simply can. The Agreement on Trade-Related Aspects of Intellectual Property Rights (TRIPS) agreement that became effective on 1995 protects the pharmaceutical companies’ right to patents and restrict any equivalent drugs to be produced or imported. Therefore, low levels of elasticity result with these companies having the capacity to set monopolistic prices on these lifesaving drugs. In other words, human lives are traded for capital to thrive. And since this situation is avoidable, we can safely say that human rights are violated, and, thus, structural violence is present.

³⁷ <http://www.unaids.org/en/regionscountries/countries/southafrica>

³⁸ Of course, even this number reflects a major success in battling AIDS in South Africa, a country which was laden with AIDS-related controversies. One of such controversies was created by the former president Mbeki who denied the causal relationship between HIV and AIDS and expressed his doubts regarding Western Medicine in treating AIDS on every occasion.

These two examples reflect the worldwide situation of bio-political structural violence, but they constitute just a tiny fraction of the general state of affairs on our planet. And perhaps the most acute cases can be seen in today's neoliberal regimes. Because they require draconian measures to be taken in both developed and underdeveloped countries for the ultimate aim of economic growth, neoliberal policies create many violent situations and are the perfect arena to investigate the connection between bio-politics and structural violence. Therefore, third chapter of this thesis is devoted to show this connection within neoliberal regimes. But before continuing with the next chapter a brief summary of Foucault's account of neoliberal politics is in order.

3.2 Neoliberalism in Foucault

In the year 1979 Foucault gave his seminal lectures *The Birth of Biopolitics* in Collège de France. This is the last lecture in the series that is focused on power generally and bio-power specifically. Despite its name, however, *The Birth of Biopolitics* involves very little mentioning of bio-power. This book is more an analysis of the liberal and neoliberal arts of government, though Foucault's aim was to use this analysis as an introduction to his investigation for the answer to this question: "How can the phenomena of 'population,' with its specific effects and problems, be taken into account in a system concerned about respect for legal subjects and individual free enterprise?" (Foucault, 2008, p. 317). In other words, his aims for making this research were to see the dynamics of both liberal and neoliberal ways of government within the scheme of bio-power into which both these sets of practices – liberalism and neoliberalism – emerge. Due to the pressing of time, however, he was unable to fully achieve his aim.

One may ask why would anyone use Foucault's theories on neoliberalism mentioned in *The Birth of Biopolitics*, which was held before neoliberal government became a global phenomenon? Are Foucault's theories not bound to be partial and incompetent since he did not live long enough to see the full repercussions of the sets of practices that neoliberal government brought forth? Well, no. First of all, what we call neoliberalism today did not just emerge out

of the blue with Thatcher and Regan coming to power. Neoliberalism is first and foremost a theory of economics and it emerged on the scene of social sciences after the end of the World War II, with thinkers such as Hayek, von Mises, and the ordoliberalists such as Walter Eucken, Ludwig Erhard, and Wilhelm Röpke. Foucault builds his analysis of neoliberalism on the writings of these thinkers, but he also stresses the fact that – and this is the second point – these theories were in effect in most governments at the time of his lectures, as he gives the example of West Germany, the country that implemented neoliberal policies since the end of the WWII (Foucault, 2008; Brown, 2015, p. 52). For Foucault, therefore, neoliberalism does not emerge as a response to the crisis of liberal economy and the welfare state as Harvey and many others argue, but is born of liberal governmentality, although it transforms the latter to such an extent that in the end one might say their mechanisms are completely opposite (Brown, 2015, p. 59). The best way, therefore, to elucidate Foucault’s views on neoliberalism is perhaps to look at his comparisons between it and classical liberalism, which the reader will find below. But before that the question why we should pay attention to Foucault’s theory of neoliberalism will be answered.

Foucault’s distinction is that he does not take neoliberalism to be a mere ideology set to work in different geographies in the world, as a “manipulative “wrong knowledge” of society and economy that must be replaced by a right or emancipatory – which means scientific or “impartial” knowledge” (Lemke, 2010, p. 54), but as a set of strategies, tactics, and policies with its own regime of truth (Read, 2009, pp. 28-30). The upside of seeing neoliberalism as a practice of government helps Foucault to discern how this governing rationality extends its values, norms and logic to every sphere of social reality, which is the defining feature of neoliberalism according to Foucault: that it involves “the “economization” of heretofore noneconomic spheres and practices” (Brown, 2015, pp. 30-31). In Wendy Brown’s words, “neoliberal rationality disseminates the model of the market to all domains and activities — even where money is not at issue — and configures human beings exhaustively as market actors, always, only, and everywhere as *homo oeconomicus*” (2015, p. 31). This amounts to market principles seeping through noneconomic spheres of life and

shaping every relationship, from parenting to partnering, every occupation, from learning to illegal activities, and almost every situation (ibid, p. 67). At stake in neoliberalism, then, is the capture of the totality of the social sphere by the economic; a total embeddedness of the social within the economic. Theories that take neoliberalism to be an ideology stay shy of reflecting this aspect of neoliberal politics, and that is why Foucault's theories of neoliberal governmentality are important: it helps us understand the full effects of these practices on any society.

As mentioned above, according to Foucault neoliberal governmentality emerged as a response to classical liberalism. Transforming the latter, neoliberalism differed itself from liberalism on at least two accounts. First is in regard to the concept of "labor." In classical liberalism labor is seen as a factor of production, receiving a wage for the exchange of hours a laborer puts to work. This model is criticized by neoliberal writers who claims that this abstracted concept of labor which is solely considered through the variable of time leaves this concept unexplored (Foucault, 2008, pp. 219-221). Agreeing with Marx on the basis that classical liberals have forgotten about labor, though without sharing any of his views on the matter, (Lemke, 2001, p. 198) neoliberals see labor not as a factor of production but as "human capital"; in other words, as an entrepreneur who invested in himself/herself all his/her life, through schooling, training or any other means, and who in turn earns the profits for his/her investment through the medium of wages (Foucault, 2008, pp. 226-230). The *homo oeconomicus* in neoliberalism, thus, is not a wage earner as was the case for classical liberalism, but he is a capitalist; hence the term "human capital." The *homo oeconomicus* in classical liberalism is also fundamentally different from the *homo oeconomicus* in neoliberalism in the sense that liberalism takes the "economic man" to be a partner of exchange, while neoliberalism builds its theory of the "economic man" on the concept of competition (Foucault, 2008, pp. 225-226). Since exchange was considered to be natural by the liberals, there was nothing more normal than equals engaged in free exchange with each other. The idea of laissez-faire stems from this naturality. But neoliberal rationality does not see exchange to be natural for the man as an economic subject.

Therefore, they do not consider laissez-faire to be an appropriate policy recommendation. The foremost economic rationality is competition not because it is given of nature, but because it ensures the formation of prices (Foucault, 2008, p. 119). The neoliberal idea therefore is that “there is no need to intervene directly in the economic process, since the economic process, as the bearer in itself of a regulatory structure in the form of competition, will never go wrong if it is allowed to function fully” (ibid, p. 137). This is where the second major difference between classical liberalism and neoliberalism steps in: the state’s role in the economy. Classical liberals believed that generally the market functions perfectly, therefore there is no need for a state to intervene. But, from time to time, the markets “malfunction”³⁹ or crises emerge, and this is when the state should step in and correct the problem so that the market can return to its smooth functioning. The neoliberal theory, however, paints a different picture. They claim that without intervention markets do not malfunction. It is actually the interventions that makes crises happen. Therefore, the state should not assume the role social guardian of people, by guaranteeing them against old age, unemployment, illnesses, or accidents (Foucault, 2008, pp. 143-144). This is the responsibility of the subjects themselves, not the state’s. The only time that states can intervene in the economy is in order to protect the principle of competition, and to ensure the rules of the game are not disturbed. As a result, the state governs not because of the market, in order to offset its negative impacts on the society, but for the market (Brown, 2015, p. 63).

As one can see, the idea of equality that classical liberals supported is also eradicated with neoliberalism. Rather, the market is set on the principle of inequality (Foucault, 2008, p. 119). As the market expands through all spheres of life and economizes every aspect of social reality, inequality becomes normalized or even legitimate (Brown, 2015, p. 64). Another side effect of neoliberalism is that when the category of labor disappears and is replaced by the category of “human capital,” the collective forms of labor, that is class, disappears as well, along with “the analytic basis for alienation, exploitation, and association among laborers” (ibid, p. 38). The subject created by the neoliberal

³⁹ In the sense of high unemployment rates, extremely low wages, high levels of pollution, etc.

governmentality is, thus, a highly individualized, though, at the same time, “responsibilized” subject, since the responsibility for the well-being of human beings is shifted from the state to the individuals themselves (Lemke, 2010, p. 59). The bio-political rationality, though, does not disappear. The state still cares about the well-being of its population, but in this case, it serves its subjects by helping the market to be the organizational principle of both itself and the society (Lemke, 2001, p. 200). It puts capital in the center of its focus, which is why economic growth has been the most important indicator of “development” in the last forty years, but not indicators such as reducing the income gap between the richest and the poorest, reducing unemployment, or shifting towards progressive tax regimes. Increasing inequalities and the sacrifice of human beings for the protection or enhancement of capital leads in turn to increased levels of structural violence and the next chapter will try to elucidate this point through cases that reflect the neoliberal art of government. In the next and the last chapter, I will carry on with what Foucault discussed and transmit them into a wider literature on neoliberalism to show the triangular relationship between structural violence, bio-power and neoliberalism. After coming to a conclusion that neoliberal practices occasionally lead to structurally violent outcomes I will move on the last section of this thesis and conclude.

CHAPTER 4

THE INTERACTION OF POWER AND VIOLENCE A CASE STUDY: NEOLIBERALISM

4.1 Introduction

Neoliberalism has become a buzzword in recent years. Perhaps it is because it has been used by many self-acknowledged “experts” or because scholars still cannot agree on what exactly it means. The concept of “neoliberalism” is somewhat ambiguous because it takes different shapes in its encounters with different political and social traditions (Brown, 2015, p. 48). Without professing to come to a conclusive argument, in this thesis, neoliberalism will be taken as an ensemble of practices that were put into effect gradually around the globe following the demise of the Keynesian politics. To state briefly, these policies generally involve trade liberalization, privatization and outsourcing of public goods, deregulation, shifting towards regressive tax and tariff regimes, the end of welfare state and its redistributive mechanisms, and the conversion of everything into a profitable enterprise (ibid). Neoliberalism, as type of governmentality, also has its own discourses of truth, the ideas it upholds and practices it disavows. In order to have a general understanding of this complex phenomenon, I will first narrate a very brief history of neoliberalism, how it emerged as an economic policy agenda, how it came to be put into effect in both developed and underdeveloped countries, and what have been its general effects on human beings. Then I will continue with a more theoretical argument, trying to situate neoliberalism as a type of governmentality. For that I will return to Foucault and elucidate his concept of governmentality to truly understand what neoliberalism amounts to in real

world. And lastly, after pointing the primary characteristics of a neoliberal governmentality, I will investigate the violent effects these have on different aspects of social reality through different examples.

4.2 A “Very” Brief History of Neoliberalism

After the Second World War, in continental Europe we can observe the emergence of intellectuals, who we later came to know as neoliberals. In West Germany ordoliberals like Röpke and Rüstow, and in Austria intellectuals like Hayek and von Mises were precursors of what we today call neoliberalism (Foucault, 2008; Harvey, 2005), though it was not until the late 1970s that neoliberal policies were fully in effect. There are two main crises that set the stage for the actualizations of neoliberal policies in this period. First, it was because of the crisis of the US dollar. After the Second World War, in order not to experience a crisis like the great depression of 1929 again, delegates from 44 countries came together at the United Nations Monetary and Financial Conference to form the International Monetary Fund (IMF) and to sign the Bretton Woods agreements that brought a fixed exchange rate regime to the global economy. A fixed exchange rate is an exchange rate regime in which the value of a currency is fixed either to another currency or to another measure of value such as gold. In the case of Bretton Woods agreement, world currencies were pegged to the price of gold, which was linked to the US dollars that acted as a global reserve currency (Harvey, 2005, p. 10). Under this agreement, USA basically guaranteed that for every dollar one could obtain a fixed amount of gold from its Federal Reserve (Harvey, 2005, p. 10). The US, however, could not keep its promise after a while due to the flooding of dollars out of its home country into the different regions of the world. An ever-increasing money supply due to thirty years of inflation and the unending finances for the imperialistic ventures of the US, such as the Vietnam War, put its economy in a difficult position with respect to the fixed exchange rate regime. For instance, a one-dollar bill that could obtain x amounts of gold from the Federal Reserve of US in 1945 could still obtain that amount of gold in 1970, but due to inflation, that

one dollar in 1970 was much less valuable than the one dollar in 1945. Since this was not sustainable, the Bretton Woods system was abandoned in early 1970s (ibid, p. 12).

The second crisis was due to the OPEC (Organization of Petroleum Exporting Countries) oil embargo in 1973. Because the price of oil was also pegged to US dollars, the abandonment of the Bretton Woods system and the subsequent depreciation of dollar due to the floating exchange rate regime the US implemented decreased the price of oil, thereby damaging the oil-rich countries of the Middle East. Furthermore, in 1973 the conflict between Arabs and Israel mounted to such an extent that military conflicts occurred between two parties. The Arabs, who did not take well the fact that Western countries such as US and UK were supporting Israel, decided to place an embargo on oil and to raise its prices to oligopolistic levels (Harvey, 2005; Lewellen, 2002). “Prices for oil increased by 400% in 1974 alone and kept climbing” (Lewellen, 2002, p. 15). This increase in the price of oil exacerbated the already crisis ridden economies of the West, dragging them into what economists term “stagflation” – the coexistence of both stagnation and high rates of inflation (Harvey, 2005, p. 12). High inflation, little or no economic growth, and high levels of unemployment resulted with the collapse of the existing system of Keynesian economics in Europe and ushered in the period of neoliberalism.

First in the UK, with the coming of Margaret Thatcher in 1979, and in the US with Paul Volcker becoming the head of the Federal Reserve that same year and with the coming of Ronald Reagan to power in the following year, neoliberal policies were being effectively put into practice. These practices were first of all aimed at minimizing the influence of states on the national economies. The preceding crisis was attributed to too much state intervention in the past and the resulting bureaucratic red tape which created inefficiencies in national economies (Lewellen, 2002, p. 19). Privatization and deregulation were the proposed solutions to this problem (Harvey, 2005, p. 65). The role of states was restricted to only creating and maintaining the institutional framework that upheld the market, which meant that the states should protect private property, create conditions for competition to flourish, and create markets where they do

not exist, “in areas such as land, water, education, health care, social security, or environmental pollution” (Harvey, 2005, p. 2). As Harvey points, according to neoliberals,

beyond these tasks the state should not venture. State interventions in markets (once created) must be kept to a bare minimum because, according to the theory, the state cannot possibly possess enough information to second-guess market signals (prices) and because powerful interest groups will inevitably distort and bias state interventions (particularly in democracies) for their own benefit. (ibid, p. 2)

As a result, previously state-run businesses were privatized everywhere and states’ welfare functions, such as healthcare and education services, were severely retracted. Other than minimizing the state influence on the economy, neoliberal practices also aimed at liberalization of trade practices all over the world, which meant eliminating tariffs, subsidies, and implementing regressive, rather than progressive, taxing regimes. Perhaps, most importantly though, “neoliberalism has meant the financialization of everything” (Harvey, 2005, p. 33).

Increasingly freed from the regulatory constraints and barriers that had hitherto confined its field of action, financial activity could flourish as never before, eventually everywhere. A wave of innovations occurred in financial services to produce not only far more sophisticated global interconnections but also new kinds of financial markets based on securitization, derivatives, and all manner of futures trading. (ibid, p. 33)⁴⁰

The prevalence of neoliberalism in the third world countries, however, occurred in a slightly different manner. The OPEC embargo on oil resulted with the enrichment of oil-rich countries of the Middle East. As a result of the pressures done by crisis ridden developed countries, these resources were put into the investment banks in Europe and US, which were, in turn, given to the third world countries as loans, who were struggling with rising oil prices and therefore hungry for credit (Harvey, 2005). “Partially to pay for oil and partially for development (which seldom materialized), countries borrowed prodigiously from private banks and major multilateral institutions at variable rates”

⁴⁰ All of these aspects of neoliberal practices will be discussed in detail below.

(Lewellen, 2002, p. 15). However, “[i]n the early 1980s, the whole system collapsed, leaving the countries heavily over-indebted” (ibid, p. 15). The IMF then stepped in, initially designed to promote free trade among nations, as a lender to these countries with interest rates that would keep the countries from defaulting (ibid). These loans, however, did not come without a price. What IMF wanted from these countries was nothing less than a reorganization of their entire economy along the lines of neoliberalism (ibid; Harvey, 2005). These demands were labeled under the term “structural adjustments” (Lewellen, 2002, p. 16). In certain countries like the post-communist countries of Eastern Europe, these policies were implemented with shock therapies⁴¹ (Klein, 2007; Harvey, 2005), in some others like Chile and Turkey via coup d’états⁴² (Harvey, 2005; Boratav, 2003), and in the least developed countries such as the Sub-Saharan African countries via neocolonial pressure mechanisms (Harvey, 2005; Harris & Lauderdale, 2002).

In terms of human safety, these practices resulted with two major consequences. First, neoliberalism erased the idea of the necessity of state protection of human beings’ well-being, thus, shifted this responsibility to individuals themselves in the form of self-care or self-responsibility (Brown, 2015; Lemke, 2001; Lemke, 2010). Neoliberal practices, in other words, left human beings to the mercy of economic markets, which occasionally led to the impoverishment of millions of people. However, neoliberal governments did not halt their protection of capital in times of crises, as was clear in the 2008 financial crisis, and legitimated this behavior under the excuse that those businesses were “too big to fail” for the good of the economy in general. Of course, and this is the second consequence, “too big to fail” argument has as its counterpart the idea that some are “too small to protect,” which results with the sacrifice of masses for the sake of capital. In Brown’s words: “the neoliberal subject is granted no guarantee of life (on the contrary, in markets, some must die for others to live),

⁴¹ The implementation of neoliberal policies with great speed, without an adjustment period. For more detail, see N. Klein, *The Shock Doctrine: The Rise of Disaster Capitalism*, (2007).

⁴² As happened in Chile with the CIA backed coup that started the Pinochet regime in 1973 and in Turkey after the September 12th, 1980 coup.

and is so tethered to economic ends as to be potentially sacrificible to them” (2015, p. 111).

As a result, with the coming of the neoliberal era, we have witnessed massive increases in worldwide levels of structural violence. Especially the increasing violation of economic and social rights of human beings is proof to this. The reason for this expansion of structurally violent practices are partly rooted in the economic understanding that neoliberalism defends. Trade liberalization, privatization, deregulation, financialization and all the other policies enforced by neoliberal governments that were mentioned above, represent the neoliberal economic perspective that brings an uncompromising attitude to economic growth. Tossing aside economic equality as unnecessary for the smooth functioning of the economic system, neoliberals strived to achieve high levels of economic growth no matter the consequences for the well-beings of human beings. Hiding behind the infamous “trickle-down effect⁴³” when accused with elitism, neoliberal economists are ready to sacrifice millions to malnutrition, preventable diseases, and excessive poverty. Economic growth without equality favors certain segments of society or, on a worldwide scale, certain nations, at the expense of those considered to be disposable, such as the poor, sick, unemployed, elderly, or, again, on a worldwide scale, the underdeveloped countries.

4.3 Neoliberal Governmentality

In order to better explain neoliberalism, one would need to return to the term “government” or “governmentality” and to locate it within Foucault’s terminology. “Governmentality” is “Foucault’s term for an important historical shift in the operation and orientation of the state and political power in modernity” (Brown, 2015, p. 117). In Brown’s words: “governmentality represents a shift away from the power of command and punishment targeting

⁴³ Trickle-down effect, or in other words, the idea that “rising tide lifts all boats,” is an argument supported by neoliberal scholars that claims even the improvements in the market that only effect particular segments – generally the rich – of the society would be beneficial for the totality.

particular subjects and toward the power of conducting and compelling populations ‘at a distance’” (ibid, p. 117). Governmentality, in other words, is a specific type of government that works not as an external influence on human beings, but through internal mechanisms, both at the level of state and individual bodies. With this shift in the mode of power that came during the modern era, governments no longer separated themselves from their populations and tried to dictate the ultimate authority of the king from the outside. Since this shift, governments have formed a unity with their populations, so much so that the whole point of government shifted from being in the name of king to being in the name of the population itself.

A quick reminder before moving on: as mentioned before, according to Foucault neoliberalism is not an ideology implemented in different countries as a result of the pressures of a few global elites. Nor is it a result of the manipulation of the third world countries so that they believe in the utility of these set of practices. Neoliberalism is also not simply a retraction of the state from the field of economics. Neoliberalism is a type of government, a “conduct of conduct” both at the level of state and at the level of individuals. It is “an intimate part of how our lives and subjectivity are structured” (Read, 2009, p. 35). It is an expansion of the economic field not only to state, but also to all domains of the social fabric⁴⁴. Neoliberal governmentality, then, is a bi-product of the bio-political regime that we exist in.

As to the effects of neoliberal governmentality on human beings, we can observe that neoliberalism creates a situation of precariousness (Molé, 2010). As mentioned in the second chapter, neoliberal governmentality treats every human being as an entrepreneur responsible for making their decisions and mistakes, which adds up to leaving them exposed to and without any protection from the

⁴⁴ It was mentioned that neoliberalism’s primary aim is to curb the power of the states so that their influence within the market would be minimized. This does not mean, though, that the state and the market are thought as mutually exclusive phenomenon in neoliberal thought. In fact, the state is *required* to intervene in the market in certain cases. This might seem as a paradox (Harvey, 2005), but this is how the governmentality of neoliberalism works: redirecting the attention of states from certain aspects of the market to the others; i.e. redirect the states to protect the foundation of the markets rather than to intervene in its quotidian dynamics (Foucault, 2008; Read, 2009).

mechanisms of the market. Evidently, this creates structurally violent conditions. Everywhere in the world we are seeing the same patterns, same precariousness, same neglect, disposableness, or the direct acts of exclusion, whether in a city like London or in Johannesburg's ghettos. Power in neoliberalism is exercised on the level of life, the population (Foucault, 1978, p. 137). As was mentioned in the previous chapters, "the power to expose a whole population to death is the underside of the power to guarantee an individual's continued existence" (ibid, p. 137). And this is exactly the problem we see in neoliberal governmentality. Through insecurities that it creates in the social fabric, and especially in the labor market, privatization of commons, retraction of welfare policies and unbridled financialization neoliberal governmentality creates and maintains an environment of fear and structural violence.

In the remaining parts of this chapter, you will find examples taken from different parts on the literature on neoliberalism and assembled under different categories of neoliberal policies that were just mentioned – namely, creation of insecurity in the labor market, privatization of commons, and retraction of welfare policies. These categories are chosen due to them being the most violent aspect of neoliberal practices.⁴⁵ The examples were all studied as case studies in different settings and all of them highlight some kind of (structural) violence caused by the basic characteristics of neoliberal governmentality. Even though Foucault did not analyze neoliberalism in this light, what he saw in bio-power and what I see in structural violence supplement each other to form a unity, and neoliberalism represents the quintessential example of this unity, namely, the violent face of bio-politics. Foucault's relative indifference towards capital and exploitation may constitute a limitation for the purposes of this thesis, but I believe that structural violence fills that void. It brings attention to structurally unjust practices inherent in modern governmentalities and it helps us acknowledge the violent face of neoliberal politics.

⁴⁵ Even though financialization is a major component of neoliberalism, it is not included among the chosen aspects of neoliberal governmentality in this thesis, because of the fact that the dynamics of financialization are so complex and vast that it would require its own thesis.

4.4 Three Faces of Neoliberal Violence

4.4.1 Insecurity in the Labor Market

One of the primary changes that occurred during the neoliberal period was within the labor markets. Policies designed to tackle inflation had damaging consequences in terms of employment in both the West and in the third world countries (Harvey, 2005). Finding the Western labor forces too expensive, companies carried their production units, such as factories, in third world countries that supplied labor for much lower remunerations. As a result, this process, called outsourcing, created a problem of chronic unemployment as well as lowering wages, increasing job insecurity and the loss of benefits and job protections in the Western countries (Harvey, 2005, p. 76). In the third world countries where these factories were relocated, this process ended with massive amounts of exploitation and human rights abuses. In order to compete with other third world countries in an open global economy to attract foreign investments, countries provided outrageous privileges to foreign companies, such as lowering or not determining the minimum wage or not having any laws that protect the environment from the degradation caused by industrial production.

The prime determining factor for foreign investment is the availability of cheap labor (Safa, 1981). A labor force where wage differentiations are possible, either in terms of gender, ethnicity or any other factor, is another important factor. In Malaysia, for instance, “[g]overnment labor laws, by not setting a legal minimum to the wage rate nor correcting the sexual imbalance in wage levels, created a situation in which transnational corporations could lower production costs by employing a female-dominated labor force” (Ong, 2010, p. 147). Labor differentiation based on gender created a situation of male domination and female subordination and set the tone for the “‘common sense’ of power relations” (Ong, 2010, p. 162). Receiving much lower wages than their male counterparts, female workers in the electronics firms were subject to a high turnover rate. Fired when they were married, pregnant, beyond a certain age, or number of years worked in the factory, these workers’ potential for organized action were highly curtailed (ibid).

Bangladesh is one of the countries that Western “fast fashion”⁴⁶ companies like Zara, Topshop and H&M subcontract production to manufacturing factories. The competition on the level of stores are converted into competition among garment factories, each trying to produce as cheaply as possible (Ross & Morgan, 2015). This means more pressure on and less benefits for the workers. Without the necessary means to organize, the laborers lose their capacity to influence their working conditions, and this may even lead to their deaths in certain occasions. The Rana Plaza collapse in 2013 is a testament to this. The Rana Plaza, just outside Dhaka, Bangladesh, was an eight-story building that involved several garment factories. One April morning in 2013, the building collapsed, killing 1,135 people and injuring 2,500⁴⁷. The worst part about this disaster, though was not that that many people died, but that the workers had already pointed out the cracks in the building to the management, but, nonetheless, were still forced to return to work that day (Ross & Morgan, 2015). As one of the commentators says in the documentary *The True Cost*, the Rana Plaza collapse shows how garment workers in Bangladesh payed the price for cheap clothing (Ross & Morgan, 2015).

Unfortunately, the Rana Plaza collapse is not an exception in an otherwise well-managed system; it was only the worst one. In garment industry alone, that year – 2012-2013 – witnessed “three out of four worst tragedies in the history of fashion”⁴⁸ (Ross & Morgan, 2015). Bhopal disaster is yet another industrial disaster due to negligence on the part of the managers. It is considered to be the worst industrial disaster that happened in the modern era, killing nearly 15,000 people over the years due to the effects of a highly toxic gas leak in 1984.⁴⁹ Other

⁴⁶ Fast fashion is a type of production in fashion industry where ideas from catwalks are turned into cheap and trendy clothing at breakneck speed. Rather than four seasons, there are 52 seasons in fast fashion, meaning new designs are brought to stores every week where they are aimed to be sold as much as possible and as quickly as possible.

⁴⁷<https://www.theguardian.com/world/2016/jul/18/rana-plaza-collapse-murder-charges-garment-factory>

⁴⁸ The other two being the fires in Ali Enterprises and Tazreen fashion factory, which took the lives of 289 and 117 people respectively.

⁴⁹<https://www.theatlantic.com/photo/2014/12/bhopal-the-worlds-worst-industrial-disaster-30-years-later/100864/>

more recent examples include the Soma mining disaster in Manisa Turkey, with a death toll of 301, and the PetroChina Chuandongbei natural gas field explosion that happened in Kai County, China in the year 2003, claiming the lives of 243 people. What all these examples have in common is the structural conditions that paved the way for their occurrence. In all the examples mentioned above, simple measures that could have been taken with, probably, very low costs, could prevent them from happening. It is difficult to consider these cases as simple and coincidental accidents. Rather, caused by systematic negligence they are cases of structural violence. In some cases governments agree that these occurrences are not accidents but result from the negligence of the part of managers. After the Rana Plaza collapse, for instance, as many as 41 people were charged, some with murder, but the question is what does it matter to charge some people when the structural conditions are not altered and people continue to die from similar avoidable “accidents”?

Accidents and disasters are not the only means through which structural conditions lead to violent outcomes. There is a subtler way that violent results surface in capitalist economies and that is the result of the trend towards “flexibility” that happened in the neoliberal period. In capitalist economies, there are generally two types of wage-laboring: stable work-forces and variable work-forces (Wallerstein, 1983, p. 21). The former comprises of laborers who enjoy relatively secure employment. In the post World War II Europe, where Keynesian policies aimed for full employment, for which they encouraged the prevalence of stable work-forces, laborers also enjoyed access to insurance, paid leaves, pensions for unemployment and/or retirement, and could fulfil their right to be unionized. In the neoliberal period, no longer aiming to achieve full employment, governments retracted the privileges of many economic and social rights laborers had obtained in the previous periods by turning a significant portion of the labor-forces into variable work-forces. The reason they are called variable work-forces is because they are generally short-term contract holders, who “tend to earn approximately 20 percent less than lifelong contract holders, to not be unionized, and to share reduced or no access to pension, maternity leave, unemployment, and paid vacations” (Molé, 2010, p. 42). The end effect

of this labor regime is structural violence in the forms of psychological violence and/or unmet survival needs, due to high levels of uncertainty, insecurity and fear regarding employment. Molé (2010) claims that this uncertainty first of all emerges at the entrance to the labor-market; with short-term flexible contracts, workers cannot estimate their economic situations once their contract ends: whether they will be reemployed or unemployment, whether they can find a job again in a short time, or whether they can get the money that was owed to them. Second of all, as neoliberal governmentality “promote[s] ideals of freedom and choice, in tandem with the idea that autonomous individuals have a moral responsibility to manage risk,” workers are refashioned as responsible for their own welfare, rather than relying on various state agencies (Molé, 2010, 40).

Under constant pressure of uncertainty, risks and working – or, more precisely, existing – in an environment of fear, a “precarious” subject emerges, “a subject fraught with acute anxiety and nagging hypervigilance” (Molé, 2010, p. 38). Consequently, workers tend to show violent behaviors towards their peers in the work space, which can be generalized under the term “mobbing”. Mobbing is a form of physical or psychological violence that can result at best with mobbees being taciturn and gloomy, and, at worst, can end with the victim showing suicidal tendencies (Molé, 2010). It can be described as,

aggression or violence or persecution in the workplace perpetuated with a certain systematic and repetitious manner by one’s manager or ... colleagues, using behaviors able to harm, discriminate, or progressively marginalize a determined worker in order to estrange him, marginalize him, and eventually induce him to resign [... and] in extreme cases, [to cause a] propensity for suicide from the absence of self-realization in work and the lack of normal gratification in social relationships at work. (Meucci cited in Molé, 2010, p. 39)

Mobbing, therefore, is a serious problem; and it is as prevalent as it is serious, especially in the neoliberal period.

Mobbing did not emerge with the prevalence of neoliberal governmentality, though; as much as we can tell, it is an archaic practice (ibid). Though it did increase with the implementation of neoliberal practices. Studying the Italian work-force from 1990s onwards, via the mobbed people he

encountered in mobbing clinics, Molé (2010) comes to the conclusion that after the deregulation policies that accompanied the introduction of neoliberal governmentality in Italy, mobbing became a serious problem for Italian labor forces so much so that local clinics sprung up solely for the purposes of battling the physical and psychological effects of this problem on workers. In his research done in mobbing clinics, Molé describes his encounters with workers either fired or still suffering from workplace mobbing. He shows that mobbing profoundly effects the psyche of victims and, hence, their quality of life (ibid). Even when there is no indication for mobbing, the suspicion that a person is being mobbed, turns even the most mundane everyday acts into acts to exclude in the eyes of that person (ibid, p. 45-46). For instance, he talks about a woman named Fiore Montiglio whose job was to manage cases of mobbing against women (ibid, p. 45). In her case the problem was not the direct acts of mobbing but the creation of an environment of doubt and fear, where she imagined that she was being mobbed and interpreted every intentional or unintentional act towards her as a case of mobbing. As a result, her relationship with her superiors and co-workers deteriorated to the point where she had to resign, while still being owed by the company. Perhaps the most interesting part of this story is that “the very woman whose responsibility it was to resolve mobbing problems felt that she was a target” (Molé, 2010, p. 45).

Unfortunately, cases like these are common, not just in Italy but in every part of the world where “flexibility” has become the watchword with respect to labor markets (Harvey, 2005). Everywhere in the world, bosses mobbing their workers to get them to resign or bend, co-workers mobbing each other in a competition for valuable employment spots, creates “[a]n ethically charged workplace imagined as ‘your death, my life’... in which stand alone actors fighting to the death for social inclusion” (Molé, 2010, pp. 47-48). Thus, we can see the effects of bio-political rationality seeping even deeper into the power relations as both vertical and horizontal mobbing⁵⁰ becomes more and more prevalent.

⁵⁰ Vertical mobbing is the type of mobbing that is observed among a worker and his/her superior, while horizontal mobbing is observed among same-level employees (Molé, 2010, p. 39).

4.4.2 Privatization of Commons

Commons are generally thought to be a type of property, such as land, animals, or water, open to the use of everybody without any restrictions. It is, therefore, not hard to imagine liberalism's trouble in understanding their utility. Commons usually are the difference between life and death for the locals who are benefitting from them, especially in today's overly exploited third world countries; but, to the liberal mind, because they do not specify any ownership patterns, commons create a problem of misuse. This theory is "the tragedy of the commons," first clearly articulated by Garrett Hardin (1968). In his article, Hardin asks us to imagine pasture open to all, in which each herdsman is considered in the image of homo economicus as profit maximizing and loss minimizing human beings, and therefore portrayed as in pursuit of keeping as many cattle as possible on the commons (ibid, p. 1244). Such an arrangement, according to Hardin,

may work reasonably satisfactorily for centuries because tribal wars, poaching, and disease keep the numbers of both man and beast well below the carrying capacity of the land. Finally, however, comes the day of reckoning, that is, the day when the long-desired goal of social stability becomes a reality. At this point, the inherent logic of the commons remorselessly generates tragedy.... Each man is locked into a system that compels him to increase his herd without limit – in a world that is limited. Ruin is the destination toward which all men rush, each pursuing his own best interest in a society that believes in the freedom of the commons. Freedom in a commons brings ruin to all. (1968, p. 1244)

Therefore, Hardin's solution is either to privatize the commons and, thereby, restrict the number of persons who have a right to them, or to regulate the commons through government regulations (ibid). However, both of these may have catastrophic consequences. According to Vandana Shiva the free commons have been the base for survival for many people living in rural India. She argues that,

[s]mall peasants and landless labourers can own livestock largely because of the existence of the commons... in arid zones, traditional farming systems partly derive their stability and viability from the commons which allow for an integrated

and diversified production strategy using crops, livestock and trees, which cushion the dry-land economy by supplying food, fodder and fuel in years of crop failure. (Shiva, 1988, p. 78)

International institutions like World Bank and World Trade Organization, however, do not share Shiva's views with regard to commons. Instead, championing the theory of the tragedy of the commons, these institutions demand countries like India to "improve" these lands that they consider to be "wastelands" (ibid). Wastelands are generally thought as lands that does not create any economic value – in a capitalistic sense – because they are uncultivated. Oblivious to the survival needs of the locals and to the effects of degradation that privatization generally causes on environment, these institutions "recommended the entry of the corporate sector in wasteland development" (ibid, p. 78). For instance, in village commons in Shimoga and Chikmagalur, proposals have been made to transferring these lands from the locals to the company Harihar Polyfibres in order to grow eucalyptus on them. Eucalyptus, however, is a type of tree that depletes soil and water sources (ibid, p. 81). Therefore, "[t]he cultivation of eucalyptus in the village commons... is seen by the people as a programme for the *creation* of wastelands, not a programme for their development" (ibid, p. 81). Not only this proposal robs people of their means to achieve survival, "wasteland development" projects such as this damage locals in a double sense by also degrading the environment around them. The result is avoidable harm resulting from practices of neoliberal governmentality that treat some as disposables for the benefit of others.

Furthermore, the neoliberal governmentality today is remarkably different from the one when Foucault was lecturing about it. Today neoliberal bio-politics govern not only human beings, but also other aspects of our biological existence, such as organs, seeds, cells, and even genes. Today, these miniscule units of biodiversity are highly commodified and used by many sectors in the economy, such as the pharmaceutical or agricultural corporations. Commodification in this case requires the process of privatization of genetic materials that are found mostly in gene-rich countries of the South (Shiva, 1995). As was the case in previous processes of privatization done in mass scale, for instance, in the

process of enclosure that occurred in England from fifteenth century to almost nineteenth, people who relied on these “commons” were and still are severely damaged.

The mechanism of privatizing such aspects of biodiversity is as follows. Protected under the agreement on Trade-Related Aspects of Intellectual Property Rights (TRIPS) corporations now can take a particular seed or gene, add or change some aspects of it and claim exclusive patent rights to that particular object with the pretext of creating something new. Made effective on 1995, TRIPS agreement was created in order to control the flow of information between countries, to avoid the countries of the South to “steal” the technologies of the North and use it for their own development, as certain South East Asian countries did in the past⁵¹. However, these rules, imposed by the World Trade Organization (WTO) in order to reduce protectionist barriers and to promote “market competition,” are “primarily rules of robbery, camouflaged by arithmetic and legalese” (Shiva, 2000, p. 92). “In reality, the WTO does not reduce protectionism; it merely replaces protections for people and nature with protections for corporations” (ibid, p. 92). And this conclusion is crystal clear in agribusinesses.

Vandana Shiva explains, how in her home country, India, globalization, in the sense of privatization of commons, deregulation, withdrawal of protectionist measures, increased debt, and the protection of multinational companies at the expense of its citizens, created despair and misery, especially among the farmers. With the emergence of neoliberal governmentality in India, previously poor but self-sufficient farmers were transformed into debt-ridden and market dependent families (Shiva, 2000). The export-oriented policies that came as a result of neoliberal mentality shifted production from food crops to cash crops, such as cotton and soybeans (ibid). Production of cash crops is favorable for multinational agribusiness corporations because they can then sell their genetically modified seeds along with fertilizers and pesticides. Protected by the multiple agreements WTO imposes on countries like India, such as removal of subsidies for domestic producers, these companies enjoy ultimate reign over

⁵¹ Such as the East Asian tigers.

small farmers who are desperate for a good produce. Convincing these farmers to buy their own “superior” seeds, which are, of course, susceptible to pests, and therefore in need of pesticides, also in need of fertilizers for the best possible harvest, and which are either sterile or made illegal to use the seeds of the previous year’s harvest, these companies make farmers depend on themselves year in year out (ibid). Also, companies like Monsanto provide the money needed to buy the package of seed-fertilizer-pesticide in the first instance, since these cost a lot and the farmers are broke. One might imagine when one bad year hits and the farmer is not able to get enough produce as he has hoped, he will not be able to make as much money as he needs, which leads him to barrow more from the corporation, which puts him in an endless cycle of indebtedness. That is why in India there are 12,000 suicides reported among farmers every year⁵².

One might say that those responsible for the apparent structural violence in the case of Indian farmers is obvious: they are the multinational agribusiness corporations. That is correct, though the list of responsible ones does not end there. There are government officials, both in India and in Western countries which have stakes in the current trade affairs, officials of WTO or any other supranational organization related with this problem, such as UN’s Food and Agricultural Organization (Shiva, 1995). The list of perpetrators swells as we delve deeper into the web of relations. But no matter who are responsible, the result does not change: that there are severe human rights violations in the agriculture sector in India⁵³. First and foremost, farmers’ right to just and favorable conditions of work is violated. No matter how much they try, these human beings cannot make a decent living for themselves with those structural conditions limiting them. Furthermore, this is obviously avoidable, since these same farmers were not in such a malice before these policies were implemented; they were more or less self-sufficient (Shiva, 2000). As a result, we can safely

⁵² <https://timesofindia.indiatimes.com/india/over-12000-farmer-suicides-per-year-centre-tells-supreme-court/articleshow/58486441.cms>

⁵³ Of course, these policies are imposed not just in India but in many underdeveloped countries that submit to the agreements of WTO.

say that neoliberal bio-politics have wreaked havoc on the lives of farmers in not just India, but in all places that succumb to the rules of the capitalist game.

4.4.3 Retraction of Welfare Policies

As mentioned above, one of the primary features of the neoliberal governmentality is that state interventions are seen as burdens on an otherwise perfectly working market. Therefore, all of state interventions are vilified, even those that are crucial in the redistributive effects for social equality. In fact, social equality is not a value to be advanced towards; under neoliberal rule, inequality is perfectly acceptable, and the retraction of welfare policies is a testament to this (Harvey, 2005).

With neoliberal rule there has been massive changes in the tax regimes of countries. All around the world, corporate taxes were reduced dramatically and the taxes on wealth has been phased out while taxation on wages has been maintained. (Harvey, 2005, pp. 16-17). Reduction in taxes ultimately means restricted budgets for governments to spend, which eventually ends up with retraction of welfare policies, such as healthcare services, free institutions of education, subsidies for small producers and aids for citizens in need.

One of the primary fields that this result of neoliberalism is felt is healthcare services. As a result of his years of work as a medical doctor in third world countries such as Haiti, Rwanda and the Chiapas region in Mexico, Paul Farmer, a leading scholar in medical anthropology, enlightens us as to the dynamics of structural violence in the poor regions of this planet. Countries like Haiti or Rwanda are laden with treatable diseases, tuberculosis and AIDS foremost among them⁵⁴ (Farmer, 2005). The right to health, or more precisely, the right to access to healthcare resources, is perhaps one of the most fundamental rights a person has, though it has been constantly violated in such countries (ibid). The neoliberal governmentality that seeps deep into the healthcare sector also made the matters worse. Commercialization,

⁵⁴ Although AIDS is not completely curable, as was mentioned in the second chapter, it can be controlled with anti-retroviral drugs, giving the patient the chance to have a relatively long life.

corporatization, and privatization of health and social welfare services, that were introduced under the pretext of “reforms” in the healthcare sector, made the right to health beyond reach for millions of people (Farmer, 2005). The competition driven market model that was applied to the non-economic sectors, such as education and healthcare created an environment of chronic inequality. And, unfortunately, the condition of severe inequality makes those that are in worse positions much more susceptible to the effects of structural violence. As inequality rose worldwide “[d]uring the decades that happen to coincide with the rise of neoliberal ideology, with the breakdown of national sovereignties, and with the end of Keynesian policies in the global debt crisis of the early 1980s” there are today far too many human rights abuses globally, especially with respect to social and economic rights, in the name of protecting or promoting the market model (Galbraith cited in Farmer, 2005, p. 303). Therefore, Farmer concludes that factors of social inequality based on religion, gender, race, ethnicity, but especially economic class, are the motor forces behind the prevalence of the diseases in these countries (2005, p. 219). Phrasing the term “pathologies of power” to describe the effects of power relations within a country that result with human rights abuses he concludes that,

[h]uman rights violations are not accidents; they are not random in distribution or effect. Rights violations are, rather, symptoms of deeper pathologies of power and are linked intimately to the social conditions that so often determine who will suffer abuse and who will be shielded from harm. (Farmer, 2005, p. 7)

For example, Farmer shows how structural conditions result with more and more contractions of contagious diseases like AIDS or TB in Haiti. Girls forced to enter into unfavorable affairs with men with many sexual partners due to excessive poverty, children born with diseases because their parents were infected, lack of both contraceptives and the education for safe sex practices are among the many structural conditions that the poor of the third world has been dealing with. The channels for combatting these problems have also been discouraging. While there were 2,43 physicians per 1,000 people in the United States in 2010, in Rwanda, this number was 0,06 in 2010, and the last data from

Haiti shows that this number was 0,24 in 1998⁵⁵. Devoted physicians and activists like Farmer try their best to combat this problem, though what they can do is also limited, since the nature of the problem is structural. Therefore, it requires nothing less than radical structural changes. In the current global affairs, though, when laws and agreements are made primarily to protect states, big businesses, to establish debt-peonage and, ultimately, to maintain the core-periphery dependence that has been in effect for centuries, the chances for such a change are dim.

4.5 Conclusion

All of these examples represent the violent face of neoliberal governmentality, whose ultimate aim is to create and maintain economic growth, while sacrificing millions of people in the meantime. Consequently, this process results with severe forms of social and economic inequalities all around the world, which leads to even higher levels of structural violence. Bearing the brunt of these policies are especially those experiencing excessive poverty, though, certain segments of societies are more susceptible to violence than others, such as women, children, and minorities.

This does not mean, though, that the victims of these examples are completely dominated and have no say in their predicament whatsoever. The concept of structural violence sometimes presents events as if they take place in an irrevocable and rigid environment. Foucault, however, offers a solution to this one-dimensional view. His theory of power relations emphasizes the fact that there is no power without resistance. The histories of these examples also attest to this argument. The Chipko movement in India is only one example. As a response to the ecological disasters that ensued due to excessive amount of deforestation, Indian village women hugged trees that were scheduled to be cut down (Shiva, 1995). Fortunately, the Chipko movement grew and became a

⁵⁵ Data extracted from the World Bank
<https://data.worldbank.org/indicator/SH.MED.PHYS.ZS>

symbol for fighting capital for deforestation, but not all resistance movements or acts are that successful.

Nevertheless, generally neoliberal politics prevail in their clashes of power with counter-practices. The bio-political rationality lurking behind determines who is worth saving and who is not. Neoliberal politics is like the Mestizaje system in Latin America. The term Mestizaje is the Spanish word for miscegenation, indicating the collection of people coming from different races (Wade, 2016). It is a word used for the purpose of creating a sense of unity in Latin America's racially diversified landscape; but this concept is simultaneously about exclusion, where people of color are seen as remnants of a barbarous past. Their only way to become a mestizo – a full citizen – is through “discard[ing] such identities – by leaving behind dress, languages, and habits seen as indigenous and black, by leaving communities that seem ethnically endogamous – and integrate into mestizo society, where they can become educated and break the ties of kinship to their communities” (ibid, pp. 327-328).

Just like the exclusion inherent in the concept of Mestizaje, neoliberalism excludes human beings, while hiding behind a discourse of multicultural tolerance (Evans, 2010). But the “other” who receives this tolerance is nothing more than the “good other,” who is, also, nothing but “the same as us” (ibid, pp. 427-428). The racism that is inherent in neoliberal bio-politics determines the boundary between included and excluded, “between those exempted from the zone of exception and those destined to disappear within it” (ibid, 428). That is why many people who have the capacity to change the structural conditions of this world choose to ignore the plight of millions, and their responsibility in stopping their misery, while actively participating in maintaining what Foucault saw as the characteristic of modern governmentality: the condition of politics as the continuation of war by other means.

CHAPTER 5

CONCLUSION

Over the course of the preceding chapters, I have argued that violence is never a simple phenomenon, explicable by what is physical and visible, and that a critique of violence must look beyond its spectacular forms. Each of the chapters contributed to this main argument in its specific ways. In the first chapter, the literature on the concept of violence was reviewed, starting with those that reduce it to a blunt instrument – the minimalist definition camp – and ending with those who take on a more comprehensive perspective to the subject. The former was criticized by scrutinizing the key points in their definition of violence: visibility, intentionality, focusing on perpetrator’s point of view, omissions and instrumentality. It was argued that acts of violence can be invisible, unintentional but foreseeable, and non-instrumental. It was also pointed out that omitted acts can be counted as acts of violence and victim’s point of view is just as important, if not more, as the perpetrator’s when one decides whether an act is violent or not. The comprehensive definition of violence was then put forth as a better alternative when dealing with a subject that is as complex as violence is.

As a sub-category under this umbrella term, the comprehensive definition of violence, I supported the view of structural violence, which brings attention to the invisible but real and avoidable damages caused by unjust or unequal structures of our social reality. Works of Johan Galtung, who is the first person to use this phrase in this manner in social sciences, were taken as essential texts with regard to structural violence; though, they too are not without certain deficiencies. Galtung takes violence to be the gap between what is actual and what is potential, and the first problem arises with this word “potential”. After

all, what is human potential? The answer to this question requires one to rely on certain universals, such as “human nature,” and since this thesis refused to accept and rely on the existence of universals, in accordance with Foucault, and since the utility of this phrase, in helping us reckon the invisible acts of violence that happen all around us, has been upheld, new perspectives towards structural violence has been searched that can free us from this trap of universals. Structural violence, then, was chosen to be seen as the violation of human rights, the latter taken here to include both civil and political rights and economic and social rights.

The second chapter was concerned with the problem of power and sought to elaborate the relationship between power and violence. This chapter focused on Foucault’s theorization of power, in which power is seen not as a commodity to be possessed or transferred, but as a web of relations that extends through the capillary vessels of any society. Then Foucault’s account of different types of power along with their connection with the concept of violence were elaborated. These types of power are sovereign power, disciplinary power and bio-power, but they do not represent mutually exclusive domains of power relations; rather, when Foucault defines one period as sovereign, disciplinary or bio-political, he means that the most dominant type of power is that particular one, not that the characteristics of the other types are lacking.

Bio-power’s relation with violence was especially important for the context of this thesis; because bio-power is a type of power that works with subtle mechanisms of coercion rather than blunt physical forces. Furthermore, in bio-politically organized societies there emerged an idea of “population,” which classifies a distinct group of people, who are, most importantly, distinct from everybody else. This distinctness leads to perception that for the welfare of the members of this population, others’ well-being may be sacrificed. These others, then, can be classified as “disposables,” continually suffering from direct and structural forms of violence. At this point Foucault’s theory of bio-power and the concept of structural violence come together and complement each other. We can thus say that bio-political regimes are laden with acts or conditions of structural violence.

To support this argument, the attention was turned to the neoliberal period, since this relationship between bio-power and structural violence is even more obvious under neoliberalism than it was before. The practices associated with neoliberal governmentality constantly create “disposable others” and therefore exacerbate conditions of structural violence. To highlight this point, I chose to focus on different examples investigated by different scholars, all taken from countries under neoliberal governmentality. The conclusion I reached was that neoliberal governmentality actively creates situations of violence via increasing poverty, hunger, exclusion, and insecurity. By championing social *inequality*, neoliberal regimes create and maintain disparities between human beings; disparities that would determine who is from us and who is the “other”. The “other” is, then, seen as a disposable body, whose human rights are not as important as the human rights of our “population,” and, therefore, not in need of vigorous protection. It is legitimated, then, to leave the “other” in excessive poverty, without being able to supply his/her basic needs, without being able to get the necessary treatment for even the most insignificant diseases, and without the ability to influence their own environments. In the third chapter, these end-results were highlighted by emphasizing three aspects of neoliberal policies: insecurity in the job market, privatization of commons, and retraction of welfare services. Each of these set of policies enforce social hierarchy and create opportunities for excessive poverty to flourish. Therefore, it is important to study neoliberalism, and especially to study it as a framework of bio-politics, to uncover the fact that present day neoliberalism is a type of necropolitics “which makes permanent war against life on behalf of life” (Foucault, 2008, p. 328; Dillon, 2008).

It was also important to discuss the concept of structural violence in terms of neoliberal governmentality for another reason. During the period that social scientists term as neoliberal, our capacity to detect and acknowledge structural violence has decreased. “The ‘neoliberal era’ ... has been a time of looking away, a time of averting our gaze from the causes and effects of structural violence” (Farmer, 2005, p. 16). With its insistence on how human beings are free agents who are responsible for their own well-being, neoliberal governmentality

concealed the structural conditions lurking beneath the totally avoidable misery of billions. Therefore, even just for this reason, this period requires our attention.

But even with all our attention present, it does not seem likely that in the near future neoliberal practices will lose their destructive effects. Of course, this does not mean that no counter-measures are being taken. The question is, how much do those counter-practices fall outside the neoliberal governmentality? Companies today seem to look more environmental conscious and to have embraced the mottos of justice and sustainability (Brown, 2015, p. 27). But how much does this appearance coincide with reality? In his article about Fair Trade⁵⁶ practices that became “the new thing” in certain sectors, such as agricultural or environmental ones, Moberg (2014) describes how these policies are actually the extensions of neoliberal governmentality. Only working properly under favorable conditions of the market, Moberg tells that in a time of crisis, Fair Trade practices damage farmers in the same manner, if not worse, as “unfair” trade regimes would do (ibid). Demanding certificates for being eligible for production under the Fair Trade regime and burdening farmers with heavy regulations, companies that engage with Fair Trade practices give farmers little room to wiggle when a bad year in terms of harvest hits. Crippled under rigid regulative schemes that greatly restrict their ability to minimize their losses, farmers, in fact, suffer more than they would have if they were producing as independent agents.

These kinds of situations abound in today’s market practices. Wendy Brown (2015) tells us how “caring” becomes a market niche in the neoliberal period and how “green and fair-trade practices, along with (miniscule) profit diversion to charity, have become the public face and market strategy of many firms today” (p. 27). But companies do not treat concepts like justice, sustainability or social responsibility as ends in themselves; but as concepts to be “entrepreneurialized,” as means to attracts consumers and investors (ibid, p. 27). Strictly thought of within the mindset of neoliberal governmentality, then,

⁵⁶ Fair Trade practices, which have become more and more common in the agricultural sectors in recent years, “claim to promote ‘sustainable development by offering better trading conditions to, and securing the rights of, marginalized producers and workers’” (Moore cited in Moberg, 2014, p.2).

these practices do not offer us a way out of the violent tendencies of neoliberal practices.

Brown also argues that with neoliberal policies gaining ground, democratic practices showed a tendency to regress. In her words,

the neoliberal triumph of *homo oeconomicus* as the exhaustive figure of the human is undermining democratic practices and a democratic imaginary by vanquishing the subject that governs itself through moral autonomy and governs with others through popular sovereignty. The argument is that economic values have not simply supersaturated the political or become predominant over the political. Rather, a neoliberal iteration of *homo oeconomicus* is extinguishing the agent, the idiom, and the domains through which democracy – any variety of democracy – materializes. (Brown, 2015, p. 79)

Even human rights laws are instrumentalized for neoliberal purposes (Brown, 2015, p. 67). Neoliberal regimes profess to be vigilant protectors of human rights, but in reality they constantly produce threats to exclude some for the sake of others. As shown in the preceding chapters, neoliberal regimes pose threats to human rights, rather than being their safeguards. Neoliberal governments do not comply with the three obligations to properly enforce a right: to respect, to protect and to fulfill. This means that it is never enough for governments to refrain from abusing human rights directly; they also have to protect the human rights of those whose rights are in danger and, thirdly, they have to fulfill those rights when the right holder cannot access what those rights entail. That is why Rancière's definition of human rights as "the rights of those who have not the rights that they have and have the rights that they have not" is crucial at this point, because it signifies the fact that human rights are the rights of those who do not have the access to their privileges (2004, p. 302); and that is why the concept of structural violence is so important, in that it signifies human rights abuses as intentional or foreseeable acts of violence and can be used as a weapon in the hands of those whose human rights have been abused.

To conclude, I believe structural violence is a good tool to address these questions. It helps us reckon the invisible acts and conditions of violence that emerge due to structural conditions; it helps us define these as human rights

violations, and hence conditions that can be avoided and reversed; and, lastly, it helps us connect these problems with the overarching relations of power – with the help of Foucault’s theory of power – that lurk beneath every relation in our world. Of course, the concept of structural violence has its own problems. One might say that this concept is good at helping us acknowledge all those avoidable harms people suffer due to mutable structural conditions, the first step, but not so much at helping us determine how exactly this change can take place, the second step. The second step, in other words, is taking action. To be more clear, the concept of structural violence may be unhelpful for this quest, because perhaps it takes violence to be a constant of human existence, thereby leading to the conclusion that we may never be rid of it. In other words, the concept of structural violence does not reveal much on how to combat it. In the end, the only solution the concept of structural violence offers us may be a tamed form of capitalism. This is a whole other problem that is just as important, if not more, as acknowledging violence where it exists, but it is also beyond the scope of this thesis. In fact, the problem of how to manage structural violence would require its own thesis. In that sense, to conclude, we can say that the concept of structural violence fulfills the first step in dealing with the issue of violence: it points that the human rights violations that occur all around the world due to structural conditions are avoidable and since they are avoidable, they constitute violence. In its humble contribution the thesis hopefully shed some light on the elaboration of the concept of structural violence, and convinced the readers that it is, nevertheless, a worthwhile concept to study.

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APPENDICES

A. TURKISH SUMMARY / TÜRKÇE ÖZET

Bu çalışmada yapısal şiddet kavramı ve onun Foucault'nun bio-iktidar kavramı karşısındaki durumu incelenmiştir. Şiddet kavramı üzerinde araştırma yapılması zor bir kavramdır. Bunun sebebi, şiddet kavramının literatürde tek bir tanımının olmaması aksine birden fazla tanımının bulunmasıdır. Bu muğlaklık da şiddetin tam olarak ne olduğu konusunda anlaşmaya varılmasını imkânsız kılmaktadır. Günlük dilde “şiddet” çokça kullanılan bir terimdir. Bu durum şiddet üzerine çalışan bilim insanlarının, üzerine çok da fazla düşünmeden şiddeti verili kabul etmelerine sebep olmuştur. Zaman zaman yazarlar, bir tanım bile yapmaya gerek duymadan “gördüğümde tanırım” tutumu ile meseleye yaklaşmışlardır. Ancak bu yaklaşım akliselim bir sosyal bilim örneği teşkil etmemektedir. Günlük kullanımdaki şiddet tanımını akademik araştırmalarda kullanmak kimi zaman uygun gözükebilir, ancak bu tutum birtakım dezavantajları da içinde bulundurmaktadır. En önemlisi, şiddet üzerine yapılan akademik araştırmalar hiçbir zaman tarafsız değildir. Şiddeti tanımlamak siyasi bir pratiktir ve yazarların şiddet ile alakalı olarak aldığı tutumlar onların siyasi eğilimlerini yansıtır. Bu sebeple şiddet kavramı üzerine akademik çalışma yapılırken kapsamlı çalışma gerektirir.

Bu tezin ilk olarak amaçladığı şey tam olarak da budur: şiddet kavramının dile pelesenk olmuş mevcut halinin bir eleştirisini yapmak ve kavram üzerine derin bir düşünce egzersizi gerçekleştirmek. Bu sebeple tezin ilk bölümü şiddet kavramının farklı tanımlarına odaklanacaktır. Şiddetin ne olduğu üzerine dönen güncel tartışmada genel olarak iki taraf vardır: “indirgemeci” tanım ve “kapsamlı” tanım. Bu iki kategori kabaca şiddet karşısında alınan iki karşıt siyasi tutumu yansıtır: liberal ve radikal. İndirgemeci tanım şiddeti bir fail

tarafından bir başkasının vücuduna yapılan fiziksel ve kasıtlı bir zarar verme eylemi olarak ele alır ve şiddet tanımının merkezine “kuvvet” kavramını koyar. Böyle ele aldığı ölçüde de statükoya bir eleştiri sunmaz, liberal ve hatta muhafazakâr bir tutum sergiler. Öte yandan kapsamlı tanım bu dar şiddet anlayışını tatmin edici bulmaz ve ötesine geçmeye çalışır. Şiddeti sadece fiziksel ve görünür eylemler ile kısıtlamaz ve bir şiddet eleştirisinin her zaman onun görkemli şekillerinden öteye bakması gerektiğini savunur. Yaptığı tanımın merkezine de “kuvvet” kavramındansa “ihlal” kavramını yerleştirir. Şiddet bu minvalde bir şeyi ihlal etmek olarak algılanır. Yapıların da şiddet içerebileceğini savunan bu yaklaşım statükoya bir eleştiri getirerek radikal bir tutum sergiler. Kapsamlı tanımın alameti farikası olan “yapısal şiddet” kavramı insanlar üzerine yapılar tarafından uygulanan şiddeti yansıttığından ötürü bu tez için azami öneme sahiptir. Şiddet tanımı üzerine dönen tartışmaya girilmesinin esas sebebi de “yapısal şiddet” kavramını yeniden canlandırmaktır. Zira noksanlıklarına rağmen yapısal şiddet kavramının bize şiddet ve iktidar arasındaki çetrefilli ilişkiyi anlamamız adına önereceği çok şey vardır.

Yapısal şiddet ve Foucault’nun iktidar kavramına odaklanan bu tez üç ana bölüme ayrılır. İlk bölüm şiddet kavramı üzerine olan literatürü gözden geçirir. İkincisi şiddet ve iktidar kavramları arasındaki ilişkiyi inceler ve bunun için Foucault’nun iktidar kuramını kullanır. Son olarak üçüncü bölüm şiddet ve iktidar üzerine önceki bölümlerde dile getirilen tartışmaları neoliberal pratikler üzerinden ele alır. Bu üç bölüm de aşağıda kısaca özetlenecektir.

Yukarıda da bahsedildiği üzere birinci bölüm şiddet kavramı üzerine yazılan literatüre odaklanır. Birincil olarak indirgemeci tanımı ele alır ve bu tanımın yetersizliklerini ön plana çıkarır. Genel olarak, indirgemeci tanım kategorisi altına düşen yazarlar şiddeti görünür, fiziksel, kuvvet içeren, kasıtlı ve süjeler-arası bir zarar verme eylemi olarak ele alır. Tez de tam da bu noktalar üzerinden indirgemeci tanımı eleştirir ve sıkıntılı yanlarını ön plana çıkartır. İlk olarak, şiddetin fiziksel olması gerektiğini savunan tez, fiziksel olmayan eylemlerin de şiddet teşkil edebileceğini iddia eder. Örneğin psikolojik şiddet fiziksel olmayan şiddet eylemlerine mükemmel bir örnektir. Bu kısımda şiddet eylemlerinin görünür ve kasıtlı eylemler olup olmadıkları da tartışılmaktadır.

Şiddetin görünür bir eylem olduğu algısı fiziksel bir eylem olması algısıyla örtüşür; zira, genel olarak, fiziksel eylemler görünür olma özelliği taşımaktadır. Ancak tezde örtülü eylemlerin de şiddet içerebileceği iddiası öne sürülür. Bu ölçüde, şiddet her daim bir öznenin bir başkası üzerine yaptığı kasıtlı bir eylem olma durumundan çıkar, failsiz ve kasıtlı olmayan ancak öngörülebilir olan örnekleri de içinde barındırır. Yapısal şiddet kavramı da, zaten, bu özellikleri taşımaktadır.

İkincil olarak indirgemeci tanımın failin bakış açısına yaptığı vurgu eleştirilir ve bir eylemin şiddet eylemi olup olmadığını araştırırken mağdurun bakış açısının da eş miktarda önemli olduğu vurgulanır. Mesela birçok bilim insanı evlilik içi zorlanmış cinsel ilişkinin tecavüz olduğunu kabul etmezken, bu durum mağdurlara göre kesinlikle tecavüz olarak sayılmalıdır. Görüldüğü gibi bazı durumlarda bir eylemin şiddet olup olmadığına karar vermek için mağdurun bakış açısı şarttır ve aşağıda anlatılacağı üzere yapısal şiddet de failsiz olması dolayısıyla mağdurun bakış açısına muhtaçtır.

Üçüncül olarak indirgemeci bakış açısının ihmalleri şiddetten saymaması eleştirilmiştir. İhmaller, doğaları gereği bir eylem içermedikleri öne sürülerek şiddet olma kategorisinden çıkartılmışlardır; fakat Bufacchi başta gelmek üzere birçok yazara göre sonuç itibariyle ihmaller ve direkt eylemler arasında bir fark gözükmeyebilir. Kasıtlı veya kasıtsız ancak öngörülebilir bir ihmal de bir çocuğun ölümüyle sonuçlanabilir, direkt bir eylem de. Dolayısıyla ihmaller de zarar verme potansiyeli açısından kısıtlı olmadıkları için şiddet eylemleri arasında sayılmalıdırlar.

Son olarak, indirgemeci şiddet tanımının şiddet eylemlerini her daim bir amaca yönelik bir araç olarak görme eğilimi eleştirilmiştir. Arendt şiddeti araçsal ele alanlar arasında başta gelen figürlerdendir ve ona göre iktidar ve şiddet arasındaki en önemli farkı oluşturan faktör şiddetin araçsal olup her zaman bir amaca hizmet etmek için kullanılması ve iktidarın ise bir amaca hizmet etmektense kendi içinde değerli olmasıdır. Arendt şiddeti dilsiz olarak nitelerken iktidarın en önemli özelliğinin konuşma yetisi olduğunu vurgular. Bu minvalde iktidar yaratıcı iken şiddet yıkıcıdır, söyleme ve yeni yaratma kapasitesi yoktur, tek yapabildiği var olan bir amaca hizmet etmektir. Ancak

şiddeti böyle kabul etmenin bir takım dezavantajları vardır. Şiddet eylemleri genellikle anlam çemberleri içine gömülüdür. Araçsal bir yönleri olmakla birlikte şiddet eylemlerinin aynı zamanda dışavurumsal bir özellikleri de vardır. Bu dışavurumsallık genellikle nefret eylemlerinde kendini gösterir. Bir mesaj vermek dışında neredeyse hiçbir amaca hizmet etmeyen bu tarz şiddet eylemleri Amerika Birleşik Devletleri'nde beyazların siyahilere karşı yaptığı linç eylemlerinde rahatlıkla görülebilir.

İndirgemeci tanımın özelliklerine eleştirilerini sunduktan sonra tez kapsamlı şiddet tanımına geçer ve onu indirgemeci tanıma bir alternatif olarak sunar. Kapsayıcı tanım aslında birçok farklı şiddet tanımını içinde barındırır ancak bunların ortak özelliği şiddeti ihlal üzerinden kurgulamalarıdır. Farklılaştıkları noktalar ise şiddet neyin ihlalidir sorusuna verdikleri cevaplardır. Kimi şiddetin hak ihlali olduğunu, kimi ise bütünlük ihlali olduğunu savunurken bu tezde “şiddet insan hakları ihlalidir” tanımı savunulmuştur. Bu bağlamda başvurulan figür ise yapısal şiddet tanımının da yaratıcısı olan Johan Galtung'dur. Galtung şiddetin bir insanın potansiyeli ve fiili gerçekliği arasında bir boşluk olduğunda ortaya çıktığını savunur. Bir başka deyişle, Galtung'a göre şiddet insanların akli veya bedeni gerçeklikleri potansiyel gerçekliklerinden aşağıda olduğunda mevcuttur. Bu tanıma göre insanları potansiyellerini gerçekleştirmekten alıkoyan her şey şiddettir ve bu sebepten Galtung bazen yapısal şiddetten “yapısal adaletsizlik” olarak da bahseder. İnsan hakları da insanların potansiyellerinin en üst noktasını temsil ettiği için bu tanıma göre şiddet insan hakları ihlali olarak konumlandırılmaktadır.

Galtung geniş şiddet tanımıyla bize iyi bir alternatif sunmaktadır. Kendi deyişle, eğer idealimiz barış ise, şiddeti indirgemeci tanımdaki şekliyle kabul ettiğimizde çok az eylemi ve durumu reddetmiş oluyoruz. Eğer barışsa amacımız, kapsamlı bir şiddet anlayışını savunmak durumundayız. Ancak bütün avantajlarına rağmen, Galtung'un şiddet tanımının da kendi içinde sıkıntıları bulunmaktadır. Bunlardan en önemlisi de potansiyel kavramıyla ilişkilidir. Bu kavram belirsiz olmakla kalmaz, aynı zamanda bir değer yargısı da içerir. Sonuçta potansiyel nedir? Neye dayanarak bulunur? Bu sorulara verilen en genel geçer cevap potansiyelin evrensel bir doğruya referansla bulunduğuudur. Ancak

bu sonuç bu tez için bir problem teşkil eder. Aşağıda da belirtileceği üzere bu tezde Foucault'nun iktidar teorisi baz alınmıştır ve Foucault'nun felsefesi bütün evrensel doğruların olmadığını kabul ederek başlar. Dolayısıyla Galtung'un şiddet anlayışıyla Foucault'nun iktidar anlayışı çelişir gözükmektedirler.

Tam da burada insan hakları devreye girer ve bizi bu çıkmazdan kurtarır. Esasen insan hakları kuramı “insan haysiyeti” kavramına dayanır. Haysiyetli bir hayata genel olarak insan olmaya yaraşır bir hayatın asgari koşullarının sağlanmasıyla erişildiği varsayılır. Bu haysiyetin her insanda içsel olarak var olduğu düşünülür ve dolayısıyla da bunun insan doğasını oluşturan ana madde olduğu öne sürülür. Ancak aynı potansiyel kavramı gibi insan doğası kavramı da evrensel doğrulara referans veren bir kavramdır ve bu doğrultuda insan hakları kuramının bizi yukarıda bahsi geçen tuzaktan kurtarmadığı, aksine bu tuzağı daha da derinleştirdiği iddia edilebilir. Fakat, insan hakları sadece bu doğrultuda anlaşılması gereken bir kurallar ve kanunlar bütünü değildir. Dahası, insan hakları insan haysiyeti ve insan doğası kavramları doğrultusunda evrensel olarak algılanması gereken bir kavram değildir. İnsan haklarının evrenselliği herkes tarafından kabul edildiği ölçüde de sağlanabilir. Ancak, eğer insan haklarının evrenselliği kavrama içkin bir özellik değilse insan haklarını ne meşrulaştırır? Devletleri ve insanları insan haklarını kabul etmeye ne iter eğer onları evrensel doğrular olarak kabul etmiyorsak? Bu sorulara da cevap Lyotard (1993) tarafından verilmiştir. Her insanın içinde haysiyet olduğunu ve her insan için doğru bir hayat yolu olduğunu doğal karşılayamayız; ama rahatlıkla her bir insanın diğerinden farklı olduğunu varsayabiliriz. Bu farklılık tam da herkeste ortaktır: “Tüm insanları benzer kılan şey aslında her insanın kendisinde ötekinin figürünü taşımasıdır. Onların ortak benzerlikleri birbirleri ile olan farklarından anlaşılabilir.” O yüzden ki “bir insanı öldürmek Homo sapiens türünden bir hayvanı öldürmek değil, hem kapasite hem de potansiyel olarak onda mevcut olan insanlığı öldürmektir.” Bu insanların içinde mevcut olan insan doğasının özü gibi değildir. Ötekiler ile empati kurma, ötekinin başından geçenleri görme, anlama, ve ötekinin yerine kendini koyduğunda hissedilenleri fark etme kapasitesi gibidir. Bu insanların bir kapasitesidir ve insan haklarını meşru ve evrensel kılan da budur.

Bu şekilde ele alındıklarında, insan hakları bu tezin amacı için azami fayda taşımaktadır. En önemlisi insan hakları sosyal realitede bir yere oturmaktadır. İnsan hakları muğlak olmadan, şiddetin her yönüyle kaçınılabılır olmasını içerecek şekilde, kapsamlıdır ve hukuki yaptırım kapasitesine sahiptir. Bu avantajlar insan haklarını bu tezin ve insan hakları ihlallerini de şiddet tanımının merkezine koymaktadır. Neticede bu tezde amaçlanan şiddeti yoksul ve sömürülmüş kitlelerin kendilerini içinde buldukları iktidar ilişkilerine karşı savunmak adına kullanmak için mükemmel bir araç olan insan hakları ile birleştirerek onun siyasi niteliğini ön plana çıkarmaktır.

Yapısal şiddet kavramı da bu bağlamda bu tez için elzemdir; zira insanları içlerinde buldukları şiddet uygulayan iktidar yapılarını görünür kılar. Ancak bu kavram tanımlaması zor bir kavramdır. Var olan iktidar ilişkilerinin insanlar üzerine uyguladığı fiziksel veya psikolojik zararları gösterdiği için çoğu zaman görünmez bir niteliğe sahiptir. Öyle ki yapısal şiddet dediğimiz şey zaman zaman normal olaylar dizesi olarak kendini göstermektedir. Yapısal şiddet karşısında terör saldırıları, tecavüzler, cinnet geçirip eşini ve çocuklarını öldüren koca figürü gibi görkemli şiddet eylemleri ön plana çıkıp ilgiyi kendilerinde toplamaktadırlar. Bu da yapısal şiddetin görünmez kılınmasıyla sonuçlanmaktadır.

Bu tezde benim amacım iktisadi sömürü, kültürel baskı, ırkçılık ve cinsiyetçilik gibi rutin günlük pratiklerin ve etkileşimlerin ortaya çıkardığı zararları şiddet olarak niteleyerek, onlara ahlaki ve siyasi bir statü addetmektir. Zira şiddet her koşulda sosyal bir olgudur. Sosyal uygulamalarda ortaya çıkar. Sonuç olarak yapısal durumlara şiddet demek “kader” statüsüne erişen bu pratiklerin insan eliyle oluşturulduklarını ve dolayısıyla da değiştirilebilir ve yok edilebilir olduğunu vurgular. Bu pratiklerin karşısında durmak ve onların içindeki şiddeti tanımak başlı başına siyasal eylemlerdir. Bu bağlamda yapısal şiddet de işlevsel bir kavramdır: bir takım sosyal pratikleri “şiddet” kelimesiyle karalayarak meşruluklarını bozar.

Yapısal şiddetin Galtung için en önemli özelliği failsiz ve önlenbilir olmasıdır. Yapısal şiddet durumları ve eylemleri sıradan şiddet eylemleriyle önlenbilir olmasında benzerlik taşır ancak failsiz olmasıyla ayrışır, zira bu

eylemlerde sıradan şiddet eylemlerinde görülen açık bir fail-mağdur ilişkisi yoktur. Daha doğrusu mağdurların katlandıkları, onlara zarar veren durumlardan sorumlu olan kişileri bulmak sıradan şiddet eylemlerinde olduğu gibi kolay değildir. İnsan hakları ihlalleri ve yapısal şiddet kavramına gelirsek: şiddet insanlara zarar veren kaçınılabılır insan hakları ihlalleri olarak tanımlandığında, yapısal şiddet açık şekilde tanımlanamayan kişiler/kurumlar tarafından yapılan insan hakları ihlallerine dönüşmektedir. Paul Farmer'a göre insan hakları ihlalleri "iktidar patolojileridir" (2005). Irkçılık, cinsiyetçilik veya sınıfsal toplumlar gibi şiddet içeren yapıların semptomlarıdır. İktidar patolojilerinin nasıl işlediğinin konusu ise ikinci ana bölümü oluşturmaktadır.

Foucault iktidarı liberal veya Marksist yazının aldığı gibi ele almaz. Hatta kendi iktidar kuramını bu anlayışlara getirdiği eleştiri üzerinden kurgular. Yani liberallerin yaptığı gibi iktidarı sahip olunabilir ve devredilebilir bir meta olarak ele almaz. Veya Marksist yazında görüldüğü üzere iktidarı iktisada ikincil bir faktör olmak üzere indirgemez. Foucault iktidarı sadece eylem sırasında ortaya çıkan bir kavram olarak ele alır. Bu anlayışa göre iktidar insanlar arasındaki bir takım ilişkiler bütünüdür. Sadece bu ilişkiler ağı içerisinde ortaya çıkar; bu ilişkileri oluşturur ve bu ilişkilerin bir sonucudur. İktidar direkt olarak insanlar üzerine değil, onları eylemleri üzerine etkide bulunur. Bir başka deyişle iktidar insanların hareketlerini belirleyen şeydir ve bu ölçüde sadece insan ilişkilerinde var olabilir.

Ek olarak, iktidarın tek amacı sadece kısıtlamak ve baskı uygulamak değildir. İktidarın üretken bir rolü de vardır. İktidar, şeyler, hazlar ve söylemler üretir ve onun kılcal damarları bütün topluma yayılmıştır. Foucault aynı zamanda iktidarı bir kuvvet ilişkisi olarak ele alır. Onu sözleşme açısından yada üretim ilişkilerini ne kadar iyi sürdürdüğü açısından ele almaktansa, bir daimi mücadele olarak ele alır. Clausewitz'in ünlü sözünün evrilmesi – siyaset başka araçlarla devam ettirilen savaşı – iktidarı toplumsal gerçekliğin dokusunun derinlerine giden aralıksız bir savaş yeri, süregelen bir mücadele sahası olarak görmesi anlamına gelmektedir.

Bunları anlattıktan sonra tez Foucault'nun farklı iktidar tiplerinin tasvirine geçer. Foucault'ya göre farklı zaman aralıklarında baskın gelen farklı iktidar

türleri vardır ve bunları egemen iktidar, disipline edici iktidar ve bio-iktidar olarak üç genel kategoride incelemiştir. Bu üçünden bu tez için önemli olan bio-iktidardır ve önceki ikisinin kısaca anlatımından sonra tez bio-iktidar ve onun şiddet ile etkileşimi üzerine odaklanır. Bio-iktidar Avrupa’da on sekizinci yüzyılda ortaya çıkmış ve o zamandan beri Avrupa’da ve dünyada baskın olmuş bir iktidar türüdür. Bio-iktidar düzenleyici ve koordine edicidir bir iktidardır. Asıl amacı yönettiği toplumun refahını arttırmak ve popülasyonun iyiliğini sağlamaktır. Bu anlamda bio-iktidar yapıcı bir güç türüdür. Ancak bio-iktidar aynı zamanda Janus suratlıdır da. Bir tarafı kendine popülasyon olarak seçtiği grubun refahını sağlarken diğer tarafı hariç tutulmuşları ölüme terk eder. Dolayısıyla bio-iktidarın şiddetle olan ilişkisi de tam bu noktada belirir. Bio-iktidar egemen iktidar gibi direkt şiddet kanallarına başvurarak öldürmez; daha güç algılanan ve göze çarpmayan yolları kullanır ve bu yolların genel adı da tahmin edildiği üzere yapısal şiddettir. Bio-iktidarın “yaşat ve ölüme terk et” felsefesini hafife almamak gerekir; bu felsefe çoğu zaman direkt şiddet eylemleriyle aynı şekilde ölümcül sonuçlar doğurabilir. Milyonların ölümünü kendi popülasyonun refahı için meşrulaştıran bio-iktidar bu anlamda belki de önceki iktidar türlerinden çok daha tehlikelidir.

Bio-iktidar ve yapısal şiddet arasındaki bu simbiyotik ilişkiyi inceledikten sonra tez neoliberalizme geçer ve öncelikli olarak Foucault’nun kuramında neoliberalizmin oturduğu yeri tartışır. Foucault neoliberalizmi tarafsız bilgi ile değiştirilmesi gereken manipulatif ve yanlış bilgi üreten bir ideoloji olarak ele almaz; ama kendi doğru rejimini içeren bir stratejiler, taktikler ve politikalar dizesi olarak ele alır. Bu ölçüde neoliberalizmin Foucault’ya göre en önemli özelliği ekonomik alanı önceden ekonomik olmayan alanlara yaymasıdır. İnsanı da bu ölçüde her daim *homo economicus* olarak algılayan neoliberalizm, ebeveynlikten her türlü mesleğe, sosyal alanın her yönüne yayılmış ve sosyal alanı tümüyle iktisadileştirmiştir. Devletin de iktisadi alana müdahalesinin meşruluğunu bozan neoliberalizm, insanların refahının sorumluluğunu da tekrar bireylere devreder. Bu anlamda refah devleti zamanında bireylerin devletlerden edindiği kazançların altı oyulmuş olur.

Üçüncü ve son ana bölüm neoliberal pratiklerin ortaya çıkardığı yapısal şiddet durumlarını bio-iktidar kuramı çerçevesinde örnekler üzerinden inceler. Bio-iktidar ve yapısal şiddet arasındaki bu ilişki neoliberalizm altında daha da aşikâr olduğundan neoliberal döneme dikkat çevrilmiştir. Neoliberalizm ile ilişkilendirilen pratikler düzenli olarak “harcanabilir ötekiler” oluşturmakta ve bu yüzden yapısal şiddetin durumunu ağırlaştırmaktadır. Benim vardığım sonuç ise neoliberalizmin yoksulluğu, açlığı, hariç tutmayı ve güvencesizliği bilfiil arttırarak şiddet içeren durumlar yaratmasıdır. Neoliberal rejimler sosyal eşitsizliğin savunmasını yaparak insanlar arasında, kimlerin bizden ve kimlerin “ötekilerden” olduğunu belirleyen eşitsizlikler yaratmakta ve sürdürmektedirler. Öyleyse ötekilerin insan hakları bizim insan haklarımız kadar önemli olmayan harcanabilir yığınlar ve haliyle de etkin korunma ihtiyacı olmayanlar olarak görülmektedir. Böylelikle, kendi temel ihtiyaçlarını gidermeye, en kayda değer hastalıklar için bile gerekli tedaviyi görmeye ve kendi çevrelerini etkilemeye dahi muktedir olmayan “ötekinin” aşırı yoksulluğa terkedilmesi meşrulaştırılmıştır. Kısa ve öz bir şekilde neoliberalizmin tarihçesinden bahseder ve sonrasında neoliberalizm literatürü içerisinde seçilmiş örnekler üzerinden neoliberal pratiklerin oluşturduğu yapısal şiddet durumlarını inceler. İlk olarak neoliberal dönemde emek piyasasında ortaya çıkan güvencesizlik durumu incelenir. 1980lerden beri görülen, üretimin birinci dünya ülkelerinden üçüncü dünya ülkelerine taşınması süreci bütün dünyadaki emek gücü için yıkıcı sonuçlara sebebiyet vermiştir. Birinci dünya işçileri için refah devletinde alınan kazançların kaybıyla sonuçlanmış, üçüncü dünya ülkelerinde ise kötü çalışma şartları, düşük maaşlar ve iş piyasasında ırkçılık ve cinsiyetçiliğe sebebiyet vermiştir. İş yerinde görülen kazalarda artış da bu politikaların doğal sonuçlarından. Bangladeş’te 2013’te Rana plazasının çökmesi sonucu 1,135 kişinin ölmesi ne tek ne de nadir görülen bir iş kazasıdır; sadece neoliberal iş politikalarının en ölümcül örneklerindedir. İş yerinde psikolojik tacizde görülen artışlar da bu sürecin sonuçlarından.

İkincil örnek olarak ortak varlıkların özelleştirilmesi kullanılmıştır. Liberalizmin on altıncı yüzyıldan beri sık sık kullandığı bir araç olan ortak varlıkların özelleştirilmesi neoliberal dönemde üçüncü dünya ülkelerinde büyük

oranda hissedilmiş ve daha önceden görülmemiş boyutlara ulaşmıştır. Eskiden herkesin kullanımına açık olan toprak, su ve hayvanların daha verimli kullanılmaları adına özelleştirilmeleri yerli halklar için yoksullaşmaya sebebiyet vermiştir. Aynı zamanda genlerin ve tohumların özelleştirilip patentleştirilmesi yerli halkların tarım pratiklerini değiştirmiş ve onları çokuluslu şirketlere bağımlı hale getirmiştir. Dünyanın başka birçok yerinde olduğu gibi Dünya Ticaret Örgütünün dayattığı politikalar sonucu tarımda özelleştirmeye giden Hindistan'da her yıl 12,000 çiftçi aşırı borçlarından dolayı intihar etmektedir.

Son örnek olarak ise refah devleti politikalarının geriye çekilmesi konu edilmiştir. Yukarıda belirtildiği gibi neoliberal dönemde devletlerin ekonomiye olan etkileri büyük ölçüde kısıtlanmış ve devletlerin rolü sadece piyasayı oluşturan kurallar ve kurumların korumasına indirgenmiştir. Bu da refah politikalarında büyük ölçüde kısıtlamaya gidilmesiyle sonuçlanmıştır. Neoliberal dönemde kurumlar vergisinin azaltılması ve daha çok azalan oranlı vergi rejimlerine geçilmesi vergi yükünü şirketlerin omuzlarından emekçinin omuzlarına taşımıştır. Bu gelişmenin en önemli sonuçları da sağlık sektöründe gözükmemektedir. Her sene binlerce insanın AIDS ve tüberküloz gibi tedavi edilebilir hastalıklardan ölmesi bunun en çarpıcı örneğidir. Sağlık sektöründe “reform” bahanesi ile lanse edilen sağlık ve sosyal yardım hizmetlerinin ticarileşme, şirketleşme ve özelleşmesi milyonlarca insanın sağlık hakkına erişiminin imkânsız hale gelmesiyle sonuçlanmıştır.

Bu üç örnekte görüldüğü üzere neoliberal politikalar yapısal olarak şiddet içeren sonuçlar doğurmaktadır. Neoliberal bio-politikanın sonucunun “necropolitika”⁵⁷ olduğu her durumda ortaya konulmuştur. Bu sonuçları şiddet yapan en önemli iki özellik de insanların bu yapılardan fiziksel veya psikolojik zarar görmeleri ve bu sonuçların kaçınılabilir olmalarıdır. Fakat bu sonuçlardan kaçınmak radikal değişiklikler gerektirir ve şu anki dünyada bu değişikliklerin gerçekleştirilmesi yakın gelecekte mümkün gözükmemektedir. Yapısal şiddet kavramı da bize bu değişiklikleri sağlama ölçüsünde yardımcı olmamaktadır. Bu kavram bize bu durumların kaçınılabilir ve dolayısıyla da şiddet içeren durumlar olduğunu söyler ancak daha ötesine geçmez; yani bize bu durumlar karşısında

⁵⁷ Ölüm politikası

ne yapmamız gerektiğini söylemez. Onun en önemli işlevi bize şiddet içeren durumları tanımamıza yardım etmektir ki bu da bu durumları engellemek adına atılan önemli bir adımdır. Bu sebeple bu tez yapısal şiddet kavramının her ne kadar sıkıntıları olsa da sosyal bilimler için yararlı bir kavram olduğunu savunur.

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