



THINKING BEYOND CAPITALISM

Edited by
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EDITION	Conferentia
TITLE	THINKING BEYOND CAPITALISM
EDITED BY	Aleksandar Matković, Mark Losoncz, Igor Krtolica
PUBLISHER	INSTITUTE FOR PHILOSOPHY AND SOCIAL THEORY University of Belgrade
REVIEWERS	Jelena Vasiljević, Marjan Ivković, Adriana Zaharijević
BOOK DESIGN	Nikola Stevanović
LAYOUT	Sanja Tasić
PRINT	Colorgrafx, Belgrade
YEAR AND PLACE OF ISSUE	2016, Belgrade
NUMBER OF COPIES	300
ISBN 978-86-80484-00-6	

This Volume contains a collection of papers presented at the Thinking Beyond Capitalism International conference which was held in Belgrade 24-26 June. The organization of the conference was supported by the Serbian Ministry of Education, Scientific and Technological Development, Institut français de Serbie, Center for Advanced Studies (Rijeka, Croatia), Balkan Trust for Democracy, Goethe Institute, Heinrich Böll Foundation, Singidunum University, Rosa Luxemburg Foundation for Eastern Europe, The German Marshall Fund, Cultural Center of Belgrade, Center for Ethics, Law and Applied Philosophy (Belgrade) and the Fund for an Open Society.

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Control and the Nation-State

Introduction

The relationship between debt and social organization is the central theme of Deleuze's text *Postscript on the Societies of Control*. The text builds on Foucault's idea of discipline societies, where organization took the form of enclosure in institutional spaces. Deleuze's concept of *societies of control* signifies a form of organization in which these spaces of enclosure become abolished in their self-sufficiency and now stand in a relation of mutual openness. The element which leads to this change is capital in the form of a debt relation. (Deleuze 1992: 3, 4, 6)

One of the ideas which has its roots in Deleuze's idea of societies of control is Hardt and Negri's thesis that nation-states have ceased being the primary political form of capitalism and that their function has been relegated to a decentred network of political power, which they call an Empire (Hardt, Negri 2000: xii, xiii, xiv). The idea follows from the distinction made above, because transition from *discipline* to *control* has the direction of abolishing social spaces whose main aim is confinement. If this direction is followed through the abolition of these spaces would also encompass nation-states themselves as relatively enclosed social units. As a result, political power would become displaced from a sovereign state onto supranational institutions, and the driving force of capital to subvert enclosed spaces to its own logic would lead to dissolution of centralized political authority of the nation-state (Hardt, Negri 2000: 332). The Empire, which emerges from this process, is not an extension of the sovereign nation-state but builds an in itself distinct and relatively autonomous

system in which the nation-state plays a partial and subordinated role (Hardt, Negri 2000: 311).

I argue in this article that this view is flawed when it comes to the role the nation-state has in contemporary capitalism. Contrary to Hardt and Negri's position, I argue that the state *in the form of the modern nation-state* still represents the central political form under which capitalist reproduction takes place. The argument does not contest the claim that the internationalisation of capital and proliferation of political actors both within and beyond the nation-state have weakened its sovereignty, instead it will show that this proliferation of political control is predicated on the very connection between capital and the nation-state.

State as nation-state and state as Empire

Hardt and Negri claim that the latest phase of capitalism, the *society of control*, is characterized by the displacement of "constitutional functions" from the nation-state onto the Empire (Hardt, Negri 2000: 309). They furthermore argue that this displacement emerges from a process of synthesis of politics and economy. This synthesis is internal to the concept of *control*, which signifies a simultaneous economic and political production of life, in other words economic production as immediately political constitution of subjectivity (Hardt, Negri 2000: 406, 410). Because power appears from the outset as economic and political, Hardt and Negri conclude that the "decline of nation-states is in a profound sense the full realization of the relationship between the state and capital" (Hardt, Negri 2000: 236). When subjectivity becomes inherently a constitutive element of economic relations, instead of merely emerging from them, the nation-state, as a superimposed and alienated mechanism of subjection loses its central political role. Consequently, when nation-state sovereignty becomes displaced, what comes into view is the *identity of state and capital*. However, this new "state" is more than a nation-state, it represents a defused network of power which subsumes the whole of

society. “The development of the mode of production leads us to recognize that to say State is the *only* way to say capital: a socialized capital, a capital whose accumulation is done in terms of power...” (Negri 1984: 188).

That state and capital do emerge as two sides of one and same power must not be contested to see that Hardt and Negri establish this identity on problematic presuppositions, one of them being that political power as such and the state are conflated from the outset. Hardt and Negri argue that politics and economy become synthezized in capitalism, but do this insofar they conflate politics with the state¹. This leads to the conclusion that even when nation-state sovereignty becomes displaced, what emerges is a “state” in its purity and identity with capital. This state, which *does not* refer to the nation-state, figures as an amalgam of defused power structures which coalesce in different institutions constituting an Empire. This conflation of the state and politics leads to unexpected results. Politics becomes defused over the social field in such a way that its function of creating *consensus* becomes attached to economic processes. This is the primary synthesis of politics and economy. However, politics also signifies the “state” in the most general term, so in this regard what is unified are the state and the sphere of production (the subsumption of society under the state). This infusion of politics into the productive sphere generates the *multitude*, a subject who has an innate capacity not only to produce objects but simultaneously subjectivities themselves. In other words, production of objects becomes always already direct production of social relations. This innate capacity of the *multitude* suddenly forces capital to base its reproduction in an external position in relation to labour. Consequently, when capital

1. “We need to recognize first of all the crisis of political relations in the national context. As the concept of national sovereignty is losing its effectiveness, so too is the so-called autonomy of the political. [...] Government and politics come to be completely integrated into the system of transnational command. [...] Politics does not disappear; what disappears is any notion of the autonomy of the political.” (Hardt, Negri 2000: 307).

as a synthetic relationship of economic and political power becomes externalized, the Empire assumes a rent-based system of reproduction. Since production is from the outset economic and political, organization does not proceed from above, but from within – making capital, i.e. the state at the same time *defused over* and *superimposed* in relation to the sphere of production. *Real subsumption* and *synthesis of politics and economy* come into contradiction since political power becomes *both defused and transcendent*. Society becomes *really subsumed* under the state as mechanisms of control establish themselves, but at the same time the state reverts to a rent-extracting machine. The consequence of this is that class struggle operates as an “unmediated” conflict between labour on the one hand and capital (i.e. the “state” as such) on the other, since “class struggle acts *without limit* on the organization of power” (Hardt, Negri 2000: 237). In other words, the state is not a result of conflict or a formation which emerges from the class struggle, but instead becomes ever more the *instrument* of domination, placed on one side of conflict, opposing labour.

Politics and economic compulsion

Hardt and Negri’s conflation of politics and the state leads to a contradiction between *real subsumption* of society under the state on the one hand and *synthesis of politics and economy* on the other. To resolve this contradiction one must view the relationship between the state and politics in light of both these terms.

In the first instance, the conflation of politics and economy comes too late. Hardt and Negri describe it as a feature of the “latest phase” of capitalism or a society of control. When compared to its earlier phases, capitalism does exhibit a higher level of mutual integration of politics and economy. However, the problem emerges when this comparison stops. To understand why this synthesis happens, it is also necessary to compare the nature of the relationship between economy and politics in capitalism to a pre-capitalist society. The reason for

this, I will argue, is that the transition from a pre-capitalist society to capitalism is in fact based on same principles as the transitions within capitalism itself.

Capitalism is, in all its forms, a continuation of a process which dissolved the pre-capitalist state. This process was from the outset characterized by the synthesis of politics and economy, but not because politics and the state were the same, but because politics effectively *emancipated itself from the state*. The pre-capitalist state was a mechanism for extraction and accumulation of surplus for the purpose of producing political power as distinct from economic relations that supported it. Capitalism, on the other hand, is based on a state which emerges as a result of political power appearing from within economic relations as their constitutive element. Furthermore, the fact that political power in capitalism is regularly appropriated by non-state elements and turned against the state can't accommodate such a broad conflation of politics and the state. This is historically the case insofar capital emerged when economic factors gained political competence in relation to existing states, as well as logically, since to think the "economy" on any level without previous political organization is to either claim that capitalist economy is natural (since it requires no external or internal compulsion) or that the state can be reduced to an external regulatory mechanism. Hardt and Negri subscribe to the second view, but only in relation to the nation-state which becomes merely a "filter" and "regulator" of global flows of capital, not to the "state" as such (Hardt, Negri 2000: 310). The nation-state is one of the tools in the toolbox of the Empire, but the Empire itself is based on the internal political capacity of economic processes to produce social life. The problem is that when the synthetic relationship of economy and politics is introduced *with the emergence of the Empire*, the nation-state as such appears hollow both in the timeline when it was dominant, as well as in its contemporary "subordinate" form. This makes the concept of the *state in capitalism* meaningless. This becomes apparent when in the process of real subsumption of society under the state, the concept of the state ceases to mean anything

more than a defused network of institutions. On the other hand, the concept becomes contradictory to itself insofar this network of institutions suddenly plays the same role the pre-capitalist state did (extraction of surplus from an external position).

The problem with this is that such a model of the “state” doesn’t account for why surplus passes from the productive sphere of labour to the Empire, or on what grounds is rent-extraction possible. It establishes a dualism of multitude and Empire, connected by a contradictory concept of the “state” without accounting for both why this state is a state (is it merely the “realization” of a tendency contained within nation-states?) as well as how does multitude relate to this “state”, when the state figures as an external and rent-extracting mechanism (is the future of capitalism in fact *stateless*?). Finally, the multitude inherits the defused political capacity of the “state” by becoming internally cooperative and productive, but not the baggage of state-power as such in the form of any kind of compulsion.

This lack of compulsion Hardt and Negri attempt to circumvent by introducing politics of a different kind. The politics of the multitude is opposed to politics of the Empire insofar it is not utilized for purposes of domination. Immaterial labour organizes according to its inherent “cooperative interactivity through linguistic, communicational and affective networks” (Hardt, Negri 2000: 294). Because the productive sphere gains capacity for self-valorisation without the organizational power of capital, compulsion gives way to a “cooperative aspect” which is not imposed from the outside (*Ibid.*). However, if internal compulsion doesn’t organize the production process, and external compulsion merely draws on the productive power of the multitude, it would appear that capitalism in the last instance is merely a nuisance, easily overthrown, *only if*... The abandonment of internal compulsion is illegitimate, because it claims that politics in the form of a state constitutes subjectivity, yet this subjectivity imports into itself only that which increases its productive capacity without importing the element of compulsion. This then necessitates

the introduction of external, imperial oppression to explain the reproduction process of capital. *Real subsumption* as a result becomes meaningless. On the other hand, when Hardt and Negri claim that “when political transcendence is still claimed today, it descends immediately into tyranny and barbarism”, as well as that sovereignty passes into “immanence” (Hardt, Negri 2000: 332, 355), they obviously reject the notion of voluntary subjection to an external power. This makes *synthesis of politics and economy* meaningless. The problem becomes more acute when one compares external compulsion to its paradigmatic form of the pre-capitalist state. Such a state necessarily relied on political coercion. The extraction and accumulation of surplus in capitalism, as opposed to the pre-capitalist state, does not function in this way. The failure to produce surplus does not trigger state’s direct and violent response. It functions through “natural violence”, i.e. violence for which no particular social actor is responsible. This is *economic compulsion*, and if there is any candidate for a form of compulsion which is both economic and political, then this would be it. More precisely, economic compulsion takes place when economic processes are compelled *via* political capacity internalized by the subject itself. This “politics” which has its source in state-organization of life can’t be divided into a “good” and “bad” politics as Hardt and Negri do. Furthermore, as economic compulsion, the synthesis of politics and economy does not emerge only with the society of control, it emerges with capitalism as such. This presence of compulsion of any kind must also lead to a change in how conflict within the multitude is regarded, which in turn will allow for a broader definition of the nation-state than the one present in Hardt and Negri.

Needs and conflict

Economy in capitalism is from the outset a political power of organization. Economy and politics emerge already synthesized when capital appears. However, this process does not only lead to a dualism of two economies and two politics (the two classes, the multitude and the Empire, etc.), it also leads to a conflict which engenders a new

form of a state. This state subsumes society in such a way that it imports *all* political capacity into a subject, not only the “creative” or “cooperative” elements, but also those which lead to *conflict which reproduces a state*.

Direct constitution of subjectivity by the state necessitates *expulsion of all non-state mediated access to economic and material means of life*. This was not the case with the pre-capitalist state, which represented a distinct mechanism in relation to the culture it presided over. The old state was organized around extraction and accumulation of surplus from a sphere of production which operated on different principles. The capitalist state severs these pre-capitalist links between the community and nature and imposes a law which does not concern itself with reproduction of power through the reproduction of *living* (economically viable) culture, but with direct reproduction of surplus. It subsumes society not because the term “state” becomes applied to political power as such, but because the regime of the state as such (extraction and accumulation of surplus) becomes the regime of the whole of society. Capitalism is properly speaking a *state-society*, where organization of life stands not under any custom, religion, family tradition and belief in general, but under state-sanctioned law.

At this point, an argument could be made in favour of Hardt and Negri, which would resolve the contradiction between real subsumption and the synthesis of economy and politics. When state subsumes society it becomes the main mechanism of socialization. It destroys culture and becomes installed in its place. As a result, there is no inherent “hinge” anymore which would hold a community such as a nation-state together. The background for this argument is that the *nation* expresses a “community of needs” (Hardt, Negri 2000: 96). With the synthesis of politics and economy, as well as the expansion of production, this community becomes less homogeneous. When a state engenders a subject, this subject *needs* on the basis of *private property*. A person (where a person could be taken as a state-category) is not defined by a set of given and inherited needs, but has in abstract only the

capacity to produce because there is no pre-given content of needs in capitalism, merely a form under which needs are produced. The imposition of state-law, therefore, inadvertently results in a heterogeneity of subjectivities, as well as any single subjectivity representing a “mixed constitution” (Hardt, Negri 2000: 331). Because of this expansion in the heterogeneity of needs, *conflicts expand and proliferate* either in places where there were none, or where they already were in some way “culturally” regulated. When conflict expands, the nation-state reveals its constitutional inability to create consensus within its borders (Hardt, Negri 2000: 399). Society becomes subsumed under the state, insofar “subjectivities tend to be produced simultaneously by numerous institutions” (ibid.). This apparently resolves the contradiction, because the heterogeneous nature of modern subjectivity, which emerges when state replaces pre-determined limits to conflict (culture, nation), escapes totalization and expels capital to function from a position similar to the pre-capitalist states.

However, the logic of this argument goes against Hardt and Negri because it misconstrues the nature of the state when placed in relation to why a heterogeneous system of needs would threaten a nation as a “community of needs”. Furthermore, it misconstrues the concept of “nation” insofar it divorces it from its own preconditions of emergence. In the first instance, the following premise is correct: heterogeneous system of needs as opposed to a “community of needs” threatens any institutional power because it *expands conflict*. Political power which is superimposed onto society and depends on the sphere of production necessarily must place a *limit to conflict*, which at the same time means a limit to the range of products which might emerge. As mentioned, the pre-capitalist state served as a limit to conflict because it alienated that which could derail any culturally organized form of life. By appropriating surplus it did not merely emerge as a power of domination over and beyond society, it also fostered internal emergence of conflict-mediating mechanisms within a culture. But economic compulsion goes in the other direction, it *abolishes* this limit in order to directly subject man to the state. Since surplus circulates

freely, conflict expands and general competition takes place. In other words, surplus which is not destined to become external political power that would coerce, effectuates changes and transformations within the sphere of production because it remains within it. This opens way for conflict taking on forms previously not recognized: everything from generational gaps to gender, class or race conflicts infecting the productive sphere. The capitalist state was from the outset a result of conflict, a form of conflict which is always already both political and economic. In this regard conflict “generated” a state, instead of the state serving as a limit to it. The nation would therefore not merely be a concept of a “community of needs”, but a form of *disintegration* of such a community. More precisely, and this is what is evident in the latest phase of capitalism, a “nation” is a population constituted by a state not only through consensus *but also competition*. Consensus might be a feature of nation’s sovereignty, but certainly not nation-state’s existence and function as such, because what characterizes capitalism as such is not the institutionalization of conflict, but the *primacy of non-institutionalized conflict*. This primary non-institutionalized conflict (predicated on the fact that politics does not limit economy, but is synthesized with it) has a tendency toward the establishment of states. In other words, the fact that the multitude in all production also produces social relations does not exclude the fact that these relations, as a consequence of conflict internal to the multitude, take on the form of a state. Consequently, the idea that conflict is “unmediated” between the multitude and the Empire is an insufficient consideration of the truly non-institutionalized nature of conflict because it presupposes pre-given and illegitimate frameworks of consensus (multitude and Empire). Hardt and Negri’s view of the Empire as the enlargement of the “realm of consensus that support its own power”, representing a “smooth space” across which subjectivities move “without substantial resistance or conflict”, as well as the multitude, which carries the potential for “love” and community”, or “creative” conflict are both framed in pacifying terms, making the only “authentic” conflict between the two (Hardt, Negri 2000: 198, 361). To divide primary (non-institutionalized) conflict in

this fashion is to effectively abolish it, because it becomes theoretically removed from the most acute places. Such a division robs away reality from countless number of conflicts which infect both sides of the border between multitude and Empire. When the reality of conflict is taken away, what remains is the divided “unmediated” confrontation between the multitude and the Empire, both emerged in a relatively cooperative form of conflict, i.e. one which functions as an external mechanism of rent-extraction and the other which is conflictual in an inherently productive sense. This again completely abolishes any idea of real subsumption under capital, and any compulsion as well as any form of conflict related to it become construed in an inexplicable fashion. All of this then serves to reject the idea of “nation” as a result of independent capacity to generate consensus.

State and institutions

Developments that are characteristic of a society of control are not reducible to the latest phase of capitalism. Because non-institutionalized conflict characterizes capitalism from the outset, such recent developments stand in continuity with previous phases of capitalism as well. This means that transformations in contemporary capitalism descend from developments which have been at work from the inception of the system. Specifically, the dissolution of institutions, of which Hardt and Negri speak, do emerge from class struggle which escapes institutionalized confines, but this struggle itself is in turn presupposed by the very nature of the state in capitalism. If one views the capitalist state in continuity with the pre-capitalist one, one can also understand the contemporary passages within capitalism itself as inherently in line with what took place when the pre-capitalist state was abolished. The passage from discipline to control societies is a continuation of a process that was internal to capitalism from beginning. It is in the first instance grounded in the synthesis of politics and economy and the expansion of conflict where “class struggle acts *without limit* on the organization of power” (Hardt, Negri 2000: 237). However, this class struggle which acts “without limit” is present from

the outset – the fact that “nation” established consensus as a limit does not preclude that what nation itself represented was a result of conflict in the first place. The modern passage from discipline to control shows this process in full light. What happens in this passage is that institutions that serve as objects of *material interest* become incapable of providing a footing in the struggle. If *society of control* signifies the dissolution of institutionally enclosed spaces and their subjection to capital, then what is dissolved in the first line is the capacity of these institutions to establish links to the means of life. All the various institutions which organized life beyond the scope of the state and that traced their lineage from a set of ideals or norms beyond surplus, now become subject to the mechanism of extraction and accumulation of surplus. The dissolution of institutions and their subjection to the regime of surplus accumulation follows precisely the same strategy in which pre-capitalist forms of life were “uprooted” by the state and subsumed to its regime. Same as the capitalist state appeared when all pre-modern “links” to the means of life were severed, so do capitalist institutions collapse under the pressure of the state. The state is not merely swept away in the process of dissolution, giving way to a homogenized political system where each point of organizational capacity would be equal to the other (Hardt, Negri 2000: 332). The state is precisely the form through which this dissolution of institutions takes place. They become re-organized in such a way that their specific character disappears, they become homogenized under the principle which is now common to all and based on a system of needs held together by a state. So in effect, the change in the way subjectification occurs in a society of control is predicated on the fact that all “private identities” now flow from a regime inherent to the state. This means that one might possess any kind of “hybrid and modulating” identity (Hardt, Negri 2000: 331), but this identity is predicated on the necessity of reproducing surplus, because surplus emancipated from coercive political power serves as support for such an identity. Skills, knowledge, abilities, financial security and so on are still the presuppositions of “private identity”, even if this private identity stands in direct opposition with the imperative to function

properly in the market, i.e. even if it exhibits a communal, cooperative features of the multitude. The multitude as such is not inherently opposed to the principle of the state from which it emerges. Instead, conflict infects the multitude to the point that its dependence on the state becomes fully evident. When other institutions become dissolved in their self-sufficiency, the state appears as the primary condition of life, it becomes ever more *itself a need*. One thing which is apparent today is how much conflict is conditioned not only by the need to appropriate the state, but by the need to appropriate the state in the face of permanent dissolution of other institutions. When school, army, church, family, etc. lose their independence from capital, the state becomes the primary object of conflict. It becomes an objective interest. Precisely in this “call back” to the state, in the necessity to appropriate the state driven both by external pressure as well as internal struggle, the multitude is remade as a nation. A *national* today might mean merely a possession of a passport, but this possession is infinitely important, it is the interest which shapes the struggle. More importantly, when the “nation” loses its traditional character, the state is increasingly capable of efficiently selecting individuals *via* their productive capacity in order to compose a nation. The “ideological” mist of nationalism and the botched excesses of fascism give way to an efficient state-sanctioned selection process which is today more regulated and protected than anything that came before. “Nation” does not disappear, instead it follows the same logic that has been in place from the outset of capitalism – it extends the homogenizing principle above and beyond any remaining pre-national characteristic which might have served to delimit conflict (customs, beliefs, etc.). In the same way “nation” already presupposed the collapse of culture, so do last remains of the “cultural flavours” of nation disappear, giving way to a highly specialized system of population composition under the control of the state. Nations always already presupposed this process of abolishing any previous heterogeneity not deduced from the state, it merely took time (extremely short time, historically speaking) to convert the “community of needs” into one universal “system of needs”.

Control and debt

When the state subsumes society, this does not mean that the state becomes dissolved into “numerous institutions”, but that these institutions become subjected to a system of needs grounded in a state. As a separate and distinct institution, the state can’t become equated with politics, because it *results* from a political and economic conflict. However, the state at the same time becomes an object of conflict and it is in this sense that it retains its form of a nation-state – it functions as something which is desired as a pre-condition of one’s life. The question which arises here is then, how and why does the state become instrumentalized, as Hardt and Negri suggest? This idea is not completely without merit, but it must be understood in the context of a state which is always itself a form conflict takes on.

The *society of control*, to which Hardt and Negri refer when they attempt to describe this process, relies on the concept of *control* or *immediate political and economic production of subjectivity*. This immediate relationship between economy and politics, signifies a relation where debt plays a central role. Debt appears as the form in which the law, or the pre-existing and achieved framework of class-relations is suspended. More precisely, it is the capacity of capital to circumvent conflict in which it becomes entangled the more conflict expands. According to Hardt and Negri, capital manoeuvres around conflict not by suspension of the law from the position of a state-sovereign, but from a decentralized position beyond the state. The subjection of society to capital then suspends the law and in effect by doing this, capital (i.e. the state as a decentralized Empire) shows itself the true sovereign. Capital therefore as the synthetic relationship of economic and political power overcomes nation-state sovereignty through other forms of political organization, circumventing conflict which is expressed in the nation-state.

However, if one places this idea in the context of the preceding arguments, one can see that state sovereignty has no bearing on the

question of state's strength or weakness in relation to capital. This does not mean that nation-state sovereignty does not reveal many important elements of a historical context capitalist system finds itself in, but it does not impact the fact that the nation-state as a form and object of conflict, is at all times presupposed in the relation of capital. That nation-state appears as a detached and alienated element points to its pre-capitalist roots. The groundwork of rent extraction is nothing but the form the pre-capitalist state functioned through, i.e. the form through which it extracted and accumulated surplus from the economic sphere. Debt relation, one way or the other, is universal for all states. But the difference in the modern relationship of debt is that it does not rely on direct application of violence as in the case of the pre-capitalist state, but economic compulsion which takes the form of state law. In other words, even if debt is imposed from a supra-state level (i.e. onto the state itself) the form this imposition takes is *the state itself* which is supposedly the victim of debt. It is the particular modification in the struggle itself which appears in the form of a state. When debt appears as "surplus" of political violence, as power which curtails rights, suspends established channels of struggle and whatever democratic form they had, the state does appear more as an "instrument" of the dominant classes. But it appears as such only to the point where the appropriation of the state also appears as a counter-instrument to domination. However, the state is not so much the "thing" which is utilized, it is the form in which excesses of conflict are contained and that are as such internal to the economy. The "justice" of the market in other words is predicated on the political injustice which has the form of a state and which is internal to the economy as such. This economy is supported by supra-national institutions, but the "terrain" of struggle is the state and the tools themselves are state-tools. This is why the state is necessarily an objective interest, a "hinge" onto which the politicized populace can attach itself and use it for its own aims and goals (regardless if these aims and goals are fascist, leftist, etc.). Therefore, the thesis that the nation-state succumbs to its own principle of organization of life because it limits conflict must also be extended by the argument that

what makes conflict non-institutionalized is precisely the nature of the nation-state itself. Hardt and Negri are correct when they claim that the concept of nation as a “community of needs” loses its significance, but the problem is that they invert the relationship of hierarchy between “nation” and “state”. It is not the nation that builds the state, it is the state which forges a nation. In this regard the specific features of a “nation” might very well become lost, but the principle of a national state remains. To jettison the “nation-state” as such because specific features of the “nation” become lost is an imprecise theoretical move. It illegitimately misconstrues the structure of the nation-state, it reduces a central feature of the capitalist state (to engender a population) into a passing phase of “national politics” and it removes one of the central elements of capitalist subjection from the new-born multitude. The “national” element is precisely what lacks within the multitude – not only consensus or “creative” struggle, but volatile and ruthless struggle which through its selection almost automatically engenders a state. The pacified, calm, “creatively” conflictual multitude can’t be viewed as something external to the states they inhabit, but as an element *constituted by the states themselves*. And the multitude itself desires these states. As such they are state-people not only by descent but also by the form of conflict which is internal to them as well. The image of the multitude is fully in correspondence with the organization of the earth into nation-states. Conflicts which emerge within the multitude necessitate a state. Consequently, the abolition of institutionally enclosed spaces does not dissolve the nation-state, but is grounded in the capacity of the state to attack and appropriate non-state spaces. It does not matter if these spaces represent a pre-modern tribal economy or any of the capitalist institutions of the “discipline society”. The nation-state is not a victim of the society of control, it is its driving engine.

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