How can the concept of *parrhesia* be used to challenge the politics of sovereign exceptionalism?

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Abstract

This research paper is one that seeks to contribute to the resistance debate that focuses on 'life' as a governmental practice of 'sovereign exceptionalism'. Sovereign exceptionalism is a term given to encompass a wide-ranging literature with its key analysis on 'biopolitical life. It is through the works of Giorgio Agamben and his reintroduction of sovereignty as a problematic to the biopolitics literature that this thesis takes its cue to focus on the more 'thanatopolitical', rather than biopolitical effects of sovereignty. What is argued in this paper is that the current literature as biopolitical or thanatopolitical hold a critique of the metaphysical conceptions of the subject as being problematic and leading to the crisis of sovereign exceptionalism. Through arguing against this point, what is suggested is that it is the very metaphysical status of the subject that allows for further resistance through the use of an ancient Greek concept called '*parrhesia*'. Building on a reanalysis of philosophical debates surrounding the subject, the final conclusions made in this thesis are that '*parrhesia*' as a 'mode of being' is a distinctly political way of 'life' that seeks 'truth' to challenge sovereign order.

Keywords: Biopolitics, thanatopolitics, sovereignty, exceptionalism, power, resistance, subject, *parrhesia*.

Contents

Introduction

Sovereign exceptionalism is a term taken from Giorgio Agamben to represent a practice of violent and increasingly degenerative politics that focuses on the biopolitical governing of 'life.' Agamben in *Homo Sacer* (2004) uses term sovereign exceptionalism, as originally theorised by Carl Schmitt (1985), in *Politische Theologie*, to represent a meta-analysis of politics where exceptional powers are put in place that contradicts a law it is supposed to protect. His thesis, drawing on Walter Benjamin's Critique of Pure Violence (2009), is that this state of affairs becomes the very constitutional basis of law, where the law is determined and policed according to its exception rather than the boundaries it is supposed to set. Agamben relates this thesis with contemporary theories of biopolitics; he claims that sovereign exceptionalism, as biopolitical life, is one where the 'subject' only ever exists as an exception to what it is not. Consequently, the subject is left in an ever-ready state to commit violence to the exceptional forms of life that are not considered proper and always at the mercy of becoming conceived as the exceptional life no longer considered proper. To this extent, life for Agamben is a degenerative and violent state of affairs. Sovereign exceptionalism is thus the term presented as a form of life that is distinctly political and a strong focus on the resistance literature.

Parrhesia is a term brought to popular attention in the biopolitical literature following the translation of Michel Foucault's final lecture series in 2011; *The Courage of Truth. The Government of Self and Others II. Lectures at the College de France 1983 – 1984*. In these lecture's, he follows how

the term was both problematised and used in the ancient Greek polis, with a particular focus on how it was a concept relevant to Socrates and the philosophy of Cynicism. His lectures do not present any obvious thesis and to this extent is open to inferential use. It is the contention of this thesis that the focus of these lectures has much to contribute to the current debate in the resistance debate to sovereign exceptionalism. *Parrhesia* is defined by Foucault as 'speaking the 'truth' to power for the benefit of the 'self' and others,' or at least, this is how the Greeks would have recognised it. This definition is one that combines may of the themes in the literature surrounding sovereign exceptionalism; 'truth,' power, 'self,' and an addition that will be presented in this thesis; the risk that is taken through the speaking 'truth' to power.

What will be analysed in the following chapters will be how these terms are considered in the literature and the particular problems that they pose to the resistance literature. The main line of argument will be that the current approaches in the resistance literature are problematic. As will be explained in chapter 1, the focus on the 'subject' and how they conceive of its role in resisting is revealed to be politically redundant in light of the 'post-subject' critique given by the works of Jean Baudrillard. This is what motivates the contention of this thesis, and it is suggested that the concept of *parrhesia* could make a useful contribution to, for it offers an analysis of the subject in a distinctly political way that has not been so far offered in the resistance literature.

The argument in this thesis will be set out as follows; Chapter one, *Resistance and the Subject*, will outline the tension that currently exists in the biopolitical resistance literature. What is contested in this chapter is that both sides of the debate are problematic regarding the meta-conceptions of 'truth' and the 'subject,' to the extent, that they contribute rather than resist sovereign exceptionalism.

Chapter two, *The Greek Solution*, is written on the basis that the problematic for the ancient Greeks, regarding the relation of 'truth' to the 'subject' (to ensure a virtuous or healthy polis), resembles the problematic that has been outlined in the previous chapter. Chapter two suggests two conclusions

of significance regarding the potential for *parrhesia* to challenge sovereign exceptionalism; first is that the meta-account of the subject is open to reimagination of what it means to live 'truthfully.' The second point focuses on *parrhesia* as an essential practice that enables the possibility of reimagining one's 'self' through the breaking down of power structures that determine who is allowed to speak and who is not.

Chapter three, *The Impossibility of Truthful Resistance?*, seeks to apply the conclusions presented as the 'Greek Solution' to the contemporary debate surrounding the temporal understanding of the 'subject' as finite. This follows the recent essays of Michael Dillon (2015), in Biopolitics of Security, where he makes the claim that security practices (as presented in this thesis as sovereign exceptionalism) will be forever tied to the infinite securing of the finite subject. The problem is posed that the subject is conceived of as finite in a paradoxical sense, the result of this is that the subject is never actually finite, but rendered to a political practice reasserting its finitude. This is the meta-basis that seeks to suggest that sovereign exceptionalism is a political form of governance that encroaches of the very 'being' of the 'subject' and not just the institutions by which he is governed. Drawing upon the 'Greek Solution,' it is suggested that this paradox is the basis of autonomy with which resist sovereign exceptionalism and is therefore not metaphysically tied with it. Following this conclusion, the second part of the chapter seeks to address why sovereignty and the subject have come to be treated in the literature as synonymous. What is presented is not a definitive account, but a speculation to pose the possibility of a relationship between a meta-account of the subject and the aesthetic means of expressing this understanding of the 'true self.'

Chapter four brings the previous conclusions together to make a case for focusing on the concept of *parrhesia* because of its capacity to challenge sovereign exceptionalism while avoiding the flaws argued to be associated with the current literature. The overarching conclusion of this chapter is that normativity is necessary to challenging sovereign exceptionalism, but that through a particular style and practice of life, normativity can be used in such a way that avoids the problems that the literature has argued derives from it.

The chapters of this thesis are aimed at engaging with philosophical problematics that surround ‘truth’ and the ‘subject’ in order to justify the claim that through the conceptual use of *Parrhesia* sovereign exceptionalism can be resisted. In summary, it is argued that this is because *Parrhesia* forces the individual to engage with a particular ‘mode of being’ that challenges how life is governed through sovereign exceptionalism.

Chapter 1

Resistance and the 'Subject'

Introduction: The Resistance Debate

This chapter presents a resistance debate that exists in the biopolitical literature, it does not confess to represent the whole biopolitical literature, but drawing upon the essays in Michael Dillon's *Biopolitics of Security* (2015) seek to expand on his focus on the *finitude* of the 'subject' as a point of resistance. Dillon claims that in order to reach a new kind of politics we will have to come up with a new understanding of freedom. Otherwise, we shall always find ourselves caught between katechontic and messianic forms of resistance practices (Dillon 2015). 'Katechontic,' representing a resistance that is based on the 'subject'[1] and messianic as one that seeks to either refuse or reimagine the 'subject'

[1] The 'katechon' is a biblical referes to St Paul of Carthage use of the term to prevent chaos amongst the Christians due to their belief in the imminent apocalypse, by claiming that it is the katechon that prevents the fore coming of days. This term was related, by Carl Schmitt, through the concept of sovereignty to claim that, in relation to the governing of society, the 'sovereign' has come to embody the role of the katechon. It is to this extent that

altogether. This resistance literature will take the structure as is described in its tension between the katechontic and messianic critiques but will follow the wider biopolitical literature's terminology and reference to the 'subject' and the problematisations of it.

The focus regarding the effect means to resist sovereign exceptionalism can be glossed as a problem of power and whether our conceptual understanding of it can deliver the political outcomes that are desired. The problem of power can be summarised as the differences in approach between Michel Foucault and Giorgio Agamben; Foucault claims that power is a productive mechanism, that while open to abuse, is a necessity to make anything possible, including resistance. Agamben, however, states that power, as it exists in its biopolitical form today will always degenerate into a violent form of sovereign exceptionalism where lives will be ever ready to have just violence committed against them. To this extent, there is a side of the debate that claims that 'power' is necessary for resistance and a side of the debate that claims that we must go beyond how power is conceived in general to challenge the sovereign order of today.

Following this structure of argument, what will be introduced to the debate will be the concept of *Parrhesia*. It will be argued that the ancient problematic of 'truth' in relation to influencing the polis, resembles the current debate in such a way that in uncovering the Greek solution to it can offer a possible means of challenging sovereign exceptionalism, without falling into a strict category of for or against power.

The Problem of Power

Walter Benjamin hypothesised the function of violence as two types; the Mythic and the Divine. An initial consideration that must be given to Benjamin's notion of violence is that it is translated from

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katechontic politics refers to the governing in such a way that imposes order through the prevention of contingency and great transformation.

the German, *Gewalt*. This is a term understood more in the sense of power and the ways in which it provides a grand architecture of society, this includes phenomenon often associated with relational forms of power such as, language, institutions, aesthetic structures. Benjamin's categorising of the structures of political existence as Mythical violence is one that he summarises as power being used over life for the continuation of the existence of that political structure. Divine violence is one that he terms in the sense of power and the violence used to create a political structure that exists for life.

The exact meaning that Benjamin had in mind for the terms and difference between Divine and Mythic violence is not determinate. Jacque Derrida (2002), in *Force of Law: The 'Mystical Foundations of Authority'*, posed a particular problem with the notion of the divine as a blood killing to impose a 'Divine' order as one that resembles too closely the Holocaust. Other theorists, such as Slavoj Zizek (Zizek in Lacan.com: no date), claim that the divine is one that accepts the political responsibility of violence and its necessity to achieve a better political structure from that which we currently experience. The French Revolution, for example, was for Zizek an instance of divine violence, where the responsibility was undertaken by Robespierre to create the new political order was one that required violence of the divine type for the benefit of the life that was to be governed.

The idea of Divine violence in its relation to biopolitics has been largely emphasised through the works of Agamben in his attempts to hypothesise an alternative the violent thanatopolitics he describes as the contemporary sovereign order. Through Agamben, the resistance literature regarding how to challenge power as conceived in the biopolitical framework has been largely influenced and demarcated by Benjamin's Critique of Pure Violence. Where Benjamin defines Mythic violence through its means end distinction, uses life to achieve the ends of a political order to promote the judicial order. The Divine alternatively is one that sees violence as an end in itself, where the means are nothing other than the divine setting for life to live, it is for no other ends that itself.

What has been added to Benjamin's through the Biopolitical literature is the subject as a violent conception, in the sense of *Gewalt*, as a sense of being supposed to govern the body in a binary sense

to make it live longer and be more effective in the modern economy. This problem is one that has been related to the governing of the body in existential terms, where it is not just the political identity of the body that is at stake but the notion of a subject at all. Where one looks in the mirror and sees its outline and recognises its finite boundaries, subjectivity is where the perceiving being attempts to find the finite boundary of the very thing that has this perception. To this extent, we see that is one that must be given character and an understanding of the identity of the perceiving self through identities entirely void of physical character, but with the need to show it physically in order to create that boundary of being.

What has been made difficult through the analysis of the 'subject,' through the violence set out in Benjamin's critique, is the difficulty of reimagining the body in terms other than its subjectivity. The resistance literature has been left to either imagining resistance to particular subjectivities that are perhaps subjugated by a particular sovereign order through analysing the power plays that will bring such subjectivities into that order and be allowed to live. However, they do not challenge sovereign power in general and to this extent continue the degenerative violence by not challenging the Mythic power it is based on. Thus, the challenge to the Mythic power has been through the hypothesising of what the Divine would be in relation to the subject. In this sense, a complete re-imagination of the body as a means in itself and not to some other end.

The Subject

Subjectivity is the focal point of resisting sovereign exceptionalism because, through the works of Giorgio Agamben, we have come to understand juridical order as one becomes concrete and active through the governing of life[2]. Judith Butler, in *Frames of War* (2010), claims that such juridical order,

[2] 'Life', here, is referred to in the context of the political construction of how we understand the term, such as how meaning and knowledge of life is governed (through discourse, violence, etc.) through normative and ideological conceptions of what life should be. However, the analysis of life as the focus of critique is one that suggests that there is no knowable conception of what life is.

at an ontological level, is a manufacturing of a naturalized violent politics where lives become "divided into those representing certain kinds of states and those representing threats to state-centered liberal democracy" (Butler 2011: 53). Lauren Gallimore (2012) is indicative of the resistance literature's challenge to such an order through her questioning of:

"what constitutes life from a liberal perspective. Does only a life that is economically prosperous constitute living? Is it only worthy of saving because it shows potential to be conditioned into 'our' way of living? In what way must the 'other' be reformed to maintain 'our' security?" (Gallimore 2012: 36)

In this respect, the challenge that must be resisted has created a particular consensus and theoretical movement for over thirty years[3]. However, where there has developed a tension in the literature is, with respect to how to resist, the prominence of theorists such as Zizek has posed a challenge regarding whether it is indeed the 'subject,' that must be abandoned to challenge the contemporary view of life as describe by Gallimore.

The foreground to this debate is a literature that attempts to resist the 'liberal subject' through challenging liberal conceptions, be it political, social, or philosophical with regards to the essential conception that one can possess knowledge of 'life.' The approach is an 'onto-political critique' to challenge how politics is conceived in terms of sovereign power and the liberal way of life that is associated with it. For example, David Campbell (1992) in *Why Fight* identifies the 'Archimedean point' as the analogous term for the general approach to resisting sovereign power. Archimedes

[3] This is in reference to the broadly framed post-structuralist theorists of which the biopolitics literature is an integral part of the theoretical analysis. The post structuralist literature is one that philosophically based its self in continental literature, particularly in its conception, Michel Foucault and Jacques Derrida. It came into full recognition when the likes of James Der Derrian and Michael Shapiro published in Post-modern Approaches, claiming to break from previous forms of analysis and references where analysis its self (or critique) was considered a distinctly political action as opposed to 'scientific'.

supposedly claimed that "in order he might draw the terrestrial globe out of its place, and transport it elsewhere, demanded that only one point should be fixed and immovable" (Schouls 1989: 53). This represents for Campbell the function of security in the onto-political sense of the sovereign, that if the world can be homogenized and fixed, "all identities would have congealed, all challenges would have evaporated, and all need for disciplinary authorities and their fields of force would have disappeared" (Campbell 1992: 12).

This is generally indicative of a resistance literature in its focus on sovereign exceptionalism as the result of a flawed 'Archimedean epistemology' embodied in the notion of the 'subject'. Were there an incontestable fact to base all epistemological knowledge in which to investigate all needs and requirements for the 'human subject', we could create a political state of affairs that could secure those needs. The problem being, however, is that 'the subject' has proved not to be the desired Archimedean point to secure all else.

Michel Foucault is a key reference for contemporary scholars in the biopolitical literature for his analysis of the subject as historically constituted in modernity. His lectures on *The Birth of Biopolitics and Security, Territory, and Population* provide the basis for much analysis into liberal life and subsequent constitution of the subject. His thesis, in summary, is that the rise in productivity from the beginning of modernity was derived through developing contemporary forms of biopolitical life. For Foucault, the rise of biopolitics and the marketisation of life began in the eighteenth century as a problematisation to bring about new identifications of 'truth' and to give them concrete practice. The conclusions drawn from the resistance literature is that, during this period, the focus on 'life' was towards governing the capacity of individuals to be "more effectively *normalized* and domesticated [added italics]" (Dillon 1995: 325). Through the practice of discovering the 'normal' from the 'abnormal,' the biopolitical literature seeks to resist the exceptional violence that is aimed at constructed forms of 'abnormal life'.

Campbell in his analysis of ethical considerations in the biopolitical literature, *Why Fight?* outlines the significance of this question because of its subsequent implications regarding how one should fight. The answer is about the persistent criticism made of Derrida (In Campbell 1998: 14) in his philosophy of Deconstruction, that one "cannot conceive of some type of critique which would not be based on affirmation, whether it is acknowledged or not" (Campbell 1998: 14). That in a sense, the normative given for why to fight is contained in 'critique' itself, and thus need not be necessarily expressed. The nature of critique, however, is one that is significantly distinct in its ethical value as opposed to normative and moral judgments. To use Foucault's theory of power in relational terms, to make normative claims is to enter into a discursive practice that places new limitations on conduct to the exclusion of others. Where this is usually one engaged with the moral reasons to do so, the point made in the resistance literature is that there are many different conceptions of what we consider to be normal and that it is an act of violence to limit practice to one perspective. Thus, for this reason, the resistance literature is one that has been summarized by Jenny Edkins in *Sovereign Lives* (2004) as reinserting power back into politics through the refusal of sovereign power for its effects are to render those within the exception as powerless. The role is not to determine the structures and instances in which politics should be engaged in but to enable the possibility to fight when one feels as though a given circumstance have become intolerable.

Susan Coutin, in *Risk and the War on Terror* (Amoore and de Goede, 2008), gives a critique of raising consciousness as one means of challenging certain discourses; she shows, using the example of the nuclear arsenal that exists in the world, that when one is confronted with the truth, one can no longer turn away from it. This form of consciousness raising is to this extent effective at challenging the discourse with regards to the essential need for nuclear weapons. She claims that during the 1980's "anti-nuclear war weapons activists used films… lectures, books, and visual devices to demonstrate that the US possessed incredible destructive capacities and that… these could destroy life on this planet" (Coutin 2008: 220). Through this intervention, they were contesting that "nuclear weapons were a form of protection" (Coutin 2008: 221) and were, in fact, a source of danger.

The resistance literature that focuses on the subject regards resisting the Archimedean midpoint, as one that separates liberalism as an a priori conception of the subject. This resistance takes place through a critique of epistemic essentialism, to challenge it, many authors, such as Jenny Edkins, Michael Dillon, and Julian Reid, also draw upon Foucault's investigations of power. Foucault's break with traditional conceptions of power is significant because, power relations, according to David Campbell (1998), always contains the possibility of freedom (though this view only represents one side of the debate). Thus, the focus on of power is in the same instance a politics of promoting freedom. However, this freedom for some has determined a reintroduction of "juridical and disciplinary power" (Dillon 1995: 325). This reintroduction is one where sovereign exceptionalism becomes a problem of understanding the subject in a biopolitical framework, and to some extent is the introduction of sovereign exceptionalism as the point to be resisted. Though, the introduction of the juridical to a conception of power previously believed to be other has not been one where all subsequently agree that Foucault's relational conception of power must be abandoned to resist this newly identified onto-political problem of the sovereign. William Connolly argues that all political interpretation is onto-political to the extent that it contains "fundamental presumptions that establish the possibilities within which its assessment of actuality is presented" (Connolly in Campbell 1998: 9). It is to this extent that we can see that power as a practice of knowledge remains a driving conception to the resistance debate as one that enables affirmation through its contestation, whether it is acknowledged regarding its aim at resistance or not (Campbell 1998: 9).

The biopolitical literature that hypothesises the possibility of resistance 'through the subject' draws upon Foucault's analysis of power to enable to possibilities of living. Sovereign exceptionalism is conceived by these scholars regarding a power practice between subjects as the creation of knowledge-based discourse. Resistance, therefore, attempts to go beyond traditional ontological conceptions of politics. The role of critique becomes one of revealing the underlying assumptions that limit political change and the possibility of addressing sovereign exceptionalism. The theoretical accusation addressed to sovereign exceptionalism is the inability for the subject to live freely in

accordance with an autonomous way of life that has not been governed towards pre-given modes of existence (predominantly white, male, liberal, western). Campbells representation of the Archimedean midpoint is that 'knowledge' and 'truth' is secured against the subject to appear as natural representations of the subject. Resistance, through the framework of the subject, takes a stance of revealing that what is experienced is thus a prescripted reality as opposed to a discovered one. To this extent, they limit through their ideological conception of the world a limit regarding what is possible. For this reason, resistance researchers often follow William Connolly's approach to critique and claim that to challenge sovereign exceptionalism one must ultimately confront the power mechanisms of 'truth' and 'knowledge' to reveal the violence that becomes justified against those outside the sovereign order.

Resistance to the Subject

The focus on the human aspect of life, according to Agamben, is one that in its modern conception must be understood in terms of the biopolitical. He makes this point through an analysis of the Holocaust and argues that the great crime of our age is one where we must accept that killing was not "a mad and giant holocaust but exactly as Hitler had announced, "as lice," which is to say bare life. The dimension in which this took place is neither religion, nor law, but biopolitics" (Agamben 1998: 114). The limitation deriving from this fact is that the biopolitical project began by Foucault did not come to bare his analysis on the "exemplary place of modern biopolitics: the politics of the great totalitarian state of the twentieth century" (Agamben 1998: 119).

Thus, resistance is to be applied to the subject as a whole, Agamben claims that all power relations between the subject belong to the sovereign order, in effect, it is the function of a judicial order to govern all life through the exception and render all 'abnormal.' To this extent, one cannot give power back to the those that fall outside of the sovereign order and not only does attempting to do so not resist sovereign exceptionalism but is also indicative of the problem in its practice. What is claimed is that this resistance literature does not challenge the subject as a meta-political entity. For, the subject itself

is apparently political regardless of the power/knowledge nexus in which it is defined for they are always ones determined by the sovereign. Thus, the other side of the debate draws more on Agamben's conception of thanatopolitics as a description of the governing of the subject in resisting sovereign exceptionalism, to this extent, resistance is looked at as a possibility of refusing the 'idea' of a 'subject' in general.

For Agamben, we can find the root of exceptionalism in relation to life through the ancient rituals of sacrifice; the maxim "*neque fas est eum immorali* ("it is not licit to sacrifice him")" (Agamben 1998: 81) is one that formed the basis of the ritual killing of the ancients. Ancient forms of capital punishment were considered to be forms of purification as opposed to the contemporary sense of the death penalty (Agamben 1998: 81). Through the notion of his being impure, he is set outside the "human jurisdiction without being brought into the realm of divine law" (Agamben 1998: 82). Consequently, "violence done to *homo sacer* did not constitute sacrilege" (Agamben 1998: 82). In effect, the impurity of the man meant that he does not fall under juridical protection. However, there is a sanction upon his sacrifice for his life belongs to the divine and so must not be touched. The apparent way around this paradox was to proclaim that he is not protected by the law but must be made pure in the name of the divine, to this extent he must be killed but not sacrificed. This midway between life outside the realm of human jurisdiction and covered by the divine is what Agamben calls bare life; "this threshold alone, which is neither simple or natural life nor social life but rather bare life or sacred life, is the always present and always operative presupposition of sovereignty" (Agamben 1982: 82). Should one take the logic of exceptional politics to its logical conclusion, the worlds: "inhabitants have been stripped of every political status and reduced completely to naked life, the camp is also the most absolute biopolitical space that has ever been realised – a space in which power confronts nothing other than pure biological life without any mediation. The camp is the paradigm itself of political space at the point in which politics becomes biopolitics and the *homo sacer* becomes indistinguishable from the citizen" (Edkins & Pin-Fat in Edkins & Pin-Fat & Shapiro 2004: 7).

For Agamben, the subject's everyday relation to political life is in terms of sovereign exceptionalism because of the biopolitical means in which the individual as the 'subject' is rendered as homo sacer. Thus, significantly for the resistance literature is where Agamben departs through his critique from Foucault. Agamben de-historicises the focus on life as a political practice through his distinction between life as zoë and bios; a life that is of its essence political and life that is given divinely with its shared characteristics with other nonhuman forms. Through this distinction, what we see from Foucault is one whereby the subject can resist through certain discursive relations. Whereas with Agamben the sole basis of the subject is as homo sacer and to this extent will always remain within a sovereign ontology of exceptional rule. This is because the exception is one in that is included by the sovereign, this Agamben calls 'the paradox of sovereignty' where "the sovereign is, at the same time, outside and inside the juridical order" (Agamben 1998: 15). This is because in reference to Schmitt "it is up to him to decide if the constitution is to be suspended in toto" (Schmitt, Politische Theologie: 13 in Agamben 1998: 15). The significance for Agamben is that it suggests that the law (as constituted by the sovereign) is thus also outside of itself for the sovereign's capacity to determine himself outside the law equally proclaims that there is nothing outside the law (Agamben 1998: 15) "what is excluded from the general rule is an individual case. But most proper characteristic of the exception what is excluded is not, on account of being excluded, absolutely without relation to the rule. On the contrary, what is excluded in the exception maintains itself in relation to the rule in the form of the rules exception" (Agamben 1998: 17).

The point that is being made here is that within the confines of subjectivity, no form of identity production, liberal or otherwise, can escape the binary effects of subjectivity where those on the outside become bare life and subject to the violence of the 'sovereign order.' To this extent, nothing the subject can do can achieve the sense of security that is desired because of the sovereign exceptionalism of power.

Summary

To summarise, the debate currently takes place with on the one hand the hypothesis that in deconstructing discursive knowledge, regarding the subject, it is possible that through this resistance practice the subject will develop other tangible 'modes of being'[4] that are not determined by sovereign exceptionalism. However, on the other side, it is claimed that a mode of being that focuses developed in terms of the subject at all cannot challenge sovereign exceptionalism because the 'subject' exists as the very notion of *homo sacer*. To this extent, life can only be structured through the politics of sovereign exceptionalism, whether that mode of existence is essentialised in terms of Western Liberalism or not. In order to challenge sovereign exceptionalism, it is therefore suggested that we should seek to resist the concept of the subject in its entirety, not just its political relations.

Resistance?

Jean Baudrillard puts forward a problem to regarding the perceived[5] outcome of the resistance literature towards the problem of sovereign exceptionalism. On the one hand, we see that the battles over the acceptability of certain identities into the mainstream discourse in effect were already won during 'the orgy.' On the other hand, he shows that a post-subject reality is one that in fact hyper-normalises the very political ways of life that sought resistance in the first place. In the first instance, the problem for the subject is that political identity is one that is easily assimilated into sovereign power. In the second instance, we see without any basis in which to hypothesise resistance (i.e. the subject) we

[4] 'Modes of being' refers to the ways in which somebody understands ones' 'self' and how they practice this understanding as a concrete way of life. For example, the philosopher, historically referred to a person of wisdom who, in order to express and live in accordance with it, would conform to stereotypical ideas of maverick, recluse, etc., associated with an overly thinking person. Thus, being a philosopher would be as much about showing that you were one as much as being philosophically engaged; this what is in mind when using the term 'mode of being'.

[5] The perceived outcomes are an inference based on what is imagined to be the result of relational power exchange and challenging of hegemonic power at a subjective level of identity.

have no way of attempting resistance at all for we are simply presented with 'life' as opposed to a governed representation of it. 'Life,' as has been observed by Baudrillard, does not, in fact, have the emancipatory effects that is perhaps assumed to derive through focusing resistance at how 'life' is conceived through the political status of the subject[6].

Baudrillard, in *The Transparency of Evil* (1993), describes the current political situation that we, abstractly, face as 'after the orgy.' The 'orgy' for Baudrillard describes "the moment when modernity exploded on us" (Baudrillard 1993: 3) towards a liberation of productive forces in every sphere. Biopolitics and the theoretical terms such as 'sovereign exceptionalism' do not appear prominent in the works of Baudrillard. However, this focus on the productive forces of modernity, and his thesis regarding the 'orgy' pose great difficulties for the biopolitical resistance literature that attempt to seek novel approaches and critiques that relate to our apparent "present state of affairs" (Baudrillard 1993: 3). For Baudrillard claims that, in effect, liberation has already taken place: "Political liberation, sexual liberation, liberation of the forces of production, liberation of the forces of destruction, women's liberation, liberation of unconscious drives, liberation of at. The assumption of all models of representation, as of all models of anti-representation. This was a total orgy…" (Baudrillard 1993: 3). The problem he poses for the resistance literature is this: "WHAT DO WE DO NOW THE ORGY IS OVER?" (Baudrillard 1993: 3).

[6] Baudrillard does not use the term 'subject', his own theoretical standpoint claims that this is the terminology of a 'flawed' sociological approach to analysing 'reality'. Instead, he prefers the use of 'symbolic exchange' that does not make any metaphysical claims regarding the 'entity' that exchanges. This essay will not attempt to draw out the disparities between the biopolitical literature and Baudrillards own frame work, but, will suggest that there is enough similarity regarding the problem of the status of 'truth' to refer to Baudrillards' concepts in a biopolitical terminology. This is because 'truth' in both literatures is treated in terms of something that is used productively rather than epistemically.

The more radical element of the resistance literature, as this thesis has associated with Agamben, is one that might address challenge and claim that there is a lot left to be resisted in so far as the resistance that has taken place on subjective terms has been assimilated by sovereign power. Resistance, should, therefore, be one that seeks to challenge subjectivity in itself if we are indeed to be able to resist the degenerative politics of sovereign exceptionalism. Nevertheless, a politics that seeks to deliver, one can only assume, a 'post-subject politics'[7] is also shown to be problematic. Baudrillard claims that the duality implicated in the metaphysics of the subject is the basis of "our entire system, both technical and mental, tends towards oneness, identity and totality, at the cost of an extraordinary simplification...[where]… metaphysics and all our neuroses chart the evils and confusions that ensue" (Baudrillard 2005: 145). However, he also claims that where we, as we currently have, cease to live in terms of the subject we enter a situation where "every phenomenon can reverse its course by mere acceleration or proliferation" (Baudrillard 2005: 149). For example, he claims that 'art' does not disappear with its physical disappearance but at the point when everything becomes 'art.' To this extent, he claims that "what we must deal with now is that our entire culture through simulation, the media… etc., gone over into something else into a space beyond the end" (Baudrillard 2005: 7). This statement suggests that how the 'subject' as it is argued in the biopolitical literature has already disappeared with the rise of a technologized society.

Why this is a problem is because Baudrillard suggests that the 'end' of the 'subject' (symbolic exchange) has not been an emancipatory event, neither has it enabled more possibilities for resistance but on the very contrary, closed them. He claims that with the 'end' of the 'subject' what takes its place is a 'hyper-real' where ideas of 'truth' become completely indistinguishable from 'non-truth.' What is

[7] Given a lack of any other blue print or term I feel this is justifiable. It also remains in line with other literatures that, as will be elaborated on in this thesis, hypothesise in terms of 'post-finitude' this I take to be a reference to the subject given the philosophical chronology of the subject as derived from Heidegger's philosophy of the 'daisen' as being in this world on the basis of his finitude.

left as a result is pure sovereign exceptionalism for which the body, stripped of its subjective character, becomes nothing other than the processes it is subjugated by. For, as Baudrillard states, at the end of the 'subject': "All velocity produces an equivalent or even greater mass. All acceleration produces an equal or even greater inertia. All mobilization produces an equal or even greater immobility. All differentiation produces an equal or even greater indifference. All transparency produces an equal or even greater opacity. All information produces an equal or even greater entropy or disinformation. All communication produces an equal or an even greater in-communicability" (Baudrillard 2005: 149). This renders resistance to sovereign completely redundant because what is found is that resisting the 'subject' does not remove the type of governance that is being avoided. Rather, it can be inferred it removes the power relationships surrounding the 'subject' that can keep sovereign practices in check.

The Greek Problematic of 'Truth' Telling

Foucault in his final lectures on *The Courage of Truth* identifies a period in ancient Greek philosophy regarding the individual's capacity to express their influence in the political community. Fundamental to this problem for the Greeks were two things: the truthfulness of the individual seeking to influence and the ability of the audience (or sovereign) to recognise this 'truth'. I wish to suggest in this thesis that these problematics contain resemblances to the contemporary resistance debate in so far as the status of the individual was also considered to have a problematic status. Foucault identifies this problem for the Greeks as one that surrounded truth and the concept of *parrhesia*, loosely meaning 'the courage to speak the 'truth.'

Parrhesia is difficult to relate to contemporary terms in political theory because of our a priori notion of concepts. This is not to say that *parrhesia* is not a concept but is one based more on the activity

of the *parrhesia*st than in some abstract form to be understood and applied[8]. A *parrhesia*st would be recognised as a person who speaks the truth that comes to his mind "without holding back anything, without concealing anything" (Foucault 2011: 9). It consisted of one individual speaking to another who is in a position of power; this relationship would force the speaker to "index-link his discourse to a principle of rationality and truth" (Foucault 2011: 10) as if to show the righteousness of his speaking to a superior. To do this, he would have to show further that he is "without concealment, reserve, empty manner of speech or rhetorical ornament which might encode or hide" (Foucault 2011: 10), the truth he speaks that transcends the power relationship he has entered. Character would also be very important; it was necessary that *parrhesia*st spoke what he really thinks, to do this he could not speak reluctantly for when he did "he personally signs it as it were… he binds himself to this truth, and he is consequently bound to it" (Foucault 2011: 11). By signing himself to his speech in this way, he showed that he was sincere in what he is saying and so displayed himself in a virtuous manner. The real test of the speaker's character is their willingness to "be taking some kind of risk" (Foucault 2011: 11), to speak the 'truth.' They would be aware the knowledge that by entering this relationship to speak the 'truth', he is running the risk that the person he is addressing may be offended and possibly provoked into violent action. Such a risk would display his virtue as a truth teller, for the risk taken to speak the 'truth,' without attempting to hide from its consequences, is a way of showing one's trustworthiness and so be distinguished as a *parrhesia*st. The *parrhesia*st, thus, would be engaging in a certain art of speech much like others in ancient Greece such as the rhetorician. It was a practice and one which required the speaker to convince others of their sincerity, however, this practice was one used to convey a sincere belief in what they were saying as opposed to indifferently persuading others of what is being said. The problem for the Greeks was how would one distinguish between, for example, the rhetorician who actively

[8] Parrhesia as will be developed through the description of a 'mode of being' in so far as it combines the conceptual with practice in a particular way.

conceals the truth but seeks to bind the audience with their speech, and the *parrhesia*st who makes attempts to be as open as possible about the self-relation to the truth they speak.

This was a problem considered relevant to the governing of Greece itself. Intellectual Greek criticism of popular politics was one in which truth telling would be considered too dangerous for the city. Dangerous because of the democratic element that anybody, in theory, could be a p*arrhesia*st thus giving "the freedom of everyone and anyone to give their views" (Foucault 2011: 36) which would allow for the pursuit of all private interests regardless of any criteria. In terms of governance, this was considered a disastrous principle because "there are as many *politeiai* (constitutions, governments) as there are individuals" (Foucault 2011: 36), thus preventing government on the basis of any one principle. The second criticism of *parrhesia* in the democratic context is not only that it is harmful to the city, but also to the individual themselves who would attempt to practice it. Speaking the "truth" to a crowd of others who also have the right to speak would be one that would lead to an antagonism to then be resolved by those not qualified to resolve it. This was considered problematic for "those who please the people, say what they want to hear, and flatter them" (Foucault 2011: 37), to this extent, any political influence was considered to have a degenerative effect. Furthermore, not only will speaking truthfully become redundant in this context but any individual that engages in "true discourse will expose them to vengeance or punishment" (Foucault 2011: 37) to the detriment of true discourse. Should someone not simply seek to please the crowds, run a risk of "justifiable fears of incurring disapproval (or ostracism) of the demos means that democratic speech must inevitably devolve into rhetoric or flattery" (Sharpe 2007: 91).

However, this is not to say that *parrhesia* was considered too dangerous for the city but rather the point of problematization regarding how to effectively accommodate it. Governance of the polis was believed healthy, good, virtuous when governed in accordance with true principles; the 'truth' was considered synonymous with the divine principles of justice as opposed to false and unjust beliefs of the people. Thus 'truth,' and the 'truth teller' was one of divine importance, it is on this basis that we see while 'truth' was divine and absolute, living in accordance with it was a truly human problem. The

significance of the truth teller and the responsibility to listen to them would be used to critique the democratic experiment of its day. Democracy would be criticised in as much as by giving all a voice it would also allow for all types of speech on equal grounds some of which of course would not be truthful, therefore threatening the health of the *polis*.

Thus, on the one hand, there was a problem that the individual in their knowledge of 'truth' was considered essential for the health of the polis, and yet the inability to recognise the 'truth' and not just rhetorical devices had the risk of damaging the health of the community. In response to this problem, we have what Foucault refers to as a 'Platonic Reversal,' a reversal of the problems regarding *parrhesia* that existed in the structural weaknesses of democracy. Plato sought to remove this somewhat external problem of political space for 'truth-telling' and create this space in the individual who can receive the 'truth.' By looking to the individual's capacity to be truthful and receive 'truth,' the individual was preferable to the community "precisely to the extent that it is in the individual soul (the *psukhe* of an individual) is capable of ethical differentiation" (Foucault 2011: 61). This is preferable because the pursuit of private interest will not be one of ingratiating the pejorative views of everyone. In just one person "effective moral training and development… both makes him capable of grasping the truth, and, following from this, teaches him to limit his power" (Foucault 2011: 61). This reversal, therefore, was not one which Plato believed could exist in the democratic context of political space for: "Either democracy makes room for *parrhesia*, in which case it can only be freedom which is dangerous for the city, or *parrhesia* is a courageous attitude which consists in undertaking to tell the truth, in which case it has no place in democracy" (Foucault 2011: 38).

The underlying assumption behind this attitude comes down to an attitude with respect to 'the crowd,' although Plato talks about the moral training of the soul, he does not believe this training possible for everyone. The justification for this understanding is that even removed from the structural problems of political space; the problem is simply a numerical in so far as it is only "possible for a single individual or a small number of individuals, to excel in virtue" (Foucault 2011: 49). Thus, it is only in "their ethical choice" and "their ethical differentiation" (Foucault 2011: 49) that they should be

considered for the means in which to govern others. What we see in Plato is the direction that truth can only be found in training ones' soul to receive the 'truth.' This training is exemplarily shown in Socrates teaching that how 'knowledge of oneself' would also affect the way in which one could live according to the 'eternal' truths of the soul.

Parrhesia and Resistance

We can see that *parrhesia* epitomises in this sense the tension of the debate that exists regarding the resistance to sovereign exceptionalism. The autonomous ability of the subject to engage politically in resistance to sovereign exceptionalism, on the one hand, there is the subject that seeks to constitute himself according to the truth he speaks to challenge power in the sense of challenging sovereign exceptionalism through critiquing the pre-given order of liberal ideology. On the other hand, there is the challenge of the impossibility of that individual escaping the sovereign order, for it requires calling on the same constitutive powers that are being resisted. Thus, in an analogous sense, there is no other power to which one can speak to, if we were to continue with theorising in terms of the subject, but rejecting the power of sovereign exceptionalism.

Campbell in his analysis of ethical considerations in the biopolitical literature, Why Fight? outlines the significance of this question because of its subsequent implications regarding how one should fight. The answer is about the persistent criticism made of Derrida in his philosophy of Deconstruction, that one "cannot conceive of some type of critique which would not be based on affirmation, whether it is acknowledged or not" (Campbell 1998: 14). What emerges, however, can be seen in the problematization of the Greeks was that there is a separation between the notion of truth and justice from the actions and beliefs of those to whom the polis is composed. The souls of men can easily be led in the wrong direction by those who do not have true knowledge of what is right and eternal and to this extent allowing government on the part of those who can be deceived as such can lead to an unjust city.

However, the contemporary debate suggests that in a sense, the normative given for why to fight is contained in the critique itself, and thus need not be necessarily expressed. The nature of critique, however, is one that is significantly distinct in its ethical value as opposed to normative and moral judgments. To use Foucault's theory of power in relational terms, to make normative claims is to engage with discursive practices that place new limitations on conduct to the exclusion of others. Where this is usually one engaged with the moral reasons to do so, the point made in the resistance literature is that there are many different conceptions of what we consider to be normal and that it is an act of violence to limit practice to one perspective. *Parrhesia* was considered the essential practice to reach decisions in political matters, however, not only was it difficult to distinguish from less sincere forms of speech such as rhetoric but where the citizens who were being addressed would have equal power, speaking an unpopular truth ran the risk to one's life. While politically 'truth-telling' could be difficult to distinguish from sophistry, genuine truth telling might pose too great a risk to the truth teller and prevent all truth telling all together, not through lack of courage but lack of effect.

In this context, we see in Plato and Socrates the need to create an authentic practice for 'truth-telling' so that it could be recognised as such, the design of the polis would have to be one which would enable truth telling and its distinction from other types of speech. Perhaps similarly with Agamben, Plato would analogously abandon the 'subject' through his subsequent criticism of democratic institutions and seek to show that the ideal polis would have to be headed by a dictator. This dictator would have to be taught the lessons to recognise the "truth," he would be able to govern according to those who were able to speak it. Socrates response was to suggest that the political arena is too dangerous for truth telling and so if one wishes to make an impact it would have to be thus divorced from it. Socrates mission would thus not be one of a political career but in entering into personal dialogues with the members of the city to encourage a life in accordance with 'truth.'

Conclusion

The problem with the debate in its current conception is that through Baudrillard we can see that there are difficulties with both approaches to resisting sovereign exceptionalism. This is because where working within the boundaries is considered to be necessary; it is the breakdown of identity that becomes assimilated into the sovereign order to the extent that resistance does not resist anything at all. On the other hand, where the debate seeks to refuse the subject altogether, it can be inferred from Baudrillard that, with Foucault, we lose all capacity to resist at all and simply become passive observers to events that completely subjugate how life is lived.

This, it has been suggested, resembles the ancient problematic surrounding 'truth' telling. Where the capacity of the individual to act as a *Parrhesia*st was recognised to be essential to the health of the polis it was a practice that also gave rise to the potential of further degeneration of governance according to false principles, not in the interest of all. Through recognising the resemblance between the contemporary problematic of resistance and ancient problematic of 'truth' telling the next chapter will seek to outline the 'Greek Solution' and see in what ways it can inform the debate that has been presented in this chapter.

Chapter 2

The Greek Solution

Introduction

This chapter will give an interpretive account of the Greek solution to the problem of governance for a democratic city-state that was able to incorporate truthful speech (*parrhesia*). The aim will be to show that, through two stories surrounding Socrates, *The Alcibiades*, and *The Laches*, it was understood by the ancient Greeks that the 'self' was not fixed by its metaphysical status. Rather, the metaphysical status of the 'self' was something to be strived for through ones' constitution. The striving and self-constitution played a role in bringing oneself into an ethical relationship with the self by seeking to take care of their 'true selves' and imagine the best practices for doing this.

The practice of taking care of the self, as prescripted from Socrates will be argued to be an aesthetic account of how one behaves. This is for two reasons, in the first instance, the ancient Greeks did not the physical realm to be 'real,' according to Plato, the 'real' existed in the world of the Forms of which the physical realm was just a poor representation. In this sense, any way of life given by the ancient Greeks would not have been considered to be a practice of something essential, but an aesthetic representation of 'reality.' The second reason for analysing Socrates account of conduct as aesthetic is

because of the status of 'truth.' This essay does not seek to give an account of truth, but in a Foucauldian fashion, simply engage in observing the effects of 'truth' claims. Thus, the disposition of this approach is to look at how ones' 'aesthetic' behaviour was considered to be in relation to epistemic and metaphysical conceptions of the self.

Parrhesia as Socratic modality

Socrates[9] was recognised in ancient Greece as a *Parrhesia*st who challenged the sensibilities of his time through his refusal to engage in the political arena which influenced life through the power bestowed to a politician. The myth surrounding Socrates claims that he was influenced by a demonic voice that warned him he should not enter politics because he would not live very long. Socrates followed the command of the voice, but later in his trial for the corruption of the youth, he claimed that this was not due to fear or lack of courage on his part, rather, a recognition that he could not be helpful to the city if he were dead. For Socrates, the significance of being truthful was not just to take care of the city, but also to take care of one's self. Socrates approach, it will be argued, shows much resemblance to the resistance literature regarding the status of the autonomous potential of the subject. For, in focusing on the care of the self as one's ethical duty, Socrates offered an interesting account of how to understand

[9] Our accounts from Socrates come from the works of Plato where Socrates would be referred to in dialogue form. This is because Socrates, apparently, only ever engaged in conversation to 'do' philosophy. To this extent, it can often be difficult to distinguish between Plato and Socrates, if indeed there is a difference. This thesis does not attempt to distinguish with historical accuracy what is Socrates philosophy, rather, to follow the information surrounding him as a way of gauging what would have been considered an ancient understanding and practice of philosophy, through the figure of Socrates or not.

the metaphysical limitations of 'truth'[10] as one that serves the community[11] rather than being detrimental to it. It is one that suggests that a focus on the 'subject' if conducted correctly, could challenge the political order of its day towards more ethical practices of life where ethics derives from a knowledge of the 'self' (soul) to conduct behaviour in accordance with the 'truth.'

For the ancient Greeks, *parrhesia* was a means of self-constitution in relation to the 'truth' to benefit the self and others. The ancient understanding of the 'self' was metaphysically conceived in a dualist sense of the real, eternal, non-physical soul, distinct from its physical embodiment. To constitute one's physical self, the ancients would express the 'truth' through a practice of ontological discovery of their 'eternal self.' *Parrhesia* was a term we might suggest offered an ostensive means for a conceptual understanding of such a process. 'Truth' for the ancients would impose a disparity between what one might consider the satisfaction of physical desire and the ethical duty to act rationally as dictated by knowledge of the soul. In this sense, *parrhesia* was an essential concept[12] for the Greeks to understand how to live ethically in the world.

[10]The metaphysical limitations of truth refer to the dualist account of reality, most associated with Plato's account of the Forms where reality is not the physical world that we live in, but rather a pure immaterial world where perfect Forms are imperfectly represented in the physical world. Our knowledge of the forms derives from the notion of the 'self' as both spirit and body; the spirit is our 'rational self' that deals with 'truth' and knowledge of the Forms and our 'physical self' is that which has animal desires situated in the physical world.

[11]Socrates had supposedly been informed that the oracle Delphi claimed Socrates to be the wisest man in Athens, as a means of understanding how this could be so, for he did not consider himself to be wise, he challenged those in the community to prove their wisdom and to teach Socrates what he did not know. This was considered to be good for the community because it forced them to reflect on 'truth' and so not follow false 'truth's' and delusions of wisdom.

[12] This is where, politically, a practice where these concepts would be engaged in between individuals and communities rather than a process of introspection.

A revision of this ancient understanding of the ethical self may offer a basis to reassess the current conclusions of the subjective capacity in the resistance debate. It has been argued that an onto-political critique contains prescriptive consequences[13] to challenge current political practices and order. For, the pursuit of normative codes that seek to impose limitations only have the adverse effects of promoting the sovereign exceptionalism it is hoped to resist. Being critical as opposed to normative, it is claimed that we can promote a state of freedom that does offer genuine resistance. For this reason, the resistance literature that looks at the subject with the capacity to resist has been focused on by Jenny Edkins in *Sovereign Lives* (2004). Where, in the debate, the subject is not considered pejorative, the aim of resistance is not to determine the structures and instances in which politics should be engaged in, Edkins claims that critique reinserts power into politics[14] through the refusal of prescripted identity. To this extent, resistance is to empower those who have found themselves powerless.

The subsequent approach of this side of the debate, it will be argued, resembles the Socratic modality of ethical life. To this extent, it will be possible to conjecture some revisions to the contemporary debate of resisting sovereign exceptionalism. This is because, Socrates, to constitute his life in relation to 'truth,' created a distinction between the ethically good 'truthful life' where one takes care of the soul and the 'bad life' that only follows apparent truths that are not beneficial for one's eternal self. Through a contemporary analysis, that does not make claims of validity; the debate will be compared, in a political sense, to Socrates' aesthetic representation of what it meant to live a 'truthful life' and how such a representation challenged the political order of the time.

[13]This refers to William Connolly's' onto-political critique as one that challenges power structures without giving a normative alternative, however, it does allow for the capacity of new structures as a result of revealing the contingency of a given. To this extent, whilst not given, it resembles as a practice the aim of prescriptive politics.

[14]This is a claim where Jenny Edkins believes that sovereignty depoliticises power through its attempts to present 'government' as a natural political order.

Alcibiades

We can see that this was, inferentially, political for Socrates through his concern to seek out the future King Alcibiades to warn him that to be great he must take care of his soul, for the soul is his 'true self.' In doing so, he stakes the ethical importance of our metaphysical understanding of life through setting apart a "reality ontologically distinct from the body… explicitly designated as the soul (*psuke*)" (Foucault 2011: 159). In agreeing with the principle that one must take care of the self, one must address the question of what is meant by 'oneself.' In instructing Alcibiades to tend to himself, his *psuke*, Socrates establishes the ontological difference between body and reality as "correlative with a mode of knowledge of self which had the form of the souls' contemplation of itself and its recognition of its mode of being" (Foucault 2011: 159). By "contemplating the divine reality, we can grasp what is divine in our own soul" (Foucault 2011: 159) and thus the practice of what it means to take care of the soul is one that possesses an ethical duty of reflection.

Socrates sought to influence Alcibiades at a critical point in his life when he "is not satisfied with his traditional status, with the privileges of his birth and heritage" (Foucault 1988 online in Foucault.info). As a youth, Alcibiades had many admirers because of his beauty, but with age, he had lost much of this accolade at a time when he sought to dominate politically. Socrates, it is claimed, intercedes not to help Alcibiades in his quest to dominate others but to dominate Alcibiades with his love. Such an understanding of his love was "not in a physical but in a spiritual sense" (Foucault 1988 online in Foucault.info) where it is understood that Socrates "intersection of political ambition and philosophical love is 'taking care of oneself" (Foucault 1988 online in Foucault.info). Alcibiades ambitions, Socrates claimed, were not concerned with the love of himself. His desire to rule and to have power over others showed that he had not concerned himself with wisdom, with "the rule of law, justice or concord" (Foucault 1988 online in Foucault.info). For this reason, Socrates felt it necessary to impose his love on Alcibiades so that he might come to constitute himself by eternal 'truths' and thus become a just and great King. In showing him that he had not reflected on virtue, Socrates pointed towards the Persian and Spartan Kings and their educations. Their "princes have teachers in Wisdom, Justice,

Temperance, and Courage. By comparison, “Alcibiades' education is like that of an old, ignorant slave” (Foucault 1988 online in Foucault.info); but through Socrates love, he might live a life where it is still possible for “him to gain the upper hand - to acquire techne” (Foucault 1988 online in Foucault.info) (a technique) for great leadership.

Through this story, we can see the relationship between the virtues of the individual and the subsequent governance that would follow, for Socrates, what was the most important element for justice; knowledge of the self. The dialogue with Alcibiades continues with an analysis of “*epimelesthai,* ‘taking pains with oneself’” (Foucault 1988 online in Foucault.info), the fundamental question being, what is the self and what does it mean to take care of it? The self, according to this dialogue: “is a reflective pronoun, and it has two meanings. Auto means "the same," but it also conveys the notion of identity. The latter meaning shifts the question from "What is this self?" to "What is the plateau on which I shall find my identity?" (Foucault 1988 online in Foucault.info)

Alcibiades until now had been trying taking care of his self in terms of the body, this for Socrates was not the correct ‘plateau’ to understand his subjective character. The focus given to his beauty prevented him from realising that his ‘true self’ was not something that he needed material wealth in order to take care of his body. What he had to learn was that his true self “is to be found in the principle which uses tools, a principle not of the body but of the soul” (Foucault 1988 online in Foucault.info), where the “care of the self is the care of the activity and not the care of the soul-as-substance” (Foucault 1988 online in Foucault.info). Thus, following this lesson, he had to additionally learn what this activity of care is to consist of, the activity is one which sought the divine, for the “soul cannot know itself except by looking at itself in a similar element, a mirror” (Foucault 1988 online in Foucault.info). To this extent, through divine contemplation, he will discover the “rules on which just political action can be founded” (Foucault 1988 online in Foucault.info) and acquire the techne necessary for him in his political life.

This understanding of the subjective character is not too dissimilar from how it is presented in the resistance literature where man has supposedly fallen into paradox through its false constitution of 'Man,' as the 'mirror' that reflects universal 'truths.' The focus on the self through Socrates' teaching Alcibiades is one that suggests, most significantly, the possibility of a techne for the ethical constitution of the self. The possibility of a technique of ethical practice is one that suggests for Socrates, and perhaps Foucault's attention to it, that there is an element of the 'self' in its ethical constitution to the 'truth' which is not purely determined by metaphysical accounts of 'truth'. Instead, it might be suggested, necessarily requires the 'autonomous subject' to recognise this 'truth' and develop ways in which to live a life that is true to it. This is perhaps significant for the current resistance debate, for it suggests that there are not just codes of conduct that are an essential part of the subject that cannot be changed, but rather they are aesthetically practiced based on one's conception of 'truth.'

A conclusion that might be drawn from this is that the subject is not the very basis of sovereign exceptionalism, in its fundamental being as *homo sacer*. It is possible, in its resemblance to Socrates mission, that *homo sacer* is perhaps one kind of aesthetic practice (technique). Much like Alcibiades living a life only focused on his physical self; living by an idea of 'self,' acquired through an epistemology particular to sovereignty, represents as much an aesthetic means of practice as opposed to a metaphysical representation of 'truth.' To this extent, it suggests that 'truth' is something that determines aesthetic practice and that the metaphysical status of 'truth' is based more on belief than essence. This claim is given as a contestable notion of what is referred to when we use the term 'truth'. The argument surrounding such a claim draws upon the conclusions of dualists such as Immanuel Kant, linguists such as Ludwig Wittgenstein, post-structuralist such as Michel Foucault, and critical theorists such as Slavoj Zizek. Whilst their arguments are very different and perhaps do not warrant being held in the same category, I take from their conclusions, surrounding what we mean by 'truth', that 'truth' is either fundamentally beyond human experience or that it makes no sense to refer to 'truth' outside of the historical, sociological, or ideological contexts in which 'truth' is referred to. Subsequently, this thesis, in a Foucauldian sense, what is significant politically when people make 'truthful' or

metaphysical statements. If 'truth' is beyond our experience and represent sovereign exceptionalism, therefore, it is possible to formulate resistance as postulated by Edkins[15]. This suggests that, the usefulness of parrhessia to resisting sovereign exceptionalism promotes a Foucauldian understanding of power as the basis of resistance. This is because power is required by 'the subject' to engage in practices that resist the politics of sovereign exceptionalism.

Laches

A problem that remains unaccounted for, however, is that to live 'truthfully' is to accept the normative value prescripted by a certain metaphysics of 'the self.' Such prescriptivism is argued to be the binary basis that determines the very sovereign exceptionalism being resisted and places its roots, once again, directly in the 'subject.' Foucault offers further attention to a dialogue that takes place between Socrates, Nicias, and Laches in response to a question of how to teach the young in the community what it means to be courageous. Nicias and Laches, who are two proven courageous men eventually recognise that they cannot agree upon what it means to be courageous and therefore despite their credentials concede that they are not good teachers. Socrates, because of his reputation is therefore invited into this discussion where he enters with a "*parrhesia*stic pact par excellence" (Foucault 2011: 142), by insisting that Nicias and Laches must allow him to "speak freely, without consideration for my age" (Foucault 2011:142). This is a pact *par excellence* because of his command for a frank discussion irrespective of social standing, in this case, age, and that whatever he says must be respected only regarding what is said not in terms of who he is.

Socrates thus, through *parrhesia,* enters a situation where only 'truth' is given any consideration. Socrates begins by arguing that despite their failure to give an adequate account of courage they "must still be able to give an account of our philosophies of verification, I suggest that

[15] This is the difference between following a Foucauldian and Agambenian account of power in its capacity to resist.

what can be focused on is the aesthetic way (or practices) of these 'truth' claims as a means of contesting the 'truth' claims that are associated with sovereign power competence" (Foucault 2011: 144), meaning, to what extent do they use their reason. He establishes first "how do things stand with you and logos," to answer a question is first to present a question "of the way in which one lives" (Foucault 2011: 144). Here Socrates represents the ability to think 'rationality' as one that is constituted through a practice of life, as with Alcibiades, he suggests that truth and how one conducts one's self begins in one's aesthetic constitution with life.

Their authority to speak on such matters is ultimately the point of the *parrhesia*, for it is he, a younger man with less social standing who is to question their authority in order to remind them that it is their reason with which they should use as an authority to answer such questions. However, no sooner does Socrates agree to teach them how to be courageous that he admits that he is "no more able to define courage than were Nicias or Laches" (Foucault 2011: 151). He says, therefore, that he will proceed "regardless of expense and without shame at returning to school" (Foucault 2011: 151) to find himself a teacher. This is in the context of Socrates is ironic and is understood to be by Nicias and Laches, for, Socrates is entirely opposed to those who give wisdom for profit. In knowing Socrates, it is quite clear to everyone observing that "since no one has arrived at a definition of courage, it is of course logos itself, the discourse which will give access to the truth" (Foucault 2011: 151). In problematising democracy, the Greeks showed that constituting the self could not be seen as beneficial to the political community because of the problem of trust worthy speech in which it was possible for pejorative effects to political engagement.

We can see in this example that *parrhesia* is a key principle of action towards taking care of the self. By bringing individuals into a relationship whereby they will listen to reason and learn to refer to their own, he must run the risk of dishonouring their social position and of showing that despite being courageous men, they know nothing of courage. However, in taking this risk he has brought them to the point of reason where they will not themselves run the risk of living according to false truths through

the illusion of their certainty. The benefits of such a principle, as one of ethos as opposed to *phronesis*[16] is in terms of caring for one's true self. According to this difference, one must not be fooled into following false notions of the truth, and so they must, in certain situations, be protected by the *parrhesia*st who is willing to protect them at risk to himself. In the *Laches*, we thus see this commitment to reflection on the divine no longer ends in a conclusion of the ontological difference of true self but "as a way of being and doing… of which one has to give an account throughout one's life" (Foucault 2011: 160); *Parrhesia* and the Greek solution being one of a never-ending quest to reflect on 'truth' and live the ethical life.

Summary

Through *The Alcibiades*, it was possible to suggest that conduct is not an essential part of the subject even where we might consider to be its most fundamental level, rather, the idea of 'truth' as a techne suggest that there is something more analogous with a performance of certain ideas. What remained, however, is the suggestion that a performance does not escape the binary (normative) conceptions indicative of sovereign exceptionalism. Through an analysis of the *Laches*, it is possible to suggest that what was understood by the Greek's was that how one lived was, in a sense, an epistemology derived from an aesthetic constitution. This is contrary to the distrust in power where it is believed that conduct is a direct correlative with the epistemic terms we hold to be 'true.' In the stories of Socrates, we see that this is not necessarily the case. A reversal presented in *Alcibiades* and *Laches* suggests that sovereign exceptionalism might be seen as the result of how the 'subject' is aesthetically constituted as one that informs how the 'subject' understands its inner self thus feeding back how one further approaches the world. What is being hypothesised, therefore, is that sovereign exceptionalism

[16]The difference between one's ethical practice of using one's rationality to determine how to live ones' life and ones' purely introspective rational reflections on 'truth'.

does not derive from how the subject is constituted epistemically, rather, that the subject's knowledge of the self is perhaps an epistemic interpretation of how aesthetically the 'subject' is constituted.

This breaks the link between how life is practiced today as governed by metaphysics and epistemology by suggesting that the subject is the medium between a belief in 'truth' and the capacity to practice that belief aesthetically. This is significant because it would suggest that the 'subject is not synonymous with sovereign exceptionalism in its very ontology but rather it is one that allows for the individual to rationalise a belief into a practice. Socrates in *The Laches* shows that in this example of *parrhesia* that 'truth' could be derived in an ethical sense when knowledge is constituted 'correctly.' In relation to the resistance debate, 'correctly' might be understood as a question of how one has aesthetically constituted themselves about 'truth' when no essential constitution is apparent.

Conclusion

This chapter, as titled 'The Greek Solution', has been referred to as such because it shows that the solution to the problem of degenerative 'truthful' speech was resolved by Socrates through showing that the significance of *parrhesia* to the polis was in its ability to direct 'truth' at the spirit of a person, as opposed to the institutions that govern them. In doing this, what has been suggested is that it is possible to challenge the claims in the resistance debate that sovereign exceptionalism and the rise of the subject as a biopolitical being are synonymous. To this extent, it challenges the claim that it is the 'subject' itself that must be re-imagined to resist sovereign exceptionalism. The claims that have been made are that, in the *Alcibiades,* the 'subject' has a certain level of autonomy to change one's conduct through reimagining the 'self' metaphysically and epistemically thinking of ways to according practice these beliefs aesthetically. The Laches has been focused upon to show that, for Socrates, *parrhesia* was an essential practice in order to challenge people's beliefs and to re-imagine what truth is and what it means to act truthfully.

The following chapter will attempt to draw out of this narrative possible resemblances to the current problematic of the subject to suggest an approach that enables the possibility of resistance without falling into the assimilation dilemma presented by Baudrillard.

Chapter 3

The Impossibility of the 'Truthful' Resistance?

Introduction

While one might accept a certain contingency in relation to metaphysics and the subject; crudely one might ask then, through what understanding of life do these new relational possibilities exist? Where the resistance debate that engages with the power of subjectivity, it is hoped to be reimagined upon a plurality of communities or individuals to challenge the totalising effects of sovereign power. However, as has been claimed, the continued use of the 'subject' is one that continues to create the exclusionary effects of a dichotomy of political identity. To this extent opens the possibility of simply reproducing the same thanatopolitics hypothesized by Agamben. For example, the conclusion was drawn by Jasmina Husanovic, in Sovereign Lives, that once a community engages with the global world, it will find that it is once again subject to the ruling ideology of global politics today. Identification with 'bare life' does not challenge global sovereignty, but rather renders a community subject to its mercy of a "global capitalistic logic over the empowerment of local civil society"

(Husanovic 2004: 229). The limitation is that sovereign politics is given renewed form through this reimagining of a finite self-understanding which a new community is based.

This chapter will, therefore, to outline the significance of the 'subject' as it is argued to give rise to the sovereign exceptionalism that is sought to be resisted. In doing so, what will be staked as an argument, is that the very finitude that is represented as leading to sovereign exceptionalism is also the very basis that enables the possibility for the subject to find an autonomous basis for resistance. Through engaging with this argument, the following question will be addressed; why is it that sovereignty is so prevalent and how has it come to be seen as so interlinked, if not synonymous with the subject?

Finitude and the Paradoxical Subject

In *The Order of Things* Michel Foucault analysis the basis of these anthropological structures as one governed by the concept of 'Man.' 'Man' as a 'mode of being' represents the conjoining of the subject and object in one figure, to this extent opening the possibility of a priori concepts to be investigated in a posteriori terms and thus the basis for all positive knowledge. Such a practice of knowledge develops when "natural history becomes biology, when the analysis of wealth becomes economics, when above all, reflection upon language becomes philology… man appears in his ambiguous position as a subject of knowledge and as a subject that knows" (Foucault 1972: 312).

For Foucault, the concept of man is one which develops from a temporal understanding of the 'subject', the temporality of 'Man' necessarily transcends his empirical reality to open up the possibility of the temporal succession of the empirical world. This, for Foucault, is enabled by a 'temporalisation of the transcendental' (Han in Gutting 2005) as distinct from our ordinary understanding of time as chronology. *The Critique* which clearly demarcates this understanding of time meant that "an entity should appear as temporal meant that it was transcendentally perceived under the form of time and chronologically synthesized following the laws of the understanding" (Han in Gutting 2005: 180). In

this, we see the creation of a double effect, one by which the subject is a transcendent condition for time and the empirical ego which exists as an object within a chronological frame. What we are led to conclude from the critique is the necessity of certain epistemic structures by which the subject can make the noumenal world intelligible. In doing so, through postulating knowledge as a subjective experience, Kant's' anthropological perspective "reveals transcendental determination as somehow pre-existing itself" (Han in Gutting 2005: 180) and subsequently: "The a priori in the order of knowledge, becomes in the order of concrete existence an originary which is not chronologically first but which, as soon as it appears [..] reveals itself as already there". As a result, transcendental determination cannot function as the clear starting point required by the *Critique*, but only as a perpetually retreating origin: "the subject cannot recapture the moment of its emergence as thinking subject without retrojecting it into the paradoxical past of the originary." (Han in Gutting 2005: 181)

The relationship between sovereign exceptionalism and the modern conception of the subject has been argued to have emerged in the temporal existence of 'Man.' Through the works of Foucault and political analysis of his work from Dillon, 'Man' is proposed as the subjective understanding of the self as 'temporally transcendent.' Through this notion, the biological body can be "weighed, distributed, valued, and found wanting, as well as good" (Dillon 2015: 52). The 'temporality' of 'man' provides us with the boundaries of possible knowledge regarding an anthropological perspective[17], for which, as an apparent construct, "we perceive the finitude and limits they impose" (Foucault 1972: 314). The anthropological perspective and thus the subjective understanding of modernity is one strongly

[17]The anthropological perspective is one that is held in relation to the 'Gods eye view' where we are limited by our very nature as human beings to only see the world in a way particular to ourselves. Whereas, God would be able to see the world as it really is because there are no limitations determined by his nature. It is Kant who claims there to be a single reality which is interpreted in two ways; from an anthropological perspective and a theistic one, of which he suggests "that the way we experience objects, and the kind of knowledge we have of them, depends on the nature of human experience" (Matthews in Walker 1982: 137).

associated with Kant. In summary, it was Kant's thesis that the transcendence of man is at the level of our epistemic structures[18] without which we would not be able to comprehend the world at all. Therefore, these epistemic structures fundamentally determine how we are to perceive and understand the world as human beings.

The resistance problematic is one that analysis 'truthfulness'[19] as an ontological problem. The paradox of *finitude* is based on a distinction of 'truth' as it appears to the anthropological subject and 'truth'[20] that is beyond our faculties of knowledge. It is through Kant's philosophy that the modern

[18] Our epistemic structures are like a pair of glasses that when put on make the world intelligible to us as anthropological beings rather than the world in itself. These structures are composed of our conceptual means of understanding the world through the concepts of time and space (and others, see Kants' *Critique*).

[19]This is in relation to what is referred to when one is being 'truthful'; that the metaphysical account of whether or not it is 'true' is beyond our capacity to know.

[20]This distinction is one which this thesis argues to be is equally indebted to Immanuel Kant's Critique of Pure Reason in as much as what is taken as the linguistic limits of our concepts are one that is equally dependent on language as acting as the particularly anthropological phenomenon of what can intelligibly be said. Thus, if one takes the critical approach and recognize that the world is only appearance in which time and space are necessary intuitions but do not constitute boundaries to the beyond our senses; we subsequently conclude that the world is neither finite nor infinite. This is a hypothesis based on our anthropological perspective. This is argued by Kant's analogy that "If it be said that all bodies have either a good smell or a bad smell that is not good, a third case is possible, namely, that a body has no smell at all; and both conflicting propositions may therefore be false" (Critique: B531/A503). Kant's critique asserts the possibility of truth as being transcendental to our conceptual means of knowing to the extent that we can only assert that our knowledge of what is fundamentally the case is interpreted through our particular epistemic structures as anthropological beings. In asserting that objects are representations of the mind, he is claiming that reality is only made intelligible by the structures with which we experience it.

understanding of the subject is contested, in its unique essentialism[21] through an identification of a paradox. This paradox, Foucault claims, derives from the anthropological perspective where man is "equally present in the element of empirical things" (Han in Gutting 2005: 179) as much as he is in his subjectivity. To this extent, he exists, in "so much as he lives, works, or talks" (Han in Gutting 2005: 179), within the same empirical reality that he has opened the possibility of as a transcendental subject. In this sense, the subject and the understanding of the self is, paradoxically, both transcendentally outside and within his very being in the world. According to Foucault, what is subsequently created through this paradox is a "structure specific to modernity… defined from the beginning by this doubling of the transcendental subject as an object of empirical knowledge" (Han in Gutting 2005: 179).

As a result of this paradox, one cannot find in man the limitations of his physical being because of his transcendental character; "[h]eralded in positivity, man's finitude is outlined in the paradoxical form of the endless; rather than the rigour of limitation" (Foucault 1972: 342). Where this presents a problem to the resistance literature is in the very possibility of an autonomous subject that can engage politically in ways that are not governed by sovereign exceptionalism. For, in his being, he is governed by a power which promises the limitations of his finitude (or actual resence in the world) and yet exists in a permanent state of "imminence which will perhaps be forever snatched from him" (Foucault 1972: 335). The paradox of 'man's' finitude has the subjective effect of thinking in terms of one's capacity to discover one's empirical reality through the "power to revolve the reciprocal relation of the origin of thought" (Foucault 1972: 332). This is apparently the case because our subjective understanding is one where: "what was, from the point of view of the *Critique*, the a priori of knowledge, is not immediately transposed by anthropological reflection into an a priori of existence, but appears in the density of a becoming where a sudden emergence infallibly in retrospection takes on the sense of the already there [and thus of an originary]" (Foucault in Gutting 2005: 180).

[21] 'Unique essentialism' in terms of the structures specific to an anthropological being.

However, such origins are never reached. Instead, they are "forever promised in an imminence of always nearer and yet never accomplished" (Foucault 1972: 332). This is because the doubling effect creates an unstable structure in which it is "possible to suppose that it also promises that very infinity it refuses, according to the system of actuality" (Foucault 1972: 314). This is because 'Man's' conception of time is not contemporaneous with himself and so "things are presented to him with a time which is proper to them" (Foucault 1972: 335). It is in this that man learns that he is not "contemporaneous with that which makes him be" (Foucault 1972: 334), because, unlike his physical appearance, his 'transcendent self' appears potentially infinite.

This supports the view that the subject cannot be used to hypothesise resistance because the distinction between transcendental and empirical is obscured in its paradoxical containment in the subject. According to Foucault, in Kant's *Anthropology*, where he introduces the originary: "the idea of a passage from the "a priori of knowledge" to an "a priori of experience" fuses the two elements carefully distinguished by the *Critique*: the conditions of possibility of experience (the transcendental organization of subjectivity) are referred back to the empirical existence of the subject, which in return invalidates the very possibility of a pure transcendental determination" (Han in Gutting 2005: 180).

In short, we do not have the capacity to shape the world according to our conception, because of our own a priori belief as empirically finite, means that we are being governed by preconceived limitations that never reach an end. This is the ontological origins of sovereign exceptionalism as deriving from the subject, where the 'subject' cannot determine the limitations of his own being the state of exception will always derive from the incomplete boundary of how the 'subject' is conceived. It also presents a problem too for the autonomy of the subject to act in a way that could resist such 'sovereign exceptionalism' if every action that it takes is determined by its very being as 'Man.' It suggests, as Agamben believes, that the 'subject' is not otherwise free but simply open to a degeneration of more and more violence, politically governed by contemporary sovereign exceptionalism.

Subsequently, Dillon claims that the subject is not a naturalistic given[22] but brought into being through sovereign exceptionalism and subsequently 'secured' against the epistemic notion of this practice as originary to create juridical order. It is, according to Dillon, an essential practice in power relations between individuals because, where there is no essential feature of the biological subject, its identity is one which necessarily must always be secured. 'The subject' is considered a political construct to the extent that it cannot be understood outside of the framework of the contingent cultural networks in which it exists. For 'the subject' to be anything, it is a practice of government that is essential to eradicate contingencies and make the subject into an objective and calculable being. However, because this condition is always the result of a political imaginary, the individual is one always subject to a host of security practices. These security practices are one's that always lead to violence, either through disciplining those who do not render themselves calculable or ultimately in eradicating them altogether. Through this analysis, what is exposed is not just our political limitations but on the nature of those limitations to open the possibility to resist.

According to Dillon, the failure to reach decisive action is "inevitable, not because he lacks this or that capacity, this or that information, but because… [a decision]… is fatally flawed by the very temporality that gives rise to it" (Dillon 2015: 9). It is the paradox of the finite subject that one can choose in an infinite number of ways and to this extent are given the "impossible task of exercising infinite government over the infinity of finite things" (Dillon 2015: 9). The point of contestation is not to return to actual experience but to go back to the starting point, and ask: "Does man actually exist?" (Foucault 1972: 322). Otherwise we are trapped within thought, where all knowledge, be it progressive, political, or economic, must always be, as determined by the transcendental doublet, "a modification of

[22] Where our knowledge of the 'truth' in the world is discovered through knowledge of the essential nature of the subject with respects to what is possible to know, Dillon's claim is that this theoretical standpoint comes with its own unique history suggesting this theoretical approach is not investigating 'truth' but a discursive position of how to govern.

what it knows, reflection and a transformation of the mode of being of that on which it reflects" (Foucault1972: 327). For what is developed is a perpetual reaffirmation of a limitation which in this move never secures the object but forces it to secure itself perpetually. One thing is thus guaranteed by 'the subject', that there is only government, not in an institutional sense, but in the sense that everything is limited without the possibility of definitive action (Dillon 2015) for which it is possible to base resistance.

Thus, it is through the epistemic ontology of the subject as a knowing being that he is held in a perpetually insecure state as one which is infinitely finite. This, therefore, is one which determines his relationship with the objective world in the sense that it is comprehended in the same finite terms and yet governs his knowledge of it as one which can always be reopened. The ontology of the subject determines that geopolitical action can never be one which can be considered to secure the object because as an object of anthropological subjectivity it remains infinitely open. To this extent, the subject also remains infinitely open and governable according to the political attempts to secure the object.

Paradox of Origins

What might be observed in the 'Greek Solution,' is that there was also a 'paradox of origins' through the Socratic account of *parrhesia*, for, in *Alcibiades*, one is supposed to live an ethical life and constitute themselves through knowledge of their 'true selves.' Then, paradoxically, in *the Laches*, one is supposed to learn and gain access to their 'true selves' through aesthetically situating themselves in such a way to make it possible. It is possible to make a comparison with the paradoxical origins of the contemporary subject which acts as the supposed limitation of the subject to resist sovereign exceptionalism. Foucault's interpretation of 'truth' telling suggests that, to Socrates, such paradoxical origins of thought supposedly did offer a means of healing the problems of their time. What is ordinarily aimed as the onto-political criticism of the modern subject is that it is through man's temporal transcendence that he is able to impose a particular order that can be "weighed, distributed, valued and

found wanting, as well as good" (Dillon 2015: 52). Accordingly, it is this that has supposedly provided the sovereign boundaries whereby "we perceive the finitude and limits they impose" (Foucault 1972: 314) and govern this boundary through a violence against the subsequent 'exception.' This is a political interpretation of modernity where the resistance literature has struggled to find an alternative to the 'subject' because it is considered synonymous with the origins of sovereign exceptionalism. The problem is that the modern subject is based on the transcendence of 'man' at a structural level, without which, the world would apparently not be intelligible at all. Through an analysis of the Greek problematic of truthfulness, however, it is possible to draw upon their problematic to suggest that the essential link between sovereign exceptionalism and subjectivity is not an essential one.

The current problematic focused on by onto-political critique (the problem of autonomy and capacity to resist), takes place at the level of subjective appearance; "modernity begins when the human being begins to exist within his organism, inside the shell of his head, inside the armature of his limbs, and in the whole structure of his physiology" (Foucault 1972: 318). To this extent those governing features of life, language and labour have the effect of an immovable a priori which governs the limitations of what is possible. For Kant, the intelligibility of the world that is perceived by 'the subject,' is not created by 'the subject'; they are "things in themselves"[23] (Kant *Critique*) made intelligible by an 'anthropological perspective' through the application of 'human concepts.' Foucault refers to this as a discursive parameter of intelligibility[24], for something to be intelligible and enter the discursive field of knowledge it must have as a primary reference to its positive intelligibility of 'Man.' The power of

[23]'Things in themselves' are 'things' that are independent of their perceived reality. According to Kant, we can only know how things are in relation to how they are perceived and so it is not possible to make any assertion regarding the nature of these 'things', other than, that they provide the content for our own perceptual reality.

[24]This is an interpretive statement, regarding the similarities between Foucault's views in intelligibility and Kant's views on the limitations of knowledge. They do not express and claim the same thing, however, through their own hypothesis' they present different ways of critiquing how we are to understand the knowable in relation to the unknown.

discourse is that which "enacts a certain understanding of 'the real'" (Dillon 2015: 52) and in doing so has a prescriptive element as one which determines good and bad, right and wrong. In addition to setting a scale of objective values, its process of intelligibility creates "games of truth'; not the discovery of true things, but of rules according to "what a subject can say about specific things becomes assessable as true or false" (Dillon 2015: 52). It is the temporal order where one can evaluate, calculate, and give "any determination the possibility of appearing in its positive truth" (Foucault 1972: 336). It does not act as a representation of 'truth' nor does it determine the possibility of 'truth,' rather what can be intelligibly said about it. What is politically disturbing about to the resistance literature, is that, on the one hand, the character of the world can only be represented to the subject, making 'his' representation the basis of all representation. Thus, paradoxically, 'Man's' capabilities also encompass the limits of capability and so becomes trapped in the very representation that he has imposed.

Such a paradox suggests that the subject is trapped in its own understanding of the world and thus to this extent cannot autonomously resist the very essence that makes the world possible for the subject to live. The perhaps radical, but logical, conclusion that the subject itself must be resisted to resist sovereign exceptionalism is a strong one. However, what is not addressed in the resistance literature is Baudrillard's' question, what is lost with the subject? Baudrillard's' work suggests that it is not just the violence of sovereign exceptionalism as one might infer from the resistance literature but rather a hyper situation of sovereign exceptionalism without the subjective capacity to resist. What is being lost in the subject is the power to resist through the basis of the 'subjects' autonomy. Slavoj Zizek (2007), in *Spinoza, Kant, Hegel and... Badiou!* suggests that the originary is one by which all discursive practices are dependent. For example, though we cannot know the origins of our concepts of democracy or justice, we must necessarily assume them to be the case to bring about a democratic or just state of affairs. It is not that democracy or justice suggest an essential way of being, but rather, to describe such concepts without 'reality' of a subject is one that:

> "would deprive us of the very "spontaneity" which forms the kernel of transcendental freedom: it would turn us into lifeless automata, or, to put it in today's terms, into "thinking machines." -

> The basic gesture of Kant's transcendental turn is thus to invert the obstacle into a positive condition. In the standard Leibnizean ontology, we, finite subjects, can act freely IN SPITE OF our finitude, since freedom is the spark which unites us with the infinite God; in Kant, this finitude, our separation from the Absolute, is the POSITIVE condition of our freedom. In short, the condition of impossibility is the condition of possibility" (Zizek 2007 online in Lacan.com)

In Zizek's' analysis of finitude we see support for Baudrillard's' claims that, without the subject, we would have no possibility control how we wish the world to be. Instead, we become entirely subjected to it. Thus, in Kant's 'transcendental turn' we see a strong relation with the Greek solution to 'truth' telling in the polis, to turn inwards on oneself is not a paradox that leads to the problem, but rather, that the problem of origins enables the freedom to act differently. In thinking of finality as a positive condition in which the "Kantian project in some sense defines the very conditions of possibility for present-day critical thought" (Bernauer & Mahon 1994: 184). It was through Kant that we gained an "idea of one's knowledge and its limits, [so] that the principle of autonomy can be discovered" (Foucault 2007: 49) and consequently found 'reason' on the principle of autonomy itself.

As with the Greek solution, the paradox of origins suggests the possibility of a reflexive practice of self-determination. It could be suggested that resisting sovereign exceptionalism, therefore, does not require that the 'subject' is challenged, but rather, to focus on "the specific techniques people devise in relation to their history [origins] to make themselves free" [inserted quotation] (Rajchman 1991: 110). Thus "freedom is not the absence of historical determination or fatality, and historical fatality not the absence of freedom" (Rajchman 1991: 110). The autonomy of an individual to decipher themselves from 'truth' does not depend on the notion of judgments without criteria, for "our freedom would not lie in our essence but our historically contingent singularity" (Rajchman: 109). The autonomy of the subject to determine and challenge their historical reality, as seen in the 'Greek Solution' has an antagonising effect of challenging the degenerative discursive domain, and to this extent reverse the violence of sovereign exceptionalism. Therefore, it can be seen that the very finitude which allows the

sovereign to govern infinitely over finite subjects to secure its power also enables the possibility of autonomous self-determination to challenge this very form of governing.

The Katechon and Aesthetic Governance

We have seen through the works of Dillon that the political problematic of sovereign exceptionalism derives from the subject due to inherent an insecurity deriving from the infinite reimaging of its origins. In contrast, this thesis has sought to suggest an antithesis to the 'insecurity' of the subject through showing the 'finitude' of the subject as a condition of 'insecurity' is that which enables a positive condition to be other than what one is. While the latter conclusion may be a possibility, what remains unanswered, with respect to disassociating the subject from sovereign exceptionalism, is exactly this: why do we associate the subject with sovereign exceptionalism, if they are not synonymous at an ontological level? The relevance of this question to the resistance literature is to show why the subject is necessary to map a path to resisting sovereign exceptionalism. To this extent what will follow is a possible interpretation of sovereignty in relation to aesthetic practice, what will be suggested is that subjective indeterminacy, is one has been governed by a 'sovereign aestheticism' as opposed to the metaphysics of 'sovereign exceptionalism.' Consequently, what will follow will suggest that there is an aesthetic factor to 'sovereign' exceptionalism that presents new possibilities regarding how to effectively resist.

In Dillon's *Biopolitics of Security*, he makes a claim regarding the 'spectacle' of sovereignty, as one historically deriving from the 'Baroque' period. The Baroque. he claims, was not just an artistic movement but one that determined the political character of its day as well, the effect of the theatre of politics is one, in the Baroque, came to direct its teleological function towards securing life as a sovereign practice even where the sovereign was not present. The Baroque was a period in which everything was 'folded back into itself' the inside and outside were aesthetically represented as one and similarly the performance of government was to represent the heterogeneous contingencies of life as all

originating in the political life of the sovereign. The resistance to sovereign decisionism, as a "point applied to the very constitution of modern individual self-hood" (Dillon 2015: 3), has only recently descended upon the formation as a historical figure of 'the Baroque.' The Baroque is a political form of modernity where inside and outside are brought together in a spectacle, claimed by Dillon to be a "field of emergence, formation and problematization" responding to the "withdrawal of the Christian God" as that Archimedean basis of life and politics. There is a somewhat underlying assumption that the death of God emerged the figure of 'Man' to give concrete form to political life. The 'death of God' as a point of emergence is one that informs resistance to the 'subject', as one that indicates finality as the potential for a new order; this belief is ultimately the driving force for contesting the 'subject.' This claim follows Agamben's hypothesis that the function of biopolitical governance has been as much about making the subject sovereign, so that his own actions and decision making is in accordance with this type of thanatopolitical power.

This abstract logic is what Dillon identifies as the 'political role security' in securing 'life' to the 'theatre of sovereignty.' He argues that the sovereign can never control the political reality he faces and so to gain governance and retain his place as a sovereign it is necessary to create the perception of what he cannot possess. The instances in which the sovereign could thus intervene and declare its authority would thus become, in theory, limitless. This can be seen through Foucault's example in Discipline and Punishment (1978) when he turns to a prison timetable for young prisoners in Paris. It details the prisoner's existence from rising "six in the morning in winter and five in the morning in summer" (Foucault1978: 6) until "half past seven in summer and half past eight in winter when they must be back in their cells" (Foucault 1978: 6). In between, they have a highly-regimented day of schooling, workshops, and meal times. This illustration of Foucault's shows that 'sovereignty'[25] could

[25] 'Sovereignty' as a judicial order of conduct derived from a process of exceptional forms of governance.

thus be imposed upon the subject through engaging the subject in a performance that would secure through eradicating contingent behaviour by making the subject engage in 'correct practice.'

The narrative of Foucault's, surrounding this 'spectacle' suggests that the status of life is now intimately tied to its neoliberal conception. Foucault shows the rise of liberalism as a form of governmentality, one which sought to make life live, to function and be effective as possible. By encouraging the individual to act in a 'sovereign' manner of conducting his life in accordance with policies rising from the eighteenth century, according to Foucault, a new focus on the life of the subject was made with the possibility of making the individual healthier, stronger, and more productive. To do so, it became necessary to construe "'reality' as calculable, problematizing it as amenable and accessible to technologies of knowing" (Dillon 1995: 325). Among these problematizations were the risks to the individual's productivity such as health, disease, lifestyle, housing, environment, governance. The mechanisms of identifying the state of health and wellbeing of the subject are one's that gave rise to empirical and scientific approaches to how society lived. This, Foucault suggests, derives from an important issue at the time of 'European Equilibrium,' a balance of power in which each state sought hegemony through the strength of its nation's economic capabilities. To achieve these ends:

> "The effective preservation of European equilibrium require[d] that each state is in a position, first, to know its own forces, and second, to know and evaluate the forces of the others, thus permitting a comparison that makes it possible to uphold and maintain the equilibrium. Thus, a principle was needed for deciphering the states constitutive force." (Foucault 2007: 315).

The new 'relations of force' determined by this equilibrium gave rise to a new art of government[26] in order to render the resolution of these new problematizations possible. This equilibrium placed certain

[26] Where, according to Foucault, there was a change from the use of a Hobbesian type of sovereign power to a market driven productive power.

necessities of conduct onto the state, which in turn required the development of new arts of government that gave rise to the professional army, the diplomat, and the police.

Why this period, as described by Foucault, is of interest to the resistance literature is because it is a historical rupture where one can identify the roots how contemporary 'contingent' and 'ideological' conceptions of the 'subject' came to be seen as empirical referents for government. From a theoretical perspective, the use of the term government is not one that is used in the institutional sense but rather in the abstract spirit of government as a practice. The sense of its meaning is one defined by Mitchel Dean (2009) as "any attempt to shape with some degree of deliberation aspects of our behaviour according to particular sets of norms and for a variety of ends" (Dean 2009: 10). The institutions that we commonly associate with government are not government themselves but are elements which derive from a certain art of government, that is to say, in Foucauldian terms, governmentality. This governmentality is one dictated by a type power conceived of in relational and productive terms as opposed to hegemonic and repressive, rather, through Foucault's analysis, suggests is beyond a fixed definition. Instead, we can only see the function of power and describe its use through focusing on relational practices of 'truth.' 'Truth' for Foucault is discursive where we derive knowledge from the structuring of concepts and statements that are intelligible together. It is, according to Foucault, "to be understood as a system of ordered procedures for the production, regulation, distribution, circulation and operation of statements" (Foucault in Gordon 1980: 133).

Where the resistance literature differs from this thesis is the observation that the 'subject' and the 'Baroque' both derived during the same period of history where we witness the rise of governmentality. For this reason, there is a theoretical primacy given to 'knowledge' as determining the practice of the 'subject' as opposed to the 'aesthetic' dimensions emphasised in this thesis. It suggests that although there is a recognised aesthetic dimension, 'knowledge' as a 'power practice' remains a hypothesised as resulting in the juridical conception of sovereign power when related to the question of the subjects' capacity to resist. This perhaps shows that a key understanding of the 'relational practices of power,' described by Foucault, is lost when it is applied to the subject. Foucault's

conception of power does not entail the connection of power to oppression and the negative consequences in the juridical conception. Instead, he argues that even in the instances where it might appear as though its consequences might be negative, that one cannot be certain as to the final effect of a particular power relationship. For example, Foucault in a discussion as to this very notion of power refers to the eighteenth-century parent manuals where "a child's sex is spoken of constantly and in every possible context" (Foucault in Gordon 1980: 120). According to the juridical understanding of power, "one might argue that the purpose of these discourses was precisely to prevent children from having a sexuality" (Foucault in Gordon 1980: 120). However, this was not the case; its effect was instead to constitute sex as a fundamental problem in the parental responsibility of bringing up their children, making children fundamentally aware of their sex. Consequently, it had the effect of "sexually exciting the bodies of children while at the same time fixing their parental gaze and vigilance on the peril of infantile sexuality" (Foucault in Gordon 1980: 120). Thus, the publishing of the manuals was quite the opposite of what one might suppose in its subsequent "sexualising of the bodily relationship between parent and child and a sexualising of the familial domain" (Foucault in Gordon 1980: 120).

Foucault, therefore, claimed that causal determinism could not be the case as to the functioning of power because if power were only present at the moments of preventing actions of previously free individuals "do you really think one would be brought to obey it?" (Foucault in Gordon 1980: 118). In its actuality, the tradition of the sovereign is not one which is present in contemporary society but continues as the core understanding of power regarding the "theoretical construction with respect to which political practice is to be assessed" (Rouse in Gutting 2005: 101). Thus, it is perhaps possible to suggest that the thanatopolitical effects, and the observation that the subject is quite often governed efficiently according to 'sovereign exceptionalism,' is because of the aesthetic dimension of political governance recognised by Dillon. Through this example, we can see that "sexuality was far more a positive product of power than power was ever repression of sexuality" (Foucault in Gordon 1980: 120). The analysis I would like to draw between these two points is not that sovereign power is not significant in the governing of society, but that governing the subject is not one that can be reduced solely to the

epistemological questions between ‘truth’ and ‘power.' What Foucault shows here, in Zizek’s words, is that “they know not what they do” (Zizek 2002), and yet life through the medium of knowledge remains fundamental. Instead, what we are really observing, through the politics of security, is the governing of belief between causal processes and the ‘sovereign’ subject as supposed to being ontologically responsible for it.

There is perhaps, therefore, more that can be taken by the reassessing Foucault’s hypothesis of relational power as one that produces a positive basis for resistance, than Agamben’s hypothesis of sovereign power as one that entails a practice of resisting the ‘subject.' However, that is not to suggest that the thanatopolitical critique should become redundant with regards to the construction of the ‘sovereign.' Rather, it may be more useful to understand sovereignty as an aesthetic mode of conduct that seeks to secure life to be lived in one way as opposed to another. The problem is thus, not an inherent one of the finite subject, but rather it is one that enables the sovereign to create its role as having the capacity to reign over a “reality in accordance with the logic of its ruling ideology” (Villa 1999: 182).

The question remains, however, why is it that the modality[27] of sovereign exceptionalism became the epistemic basis for governance? A possible answer to this question has been signalled through a literature of political theology where it is believed that the discursive origins of particular concepts derive. One key figure identified in relation to the sovereign is the Christian role of the ‘katechon.' The figure of the katechon was a withholding force, historically understood through AC, Paul’s letters to the “Thessalonicians to reassure them [the Carthaginians] that the alarming rumours of the forthcoming Day of the Lord are false” [inserted quotation] (Christias 2013 online in ucy.ac.cy). He assures them of this by reminding them that:

[27] ‘Modality’: ‘mode of being.’

> "first there will be the apostasy, and then the Apocalypse of the Man of Iniquity, and then only will come the Apocalypse of our Lord. But until then, continues Paul, you know what withholds him" (Christias 2013 online in ucy.ac.cy).

What exactly withholds chaos and imposes political order is the figure of the katechon, but what or who that figure is supposed to be is somewhat of a theological mystery. What is politically significant about Pauls letter, however, is in the context in which he writes it, where Christians, as a minority were facing persecution from the Romans, their perceived notion of the end of the world prevented order from being sustained. For this reason, we can see Pauls writing of the katechon as a principle "which holds back the rising tide of anarchy" (Dillon 2015: 216). Michael Dillon suggests that we can see the concept of the katechon was to develop from "a veridical apparatus which was also to become a political apparatus – rule of truth and truth of rule" (Dillon 2015: 216). It is here that we see the epistemic basis of 'Man' as the point of katechontic politics, the sovereign, it is argued, embodies[d] the role of the katechon. Sovereignty in its epistemic form is then presented in viewing the subject as a finite being which could be practised on to prevent chaos and allow society to function.

This hypothesis presents the possibility to reassess the function of sovereignty in relation to what has been represented as the aesthetic[28] role of governance in securing the subject to a particular code of conduct. Drawing upon the works of Carl Schmitt, Agamben claims that sovereignty is a homogenous basis in which the ontological distinctions of life are able to function as an ordering principle over the life the 'subject.' In conjunction with Foucault's analysis of *finitude*, we can see that the sovereign role is to render the subject infinitely finite and securing it as such to ensure, in theological terms, that the subject never really comes to face its *finitude*. Agamben argues "that sovereignty marks

[28] Following the earlier contention that 'truth' is beyond the possibility of knowledge this further claim contests that the 'metaphysical truths' that surround sovereignty can only be known in the way it aesthetically manifest as opposed to the validity of their claims to 'truth'.

the limit (in the double sense of end and principle) of the juridical order" (Agamben 1998: 15), he is a necessary figure in relation to the political makeup of society because:

> "Every general rule demands a regular, everyday frame of life to which it can be factually applied and which is submitted in its regulations. The rule requires a homogenous medium. This factual regularity is not merely an 'external presupposition' that the jurist can ignore; it belongs rather to the rules immanent validity. There is no rule applicable to chaos. Order must be established for juridical order to make sense. A regular situation must be created, and sovereign is he who definitely decides if this situation is actually effective". (Schmitt *Politische Theologie*: 19 – 22 in Agamben 1998: 16)

Here, what is described is the sovereign performance over chaos where the unknown effects of an action cannot be codified without the 'homogenous medium.' Drawing upon Foucault's description of power, it would be suggested that this cannot mean that he has control by containing chaos, because he cannot know the effects of his actions. Rather, the sovereign provides the symbolic function for 'juridical order to make sense' in its chaotic practice. This is one that I suggest can be reduced to an aesthetic mode of governance that is enabled through the finitude of the subject and the paradox of its origins. Though in a suggestion to the current debate, it is not necessary to link the notion of the 'subject' as living through an essential practice of this aesthetic mode of being, but one that could be hypothesised in accordance with other modes of aesthetic being.

Conclusion

This chapter has focused on finitude as a paradox of origins is such a way that follows the structure of the glossed argument surrounding power between Agamben and Foucault. What has essentially been argued is that the subject is not synonymous with sovereign exceptionalism, but that through its paradoxical origins it has been rendered governable to sovereign exceptionalism. However,

the very paradox that makes it governable is also the basis that allows for alternative modes of being to be made possible.

Having made this argument, a problem remained regarding the origins of sovereignty if the subject is more that how it is governed. This chapter does not contest that the narrative given regarding the origins of sovereignty is historically beyond reproach, rather, what has been attempted to show, at least, is that the origins of sovereignty can be understood as developing according to a particular problematic independent of the metaphysical status of the subject.

Chapter 4

Defacing the Currency: The Greek Solution and Resistance

Introduction

If one is aware of Diogenes the Cynic, it is often the case that they are aware of his mythology surrounding his supposed mission to deface the currency. It has been suggested that there are two reasons for his association with such a mission, in the first instance it is that his father had been accused of defacing the currency and following his execution, Diogenes faced a ban from his hometown of Sinope. The, perhaps more romantic version, is that he found present in society something particularly corrupt in the same sense that an ancient coin could be tampered with and lose its value. Thus, in an analogous sense, he felt it his duty to deface the currency and restore society to its proper value; that he took this on as a mission in the same sense that Socrates took on the mission to find the wisest man in Greece. This more romantic version is one that has a resemblance to the resistance literature, it needs to be defaced in some way to restore a better practice of politics.

Drawing from the previous conclusion, in this chapter I attempt to present the final thesis of this essay that a focus on *parrhesia* can contribute and strengthen the resistance debate against the problem posed by the work in Baudrillard. The ancient philosophy of Cynicism will be presented as the

archetypal model of resistance that engages with the subjective constitution as an aesthetic practice but does not become assimilated into any particular social order. In avoiding assimilation, it will be argued that what sets *parrhesia* apart from other aesthetic practices taken upon the self is the element of risk that is evoked through the ostensive recognition of the use of the concept.

Parrhesia **and Resistance**

The resistance potential of *parrhesia* as it has been theorised in recent literature (Dryberg (2014), Sharpe (2007), Prozorov (2014) has been as one of a type of veridiction which has the potential to challenge hegemony and violence in discursive power relationships. Dryberg (2014), in *The Politics of Parrhesia*, claims that the act of speaking truth to power is revised particularly against the judicial conception of the power in its discursive effect, and therefore, acts as a practice that allows other forms of discursive power relations to be actualised. For this reason, *parrhesia* cannot "be boxed into either empirical or normative political theory" (Dyberg 2014: 70) instead it might be suggested that it is better understood as an act of "problematization,' that is, how and why certain things (behaviour, phenomena, processes) became a problem" (Dyberg 2014: 70). As a form of problematisation, we can further deduce the significance of *parrhesia* with regards to the constitution of the 'self' for, by speaking truth to power, the subject is engaged in the making of himself by constituting the demarcations of the power/knowledge relationship that in turn is the process subjective conduct. In this sense, the potential of *parrhesia* is a possibility for the individual to detach the "power of truth from the forms of hegemony, social, economic and cultural, within which it operates at the present time" (Foucault in Gordon 1980: 133).

What is subsequently hoped for as the resistance potential of *parrhesia* is the capacity for the autonomous subject to seek other aesthetic practices from sovereign order. However, it might be observed that self-constitution is not a political practice particular to *parrhesia* but may well be considered more the mark of problematisation in general as opposed to a '*parrhesia*stic

problematisation'. It also remains necessary to hypothesise a type of the practice of 'the self' that does not get assimilated into sovereign exceptionalism, as with the threat presented by Baudrillard, but through aesthetic constitution to offer a challenge to it. For this reason, this final chapter will attempt to tie the previous arguments made in the previous chapter to show that, much like the way sovereignty can be seen as a particular mode of existence, the resistance potential of *parrhesia* comes with its own prescriptive values regarding how one is to aesthetically conduct themselves. Thus, in order to hypothesise resistance, it is important to understand fully how *parrhesia* governs a way of life that challenges power. To do so, Foucault's investigation into the courage of truth as a practice of the Cynics will be presented as satisfying this criterion. Through the accounts of this ancient philosophy, we can see that practices of the 'self' can, did, and do have political significance in which it is possible to present as a furtherance to the resistance literature.

The Socratic Revolution

Through the *Laches* and *Alcibiades*, Foucault presented the Socratic principle of taking care of the self as a distinctly ethical practice that challenges any social restrictions that might prevent one from doing so to this extent, taking care of the 'self' was shown to be an ethical practice that required courage. This derived from Socrates mission,[29] from the divine command of Apollo, that Socrates "ought to live philosophizing and examining myself [himself] and others" [inserted quotation] (Gomez-Lobo 1994: 36). However, the mission assigned him was one where his action was independent of the Gods. His moral behaviour and the need to annoy the citizens of Athens was based on the principle that "injustice [is] not only morally shameful, but also bad; i.e. they are things that harm us, just as an accident or a sickness would harm us" [inserted quotation] (Gomez-Lobo 1994: 42). Fundamental to the ancient concept of 'truth' was its eternal nature as distinct from material reality. Where one's 'real self' was

[29] As referred to earlier, Socrates message from the oracle that he is the wisest man became, for Socrates, a mission to prove whether or not this was the case.

immaterial, Socrates teaching in the *Laches* and *Alcibiades* was to "concern himself less with what he has than with what he is" (Hadot 1995: 90). It is a principle that resembles the analysis of sovereign governance that in order to discover and live by what is 'truthful' one must have a 'divine' or metaphysical understanding of the 'self.' To re-examine Socrates from a contemporary perspective today is, for Pierre Hadot (1995), significant because "the practice of spiritual exercises is likely to be rooted in traditions going back to immemorial times" (Hadot 1995: 89). However, it is "the figure of Socrates that causes them to emerge in Western consciousness" (Hadot 1995: 89), and so to understand Socrates problematic can in some respects helps us to understand our own. The Socratic 'revolution' is one in where he combines the 'divine' and 'eternal truths' but turns these metaphysical notions into a practice of life and consequently a problematic of ethical freedom regarding how to live. For, Socrates shows that to 'take care of the 'self,' one must also engage in the epistemic quest to understand the nature of oneself;

> "know thyself." Although it is difficult to be sure of the original meaning of this formula, this much is clear: it invites us to establish a relationship of the self to the self, which constitutes the foundation of every spiritual exercise" (Hadot 1995: 90)

Gomez-Lobo (1994) claims that, prior to Socrates, character would be judged by standards of the Poets. For example, Homer, would depict that a "[l]ack of excellence, that is, badness (in this peculiar sense of the term), is coextensive with the sort of inability which leads to defeat" (Gomez-Lobo 1994: 34). To this extent, what can be inferred by Gomez-Lobo and Hadot is the potential of ones' aesthetic representation of knowledge of the 'self' was revolutionary. It was a "complete transformation of his representation of the world, his inner climate, and his outer behaviour" (Hadot 1995: 86) whereby ones "excellence" would be based on one's ability to live in accordance with the 'divine' as opposed to a 'divine grace'.

Parrhesia and Risk

Taking care of oneself, was for Socrates, one that always refers to ones' aesthetic constitution to allow one to use reason against any populist social opinion which may be harmful. Socrates trial reinforces that reason is utmost, even at the threat of death, for he was "not now for the first time but always have been, the sort of man to be persuaded by nothing I possess other than the argument [logos, reason] which upon reasoning appears to me to be the best" [inserted quotation] (Gomez-Lobo 1994: 48). To "rely on what the ignorant majority tells us to do, we run the risk of suffering harm, of being deprived of a good" (Gomez-Lobo 1994: 53) by living according to reason.

Through Socrates trial, we can uncover to the significance of *parrhesia* as an ethical mode of practice that distinguishes between non-political aesthetic practices on the 'self', as might be understood through Baudrillard, and the politicised practises that resist sovereign exceptionalism. The book of Crito offers an understanding of how the link between risk and care for others had been understood by Socrates, while one might be risking ones' physical self, it is towards being true to ones' eternal self and not allowing others eternal selves to be dictated to by unjust principles. Socrates response to Crito, in Phaedo, shows the significance of *parrhesia* in the foundations of ethics towards the self and others. Crito attempts to put an obligation onto Socrates to let Crito break him out of prison if he does not do so, people will criticise Crito for having not done his best to rescue his friend and will thus be shamed by society. Socrates response to Crito is that:

> "You are wrong, my friend, if you think that a man who is worth anything should take into account the risk of living or dying instead of considering only this when he performs an action: whether his actions are just or unjust, [i.e.] the deeds of good man or of bad one" (Gomez-Lobo 1994: 34).

If Socrates were to escape through Crito, although he would protect his own body he would not be acting in accordance with what is just, for to live by a certain doctrine until the time comes that one is under threat would be to turn one's back on it. To run away would not serve the people he is seeking to help for he would show that there are times when one should take care of the body and not the soul.

Thus, it is necessary that he takes accepts the risk to himself and not go with Crito. Socrates understanding of risk is one that is dependent on a spiritual notion of harm, in effect, one would have to risk ones' physical safety, if necessary, to prevent harm to their soul. Socrates claims that those trying persecute him will not harm him more than themselves for they "couldn't even do so, for I do not think it is permitted… that a better man be harmed by a worse" (Gomez-Lobo 1994: 43). While it is possible that his persecutors can harm Socrates physical person and gain an advantage in doing so, it cannot be advantageous to their spirit, and so an "unjust execution is worse, in the non-moral sense of 'worse'" (Gomez-Lobo 1994: 43) for them to commit against Socrates.

What can be drawn out of Crito for the resistance literature is a difference between 'self-conduct' and what might be framed as 'politico-ethical self-conduct' (ethical conduct that has a political effect). To politically conduct oneself in relation with the 'truth,' to the benefit of others, one must undertake an element of risk if it is to 'truly' challenge what is believed to be false. The focus on the spirit is one that suggests that, to do so, if the individual is to challenge a 'sovereign way of life' that individual will equally have to call upon a normative set of standards that, in attempting to implement, will pose a risk to the said individual. In reflection on the problem of 'autonomy' in the 'modern' subject, *parrhesia*, as a means of resistance, shows a requisite of a spiritual element that can perhaps be revived from such basis of autonomy. Where the '*finitude'* of the 'modern self' sets a boundary to what can be known to that self, the limits of what is known creates a space of indeterminacy to imagine new ways of living in the world.

Through the combination of risk and the reimagining of normative standards through a person's autonomous capacity, we can see how *parrhesia* offers an account of self-conduct that does portray ethical and political purpose. For we see that autonomy and normativity do not necessarily belong to a life determined by sovereign exceptionalism, but rather suggests that they can be used as means of resisting 'bad' practice. The significance of seeing sovereignty in terms of aesthetic practices of behaviour is one that can be put for to suggest that resisting sovereign exceptionalism is perhaps a problem of style than of philosophical overhaul.

Spiritual Practice and Resistance

The style referred to here can be seen again through Socrates' ethical approach that did not advocate a doctrine but a principle that we should take care of our 'true' selves. Cynicism was a philosophy that used this principle as a way of life, with a focus on living the good life as a practice of ones' physical[30] constitution of the body. Cynicism owes much to the Socratic principle of taking care of the self, with the first Cynic, Diogenies, was supposedly referred to by Plato as 'Socrates gone mad.' As a way of life rather than a written philosophy, there does not exist a large body of factual literature regarding the history Cynicism. Instead, our knowledge generally derives from a series of myths that give an indication of the spirit[31] of Cynicism and its spiritual significance to the ancient Greeks. Cynicism offers an insight which suggests that philosophy for the ancients was not just one of theoretical analysis but also a search for codes of conduct regarding how one was to live their lives. The ancient conception of the 'true self,' practiced by the Cynics was believed to be "the fruit of the universality of thought" (Hadot 1995: 97). The significance of practicing Cynicism was that although 'truth' was eternal, in our material self it was still possible to live in accordance with falsities. This provided the meta-understanding of the *askesis* (ascetic practices) of Cynicism, in so far as how one lived was divined around the separation of the soul and body towards the greatness of the soul according to this principle. Thus, the Cynics as *parrhesia*sts would attempt to avoid being dictated to by the materiality of the body in their pursuit of universal truths.

[30]Though as describe earlier, ones 'physical' constitution was as much about using ones immaterial rational 'self' to both inform and be perfected by these practices.

[31]I am not referring to 'spirit' here in a metaphysical sense, but rather more akin to Richard Rortys' hypothesis of *geistestwissenschaften*; that certain practices that do not appeal to scientific verification but is practicable in accordance with the meaning it has to the individual or body of people (Rorty: 1980).

Following the Socratic notion of the 'true self,' the Cynics believed that in order for one to, 'authentically',[32] live a 'true life', one had to distinguish between what conduct of the 'self' was in relation to the 'true self' and what was not. This suggests that for the Greeks there was a relation between how one acted and the 'truth' that could be derived by such ways of life. This true life had a "reductive function: reducing all the pointless obligations which everyone usually acknowledges and accepts which have no basis in nature or reason" (Foucault 2011: 171). An infamous example of this can be seen in the actions of Diogenes' 'scandalous life' where he would justify outrageous actions like masturbating in public, claiming that it satisfies his needs no less than eating and yet we do not find eating in public scandalous. Such actions were considered an eradication of false practice from ones' life, to satisfy one need in public and yet consider another improper is restrictive of the 'true' practices of who we are. This desire for freedom is a curious effect believed to be derived from asceticism in the Cynic way of life; they observed that in the animal kingdom if a dog has the need to relieve itself in some way it just does it. In this sense, freedom to live according to our 'true' nature, for the Cynics, was prevented by the social practices that introduced codes of conduct and false notions of propriety. Diogenies, for example, supposedly claimed that he has "no wife, no children, no governor's palace, but only the earth and the sky and an old cloak… what do I lack? Am I not without grief and fear, am I not free?" (Foucault 2011: 171).

The act of courage that is seen in the undertaking of an asceticism of the self that distinguishes the 'truth' telling of *parrhesia* as a political act as opposed to an aestheticism of the self that has no significance. It is on this basis that we understand the significance of *parrhesia* as one's ability to speak the 'truth.' To not be blocked by the materiality of the body in pursuit of universal truths and justice is

[32] Authenticity is not a strong theme in the biopolitical literature that engages with strong hypothesis and claims that authenticity is impossible. However, through the striving for the perfection of the soul (the 'true self') I think it is possible that the good life would have been strongly associated with what we today would understand as authenticity.

linked to the idea of there being a 'true self' whom one must care about, above and at risk to one's physical self. As a practice of life, the Cynics radicalised the principle of *askesis*, because of their belief in the true self as separate to that of the body. Through Cynicism as a way of life, we see that the styling of the 'self' according to 'truth' had an element that provoked the social order, not just an arbitrary one that could be ignored by it. In provoking the sensibilities of others, we can see that Cynicism was clearly not assimilated into everyday life, unlike the problematic of challenging the 'self' as posed by Baudrillard, it posed a real challenge to the social community.

Foucault, in his study into courageous 'truth telling,' refers to Epictetus' description of the 'Cynic' that emphasises this point. For Epictetus, the Cynic could not be just anybody; he claimed that "one does not define a choice of life exactly, but a mission one is given" (Foucault 2011: 292). Behaving like a Cynic does not lead to a Cynic life, to do so is like saying "I already wear a rough cloak, so I shall wear one then. I already sleep on the ground, so I shall sleep there then" (Foucault 2011: 293). He claimed, "if this is how you see things, keep away from it; don't come near it, it has nothing to do with you" (Foucault 2011: 293). To do so would be to supposedly anger the Gods, who are the only ones who can appoint such a mission. What is emphasised through this view of the Cynic is that an authentic aesthetic life it is not an arbitrary practice of conducting oneself. To this extent, it might be suggested that the significance in relation to *parrhesia* is that not just any mode of aesthetic life should be emphasised to resist sovereignty but that there is an element of the conduct that particularly sets it apart. In this, we see a separation from ones' aesthetic or ascetic constitution of their life from the same aesthetic practices as having a particular significance beyond the simple act of asceticism. The difference being one of a true self where, as presented by Socrates, one is seeking to take care of their soul and the soul of others.

This is a *parrhesia*stic mode of being which takes the Socratic principle to an extreme length, the principle derived from Socrates that ultimately one could only live 'truly' through living in accordance to the divine truths of the soul. To this extent, the apparently vulgar acts of the Cynics to defecate, commit sexual acts, and engage in impolite eating practices, in public was a way of

aesthetically living a life which would only bear the consequences of being just or having a good soul. We can see that in the aesthetic choices of the Cynic they attempted to teach and help others achieve this true life by contesting the social form of governance. In the myth of the encounter between King Alexander and Diogenes, Diogenes claims himself to be the true king because he "does not rely on splendour of his glory and his armed strength for his authority" (Foucault 2011: 276). Where Alexander needs all of these things to be king his "monarchy is therefore quite fragile and precarious for it depends on something else" (Foucault 2011: 276), whereas Diogenes is "the anti-king king, as the true king, who by the very truth of his monarchy, denounces and reveals the illusion of political kingship" (Foucault 2011: 275). This apparent event or myth shows how styling life according to one's' own 'truthful' being in the world was in complete opposition to the 'king' who his power and freedom through poor, 'un-true' foundations. Through his ascetic practices, the Cynic was able to challenge the power of the king, to separate himself from the kings' rule and make attempts to bring society into a new ethical relationship with what is true.

Conclusion

To conclude this chapter, what has been presented is how, through the mythology of Diogenies, the subject has the autonomous capacity to challenge power through constituting a particular way of life separate and challenging to accepted norms. The normative element that is portrayed in this argument has been that normativity is dependent and founded on a particular way of life that is not necessarily governed by sovereign power. To this extent, it is possible to have a Foucauldian resistance as a practice of life where identity and difference do not degenerate into an assimilated form of sovereign power.

Conclusion

This thesis presented in the beginning chapter a problem with the resistance literature deriving from the works of Baudrillard. This problem is one that I have essentially posed as ‘assimilation’; the approaches to pluralising power through either refusing power allow for other ways of being is one shown to be possible, nevertheless, in terms of its political effects it cannot be affirmatively claimed to be a strong means of resistance. It is my inference, that the literature most associated with Agamben, to a greater of lesser extent recognised this problem and so posed the role of resistance at the subject. The motivation for such an approach relates strongly to what Dillon has referred to as ‘messianic’, it requires a belief that, first, there is something beyond the subject and second, that there is a better order of life beyond it. What has been presented through Baudrillard, however, is that there is a life after the subject and that it does not resist the sovereign exceptionalism that is being resisted in challenging the subject.

What had been criticised of the resistance literature was that the ‘subject,' as in Foucault’s Order of Things, is a contingent being that, while it enables the worst possibilities of sovereign power, it is not necessarily the cause of such politics. For this reason, I have attempted to pose a thesis that interrogates the status of the subject when it is not received as synonymous with sovereign exceptionalism. This argument has made the following conclusion: subjectivity is the medium between an epistemology of ‘truth’ and aesthetic practice of ‘truth.' Thus, it does not imply the subject has as part of its structure any particular epistemology or aestheticism. What is essential about the ‘subject’ is its finitude, where it has been argued that this temporal basis leads to the degenerative effects of

sovereign exceptionalism, it can also be seen as the basis of autonomy that challenges such exceptionalism. Sovereignty is the result of a theological problematisation with historical roots. It has been used to impose order upon the subject and is not indicative of the subject its self.

Through these conclusions I argue, that it is possible to present *parrhesia* in terms of a 'mode of being' that is not only distinct from, but through its basic definition of 'speaking 'truth' to 'power,' suggests a political diversification from sovereignty. It is through presenting the political potential of *parrhesia* as a 'mode of being,' that the normative elements of this thesis avoid the problem of assimilation presented through an interpretation of Baudrillard's' 'hyper-real' and can successfully be used to challenge sovereign exceptionalism.

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