

Rethinking the divide: beyond the politics of demand versus the politics of the act debate

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Abstract

The politics of the act is an important part of radical politics as it seeks to disrupt and challenge the status quo. I define the politics of the act as a mode of politics that involves a withdrawal from the state, mobilises around non-hierarchical organising structures and is animated by an imperative of enactment. This can be contrasted with a politics of demand, which is state-oriented, hierarchical in nature and looks to educate the movement for enactment. While Marxists have tended to privilege the politics of demand as the route to radical change, anarchists have favoured the politics of the act, thus creating a clear opposition between these two different ways of acting politically. In this thesis I will argue that this dichotomy between a politics of demand and a politics of the act is overemphasized, and using Deleuze I will show that a politics of the act is the ontological and creative basis through which the politics of demand comes into being, and the politics of demand is enacted by capturing certain flows of creativity into recognisable ‘moments’ that allows them to be made visible and understood at a societal level. Thus, these modes of politics, although they have meaningful differences, are not distinct from each other but rather flow into each other.

In IR, conceptualisations of social movements practising a politics of demand have overshadowed the politics of the act, although anarchists have recognised its importance. This thesis will build on this work by drawing on Deleuzian concepts to deepen our understanding of the politics of the act both conceptually and empirically and contributing to the development of a postanarchist politics. It will examine six case studies of activities that are valorised as exemplifying the politics of the act: withdrawal from the state by Food Not Bombs and Social Centres; horizontal organising structures of Critical Mass and Indy Media Centres; and an imperative of enactment through guerrilla gardening and the Clown Army. This thesis challenges those conceptualisations of politics that privilege either the politics of demand or the politics of the act, and demonstrates that both are needed in any conceptualisation of radical politics. It concludes by offering a way of conceptualising both modes of politics through a ‘politics of the molecular’.

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Preface

I came to write this thesis through my interest in the way in which identity is understood. I was uncomfortable with dominant theories of identity that suggest that one's identity is formed in relation to an 'other' and the way in which this can lead to binary division between 'us' and 'them' which is generally invoked in a spirit of superiority/inferiority. I turned to Deleuze in order to see how these binaries might be overcome through an overturning of the identity/difference paradigm, and it is primarily this desire to overcome binary distinctions that animates my thesis. I found what Deleuze had to offer in rethinking politics was theoretically suggestive, and wondered how this might be born out in social movement politics, before being introduced to anarchism through the work of Richard Day. Deleuze's politics based on creativity seemed a good fit for anarchism, and I also found interesting in Richard Day's work the distinction he made between the politics of demand and the politics of the act. Although I saw these two ways of thinking about politics as having meaningful differences, I felt that Deleuze would be useful to disrupt this binary and help me understand the complexity of the relationship between the politics of demand and the politics of the act. Although it is not possible to completely overcome dichotomous thinking of us/them, identity/difference, I hope that this thesis goes some way to disrupting this binary logic.

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Introduction

The protests against the World Trade Organisation in Seattle in November 1999 marked the beginning of a new wave of interest in an alternative radical politics on the Left from academics and the media. Many were taken by surprise at the way in which activists organised themselves despite the seemingly chaotic atmosphere that was generated, and it has been dubbed ‘a kind of coming-out party for a global resistance movement’¹ (e.g. Klein, 2004). Many of those involved in these global resistance practices believe that they are part of a global movement, and it has variously been termed the ‘anti-capitalist movement’, the ‘anti-globalisation movement’, the ‘movement of movements’, and the ‘global justice movement’.²

This led many commentators to claim that we were witnessing a new way of acting politically – with activists creating alternatives to state organisation; affinity groups modelling decentralised, flat organising structures; the unlikely coalitions such as the Teamsters (steelworkers unions) and the Turtles (environmental groups dressed as turtles), and an emphasis on creative direct action tactics. One way in which this has been characterised by scholars interested in the type of politics this made visible is by setting up a distinction between the ‘new’ anarchist politics, witnessed in Seattle and beyond, and the ‘old’ Marxist politics that has now been superseded. Such claims have been explained by the influence of anarchism, with theorists arguing that ‘it is in the early 21st century that anarchism has come into its own, crystallizing in the anti-globalization politics of the late 20th century’ (Curran, 2006, p. 2). Saul Newman notes that ‘anarchism –as a form of political theory and practice –is becoming increasingly important to radical struggles and global social movements today, to a large extent supplanting Marxism’ (Newman, 2008, p. 5).

In this context, it seems that this ‘new’ politics is valorised by those sympathetic to anarchism as being superior to a more Marxian politics that encourages a proletarian

¹ Of course many activists and academics were not taken by surprise and would argue that there is nothing particularly new about the tactics employed by current movements (e.g. Epstein, 2001). This is an argument that will be developed further in Chapter 1.

² I prefer to use the term Global Justice Movement as participants are not anti-globalisation; neither are all participants anti-capitalist (although the more radical elements are mostly anti-capitalist). The Global Justice Movement, although vague, is a term that suggests that they are positively ‘for’ something rather than simply reactionary.

conquest of the state in their attempts to overcome it. However, many of those involved in more traditional forms of political engagement are sceptical that this supposedly new way of acting politically can be effective, and find the lack of structure or overall direction and vision frustrating. They see this type of politics as self-indulgent and ineffectual (Morton, 2002; Žižek, 2007). Instead these critics see effective political action in terms of concrete goals, such as getting rights or recognition from the state or engaging with it to overcome it, hierarchical, well-organised structures, and having a centralised plan of action. This second view has tended to be associated with a Marxist conception of social movement politics, and has been the dominant perspective in IR due to the fact that the interest that has been paid to social movements has been done so mainly by those from a neo-Gramscian or Marxist perspective (e.g. Cox, 2005; Gill, 2005; Morton, 2002; Rupert, 2003).

There are, however, a number of theorists who have recognised the importance of the 'new' way of acting politically, and have championed the anarchist position. A significant contribution made to the anarchist literature is that of Richard Day (Day, 2005), who expresses the two different ways of acting politically discussed above by making a distinction between a *politics of demand* and a *politics of the act*. Day argues that a politics of demand is enacted when social movement actors orientate their activities towards states and global institutions from which they seek rights or recognition. This mode of politics can change the *content* of structures of domination but not their *form*. On the other hand a politics of the act chooses to bypass state recognition or the rights it can grant, and instead seeks radical change from within by creating pre-figurative alternatives of the type of society they want to see. This then breaks the cycle through which requests for rights or recognition granted by the state are used to justify the existing system of state domination through discipline and control. According to Day, this type of politics, operating according to a logic of affinity, can be found in anarchist politics and is made visible in many examples through the activities of the Global Justice Movement.

Day argues that the politics of demand is the prevailing way of thinking about politics, and sets up these two modes of acting politically as being mutually exclusive. I will build on his argument by showing, both historically and conceptually, that, although neither anarchism nor Marxism can be simply contained within these categories, anarchist and Marxist theorists have commonly conceptualised these social movements

in opposition to each other in a way that gives weight to Day's distinction. It is my contention that, rather than offering a new way of acting, the conceptualisations of politics being brought into relief through the Global Justice Movement are actually just the latest manifestation of a long-standing debate between anarchists and Marxists, and that Day has reproduced this broad debate theoretically in his distinction between the politics of demand and the politics of the act. In the first part of this thesis I will demonstrate that distinctions were created by anarchist theorists in a historical context by defining their politics with conscious reference to their differences from Marxism, and I then will show how, although these categories have points of overlap, this distinction has been reproduced theoretically in recent years by Marxian and anarchist thinkers. I will demonstrate that many Marxist thinkers have tended to privilege a politics of demand, and anarchists have tended to privilege a politics of the act.

The main aim of this thesis, however, is to demonstrate that, although there is a meaningful distinction between the politics of demand and the politics of the act, this should not be overemphasised or understood simply in dichotomous terms. Drawing on Deleuze, I will show that the politics of demand and the politics of the act can be understood as existing in a symbiotic relationship, with the politics of the act being afforded a certain ontological priority, but *not* an ethical priority. Using Deleuze and Guattari's explanation of three lines of politics – molar lines which organise society into recognisable segments and are enacted by the state, molecular lines that produce new identifications that are folded into the molar segments, and lines of flight that are lines of pure speed and creativity – I will demonstrate that the politics of the act can be understood as lines of flight that interact with molecular lines, and the politics of demand can be understood as molecular lines that interact with molar lines. I will argue that the politics of the act is the creative ontological foundation through which the politics of demand comes into being. The politics of demand is enacted by capturing certain flows of creativity; it is the crystallisation of various aspects of the politics of the act into recognisable 'moments' that allows us to create resonance with others at a societal level and to challenge existing systems of domination, but these 'moments' can be dissolved as well as created. Thus, the politics of demand and the politics of the act, although there is a meaningful distinction between them, are not mutually exclusive but rather flow into and out of each other.

In a context in which the politics of demand and the politics of the act can be understood as existing in a symbiotic relationship to each other, where one has an ontological but not an ethical priority, I will argue that there is something at stake in privileging one mode of politics over the other. Both the politics of demand and the politics of the act are necessary parts of acting politically, and it does not make sense to recognise one without also recognising the other. Even if political activities set themselves up as privileging one mode of politics or the other, it is impossible to have a 'pure' politics of the act, as there will always be some element of the politics of demand, and vice versa. In privileging one mode of politics over the other, or dismissing one as unnecessary, Marxists and anarchists are at risk of missing out on the full transformative power of radical politics where both the politics of demand and the politics of the act have distinct but complementary functions.

Alongside this attempt to think a radical politics that enacts both the politics of the act and the politics of demand together, there is a second aim of this thesis, which is to deepen our understanding of the politics of the act both theoretically and empirically. As demonstrated in the first part of the thesis, anarchists have historically pursued a politics that can be aligned with Day's description of a politics of the act. Using Deleuze and Guattari I will suggest that the politics of the act can be better understood by using the concepts of the war machine, rhizomes and lines of flight. Developing this mode of politics highlights, however, ways in which classical anarchism limits the possibility for the politics of the act in some of the ontological assumptions that it makes about human nature, society and our relationship to power. In order to deepen an understanding of the politics of the act I will draw on the principles of a recent theorisation of anarchism, developed in particular by Saul Newman and Todd May, known as 'postanarchism'. Postanarchism is not 'post' as in *after* anarchism; but is influenced by post-structuralist theory and new resistance practices and aims to extend anarchism beyond its classical limits (Newman, 2008, p. 5).

There are several ways in which postanarchism takes classical anarchism beyond itself. Firstly, postanarchism sees in classical anarchism a need to be overcome the reliance on an essential humanist epistemological framework and its exponents argue that we can no longer rely on the notion that there is a fixed, constant set of properties and characteristics that form the basis of social identities and relations through which we can determine how society will develop (Newman, 2010a, p. 196). Postanarchists

believe that there needs to be a move away from anarchism as a body of thought that is founded on the idea of a rational, ethical human essence which leads to a teleological unfolding of rational truth. Secondly, postanarchism allows us to think a politics which is contingent and able to challenge or disrupt the existing social order rather than working towards an already defined end-goal of a fully developed rational society. If this end-point for society were already determined it would be pointless to engage in concrete political interventions to challenge relations of domination. A third important area in which postanarchism makes an important contribution to anarchist theory is in its understanding of power. Drawing on Foucault's analysis of power, postanarchists acknowledge that power is an ineradicable element of any social identity, and so anarchism needs to rethink its understanding of power and domination to accept that a utopian anarchist society where power does not exist is impossible. This leads to a reappraisal of domination and the idea that there is a single site of struggle that can be overcome by the changing of power through a single goal of overthrowing the state.

Day argues that the politics of demand is the prevailing perspective in analysing social movements, and the politics of the act has not been given much theoretical attention. I will demonstrate that Deleuze and Guattari and their conception of politics embodies these tenets of postanarchism, and that they can help us understand how the politics of the act can be specified in more detail through their elaboration of the way lines of flight operate. In order to demonstrate this, the second part of this thesis will examine some empirical examples of activities that are valorised by anarchists such as Day as exemplifying a politics of the act. In doing so I aim to add to the empirical work already being done to demonstrate a postanarchist politics in action (in particular see May, 2010).

This thesis is primarily a theoretical exploration of the politics of demand and the politics of the act as different modes of politics. Although I believe that Day is not clear on how exactly he sees these different types of politics, as he tends to conflate them with social movements, I am treating them as 'modes of politics'. I define modes of politics as a distinct set of practices that can be recognised as belonging together and have a traceable history that comes from regularity of these practices being used together over time. A mode of politics is not a social movement or directly reducible to specific social movements, although it could be said that particular social movements practise a particular mode of politics well and often. However, different social

movements can act politically in more than one mode at any one time – and I will argue that both the politics of demand and the politics of the act take place together.

This project is animated by a need to overcome the dichotomy between two modes of politics that have been set up and sustained by anarchists and Marxists in both a historical and contemporary context. Any attempt to overcome a duality is not without its problems, and I do not claim to have an answer as to how to do this with complete success. The main challenge is to differentiate between these modes of politics, but not set them up as opposites or privilege one above the other, and in doing so to fall into the very trap that I am trying to avoid. Deleuze and Guattari recognise this danger when they explain that ‘we employ a dualism of models only in order to arrive at a process that challenges all models. Each time, mental correctives are necessary to undo the dualisms we had no wish to construct but through which we pass’ (Deleuze & Guattari, 2004, pp. 22-23). Thus, although I will be attempting to overcome dualisms, I may unintentionally construct some of my own on the way.

I am basing my analysis in the context of the Global Justice Movement because Day bases the politics of demand and the politics of the act on the distinction between so-called ‘old’ and ‘new’ social movements on the one hand, and ‘newest’ social movements on the other, which he sees as those involved in the Global Justice Movement (although he chooses to characterise it as the ‘anti-globalisation movement’). Other anarchist and Marxist theorists that I will draw on generally base their analysis in the context of the Global Justice Movement. This is not a thesis about the Global Justice Movement, but rather it is the context in which the debate between different ways of acting politically have been reignited, and where examples of the politics of the act have been made visible.

The majority of the activities that will form the case studies of Chapters 4 – 6 have been valorised by anarchists and others interested in the types of politics made visible by the Global Justice Movement. Each of these three chapters will focus on a particular indicator of the politics of the act and will show how the activities exemplify this in light of the relevant Deleuzian concept. In order to determine what motivates them to act in the way that they do, I will use activists’ accounts of these movements through websites and handbooks rather than concentrating on how they have been written about by others. By doing this I do not, of course, believe that each of the six activities

exemplifies only the particular aspect in question, as most of the activities display all of the different aspects of the politics of the act to greater or lesser degree. However, in order to clearly outline the concepts in question these activities have been themed so as to show the best examples that illustrate each one.

I will now turn to a brief outline of how the argument I have put forward is developed through the thesis. In Chapter 1 I will argue that, historically, anarchists and Marxist theorists have conceptualised social movements in different ways and set themselves up in opposition to each other. They have differed in key areas: around their attitudes to the state, the way in which the movement is organised, and methods of enactment. This chapter will explore these different conceptions in both a theoretical context and through empirical examples of the split in the First International, the Spanish Civil War and May 68. The chapter will begin by contextualising debates around the politics that is being heralded as a new manifestation of anarchist politics. I will argue that although some have heralded this as a new way of conceptualising politics, this is actually just the latest manifestation of a debate that can be traced back throughout the history of the anarchist movement.

I will then argue that *anti-authoritarianism*; *decentralised organisation* and *an imperative for enactment* are three principles that are consistent with a conception of anarchist politics. Anti-authoritarianism refers to anarchist beliefs that the state is the ultimate concentration of authority and always produces a relation of domination. Anarchists are against all forms of domination, and thus the state can never be a legitimate form of authority and must be destroyed. Decentralised organisation is a key feature of anarchist thought as it eschews hierarchical, centralised forms of organisation in favour of non-hierarchical organisation where decisions are made at a local level, in order to avoid building structures of domination into the way they are organised. An imperative for enactment is animated by anarchists' belief that we should be the agents of our own emancipation from domination, rather than waiting for someone to educate us and instruct us in how we must act. The chapter then continues by outlining each of these three principles through the literature of key thinkers in the anarchist canon, and showing how they have defined themselves in opposition to Marxism. Following on from this, I show how an anarchist politics aligns to each of these principles through three examples of anarchism in practice. These examples of anarchist political practices highlight the division in their conceptualisations of politics, with Marxists frustrated by

a way of acting politically that seems ineffective and without any particular goals or measures of success. The chapter finishes where it started, with a discussion of the anarchist character of the Global Justice Movement, with the G8 protests in Gleneagles in 2005 providing a current example of the different modes of politics.

Chapter 2 will build on the previous chapter by showing that the historical distinction between the anarchist and Marxist conceptions of politics are still being reproduced theoretically. Richard Day offers a clear example of this, and I will start by outlining Day's distinction between a politics of demand and a politics of the act as different modes of politics. I will then go on to develop Day's distinction by identifying three indicators of the politics of demand and corollary indicators of the politics of the act that I think capture the main differences between the two modes of politics: *state-oriented politics/withdrawal from the state*, *hierarchical organisation/horizontal organisation*, and *educating the movement/imperative for enactment*. I will argue that Marxists tend to privilege a politics of demand, by drawing on Gramsci, Morton, Laclau and Mouffe, Callinicos and Lenin, and I use these thinkers as exemplars of a particular aspect of the politics of demand rather than to represent 'Marxism' as a whole. I will then draw on anarchist thinkers (and those Marxists who take a position that exemplifies a particular aspect of the politics of the act) to show that anarchists tend to privilege a politics of the act. I will demonstrate this through the work of Bey, Hardt and Negri, Tormey, Rancière and May, again as exemplars of particular aspects of the politics of the act. I will then show how the categories of the politics of demand and the politics of the act are not the only way of creating this distinction between different ways of acting politically through a discussion of Žižek and Critchley, by demonstrating that the politics of the act can be thought about through making demands on the state, and the politics of demand can be a call to action.

In Chapter 3 I will argue that I will then argue that the relationship between a politics of demand and a politics of the act can be understood as a symbiotic one, where the politics of the act has an ontological – but not ethical – priority. Drawing on Deleuze and Guattari's three lines of politics, I will suggest that this provides a useful way of understanding the relationship between the politics of demand and the politics of the act where the politics of the act is the foundation for politics; it is the productive basis on which the politics of demand can be enacted. The politics of demand is enacted when it captures creative flows and crystallises them into recognisable 'moments' – by framing

their politics in terms of rights and recognition, the politics of demand becomes recognisable and creates resonances with state and society. In other words it makes the politics of the act visible and understandable. I will then go on to show that Deleuze and Guattari help us develop a rich understanding of the politics of the act through the concepts of the war-machine, rhizomes and lines of flight, which align respectively with *withdrawal from the state*, *horizontal organising structures* and *an imperative for enactment*. These concepts demonstrate that Deleuze can add value by both specifying what a politics of the act might look like, and also to show how a politics of demand can be brought into being and crystallised as ‘moments’ of visibility. This explanation of the relationship between the politics of demand and the politics of the act will help to overcome the dichotomous thinking set up by anarchists and Marxists between these two modes of acting politically.

A short ‘intermezzo’ section then revisits Day’s distinction between the politics of demand and the politics of the act and offers two main critiques of Day’s distinction between the politics of demand and the politics of the act. Firstly, I will argue that the politics of demand and the politics of the act are very narrow and rigid in their categorisation, and that it is problematic to set these two modes of politics up as being mutually exclusive, independent modes of politics. Secondly, I will show the limitations that Day creates by valorising the politics of the act as ethically superior to the politics of demand. This critique is possible in light of the way Deleuze and Guattari can help take us beyond Day by challenging this dichotomy. This leads to a discussion of how postanarchism can help us think about anarchism and its relationship to the politics of the act in a different way by moving beyond some of the limitations that classical anarchism imposes on itself through its Enlightenment paradigm. I will then ask some questions that will guide the following chapters in deepening our understanding of activities that are valorised as practicing a politics of the act.

Chapter 4 examines withdrawal from the state by Food Not Bombs and the social centre movement; Chapter 5 examines horizontal organising structures by Critical Mass and Indymedia Centres; and Chapter 6 examines an imperative for enactment by guerrilla gardening and the Clandestine Insurgent Rebel Clown Army (CIRCA). I will use three Deleuzian concepts of *war machine* (Chapter 4), *rhizomes* (Chapter 5), and the *line of flight* (Chapter 6) to deepen our understanding of the politics of the act and its relationship with the politics of demand. This is not to suggest that these activities only

display the particular Deleuzian concept which is discussed in each chapter, and reference will also be made in these chapters to the way in which they exemplify any or all of the three concepts outlined above.

In Chapter 4 I will show how Food Not Bombs and Social Centres exemplify one aspect of the politics of the act – withdrawal from the state. Food Not Bombs takes wasted food that would otherwise be thrown out and creates vegetarian meals for those who need it, such as the homeless, and Social Centres take over buildings to provide for the needs of the local community. Both Food Not Bombs and Social Centres exemplify a withdrawal from the state as they do not expect or ask anything from the state, but exist alongside it without asking for permission or recognition. The concept of the war machine characterises this through providing an alternative to the state and avoiding recognition by the state. The important moment comes when the war machine comes into contact with the state, as this can lead to the war machine being captured by it. I will show that these activities exemplify these three characteristics of the war machine by examining each in turn. I will use Food Not Bombs as an exemplar of the creation of an alternative and social centres as an exemplar of avoiding contact with the state. I will then examine the way both Food Not Bombs and social centres operate when they come into contact with the state. Finally I will return to the concept of the war machine, and show how it adds value to withdrawal from the state, as this moment of contact with the state is when the politics of the act can produce a crystallisation into the politics of demand. I will consider how this might be demonstrated in these activities, and how it might raise further questions to be considered.

Chapter 5 will continue to look at the politics of the act, this time focusing on the principle of horizontal organising structures, and will show how Critical Mass and Indymedia Centres exemplify this through the concept of rhizomes. Critical Mass, like Food Not Bombs, started as a simple idea that has now spread around the world. Cyclists in San Francisco were unhappy at how unfriendly the city's streets were for cyclists, and decided to take back the streets by organising a mass bike ride through the city on the last Friday of every month. Indymedia Centres (IMCs) are another example of decentralised, horizontal ways of organising. The first IMC was set up to offer reports on the Seattle protests in 1999 that provided an alternative to the corporate media coverage. This use of independent media has been taken up by activists around the world, with many Indymedia Centres being set up as permanent websites through

which information and reports on events can be shared. Rhizomes have no centre of control but consist of many differences resonating together, rather than an identity to which all elements of the rhizome have to measure up. Rhizomes are also characterised by connection and multiplicity, by which a rhizome can be infinitely expanded through new connections, but these connections change the nature of the rhizome. Their third characteristic is one of mapping newness rather than reproducing existing paths of action. I will demonstrate that Critical Mass exemplifies this first aspect of a lack of central control, and that Indymedia Centres exemplify connection and multiplicity. I will then return to Critical Mass as exemplars of mapping newness in their actions rather than reproducing what has gone before. Following this I will focus once again on the Deleuzian concept of the rhizome in order to show how it adds to the understanding of horizontal ways of organising by showing how the politics of demand can be present when elements of a rhizome become crystallised in a way that creates control – and that rhizomes contain elements of hierarchy and control, just as hierarchical organisations contains elements of the rhizome. This leads to a discussion of how the politics of demand might be formed in a rhizome, and what this might look like in Critical Mass and Indymedia Centres.

The third aspect of a politics of the act – an imperative for enactment – is the subject of Chapter 6, and I will show how the activity of guerrilla gardening and the Clandestine Insurgent Rebel Clown Army (CIRCA) exemplify this. Guerrilla gardening has, according to some, been around since the Diggers in the 17th century, and can be summed up as the cultivation of land that belongs to somebody else. This can range from planting sunflowers on roundabouts to taking disused land and creating a community garden. The act of guerrilla gardening is a way of reclaiming the right to occupy a space, and redefining narratives around issues of environment and public spaces. The activities of the Clown Army appear to some to be frivolous: dressing up as clowns and making a nuisance of themselves at protest events by distracting the authorities from more destructive elements of the protest (Boyes, 2007). However, there is more to clowning than meets the eye. These clowns are purposefully engaged with creativity and spontaneity, and see the process of becoming a clown as about allowing oneself to be open to experimentation and play, which leads to self-transformation. The Deleuzian concept that helps us here is the line of flight, which can be characterised as open to everyone, experimental and creative, and an ability to disrupt molar segments by calling their fixity into question. Guerrilla gardening is a

good exemplar of the inclusivity and openness of a line of flight, while CIRCA exemplify its spontaneous, experimental nature with the capacity for self-transformation and creativity. I will argue that both guerrilla gardening and CIRCA exemplify the way in which a line of flight does not seek to overcome authority, but rather disrupts it through questioning what seem to be fixed and rigid molar segments. I will then return to Deleuze's line of flight in order to see how the politics of demand is crystallised through the politics of the act when the pure creativity of a line of flight is channelled towards an interaction with the molar segments in order to disrupt them and with molecular lines allows itself to be captured in this way, shifting the molar segments as it does so to allow for new concepts or identifications to be folded in. I will then consider how this might be demonstrated in the activities of guerrilla gardening and the Clown Army.

I conclude by arguing that any conceptualisation of social movement that privileges one mode of politics over the other is in danger of overlooking or dismissing the different functions that a politics of demand and a politics of the act play in a politics of radical change. I will also suggest that the relationship between a politics of demand and a politics of the act needs to be further developed and will set out some thoughts on what kind of theoretical and empirical work needs still to be done. I will outline one way in which this could be conceptualised as a 'politics of the molecular', in contrast to Chantal Mouffe's conception of the political.

Chapter 1: A Permanent Divide? Anarchism and Marxism in a historical context

For many academics and activists, a new expression of radical politics burst onto the scene on 30th November 1999 at the so-called ‘Battle of Seattle’. Activists of all traditions, from trade unionists and environmental activists dressed as turtles to the Black Bloc, gathered in Seattle and disrupted the World Trade Organisation meeting, stopping delegates reaching the summit and taking control of downtown Seattle. Actions targeted at both state and corporate organisations, the use of affinity groups and the creativity and diversity of direct action targets were all noted as proof that traditional Left or Marxist politics was in decline, and that we were witnessing the birth of a ‘new’ type of movement that was influenced in many ways by anarchism.

In this chapter I will show that this example of a politics that is influenced by anarchist principles of anti-authoritarianism, horizontal organising and an imperative for action is not new, but is the latest manifestation of a radical political debate that has been around for the last two centuries, and can be traced through the historical context of anarchism; and that historically, anarchists have conceptualised politics by consciously setting themselves up as distinct from Marxist conceptualizations of politics.

I will argue that the axes of debate along which these differences between anarchists and Marxists occur can be found in three key areas: attitudes towards the state, ways of organising and methods of enactment. I will examine the historical context by discussing each of these areas in turn in two ways. Firstly I will discuss how these three areas are theorised by anarchists, and how they have differentiated themselves theoretically from Marxist conceptions of politics, by drawing on the work of theorists from the anarchist canon. I will use anarchist thinkers to examine these three areas of difference, drawing on Kropotkin and Bakunin’s attitudes towards the state; Godwin and Proudhon’s ways of thinking about organising structures; and Bakunin and Malatesta’s views on methods of enactment. Secondly, I will examine three brief examples of resistance that I consider to be important moments in the history of an anarchist way of thinking about politics. These three examples each correspond to one of the principles outlined above: attitudes to the state shown in the anarchist/Marxist split in the First International; organisational structures shown through the Spanish Civil

War; and methods of enactment shown through the popular uprising in France in May 68. This will demonstrate both an anarchist conception of politics and the way in which Marxists have conceptualised these same events in different ways. The chapter will conclude with an examination of how these anarchist principles are demonstrated in the Global Justice Movement, and how the distinction between anarchist and Marxist conceptions of politics is present in this current context.

It is important to note that although these three key areas outline the general positions of anarchism and Marxism and highlight important differences between the two ways of conceptualising politics and acting politically, this does not mean that all anarchists and Marxists subscribe to these views. There are many examples of the blurring of boundaries between the two types of politics, indeed anarchism and Marxism come from the same historical context and have shared goals. There are also practical compromises that have been made in acting politically, for example when anarchists became involved in government during the Spanish Civil War. There are also many internal debates within anarchism and Marxism, and many of the concepts are complex and do not make for easy classification. Many areas, such as the character and usefulness of the state in revolutionary politics are still widely contested.³ This chapter is written primarily from the anarchist perspective and shows anarchist thinkers' own positioning in reference to Marxism, and so it is their understanding of the concepts that is offered. Of course this does not amount to a uniform and totally hostile critique of Marxism – and as anarchists have viewed and understood Marxism in different ways so they offer their critiques in different ways.

Three principles of anarchism

One way that I find useful of distinguishing between anarchist and Marxist understandings of what they are fighting against, proffered by Todd May, is to say that generally Marxists see the struggle as one against exploitation and anarchists see the struggle in terms of domination (May, 2009). The Marxist explanation of the problem is that workers are exploited because they do not receive the full value of the labour and surplus value is extracted by the capitalist. Thus they see the problem as political but as being solved through economic measures. The only way to stop the workers being

³ Indeed many argue that this is a necessary problem to have. Poulantzas argues that 'there is certainly no general theory of the State to be found in the Marxist classics: not just because their authors were for one reason or another unable to complete one, but because there can never be any such theory' (Poulantzas, 2000, p. 20).

exploited is to bring an end to capitalism. Domination, on the other hand, refers to oppressive relations of power that stop humans flourishing by imposing authority upon them. This is more of a political than an economic argument, and can relate to oppressive power relations in a wider variety of areas, for example racial domination or sexual domination as well as economic domination (May, 2009, p. 12). The implication of understanding what they are fighting against in different ways is that anarchists and Marxists then conceptualise the solution differently. Whereas a Marxist solution is likely to be economic first and political second, for anarchists the problem needs to be solved through changing particularly oppressive power relations. This means seeing the solution as being brought about through a mode of politics that is anti-authoritarian because authority, particularly in its state form, is the ultimate oppressive relation of power; decentralised in the way it is organised as this limits the levels of domination that comes from centralised, hierarchical organisation; and through an imperative for enactment that empowers each individual in trying to resist the particular power relations that oppress them.

Attitudes towards the state: Kropotkin and Bakunin

Central to any anarchist conception of domination is the rejection of the legitimacy of the state. Oppressive power relations are, for anarchists, most often located in the state. This is not to say that all domination can be solved by abolishing the state, but that the state is always an agent of domination. The state is illegitimate because it has been imposed, and could be described as authority backed up by coercion. Anarchists believe that states set themselves up through the false claim that they are rescuing societies from the unruly and dangerous state of nature, and govern with the fictitious 'will of the people' as their mandate. Anarchists also reject the liberal notion of the social contract and see it as a fictional legitimisation of the state: 'political authority cannot, therefore, be based on a rational and free agreement between individuals. Rather it is based on a founding gesture of violence that is masked by the ideological fiction of the contract' (Newman, 2005, p. 35).

This idea of a rational self-governing society is best summed up by Russian anarchist Petr Kropotkin. Kropotkin was both a scientist and a philosopher, and attempted to bring scientific reasoning to his development of anarchism. His most famous work *Mutual Aid* (Kropotkin, 1902) explored how humans exist in community and was based on his observance of animals. He argued that, although nature contains elements of struggle and that the 'survival of the fittest' is an observable principle, Darwin had

overlooked mutual aid as an important phenomenon that played more of a role in the progressive evolution of these species than social Darwinism did. Kropotkin applied this to human society and developed his brand of anarchism on the lines that the state of nature is one of mutual cooperation; or in other words he maintained that society is a natural phenomenon existing outside of man, and that man is naturally adapted to live in a society without artificial regulations.

Anarchists believe that the state is an agent of domination because it is created by force, or the threat of force, and is oppressive because it does not allow humans to develop their natural capacity for harmony. Man is and always has been a social species. Kropotkin believed that anarchism is in keeping with the evolution of human nature – as humans gain better education and evolution, the individual is allowed to flourish within the construct of the community. It is only in genuine community that individual development can take place. Anarchy is thus a current possibility in our everyday lives, and it is up to anarchists to help people express what are natural tendencies for mutual aid and cooperation.

So we see that the state is the main source of oppression, but the problem for Kropotkin comes when he needs to explain how, if man is naturally cooperative, the state came about in the first place. He argues that it was in the Middle Ages and Renaissance when the state began to be established, and it happened when two functions of a society – the military force used for defence and the specialized knowledge of the law held by those with judicial power – became centralised in one person. Backed by the church, this then led to the creation of serfdom, capitalism and finally the state (Marshall, 2008, p. 324). Man then developed a taste for authority, and wanted an authority figure to settle their disputes. Those who had developed a taste for power and authority were happy to play this role, and strengthened their position by acting as a restraint on the true development of human society in mutual cooperation. According to Kropotkin, the state is designed to ‘prevent the direct association among men, to shackle the development of local and individual initiative, to crush existing liberties, to prevent their new blossoming – all this in order to subject the masses to the will of the minorities’ (Kropotkin, 1969, p. 52). This still doesn’t entirely explain how man goes from being naturally cooperative to desiring authoritarian rule, being willing nevertheless to turn back to mutual aid and cooperation if the state was abolished, but Kropotkin argued that if the political authority of the state and other unnatural institutions was removed, that man would once

again act socially – that the will for altruism and cooperation is stronger than the will for power and authority. He argued that the state had become the master of all areas of human activity and that individuals had forgotten that they were independent beings and could cooperate together to achieve common goals (Kinna, 2005, p. 54).

Another thinker who developed an anarchist conception of the state was Russian dissident Mikhail Bakunin. One of Bakunin's main contributions to anarchist theory was to extend and develop earlier anarchist critiques of the state. He believed that society has its own natural laws, but that those imposed by the state are not natural but artificial. Therefore states are responsible for the evils of society and true freedom can only be realised with the complete destruction of the state. Bakunin argued that authority is opposed to liberty as it crushes the spontaneous life of the people. It is like 'a vast slaughterhouse or an enormous cemetery, where all the real aspirations, all the living forces of a country enter generously and happily, in the shadow of that abstraction, to let themselves be slain and buried' (Bakunin, 1973a, p. 269). People are not able to act spontaneously or cooperatively as the state centralises all economic and political power in its hands and stifles the creativity of individuals and society.

For Bakunin the state will always represent violence. Because it has been imposed by violent means and is maintained through coercion or the threat of coercion, the state will always be military in nature. If the state is imposed on society by one group, it then remains open itself to being imposed upon from others by violent means, and so in order to survive the state must conquer or be conquered, thus perpetuating domination both in a national and international context as a necessary condition for its survival. He believed that the state destroys human freedom in two ways: internally by maintaining order through force and exploiting the people, and externally by aggressively waging wars on other states. Bakunin does not hold back in his criticism of the state and claims that:

The entire history of ancient and modern states is merely a series of revolting crimes...There is no horror, no cruelty, sacrilege, or perjury, no imposture, no infamous transaction, no cynical robbery, no bold plunder or shabby betrayal that has not been or is not daily being perpetrated by the representatives of the states, under no other pretext than those elastic words, so convenient and so terrible: 'for reasons of state' (Bakunin, 1973a, pp. 133-134).

Anarchists like Bakunin and Kropotkin held similar views of the problem of the state to Marx and his followers. They both believed that the state was always an instrument of

the ruling class and that ‘the political regime to which human societies are submitted is always the expression of the economic regime which exists within that society’ (Marshall, 2008, p. 324). Fredreich Engels argued that the state arose in order to hold class antagonisms in check, and is captured by ‘the most powerful, economically dominant class, which, with the assistance of the State, becomes also the politically dominant class, and thus acquires new means of suppressing and exploiting the oppressed class’ (Engels, quoted in Lenin, 1992, p. 9). However, for anarchists, political and economic regimes influenced each other in a relationship of symbiosis rather than the economic determining the political as Marx claimed.⁴

Bakunin argued that Marx had too narrow an understanding of the state, and that to focus on the economic understanding of the state at the exclusion of political factors was a mistake, as although the economic base did influence the political superstructure, the superstructure could also influence the base. He noted that:

[Marx] holds that the political condition of each country is always the product and the faithful expression of its economic situation...He takes no account of other factors in history, such as the ever-present reaction of political, juridical, and religious institutions on the economic situation. He says: ‘Poverty produces political slavery, the State.’ But he does not allow this expression to be turned around, to say: ‘Political slavery, the State, reproduces in its turn, and maintains poverty as a condition for its own existence; so that to destroy poverty, it is necessary to destroy the State!’ (Bakunin, 1973a, p. 282).

Kropotkin argued that Marx went wrong when he conflated the concepts of state and government. He argued that Marx defined both as types of economic power, and thus

⁴ For some Marxists this understanding of the state and its relationship to capital and the class system is more nuanced than this particular argument suggests. Marxist thinker Poulantzas, for example, has argued that the state is relatively autonomous from the capitalist class because its function is to secure social cohesion – thus there is a separation of the political from the economic sphere. He argues that ‘the political field of the State... has always, in different forms, been present in the constitution and reproduction of the relations of production’ (Poulantzas, 2000, p. 17). It would be difficult to say that Marx held a consistent position on the state and its relationship to the ruling class, as although the dominant theory of the state is the one outlined above, where the state is the instrument of the bourgeoisie, in *The Eighteen Brumaire of Louis Bonaparte* (Marx, 1926) he suggests that the state has a fair degree of independence from the state, with the state not always acting in the bourgeoisie’s immediate interests. Rather than choose between these two slightly different conceptions of the state, however, it would suffice to say that in some form or another that the state is bound up with the ruling class to a greater or lesser degree and is determined by capitalist relations (Newman, 2010b, p. 23), and that this reflects Marx’s argument that the economic determines the political.

assumed that the state could be abolished by changing the form of government. Marx believed that ‘to wrest, by degrees, all capital from the bourgeoisie, to centralize all instruments of production in the hands of the State’ (Communist Manifesto, p. 25), where the proletariat would be the ruling class then radical change and the abolishment of the state would be possible, but for Kropotkin this was impossible because the state would always be a source of oppression even in socialist hands.

Thus although anarchists and Marxists agree that the state represents power concentrated in the hands of the wealthy, and both look forward to a society in which the state has been abolished, they had very different ideas of how to get there. As Lenin noted, ‘we do not at all disagree with the *anarchists* on the question of the abolition of the State as an *aim*. We maintain that, to achieve this aim, we must make temporary use of the instruments, resources and methods of State power *against* the exploiters’ (Lenin, 1992, p. 55). They differed on the causes of the problem, with anarchists seeing the state as the determining influence over the economy and Marxists arguing that the right economic conditions had to be developed before the state was no longer needed. Engels argued that as soon as there was no longer a conflict among different classes, there would be no need for the state which is a ‘special force for suppression’, the state functions would become administrative and the state wouldn’t need to be abolished, rather it would simply ‘wither away’ (Engels, 1934, pp. 302-303).

Ways of organising: Godwin and Proudhon

Anarchists are not against all forms of organisation, but rather those that are authoritarian. They recognise that some forms of overarching organisation will be necessary, and argue for organisation that is non-hierarchical and decentralised, organised from the grassroots up. Different thinkers have approached the form that this type of organisation might take in different ways, but it is a theme that is consistent with almost all anarchists.

William Godwin is considered by many to be the first to set down anarchist principles, and Kropotkin described him as ‘the first theorizer of Socialism without government – that is to say, of Anarchism’ (Kropotkin, 1912, p. 13). Godwin’s 1793 book *Enquiry Concerning Political Justice* (Godwin, 1798) critiqued the state and set out how an anarchist society might look. He believed that we are all born as equals and are products of our social environment; therefore there are no innate grounds for class distinctions or slavery. Thus all men and women should be treated equally, and what is

desirable for one is desirable for all. All humans can be brought to see reason, and principles of pure reason will guide all to do what is best for the community. Godwin believed that it was not fair for the decisions that we make to bind us forever, as we might change, and circumstances may change. Rather, arrangements between individuals must be finite and limited in order for them to be just. The state, however, demands a commitment that is infinite, and therefore cannot be legitimate.

Godwin opposed national, centralised representative government, arguing that it would create a fictitious unanimity that leads to a tyranny of the majority. Instead of the state he suggested there should be small local groups known as parishes in order to co-ordinate production and secure social benefits, and several parishes would form a loose confederacy. These federated parishes would have no interest in conquest and extending their territory by force, unlike the state which, as we noted earlier, is driven by the logic of conquer or be conquered (Day, 2005, p. 98). Differences would be settled between parishes informally, with a national assembly that could be convened and dissolved by parishes as required.

Godwin also believed that genuine reform was best achieved through education and enlightenment in small independent circles, and such circles anticipated the ‘affinity groups’ of later anarchists. When people were educated in this way the state would wither away as people become more enlightened and see the state as an unnecessary evil and withdraw their support.

Another anarchist thinker who developed a vision of how societies would be organised was Frenchman Pierre-Joseph Proudhon. He claimed that in fact ‘anarchy was order’ rather than chaos and disorder, by arguing that the unequal distribution of wealth and authoritarian government are the main causes of disorder and chaos in society (Proudhon, 1890). Proudhon’s reason for advocating decentralised organisation was more economic than Godwin’s. He argued for an economic system of mutualism, where workers would form associations to exchange the products of their work. The value of this work would be worked out on the basis of the amount of necessary labour time involved in production. The workers would control their means of production, and this economic system would replace the political system and the state would wither away.

Proudhon believed that we should exist in communes, and that these communes would be part of a federal society, which would prevent the tendency of power to lead to more power. Society would be organised from the bottom up, with a reverse of traditional forms of hierarchy; however, it would still be necessary for some form of overarching arbitration to settle disputes. Proudhon was quite specific about what decentralised federation might look like. Woodcock explains:

The federal principle should operate from the simplest level of society. The organization of administration should begin locally and as near the direct control of the people as possible; individuals should start the process by federating into communes and associations. Above that primary level the confederal organization would become less an organ of administration than of coordination between local units. Thus the nation would be replaced by a geographical confederation of regions, and Europe would become a confederation of confederations, in which the interest of the smallest province would have as much expression as that of the largest, and in which all affairs would be settled by mutual agreement, contract and arbitration (Woodcock, 1979, p. 130).

This could end up looking like a government, and ends up sounding more like liberalism than anarchism – it is clear that this conception of federalism is not without its problems (Day, 2005, p. 112). However, the ideas that Proudhon put forward led to practical action by activists who tried to live out this model of mutualism. His followers made up a large proportion of those in the Paris commune in 1871, and Marshall notes that ‘the Paris Commune of 1871, which declared ‘the absolute autonomy of the Commune extended to all the localities of France’, advocated in theory a form of Proudhonian federalism’ (Marshall, 2008, p. 435). The Paris Commune experiment may have been short-lived, but Proudhon’s mutualism and federalist ideas were influential in later expressions of anarchist activism.

This approach to the organisation of the workers is one where anarchists and Marxists differ extensively. Proudhon was insistent that justice could only be brought about through equality, and thus believed that hierarchy in the form of a centralised social movement could only replicate the injustice and oppression that all workers and activists on the Left were trying to overcome. He argued that hierarchy is one of the most powerful instruments of oppression and that it results in exploitation of the masses by the wealthy few (Proudhon, 1858, p. 174). He thus disagreed profoundly with the dictatorship of the proletariat that Marx advocated, and argued that it would lead to universal servitude, centralisation and the systematic destruction of individual thought. Marx wanted to build up the vanguard party as the means through which the proletariat

would be educated and mobilised. The party would have strong authoritarian leadership, and would be organised from the top down. The Russian Revolution seemed to bear out anarchist warnings that centralised, authoritarian communism promoted oppression and dictatorship and did not result in the transitory period of state domination, and many anarchists were dismayed at the Bolsheviks' oppressive regime of domination. Russian anarchist Voline notes that for the Bolsheviks, although using the kind of language that had been spoken by anarchists to create such slogans as 'long live the social revolution!' their interpretation of those slogans were different to anarchist interpretations:

For the anarchists this call described '*a really social act: a transformation which would take place outside of all political and statist organizations...*' It meant '*destruction of the State and capitalism at the same time, and the birth of a new society based on another form of social organization*'. For the Bolsheviks, however, the slogan meant 'resurrection of the State after the abolition of the bourgeois State – that is to say, the creation of a powerful new State for the purpose of "constructing Socialism"' (Voline, 1975, pp. 210-211).

The experience of anarchists in the Russian Revolution goes some way to explaining why anarchists are so opposed to hierarchical organisation of any kind, and why they see this is a clear dividing line between anarchism and Marxism, even if Marx himself would not have endorsed the actions of the Bolsheviks.

Methods of enactment – Bakunin and Malatesta

The high value placed by anarchists on equality and freedom and the rejection of a top-down vanguard party to direct the revolution led anarchists to argue that individuals needed to take responsibility for their own liberation. The form that this action will take varies, but the important thing is that individuals decide what action is necessary, and take responsibility for their own action. Thus politics can be seen as an enactment of freedom rather than a means to an end; it is in this sense an end in itself.

Bakunin believed that freedom is linked to equality, and that the one can only be realised in the fulfilment of the other. All men and women are born with the same level of morality and intelligence, and they develop as a product of their environment. Humans are born with the capacity for reasoning and feeling, but that these capacities are only developed through society: 'Man is born into society, just as an ant is born into an ant-hill or a bee into its hive' (Bakunin, 1973b, p. 65). It is necessarily anterior to our thought, speech and will and we can only become humanized and emancipated in

society. Liberty involves the ‘full development of all the material, intellectual and moral powers which are to be found as faculties latent in everybody’ (quoted in Marshall, 2008, p. 292). To be free is not to surrender one’s own thought or will to anything but one’s own reason. Thus it is not true freedom to achieve liberation through following the orders of a ruler or party intellectual.

Bakunin was opposed to the role of the dictatorship of the proletariat, and argued against Marx in the First International that the International should not simply provide education so that the workers could realise and address their ‘false consciousness’, but that this should be achieved through practice in the here and now – and that the emancipation of the workers was the job of the workers themselves rather than a centralised dictatorship. He disapproved of Marx’s decision to support the formation of working-class political parties, and his view that ‘the immediate aim of the Communists is the same as that of all the other proletarian parties: formation of the proletariat into a class, overthrow of the bourgeois supremacy, conquest of political power by the proletariat’ (Marx & Engels, 2008, p. 17), arguing that a uniform policy of political conquest should not be imposed on the working classes (Kinna, 2005, p. 126). Marx and his followers believed that workers could take control of the state to achieve freedom through their representatives and for a ‘decisive centralisation of power in the hands of state authority’ (Marx & Engels, 1978, p. 509); anarchists argued that only direct action by the workers would lead to emancipation.

Bakunin displayed this commitment to equality of action by recognising the revolutionary potential of the peasant class. He argued that Marx was too narrow in focusing only on the proletariat as the architects of revolution and that the peasant class – those who were poorest, alienated and oppressed, dismissed by Marx as the ‘lumpenproletariat’ (Marx & Engels, 2008, p. 14) – would also play a part in any revolution, as they had the least to lose. He called for alliances between industrial workers and peasants to be formed so that when workers took the revolutionary initiative, they would have widespread support. Bakunin was a strong supporter of the Paris Commune of 1871, which was suppressed by the French government. He saw the Commune as ‘inaugurating [a] new era, that of the final and complete emancipation of the masses of the people’ (Bakunin, 1973b, p. 199). He commended the Communards

for rejecting the state rather than exemplifying Marx's model of proletarian dictatorship.⁵

Another anarchist thinker and activist who focused on the importance of direct action in achieving revolution was Errico Malatesta. One of Malatesta's main contributions to anarchist activism was his belief that direct action is a necessary part of educating the masses and 'the insurrectional fact, destined to affirm socialist principles by deeds, is the most efficacious means of propaganda.' He believed that it is not enough to wait for the right economic or political conditions before revolution could take place but that radical change must be brought about by action: 'We believe furthermore that the revolution is an act of will – the will of individuals and of the masses; that it needs for its success certain objective conditions, but that it does not happen of necessity, inevitably, through the single action of economic and political forces' (Malatesta, 1977, p. 154).

Malatesta recognised the importance of the economic struggle to improve workers' conditions, but insisted that one must also engage in the political struggle; that is, the struggle against government. He argued that trade unionism was reformist, and that this could not be enough to bring about change. 'A successful insurrection is the most powerful factor in the emancipation of the people; it is therefore the task of anarchists to 'push' the people to expropriate the bosses, to put all goods in common and to organize their lives themselves' (Hostetter, 1958, p. 368). The only way in which there will be well-being for all is through the complete destruction of the domination and exploitation of man by man.

Malatesta talked about anarchism as a movement and argued that change would be brought about through solidarity with concrete struggle: 'the revolution consists more in deeds than words...each time a spontaneous movement of the people erupts...it is the duty of every revolutionary socialist to declare his solidarity with the movement in the making' (Malatesta, 1876, p. 10). Malatesta did not believe that the general strike would be effective, as there would not be enough food and essential goods to sustain

⁵ Marx also celebrated the success of the Paris Commune as socialism in practice however. Engels argued in the 1891 postscript to *The Civil War in France* that this was the work of the dictatorship of the proletariat in action: 'Well and good, gentlemen, do you want to know what this dictatorship looks like? Look at the Paris Commune. That was the Dictatorship of the Proletariat' (Engels, 1933).

society, and the workers would be the first to starve. Rather, he advocated insurrection – to occupy the factories and seize means of production as quickly as possible before the state and police responded and stopped the insurrection by force. He believed that the revolution was coming and that violence would be a necessary part of the revolution, as the aim was to overthrow the state, which is built on violent coercion. Thus for Malatesta, some form of violence would be necessary for emancipation.

Anarchist politics in practice

In this section I will trace the three principles of anarchism – anti-authoritarianism, decentralised organisation and an imperative for enactment – through three empirical examples that anarchists identify as important events in their history. These three examples each demonstrate an aspect of anarchist politics in practice outlined above: anti-authoritarianism in the split in the First International; decentralised organisation during the Spanish Civil War; and an imperative of enactment through the uprising in France in May 68. They add depth to the historical account of an anarchist politics, and demonstrate the differences between anarchism and Marxism through the way in which Marxists have interpreted these same events in different ways. They also demonstrate, however, that this is always ambiguity and compromise in political activity, with a blurring of the principles of anarchism and Marxism in the every-day resistance of political conflict.

The First International

In 1864, the International Working Men’s Association or ‘First International’ was formed, bringing together different groups of Leftist revolutionaries and trade unions including many of Proudhon’s followers. Due to its links with workers movements across Europe, it became a significant organisation for working class struggle. Up until that point, revolutionary activism had not been defined in different ideological ways; rather there was a general commitment to the struggle of workers. Karl Marx became one of the First International’s leading lights, and his disagreement with Mikhail Bakunin led to the crystallisation of two revolutionary currents – Marxism and anarchism.

Marx was involved from the start, and was elected onto every subsequent General Council of the First International. Bakunin and his followers, who were known as ‘collectivists’ at that time, joined in 1868. Marx and Bakunin enjoyed lively discussions but their different opinions on bringing about revolutionary change soon

became clear. One of the most significant differences between Marx and Bakunin was in their understanding of the state, as described earlier in this chapter. Bakunin believed that Marx confused the state with government, as Marx thought that it was possible to abolish the state by changing the mode of government, by putting it in socialist hands, and to create 'red bureaucracy', whereas Bakunin feared that socialism would merely create a new form of an oppressive state in the workers' control. Bakunin feared that the communist revolution was so focused on the liberation of the proletariat that all others would be oppressed in the name of economic progress. He argued that, however democratic they might be, all rulers are corrupted by their role in government and start seeing themselves as sovereign rulers over their subjects. Thus a popular state is no different from any other kind of state, even if it is only in transition: 'if their State is effectively a popular State, why should they dissolve it? If on the other hand its suppression is necessary for the real emancipation of the people, why then call it a popular State?' (Bakunin, 1967, p. 149). For Bakunin representative democracy will always be a fraud because it rests on the myth that elected officials can carry out 'the will of the people', which is an impossible concept.

These different views of the state led Marx and Bakunin to advocate different sets of strategies to achieve social change. Marx promoted a strategy of engaging with the state through parliamentary involvement, and this issue was the main source of conflict between the 'revolutionary socialists' or anarchists who followed Bakunin and the 'authoritarian communists' who followed Marx. Bakunin was scathing of this idea that involvement in parliamentary politics could be an effective or just route to radical change:

We do not accept, even in the process of revolutionary transition, either constituent assemblies, provisional governments or so-called evolutionary dictatorships; because we are convinced that revolution is only sincere, honest and real in the hands of the masses, and that when it is concentrated into those of a few ruling individuals it inevitably and immediately becomes reaction...The Marxists profess quite different ideas. They are worshippers of State power, and necessarily also prophets of political and social discipline and champions of order established from the top downwards, always in the name of universal suffrage and the sovereignty of the masses, for whom they save the honour and privilege of obeying leaders, elected masters. ...Between the Marxists and ourselves there is a chasm. They are for government, we, for our part, are anarchists (Bakunin, 1973b, pp. 237-238).

Although they had the same ultimate goal – to create a new society based on the collectivised organisation of labour and ownership of the means of production – Marx

and Bakunin had very different ways of going about it. Different tactics were put forward for both positions, with communists wanting to take control of the state in order to overthrow it, and the anarchists wanting to destroy the state altogether as a first goal, basing their rationale on the principles of authority and liberty respectively. Bakunin did not believe that the first goal must be economic emancipation at the expense of political emancipation, believing that it would be no freedom to destroy economic exploitation only to be subject to political domination. As noted earlier in the chapter, Marx was insistent that the working class would be the agents of revolution and believed that, although the abolition of the state was the end goal, political involvement in government could be progressive (Marx & Engels, 2008, p. 23). Political power could be transformed through the agency of the working class to create a dictatorship of the proletariat that would eventually lead to the withering away of the state.

In 1872 at the First International Congress in The Hague, Marx accused Bakunin of forming a secret society in Russia and trying to control workers in Spain, Italy and France. Bakunin and his collaborator James Guillaume were subsequently expelled from the International, and formed a new organisation in Switzerland which was a 'loose association of fully autonomous national groups devoted to the economic struggle only' (Marshall, 2008, p. 302). The First International moved its headquarters to New York but soon collapsed.

Kinna argues that it was in the Second International, established in 1889 to mark the centenary of the French Revolution, that the anarchist and Marxist divide was solidified. The International saw adherence to the policy of political action, that is to say participation in parliamentary politics, as a test of its membership. This became the central division between Marxist and anarchist conceptualisations of politics. Kinna argues that:

This was not surprising for in the course of the 1880s anarchists and Marxists had spent considerable time arguing about the parliamentary strategy and, in the process, both sides had developed coherent alternative understandings of the revolution and of the post-revolutionary society. By the 1890s the differences between the two sides were so visible that some Marxists felt able to argue that anarchism was not a form of socialism at all and that it described a competing ideology (Kinna, 2005, p. 29).

From this moment, anarchism and Marxism were distinguished as offering competing way of thinking about politics.

The Spanish Civil War

Anarchism found a receptive home in Spain, and there was a large element of Spanish workers in the First International. Anarchism found fertile ground among the rural peasants – who dreamed of the redistribution of land away from the authority of the landowners, priests and police – and it also appealed to industrial and urban workers. The beginning of the 20th century saw an upsurge in strike action and uprisings, and led to the formation of the Confederación Nacional del Trabajo union (CNT) in 1911, which saw itself as a Spanish successor to the First International. Different factions of the CNT were united in their common opposition of the authoritarian direction of the Russian Revolution and in 1922 declared themselves to be a ‘firm defender of the principles of the First International maintained by Bakunin, and broke away from the Communist Third International because of its link with the Soviet Union’, and adopted the mantra that ‘the emancipation of the workers must be the work of the workers themselves’ (Marshall, 2008, p. 456).

Led by the CNT and the more extreme Federación Anarquista Ibérica (FAI), anarchists declared their revolutionary intentions: ‘Once the violent aspect of the revolution is finished, the following are declared abolished: private property, the state, the principles of authority, and as a consequence, the classes which divide men into exploiters and exploited, oppressed and oppressors’ (quoted in Marshall, 2008, p. 459). At a CNT national congress in Zaragoza in May 1936, proposals were put forward for a post-revolution society, which would be made up of communes who would produce and exchange goods through regional and national federations. There would be elected committees that were non-hierarchical and non-bureaucratic in the communes to deal with issues of day-to-day living. The individual is the basic element of each commune, but goods would be distributed on a communist basis of each according to his need. These proposals captured the imagination of Spanish workers and the CNT had more than one and a half million members by the end of 1936. Not all members agreed with the CNT’s policy of abstaining from voting however, and many took part in the 1936 elections which brought the Popular Front coalition to power.

When Franco rebelled against the republic in July 1936 and the country was thrown into civil war, his forces were disarmed by popular militia groups and he was left in control of only half the country. The CNT and FAI were able to seize the opportunity to respond and called a revolutionary general strike. They were able to take control of

Barcelona and large areas of rural Spain, where they collectivised land and took over the running of factories. Rural peasants also formed collectives, no doubt inspired by anarchist activism but also drawing from their own communal and cultural traditions, and by 1937 there were some three million people living in rural collectives. CNT syndicates became popular assemblies that would elect an administrative committee responsible for day-to-day living arrangements but these committees were accountable to the assemblies. This was an experiment of anarchism in practice that has never been seen before or since on such a scale, which suggested that an anarchist society was both possible and achievable.

Although the anarchist experiment was deemed a success, there was also widespread dissatisfaction among activists at the way in which anarchist leaders decided to collaborate with the Catalan government rather than attempting to dissolve it. They decided to leave the Generalitat intact and support the existing President, and shortly afterwards anarchist leaders of the CNT-FAI entered into the government, trying to justify themselves by calling it a Regional Defence Council. They 'had started down the slippery slide to parliamentary participation' and the desire to achieve victory overcame the desire to create an anarchist-inspired social revolution (Marshall, 2008, p. 461). The CNT leaders felt that the collectives were not sustainable against Franco's army and other competing factions such as the Communists, and several of its leadership became ministers in the socialist government, collaborating with them in order to unite republican forces in the war against Franco and fascism. Raw materials were in short supply and the sole foreign supplier of arms for the Republican cause was the Soviet Union, thus the Communists quickly gained increasing influence over the resistance movement. The anarchist refusal to form a military army with regimented units and command centres in the end led to their defeat.

Many outside the anarchist tradition were inspired by the events, and George Orwell took anarchism to an international stage through his writings. He went out of his way to correct the misinterpretations surrounding anarchism and syndicalism in England through his *Homage to Catalonia* (Orwell, 1938) and other works. Another Englishman who was impressed by the activism of anarchists in Spain was Fenner Brockway, Secretary of the British Independent Labour Party, who praised the CNT after a visit to Spain. He believed that:

Their achievement of workers' control in industry is an inspiration...The Anarchists of Spain, though through the CNT, are doing one of the biggest constructive jobs ever done by the working class. At the front they are fighting Fascism. Behind the front they are actually constructing the new Workers' Society. They see that the war against Fascism and the carrying through of the Social Revolution are inseparable (quoted in Rocker, 1938, p. 8).

Far from the anarchist experiment being a failure, Marshall suggests that 'the defeat of the anarchist movement in Spain did not result from a failure of anarchist theory and tactics but rather a failure to carry through the social revolution. If the latter had not been sacrificed for the war effort, and the Communists had not seized power, the outcome may well have been very different' (Marshall, 2008, p. 467). One commentator suggests that they chose 'heroic indiscipline' over 'hierarchical efficiency' (Kinna, 2005, p. 141), which would of course not be compatible with anarchist principles of decentralisation and non-hierarchy. The action may have been short-lived, but it demonstrated the ability of workers and peasants to manage their own affairs. The use of affinity groups is cited by activists as an inspiration for current anarchist-inspired activism and the impact of anarchist resistance in the Spanish Civil War was to show that, for a short time at least, anarchism could actually be carried out in practice.

Some Marxists hold that the anarchists defeated themselves in the Spanish Civil War because their principles will never allow them to be revolutionary. Trotsky argued in strong terms that:

In and of itself, this self-justification that "we did not seize power not because we were unable but because we did not wish to, because we were against every kind of dictatorship," and the like, contains an irrevocable condemnation of anarchism as an utterly anti-revolutionary doctrine. To renounce the conquest of power is voluntarily to leave the power with those who wield it, the exploiters. *The essence of every revolution consisted and consists in putting a new class in power, thus enabling it to realize its own program in life.* It is impossible to wage war and to reject victory. It is impossible to lead the masses towards insurrection without preparing for the conquest of power (Trotsky, 1938, emphasis added).

The Spanish Civil War shows that ways of organising a movement did become strategically important when it comes to the practice of politics. Anarchists may have been defeated because of both their insistence on sticking to principles of decentralised organisation and their sacrifice of the social revolution to victory over Franco, and Marxists were frustrated by the way in which this did not help them strategically to win the war, and saw the anarchists as ineffective and destined to failure.

May 68

After the Spanish Civil War ended in 1939, fascism and communism replaced anarchism as a significant influence in world politics, and anarchist activism became largely dormant, especially with the onset of World War II. However, anarchism was revived in France in the 50s and 60s, with the surrealists and Dada providing a fertile ground for a group of artists who formed the Internationale Situationniste in 1957. The Situationists delved into anarchist history and developed libertarian critiques of a consumer culture. Anarchist conceptions of politics became an important inspiration to many, for example Daniel Guérin, a former Marxist, became an influential anarchist thinker, and the 'circle A' symbol was created.

This anarchist/libertarian current found its greatest and most energetic expression in the student uprisings of May 68. Anarchist ideas again came to inspire political activism, and in particular the Situationist-inspired rebellion of students that ignited into street protests and a general strike by around two thirds of the French workforce, approximately 11 million workers. This was unusual in itself, as the uprising started with students but developed into a mass insurrection that cut across class boundaries to involve workers as well. Guérin's book on anarchism (Guérin, 1970) became a bestseller at the time, and he argued that the rebellion had been consciously anarchist in nature, with the denial of all authority and the call for workers' and students' self-management. Although the uprising was short lived, it highlighted a shift in radical Left conceptions of political organising in France. There was an emphasis not just on overcoming economic scarcity, but on transforming society through the transformation of everyday life – 'self-liberation as the basis for social liberation' (Marshall, 2008, p. 547).

As noted above, many of the creative ideas that were played out in May 68 were from the Situationists, a small group of avant-garde artists and intellectuals. The Situationists believed that they were living in a society of spectacle, in which there were actors and spectators, or producers and consumers where man is alienated from what he produces and from his fellow workers, and lives an alien life of meaningless drudgery and boredom. Society has become a consumer society, where we are driven on to accumulate and consume more and more in a society of spectacle where all relationships are transactional. Rather than an overthrowing of the state, they argued for

a different kind of revolution – a revolution of the art and imagination that refused boredom and the lack of creativity involved in production. The uprising was notable for its focus on joy and play, on creativity, spontaneity, improvisation and self-expression. Tactics and slogans were made up as they went along rather than being part of an overarching strategy set down by any leaders of the movement, and capitalism was the main target. Student local action committees were formed and evolved to deal with situations as they arose, but were set up as collectives and eschewed the need for a party or revolutionary leadership. Instead they believed that revolution could not be made on behalf of a party or abstract idea but that ‘C’est pour toi que tu fais la révolution’ (you make the revolution for yourself).

This idea of creativity and imagination caught on among student groups, some of whom tried to create ‘organised chaos’ on university campuses. The most significant contribution of the Situationists, however, is their belief that the transformation of creativity and imagination had to take place in the here and now, rather than waiting for a revolutionary moment in the future, and people had to take responsibility to change themselves – as to change oneself is to change society. The Situationists argued for a society without money, production of commodities, wage labour, private property or the state; instead suggesting small local groups with workers’ councils, based on the love of free play and imagination. They were elitist and in many ways as much Marxists as anarchists with their analysis of the alienation of the worker, but the Situationists gave anarchism a new lease of life with their critique of the consumer society of spectacle and their celebration of imagination, creativity and the transformation of everyday life in the here and now. They insisted that no one should be a spectator, and that everyone should ‘actively and consciously participate in the reconstruction of every moment of life’.

For a time, this led to a renewed interest in anarchist thinkers, and the most striking example of anarchist thinking and the Situationist practice of transformation of everyday life came in the 70s, which saw widespread experimentation with alternative ways of living, no more so than in Italy with the social centres movement. Richard Day explains:

In the early years of this decade [70s] the Italian revolutionary left had been forming comitati di quartiere, or neighbourhood councils, as a complement to the workers’ councils which formed the basis of their organizing strategy. Since their community

had no pre-school, medical clinic or library, militants from one of these committees in Milan ‘occupied and reactivated’ an abandoned building, and invited the newly elected city council to ‘demonstrate in practice its intention to meet the social needs of the population of a popular neighbourhood like ours, allowing for the social use of the occupied factory.’ (Leoncarvallo Occupation Committee 1975)...soon other centres began to appear in Milan, and eventually all over Italy, some of which – like Leoncavallo – have survived to the present day (Day, 2005, p. 40).

Anarchist social centres sprung up in other parts of Western Europe too, most notably in Barcelona and the setting up of an autonomous zone in a disused military base in Denmark known as the Freetown Christiania in 1971. This type of anarchism is predicated on the recognition that a revolution is not going to happen just yet, and that instead it is possible to live out anarchism in our everyday lives. This does not demand a final rupture with the state in order to be practiced (Kinna, 2005, p. 142). Woodcock believes that this marks a break from the romantic, utopian nature of ‘old anarchism’ and argues that:

The kind of mass movement at whose head Bakunin challenged Marx in the First International, and which reached its apogee in the Spanish CNT, has not reappeared... Except for a few dedicated militants, anarchists no longer tend to see the future in terms of conflagratory insurrection that will destroy the state and all the establishments of authority and will immediately usher in the free society... Instead of preparing for an apocalyptic revolution, contemporary anarchists tend to be concerned far more with trying to create, in society as it is, the infrastructure of a better and freer society (Woodcock, 1992, p. 128).

Thus, anarchist conceptions of acting politically have shifted in strategy from an immediate overthrowing and destruction of the state as Bakunin would have advocated, to creating a new society in the shell of the old, in the here and now.

Many Marxist theorists, however, were completely taken by surprise at these events. Thinkers such as André Gorz or Ernest Mandel believed that there would be no movement in the French working class in the foreseeable future and were unprepared for the events of May 68. Deleuze and Guattari note that ‘the politicians, the parties, the unions, many leftists, were utterly vexed; they kept repeating over and over again that “conditions” were not ripe’ (Deleuze & Guattari, 2004, p. 238).

Most Marxists saw the uprising of May 68 as a failure – the revolt was just froth with no real substance, as the balance of power did not shift, and the protests did not lead to the taking of state power or, at the very least, the achievement of concrete reforms:

The class balance of forces was here expressed, not as a mere abstract potential or statistic, but as an actual power on the streets and in the factories. In reality, power was in the hands of the workers, but they did not know it. But like any other army, the working class requires leadership. And that was what was missing in May 1968. Those who should have provided leadership - the leaders of the mass organizations of the class, the trade unions and the Communist Party - had no perspective of taking power (Woods, 2008).

This implies that for Marxists there needs to be direction provided from above by the leaders of the vanguard in order to make a revolution successful by taking power. The anarchist tactics of self-expression and play are absent from this Marxist analysis of the event; indeed Woods notes that ‘the marvellous movement of the French workers thus ended in defeat. But the traditions of May 1968 remain in the consciousness of the workers of France and the whole world... We are striving to prepare the vanguard so that the next time we will be successful’ (Woods, 2008).

The anarchist character of the Global Justice Movement

Many activists and academics have heralded the Global Justice Movement as a new form of politics, following on from the activism of the 60s and 70s, which has anarchism at its heart. Uri Gordon argues:

The past ten years have seen the full-blown revival of anarchism, as a global social movement and coherent set of political discourses, on a scale and to levels of unity and diversity unseen since the 1930s. From anti-capitalist social centres and eco-feminist communities to raucous street parties and blockades of international summits, anarchist forms of resistance and organizing have been at the heart of the ‘alternative globalization’ movement and have blurred, broken down and reconstructed notions of political action and articulation (Gordon, 2007, p. 29).

Activists who self-identify as anarchists, or who are sympathetic to anarchist principles of organization, have been a part of the movement from its inception and according to one academic: ‘most of the creative energy for radical politics is now coming from anarchism’ and ‘anarchism is the heart of the movement, its soul; the sources of most of what’s new and hopeful about it’ (Graeber, 2004, p. 203).

The three anarchist principles discussed earlier in this chapter can be seen in the main elements of the movement that have been associated with anarchist principles: physical interventions against intergovernmental and corporate symbols, organisational

principles and creativity of direct action.⁶ Graeber argues that this new mode of politics is anarchist inspired ‘as the very notion of direct action, with its rejection of a politics which appeals to governments to modify their behaviour, in favour of physical intervention against state power in a form that itself prefigures an alternative’ stems from the anarchist-libertarian tradition (Graeber, 2004, p. 203). The summit mobilizations, which made the world pay attention in Seattle and have been a big part of the Global Justice Movement’s repertoire ever since, explicitly target inter-governmental summits which are represented by the leaders of states, whether it is the G8 heads of state or institutions that symbolize state-sponsored neo-liberal economics. Thus it is clear that those within the Global Justice Movement see states as part of the problem rather than the solution. This is also extended to symbols of corporate capitalism as is demonstrated by the various physical attacks on businesses such as Gap and Starbucks and ongoing actions that target these stores (e.g. Kingsnorth, 2003, pp. 125-162).

Many commentators on the movement cite anarchist principles of decentralization as being a huge influence on the GJM. Amory Starr in her book *Naming the Enemy* comments on the Seattle protests and notes that ‘the anarchists who engaged in property crime got a lot of media attention, which detracted from the success of the protest. *In that context, no one wanted to draw attention to the fact that the entire event was organized according to anarchist principles*’ (Starr, 2000, p. 115, emphasis added). In her discussion of the protest movement which, she argues, has mushroomed since the Battle of Seattle, Naomi Klein notes that each campaign is comprised of many groups, mostly NGOs, labour unions, students and anarchists, and that it is ‘anarchists, who are doing a great deal of the grassroots organizing, direct democracy, transparency and community self-determination’ which represent central tenets of the way they organise themselves (Klein, 2005, p. 166). She also argues elsewhere that anarchists are ‘fanatical about process’ and are an asset in their refusal to allow centralisation of the movement and the creation of an organisational hierarchy that ‘speaks for’ the movement (Klein, 2002, p. 206).

⁶ This is not to say that other modes of politics do not practice anti-corporate/anti-state interventions, non-hierarchical organising or creative forms of direct action, but rather that these elements of the political practices of the GJM are consistently being linked to anarchist influences on the movement.

The anarchist influence can be seen through the widespread use of affinity groups as a way of organising at summit protests, similar to those of the Spanish Civil War. In this context, affinity groups are small groups of around 5-15 people, all with a similar understanding of political action, who carry out local projects, such as Food Not Bombs; they also engage with other affinity groups at major events, such as the anti-WTO/IMF/G8 summits (ACT_UP). Affinity groups provide support and solidarity for their members through familiarity and trust. On a larger scale these affinity groups can engage in any kind of participation they choose, but at the same time they work together at events through a system of spokescouncils that creates the conditions for consensus decision-making. Each affinity group selects a representative or 'spoke' who is empowered to speak for their group in the spokescouncil. These spokes take part in the council to find consensus and before any major decisions are made they break out into their affinity groups; each group comes to a consensus on which position they want their spoke to take in the decision-making process. There are a myriad of variations on this theme that are concerned with creating networks that are non-hierarchical and where no one can dominate and all can be heard.⁷ Affinity groups coming together to take part in a mass action can create something that is more than the sum of its parts: 'in this way, many affinity groups form a network that achieves exponentially more than equal numbers of unaffiliated activists ever could' (Notes-from-Nowhere, 2003, p. 88).

Although it would be impossible to claim direct action as an anarchist invention, it is a very strong part of the GJM, influenced by the anarchist principle of encouraging people to fight for their own emancipation and practice pre-figurative politics in the here and now rather than simply waiting for a future revolutionary moment. Tormey also notes the presence of anarchists within the most creative aspects of the movement. Speaking about anarchism in his *Anti-Capitalism: A beginner's guide*, he notes that 'some of the most positive aspects of the contemporary anti-capitalist resistance have a largely anarchistic character' (Tormey, 2004, p. 122). Epstein claims that 'anarchism has also been associated with political theater and art, with creativity as an element of political practice. It has insisted that radical politics need not be dreary' (Epstein, 2001). The street parties of Reclaim the Streets have declared their tactics are inspired by anarchist principles (Day, 2005). Reclaim the Streets (RTS) started by holding street parties in order to protest about proposed road building of the M11 motorway in London, and to

⁷ For a more detailed description of spokescouncils and other tools for consensus decision-making see Graeber (Graeber, 2004).

reclaim the streets as a public space for the community. RTS claim to be ‘just a bunch of unorganised, chaotic anarchists’, but their actions have become one of the most celebrated tactics of the GJM. This form of direct action is the action of choice rather than a last-ditch idea; John Jordan, one of its founders, declares that ‘RTS does not see Direct Action as a last resort, but a preferred way of doing things...a way for individuals to take control of their own lives and environments’ (Jordan, 1997).⁸

Gleneagles: Success or failure?

On July 2nd 2005 the streets of Edinburgh were filled with around 250,000 people wearing white and marching around the streets, forming a white band. Celebrities flocked to the Live 8 concerts around the world organised by Bob Geldof, 20 years on from the Live Aid concert. This protest march and series of events was organised by the Make Poverty History campaign⁹, and captured the imagination of celebrities, big NGOs, trade unions, moderate protesters, and the support of Tony Blair and Gordon Brown and other politicians. Thousands of people were there as part of the Make Poverty History campaign, along with many seasoned summit protesters, to mark the meeting of the G8 in Gleneagles later that week. The Make Poverty History demonstration was billed as a family-friendly event – a peaceful, fun and non-disruptive way of registering an opinion. Leaders argued that: ‘[It is] not a march in the sense of a demonstration, but more of a walk. The emphasis is on fun in the sun. The intention is to welcome the G8 leaders to Scotland and ask them to deliver trade justice, debt cancellation and increased aid to developing countries’ (quoted in Hewson, 2005, p. 144).

The media latched onto the Make Poverty History demonstration: the campaign had begun in January of that year and continued for a full year. NGO spokespeople and celebrities such as Geldof, Bono and Richard Curtis were queuing up to speak for the campaign, offering sound bites and engaging with the media. The campaign had reached a high level of national consciousness and had a clear set of three demands – drop the debt, more and better aid, trade justice – that the thousands of people on the

⁸ Although I believe that the Global Justice Movement is global in scale and vision, it is fair to say that some of these strands are perhaps more evident in the global North, where many activists have the relative privilege of being able to travel to summit protests and have time to create a street party in the middle of a motorway. These examples are not intended to define the entire character of the movement, although they are indicators of the creativity that is a feature of the movement as a whole.

⁹ <http://www.makepovertyhistory.org/2005/index.shtml>

march could repeat and in most cases explain to any interested parties. A policy of engaging politicians was a key part of the movement, and the MPH campaign was not there to protest against the legitimacy of the G8.

Organisations such as the Socialist Workers Party and the Stop the War Coalition organised a counter-summit on the Sunday and an organised march on the Wednesday called G8Alternatives (TNI, 2005), with big name speakers such as Walden Bello, Susan George, Trevor Ngwane and George Monbiot. This offered an alternative to the government-friendly NGOs such as Oxfam who were key organisers in the Make Poverty History demonstration, and G8Alternatives was well organised and publicised. For many of the Make Poverty History protestors, the public, politicians and the mainstream media, the act of trying to stop delegates arriving at the summit and closing it down was pointless, and was not going to achieve anything. Most viewed these radical protesters as a wacky and irrelevant bunch, who didn't really have anything in common with the mainstream protesters. Even if the media were interested in finding out what these activists stood for, they couldn't find anyone who would actually give them a statement or position. Rather the media chose to reinforce the notion of 'good protester/bad protester' by contrasting those on the official Make Poverty History march with the 'hippies and anarchists' (Summer & Jones, 2005). This was helped by the media-savvy Make Poverty History brand, as Hewson observes that 'MPH's white wristband mania and star-studded PR succeeded in... capturing millions of ordinary people's imagination about global poverty' (Hewson, 2005, p. 138). The more radical element of the protesters struggled to get their message across. Because of their principles of non-engagement with the state or national media, decentralised organisation with no spokespeople for the movement, and not educating activists as to an agreed set of reasons for direct action, opportunities to engage with the media interest and explain their position were lost.

This highlights the difference in tactics between more traditional Marxist organisations and the latest manifestation of anarchist politics. Hewson highlights what he sees as a failure of the more anarchist strand of the GJM in Gleneagles when he notes that 'to our eternal shame, the only real dissenting voices came not from us but from G8Alternatives – yes, the bloody SWP and fellow travellers! Only they took up the challenge of politics by hosting a genuine counter-summit and helping to produce an alternative Africa Commission report from social movements themselves' (Hewson,

2005, p. 138). This goes to show that the mistrust between different elements of the Global Justice Movement and other protest movements is all too apparent in a contemporary as well as a historical context.

Conclusion – a historical divide

The aim of this chapter was to show that, historically, there are three themes on which anarchists and Marxists differ – attitudes to the state, ways of organising and methods of enactment. Although anarchism and Marxism have developed from the same context, anarchists have defined themselves consciously in relation to Marxists, with different understandings of politics both in theory and in practice. This has further been developed by looking at three examples of anarchism in action – through the First International, the Spanish Civil War and May 68. I then returned to claims that the Global Justice Movement is a new kind of politics, in order to show that the anarchist principles developed throughout the chapter are consistent with the practices of the GJM – thus strengthening the argument that, rather than being a new type of politics, the practices of activists within the GJM are the latest manifestation of an anarchist politics that goes back two centuries if not more. I finished with a contemporary example of the way in which anarchist and more traditional Marxist elements of the movement have differed in their politics. The G8 mobilisations in Gleneagles demonstrated these different logics at work – with anarchists dismissing taking part in the organised demonstrations as ‘selling out’ to the pro-government lobby, and Marxists who took part in the demonstrations such as the G8Alternatives seeing anarchist attempts to create blockades as at best ineffective, and at worst pointless.

But what is at stake in this historical divide set up by anarchists and Marxists and demonstrated in recent manifestations of radical resistance? In setting up one mode of politics as being ethically prior to the other, it is possible that we may miss out on routes to radical change that encompass both modes. Hewson, for instance, argues that being bound by anarchist principles of non-engagement at the G8 in Gleneagles led to a failure to impact on the demonstrations and non-engagement with the press because of a refusal to speak for the movement because they were ‘constrained by our own dogma and ideology’ (Hewson, 2005, p. 146). Similarly, the anarchist organisation of affinity groups in the Spanish Civil War, although some of their leaders took part in government, led ultimately to their defeat, as they were not willing to compromise on their ways of organising. On the other hand, Marxists did not understand the rebellion

of May 68 because it did not conform to their particular understanding of what it was to act politically. The danger on both sides is that politics will be constrained by self-imposed divisions.

There is also a danger that these historical divisions will be unconsciously reproduced, and in the next chapter I will build on this historical account by moving to a 21st century interpretation of the distinction between these different ways of conceptualising politics by turning to anarchist Richard Day's distinction between a politics of demand and a politics of the act as different modes of politics. I will add to this distinction set out by Day by showing through Marxist and anarchist conceptions of politics that Marxist theorists tend to privilege a politics of demand, whereas anarchists tend to privilege a politics of the act.

Chapter 2: The Politics of Demand versus the Politics of the Act

In the previous chapter I argued that, historically, anarchists and Marxist theorists have conceptualised politics in different ways, and anarchists have often consciously set themselves up in opposition to Marxism. Anarchist conceptions of politics have differed from Marxists conceptions of politics in three main ways: around attitudes to the state, ways of organising and methods of enactment.

In this chapter I will build upon this distinction between anarchist and Marxist conceptions of politics by arguing that this historical division has also been reproduced theoretically. I will draw on Marxist and anarchist conceptions of politics, some of whom have tried to engage directly with current resistance practices made visible by the Global Justice Movement, and thus are helpful to a discussion of current theorizations of politics. The clearest example of this is anarchist Richard Day's distinction between a *politics of demand* and a *politics of the act* as different modes of politics, and I will use this as a framework for exploring the different theoretical approaches of Marxists and anarchists.

Day sets up this distinction along the lines discussed in Chapter 1, and argues that Marxist theorists tend to privilege a politics of demand, whereas anarchists tend to privilege a politics of the act. I will outline Richard Day's distinction between a politics of demand and a politics of the act and, building on this, I will develop my own indicators that I believe will help us understand what a politics of demand might look like. These indicators are *state-orientated politics*, *hierarchical organisation* and *educating the movement for enactment*. State-oriented politics refers to a politics that engages with the state in some way, either to gain rights or recognition or to attack the state with the aim of overthrowing it. Hierarchical organization refers to the way in which groups organize themselves for action in a structured, formalized and 'vertical' way, in order to promote efficiency and effectiveness. Educating the movement for enactment refers to the conditions under which political action can be taken, in this case by educating members before they can act.

I will also offer three corollary indicators to help us understand a politics of the act – *withdrawal from the state*, *horizontal organising* and *an imperative for enactment*. Withdrawal from the state refers to the way in which movements no longer see the state as their primary interlocutor and instead develop alternatives to the state in the hope that

this will drain the state of its legitimacy. Horizontal organizing is a term that has been widely used among participants in the Global Justice Movement to explain flat organizing structures that have no formal leadership and in which decisions are generally made by consensus. An imperative for enactment refers to the way in which members of organizations are encouraged to be creative and take action themselves rather than waiting to be educated in how to go about it or given permission by a leader.

I will then show how the three indicators of the politics of demand are exemplified by Marxist theorists, drawing on Gramsci, Morton, Laclau and Mouffe, Lenin and Callinicos; and how the three indicators of the politics of the act are exemplified by anarchist theorists (and Marxists who illustrate particular aspects of the politics of the act), notably Bey, Hardt and Negri, Tormey, and May on Rancière. In doing so I am using these thinkers as exemplars of a particular indicator of the politics of demand and act, rather than suggesting that they form a coherent position across the whole range of indicators. I will also show that there are limits to Day's characterisation however, as the degree to which anarchism and Marxism cannot be contained by these distinctions is clear here –Hardt and Negri are autonomous Marxists who exemplify a characteristic of the politics of the act, whereas although May uses Rancière in a particular way, Rancière himself would not necessarily subscribe to a politics of the act as Day defines it. This impossibility of containment by either category of the politics of demand or the politics of the act is further articulated at the end of the chapter when a brief discussion of Žižek and Critchley shows that the politics of the act can be thought about by through making demands on the state, just as the politics of demand can be a call to action.

Richard Day and the politics of act and demand

Richard Day in his book *Gramsci is Dead: Anarchist Currents in the Newest Social Movements* (Day, 2005) sets out to show that the types of politics made visible by the Global Justice Movement are predicated on the model of a 'politics of affinity' rather than a politics of hegemony, and this 'politics of affinity' is based on anarchist principles.

He points towards the changes in political activism from the late 1990s as warranting a distinction between the 'new social movements' of the 1970s and 80s and the 'newest social movements' of the 90s onwards. He argues that there is a new political logic to be found in these 'newest social movements' that moves away from a logic of

hegemony and towards a logic of affinity. Day traces the logic of hegemony primarily through the Marxist tradition, suggesting that it is given deference as a logic of political activity. This logic of hegemony is characterised as ‘the commonsensical assumption that meaningful social change – and social order itself – can only be achieved through the deployment of universalizing hierarchical forms, epitomized by the nation-state, but including conceptions of the world-state as well’ (Day, 2004, p. 717). This means that firstly, social and political action has to be brought about by the leaders of a movement; and secondly that protests or other forms of action must be directed towards those who can deal with their demands, in other words the state, or in an international context the appropriate intergovernmental organisation.

This logic of hegemony operates under the assumption that both consensus and coercion are necessary in particular circumstances in order to manage effective political change. Marxist theorist Antonio Gramsci argued that in the sphere of civil society, the general masses give consent to the direction of life as imposed on society by the dominant group (Gramsci, 1971, p. 148). Any group looking to lead society must then attempt to lead in a way that is legitimised by recognition of its moral and intellectual superiority. There will be some, however, who will not respond in the required fashion and give their consent, and it is then that coercion by the state apparatus comes into play. In order for one group among several competing groups to gain the upper hand they must be able to create what Day describes as ‘society-wide ‘irradiation effects’, rays of control/consent that reach out from a set of particular interests to simultaneously create and operate upon a ‘universal’ plane, bringing about ‘not only a union of economic and political aims, but also intellectual and moral unity’ (Day, 2004, p. 721). ‘Old’ style social movements use this logic of hegemony to seek two outcomes. Firstly, effects that will cover an entire social space, most often a nation-state; secondly that these effects will occur over the whole spectrum of social, political, economic and cultural structures and processes.

Day argues that new social movements, although moving away from class-based models of social change, nevertheless still work within this hegemonic logic. Often described as ‘identity politics’ or ‘symbolic politics’, the new social movements of the 70s and 80s brought issues of race, gender, sexuality, the environment and others into the public arena, and have been often described as single-issue politics, as although they often link diverse struggles such as feminist links between patriarchy and capitalism,

they share a rejection of the need for a totalizing, universal reworking of the social order. Day argues that these movements are characterised primarily by a politics of protest that has as its goal changes to laws, structures of bureaucracy and shifts in the hegemonic common-sense assumptions and practices. Thus, the aim of these movements is still oriented to the state and remains ‘within a hegemonic conception of the political, and is only marginally and nascently aware of the possibilities inherent in actions oriented neither to achieving state power nor to ameliorating its effects’ (Day, 2004, p. 723).

Day argues that this logic of hegemony obscures much of what is important about the ‘newest social movements’, which operate instead through a logic of affinity. What does he mean by newest social movements? Day explains: ‘I am talking about those direct-action oriented elements within the anti-globalization movement very broadly conceived, which are neither revolutionary nor reformist, but seek to block, resist and render redundant both corporate *and* state power in local, national and transnational contexts’ (Day, 2004, p. 733). These movements can be considered ‘newest’ because they are openly bringing into question the hegemony of hegemony as the best (or only) way of practicing politics. They practice a logic of affinity, which Day suggests can be found in anarchist theory and practice and is made visible in many examples through the Global Justice Movement. This can be seen through the aims of activists within the movement whose goal is ‘not to create a new power around a hegemonic centre, but to challenge, disrupt and disorient the processes of global hegemony, to *refuse, rather than rearticulate* those forces that are tending towards the universalization of the liberal capitalist ecumene’ (Day, 2004, p. 730, emphasis in original). This affinity based direct action politics, Day argues, takes us beyond the logic of hegemony, beyond both reform and revolution.

This leads Day to characterise the distinction between the hegemonic logic of old and new social movements and the ‘newest’ social movements that operate through a logic of affinity as a ‘politics of demand’ and a ‘politics of the act’ (Day, 2005, p. 89). He creates the politics of demand and the act in order to demonstrate what is different about the logic of affinity pursued by the newest social movements, which he considers to be qualitatively different and ethically superior to the old politics of hegemony.

Day identifies a politics of demand as ‘actions oriented to ameliorating the practices of states, corporations and everyday life, through either influencing or using state power to achieve irradiation effects’ (Day, 2004, p. 733). He notes that the politics of demand is limited in its scope as it can only change the *content* of structures of domination and exploitation, but not their *form*. Or in other words, a politics of demand perpetuates these structures of control and domination by anticipating a response to its demand in the form of emancipation through the granting of rights or recognition. Most of the time however, the current hegemonic formation to which the demand is addressed is unable to produce the desired outcome of emancipation and instead defers, dissuades or provides only a partial solution to the problem that, more often than not, exacerbates other problems. Thus there is a constant cycle of demand, partial amelioration, and then another set of demands.

A politics of the act, on the other hand, breaks out of this cycle of demand and response by ‘giving up on the expectation of a non-dominating response from structures of domination; it means surprising both oneself – and the structure – by inventing a response that precludes the necessity of the demand and thereby break out of the loop of the endless perpetuation of desire for emancipation’ (Day, 2005, p. 89). This then breaks the cycle through which requests for rights or recognition to the hegemonic formation, primarily the state, are used to justify the intensity of state-sponsored discipline and control. The politics of the act as described here can, Day believes, be seen in the forms of direct action based on anarchist principles and deployed in the newest social movements.

Day then goes on to argue that ‘groups/movements/tactics that are oriented to a politics of the act cannot be adequately understood by existing paradigms of social movement analysis, and therefore require the development of new modes of theorization’ (Day, 2004, p. 735). He does this by appealing to Hardt and Negri’s concept of the multitude, anarchist theorists such as Buber and Landauer, and post-structuralists such as Foucault and Deleuze. Day does not specify in great detail what a politics of the act might look like, and it is in this area that I will build on his work in Chapter 3. The main aim of this chapter, however, is to demonstrate that this distinction is at work in Marxist and anarchist conceptions of acting politically, with Marxists generally privileging a politics of demand and anarchists privileging a politics of the act. Even in the cross-over between Marxists and anarchists who exemplify positions of the politics of the act and

the politics of demand respectively, it is still true to say that they are set up as opposing rather than co-existent concepts, whichever side they are on.

Marxism and the Politics of Demand

In this section I will build on Day's conception of the politics of demand by offering three indicators of Marxist conceptualisations of politics that I believe can be identified as part of the politics of demand. These indicators are 1) state-orientated politics, 2) hierarchical organisation and 3) educating the movement for enactment. I have developed these particular indicators by bringing together Marxist understandings of the three areas of the state, ways of organizing and methods of enactment discussed in Chapter 1, and what I consider to be the key features of the politics of demand outlined by Day. I will look at each one in turn, and demonstrate that Marxists tend to privilege this way of acting politically by drawing on theorists who exemplify these positions.

The politics of demand 1: Orientation to the state

The first element of the politics of demand is orientation to the state. This is an obvious element to pull out of Day's understanding of the politics of demand, as it fits with his claim that a politics of demand is about overcoming oppression through directing demands at those who are perceived to be able to deal with them – generally the state. This is done through seeking rights or recognition from the state, but in doing so seems to legitimize the state as a body that can bring about progressive change. Many Marxists assume that progressive politics is oriented to the state, and it is to a discussion of prominent Marxist Antonio Gramsci and the subsequent school of neo-Gramscianism that I turn to illustrate this.

Gramsci's work on hegemony has been taken up by many Marxist theorists as offering a process of radical change that moves away from a narrow Marxism that claims the working class are the sole agents of revolution to include other social groups and interests into a 'hegemonic bloc'. His understanding of civil society – as the arena in which transformation and the formation of a hegemonic bloc can take place – and its relationship to the state is important for an understanding of how he conceptualized politics as being oriented to the state. For Gramsci, hegemony meant that the ruling class determined the whole of social relations of a given state, for example its moral, intellectual and educational discourses. The apparatus or mechanisms that upheld this hegemony did so through the institutions of civil society (Gramsci, 1971, p. 258). This

led Gramsci to enlarge his definition of the state in order to include civil society, as governance was more than the administrative, executive and coercive elements of government; and these other elements of governance such as the discourses of morality and education formed part of this definition. Gramsci explains that 'State can mean politico-juridical organisation in the narrow sense or hegemony over its historical development through private forces – 'to civil society – which is "state" too, indeed is the state itself' (Gramsci, 1971, p. 261).

Gramsci duly enlarges his conception of the state to include civil society, which leads to a dialectical understanding of civil society and its relationship to the state. On the one hand there is Gramsci's often quoted equation: 'state = political society + civil society, or in other words hegemony protected by the armour of coercion' (Gramsci, 1971, p. 263). Thus civil society is a function of the state that sustains the educational and ideological dominant discourses that are backed up by the coercive power of the state, by shaping morals and culture in society. On the other hand, for Gramsci civil society can be more fundamental than the state, having autonomy from it, and a strong civil society is the basis upon which a state can be founded.

In both cases, the state is given legitimacy by civil society, either by sustaining the moral and intellectual discourses that the state promotes, or by forming a basis upon which a state can be built. For Gramsci, this meant that civil society is the place in which transformation is possible: 'civil society is both shaper and shaped, and agent of stabilization and reproduction, and a potential agent of transformation' (Cox, 2005, p. 104). It is clear that whether civil society is seen as a basis for the legitimacy of a state or as a potential brake on that state, the actions of civil society are still oriented towards the state. There is no sense in which this transformational potential of civil society is understood apart from in the context of how it will effect/strengthen/weaken the hegemony of the dominant ruling class, or in other words the (enlarged) state.

It is this view of civil society as a potential agent of transformation that has inspired theorists to look at Gramsci's project of counter-hegemony in current political scenarios (e.g. Cox, 2005; Gill, 2005; Morton, 2002; Rupert, 2003), and Morton is one such theorist who uses Gramsci to develop an understanding of the counter-hegemonic project through current resistance practices by looking at the resistance practices of the Zapatistas in Mexico. Morton exemplifies a neo-Gramscian perspective that is

predicated less on a class basis than Gramsci, but advocates uniting class and other groups into a historic bloc to create a counter-hegemonic movement.

According to Gramsci, this counter-hegemony can take two forms – a war of manoeuvre and a war of position (Gramsci, 1971, pp. 238-239). A war of manoeuvre is a rapid assault on the state or institutions of the state in order to get an immediate result of either state power or demands met by the state, whereas a war of position is a longer-term ideological struggle in civil society to form a counter-hegemonic bloc that is capable of uniting diverse groups under one movement. This war of position is a more tactical long-game, which does not seek immediate gains of power or results, but opts for gains in position that will eventually lead to the creation of a new hegemony formed by this counter-hegemonic bloc's ability to change dominant discourses.

Morton argues that the Zapatistas use both strategies of a war of manoeuvre and a war of position to achieve their goals. They started with a war of manoeuvre when they declared war on the Mexican government:

It is within this crisis period that social class forces in Chiapas attempted to forge a 'counter'-hegemonic movement by publicly emerging on 1 January 1994 as the EZLN with a mass base of support and a well-organised army. It was this force of over 3000 initial combatants that occupied the towns of San Cristobal, Ocosingo, Las Margaritas, Altamirano, Chanal, Oxchuc and Huixtan with the demands of work, land, housing, food, health, education, independence, freedom, democracy, justice and peace (Morton, 2007, p. 457).

A war of manoeuvre is about taking state power. It is not a subtle move but makes clear that there is a group of people who have specific demands on the state. Thus their activity is clearly directed towards the state, strengthening the claim that the state features heavily in the way this movement constructs its counter-hegemonic project.

Morton argues that the Zapatistas have also mounted a war of position, and have formed a counter-hegemony by creating a framework through which the economic concerns of certain groups can be articulated, along with others groups such as indigenous demands for rights and recognition. The EZLN have created a narrative that joins together different struggles to form a counter-hegemonic bloc in order that resistance is shaped into one cohesive unit. This does not mean that all identities are subsumed under a single banner, but that narratives are carefully crafted to appeal to a wide range of issue-based struggles, in the case of the Zapatistas centering on class-based and indigenous

forms of identity where ‘the Zapatista movement has rearticulated issues of identity in order to appeal to a variety of identities and interests’ (Morton, 2002, p. 47).

Although the struggle is also about changing attitudes and creating alternatives, there is still an element in which the balance of a war of manoeuvre and war of position are intended to result in the same outcome (Gramsci, 1971, p. 239) – the meeting of specific demands of rights or recognition, class or otherwise, by the state or others who can ameliorate the struggles of all the constituencies involved. Morton sums up as follows:

It is clear from this study that the EZLN task to radically reconstruct organic links between different identities and interests in Mexico is principally grounded within the national context whilst, nevertheless, influenced by conditions in the global political economy. It therefore seems that the terrain of state-civil society relations remains the concrete location and framework for political struggle, although resistance to globalisation cannot be successful unless it is also prosecuted beyond national boundaries (Morton, 2002, pp. 53-54).

This ‘state civil-society terrain’ goes back to Gramsci’s conception of civil society, and shows that all political activity that aims to bring about transformation through civil society is ultimately oriented towards the state, as indeed civil society is part of the larger conception of the state and plays the role of providing the state with its legitimacy. For Gramsci, the role of the political party is taken over by the formation of national-popular ‘collective will’, an alliance of different forces in civil society (Gramsci, 1971, p. 129), and Morton argues that concepts such as ‘the party’ have not been superseded but simply transformed into a different type of relationship: ‘whilst the EZLN has attempted to shift political action beyond modernist practices associated with conventional political parties, it is still possible to see the movement as ‘the organiser and the active, operative expression’ of a national-popular collective will’ (Morton, 2002, p. 49).

So we see that Morton applies a neo-Gramscian framework to explain a movement that is challenging traditional understanding of politics, as many have suggested of the Zapatistas, but he still relies in some way on an assumption of a leading agent similar to a political party who both presents immediate demands for rights and recognition of the state, and longer term attempts to ameliorate their struggles by changing the dominant discourse of the leading hegemonic group, which is, in effect, the state as ‘whilst efforts were therefore made to articulate forms of counter-hegemonic resistance against the

PRI, the Zapatistas were also compelled to strategically engage with the government on a number of issues' (Morton, 2002, p. 45).

Thus politics viewed through a neo-Gramscian lens is still oriented towards the state in one form or another, although the ultimate goal is to capture and transform the state and for it to eventually wither away when it is no longer needed. In order to mount a politics oriented to the state, either in a straightforward attack on state power or as a more subtle attempt to change the dominant discourses of the state, there needs to be some form of organization to lead the way, whether it is through civil society or the more traditional Marxist role of the Party. This leads us onto the second element of a politics of demand: hierarchical organisation.

The politics of demand 2: Hierarchical organisation

According to Day, the politics of demand is characterized by a logic of hegemony, and this logic accepts that coercion and consensus will both be necessary to bring about effective political change. This coercion and consensus can be seen within the Leninist concept of the vanguard party, which is arguably the greatest contribution to Marxism in terms of developing the role of the party who would bring about the revolution. Many within the Marxist tradition accept that for politics to maximize the effectiveness of claims on the state or attempts to overthrow it, the vanguard party is the best way to organise the proletariat. A more recent attempt to theorise effective political strategy though the hegemony of a leading group is made by post-Marxists Laclau and Mouffe, and in this section I will also look at the way in which these hegemonies are created and sustained through a leader.

Lenin developed Marx's argument for the dictatorship of the proletariat, reasoning that after the revolution had captured the state by force there would need to be a new proletarian ruling class that prepared people for the eventual creation of socialism that superseded the state (Lenin, 1992, p. 18). The vanguard party would be the organizer and director of the proletariat revolution, as Lenin believed that a centralized leadership was necessary to carry revolution through to its end and for many 'his [Lenin's] party stands out as the unsurpassed prototype of what a democratic and centralised leadership of the workers, true to Marxist principles and applying them with courage and skill, can be and do' (Cannon, 1967).

The aim of the vanguard party is to provide a political programme and then to organise the proletariat around this programme. This, argued Lenin, is the best way of establishing a socialist economy. There is a need for a centralised programme of this type as the working class is divided and stratified in many different ways – thus the most effective way for building the workers for revolution is to centralise all these different local struggles into a universal programme. This can be done by spokespeople who grasp the requirements for revolutionary action and can devise their implementation sooner than if it was left to the bulk of the workers (Cannon, 1967).

Trotsky developed Lenin's concept of the vanguard party further, and saw the party as being the sole agency through which capitalism could be overcome. He argued that 'the interests of the class cannot be formulated otherwise than in the shape of a program; the program cannot be defended otherwise than by creating the party...The proletariat acquires an independent role only at that moment when, from a social class *in itself*, it becomes a political class *for itself*. This cannot take place otherwise than through the medium of a party' (Trotsky, 1917).

The building of the party is very deliberate or conscious, and the aim is to build a party that is 'for itself', or capable of uniting workers around the identity of the party. Centralising the creation of the party and the revolutionary strategy means that the workers will all be able to act together as one, with a universal picture of understanding that promotes the best possible strategy for a unified revolutionary front. Many Marxists believe that the organization of the vanguard party must match that of the enemy that they are trying to overcome – and that 'the ruling class is highly centralised' (Cliff quoted in Evans, 2009; Žižek, 2007). In order to be effective in fighting against the ruling class, it is necessary to mirror it, as anything else would be inefficient and would not be pitching 'like against like'.

The aim of the party therefore must be to deliberate and make decisions as expediently as possible rather than being a talking shop for aimless and endless debate. Members of the party must remember that they are there to arrive at decisions for revolutionary action and the party is not 'an infirmary for the care and cure of sick souls' (Cannon, 1967). There is little room for discussion and interaction that does not contribute to the end goal of devising and implementing revolutionary strategy.

Laclau and Mouffe move this idea of the hegemonic articulation of a set of demands into new territory in light of the identity politics of the 1960s onwards. They are concerned primarily with the need to develop a radical re-working of Marxist thinking into a 'radical democratic' project for the Left and took on the question of how the revolution is to be achieved in practice. Using Gramsci's reworking of the concept of hegemony they developed their vision of a strategy to achieve radical change in their book *Hegemony and Socialist Strategy* (Laclau & Mouffe, 1985). Laclau and Mouffe describe this offering as a postmarxist reading of Gramsci, by which they intended to push his theory of hegemony to its limits. They believe it is necessary to do away with essentialist understandings of human relationships and society, and instead argue that contingency is hugely important in theorising resistance.

Like Morton, they begin by arguing that in the late 20th century it is no longer possible to have a historically determinist view of society in which only the working class could bring about revolution. Instead they suggested that multiple identity groups can bring about radical change, and not just class movements, or in other words they find fault with the view that 'there must always be a *single* unifying principle in every hegemonic formation, and this can only be a fundamental class' (Laclau & Mouffe, 1985, p. 69, emphasis in original). They argue that recent history has shown the construction of political identities that have little to do with strict class boundaries and, in advanced capitalist countries, the emergence of new forms of political subjectivity cutting across the categories of social and economic structures (Laclau & Mouffe, 1985, p. 13). Laclau and Mouffe respond to the struggles from the 60s onwards on the Left such as the civil rights movements, feminism and ethnic minorities and the peace movement, but argue that there will always be new struggles emerging as potential sites of struggle, or antagonisms, are always coming into view (Laclau & Mouffe, 1985, p. 165). In an age where democratic societies are increasing in number, the proliferation of antagonisms increases and any number of antagonisms will be able to exist in the political space at the same time. Thus democracy in Western societies is always moving forward by increasing the range of groups that have access to equality and liberty.¹⁰

¹⁰ The main principle upon which their theory is built is the contingency and non-fixity of the social. Identities or subjects may claim to be fixed and closed but if they were closed then they would not be able to relate to other identities, rather they would be pure differences in an overarching system of difference, which could not be seen as a society of any kind as there would be no interaction. Instead, part of the definition of one's own identity is in its complex and elaborated system of relations with other identities

Laclau and Mouffe privilege the formation of contingent alliances of ‘collective will’ that crystallise at various points, and assert that ‘the concept of ‘hegemony’ will emerge precisely in a context dominated by the experience of fragmentation and by the indeterminacy of the articulations between different struggles and subject positions’ (Laclau & Mouffe, 1985, p. 13). This lack of historical necessity or privileged subject positions in hegemonic formations allows Laclau and Mouffe to think an opening up of the concepts of subjects and resistances fixed in certain positions in relation to the capitalist economic structure.

These demands for rights or recognition from the state come about through hegemonic formations, where one group rises above and leads others by gathering different antagonisms into what they call a ‘chain of equivalence’. These chains of equivalence are extended systems of relationships in which different identities form an alliance, with the leading group able to represent all the others. Laclau and Mouffe argue that the chain of equivalences is necessary because groups who all start with the principle of equality as a basis for their demands and then pursue them individually will end up articulating demands that are often incompatible with the demands of others, which will not lead to a set of well thought through democratic demands that encompass as wide a constituency as possible: ‘for the defence of the interests of the workers not to be made at the expense of the rights of women, immigrants or consumers, it is necessary to establish an equivalence between these different struggles’ (Laclau & Mouffe, 1985, p. 184). Thus they seek to overcome that with the logic of equivalence, a kind of ‘common sense’ utilitarian approach to ensure that a hegemonic articulation can get the most amount of benefit for the most amount of people by simplifying the political space and allowing some of the different group’s individual differences to be temporarily dissolved. This has parallels with Lenin’s argument that the revolutionary programme should be centralised under the guidance of particular leaders in order to maximise efficiency and the chances of achieving radical change.

(Laclau, 1996, p. 48). Thus there will always be an ‘outside’ to society, identities that are excluded and want to become included – which then leads to other groups or identities being on the ‘outside’. This is an ever-expanding process as society can never be fully closed – rather antagonisms ‘constitute the limits of society, the latter’s impossibility of fully constituting itself’ (Laclau & Mouffe, 1985, p. 125).

Laclau argues that ‘even though populist movements embody an anti-systemic dimension, they are generally organised around a leader: the desires, passions and aspirations of the movement are symbolically invested within the figure of the leader, or within a particular political party, which pitches itself in opposition to the existing political system’ (Laclau, 2005, p. 122). This means that these chains of equivalence can lead to the articulated demand becoming more of a symbolic opposition to the system represented by the leader – that the demand can become an ‘empty signifier’ (Laclau, 1996, p. 40). The more the chain of equivalences is extended, the less each concrete struggle will be able to retain its own identity, that which differentiates it from the other differences in the system. The other consequence of this is that the longer the chain becomes, the less concrete the ‘something equally present’ in all the struggles will be. The external opposition then will become less the instrument of particular repressions of the groups within the chain of equivalences, and more an empty signifier that represents all the demands in the chain in such a general way that it effectively becomes lacking in concrete meaning (Laclau, 1996, p. 42), and all the opposition is centralised in the symbolic power of the leader.

Thus there is an important role for the leading group or identity, as it is both part of the chain of equivalence (with its own particular claim), but also needs to position itself above the chain in order to shape and present this universal claim. Laclau and Mouffe see this need for representation by the leading identity as a necessary part of radical politics, and so although the agents of change may have broadened out from the vanguard party and Gramsci’s class based alliances, not much has changed in the need for hegemonic leadership by a group that sets itself up as both belonging to the chain of equivalence but also being above it to represent the demands of the other members of the chain. This then leads to a ‘logic of representation of interests within a state-regulated system of hegemonic struggles’ (Day, 2005, p. 75).

This idea of a leading group being an essential part of a successful movement is present among some Marxist activists in the Global Justice Movement, and Callinicos offers a good illustration of this with his discussion of the social forum network, and particularly the organisation of the London European Social Forum in 2004. The organising process that led up to the ESF was fraught with difficulties and disagreements, with the autonomist groups believing that particular Marxist groups had taken control of the organising process through limiting discussions and making decisions behind closed

doors, and these particular Marxists groups feeling frustrated about the desire for more discussion in the planning groups before decisions could be made. Callinicos argues that although autonomist groups have an important part to play in a politics of resistance and their aims and tactics are understandable in themselves, the movement as a whole needs direction to be provided in order for radical change to be achieved. He takes issue with the organising practices of the less traditional or affiliated groups that form a significant part of the Global Justice Movement, arguing that this lack of centralised, highly organised type of politics leaves little room for outlining and achieving specific goals.

Callinicos argues that if the movement is seeking to confront the centralised power of state capitalism through its actions then ‘celebrations of fragmentation and dispersal are of no help whatsoever in addressing the problem’ (Callinicos, 2003, p. 92). He goes on to suggest that:

The political style of some anti-capitalists can be a bigger obstacle to the involvement of trade unionists. The method of organising through affinity groups and consensus-based decision-making is designed to be inclusive, but it can have the opposite effects...The result can be a plethora of separately organised and differently motivated protests that can diffuse energies and create confusion. Often implicit in this style of organization is a view of protest as a form of self-realization rather than a political action intended to achieve definite consequences (Callinicos, 2003, p. 100).

Writing about the London European Social Forum, he describes some of those groups involved in organising the forum as ‘a coalition of significant social movements and a disruptive but socially weak autonomist fringe’ (Callinicos, 2004). Groups who do not favour centralised, highly organised movements, and whose direction is not decided by a group of leaders put their faith in the ability of the movement to spontaneously determine its own direction, which as we have seen is an anathema to Lenin and his understanding of the efficiency of the vanguard party. This is an important consideration for those who favour centralised, hierarchical forms of political organising, as Chris Nineham of the SWP/Globalise Resistance notes in response to the organisation for the ESF: ‘the openness of the movement to innovation and creativity has been one of its great strengths. *But simply celebrating spontaneity will not provide answers about how to move forward.* Consensus is obviously desirable where possible but we can’t pretend we can have a non-ideological movement’ (quoted in Tormey, 2005b, p. 406, emphasis added).

The politics of demand 3: Educating the movement for enactment

An aspect that Day mentions frequently in contrasting the politics of demand with the politics of the act is the ‘Do It Yourself’ element of the politics of the act. This means that those engaged in a politics of the act are not waiting for someone to tell them what to do, and how to do it, but are able to determine for themselves their own course of action. Many Marxists have seen this as problematic, and argued the workers must be educated in why, when and how to act as revolutionaries. This can be seen none more so than by Lenin and his concept of the vanguard party as discussed above and returned to here.

Lenin believed that the proletariat class would not have the time or the means to learn about the complexities of Marxist theory, and argued that there would be no ‘spontaneous’ understanding of the revolutionary consciousness. Thus it had to be constantly fought for, and the vanguard party was needed to educate the proletariat class in their false consciousness and direct them in revolutionary strategy, as only a revolutionary party could direct the revolution according to the ‘scientific’ principles of Marxism. The vanguard party would be ‘capable of fighting for the Marxist program and transforming the revolutionary potential of spontaneous militancy into revolutionary consciousness... the socialist revolution is only made possible when the revolutionary party prepares the revolution: that is, when the preparatory period is used for the formation of a Leninist vanguard party’ (Anon., 1993).

This elevated a group of the Party to professional revolutionaries, creating a hierarchy between those who were to lead the revolution and make decisions regarding the Party, and the workers who were told what to do, when and how to do it. As the workers could not be expected to realize their false consciousness on their own, the Party would do it for them: ‘revolutionary class consciousness of the necessity of socialist revolution and of the methods needed for victory develops in the working class only by means of building the revolutionary party’ (Anon., 1993). The Party is there to serve a function, of making sure that members are there not to contribute their own ideas, or to agree on policies and strategies by discussion and consensus but to educate them as to the policies and strategies that have been decided upon by the Party leaders, as Lenin explains:

By educating the workers' party, Marxism educates the vanguard of the proletariat which is capable of assuming power and of leading the whole people to socialism, of directing and organizing the new order, of being the teacher, the guide, the leader of all the labouring and exploited people in the task of constructing their social life without the bourgeoisie and against the bourgeoisie' (Lenin, 1992, p. 25).

Lenin argues that this wouldn't cause the participation of the masses to suffer if they were subjected to this authoritarian leadership carried out in secret, in fact it would liberate them: 'the active and widespread participation of the masses will not suffer; on the contrary, it will benefit by the fact that a "dozen" experienced revolutionaries, trained professionally no less than the police, will centralise all the secret aspects of the work' (Lenin, 1901, p. 80). This could include such things as drawing up leaflets, working out plans of action and appointing leaders for different districts and institutions.

He explains that 'we must have a committee of professional *revolutionaries*' (Lenin, 1901, p. 78) for the following reasons:

I assert: (1) that no revolutionary movement can endure without a stable organisation of leaders maintaining continuity; (2) that the broader the popular mass drawn spontaneously into the struggle, which forms the basis of the movement and participates in it, the more urgent the need for such an organisation, and the more solid this organisation must be (for it is much easier for all sorts of demagogues to side-track the more backward sections of the masses); (3) that such an organisation must consist chiefly of people professionally engaged in revolutionary activity; (4) that in an autocratic state, the more we *confine* the membership of such an organisation to people who are professionally engaged in revolutionary activity and who have been professionally trained in the art of combating the political police, the more difficult will it be to unearth the organisation; and (5) the *greater* will be the number of people from the working class and from the other social classes who will be able to join the movement and perform active work in it (Lenin, 1901, p. 79).

Thus there is a clear distinction for Lenin between the intellectuals and the masses, between the 'thinkers' and the 'doers', which became the line of the Communist party.

During the student and workers revolts of May 68, some Marxists such as Althusser were critical of the 'infantile leftism' of the uprising, and maintained the party line between thinkers and doers. Althusser privileged scientific reason over what he saw as popular delusion that had gripped those involved in the uprising (Hallward, 2006, p. 109). This led many to question the validity of this approach, and as we shall see later in this chapter, inspired Rancière to his theory of the presupposition of equality. Hallward notes that for Rancière, the real delusion is the theoretical authority that is

maintained by theorists such as Althusser, that ‘the masses live in a state of illusion’, and workers or producers ‘are incapable of thinking through the conditions of their production and domination’ (Hallward, 2006, p. 118). Thus it is the thinkers who are under the illusion that the doers cannot understand their oppression and possible practices of resistance.

Anarchism and the politics of the act

In this section I will build on Day’s conception of the politics of the act by offering three elements of anarchist conceptualizations of politics that I believe can be identified as part of the politics of the act. These indicators are 1) withdrawal from the state, 2) horizontal organisation and 3) an imperative for enactment. As with the politics of demand, I have developed these particular indicators by bringing together anarchist understandings of the three areas of attitudes to the state, ways of organizing and methods of enactment discussed in Chapter 1, and what I consider to be the key features of the politics of act outlined by Day (and as Day bases his politics of the act on anarchism there are significant areas of overlap). I will look at each one in turn, and use anarchist theorists (and those who, although not anarchists, exemplify an aspect of the politics of the act) to demonstrate that anarchist theorists tend to privilege this way of acting politically.

The politics of the act 1: Withdrawal from the state

One of the most important ways that the politics of the act differs from the politics of demand is in its understanding of the role of the state in bringing about radical change. Whereas the politics of demand expects the state to be able to grant movements the rights or recognition they seek or is a way of engaging with it to achieve its ends, the politics of the act rejects the state as the primary interlocutor in social movement politics. Although not necessarily presupposing the overcoming of the state, or denying the state’s legitimacy entirely, a politics of the act assumes that that state cannot or will not provide the solutions for any problems or grievances that movements might have. Rather than taking the state as their main focus of political activism, those who practice a politics of the act try to build alternatives that bypass the need for action oriented towards the state.

This withdrawal from the state has been theorised by German anarchist Gustav Landauer. Anticipating the work of post-structuralist theorists, particularly Foucault

and his analysis of power, Landauer argued in 1911 that the state was not a 'thing', but was a condition that is made up by certain types of relationships, in which we give the state the semblance of legitimacy and are thus all governing each other via complex relationships of power. The state could then be challenged by the alteration of the network of relationships between individuals and the state. He again prefigures current thought in anarchism by arguing that revolution can be achieved only 'by each individual's decision to refuse to co-operate with the existing State and its institutions in order to create positive alternatives'. He goes on to say that:

There comes a time in the history of a social structure, which is a structure only as long as individuals nourish it with their vitality, when those living shy away from it as a strange ghost from the past, and create new groupings instead. Thus I have withdrawn my love, reason, obedience, and my will from that which I call the 'state' (Landauer, 1929).

This idea of withdrawal from the state and the creation of alternatives has been taken up in contemporary contexts by several theorists, two of which I will discuss now. Hakim Bey has contributed interesting insights to the development of anarchist theory with his theorisation of the temporary autonomous zone, and is widely cited by anarchist activists as a source of inspiration. Hardt and Negri, who are not anarchists but autonomist Marxists, have also interested academics and activists alike with their theory of Empire and the multitude, which offers resistance to Empire. Both Bey and Hardt and Negri have in their own way contributed to the idea of being autonomous from or withdrawing from the state, and in this way refusing to acknowledge the state as the primary interlocutor for their mode of politics.

Hakim Bey is an anarchist who has developed the theory of non-engagement with the state through the notion of the Temporary Autonomous Zone. In his essay entitled 'Post-Anarchism Anarchy' Bey suggests that the romantic anarchist notion of total revolution has left the anarchist movement without a notion of the present, and instead it is stuck in the middle of a tragic past and impossible future (Bey, 2003, p. 61). He suggests that there are many people out there who are disaffected and looking for a new type of politics, and the anarchist movement has not managed to attract them because there is a lack of any 'present', any sense that struggle can happen in the here and now. He argues that creative, radical struggle should not be abandoned, but should also not cherish and aim for the goal of a totalising revolution. We need 'radical networking' among the disaffected, and this can be achieved by creating new spaces in which to live

between the cracks of the state. These new spaces are developed in his conception of the Temporary Autonomous Zone (TAZ): ‘The TAZ is like an uprising which does not engage directly with the State, a guerrilla operation which liberates an area (of land, of time, of imagination) and then dissolves itself to re-form elsewhere/elsewhen, before the State can crush it’ (Bey, 2003, p. 99).

This need to create TAZs that exist in the cracks of society is necessary, argues Bey, as current conceptions of space cannot be separated from the mechanisms of state control. The TAZ not only rejects engagement with the state but it also tries to remain invisible to the state, as to be made visible and to be recognized is the first step in losing autonomy, in being captured by the state and used for its own ends. TAZs do not wish to become the state, or to engage with the state but rather attempt at all costs to stay off its radar of power and political activity. It is a withdrawal from the state in every way. Of course a TAZ is generally a temporary rather than fixed act of resistance, although there are examples such as the Italian Social Centre model that looks towards longer-term autonomous spaces.

Bey argues that these Temporary Autonomous Zones are spaces for alternative ways of being, that are part of the ‘always-ongoing “revolution of everyday life”’ (Bey, 2003, p. 126). This life is a creation, and this creative desire invades our consciousness at moments of uprising – but this “peak experience” although it subsides also changes things; it causes shifts and integrations that give shape and meaning to the entirety of life (Bey, 2003, p. 98). Although TAZs are by their nature temporary we are changed as a result of them, society shifts slightly because of them and as Day notes, ‘each moment living differently, each quantum of energy that the neoliberal societies of control do not capture and exploit, is indeed a contribution to the long-term construction of alternative subjects, spaces and relationships’ (Day, 2005, p. 163).

Bey owes much to the Situationists, and it could be argued that the TAZ is a somewhat privileged type of resistance by those who are not constrained by jobs or families, or at least are able to leave it all behind for a short-term adventure into the Temporary Autonomous Zone. Nevertheless, the TAZ offers an example of a conceptualization of acting politically that changes its participants and, as Landauer suggested, can have long term effects on the power of the state by draining it of its legitimacy.

The idea of withdrawal of the state is not limited to Bey, or even to anarchists for that matter. Hardt and Negri, whose seminal work *Empire* (Hardt & Negri, 2000), and its follow-up book *Multitude* (Hardt & Negri, 2004) made a significant impact on the academic world, are autonomist Marxists who also appear to demonstrate similar ideas to Day's politics of the act in relation to a withdrawal from the state. Hardt and Negri argue that Empire is the dominant force in the current era, a neo-liberal capitalist hegemon that has no outside – thus any resistance or counter-Empire must take place within the Empire, in a relationship of deterritorialization and reterritorialization, a concept which they borrow from Deleuze and Guattari and which I will discuss in Chapter 3. This resistance is undertaken by the multitude, replacing the concept of the proletariat with something wider, in a move similar to Bakunin's embracing of the lumpenproletariat.¹¹ Hardt and Negri argue that this multitude, although creating and sustaining the conditions for the domination of Empire by desiring its own repression, also has the capacity to form a resistance, or counter-Empire – 'an alternative political organization of global flows and exchanges' (Hardt & Negri, 2000, p. xv). Even if it has not been actualised yet, there is potentiality in every event which could be transformed into actuality: 'a horizon of activists, resistances, wills, and desires that refuse the hegemonic order, propose lines of flight, and forge alternative constitutive itineraries' (Hardt & Negri, 2000, p. 48).

Although they advocate wide-ranging (and sometimes contradictory) ways of resisting Empire, one of the methods that they suggest is that of withdrawing from the state. They are writing from an autonomist Marxist position which is predicated on the idea of self-organised actions rather than action carried out by a political party, and they aim to show that everyday working class resistance by actions such as withdrawal or absenteeism can be an effective resistance to capitalism. This influences their idea of the multitude as those engaged in struggles against Empire who self-organise from the bottom-up and refuse to engage with states or the sovereignty of Empire. Hardt and Negri argue that 'democracy today takes the form of a subtraction, a flight, an exodus

¹¹ The power of the multitude to defeat the constituted power of the Empire is called into question by Mouffe however, as she argues that 'the multitude' obscures the internal struggles of those who make up the multitude, and who will have different interests and demands that may well be in conflict (Mouffe, 2005, p. 113). For Mouffe, this is actually to eliminate the political, which Mouffe describes as 'the dimension of antagonism which I take to be constitutive of human societies (Mouffe, 2005, p. 9).

from sovereignty...every exodus requires an active resistance, a rear-guard war against the pursuing powers of sovereignty' (Hardt & Negri, 2004, pp. 341-342).

This exodus is also positive, as they insist that we must create real alternatives, but these alternatives are based on a refusal of the controlling constituted power of Empire, and could include such diverse tactics as a refusal of work, consumerism, education, or of fitting within conventional norms in areas such as sexuality. At one point they argue that the task of the multitude is to create 'a new society in the shell of the old, without establishing fixed and stable structures of rule' (Hardt & Negri, 2000, p. 207). Negri explains that this withdrawal from the state is not a negative thing but a positive, constitutive way of acting politically:

When we speak of 'desertion', we aren't appealing to a negative slogan... Today if one deserts, if one opposes the relations of power or the nexus of capital, the relations of power or the nexus of knowledge, the relations of power or the nexus of language, one does it in a powerful way, in producing at the very moment when one refuses (Negri, 2001).

This desertion involves the creation of alternatives, the demonstration that there is another way to act politically than what we are led to assume by the politics of demand. This goes back to the ideas offered by Landauer in the sense that 'these alternatives take the form of experiments which undermine Empire by draining its energy and rendering it redundant' (Day, 2005, p. 149).

Hardt and Negri argue against the formation of political parties as such, and claim that we must move away from any understanding of the state being central to political resistance, even if they then seem to replace the state with Empire. However, Negri is clear that Gramscian theories, such as that of Laclau and Mouffe, are not compatible with a radical rethinking of the political since the concept of hegemony is 'completely soaked in the modern concept of the state' (Casarino & Negri, 2008, p. 165). Thus although they develop instead the concept of Empire, Hardt and Negri no longer see the state as the primary interlocutor in the struggle for autonomy and resistance to the dominating and controlling power of capital.

Although Hardt and Negri's project of the multitude and resistance of Empire is much broader and more complex than I have been able to reference here, and they declare that they are not anarchists but 'communists who have seen how much repression and

destruction of humanity have been wrought by liberal and socialist big governments' (Hardt & Negri, 2000, p. 350), they do have affinities with the politics of the act that I find helpful in conceptualising this active politics of withdrawal from and refusal of the state or Empire. Along with Hakim Bey they show how we might conceptualise the act of refusing the politics of demand by creating alternatives without the need for, or sanction of, the state.

The politics of the act 2: Horizontal organisation

For Day, the most important element of the politics of the act is that it is based on a logic of affinity rather than hegemonic hierarchy. This is in direct contrast to the hierarchical organisation of the party advocated by Lenin, and many theorists and activists point to 'horizontal' organising as being the most notable aspect of the activities of the Global Justice Movement. In order to see how this need for horizontal organisation is conceptualised I will turn to Graeber, Tormey and those who are actively part of social movement organizing.

Anarchists who valorise horizontal ways of organising insist that one of the reasons that this is so central to acting politically is that everyone has a right to have their voice heard, and each opinion is as valid as the next. This contrasts with a more procedural form of politics implied by the politics of demand, where the goal is already decided upon by the leaders. Thus in prioritising the achievement of such goals, party leaders are not allowing the voices of all the movement participants to be heard. This way of organising privileges inclusion and participation over efficiency and setting and achieving pre-arranged goals. Werner Bonefeld notes that:

The Party provides the multitude with a programmatic definition that perverts the aim of organization in the means of resistance...Thus the multitude of human dignitaries becomes instead commensurate to foot soldiers. Do not think. Do not show humanity. Do not blink. Comply! The Party always knows best...the Party transforms the not-yet of social autonomy in action into a well-ordered, thoughtlessly thinking voting bloc (Bonefeld, 2005, p. 268).

Thus for those conceptualizing and practicing horizontal-style modes of organisation there is a belief that the most important element of political activism is the way in which relationships with others are enacted. David Graeber suggests that far from the Global Justice Movement not having a coherent ideology, these new forms of organisation *are* its ideology. He directly contrasts this with traditional organizations, explaining that this type of politics is about 'creating and enacting horizontal networks instead of top-

down structures like states, parties or corporations; networks based on principles of decentralized, non-hierarchical consensus democracy' (Graeber, 2004, p. 212).

Graeber believes that this kind of direct democracy, though painful at times and undoubtedly less efficient than the traditional political party at reaching a decision, has the capacity to profoundly transform how we understand human possibility, and that the relational aspect of equality of opinion is what is most different about this type of politics. Therefore any action or gathering represents a process or journey rather than the event itself, and it is important to focus on the ongoing political process of dialogue, rather than the festival-type events of activist gatherings or protest events (Horizontals, 2004).

This is achieved by focusing on the means of any action rather than prioritising the outcome, and one example of this is the consensus decision-making model. Graeber explains in some detail how these processes of consensus decision-making work, and what the purpose is:

The basic ideas of consensus process is that, rather than voting, you try to come up with proposals acceptable to everyone – or at least, not highly objectionable to anyone: first state the proposal, then ask for 'concerns' and try to address them. Often, at this point, people in the group will propose 'friendly amendments' to add to the original proposal, or otherwise alter it, to ensure that concerns are addressed. Then, finally, when you call for consensus, you ask if anyone wishes to 'block' or 'stand aside'. Standing aside is just saying, 'I would not myself be willing to take part in this action, but I wouldn't stop anyone else from doing it'. Blocking is a way of saying 'I think this violates the fundamental principles or purposes of being in the group'. It functions as a veto: any one person can kill a proposal completely by blocking it – although there are ways to challenge whether a block is genuinely principled (Graeber, 2004, p. 213).

Thus rather than having efficiency and speed in decision making as its main priority, consensus decision-making focuses on providing the best method available to ensure that everyone has a chance to be heard, and treated as equal partners in the conversation. This process aims to mediate differences rather than brush over them in order to reach a speedy decision.

There is a second way in which theorists who favour a horizontal mode of organising critique 'vertical' or hierarchical modes of organising, and that is in the area of creativity. Tormey argues that vertical politics stifle creativity and make politics procedural rather than productive:

Politics conforms to the logic of a military operation: we are to be coordinated, organised, galvanised. It is not a practice with room for doubt or ambivalence, of uncertainty or unknowability. These are marks of ‘weakness’ and ‘vacillation’. We need to ‘get down to business’. Politics in this sense is paradoxically the end of the political, or the end of the political as a creative act’ (Tormey, 2005b, p. 399).

He argues that horizontal organising is about creating space for the type of political activity that is productive and positive, but which needs connection and discussion for its own sake in order to flourish:

Accounts of the kinds of spaces that contemporary theorists and activists want to create, i.e. ‘smooth space’, ‘autonomous space’, anti-authoritarian spaces – spaces of imagination and creativity are contingent, open, negotiated, unpredictable, beyond capture. This is what we are calling ‘utopian space’. It is a space that is produced by, and becomes the object of, ‘horizontal’ politics...It thus accepts, indeed celebrates, the desirability of developing spaces in which we can encounter others on terms that are not mediated by ‘necessity’ or by some over-arching instrumental consideration, where we can learn from others, engage with others, join with others’ (Tormey, 2005b, p. 402).

There is a need for unpredictability in order to engender a politics that is creative and productive, and Tormey argues that we need to create utopian *spaces* rather than a totalising utopian space, which then precludes others from entering that space. He points to the success of the World Social Forum model as proof that this is both creative in the alliances and unexpected connections that are born out of it, and desirable as there is clearly an appetite for this type of model among activists with the huge numbers attending these Social Forums. The unpredictable spaces that are created means that outcomes are not known in advance, and that there is an impermanency and unknowable quality of contemporary activism made visible at Social Forums and summit protests, which are ‘of course a source of huge frustration for the ‘vertical’ wing of the AGM [anti-globalisation movement] which argues that without the permanent and institutional crystallisation of activist demands in the Party form the movement cannot build and conquer power’ (Tormey, 2005a, p. 346).

The politics of the act 3: An imperative for enactment

The third indicator of the politics of the act which I think can be extracted from Day’s concept is that of an imperative for enactment. The logic of affinity is exemplified according to Day by DIY activism and ‘non-branded tactics’: by invention of new ways to act politically that don’t perpetuate existing patterns of domination. These non-branded tactics ‘tend to spread in a viral way, with no one taking ownership or

attempting to exercise control over how they are implemented’ (Day, 2005, p. 19). An imperative for enactment captures this emphasis on experimentation with acting politically that is not handed down to individuals according to the party who have ownership of them, and who decide how politics will be enacted and by whom. Rather there is a responsibility on individuals and collectives to experiment for themselves, to take direct action that is appropriate to their own situation. Day goes on to note that unlike the dictates of the Communists in the heyday of the Soviet Union, ‘non-branded tactics easily morph into new forms appropriate to different times and places, and thus are beginning to display the kind of diversity and differentiation that is required for ‘survival’ in the hostile environment of neoliberal societies of control’ (Day, 2005, pp. 19-20).

Postanarchist¹² Todd May believes that this understanding of who should act politically and how they should act can be re-thought by drawing on the work of Jacques Rancière, with particular reference to his conception of equality. Rancière was a student of Althusser, but found himself at odds with Marxism during the uprising of May 68, where students and workers revolted together. Althusser was critical of this type of uprising but Rancière wanted to distance himself from a position that was predicated by figures such as Althusser on a division of labour between the intellectuals who think and then ‘direct’ political resistance, and the workers who actually carry it out (May, 2009, p. 15). Althusser believed that Marxism was a science, and thus needed an avant-garde party to properly understand the workings of capitalism and its weaknesses in order to develop appropriate strategies that would then be carried out by the workers, or as Rancière claimed ‘Althusser needs the opposition between the ‘simplicity’ of nature and the ‘complexity’ of history: if production is the affair of the workers, history is too complex for them and must be left to the Specialists: the Party and Theory’ (Rancière, 1973).

This led Rancière to see and reject a clear division of labour in Althusser’s thought between the intellectuals and the workers, which creates and reinforces the idea of a natural hierarchy of ‘thinkers’ and ‘doers’ (May, 2010, p. 6). This led to a huge distance between the powerful professor and what was happening on the ground by

¹² The postanarchist project and the way in which it contributes to this thesis will be discussed later in this thesis. For now it is sufficient to say that postanarchism is a project that aims to renew a politics of anarchism by using post-structuralist insights in order to move anarchism beyond some of its theoretical limits.

students and other social movements (Hallward, 2003, p. 195), which can only reinforce the divide between intellectual and worker, educator and educated, in which the theory proposed by the educator will only strive to maintain the source of power that it sets out to expose (Rancière, 1974, p. 104).

Rancière wished to move away from this division and to remove the hierarchy that comes from saying that only certain people have the ability or right to determine what is to act politically. Instead he developed a conceptualisation of politics that was based on an idea that to be truly democratic, acting politically had to be based on a presupposition of equality. What does equality in this instance mean? For Rancière it is based on our intelligence as human beings. That is to say it does not depend on what IQ we might have, but on our common ability to discuss, communicate and make sense of the world around us and for our actions to be understood by others. There is no essence or particular quality or type of group that is needed to possess equality, rather it is something that everyone possesses. There are no scientific ‘truths’ about what constitutes democratic politics that can only be accessed by a few, rather the basis for intellectual equality is that there is nothing that is essentially hidden that can’t be accessed by nearly all of us (May, 2010, p. 7).

A presupposition of equality exposes the contingency of existing hierarchies – it allows us to see that there is no necessary reason why particular people are at the top of any hierarchy and why others are at the bottom. Rancière argues that ‘there is no natural principle of domination by one person over another’ (Rancière, 1999, p. 79), and thus hierarchies are due to contingent circumstances of history rather than the necessities of nature (May, 2010, p. 10). May recognises that it is difficult to allow ourselves to presuppose this equality as society is ordered on a basis of hierarchy, and this idea of inequality is so ingrained in us that we find it difficult to imagine a social order built on anything different. For Rancière, acting politically demonstrates the power of anyone to act, or in other words: ‘the power of the people itself is anarchic in principle, for it is the affirmation of the power of anyone, of those who have no title to it. It is thus the affirmation of the ultimate illegitimacy of domination’ (May, Noys, & Newman, 2008, p. 173).

May takes Rancière's presupposition of equality further, by suggesting that as all are presupposed as equal, any means of practicing democratic politics must not be violent or seek to reproduce the hierarchies that necessitates action in the first place, as those who oppress or dominate are as entitled to be equal as much as anyone else (May, 2010, p. 10). Thus the means must be consistent with the ends. Acting democratically should not lead to the seizing of power and therefore the oppression of those who were the oppressors, rather acting democratically seeks to disrupt existing notions of hierarchy not reinvent them. Politics rather seeks to make visible those who are invisible. It is about disrupting the police order rather than seeking to overcome it, and it disrupts the assumption that 'politics' is carried out by particular people such as politicians and civil servants – people who 'know best' – or in other words 'the division of politics into militants and everyone else does not occur' (May & Love, p. 64).

Rancière is not under any illusion that this democratic politics that is based on presupposing our equality to others, and particularly those who have domination over us is easy – indeed he does not think that it actually happens very often. Activity that is often assumed to be a form of democratic politics (a politics of demand) is not truly democratic politics as it is based on distributive justice, and distributive justice presupposes that there will be someone at the top who decides on who is worthy of resources in order to redress issues of inequality. Clearly that is not equality as Rancière sees it. Distributive equality separates people into those who are politically active and those who are politically passive and 'to be politically passive is not to be equal, in the creation of one's own life, to those who are active' (May, 2010, p. 10). If we limit politics to the systems of organisation and distribution, we limit people's ability to act politically. Thus for Rancière, politics is not aimed at the state but at the people, or the demos – the 'part that has no part' or the uncounted.

Although Rancière wouldn't necessarily subscribe wholly to the politics of the act,¹³ he does suggest that politics comes from outside the organisation of the state, or what he

¹³ Although Rancière exemplifies characteristics of the politics of the act as demonstrated above, notably an imperative for enactment through the presupposition of equality and an opposition to hierarchical forms of political activity directed by a class of intellectuals, he could not be considered to dismiss the need for a politics of demand, of engagement with the state and its institutions in order to make concrete gains in the counting of those who are uncounted. He notes that 'on the one hand, then, it is necessary to affirm a politics independently of State logic. On the other, the State is a terrain of struggle: I am not talking about the struggle to 'take power', but of the

calls the police order, and that this politics can be enacted by anyone who presupposes themselves as equal. Rancière states that ‘there is an opposition between state logic, which is a logic of the restriction and the privatisation of the public sphere, and democratic political logic which, on the contrary, aims to extend this power through its own forms of action’ (May, Noys, & Newman, 2008, p. 173). Rancière’s call to act on the presupposition of equality extends to everyone who sees a gap in the social where those who have no part should be counted. This equality cannot simply be granted however, as this would be a passive politics, but has to be fought for. It is ‘not an equality decreed by law or force, not a passively received equality, but an equality in act, verified, at each step by marchers who, in their constant attention to themselves and in their endless revolving around the truth, find the right sentences to make themselves understood by others’ (Rancière, 1991, p. 72).

Thus Rancière demonstrates this particular indicator of the politics of the act – an imperative for enactment – in the way he argues against the need for a division between those who decide on what political action is to be taken and those who carry out this political action. It shows that all are equal and have the ability to act, and so create a gap between the social as a whole and those within that society who are not counted. It is precisely by acting on this presupposition of equality they disrupt the existing order and expose society’s hierarchies as contingent and illegitimate by rejecting the particular identification and limited demands or actions they are granted by their characterisation in the system. May explains how this is consonant with anarchism, and I would argue an imperative for enactment, when he states that ‘if equality is the touchstone of a democratic politics, this means that there is no avant-garde, no necessary divisions between those who think and those who act. It also means, concomitant with this, that the process of politics is essential – not just its results. This is a point that has often been insisted upon by anarchists’ (May, 2009, p. 16).

I believe there are three things that we can take from Rancière as exemplifying an imperative for enactment. Firstly, anyone is free and has the potential to act politically through a presupposition of equality that disrupts the existing order by exposing those who are not counted. Action can take place anywhere: ‘from the workplace to the

struggle to affirm the power accrued to the people on all terrains. The latter struggle produces effects of the redefinition of rights and the transformation of institutions that, personally, I refuse to regard as illusory because they point to capacities for new forms of action’ (May, Noys, & Newman, 2008, p. 183).

classroom to the theater to the street' (May, 2010, p. 22) and by anyone. There is no difference between leaders and led, intellectuals and workers. Everyone is able to make his or her own contribution to political action based on their presupposition of equality.

Secondly, democratic politics may have a specific outcome or aim, but this is predicated on a movement where 'intellectuals' develop a programme and 'workers' carry it out. This suggests to me that the possibilities for experimentation are far greater as each individual action is not part of some overarching revolutionary strategy, which gives us freedom to experiment. Indeed, Rancière argues that politics is theatre, in the sense that it makes the invisible visible when people act out the role of those who society argues have no role (Hallward, 2006, p. 117). Every theatrical sequence has to create its own stage on which to be played: 'Politics has no "proper" place nor does it possess any "natural" subjects . . . Political demonstrations are thus always of the moment and their subjects are always precarious and provisional' (Rancière, 1998, p. 245). Thus contingency and experimentation play an important part in Rancière's conception of the political.

Thirdly, according to May's interpretation of Rancière, taking democratic action is not about replacing existing systems of hierarchy with new ones, but rather coming from a completely different perspective that instead assumes that everyone is equal. Thus to act violently or to attempt to seize power from the oppressors and wield it oneself is neither just nor desirable. The status quo can be changed, through acting on a presupposition of equality, but through changes in attitude or ways of thinking about politics rather than taking power from those who currently have it and continuing to reinforce hierarchies of inequality, even if they are different from the previous hierarchies.

The politics of demand versus the politics of the act rethought

In this chapter I have separated out the different aspects of the politics of demand and the politics of the act in order to develop their specificity. In doing so I have been able to demonstrate that Marxist and anarchists generally exemplify these different indicators through a politics of demand and a politics of the act respectively. However, just as the categories of the politics of demand and the politics of the act do not contain all the excesses of the Marxist/anarchist dichotomy, so the terms can also have different meanings to the ones outlined by Day and developed here. It is important to note that

these categories are not exhaustive expressions of these modes of politics, and can be used just as easily almost in reverse, as I will demonstrate through a brief examination of two viewpoints that express a preference for the politics of demand and the politics of the act by Critchley and Žižek respectively, stemming from Critchley's book *Infinitely Demanding* (Critchley, 2007) and Žižek's response.

In *Infinitely Demanding* Critchley seeks to develop an ethical approach to a politics of resistance in the 21st century. He aligns himself with an anarchist approach that is not a hegemonic principle of political organisation but is an ethic of 'infinite responsibility that arises in relation to a situation of injustice' (Critchley, 2007, p. 93). The main feature of this for Critchley is the disturbance of the state through calling it into question: 'politics is the manifestation of dissensus, the cultivation of an anarchic multiplicity that calls into question the authority and legitimacy of the State' (Critchley, 2007, p. 13). If this is politics, then Critchley's project is to provide an ethical orientation to support this politics (Critchley, 2007, p. 90) – a politics which for me displays the indicators of the politics of the act outlined in this chapter through withdrawal from the state (Critchley, 2007, p. 113), non-hierarchical organisation (Critchley, 2007, p. 122), and an imperative for creativity and enactment (Critchley, 2007, p. 123).

Critchley's main thesis is that in order to ensure the state's legitimacy and authority are called into question, or in other words to make sure that the state is not able to represent itself as a whole or compete entity, politics 'is the praxis of taking up distance with regard to the State, working independently of the State, working in a situation' (Critchley, 2007, p. 112), and cites the practices of the anti-globalisation movement and indigenous rights groups, among others, of those who are engaging in this definition of politics.

However for Critchley, this distance from the state can never be an outside to the state and so withdrawal from the state remains 'within and upon the State's territory' (Critchley, 2007, p. 113) and space from the state can only be prised open from inside. Space from the state can be opened up by making ethical demands on the state in order to expose its illegitimacy through its inability to meet these demands – as for Critchley the state does not have the capacity to deal with injustice and is generally the cause of it. These demands often take the form of demands for rights or recognition, and he argues

that ‘we might say that rights can be levers of political articulation whereby a hitherto invisible or excluded constituency enters into visibility in relation to an injustice or wrong that shows a contradiction in the logic of the State structure’ (Critchley, 2007, p. 111).

Thus we see that according to Critchley the state can be exposed as being unable to fulfil the impossible demands and the solving of some demands for rights leads to the reduction of those rights for others. This echoes Day’s description of the politics of demand as a politics that perpetuates these structures of control and domination by anticipating a response to its demand in the form of emancipation through the granting of rights or recognition, but with Critchley there is one important difference – he does not think that these demands will be fulfilled, but rather relies on the impossibility of the state being able to fulfil them to expose and challenge its authority and legitimacy. I would suggest that this exposes the narrow definition that Day gives to the politics of demand and the act as here we have a political practice that Day would dismiss as the politics of demand being used in such a way as to create the conditions of possibility for the politics of the act.

Žižek, on the other hand, understand the politics of the act to mean something quite different. For him ‘the Act’ is a radical political event that creates a fundamental change to the existing order. In an article entitled ‘Resistance is Surrender’ (Žižek, 2007), Žižek is critical of Critchley and others on the ‘postmodern Left’ precisely for this call for a politics of resistance that hopes to disrupt the state through making impossible demands of it. He argues that making demands of the state which it can’t possibly fulfil leaves the liberal-democratic state untroubled, and allows the state and an anarchic politics in a relationship of mutual parasitism where the anarchists do the thinking, and the state gets on with the job of running and regulating society. Žižek argues that this withdrawal from the state cannot be seen as the primary, or only, way of acting politically, as it does not help in the fight against concrete and material oppressions. He asks ‘if the state is here to stay, if it is impossible to abolish it (or capitalism), why retreat from it? Why not act with(in) the state?’ (Žižek, 2007). Žižek claims that those who embody the latter position (such as Critchley) are dismissive of those who choose to continue with the activities of the traditional Left as ‘those who still insist on fighting state power, let alone seizing it, are accused of remaining stuck

within the 'old paradigm': the task today, their critics say, is to resist state power by withdrawing from its terrain and creating new spaces outside its control' (Žižek, 2007).

For Žižek, if we get the chance to take state power, to make changes to existing state policies then why would we not do so? It would be ridiculous to say to someone like Chavez in Venezuela 'no, don't grab power, just withdraw from the state and leave the current situation as it is'. To refuse the opportunity to grab state power, withdraw from the state and cause no problems for those in power is not truly subversive – rather 'the thing to do is, on the contrary, to bombard those in power with strategically well-selected, precise, finite demands, which can't be met with the same excuse' (Žižek, 2007). Rather what is needed in any authentic Act is the aim to succeed, to actually change something rather than to know you are going to fail from the outset because what you are asking for is impossible (Žižek, 2002). This is what Žižek refers to as 'interpassivity', or in other words doing things not to achieve something but to *prevent* something actually happening or changing: 'All the frenetic humanitarian, politically correct, etc., activity fits the formula of "Let's go on changing something all the time so that, globally, things will remain the same!"' (Žižek, 2002). Thus an Act on this reading cannot be a withdrawal from the state, it cannot be brought about through the creation of networks of activists who either ignore the state or attempt to disrupt it through exposing its illegitimacy through 'mocking satire and feather dusters' (Critchley, 2007). Rather an Act is to create demands of the state that are able to change the status quo, and accept that working within the state paradigm is the best way to effect real change. This willingness to target the state, either by making a change through affording rights and recognition or, ultimately, by taking state power is what Day would describe as a politics of demand, although for Žižek it comes down firmly on the side of the Act.

I have show that Žižek and Critchley understand the practice of radical politics in different ways – with Critchley calling for a politics of demands and Žižek for a politics of the Act. For Žižek, politics is about engaging with the powerholders either to bombard them with specific demands or to take power from them. He argues that we can only change the world if we accept that we live in the real world where any kind of political act should change the existing order. He believes that a politics that withdraws from the state cannot have an impact on concrete and material struggles and therefore cannot be a successful Act. Critchley, on the other hand, believes that to try and change state domination is to withdraw from it while also creating infinite demands that expose

the state's inability to deal with such demands and thus to expose as false the state's claim to work for the best interests of the people in it. These two positions exemplify the dichotomy that theorists have set up between the politics of demand, and its engagement with the state on the one hand, and the politics of the act through withdrawal from the state and the creation of alternatives on the other, but do so in a way that sets up the dichotomy the other way round – so that Critchley calls for a politics of demand and Žižek for a politics of the act. This shows that Day's distinction between a politics of demand and a politics of the act are not all encompassing, but are open to different and seemingly opposite interpretations.

In this chapter I have built on Day's contention that the politics of demand and the politics of the act are understood in dichotomous terms, with Marxists privileging a politics of demand and anarchists privileging a politics of the act, by drawing on theorists who exemplify the indicators of the politics of demand and the politics of the act that I have developed. In Chapter 3 I will look at the relationship between the politics of demand and the politics of the act and, drawing on Deleuze, argue that the two ways of thinking about politics and acting politically cannot be separated out from each other, and should not be understood as existing in isolation as Day does. Rather they exist in a symbiotic relationship with the politics of the act being afforded an ontological (but not ethical) priority. I have also noted Day's claim that the politics of demand overshadows the politics of the act in terms of conceptualising politics in IR, and I will also provide a more in-depth look at the politics of the act, showing that Deleuze and Guattari's three lines of politics can help us deepening our understanding of the politics of the act.

Chapter 3: Deleuze and Guattari's three lines of politics: a conceptual framework

In the first two chapters I demonstrated that although anarchism and Marxism have developed from the same historical context, they have consciously defined themselves in opposition to each other, and have developed different conceptualisations of what it is to act politically. I then showed that this historical distinction has also been reproduced theoretically in a more contemporary context by Marxists and anarchists. The clearest example of this is Day's distinction between politics of demand and a politics of the act, and I built on this distinction by drawing on both Marxist and anarchist theorists to demonstrate that Marxists tend to privilege a politics of demand and anarchists a politics of the act.

The aim of this chapter is two-fold. Firstly I will argue that although the distinction between a politics of demand and a politics of the act is generally understood in dichotomous terms, as demonstrated by Day and others, I believe that this distinction is overdrawn. By drawing on Deleuze and Guattari I will show that, even though the politics of demand and the politics of the act are meaningfully different, the politics of the act can be understood as being ontologically prior to the politics of demand. This does not mean, however, that the politics of the act is ethically or normatively prior. The second aim of this chapter is to draw on Deleuze and Guattari to create a conceptual framework through which we can deepen our understanding of the politics of the act. I will do this by using the concepts of the *war machine*, *rhizomes* and *lines of flight* developed by Deleuze and Guattari to understand the way the politics of the act may be practiced.

Deleuze and Guattari claim that there are three lines of politics that we live on: molar lines of rigid segmentarity that provide order; molecular lines that exist below the molar lines, creating destabilising fluxes that question the rigidity of these fixed segments and allow the molar lines to be shuffled and redistributed; and lines of flight which are qualitatively different to the other two lines and express the excess of creativity and productivity that escape the life of molar segments. These three lines work for my argument in two ways. First, they characterize the relationship *between* 'resistance' and 'governance', or radical politics and the state. They do this by showing the relationship between molar segments on the one hand – which are managed by the state apparatus – and molecular lines and lines of flight on the other, which try to disrupt these segments

and expose their contingency as they are not rigid and fixed, but have crystallized into certain identities. Secondly, these three lines characterise the relationship between the politics of demand and the politics of the act *within* a radical politics of resistance. This is captured by the molecular lines and lines of flight and the way in which they create newness which can be turned into alternative practices that exist outside the state (the politics of the act) on the one hand, and the molecular lines that interact with molar segments to force changes in the existing order (the politics of demand) on the other, although these mappings must remain somewhat fluid.

Deleuze and Guattari are animated by a concern to overcome dualisms that are created through binary oppositions. Trying to map three lines of politics onto two modes of politics is difficult, as it is meant to be, and means that any identification will be approximate. Deleuze and Guattari insist that we must move away from conceptualising politics as an oppositional logic that creates a moral hierarchy of superior/inferior. This moral hierarchy only serves to strengthen the division between the politics of demand and the politics of the act and the way in which this feeds into different conceptualisations of what it is to act politically.

The politics of demand can be seen as primarily occupying the molecular line as it comes into contact with molar segments. Molar lines of rigid segments are managed by the state, and create fixed markers of identity, through which we are categorized. These are often set up as binary opposites – for example you are either man or woman – and do not allow for creativity and newness. The molecular lines exist below the molar lines and they come into contact with these molar lines by sending fluxes through the segments to destabilize them and force the molar lines to reshuffle their segments, just as the politics of demand asks for rights or recognition to be granted by the state which requires the state to shift its segments to add another identification.

The politics of the act can be seen as primarily occupying the line of flight as it comes into contact with molecular lines. Lines of flight are of a different nature to molar and molecular lines, and do not exist on the same plane. Rather they are lines of pure creativity, of absolute speed that hurtle into the unknown, and can only be used to challenge the molar lines managed by the state when they are slowed down by molecular lines. The politics of the act is a good fit with these lines of flight, when they seem by some to be self-indulgent expressions of creativity but can disrupt the

legitimacy of the state when they are able to frame their creativity through contact with molecular lines.

For Deleuze and Guattari, lines of flight have a certain ontological priority and act as the creative base of difference from which identities can be crystallized. This ontological priority does not, however, afford lines of flight an ethical priority, as all three lines of politics are equally necessary because society could not function properly without them. The politics of the act can be seen as the creative basis through which the politics of demand comes into being. The politics of demand is enacted by capturing certain flows of creativity – it is the crystallisation of various aspects of the politics of the act into recognisable ‘moments’ that allows us to create resonance with others at a societal level and challenge the legitimacy of the state. Thus, these modes of politics are not distinct from each other, but rather flow into each other. In this context, it does not make sense to recognize either the politics of demand or the politics of the act as being ethically superior, as both have distinct but complimentary political functions.

In this chapter I will also develop a conceptual framework in order deepen our understanding of the politics of the act. I will do this by using the concepts of the *war machine*, *rhizomes* and *lines of flight* developed by Deleuze and Guattari to understand the way a radical politics looks in practice. Each Deleuzian concept helps develop one of the indicators of the politics of the act that I developed in the previous chapter – withdrawal from the state is conceptualized by the war machine, horizontal organizing by rhizomes, and an imperative for enactment by lines of flight.¹⁴

These concepts develop the three indicators of withdrawal from the state, horizontal organizing and an imperative for enactment by both deepening the specific understanding of what these three indicators may look like, but also by showing the constantly shifting relationship between the politics of the act and the politics of demand through identifying moments in which the politics of demand can be brought into being and crystallized in ways that can challenge fixed meanings and identities managed by the state.

¹⁴ When I refer to lines of flight in this context, I am referring to specific characteristics that can be found within the line of flight rather than the whole line of politics discussed above.

Three lines of politics

Before discussing the three lines of politics that Deleuze and Guattari claim we operate on and their relationship to each other, I will briefly discuss the question of whether we can extract any kind of political theory from Deleuze and Guattari. Some thinkers argue that this is not possible, suggesting that an insistence on immanence and a lack of specificity renders their work unsuitable for deriving any kind of political theory. Thinkers like Perry Anderson have been frustrated by Deleuze and Guattari's work as they have deliberately not offered a political programme or ready-made set of policies – they do not give answers to questions of strategy (Buchanan & Thoburn, 2008, pp. 1-2). Alain Badiou argues that in generalizing politics everywhere, Deleuze's system lacks a specifically political register (Badiou, 1998). However, other thinkers claim that Deleuze and Guattari offer us a different type of politics that is less about direction and more about creation (Buchanan, 2000; Colebrook, 2002; Hardt, 1993; Jeanes, 2006). Thinking creatively 'provokes us, dislodges us from our ways of thinking' (Jeanes, 2006, p. 128). This is useful not in telling us how a particular form of governance such as democracy or a specific set of laws and institutions might work, but in seeing politics as an art of composition, an art that affirms the variation and creation of life (Thoburn, 2003), and that a different way of thinking is possible, as 'our' conception of philosophy (or creativity) is not the only one (Buchanan, 2000, p. 74).

Deleuze and Guattari's joint work, and particularly their second part of the Capitalism and Schizophrenia project, *A Thousand Plateaus* (Deleuze & Guattari, 2004), set out a vision of the social that turns traditional understandings of social and political relations on its head. They believe that the politics as they understand it has always existed but has just not been articulated in this way. This makes their conceptualisation of politics descriptive rather than prescriptive, as they believe they are creating a theoretical framework to render an already-existing politics visible. Their core claim in this area, although their body of work and concepts is huge, is that human existence, and therefore politics, takes place on three different lines that are constantly intersecting and crossing over onto each other. These three lines are molar, molecular and lines of flight, and form the basis of society.

Molar lines

The first lines described by Deleuze and Guattari are molar lines or segments. These segments are based on a traditional understanding of the way in which we recognise

things around us and relate to them, we might think of this as 'identity'. Segments are fixed, and used by the state to hold together the social field in which we all relate to one another. These molar lines are recognizable to everyone and persist over time as 'segmentarity is inherent to all the strata composing us. Dwelling, getting around, working, playing: life is spatially and socially segmented' (Deleuze & Guattari, 2004, p. 230).

Molar segments are pre-determined, fixed, and rigid; and there are different segments or lines to correspond to various stages of human life – we move through these segments in a pre-defined order from one to the next: 'The first kind of line which forms us is segmentary – of rigid segmentarity (or rather there are already many lines of this sort): family-the army-and then the factory-and then retirement' (Deleuze & Parnet, 1987, p. 124). Or in other words, they remain stable and people move through them with regularity and without needing to think about it. People do not generally see any reason to break out of the established pattern.

These segments remain in place through the state apparatus, which overcodes and controls the segments at both societal and individual levels and fixes the code and the territory of the corresponding segment (Deleuze & Parnet, 1987, p. 128). The state according to Deleuze and Guattari is not a particular set of institutions or sovereignty, rather it is an abstract concept that goes beyond concrete manifestations, although it operates through them (Newman, 2009). The state has always been in existence, indeed Deleuze and Guattari argue that it came into the world 'fully formed and rises up in a single stroke' (Deleuze & Guattari, 2004, p. 238). The state-form does not only apply to states but to any overcoding entity, but the state is generally the operator of overcoding that can actually make it stick (May, 1994, p. 107). The state apparatus is one of capture, it arrests the movement of lines of flight through the molar segments – as the segments promote binary logic that classifies every identity, and therefore control them. Controlling these segments allows the state apparatus to retain the rigidity of the molar structure:

Not only are the great molar aggregates segmented (States, institutions, classes), but so are people as elements of an aggregate, as are feelings as relations between people; they are segmented, not in such a way as to disturb or disperse, but on the contrary to ensure and control the identity of each agency, including personal identity (Deleuze & Guattari, 2004, pp. 215-216).

This controlling power works at both a state and individual level, it pervades the whole of society. The state organises dominant segments of language, knowledge, conformist action and feelings by overcoding them into something that we can recognise, or as Deleuze and Guattari put it something that resonates with us (Deleuze & Guattari, 2004, pp. 246-247). In other words, this ‘ensures the homogenization of different segments, their convertibility, their translatability, it regulates the passages from one side to the other’ (Deleuze & Parnet, 1987, p. 129).

The main way through which we create and sustain these ‘resonances’ is through conforming to specific identities, which are decided for us. Identity is generally understood as being defined by binary opposites: ‘binary machines of social classes; of sexes, man-woman; of ages, child-adult; of races, black-white; of sectors, public-private; of subjectivations, ours-not ours’ (Deleuze & Parnet, 1987, p. 128). This is done through dualisms that help us identify ourselves in relation to an ‘other’ – I am ‘a’ because I am not ‘b’ – and is a key tool of the state in claiming that this is the natural order of society as ‘in State societies...dual or binary segmentarity is elevated to a self-sufficient principle of organization’ (Bogard, 1998, p. 68). These binary opposites help us to define who we are by recognising who we are not, and it makes it easy to classify everyone into one of the predefined choices.

Deleuze and Guattari, believe that these molar segments are used by the state to control and regulate the productive forces in us, or desires, by positing these molar segments as a necessary part of life, as they allow us to communicate with others who share the same social space. They produce meaning that, however controlled it might be, is still considered necessary for society to function. The state controls desire through these segments – as to allow us to unleash our creativity or desire would be a threat to the state. Desire is created by the state and expressed as a ‘lack’ – as something that we think we need to be fulfilled in order to be a functioning part of society. The state controls us by telling us what we ought to be thinking and feeling, and by creating the molar segments as identifications that we perceive to be necessary that we place ourselves and others into. This is an all-pervasive exercise of power as it works at the level of our own perceptions of identity. Or to put it another way, what makes the molar segments rigid is ‘not what they contain but what people *think* they contain’ (May, 2005, p. 135, emphasis in original). By instilling in us particular wants and needs which are seen as expressions of social desire, the state ‘renders certain forms of desire

transparent, which in turn renders them more malleable to efficient regulation and codification' (Reid, 2003, p. 74). Deleuze explains: 'To the question 'How can desire desire its own repression, how can it desire its slavery?' we reply that the powers which crush desire, or which subjugate it, themselves already form part of assemblages of desire' (Deleuze & Parnet, 1987, p. 128). They allow us to recognise and be recognised by others, and thus to interact with and enter into relationships and collective movements with others. We are told that dispensing with the molar line would not be possible, or even desirable. Rather we would become afraid and insecure:

Our security, the great molar organization that sustains us, the arborescences we cling to, the binary machines that give us a well-defined status, the resonances we enter into, the system of overcoding that dominates us – we desire all that. The more rigid the segmentarity, the more reassuring for us. That is what fear is, and how it makes us retreat into the first line (Deleuze & Guattari, 2004, pp. 250-251).

Despite the 'need' for these molar segments, Deleuze and Guattari do not believe that they are all there is to our existence or political life. Their main difficulty with these molar lines is that they do not allow for difference or creativity, as everything is already able to fit into a pre-determined binary or molar segment that is determined by the state; and if there are not adequate segments to classify something or someone, a new binary choice is created and we fit into that segment until we move to another (already delineated) segment. These segments are predictable, they do not deal in the new or unexpected - rather, as for all of us, there is a line of rigid segmentarity on which everything seems calculable and foreseen, the beginning and end of a segment, the journey from one segment to another (Deleuze & Guattari, 2004, p. 215).

Molecular lines

The second of these three lines are molecular. These differ from molar lines as they are more subtle and have the potential to change the structure of things. They are 'lines of segmentarity which are much more supple, as it were molecular' (Deleuze & Parnet, 1987, p. 124). These molecular lines try and disturb the fixed and rigid molar segments; by disrupting and asking questions of them. Molecular lines are constantly moving – they are fluxes that shoot between the molar segments and attempt to unsettle their rigid, established binaries. Two things need to be noted about the geography of these lines – about where they are situated in relation to the molar segments. Firstly, they are less visible or noticeable than molar lines and they pop up into view on occasion when they cross or interact with them, and produce unexpected results: 'A threshold is crossed, which does not necessarily coincide with a segment of more visible lines'

(Deleuze & Parnet, 1987, p. 124). Secondly, and related to this idea of visibility, the molecular lines move beneath the molar lines of binary segments. Deleuze explains that, ‘a profession is a rigid segment, but also what *happens beneath it*, the connections, the attractions and repulsions, which do not coincide with the segments’ (Deleuze & Parnet, 1987, p. 125, emphasis added).

Existing beneath the molar lines does not mean that molecular lines are interior to them or belong to them. Rather the ground on which molar segments stand is not solid but is constantly moving below the surface, like a river in winter – there may be a thin layer of ice on the top that looks solid enough, but under the surface the river is still flowing, in constant movement. Daniel Smith gives a further example of Deleuze and Guattari’s understanding of this multi-layered reality with his description of Mount Everest. He argues that although we speak of Everest as an object or thing, its ‘objectness’ is actually an illusion. Rather the Mount Everest that we see is the result of continuing, complex processes such as tectonic plate movement and the continued pressure that this exerts, and the weathering and erosion of the Himalayan mountain range through the effects of rain, freezing water, glaciation and so on. Thus Mount Everest is a snapshot or an artificial arrest of movements and processes that are as real as Mount Everest but are also constantly in a state of flux or becoming (Smith, 2007, pp. 1-2). Deleuze and Guattari use the example of the binary distinction between man-woman, which in reality is traversed by different molecular flows: ‘for the two sexes imply a multiplicity of molecular combinations bringing into play not only the man in the woman and the woman in the man, but the relation of each to the animal, the plant, etc.: a thousand tiny sexes’ (Deleuze & Guattari, 2004, p. 235).

Molecular lines disrupt the segments through making visible the different elements that are moving and show the non-fixed nature of what seems to be permanent. They challenge the state, which uses molar segments to try to deny this constant shifting in favour of fixed identities: ‘State philosophy systematically misconceives that operation, positing a necessary connection for what is a purely contingent relation of heterogeneous elements, an identity of parts for what is an internal proliferation of differences’ (Bogard, 1998, p. 55).

So we see that molecular lines are concerned with details rather than great organisational structures, but they become visible at various points when they call into

question the rigidity of the molar segments. They can work like a magnifying glass, exposing the detail beyond what we can actually see, so that ‘where before we saw end points of clear-cut segments, now there are indistinct fringes, encroachments, overlappings, migrations, acts of segmentation that no longer coincide with the rigid segmentarity’ (Deleuze & Guattari, 2004, p. 251).

Molecular lines cannot be contained in the great binary divisions but consist of the constant escaping of this excess, where life refuses to be either ‘the One’ or ‘the Other’ (Deleuze & Parnet, 1987, p. 131). However, although Deleuze and Guattari argue that these molar lines are based on a binary function of opposing segments, which implies a strict dualism, they do shift if necessary to allow new segments to come into existence. Thus these binaries are not simply dualistic, but rather they operate diachronically (if you are neither a nor b, then you are c). Or in Deleuze’s words:

Dualism has shifted, and no longer relates to simultaneous elements to choose between, but successive choices; if you are neither man nor woman, you are a transvestite; each time the machine with binary elements will produce binary choices between elements which are not present at the first cutting-up (Deleuze & Parnet, 1987, p. 128).

Thus there is room for the production of something different, the ability for other elements or groups to enter the equation, but they are always already folded into the existing segments and thus do not challenge the structure and control of the status quo.

The term *deterritorialization* is one that Deleuze and Guattari create to explain the way in which the molecular fluxes bring to light something that means the fixed, pre-existent segments suddenly cannot keep their binary identities exactly as they are, and which results in these identities being exposed for a moment as temporary crystallisations of various different elements into seemingly fixed molar segments. These molecular fluxes, however, have a limited role in transforming society, as at some point they are *reterritorialized* onto the molar lines: ‘molecular escapes and movements would be nothing if they did not return to the molar organizations to reshuffle their segments, their binary distributions of sexes, classes, and parties’ (Deleuze & Guattari, 2004, p. 239). A good example would be that of the man-woman binary that then has to accommodate the ‘transvestite’ identity, mentioned above. The molar line then

responds and reterritorializes this molecular line by reshuffling itself to create a new choice by creating transvestite as an alternative segment that can be chosen for us.¹⁵

This does not mean that the molecular lines cannot bring about change or are an empty form of resistance. The strength of these molecular lines is that they are capable of disrupting the closed and fixed logic of molar segments. This brings into question the legitimacy of the state and the fixity of the molar segments, and can lead to real change in identifications for groups who are being forced into segments that do not define them – so a transvestite becomes a recognised difference, even if the state is still in control as it allows the identification to be named on its own terms. Another important aspect of molecular lines is that they are mutating rather than overcoding, or in other words non-oppositional - they are not 'against' the molar segments, and they are not in some way morally superior to them. However, the weakness of molecular lines is that whatever gains they make when they break through and disrupt the molar lines, they are captured and reterritorialized in the end. Or in other words, they are not capable of producing something that is truly different and creative, as the molar segments rearrange themselves to appropriate the molecular lines and thus pull them back into the existing order.

Lines of flight

Deleuze and Guattari are not, however, content with explaining the social world with only these two lines, but rather they argue that a third line exists – the line of flight. Lines of flight are qualitatively different to the other two lines because they rest on different foundations, and in order to understand what lines of flight are it is necessary to take a short detour into Deleuze's earlier work *Difference and Repetition* (Deleuze, 2004) to explain a world that is based on an ontology of difference rather than identity.

Deleuze argues that Western philosophy, from Plato onwards, has predicated a system of identity and difference in which difference is subordinated to identity, the One or Form or Big Idea. Thus according to Deleuze:

The task of modern philosophy has been defined: to overturn Platonism. That this overturning should conserve many Platonic characteristics is not only inevitable but

¹⁵ Of course this new segment of transvestite can still be confined within a binarised segmentarity however, as it can be part of the distinction man or woman/transvestite as opposed to man/woman/transvestite.

desirable. It is true that Platonism already represents the subordination of difference to the powers of the One, the Analogous, the Similar and even the Negative (Deleuze, 2004, p. 71).

This kind of reasoning in which identity is primary or constitutive relies on a framework of knowledge by which objects are already known before they are created – their identity is predetermined, and therefore everything that exists can already be known. This is the basis for the molar and, to some extent, the molecular lines. As I have already argued, Deleuze suggests that the traditional understanding of a politics based on fixed molar segments does not allow for creativity and innovation. This is important, as politics should be productive and creative rather than merely the movement between fixed segments.

The second major problem with the Platonic understanding of identity is that of negativity: starting with fixed identities as the basis for existence means that difference is subordinated and made inferior – as it is defined by its difference from the One, the Similar etc, which leads to difference being associated with the Negative, as it is something that is removed from the One. For Deleuze, politics cannot be based on this subordination of difference but is based rather on a foundation of difference rather than identity.

In *Difference and Repetition*, Deleuze refuses to allow difference's subordination to identity to be maintained, and turns this fundamental understanding of life based on identity on its head. He develops instead an ontology of difference where identity is no longer a primary component of existence but rather a secondary one, where identities are not logically or metaphysically prior to difference. This is achieved by developing the concept of univocity.¹⁶ This means that everything exists in one sense, that nothing is derived from anything else, but all share the same level of existence, the same voice.

Deleuze claims then that being is, univocally, 'difference with univocity, however, it is not the differences which are and must be: *it is being which is Difference*, in the sense that it is said of difference' (Deleuze, 2004, p. 48, emphasis added).

¹⁶ Deleuze borrows this idea from medieval thinker Duns Scotus and Spinoza. Deleuze at once echoes and inverts Spinoza, who maintained that everything that exists is a modification of the one substance, God or Nature, and he replaces this idea of substance with a process of always-differentiating.

This is incompatible with a system that is constituted by identity, (where identity is by way of forms, representations, resemblances, categories etc) as difference only exists as something negative, something removed from the perfect form of identity. Rather for Deleuze, everything is based on a foundation of differences that exist together: ‘the essence of univocal being is to include individuating differences, while these differences do not have the same essence and do not change the essence of being - just as white includes various intensities, while remaining essentially the same white’ (Deleuze, 2004, p. 45).

This foundation of differences does not mean that identities do not exist, rather that they come into existence through the unfolding of singular differences in a particular way at a particular moment (Deleuze, 2004, pp. 26-27). It is as things crystallise in various ways at various moments in time that we see the snapshots of concepts and identities, as with Mount Everest. Thus differences exist within concepts and are constantly unfolding to give new expressions of a concept. Now that the case for existence based on an ontology of difference has been briefly made, we can return to the properties of lines of flight.

One of the most important aspects of lines of flight that is crucial to its understanding is that, following Deleuze’s ontology of difference, these lines of flight are the primary basis of society, they are constitutive of the social rather than an add-on component (Deleuze, 1995, p. 171). These lines of flight exist before the other two lines, even if we are not aware of them because they exist in a virtual sense, or as potential (Deleuze & Guattari, 2004, p. 226). As Deleuze argues:

One might say in a certain sense that what is primary in a society are the lines, the movements of flight. For, far from being a flight from the social, far from being utopian or even ideological, these constitute the social field, trace out its gradation and its boundaries, the whole of its becoming (Deleuze & Parnet, 1987, p. 135).

This fits with the ontology of difference that Deleuze outlines in *Difference and Repetition*, whereby the seemingly unstable element of society, i.e. difference or lines of flight, are constitutive of society and the more stable element, i.e. identity or molar segments, are *effects* of differences that have crystallised in a particular way at a particular time.

Lines of flight may have an ontological priority but this doesn't necessary mean that they always happen first as Deleuze and Guattari don't see time only in a linear way – being ontologically prior does not necessary mean coming into being before the other lines, as they can all come into being at the same time. Thus, 'this primacy of lines of flight must not be understood chronologically, or in the sense of an eternal generality...for reterritorializations happen at the same time' (Deleuze & Parnet, 1987).

Whereas the molar and molecular lines are related to binary segments, the lines of flight are not attached to segments or do not interact with them in the same way as molecular lines, but rather 'this line appears to arise afterwards, to become detached from the two others' (Deleuze & Parnet, 1987).¹⁷ Lines of flight are not on a topographical scale of 'above and below', like the molar and molecular lines, but operate in ways that are detached from them. Lines of flight are of a different nature to both molar and molecular lines. They are more abstract and fleeting, and cannot be reterritorialized into the molar segments. Rather 'there is a new line, a third type, a kind of line of flight that is just as real as the others even if it occurs in place: this line no longer tolerates segments; rather, it is like an exploding of the two segmentary series' (Deleuze & Guattari, 2004, p. 218).

Lines of flight do not end up being reterritorialized onto molar lines, for Deleuze they are the only lines that are truly productive and creative. These lines of flight dive headlong into the unknown, 'towards a destination which is unknown, not foreseeable, not pre-existent' (Deleuze & Parnet, 1987, p. 125). This means that these lines are equally dangerous and exciting, as we do not know where they will lead or if they will turn out well or badly. For Deleuze though this does not matter. It is about the journey, and the act of experimentation rather than the result. By suggesting that lines of flight are the basic and productive type of politics rather than the fixed segments of molar lines, Deleuze is effectively turning the whole notion of political activity on its head, as we will now see.

¹⁷ The use of the word afterwards does not mean that the lines of flight are secondary to the other two lines or that they come about afterwards, rather they are the primary lines of society as I have already discussed. In this context I believe that it means that we notice them afterwards as the molar segments and their underlying movement is more obvious.

Three lines into two modes of politics

The three lines of politics – molar, molecular and lines of flight – are all interlinked and ‘are traced out, they are formed, immanent to each other, mixed up in each other’ (Deleuze & Parnet, 1987, p. 133). All of the lines will always continue to co-exist because the balance between them is finely tuned and they all have a different function:

The two great molar aggregates of the East and the West are perpetually being undermined by a molecular segmentation causing a zigzag crack, making it difficult for them to keep their own segments in line. It is as if a line of flight, perhaps only a tiny trickle to begin with, leaked between the segments, escaping their centralization, eluding their totalization (Deleuze & Guattari, 2004, p. 238).

Molar lines allow us to recognise our identity and differentiate ourselves from others, in this instance between East and West. The molecular lines show that these identifications of East and West are not rigid and fixed forever, as they cause a crack in the veneer of the molar aggregates. The lines of flight trigger these molecular cracks by leaking between the segments, by offering a new way of thinking through which the molecular lines are able to create and make visible the cracks.

The fact that all three lines exist and interact does not necessarily mean, however, that all three lines always operate within everyone at the same time, ‘for perhaps there are people who do not have this line, [line of flight] who have only the two others, or who have only one, who live on only one’ (Deleuze & Parnet, 1987, p. 125). It is possible to live without lines of flight, and many people do so without realising it, but that would be to deny the excess of life, the sense of real participation in one’s existence rather than simply allowing ourselves to be slotted into different segments. Allowing oneself to journey along a line of flight does not have to be a grand gesture: ‘watch someone walk down the street and see what little inventions he introduces into it, if he is not too caught up in his rigid segmentarity, what little inventions he puts there’ (Deleuze & Parnet, 1987, p. 128). Simple things can allow the productive excess of desire to leak out of the molar segments, whether we notice it or not.

It may seem, then, that lines of flight are the preferred mode of living for Deleuze and Guattari, and that molar lines, and to some extent molecular lines, only bring negativity and the continuation of the status quo. Indeed, it is clear that Deleuze does see the importance of these lines, as he argues that molar segments are a visible ‘history’ or record as we move from one segment to another but ‘our true changes take place

elsewhere – another politics, another time, another individuation’ (Deleuze & Parnet, 1987, pp. 124-125). However, as I have already noted, the state tells us that it would not be possible to get rid of the molar segments, because even though they are constricting, they are also reassuring: ‘even if we had the power to blow it [the molar line] up, could we succeed in doing so without destroying ourselves, since it is so much a part of the conditions of life, including our organism and our very reason?’ (Deleuze & Parnet, 1987, p. 138).

Thus all three lines will always continue to be as important as each other, as they weave their way in and out of each other, because there is a balance between existing segments that stabilize existence and the lines of flight that offer something new, but do not seek to create a new hierarchical relationship of superior/inferior. Because we need all these lines with their different functions ‘we cannot say that one of these three lines is bad and another good, by nature and necessarily’ (Deleuze & Guattari, 2004, p. 250). We need these lines, just as we need a balance between caution and experimentation:

It is because we never know in advance which way a line of flight will turn, or whether a given set of heterogeneous elements will be able to form a consistent and functional multiplicity, that caution is necessary. At the same time, it is because ‘it is always on a line of flight that we create’ that we must continue to experiment with such lines (Patton, 2000, p. 67).

So how can we map these three lines onto the difference *between* governance and resistance on the one hand, and the different politics *within* resistance, namely a politics of demand and the politics of the act, on the other? The key concept that Deleuze and Guattari use to explain the relationship between governance and resistance is deterritorialization and reterritorialization. As discussed above, these terms are employed by Deleuze and Guattari to explain how a radical politics embodies the excesses that escape from the molar segments, and can create lines of flight that produce new concepts, or deterritorializations. When radical politics and the state connect, this then produces reterritorializations whereby the state captures the disruptive flows, causing molar segments to reshuffle themselves, and resulting in a new segment or identification being created. In this case ‘it is certainly no longer a matter of a synthesis of the two, of a synthesis of 1 and 2, but of a third which always comes from elsewhere and disturbs the binarity of the two, not so much inserting itself in their opposition as in their complementarity’ (Deleuze & Parnet, 1987, p. 131).

One way of splitting these lines into acts of governance and resistance would be to distinguish between *mutating* and *overcoding*. Molar segments, which are used by the state apparatus in order to assert control over society, are overcoding rather than mutating. This means that their aim is to control our identities, to regulate the safe and stable passage from one segment to another. In this way we see the state apparatus operating through molar segments through a justification of necessity to society, as it allows us all to make sense of life. This can be mapped onto the level of governance, most often practiced by the state, in which the ruling hegemony is preserved and the state promotes the illusion that the dominant discourses of society are fixed and rigid. For Deleuze thought, rationality and morality are part of the state apparatus. The state controls the discourse about what is rational thought through the molar segments, and ‘only thought is capable of inventing the fiction of a State that is universal by right, of elevating the State to de jure universality’ (Deleuze & Guattari, 2004, p. 238). Deleuze and Guattari do not allow us to create a resistance that is based on a critique of the state that is based on rational or moral principles, as this reaffirms the state’s position (Newman, 2009), but rather they acknowledge that the kind of ‘nomadic thinking’ that they initiate is ‘profoundly at odds with all forms of statist thought’ (Call, 2002, p. 3).

Thus Deleuze and Guattari argue that resistance through radical politics is mutating rather than overcoding. This means that resistance begins from outside the state – as thought remains within state control. It has to take a completely different form and of a different nature which seeks to offer alternative ways of thinking. Resistance in these terms has different modes of politics within it – characterised in this thesis as the politics of demand and the politics of the act. This is a combination of the molecular and lines of flight that together seek to destabilise the ruling hegemony and expose the contingency of its legitimacy (the politics of the act), and the molecular lines interacting with the molar segments to show that they are just the crystallisation of molecular flows at that particular point in time (like the snapshot of Mount Everest), and are thus open to contestation; calling into question the dominant discourses the state controls (the politics of demand). This resistance is mutating rather than overcoding in the sense that it doesn’t seek to command control of the state, to take power from it, but to undermine it and ask questions of it. It is not confrontational but disrupting.

Within this resistance to the governance of the state, the politics of the act has an ontological priority – it is the productive foundation of politics and is necessary for

creativity and newness. As Patton notes ‘the function of mutation, metamorphosis and the creation of the new is ontologically primary. Deleuze and Guattari treat rhizomatic, molecular and micropolitical assemblages as prior to arborescent, molar and macropolitical assemblages, and the abstract machine of mutation as prior to the abstract machine of overcoding’ (Patton, 2000, p. 45). Thus the politics of act embodies what is primary in society from an ontological basis – it is the excesses that cannot be captured by the state, the creativity that is latent in us and needs a vehicle for expression. These lines of flight ‘never consist in running away from the world but rather in causing runoffs, as when you drill a hole in a pipe; there is no social system that does not leak from all directions, even if it makes its segments increasingly rigid in order to seal the lines of flight’ (Deleuze & Guattari, 2004, p. 225). When lines of flight come into contact with molecular lines, when the absolute speed is slowed slightly, then we see the production of lines of questioning that can be understood by the state, and threatens to break through the fixed molar segments and force molar segments to become defensive in order to maintain their illusion of stability.

This is when the politics of the act produces the politics of demand, when the molecular lines have slowed the line of flight to make sense of its creativity and new ways of thinking, and can turn their attention to the molar lines. The politics of demand makes the creativity generated by lines of flight visible and recognisable, and is thus in a position to challenge the molar segments of the state apparatus. The politics of demand, by interacting with the state aims its disruptive politics at recognisable segments, which allows another segment to be opened up alongside existing ones, for example by seeking rights or recognition of particular groups that can be added into the molar segments. The politics of demand has the ability to shift the ground upon which the state apparatus has crystallised into particular segments and force these segments to reshuffle themselves, although without undermining the existing structures.

This conception of resistance politics and the politics of the act is clearly different to that of the anarchist conceptions of the politics of the act outlined in the previous two chapters. This is a different conception of the governance of the state from a classical anarchist understanding. For anarchists, the state is an abstract form of power that goes beyond a particular manifestation, which is not dissimilar to Deleuze. However, where they differ is that anarchists conceptualise the idea of the state as the source of power translated into domination through concrete institutions, and argue that power and

domination can be overcome through a 'once and for all' revolution. They believe that the state can be overcome and replaced with a rational and moral society as it is the existence of the state which is the obstacle to this society. This differs from a classical anarchist understanding of social revolution as an event that overturns the way society is organised and creates a utopian society, as for Deleuze and Guattari resistance has no end-goal but is an ongoing revolution. Does this mean that resistance politics is pointless as the state can never be overcome? It may seem that Deleuze and Guattari's proclamation that we desire our own repression means that there is no worth in questioning the legitimacy of state control by exposing the fluidity of what seem to be fixed molar segments. However, as we have seen with the lines of flight, to live life fully is to refuse to be constrained by molar segments and to experiment with a different way of existing, a different type of politics. Lines of flight can be collective as well as personal, and we can change the way we think about the state and refuse to live under its control. Although Deleuze and Guattari do not offer much in the way of direction as to whether we can overcome the need for the state by desiring our own repression, it is clear that the state needs to be overcome as an idea before it can be overcome in reality. The state is an abstract instrument of control, and so will always be with us in some form – it does not have to be a particular set of institutions as the state is an abstract form that represents any expression of control – but the more resistance can disrupt the molar segments and introduce complexity and fragmentation, the less control will be exercised by the state. This can only be done if we allow ourselves to relinquish this need for control and start to think and act beyond state control. The more we think from outside the overcoding control of the state apparatus, and the more alternative ways of living we offer, the more likely it is that we will be able to overcome statist thought based on an ontology of identity where we can only think in binary terms of One versus the Other.

The politics of the act: a conceptual framework

In this next section I will outline three concepts that I believe offer a framework to deepen our understanding of the politics of the act. These three concepts help add specificity to the three indicators of the politics of the act I developed in Chapter 2: withdrawal from the state is understood through the war machine; horizontal organising structures through rhizomes; and an imperative for enactment through specific characteristics of the lines of flight.

The war machine and the state

One of the ways in which Deleuze and Guattari explain how resistance is played out in its relationship with governance is by taking the specific example of interaction with the state. As we have previously discussed, for Deleuze and Guattari the state forms an apparatus through which the molar segments can be created and controlled. The state then plays a leading role in maintaining the clear and rigid boundaries of identity in which we all fit, in order to control society's desires and flows. The war machine is an expression of the politics of the act – a mutating resistance that responds to the overcoding of the state. This section will look at how the war machine creates an alternative to the state, how it attempts to stay beneath the state radar, and what happens when the state and the war machine come into contact with each other.

Although the state and the war machine have different aims – with the state trying to maintain the status quo and the war machine trying to disrupt it – they are interdependent and bound up with each other, even if you can't always see both of them at work all the time. They have a relationship of interior and exterior, and one cannot exist without the other. Deleuze and Guattari claim that 'the State itself has always been in a relation with an outside and is inconceivable independent of that relationship. The law of the State is not the law of All or Nothing (State societies or counter-State societies) but that of interior and exterior' (Deleuze & Guattari, 2004, p. 397).

Thus the state exists in relation to an exterior, and this exterior is an excess that remains outside the sovereignty of the state. The state cannot control this excess, which remains outside its reach. This exterior is where the war machine is located, and it is 'irreducible to the state, outside its sovereignty and prior to its Law. The war machine comes from elsewhere' (Deleuze & Guattari, 2004, p. 388).

The state and the war machine exist in a relationship of coexistence which always has the potential for interaction as 'it is in terms not of independence, but of coexistence and competition *in a perpetual field of interaction*, that we must conceive of exteriority and interiority, war machines of metamorphosis and state apparatus of identity, bands and kingdoms, megamachines and empires' (Deleuze & Guattari, 2004, p. 388). However, although the state and the war machine are interdependent, they are not of the same nature. Like the difference between molar lines and lines of flight, they have a qualitative difference in the way they are constituted and behave, or as the authors put

it, 'in every respect, the war machine, is of another species, another nature, another origin than the State apparatus' (Deleuze & Guattari, 2004, p. 389). The war machine is characterised by speed, inventiveness, movement and exteriority, whereas the state is characterised by slowness, capture and control. The war machine is a state of flux rather than fixity and has a momentum, a movement that is based on the ethos of becoming rather than simply being (Reid, 2003, p. 65).

The State and war machine correspond to different lines of existence, come from different places and have different destinations:

One might say that the State apparatus and the war-machine do not belong to the same lines, are not constructed on the same lines: while the State apparatus belongs to the lines of rigid segmentarity, and even conditions them in so far as it realizes their overcoding, the war-machine follows lines of flight and of the steepest gradient, coming from the heart of the steppe or the desert and sinking into the Empire (Deleuze & Parnet, 1987, pp. 141-142).

So what is the purpose of this war machine? Deleuze and Guattari suggest that the war machine was invented by the nomads in order to ward off the centralising and organising of their space by the state – to avoid its controlling reach. The war machine attempts to provide an alternative to the state logic – it offers newness and creativity that is possible because it exists outside state sovereignty, or in other words it 'provides a model for an alternative, 'nomadological' politics and forms of socialisation' (Krause & Rolli, 2008, p. 249).

The war machine is not always visible, but sometimes erupts onto the molar lines though the molecular lines (demonstrating a politics of demand). The most important aspect of the war machine is that it does not have war (in the sense of capture or annihilation) as its aim. The war machine seeks alternatives to the state form, and is the life of a nomad – always moving and changing and occupying 'smooth space'¹⁸.

¹⁸ Smooth space is the term Deleuze and Guattari use to delineate the flat, univocal plane of pure creativity. This smooth space can be 'striated', where it is carved up by lines of control that parcel it up into different segments. The best example of this is that of the sea – which according to Deleuze and Guattari was a smooth space in that no-one had control of it or knew what would happen when one was in the middle of the ocean, but then the seas were striated by adding lines of longitude and latitude – lines that control the sea by divide it up into territories (Deleuze & Guattari, 2004, pp. 460, 523-551).

The war machine only turns to war when its ability to occupy this smooth space or continue the line of flight is blocked by the state apparatus, or in other words: 'if war necessarily results, it is because the war machine collides with States and cities, as forces (of striation) opposing its positive object: from then on, the war machine has as its enemy the State' (Deleuze & Guattari, 2004, p. 460). So the war machine has no general intent to annihilate and destroy, but only turns to war when its positive drive to creativity is blocked or interrupted by the state apparatus.

Even when the war machine does wage war on the state, it is not the kind of war that aims for domination of the prey, rather it is a destabilising, disrupting war that does not seek to overcome but instead to open up a way for its lines of flight to break through into the molar segments and cause a reshuffling of these segments. It is at this point that the war machines that have been moving below the seemingly fixed segments of molar institutions appear as if from nowhere and become visible for a fleeting moment, asking questions of molar segments as they go. This shows again the characteristic of the war machine to be mutating rather than overcoding.

We have seen that war is waged when the war machine collides with the state and finds its line of flight blocked, and it is then that the war machine can disrupt the molar segments. As its flows are blocked by the state it changes in nature and becomes a machine of total war – war that seeks total domination and annihilation – rather than wanting to disrupt but not oppose the enemy. It can become an object of war that is directed by the state, it becomes a line of negativity and destruction rather than positivity and creativity. Or to put it another way, 'in short, it is at one and the same time that the State apparatus appropriates a war machine, that the war machine takes war as its object, and that war becomes subordinated to the aims of the State' (Deleuze & Guattari, 2004, p. 461). The state can stop the war machine, arrest its flows and slow it down so that it can become a tool of the state which it can then use it to further its own aims. Thus it becomes something different in possession of the state; or rather it stops becoming a war machine as such and turns into a tool of the state. It is in this moment of contact with the state, I would argue, that the politics of the act produces a politics of demand. In order to avoid capture by the state, the war machine can become slowed by molecular lines and interact with the state, attempting to disrupt it by forcing it to reshuffle its segments and allow new identifications or ideas to become part of the molar structure. This may be a partial capture by the state in that it becomes part of

state thought, but it may be better than becoming an out-and-out tool of the state. So the aim of the war machine is to stay invisible, or in other words to stay off the radar of the state in order to avoid being used as a tool for the state's own ends of reinforcing rigid, binary segments. Of course, there can be multiple war machines in existence at the same time that do not become visible until the state seeks to force them into its molar segments.

I believe that this relationship between the state and the war machine can help specify the indicator of withdrawal from the state in three ways. Firstly, the war machine acts on a different plane to the state apparatus, it does not engage with it or attempt to reproduce the logic of the state in any way. The war machine is not interested in seizing power from the state, but exists outside this system of control. Thus we can look at the activities that are valorised as practicing a politics of the act in terms of their qualitative difference from the politics of demand, or activities that look to engage with or replicate state forms. The criteria of success are not whether they have an impact at a molar level, but rather what alternatives they offer.

Secondly, the war machine seeks to create alternatives to the state by avoiding its recognition. Indeed the war machine tries to avoid being noticed by the state which might lead to its capture, and only comes into direct contact with the state when it is blocked by it. This reinforces the fact that often activities that practice a politics of the act are overlooked by those who privilege or practice a politics of demand, as they do not seem to be either political or relevant to 'proper' politics, but this is entirely deliberate as to be recognized by the state is to be legitimated by it in some way – to be forced into the classification of binary segments even if a new choice is added.

The third element of the war machine is its character when it comes into contact with the state. One of things that might happen is that the war machine is captured by the state apparatus and used for its own ends. Sometimes this capture can be violent or involve arrest, as is often the case for Food Not Bombs groups as we will see in Chapter 4. Sometimes the state apparatus appropriates the symbols of those practicing the politics of the act and turns them into mechanisms to achieve its own ends. One example would be the way in which clothing retailer Gap, which is a favourite target of anti-corporate activists for their use of sweatshops, developed an advertising campaign that involved red banners and fake graffiti, or Nike which has spoofed such protesters in

its adverts for football boots – ‘the most offensive boots we’ve ever made’ (Kingsnorth, 2003, p. 143), thus turning a symbol of resistance into part of their marketing strategy.

Rhizomes

I will now examine another aspect of politics that I will show offers a framework for deepening the second principle of the politics of the act – a horizontal organising structure. Deleuze and Guattari’s concept of rhizomes has been associated with the ways of acting politically in the Global Justice Movement by many theorists (e.g. Tormey, 2004), and Gilbert sees Deleuze and Guattari’s relevance for speaking to current forms of radical politics as ‘the decentered, leaderless, networked forms which much of the anti-capitalist movement takes is decidedly rhizomatic in character’ (Gilbert, 2008, p. 146). Here I will outline three areas in which I think it is particularly useful for a politics of the act. Firstly, it is decentralised, with no central command structure. Secondly, it can be changed by adding different elements to the rhizome, which is infinitely expandable, and makes connections that are creative and unexpected. Thirdly, a rhizome is about creating newness rather than tracing existing patterns of organisation.

A rhizome is an organism that sends out multiple roots from its nodes that are all connected to each other, and does not have a central root. Ginger and some types of orchids are good examples from the plant world. Deleuze and Guattari take this idea of the rhizome and contrast it with the hierarchical, rigid properties of a tree, which has one central root from which everything springs. Here again we see the alternative to the understanding of politics as being about an ‘identity’, with differences being subordinate to this identity. Rhizomes are different to arborescent (tree) structures because they are non-hierarchical, and there is no centre of control. Deleuze and Guattari describe rhizomes as being a ‘multiplicity’, which equates to univocity and the field of difference that I discussed earlier in this chapter. This means that there are many different parts that are all different but equal to each other. Multiplicities are qualitatively different from multiple instances of molar segments and: ‘it is only when the multiple is effectively treated as substantive, ‘multiplicity’, that it ceases to have any relation to the One as subject or object, natural or spiritual reality, image and world’ (Deleuze & Guattari, 2004, p. 8). In other words, every element in a rhizome is as valid as the next, and all these differences resonate together as they are based on an ontology of difference and univocity.

A rhizome can be like a swarm of rats or ants – there is no ‘lead rat’ or ant but a whole pack that fill the space that they occupy, with different rats or ants leading the pack at different times. A rhizome cannot be overcoded: it fills the whole of its space, or occupies all its dimensions (Deleuze & Guattari, 2004, p. 9). This means that rhizomes have multiple points of entry and exit and ‘a rhizome may be broken, shattered at a given spot, but it will start up again on one of its old lines, or on new lines’ (Deleuze & Guattari, 2004, p. 10). Thus rhizomes cannot be reterritorialized or recaptured by the molar lines on their own, as they are operating in a way that cannot easily be captured. A rhizome cannot easily be destroyed because there is no central root or section that can be targeted to bring down the whole thing. It is almost impossible to capture something that has no command centre, as you may capture one section of the rhizome, but another will spring up somewhere else. As a US military report by RAND argued in the context of the ‘swarm’ tactics of the Global Justice Movement, it has no ‘central leadership or command structure; it is multiheaded, impossible to decapitate’ (Ronfeldt, Arquilla, Fuller, & Fuller, 1998, p. 50).

The second element of the rhizome is their connectivity and heterogeneity. In other words ‘any point of a rhizome can be connected to anything other, and must be’ (Deleuze & Guattari, 2004, p. 7). Thus every part of a rhizome is interlinked and related in some way, even though they contain many different elements. Rhizomes are also connected to other rhizomes; and interaction with other rhizomes produces new possibilities and directions that a rhizome can take. A rhizome is infinitely expandable because it is always starting up on other lines.

Deleuze and Guattari explain that ‘a multiplicity has neither subject or object, only determinations, magnitudes, and dimensions that cannot increase in number without the multiplicity changing in nature’ (Deleuze & Guattari, 2004, p. 9). This means that a rhizome can have different characteristics at different times, and that it is not simply about adding more dimensions onto an existing structure, rather every addition changes the very nature of the structure. This ties in with the idea of the politics of the act as being qualitatively different from traditional understandings of politics, as every addition or subtraction changes the whole nature of the rhizome. Connections are always being created and dissolved, but there is no pre-ordained way in which this will happen. Rhizomes connect with other rhizomes in order to cross the whole range of

social struggles and activism, they do not exist in isolation: ‘a rhizome ceaselessly established connections between organizations of power, and circumstances relative to the arts, sciences, and social struggles’ (Deleuze & Guattari, 2004, p. 8). Or to take another example, plants always have an outside; they form rhizomes by contact with the wind, animals, humans etc. (Deleuze & Guattari, 2004, p. 12).

When discussing the arborescent logic of the tree, Deleuze and Guattari make clear that it is related to molar lines and segments: ‘the Tree or Root as an image, endlessly develops the law of the One that becomes two, then of the two that becomes four: Binary logic is the spiritual reality of the root-tree’ (Deleuze & Guattari, 2004, p. 5). Unlike a structure that is defined by a set of points and positions, with binary relationships between the points, the rhizome is made only of lines: lines of segmentarity and stratification as its dimensions. Connections with other rhizomes mean that the multiplicity undergoes a metamorphosis, and changes in nature (Deleuze & Guattari, 2004, p. 23).

Thus a rhizome is a difficult thing to understand from the perspective of the politics of demand as it is always mutating and changing its nature and direction. It cannot be slotted neatly into binarized molar segments but rather ‘a rhizome has no beginning or end – only a middle from which it grows and overflows’ (Deleuze & Guattari, 2004, p. 23). Rhizomes are anti-genealogy, or in other words a linear history cannot be traced as the rhizome is constantly shifting and changing in nature, colliding with other rhizomes and producing unexpected results.

This leads to the third area of rhizomes that I wish to highlight – the distinction between mapping and tracing. Arborescent or tree logic is one that, as we have seen in our discussion of molar segments, is not open to anything new but rather is merely adding to the segments that are already pre-determined through binary logic: ‘all of tree logic is a logic of tracing and reproduction: it consists of tracing, on the basis of an overcoding structure or supporting axis, something that comes ready-made’ (Deleuze & Guattari, 2004, p. 13). Rhizomes, however, have a principle of cartography; that is to say that rather than tracing a pre-existing path, they produce maps. This goes back to the element of creativity that a politics of the act can generate. They do not trace existing patterns of overcoded molar segments, rather they map the unknown, the new. What distinguishes a map from the tracing is that it is entirely oriented towards an

experimentation in contact with the real. The map does not reproduce an unconscious closed in upon itself; it constructs the unconscious. There is no way of knowing where the rhizome will end up, no certainty in its movement. The map is open and connectable in all of its dimensions; it is detachable, reversible, and susceptible to constant modification. It can be torn, reversed, adapted to any kind of mounting, reworked by an individual, group, or social formation. It can be drawn on a wall, conceived of as a work of art, constructed as a political action or as a meditation (Deleuze & Guattari, 2004, pp. 13-14).

Thus rhizomes describe a structure that can be understood through the politics of the act – one that has different elements that collide and interact, creating new and unforeseen groups and events. It never has a defined beginning or end but is always in the middle, and it maps out its new adventures rather than tracing pre-determined paths. This seems to capture the logic decentralised organisation, with many diverse groups that sometimes come together, for example affinity groups at a protest like Seattle that produce something unpredictable or unexpected that is more than the sum of its parts.

Deleuze and Guattari are at pains to point out that by setting up a distinction between a rhizome and an arborescent structure they are not creating a new binary relationship between the two:

Every rhizome contains lines of segmentarity according to which it is stratified, territorialized, organized, signified, attributed, etc., as well as lines of deterritorialization down which it constantly flees. These lines always tie back to one another. That is why one can never posit a dualism or dichotomy, even in the rudimentary form of the good and the bad. You may make a rupture, draw a line of flight, yet there is still a danger that you will reencounter organizations that restratify everything, formations that restore power to a signifier, attributions that reconstitute a subject. Groups and individuals contain microfascisms just waiting to crystallize (Deleuze & Guattari, 2004, p. 10).

So although rhizomes are favoured over arborescent forms of organisation, everything has the potential to go either in one direction or the other. A rhizome may contain various levels and elements of arborescence and vice versa. This reinforces the constant potential flow from the politics of the act to a politics of demand, and vice versa.

Rhizomes and arborescent structures can be seen as points along a continuum, with organisations often starting at one end of the spectrum but shifting towards the other at times, in a relationship that is not clear-cut but is constantly breaking and then re-

starting somewhere else. The politics of the act produces a politics of demand when the rhizomes incorporate an element of arborescence that allows the rhizome to be recognised and made sense of by the molar lines. This allows them to interact with the state, and attempt to disrupt the molar segments and cause a reorganisation of these segments.

In this section I have developed three aspects of rhizomes that I believe help deepen our understanding of the politics of the act, specifically in relation to the second principle of horizontal organisation structures. Firstly, they help us to see that everyone has the right to have their voice heard. Conceptualising a rhizome as being made up of differences that resonate together allows us to give voice to the idea that there is no-one who is more important than anyone else, no-one who creates a leading identity and what is subordinate to that identity by being compared to it.

Secondly, there is a performative element to rhizomes because of their flexibility. By their very nature, rhizomes are open to being infinitely expanded and transformed through contact with other rhizomes or assemblages, as to come into contact with others is to be changed through it rather than to simply add more elements onto a particular rhizome. This offers a freedom for all to play a part in a way of acting politically that is productive and positive, and also a recognition that connections with others and the incorporation of new ideas will allow a rhizome to flourish.

The third aspect is that of cartography. This idea of decentralised organisation allowing for creativity can also be understood as pursuing mapping rather than tracing, as one of the signs of creativity is whether something is tracing an existing set of prescriptions or whether something new is happening, a map is being drawn. This can come about through the connections of different rhizomes that produce something different, or something that is more than the sum of its individual parts.

Lines of flight

Although I have already discussed lines of flight in the context of the three lines of politics, I will now focus on its specifically creative characteristics in more detail as I believe this will help deepen our understanding of the third principle of the politics of the act – an imperative for enactment. Lines of flight demonstrate this encouragement for activists to take control of their own political actions in three ways: anyone can take

responsibility for their own lines of flight, they are creative and experimental, and they work with molecular flows to disrupt existing segments and force a change.

Deleuze and Guattari encourage everyone to take responsibility for their own lines of flight, whether they are personal or collective. It is possible to live without lines of flight, and just to live on the other two lines. However, to deny lines of flight is to live one's life only partially. In discussing the three lines they note that:

For some of these lines are imposed on us from the outside, at least in part. Others spout up somewhat by chance, from a trifle, why we will never know. Others can be invented, drawn without a model and without chance: we must invent our lines of flight, if we are able, and the only way we can invent them is by effectively drawing them, in our lives. Aren't lines of flight the most difficult of all? Certain groups of people have none and never will (Deleuze & Guattari, 2004, p. 223).

Thus, we can live without drawing lines of flight on ourselves, without experimenting with the unknown, but it is to deny one's true potential if we try and live our lives only on the molar and molecular lines, and it is our responsibility to be open to lines of flight in both our personal and collective lives.

This engagement with lines of flight is not necessarily easy or without danger, indeed we know that they can lead to abolition or death as much as they can lead to positive creativity, and we must be prepared to take these risks in relation to ourselves as well as to society if we are to live life to the full. The benefits, however, of living on all three lines as we have the potential to do, and the possibilities of creativity and productivity mean that the risk is worth taking. Our fixed, stable identities produced by the molar lines are an illusion; in reality we are constantly shifting and making connections with other assemblages, connections which can be created and dissolved without warning. This is the heart of what politics is – the disruption of molar segments – but we have to disrupt the molar segments in our own lives through the assumptions that we make and the way we choose to engage with lines of flight, as well as those in wider society.

Deleuze and Guattari remind us that lines of flight are about the constant battle against allowing ourselves to be contained and defined by rigid segments – it is a part of being human, and allows us to take control of our own lives and live them to their full potential. It may sometimes be dangerous to leave the safety net of the molar segments where we feel comfortable and reassured, but we have a duty to subvert these segments as it is as much about ourselves as it is about our relationship to the state: 'the prudence

with which we must manipulate that line, the precautions we must take to soften it, to suspend it, to divert it, to undermine it, testify to a long labour which is not merely aimed against the State and the powers that be, but directly at ourselves' (Deleuze & Parnet, 1987, p. 138). Thus lines of flight are as much about experimenting on oneself as they are about transforming wider social structures.

Secondly, lines of flight are about active experimentation and being prepared to accept that we do not know in advance which way a line is going to go (Deleuze & Parnet, 1987, p. 137). They are totally unpredictable – embarking on a line of flight can turn out well or badly, but you can't expect to know the outcome in advance. Those who only take action when the outcomes are calculated are not really prepared to follow a line of flight. To illustrate this, Deleuze and Guattari make a distinction between the novella (such as a murder mystery), in which something has already happened and it is the task of the writer to invent the details which need to be known; and the tale, where we wait for something to happen: 'the tale has a relation to discovery. The tale puts into play attitudes or positions that are like unfoldings and developments, however unexpected' (Deleuze & Guattari, 2004, p. 214).

Thus we cannot predict the outcome, what it going to happen, but must be prepared for things to unfold in front of us, often in unexpected ways – being willing to make fruitful connections along the way. Lines of flight are about experimentation and improvisation; they are about breaking out of established patterns of relationships. Different relationships can only happen if there are opportunities to experiment with new ways of acting politically. As we saw with rhizomes, different groups come together and mutate into something else of a different type or nature, and these different assemblages can move in new and unexpected directions.

Lines of flight are not reactive, in the sense of responding to a situation, but they are primary, positive and constitutive of the other lines. According to Deleuze and Guattari these lines of flight are primary in the sense that they 'are not phenomena of resistance or counterattack in an assemblage, but cutting edges of creation and deterritorialization' (Deleuze & Guattari, 1988, p. 531). This leads to the third point, which is that lines of flight are the basis upon which we can challenge and expose molar lines for what they are: an illusion rather than the primary grounding of reality. Thus the aim of a line of flight is not to take power, but to ask questions of those who organize the molar

segments, to show briefly that what we think is fixed is in fact merely a crystallization of segments at a particular time. There is no desire to take the position of the state apparatus in overcoding society, but rather this is a new form of politics: ‘not of reform or even revolutionary opposition, but of doing something different: an a-systemic rather than anti-systemic politics’ (Widder, 2004, p. 202).

The lines of flight start this process of cracking and disruption, they show a glimpse newness and creativity that will, even if just for a moment, break through and show an alternative reality or way of thinking, where creativity and productivity are allowed to flourish. Molar lines might not see the lines of flight until they have already seeped into the cracks of society and begun their line of mutation. It is at this point the lines of flight will be slowed from their absolute speed and allow molecular lines to harness this creativity and newness so that it can challenge the molar segments. This is when the politics of demand is produced – a politics that makes sense of the speed of a line of flight and allows itself to interact with the molar lines.

As noted earlier, change happens on the molar lines when lines of flight bubble up unexpectedly and are made visible through molecular e.g. May 68, or, the ‘Battle of Seattle’. Deleuze and Guattari explain how these lines of flight can take people who are immersed in the politics of demand by surprise, as in the events in France of May 68:

May 1968 in France was molecular, making what led up to it all the more imperceptible from the viewpoint of macropolitics. Those who evaluated things in macropolitical terms understood nothing of the event because something unaccountable was escaping. The politicians, the parties, the unions, many leftists, were utterly vexed; they kept repeating over and over again that ‘conditions’ were not ripe (Deleuze & Guattari, 2004, p. 238).

Thus the politics of the act allows us to develop new, creative ways of thinking that do not follow previous patterns of political engagement – in the case of May 68 they did not follow the established pattern of workers strikes but the rebellion came from somewhere else completely. Thus the politics of demand that allows the molar segments to be challenged could not have come about without the politics of the act in the sense that it produced something new that did not conform to pre-established patterns, and thus had a greater impact. When the lines of flight connect with the molecular lines they may be reterritorialized and folded into existing segments, but hopefully they introduce something new into the molar segments, if only briefly. In the

longer term though, lines of flight give us different ways of thinking that doesn't conform to state thought, and allows us to destabilise the molar segments so that they are constantly having to shift to allow others in. This is the first point in any resistance to the molar segments – to show that we can live outside of their comforting and safe rigidity and is part of the ongoing revolution of providing alternatives to the state.

Lines of flight can help deepen the indicator of an imperative for enactment in three ways. Firstly, everyone is encouraged to follow their own line of flight. They do not have to be instructed to act by movement intellectuals or follow a prescribed programme in order to take their own journey on a line of flight. If we are not prepared to experiment with lines of flight then we will miss much of the creativity and joy of life, and it is up to us to take the initiative to create lines of flight, both individually and collectively.

Secondly, creativity and experimentation is key to understanding enactment in the politics of the act. New paths are forged rather than old ones re-traced, and lines of flight do not do things simply because they have always been done that way. This does not involve the need to achieve particular outcomes or criteria which will demonstrate either success or failure, as the main aim of the line of flight is to experiment and create newness rather than having to measure up to a pre-determined criteria of success.

Thirdly, there is a sense of joy rather than fear about the unpredictability and unknown outcomes of direct action, with the process of doing being as important if not more so than the expected result. The aim of a line of flight is to disrupt the existing segments by offering something new, not to create a new hierarchical relationship between segments that are normal and others which are non-categories or seen as delinquency or madness.

These three lines help this thesis in both understanding the relationship of governance and resistance, and in understanding the relationship within a radical politics between the politics of the act and the politics of demand. Three lines do not easily become two modes of politics, and they are always flowing into each other. This makes seeing different modes of politics as a fairly exact science, as Richard Day does, difficult if not impossible. I will now return to Day and his distinction between the politics of demand

and the politics of the act to see how Deleuze and Guattari can help us build on it, and go beyond it.

Intermezzo

In the previous two chapters I have demonstrated that although Day's distinction between the politics of demand and the politics of the act is one that seems to hit upon a meaningful distinction between different ways of acting politically, there are also limits to such a narrow conceptualisation, and I will discuss briefly here what these limits are and how Deleuze and Guattari help us to move beyond them. I will also suggest that although the politics of the act has been deepened by Deleuzian concepts, anarchist theory limits some of the conclusions that Deleuze and Guattari draw. I will discuss the work of 'postanarchist' theorists, and suggest that the politics of the act conceptualised through a Deleuzian lens marks a contribution to the postanarchist body of literature, before looking briefly forwards to the next part of the thesis where the politics of the act is developed through several empirical case studies.

Richard Day revisited

There is much to be retained from Day's distinction between the politics of act and demand, and it rearticulates a debate between meaningfully different modes of politics. Day offers a way to think differently about politics, and challenges prevailing perspectives of what constitutes political action, and how this action is measured as 'successful'. His thesis that the only way in which to challenge the current systems of domination is through the logic of affinity requires engagement by all who consider themselves to be involved in radical change. It opens up a new space in which we can consider what is at stake in only practicing the politics of demand, which Day claims perpetuates systems of domination and oppression. Day clearly shows how this logic of affinity, through a politics of the act, corresponds well to anarchist principles, which is significant in bringing anarchist activities to the fore and readjusting the balance of IR as a predominantly Marxist-focused body of theory where other modes of politics have often been overlooked or not taken seriously.

However, there are two aspects of Day's distinction between a politics of demand and a politics of the act that I find to be problematic, particularly in light of what Deleuze and Guattari offer us. The first problem is that the conceptions of the politics of demand and the politics of the act are very narrow and rigid in their categorisation, as the terms 'act' and 'demand' can mean many things in relation to the practice of politics. As I showed in the discussion between Žižek and Critchley, the language of the politics of

demand and the politics of the act can be understood in different ways to mean very different things. I believe then that this disrupts Day's logic, and leads us to ask whether making demands *necessarily* limits activists to perpetuating the logic of hegemony and the state, and whether acting outside the state *necessarily* frees activists from reinstating different forms of hegemony and domination. The rigidity of Day's distinction which conflates each mode of politics with a particular social movement (in this case Marxism and anarchism) simply reinforces the distinction made by anarchist and Marxist theorists themselves, and does not allow us to move forward in understanding radical politics as being a more complex and multi-layered set of contingent practices.

Day seems to suggest that these different modes can only exist in isolation from each other. Thus a movement can only be said to be exemplifying a politics of the act if their practices do not contain any elements of the politics of demand. By drawing on Deleuze and Guattari I have shown in theory, and will propose empirically, that most groups or movements could find evidence of both modes of politics in their practices, as for the politics of the act to be made visible or understandable to society it has to produce moments of the politics of demand. The politics of demand can also then dissolve back into the politics of the act. Deleuze and Guattari show us how we can see that these two modes of politics are in fact symbiotically related, and one produces the other, thus it is not possible to recognise one without the other, or to see them as entirely separate from each other.

It would be very difficult to argue that the politics of demand cannot be creative, or that a politics of the act never organises itself along hierarchical lines, but this is what Day seems to suggest. Deleuze and Guattari want to break down these binary identities of different modes of politics, and show that there is a complexity at work which cannot justify the creation of new, but inverted, hierarchies which privilege one mode over the other. Chapters 4 – 6 will show that activities that are valorised as a politics of the act also have the potential to produce moments of the politics of demand, and as Deleuze and Guattari suggest in relation to rhizomes and arborescent structures, organisation can exist along a continuum rather than being either one or the other.

This leads to the second criticism of Day's distinction between a politics of demand and a politics of the act, namely that the politics of the act is valorised as being normatively

and ethically superior to the politics of demand. Whilst I aim to add to the anarchist literature which recognises the importance of the politics of the act; in light of Deleuze and Guattari's three lines of politics it is impossible to talk about one mode of politics as being superior to the other, as all three lines of politics are part of our existence. It is not possible to live on only one of the three lines all the time, as they embody different functions of society. The politics of the act may be ontologically prior to the politics of demand but this does not give it a normative or strategic priority. Both modes of politics have their own functions in a radical politics of resistance, and thus it cannot be that one is normatively or ethically more important than the other. The politics of the act is the basis of newness and creativity from which the politics of demand is produced. The politics of demand captures these flows into something that allows the translation of this creativity into recognisable elements that help us to connect with others in society.

Day sets up the logic of affinity that forms the basis of the politics of the act as the only radical way of practicing politics and as a corrective to the faulty logic of hegemony that forms the basis for the politics of demand. Although by situating himself in the anarchist camp one can expect a preference for the politics of the act, Day creates an ethical judgement on those who orient their politics to the state, and allow themselves to operate within a logic of counter-hegemony, and suggests that they are not really interested in radical change or making the world a better, more just place. One could draw from this line of thinking the conclusion that those who practice a politics of demand are actually in collusion with the systems of governance, as they want to uphold the existence of systems that those practicing a politics of the act are trying to overcome.

Day does note that he enjoys the structural privilege of being a white, male professor in the global North and that his aim is to challenge his own institutionalised prejudices and stand in solidarity with those who are suffering the most debilitating effects of neoliberalism on a daily basis, but it seems difficult from this position to say with conviction that demanding rights or recognition from the state is inferior to challenging state domination through a logic of affinity. Deleuze and Guattari make clear that it is unethical to construct binaries – such as radical/non-radical, act/demand, good activist/bad activist – in this way, as this is predicated on an ontology of identity from which everything 'other' is subtracted and therefore considered inferior. Rather for

Deleuze and Guattari, ethical thinking is based on an ontology of difference in which there is no room for the superior/inferior distinction.

Re-thinking anarchism as a Politics of the Act

In the previous chapter I showed that Deleuze and Guattari's theory of politics takes us beyond the anarchist and Marxist understanding of politics discussed in Chapter 2, and beyond Day's conception of the politics of demand and the politics of the act in its narrow form. Deleuze and Guattari have given us the concepts of war machine, rhizomes and lines of flight that I have argued help us to deepen an understanding of a politics of the act. The politics of the act is most similar to anarchist conceptions of politics, but I would suggest that the politics of the act as developed through Deleuze takes us beyond a classical anarchist politics.

There are theorists, however, who have recognised the limits of classical anarchism and sought to re-engage anarchism with insights gained from post-structuralists, such as Deleuze and Foucault, to move anarchism beyond itself through a theoretical direction described by its instigators as 'postanarchism'. It is my contention that the way Deleuze and Guattari help us to deepen our understanding of a politics of the act will contribute to this postanarchist body of work, and I will briefly explain how postanarchism furthers the conceptualisation of a radical politics of anarchism in a 21st century context, before showing what Deleuze and Guattari add specifically to the politics of the act in terms of thinking an anarchist politics.

Postanarchism is the term used principally to describe the work of two thinkers – Saul Newman and Todd May. They bring together anarchist theory and practice and post-structuralism in order to move anarchism beyond what they conceive to be particular limits that anarchism imposes on itself. Postanarchism is not 'post' as in *after* anarchism; but by drawing on post-structuralism and new forms of resistance postanarchists attempt to extend anarchism beyond the limitations of classical anarchism and uncover its 'heterogeneous and unpredictable possibilities' (Newman, 2008, p. 5). Newman and May have argued that there are several areas of classical anarchist theory that situate it within an Enlightenment paradigm and therefore limit its possibilities for radical politics in a 21st century context. To move past these issues is not to diminish the value of anarchist theory, but just enables us to think anarchism at its limits with the tools of post-structuralist thought that we now have available.

There are three main areas in which I see postanarchism as being able to expand the horizons of classical anarchism. The first claim is that anarchism needs to abandon its commitment to an essential human nature. May argues that much anarchist theory is based on an assumption that humans have a particular essence or nature, and that this essence is fundamentally good or benign and allows us to live harmoniously with others in society (May, 1994, p. 63). As we saw in Chapter 1 the anarchism of Kropotkin, for example, is one that is founded on an essentialist notion of the subject as being fully constituted, and as having particular rational characteristics, or at least the potential for rationality once properly educated. Classical anarchism is predicated on the idea of the utopian state of nature where humans lived in mutual cooperation before they had unnecessary authority in the form of the state placed upon them. Kropotkin believed that if the state were to be abolished then man's predominant mode of operation would be once again one of mutual cooperation.

Newman argues that we need to overcome the idea that there is a fixed, constant set of properties and characteristics that form the basis of social identities and relations because 'the Man of Enlightenment humanism, the figure endowed with certain moral and rational characteristics or potentialities which would emerge as part of a historical process or a development of social forces, can no longer serve as an entirely convincing basis for politics' (Newman, 2010a, p. 196). Todd May agrees and suggest that for this, post-structuralism is a perfect fit as 'if poststructuralist political thought could be summed up in a single prescription, it would be that radical political theory, if it is to achieve anything, must abandon humanism in all its forms' (May, 1994, p. 75). By moving away from this belief in an essential rational and moral human society that has had power imposed upon it through the state, postanarchism is able to embrace contingency, to open the way for Deleuze's ontology of difference where there is no fixed identity (in this case the rational, moral human) but only differences that can collide and combine in any number of ways and forms that cannot be predicted.

This leads to a second limit of classical anarchism that needs to be critically interrogated – that there is a certain dialectical movement of historical forces that determines the present and future of social relations. This can be seen in the work of Godwin, in his belief that anarchism is in keeping with the evolution of human nature towards an end point where mankind will flourish to their full potential and live in harmony and mutual

cooperation. To overcome this presumption is important, as what is at stake in taking this view could be seen in some ways as a denial of politics. If history and natural laws are pre-determined and unfolding there is no point engaging in contingent political interventions, as history has already been determined (Newman, 2005).

If we dismiss the idea of the movement of historical forces towards the unfolding of a totally rational anarchist society then any notion of politics has to be constructed deliberately rather than occur naturally. By rejecting this already-determined dialectical movement of the social, postanarchism allows us to see discursive structures as contingent and unstable and thus open to contestation (Newman, 2010b). Radical politics then ceases to be simply the development of a rational process and instead can be understood as ‘unpredictable points of rupture with the existing social order’ (Newman, 2010a, p. 209). This leads us to an emphasis on contingency and experimental practices rather than a social theory. It allows us to see radical politics as a real and deliberate break with the status quo that recognises that any particular set of social relations can be disrupted. Deleuze and Guattari show us that dominant systems can be disrupted and gaps can be opened by questioning the legitimacy of the state, through the creation of new ways of thinking that exist outside state thought. If this is possible, then political interventions are both possible and meaningful in creating cracks in the seemingly fixed apparatus of the state that show another way of thinking and acting politically.

The third area in which I think postanarchism encourages us to think beyond anarchism’s limits is influenced by Foucault’s analysis of power, and leads May and Newman to acknowledge that power is an ineradicable element of any social identity. For classical anarchism, the destruction of the state is synonymous with the eradication of power, as they believed that power can only be oppressive and used to dominate others. Bakunin believed that the lust for power was a dangerous force, and therefore no one should be entrusted with power as it can only corrupt those who exercise it. As I showed in Chapter 1, Bakunin rejected the Marxist strategy of taking control of the state in order to use it to advance a socialist society, as he argued that the power held by the state could only be used to dominate and suppress rather than to be productive. Kropotkin believed that only a power-less community of mutual aid would be achieved once power (in the form of the state) had been eradicated. Postanarchists argue that classical anarchism needs to rethink its understanding of power and domination and to

accept that a utopian anarchist society where power does not exist is impossible because ‘there can be no uncontaminated point of departure that is external to power’ (Newman, 2005, p. 46). As noted in Chapter 2, German anarchist Gustav Landauer prefigured currents in post-structuralist thought by arguing in 1911 that the state was not a ‘thing’, but was a condition that is made up by certain types of relationships, in which we give the state the appearance of legitimacy. In this way, we are all governing each other via complex relationships of power (Landauer, 1929). For Landauer, this meant that the state could then be challenged by the alteration of the network of relationships between individuals and the state. Deleuze and Guattari similarly suggest that the state has encouraged us to believe that we desire our own repression, and that truly creative desires are productive rather than suppressive. This leads to a reappraisal of domination and the idea that there is a single site of struggle that can be overcome by the changing of power through the goal of overthrowing the state. Postanarchists argue that there cannot be a utopian society where there are no power relations, but that power relations can be constitutive as well as repressive.

Utopianism then takes on a different meaning, instead of the eventual and total goal of overthrowing the state it becomes a utopia in the present – the construction of alternative relations of power to the domination of state forms through pre-figurative politics. This allows us to ‘distance ourselves from the existing order, to see its limits; to understand that it can be transcended, that there are alternative and vastly better ways of living one’s life’ (Newman, 2010b, p. 67). This is crucial to any project of politics as it recognises that radical change does not have to be a wholesale replacement of the state in one move, but can take place on many levels at once. This allows alternative power relations to exist within the existing systems, and allows activists to both challenge some systems whilst existing within other systems of domination and even using them to achieve some amount of disruption to these systems.

The principles outlined here as postanarchism can also help us re-articulate the three principles of anarchism discussed in Chapter 1 to become more like the politics of the act as developed in Chapter 3. Firstly, anti-authoritarianism can be adapted by re-evaluating power as being infused in relationships rather than in an abstract place that is only manifested in concrete terms by the state. I argue that for Deleuze, resistance can no longer be understood as overthrowing the state in a once-and-for-all revolution, but is rather an ongoing revolution through the disruption and subversion of molar segments

that overcode and organise us. In terms of decentralised organisation, Deleuze and Guattari give us a new way of understanding this through the concept of rhizomes based on an ontology of difference that allows us new ways of thinking about how differences resonate together and the way in which a rhizome has room for infinite expansion. This means that contingency and unexpected connections can be seen as an important part of the creativity of the politics of the act rather than something undesirable. An imperative for enactment can be developed by adding the dimensions of contingency and creativity, and the responsibility for all to take responsibility for their own lines of flight that can be collective as well as individual.

Postanarchism could also be seen to have an ethical dimension which counters Day's suggestion that the politics of the act is morally superior to the politics of demand. May suggests that post-structuralists offer a few principles of ethics, even if they are not aware of it (May, 1994). These could be summed up as a commitment to anti-representation, a commitment to experimentation, creativity and giving alternatives the space to flourish, and a general anti-capitalist sentiment that looks to disrupt sedimented, state practices. I would add that a postanarchist ethic offers a commitment to thinking outside of statist thought and being committed to seeking out and celebrating difference rather than being constrained by a system of binary identities.

I believe that postanarchism leads to the reapplication of anarchist analysis and methods to the new ways of political resistance seen, for example, in the Global Justice Movement (Franks, 2007, pp. 131-132). In the second part of this thesis I will use the insights from Deleuze and Guattari to add to the postanarchist project by demonstrating empirical evidence of the politics of the act and suggesting that these activities are 'a multiple, diverse, and contingent network of events, effects, and influences that defies such dichotomies as above/below and inside/outside' (May, 1994, p. 78).

The activities that I have chosen to examine in the following chapters are all strong exemplars of the politics of the act, and all of them display some characteristics of the three concepts of war machine, rhizomes and lines of flight. These correspond to the politics of the act's indicators I developed in Chapter 2 – *withdrawal from the state*, *horizontal organising* and *an imperative for enactment*. Although each activity has been chosen as the clearest way to illustrate each particular concept, this does not mean

that war machines, rhizomes, and lines of flight do not flow into and out of each other – and these activists will often demonstrating all three practices at once.

In the first part of this thesis the theory has been developed, and it is now time to see how the politics of the act is played out empirically. But does this distinction that has been articulated by theorists between the politics of demand and the politics of the act manifest itself in the practice of grass-roots activism? Or do the politics of act and demand flow into and out of each other, crystallising and dissolving at various moments as Deleuze suggests that they do? These are questions that I will try to address as I examine the varied practices of Food Not Bombs, social centres, Critical Mass, Indymedia Centres, guerrilla gardening and the Clandestine Insurgent Rebel Clown Army.

Chapter 4: Withdrawal from the state – Food Not Bombs and social centres

In this chapter I will look at two movements that exemplify the first indicator of the politics of the act that I have identified – withdrawal from the state. I have developed these indicators in order to specify what a politics of the act might mean, as a way of building on Day's description of the politics of the act as a distinct mode of politics. I then drew on Deleuze and Guattari's concept of the war machine to help deepen our understanding of what withdrawal from the state might look like. The war machine offers a conceptual framework through which to understand activities that withdraw from the state, or refuse to see the state as their primary interlocutor and agent of radical change. It also offers added value to understanding the relationship between the politics of the act and the politics of demand in the way in which it shows how a politics of demand can crystallise through a politics of the act. The key moment is when the war machine comes into contact with the state, and this will be explored at the end of the chapter in relation to both case studies.

I will offer a narrative description of two case studies that exemplify a withdrawal from the state – Food Not Bombs and the social centre movement, with particular reference to the UK context of social centres. Food Not Bombs and Social Centres have both been held up as evidence of the anarchist character of the Global Justice Movement (Marshall, 2008, p. 698), and Richard Day sees them as demonstrations of the 'non-branded strategies and tactics' that exemplify a politics of the act (Day, 2005, pp. 9, 39-42). Day then takes Hakim Bey's notion of the Temporary Autonomous Zone a step further by likening the social centre movement to a 'PAZ' or Permanent Autonomous Zone which can provide long term alternatives whilst staying off the radar of the state (Day, 2005, p. 163), tying into Bey's theorisation of withdrawal from the state articulated in Chapter 2.

I will explore how each demonstrates the war machine in turn, by showing how Food Not Bombs offers an alternative to the state that does not require state recognition or acceptance, and how social centres maintain social spaces as an alternative to the state by evading recognition. I will then look at how both Food Not Bombs and the social centres understand their relationship to the state when they come into contact with it. Finally, I will return to the war machine and demonstrate that Deleuze and Guattari

offer a unique 'added value' by offering a way of breaking out the dichotomy between the politics of act and the politics of demand. I will do this by focusing on the key moment of contact with the state of demand, and will suggest how this might be found in the activities of Food Not Bombs and the social centres, and what further lines of enquiry this approach might generate.

Before looking at these two activities in turn, I will briefly remind the reader of the characteristics of withdrawal from the state that can be seen through the concept of the war machine. Firstly, the war machine provides an alternative way of existence to the society controlled by the state. It exists in a relationship with the state, but not one in which it is focused on the state as the way to change society, as it does not believe that the state can be a route to radical change as the state overcodes society and blocks creative flows. Thus it is aware of the state but does not rely on it for anything. The war machine is qualitatively different to the state apparatus, it is of a different nature: 'As for the war machine in itself, it seems to be irreducible to the State apparatus, to be outside its sovereignty and prior to its law: it comes from elsewhere...In every respect, the war machine is of another species, another nature, another origin than the State apparatus' (Deleuze & Guattari, 2004, pp. 388-389). The war machine is characterized by speed rather than slowness, creativity rather than control.

This leads to the second characteristic of the war machine: the way in which it attempts to keep off the radar of the state. The war machine aims to evade acknowledgment by the state, as by being recognized by the state the war machine also runs the risk of becoming sanctioned by the state, and therefore legitimized by it. Another possible consequence of being noticed by the state is the threat of violent repression. The state will try to control the war machine by any means possible, whether through repression or by legitimizing and controlling it by imposing rules upon it: 'It is a vital concern of every State not only to vanquish nomadism but to control migrations and, more generally, to establish a zone of rights over an entire "exterior," over all of the flows traversing the ecumenon...In this sense, the State never ceases to decompose, recompose, and transform movement, or to regulate speed' (Deleuze & Guattari, 2004, pp. 425-426).

The third characteristic of the war machine is what happens when it comes into contact with the state. The state may try to destroy the war machine, or it will try to capture the

war machine and use it for its own ends: ‘One of the fundamental tasks of the State is to striate the space over which it reigns, or to utilize smooth spaces as a means of communication in the service of striated space’ (Deleuze & Guattari, 2004, p. 425). The state can reterritorialize the war machine, but in the process the war machine will cause the molar segments to reshuffle to accommodate the war machine, and thus reconfigure how we think about certain things, even if the change is only a small one. The other possibility is that the war machine is blocked by the state and tries to free itself, and in doing so turns to all-out war with the state and seeks to destroy it.

It is in this moment of contact with the state that the politics of the act produces a politics of demand. The politics of demand allows the politics of the act to be recognised and understood by society and the state, or in other words it allows the pure creativity and speed of the line of flight to be slowed and made sense of through connecting with the molecular lines. When the molecular line makes sense of the line of flight, it can then undermine the molar segments, and change them. In order to avoid capture by the state, the war machine can become slowed by molecular lines that allow it to interact with the state and attempt to disrupt it by forcing it to reshuffle its segments and allow new identifications or ideas to become part of the molar structure.

I will now examine Food Not Bombs and the social centres noted above in turn, to see how the three elements of the war machine can help us understand these activities. The chapter will conclude with a return to Deleuze and Guattari and the relationship between the politics of the act and the politics of demand, in order to see how this might be demonstrated in these activities.

Food Not Bombs

Food Not Bombs began in 1980 in Cambridge, Massachusetts by anti-nuclear activists as part of a protest about the Seabrook nuclear power station. The founders wanted to highlight the link between food scarcity and the amount of money spent on nuclear power and militarism, and hit upon this creative way to get their message across. The founders of Food Not Bombs take up the story:

One of our many activities was to spray-paint anti-nuclear and anti-war slogans on public buildings and sidewalks using stencils. One of our favorites was spray-painting the words “MONEY FOR FOOD NOT FOR BOMBS” on the sidewalk at grocery store exits in our neighborhood. One night, after an outing of spray-painting, we had the inspiration to use the slogan “FOOD NOT BOMBS” as our name. By

having a slogan, the message of our group would be clear, and by repeating our name over and over again even the media would be getting the political concept of food, and not bombs, to the public (Butler & McHenry, 2000, p. 5).

The founders of Food Not Bombs used this slogan to create an activity that took on a character of its own and became their most recognizable aspect of protest. The basic premise of Food Not Bombs' activity is to collect food that otherwise would be thrown out and makes hot vegetarian meals for those who need it. This is a simple idea that recognizes a need – food scarcity – and provides for that need directly, whilst also highlighting the reasons for this: that priority is given to government spending on nuclear power and not on feeding the hungry.

This idea has been exported to hundreds of chapters across the world, and Food Not Bombs exists in around 67 countries on all major continents, with 264 in the United States alone and 20 in the UK (Food-Not-Bombs, 2010a). This demonstrates rhizomatic principles as the spread of FNB groups has not been controlled or driven by a central 'FNB identity' but has sprung up organically and in various different ways. Groups range from one or two individuals who meet on an ad hoc basis; groups that meet at a regular time and place to give out food every week or month; to those that are more permanently housed in social centres (Day, 2005, p. 41). Food Not Bombs chapters have been active at protest events and provided hot meals to rescue workers responding to the September 11th attacks and during Hurricane Katrina. They note that 'volunteers also helped organize and shared meals at the 1999 WTO protests in Seattle and provide logistical support for many other anti-globalization actions...We are also sharing meals at protests responding to the global economic crisis' (Food-Not-Bombs, 2009b). Thus, although Food Not Bombs is associated with a specific activity their founders also see themselves as responding to a wider political movement for change that challenges both government spending on nuclear power and a wider anti-capitalist resistance.

Although FNB chapters are all autonomous groups, they do share certain characteristics and are predicated on three main principles: non-violence, consensus, and vegetarianism. Non-violence refers both to the (violent) protection offered by government spending on nuclear missiles and also to the violence of poverty that is experienced by millions. Another violence is that of commercial food production: from the slaughter of animals to the use of chemical pesticides and fertilizers. Food Not

Bombs explain that their commitment to non-violence is reflected in their withdrawal from the dominant culture that is characterized by a desire for death and violence through state-sponsored wars: 'The name Food Not Bombs states our most fundamental principle; society needs to promote life, not death. Our society condones, and even promotes violence and domination. Authority and power are derived from the threat and use of violence' (Crass, 1995).

The second of their principles is consensus decision making. The Los Angeles FNB website states their mission very succinctly: 'Food Not Bombs is organized according to anarchist principles of non-hierarchy and decentralization. We take food that would otherwise be thrown away and make healthy, vegan meals for the hungry' (L. Food-Not-Bombs). FNB is an all-volunteer organisation with no paid members of staff, and New York FNB also expresses this desire to create an alternative way of thinking about society through organizing themselves differently:

Food Not Bombs operates on the anarchist belief that we must work to build alternative institutions now, at the grassroots level, to help create the just society we would like to live in. This is why Food Not Bombs is collectively run, non-hierarchical, and anti-authoritarian. All decisions, within each autonomous chapter, are made by consensus. No one is in charge. No one gives orders. Things simply get done because people see that something needs doing. Everyone who wants to volunteer is welcomed (N. Y. Food-Not-Bombs).

This again illustrates the character of a rhizome, where individual groups are not organized according to a central 'trunk', but exist as a series of different groups that resonate together without the need for a hierarchical chain of command.

The third principle is vegetarianism. A meat-based diet allows for huge agribusinesses in order to farm meat effectively, and encourages dependency on chemical fertilizers and pesticides. Food Not Bombs argue that if more people were vegetarian it would support small-scale local farming and better stewardship of the land – as more people can be fed from one acre of land used to create a vegetarian diet than a meat-based one (Butler & McHenry, 2000, p. 3). Vegetarianism, they believe, is better for the environment, consumes fewer resources, and is healthier for us. From a practical point of view, cooking vegetarian/vegan meals is that the potential for food spoilage is reduced, and people who get involved with Food Not Bombs become educated in healthier eating patterns.

Food Not Bombs states explicitly that they are ‘an organization devoted to developing positive personal, political, and economic alternatives’. They argue that although they may not seem like revolutionaries as they are not trying to overthrow the government by any means necessary, they are still struggling with it, just in a different way: ‘by simply exerting our basic rights to free speech and association, we challenge the power elite, and they will try to stop us from focusing on what needs to be done. We want to create new alternatives and life-affirming structures from the ground up’ (Butler & McHenry, 2000, p. 72). The way to combat this is to withdraw consent from the status quo wherever possible. One of the original organizers notes that ‘it is not lost upon us that the major contribution to stopping bombs is our withdrawal from the economic and political structures of the death culture...as an organization, we operate outside the dominant economic paradigm’ (Butler & McHenry, 2000, p. 74).

Food Not Bombs founders put their success down to methods of organising and self-empowerment:

There are several reasons why this movement is still so strong after 30 years. Food Not Bombs has no leaders, directors and each chapter is autonomous, making decisions involving everyone in the group using the process of consensus. It is very empowering to collect, prepare and share free food, all on your own and to do it with little money, and few resources. Sharing food is powerful and magical. Additionally, when average people realize they have the power to make a difference, it can change their lives. This is the foundation of social change and the authorities know it... The self-empowerment of tens of thousands of people may be Food Not Bombs' greatest achievement (Food-Not-Bombs, 2009a).

This shows that Food Not Bombs is offering an alternative vision of how to promote social change that does not involve asking for something from someone else, for example the state. This rejection that permission has to be granted for their activity leads to a sense of empowerment. Rather than asking the state for rights or recognition, Food Not Bombs through its actions makes individuals and communities aware that they can take responsibility for their own actions in creating alternatives. ‘Either the movement can seek food services from the outside and be dependent on businesses that may not be progressive, or we can provide for ourselves. Clearly, it is Food Not Bombs’ position that providing for our own basic needs, in ways that comprehensively support the movement, is far more empowering’ (Butler & McHenry, 2000, p. 4).

Food Not Bombs’ vision of an alternative society is deeply rooted in their local communities, which is part of what makes these groups so strong. In many cases this is

demonstrated by the longevity of such activities – with 2010 marking the 30th anniversary of an idea that is still seeing growth around the world. Everywhere through Food Not Bombs groups, people are building alternatives to the state that are all different in character because they are situated in a local context:

While the corporate society starts to collapse and the American Empire begins to crumble, Food Not Bombs is more active than ever, building the kind of society we all want to have. Because each chapter is organized by local volunteers and non-hierarchical nature, they have deep connections within their local community. Food Not Bombs volunteers are becoming experienced in cooperative action and collective decision-making. They are generating the spirit and vision needed to create a new world that can flourish while seeking solutions to the crisis of climate, change, economic failure and a corporate dominated political system' (Food-Not-Bombs, 2009a).

Food Not Bombs take on the role of solving problems that they perceive to be important to changing society for the better. This alternative world is where solutions are provided by empowering people to engage in creating the world they want to live in for themselves, rather than waiting for them to be legitimized by an external source. One Food Not Bombs member summed this up when commenting about a recent police shut down of a Food Not Bombs event in Concord, California that 'manifesting "Food not bombs" by permission of the state would defeat the point of the protest' (E. B. Food-Not-Bombs, 2010). The East Bay Food Not Bombs group agrees that 'one of the many beautiful things about FNB is that we operate without asking the government for permission' (East Bay, 2001, p. 70).

Thus we see that Food Not Bombs provides an alternative vision for society in which food production would be local and decentralized rather than concentrated in the hands of 'big 'agri-business'. The commitment to vegetarianism provides an alternative discourse to food production and consumption. Their commitment to decentralized non-hierarchical forms of decision-making that empower people to make their own decisions and to be part of the process provides an alternative way of thinking about political activity. Food Not Bombs make it clear that they are promoting a positive, productive alternative to the 'death culture' which promotes bombs above food that is life-affirming, and they do this through withdrawing their consent from the dominant political and economic paradigms promoted by the state. By serving food and conducting their activities in public places, they are challenging the accepted notions of free speech and association. Food Not Bombs in this way sees their activity as being qualitatively different from the state apparatus, and it is this different approach to

politics, economics, free space and association and decision making that makes them stand out as an alternative to the state.

The social centre movement

The social centre movement emerged in Italy in the 1970s and can now be found in many forms. Social centres are usually abandoned buildings that have been taken over by activists to provide a space outside of state control, often offering basic services that governments would not provide such as health clinics and libraries, and services such as cafes and bars that offer an alternative to the commodification of the high street by corporate chains. The 1970s saw widespread experimentation with alternative ways of living, no more so in Italy with the social centres movement. Over 250 social centers have been active in Italy over the past 15 years, especially in urban areas (Mudu, 2004).

Social centres sprung up in other parts of Western Europe too, most notably in Barcelona and the setting up of an autonomous zone in a disused military base in Denmark known as the Freetown Christiania in 1971. In this chapter, however, I will be predominantly concentrating on one particular context, the British social centre movement. The context of social centres and the political influences vary across Europe, and so I am limiting this case study to one context for the purposes of this discussion.

There are around 22 social centres in the UK and Ireland that are connected by a website of social centre networks (www.socialcentresnetwork.co.uk), and probably many more that are squatted or rented on an ad hoc or temporary basis. One activist conducted a survey of 15 social centres in 2007 and found that between the fifteen spaces, there are around 350-400 people involved in social centres around the country - organising around 250 events per month and gaining the presence of 4,000 to 6,000 people (Alessio, 2008, p. 34).

So what are social centres and what do they do? One activist explains that:

Social centres, or 'autonomous spaces', are communally-run buildings which are either occupied, rented or owned. Each of the spaces are run non-hierarchically by individuals on a completely voluntary basis. There are varying concerns that shape the make-up and activities within the centres, but these can be described as all propelled by premises of community-based activity, creativity, inclusion, and autonomy from the command of the dominant culture' (Finch, 2008, p. 76).

Social centres are the creation of social spaces which are set up to provide room that is not sanctioned or governed by the state or any other body. Each centre is different, and there is no set of criteria imposed externally to determine if a space fits its definition of a social centre. Again, they are rhizomatic in that there is no central arborescent model that all centres must draw their identity from. Another social centre participant notes that 'having a public space where anti-authoritarian politics are accessible and clearly visible is key to what it's all about' (Various, 2008, p. 2). The activities that go on in social centres are wide and varied, and there is no such thing as a 'typical' centre. Social centres vary in size and resources and so some provide basic functions such as a meeting room and bar/café area, whereas others are more developed and have greater resources, both material resources and personnel. As an example of a bigger, well-resourced centre a member of the Leeds social centre, called the Common Place describes the activities that happen there:

What the Centre offers has changed a lot – over the three years so far it has included: meetings (endless meetings), our weekly (now bi monthly) organising meetings, gigs, cinema, workshops, language classes, open access computers, talks, film and zine making festivals, free schools and a free shop, an action planning event called 'Action Central', national gatherings, cooking courses, skill shares, self defence classes, exhibitions, and the growth of a beautiful garden space and BBQs (Paul, 2008, p. 35).

This covers a wide, but not exhaustive, list of activities that go on. Social centres obviously vary depending on what kind of space is available and what resources the activists who set up the centre have, but they also vary around the needs of the local community, as each social centres is deeply rooted in a local context.

One of the common themes across the movement is the need for space in which people can express different principles – a place where people can co-exist and learn from each other in an environment where their views are respected and everyone's opinion is valid. Another member of the Common Place in Leeds puts it like this:

I think one of the wonderful things about this place is that it holds together, it's a really open, complicated space that accommodates really very different people, which I think is amazing. The people who congregate round here are people who want to get their hands dirty basically. They want to get involved in all the complexities of something, they don't want pure things. It makes you face up to loads of stuff all the time (Chatterton, 2008, p. 81).

Social centres are places where conflicts and differences can generally be dealt with, although having many different service users with different views and backgrounds

does not make this easy. In Deleuzian terms the idea is to create a space that is 'smooth' rather than 'striated' – that is a space that is not crossed by rules and regulations of control. Ideally there are no boundaries of inclusion and exclusion and therefore all are welcome. Social centres are also designed to be inclusive because they are rooted in local communities, and so not restricted to those who have the means to travel. Those who run social centres see this as a place where everyday revolution takes place, for example the Kebele centre in Bristol:

Such centres recognise we can make fundamental changes here and now, in the ways we organise, communicate, interact and take action. This is the everyday revolution. We don't rely on bosses, politicians or community leaders to tell us what to do and think. Social centres provide a space for people to explore and practice what they believe in, free from interference from the state and capitalism (for most of the time!) (Tim, 2008, p. 16).

Like Food Not Bombs chapters, social centres are rooted in local communities and thus are in a unique position to respond to needs of that particular community. By doing so they can reach out to those who would not have had the opportunities to experience this 'everyday revolution before'. Social centres are a way of taking back a space in the local community for local people and are often active in resisting the gentrification of urban centres, where locals are squeezed out by developers and corporate regeneration, as Hodkinson and Chatterton explain:

What sets social centres apart from residential squats or housing cooperatives is their simultaneous politicization of the very act of reclaiming private space and opening it up to the public as part of a conscious refusal and confrontation to neo-liberalism and the enclosure of urban space...Social centres represent an open challenge to this neo-liberal process by taking these buildings emptied or abandoned by capital and regenerating them *back* into noncommercial places for politics, meetings and entertainment. In the face of rapid changes to the urban fabric, social centres constitute a new claim to the city—a demand that land and property be used to meet social needs, not to service global, or extra-local, capital (Hodkinson & Chatterton, 2006, p. 310).

These social centres then come from a shared desire to build networks and movements of solidarity. Through building these connections they help to develop an alternative politics, that carves out a social space that is untouched by the state and does not reproduce the hierarchies in society between the 'haves' and have nots' that often dominate urban centres. Instead they try to move beyond divided spaces that are controlled by wealth and privilege in order to create a space where these things are not a barrier to involvement (Various, 2008, p. 2). To many locals social centres 'become a

first “port of call” - their first interaction with ordinary people who want to fully participate in reshaping and re-imagining their environment’ (Alessio, 2008, p. 34).

These activists argue that this striated and divided society needs a solution, but in order not to reproduce existing hierarchies of inequality and access to resources, social centres need to avoid any association with the state form that produces and reinforces these hierarchies in the first place. They find strong roots for radical politics in their own localities to resist oppression and greed and to create responses and alternatives.

By providing a space that stays off the state radar, social centres also provide alternative criteria for judging success and failure. Social centre activists exemplify the politics of the act in the sense that they do not see overcoming the state, or engaging with the state to achieve a particular set of results as the main way of enacting a radical politics. A member of the Common Place social centre in Leeds gets to the heart of this discussion:

So how can we gauge the success of this place? We use this place to find ways out of the parts of the world that we don’t like. We certainly talk about some of the problems we face with capitalism and work - and this is one of the few places we can do that in our lives. But we have to acknowledge that we are not necessarily in open conflict with the system. If we were we’d probably be more ghettoised. But we chose to develop something more accessible and inclusive which would both bring people together but also act as a resource for existing activist groups. The point for us is that we don’t feel we have lost just because capitalism still exists. We need to set ourselves smaller aims or at least see the change happening in different ways than ‘bringing the system down tomorrow’ (Paul, 2008, p. 38).

By moving beyond the two choices of either reforming the state or overcoming it, activists can move away from seeing success as overturning the capitalist system immediately, and by doing so free up their focus to be about providing an alternative that remains off the radar of the state and allows them to create an alternative world in the shell of the existing one. Being recognised by the state and thus in some sense legitimised as being an accepted part of society could be seen as blunting the radical edge – as we saw with Food Not Bombs, who argued that the whole point was not to ask or be granted the state’s permission, as this would defeat the point of the exercise. By evading state recognition, social centres can also develop these alternative spaces without the threat of annihilation by the state or being captured by it. Paul goes on to note that:

We sometimes wonder if we have become too distracted running this place to take on ‘capitalism’ head on - whatever that means. But maybe we are choosing our battles

more carefully – ones that are worthwhile (like supporting asylum seekers, grassroots music, political education, skill sharing, learning consensus, self management) and can teach us lessons. So we need to see what we actually have achieved. We make the future we want seem more attainable by simply having this building. It opens up increasing possibilities for people to organize themselves (Paul, 2008, p. 38).

Thus social centres stay off the radar of the state and do not engage in a direct confrontation, but this doesn't mean that they are not practicing a political resistance in some way, even if it doesn't conform to war on the state's terms. Rather the aim is not to take power but to flee from the power mechanisms of the status quo and therefore drain the state of its legitimacy. Although it might be naïve to suggest that social centres will be able to shift the balance of power simply by creating alternatives, the purpose of withdrawal from the state is not to relocate power or to seize it, 'but to help break up existing power structures and that all these practices can be interpreted as an "exodus" from, or "scream" against, dominant practices' (Mudu, 2004, p. 937).

Another way in which these social centres have an impact is as a symbolic action. This can have an impact on the public that shows an alternative is possible without seeking confrontation with the state. Kinna describes the squat set up in 1996 on a derelict patch of land in London owned by the Guinness company. The squat was called 'Pure Genius' and turned into an eco-village that was permanently occupied by between 50 and 100 people. Kinna notes that 'Pure Genius could neither resolve the shortage of housing in London nor remedy the ecological damage sustained by the city, and to this extent the protest was symbolic'. However, by generating interest from the press the squat was able to raise these issues and 'to the extent that the squatters demonstrated the possibility of an alternative way of life, it was a practical response to a particular situation' (Kinna, 2005, p. 151).

Thus success cannot always be judged using the criteria of the politics of demand – whereby we measure whether we have managed to gain the rights or recognition that was sought from the state. Rather any kind of social change is going to be partial and may break through only to be reterritorialized, but at least it will have shifted the segments slightly. As one activist argues:

A commitment to anti-capitalism is always going to be messy and incomplete. Social centres and autonomous spaces in these dark times are amazing reminders of the possibilities of building the new worlds we dream of. We still ask, what now? What next? When will the future begin? Social centres help here: they continue to give us

strategic glimpses of what an anti-capitalist life may look and feel like (Chatterton, 2008, p. 85).

As we saw in Chapter 2 some theorists have addressed withdrawal from the state, and Hakim Bey's Temporary Autonomous Zone (TAZ) provides a clear post-anarchist theorisation of this indicator of the politics of the act. For some activists involved in the social centre movement, Bey is a significant influence. One activist talks about the relevance of the TAZ for many involved in social centres when he notes:

There is a seminal work by Hakim Bey that influences the concept of the 'autonomous zone' a great deal. What Bey has termed as a 'Temporary Autonomous Zone' is perhaps the closest written formulation to be found that resembles the social centre phenomenon. A 'T. A. Z.' is "like an uprising which does not engage directly with the State, a guerrilla operation which liberates an area (of land, of time, of imagination) and then dissolves itself to re-form elsewhere/elsewhen, before the State can crush it". This is quite a familiar description I suspect: the freeing of a building from the greed that keeps it from being put to good use – an oasis in the middle of a desert of avarice (Finch, 2008, p. 78).

The TAZ is used as an inspiration for the withdrawal from the state, to evade attention by staying off the radar of state and other instruments of control. Or as one social centre activist puts it, 'social centres respond to a very basic need – independent, not for profit, politically plural spaces where groups outside of the status quo can meet, discuss and respond and plan away from direct policing and surveillance' (Chatterton, 2008, p. 81).

In this brief discussion of the social centre movement in the UK we have seen that social centres are important in creating alternative spaces which are deeply rooted in local communities and thus offer up alternative ways of taking politics beyond activist circles to the community as a whole. Those involved in social centres recognize that to provide a real alternative to political and economic systems of control, overcoming the state or making demands of it are not the only choices for a radical politics. Rather to stay off the state radar is a political act in itself, as it denies the possibility of recognition by the state, which would defeat the object of the exercise somewhat. They aim instead to remain undetected and to drain the state of its legitimacy by showing that another way of organizing social space is possible. Avoiding the attention of the state also ensures that social centres are not destroyed by the state, or captured for its own ends.

Contact with the state

Food Not Bombs groups embody a paradox in the sense that although they do not seek

permission or recognition from the state, they do operate in very public areas such as parks as they want to reach as many members of the public as possible. This inevitably leads to interaction with the state, most commonly through state institutions such as the police and local government. This leads to a difficult balancing act, 'because we generally ignore the authorities, we allow them as little contact with us as possible; but, as we want exposure for our life-affirming alternatives, we never hide what we are doing' (Butler & McHenry, 2000, p. 74).

One of the reasons why contact with state institutions is generally avoided, as noted in regard to social centres, is that avoiding contact with the authorities is a way of ensuring that Food Not Bombs groups do not get shut down. Their manual advises that:

In general, Food Not Bombs believes that our work does not require any permits. However, the city or the police often use the permit issue as a way to attempt to harass you and shut you down. Therefore, it is sometimes a good idea to have a fully equipped field kitchen. There may still be attempts to shut you down, but you can point out that it is not a health but a political issue they are raising. It is the Food Not Bombs position that we have a right to give away free food anytime, anywhere, without any permission from the state' (Butler & McHenry, 2000, pp. 21-22).

The state might attack a war machine and look to destroy it because it threatens to disrupt the fixed segments that the state holds together, and suggest that there is an alternative way of thinking about things. One piece about Food Not Bombs notes that 'in fact, San Francisco Police memos state that if they did not stop Food Not Bombs, the public might come to believe that they could solve social problems, and ignore government and corporate leaders' (Food-Not-Bombs, 2009a). This echoes the claims of anarchist theorists in Chapter 1 that state power is authority backed up by coercion. If the state is threatened by the possibility of the public believing they can solve social problems and ignore government then it is in the best interests of the state to impose its authority by coercion and shut Food Not Bombs groups down. Thus Food Not Bombs is waging a war on the state that attacks it from within – where the instruments of the state, such as the police, themselves start to question the legitimacy of the state and the ways in which it operates.

Contact with the state is not welcome as it gives the state the opportunity to take control of their activities by either shutting them down or through the 'striation' of the smooth space that Food Not Bombs occupy by imposing a set of rules or regulations on the activity. This gives an element of control to the state institutions as it allows them to

regulate the activities that are taking place. As noted above, the issue of permits is one that often provides a sticking point for activists and their relationship with the state. This example illustrates how the state can use this issue to gain control of the situation:

Case in point: on July 11, 1988, after serving food for several months without city interference, the San Francisco Food Not Bombs group wrote a simple, one-page permit request to the Recreation and Parks Department at the suggestion of some community organizers. This unfortunately alerted the government to the meal distribution program, and gave it an opportunity to deny us a permit. It then used this as an excuse to harass the food table and arrest volunteers (Butler & McHenry, 2000, pp. 29-30).

The East Bay group explains that ‘permits are often used as a political tool to manipulate and constrict Food Not Bombs groups...Some cities want you to sign a permit just so they have a feelings of control and order, and will take drastic measures if you refuse, but leave you alone if you comply’ (East Bay, 2001, p. 70). This demonstrates what can happen when the war machine comes into contact with the state, and again gives weight to the practice of staying off the state radar.

Another way in which the state tries to control the alternatives provided by Food Not Bombs is through the confiscation of FNB literature. The FNB website explains that this a major source of oppression to Food Not Bombs groups:

The U.S. government has a nationwide campaign against our bringing literature and a banner to our meals because they know it is one of the most effective ways for Food Not Bombs to encourage resistance. Food Not Bombs is not a charity. It is organizing to change society. The government arrests Food Not Bombs to silence our message because they know we are effective when we share literature and vegan meals under the banner of Food Not Bombs. Meals without a message is just charity and supports the system of exploitation. The government and military contractors feel that our literature tables are effective so they have been known to take our flyers, banners and arrested our volunteers. The authorities are so concerned about our literature tables that they have been telling groups that they can share food as long as they don't hand out flyers and post banners (Food-Not-Bombs).

One of the difficult balancing acts that Food Not Bombs groups face is between evading the state whilst also making themselves visible to the public. By advertising what they are doing, and offering literature in very public places they also allow themselves to be recognized by the state, and in some cases seek out this recognition. For example, the manual suggest that you ‘pick highly visible locations, because part of our mission is to help make the “invisible homeless” more visible. We also want to reach out to

everyone with our political message of “food not bombs”, and we want to be very accessible’ (Butler & McHenry, 2000, pp. 10-11).

Another potential response of the war machine coming into contact with the state is that the war machine turns to war, or becomes even more determined to provide an alternative that takes legitimacy away from the state. A statement on the Food Not Bombs website, in reporting on the threatened closure of the Ann Arbor Food Not Bombs group in August 2010 gives some context and offers a defiant stance on this:

There have been many attempts to shut down local Food Not Bombs groups by claiming they need a permit to share free meals and that volunteers need to cook in a licensed facility. After first arresting San Francisco Food Not Bombs on August 15, 1988 because they were "making a political statement and that's not allowed" the city started claiming that the group needed a permit from the parks department and when that didn't work they told the public that Food Not Bombs needed a Health Permit. Even though California state law clearly stated that no one was required to have this permit unless they were selling or making money from distributing the food the police made over 1,000 arrests. San Francisco Food Not Bombs is not only still sharing free meals but the arrests inspired people all over the world to start their own Food Not Bombs groups. Each time a government threatens to stop a local Food Not Bombs group their actions cause the creation of new chapters. State officials in Arizona, Florida, California, Nevada, Massachusetts and Connecticut have also tried to stop Food Not Bombs in the past couple of years (Food-Not-Bombs, 2010b).

In this case we see that when Food Not Bombs comes into contact with the state those involved become even more determined to promote their message to as many people as possible. They in effect turn their activities into a war against the state, by seeking to undermine the legitimacy of the state as vigorously as possible. This kind of repression by the state only serves to politicize the potential of Food Not Bombs even more, and for those activists involved to orient their activities towards the state as a gesture of war.

This does not mean, however, that just because Food Not Bombs turns its attention to war that it is a war on the state’s terms. To use the same methods as the state, such as violence and intimidation would be to reproduce precisely the mechanisms of authority and hierarchy that these activists are fighting against. It would undermine the alternative nature of Food Not Bombs and suggest that they are not qualitatively different from the state, but are instead cut from the same cloth. In many cases violence has been directed towards Food Not Bombs activists by the police, most notably in San Francisco. A recent event in Concord, California was shut down by the police and Health department, with organizer harassed and all food and resources confiscated (S. F.

Food-Not-Bombs, 2010). However, as suggested above, activists refuse to react violently as this would be to recreate the authoritative methods of the state that they are trying to overcome (E. B. Food-Not-Bombs). The San Francisco Food Not Bombs website explains that:

While the police have attacked Food Not Bombs (members of San Francisco Food Not Bombs were arrested more than 1000 times from 1988 through the 90s) for its actions, we never respond with violence because we would never want to recreate the authoritative methods of the state in our own actions...We cannot jeopardize ourselves or the people we work with through the use of shortsighted acts of violence in the heat of the moment' (S. F. Food-Not-Bombs, 2009).

Just as the war machine is qualitatively different from the state apparatus, so Food Not Bombs is qualitatively different to the state in the way it thinks about politics. Food Not Bombs groups refuse to use the same methods for their war that they believe the state is using in order to fight to control them. Thus although they might be fighting an absolute war, it is not a war that is recognized by the state, as it doesn't take place on the state's terms.

Social centres also find it difficult to always remain off the radar of the state, and there are two main problems faced by social centres when they come into contact with the state or its institutions such as the police and local government. The first, similarly to Food Not Bombs, is police repression and eviction. This is often because the state recognizes an alternative that offers a threat to the control that holds over society, and thus seeks to destroy it in order to remove such a threat. Whether it is rural or urban, the creation and self-management of social spaces and private property has always been confronted by the state. As one activist explains 'the challenge such acts represent not only to sacrosanct liberal notions of private property rights but also in terms of self-organisation of the class, results in an open defiance of oppressive, capitalist relations. It confronts the central purpose of the state - the control and maintenance of inequalities in property' (Wellbrook, 2008, p. 11).

Again, this relates to the criteria of success discussed earlier. Having a thriving social centre that offers a range of alternatives to state-sponsored spaces is something of a double-edged sword. Success that becomes noticed by the state can be short-lived, as this can lead to the state either seeking to control them by drawing them into striated space where it can impose its rules on them, or it sees it as a threat to its legitimacy and trying to repress them. Social centres are 'often externally and negatively defined -

when such radical projects are seen as an effective opposition they provoke repressive responses from the state and police' (Chatterton, 2008, p. 83).

Autonomous spaces have also face increased European wide repression in recent times. A recent flashpoint was the eviction of the long running Ungdomshuset centre in Denmark in March 2007, which led thousands onto the street to demonstrate for their space, openly expressing their willingness to fight for this space. This is not an isolated incident, and 'repression against squats continues to mount in Spain, Germany, France and the UK with concerns over co-ordinated European police action against the squatting movement' (Various, 2008, p. 3).

The second problem of social centres coming into contact with the state is that the state can capture these war machines for their own ends. A common way in which this happens is through encouraging social centres to offer provision that the state does not want to provide itself. The Cowley Club in Brighton offers a good example of this – as their centre is recommended by local health care practitioners:

The Cowley Club is not just a self-organized space but does also provide services, such as cheap meals, English classes, advice and a social space. About a year ago we discovered that the local mental health services were encouraging people to come to the club when they were discharged from a period in hospital. In a lot of ways this seems a good idea, after all having a regular, cheap, healthy meal can be really important when you're trying to get yourself back on your feet. At the same time it raised some questions about the way that untrained volunteers were somehow being expected to support some really quite vulnerable people, by recommendation of their health professionals. We contacted the mental health team and they were quite indignant and informed us that we are, according to our website, open to everyone. They are probably desperate to find something to recommend to their clients, and the Cowley Club offers itself as an inclusive space (Anon., 2008, p. 23).

The state is able to create mechanisms of control over social centres by legitimizing them as part of its own apparatus. Thus the services provided by centres such as the Cowley Club become less of an alternative and more a tool of the state. This suggests that by meeting the needs of their local communities, social centres are willing to plug the gaps left in welfare and service provision and the local state 'retreats into the skeletal functions of neo-liberal management' (Hodkinson & Chatterton, 2006, p. 311). Activists at the Cowley Club illustrate this dilemma, as they recognise that the relationship between the state social services and themselves as service providers is complex. By being prepared to provide an alternative, these social centres assist in allowing governments to supplement cuts to public services while collecting taxes for

these services, and so more money ends up going to private companies and spending on areas such as the military (Anon., 2008).

The potential to be evicted by state or police has raised a discussion among the movement about the pros and cons of squatting or renting/buying a space. Speaking in an Italian context, but to a debate that I believe is transferable to a UK context, Mudu notes that:

A deep gulf separates Social Centers, which pragmatically accept some sort of relationship with institutions, from those that oppose any such contacts in principle. 1993 marked the beginning of negotiations between municipalities and Social Centers for the legalization of squats. While some continued to oppose them, most Social Centers endorsed such negotiations and following a lengthy confrontation process within the movement and between Social Centers and some municipal governments, a few Social Centers were officially assigned the properties and spaces they had so far illegally held (Mudu, 2004, p. 923).

Thus there is a sense in which some activists feel that their fellow activists are ‘selling out’ by allowing the state to legitimate them in some way, as this is no longer evasion of the state but compliance with it. This allows the state to create mechanisms of control over these social centres by introducing certain rules and regulations that they have to abide by. Hodkinson and Chatterton (Hodkinson & Chatterton, 2006, p. 311) bring this theme back to a discussion of UK social centres and explain that:

A similar critique has recently emerged from within the UK social centre movement in response to the current wave of rented and bought social centres (Anon., 2003, 2008; Rogue-Element, 2004). While acknowledging the logic behind the search for continuity and permanency as opposed to the short-termism of the squatted space, these critics argue that once ‘legalized’, their priority at all times becomes *legal compliance* and obeying private property relations to avoid losing state-sponsored licenses or being closed down. The constant need to find the rent/mortgage rapidly transforms social centres into ‘social enterprises’, creating the same alienating, authoritarian structures as capitalist society and making radical groups feel unwelcome or forced to limit their radicalism in order to protect the space (Anon., 2003, p. 186). This diverts a huge investment of activist time, energy and resources away from the real fight for public space—squatting—to an ‘essentially non-radical and liberal project’ built upon compromise, constrained by legal hurdles and enshrined in unnecessary bureaucracy (Anon., 2003, p. 185).

This is a good example of how the state is able to alleviate the threat posed to its legitimacy by this type of alternative, through imposing its own criteria and rules of the social centres and diverting attention away from the centres’ main activity of providing an alternative to the state. Many social centres in the UK have decided that the security of renting a space is a compromise that is worth making in order to know that they are

'legal' and cannot be evicted at a moment's notice. Activists recognise that is something of a contradiction, but think that the benefits outweigh the costs. The sense of security that is provided by a permanent space is one that many activists feel is a fair price to pay for the creation of stability for users of the centre, knowing that they will not have to suddenly move on.

The Newcastle based Star and Shadow Cinema have experienced this same issue of becoming legal and thus being recognized by the state; and the relative stability that this offers on the one hand, and the worry that it recognises and affords the state legitimacy by meeting its specific criteria on the other. Two of their members explain how they were legitimized by the local authority in their set-up process:

This process was done entirely legitimately and legally: our building meets all the building regulations, licensing and environmental standards that applied in November 2006, when we officially opened. While this conformity to the bureaucratic requirements of the state is nothing to necessarily brag about, it does give us a sense of long-term sustainability than something less legit might have allowed. Ultimately, many of those issues we had to deal with were empowering, common sense and in the public interest (like accessibility and dealing with emergencies like fires) (TonTon & Visible Choirboy, 2008, p. 63).

Thus they face the problem that comes from state recognition – the controlling aspect of state apparatus rules and regulations, such as fire and health and safety regulations. They also receive some government grants, and have mixed feelings about this:

Financially, bar sales contribute the most and we might one day be able to survive off them. On top of that, the place is kept going by the grants we get from the City Council, and Arts Council and very occasionally the Film Council, which helps with programming special things and the £19,000 annual rent. The conditions attached to this money are relatively minor. There are different opinions about how quickly, or if at all, we should be trying to become self-sufficient. Broadly speaking people would be happy to be entirely self-financed, but some think we should take state money if it doesn't stop us operating in the way we want to. Some have also taken local government grants [e.g. the Bradford 1 in 12 Club social centre] which leads to questions about what is at stake in that – local authorities etc want their say in how it is set up/run (TonTon & Visible Choirboy, 2008, p. 63).

The war machine and the politics of demand

(1) The war machine is that nomad invention that in fact has war not as its primary object but as its second-order...in the sense that it is determined in such a way as to destroy the State-form and city-form with which it collides. (2) When the state appropriates the war machine, the latter obviously changes in nature and function, since it is afterward directed against the nomad and all State destroyers...(3) It is precisely after the war machine has been appropriated by the State in this way that it

tends to take war for its direct and primary object...In short, it is at one and the same time that the State apparatus appropriates a war machine, that the war machine takes war as its object, and that war becomes subordinated to the aims of the State (Deleuze & Guattari, 2004, p. 461).

The concept of the war machine shows how withdrawal from the state is possible by setting up alternatives to the state that are qualitatively different – the war machine is a different kind of entity to the state. The war machine exists outside the reach of the state and it represents the excess of life that the state cannot capture – the creativity that flows around the state – as war machines do not fit into the binarised categories that the state allocates people to. The war machine tries to create lines of flight that embody newness and experimentation and is seen as dangerous by the state, as the state aims to overcode everything according to its societies of control organized through a system of molar segments and hierarchies.

The turning point of the war machine is when it comes into contact with the state. The state wishes to turn a war machine into something it can understand and control – to overcode the lines of striation in a smooth space. The state apparatus puts a brake on the speed of the war machine ‘by arranging a striated space where opposing forces can come to an equilibrium’ (Deleuze & Guattari, 2004, p. 396). When this happens the war machine goes either one of two ways. It can turn to war and seek to destroy the state. This sends it onto a collision course with the state where annihilating the state is the war machine’s only aim – this could lead to something like Gramsci’s war of manoeuvre – which aims to destroy the state by overthrowing it and is a direct confrontation with the state.

The other way in which the war machine may react to contact with the state is by allowing itself to be captured by the state and used for state ends. The state will try and turn the war machine into something that makes sense to it, into activity that it has the ability to sanction and allow it within the territory it controls. The state can then use the war machine to carry out tasks that ensure its continued domination and control of society.

This suggests to me that the key moment in which a politics of the act lead to crystallisation into a politics of demand comes when the war machine comes into contact with the state. The war machine is captured by the state or tries to annihilate the state but may allow the shifting of molar segments to allow the war machine to be used

for state ends. Both responses become oriented to the state, either as an object of war or by the war machine being reterritorialized under state control and could be described as 'survival tactics'. Thus the politics of demand is produced at the moment when the activity comes into contact with the state and, rather than looking to destroy the state, chooses to interact with the state, as when the politics of demand makes sense of the politics of the act in a way that can be understood it can then undermine the dominant discourses of the state and change them to and allow new identifications or ideas to become part of the molar structure. Thus when Food Not Bombs and social centres come into contact with the state, the politics of demand is able to mediate the politics of the act so that it can interact with the state in a way that does not necessarily lead to violent repression or capture. Rather it can lead to a shift from inside the state apparatus to reshuffle the existing segments in order to create others that can be folded into the dominant discourses of state and society.

How might this be seen in the activities of Food Not Bombs and social centres? One of the ways it might be seen is in knowing and accepting that you are providing a service that the government should provide, and therefore allowing the state to abdicate responsibility for the provision of that service. This seems to be allowing the state to bypass responsibilities, say, of Food Not Bombs feeding the homeless and providing support and food to those rescue workers involved in 9/11 or Hurricane Katrina. But in providing such services under the eye of the state, this allows Food Not Bombs activists to explain to the public what motivates them to do what they do – it allows them to highlight issues of government spending on nuclear weapons and the way in which food production is carried out. By insisting that leaflets are handed out at every event, Food Not Bombs are able to attempt a shift in the public imagination when it comes, for instance, to military spending or agri-business. It also allows them to make the plight of the homeless visible and unavoidable to the public when they are feeding them in the middle of a busy park. Shifts in the dominant discourses of society come from public pressure as well as state control, when an issue changes the hearts and minds of the public it can force the state to change its position. Also, by allowing themselves to be noticed by the state, Food Not Bombs are making themselves visible to the public when they are arrested or face violent repression by the state institutions, most notably the police. This also contributes to the changing of public hearts and minds by gaining the 'moral high ground' when Food Not Bombs are treated with violence for simply feeding the hungry.

Another way in which the politics of demand is produced is through connecting with society and the state in ways that they will be able to understand and grasp hold of. For example, the social centres are often set up as spaces that provide an alternative in urban environments to the endless rows of commercialised coffee shops. However, this suggests a parasitic relationship with capitalism, as although visitors might like the fact that it is independent, it is still predicated on the need for the coffee-shop consumer. One participant in social centres argues that this is indicative of the way in which seeking recognition of state or society implies a politics of demand:

The parasitical relationship that autonomous spaces have with the market place – living off the excesses of expansionist capitalism – means that autonomous spaces can never be truly autonomous in the sense of a self-valorisation (people creating their own values and then defending them from capitalism) because the spaces need and rely on the “motor” of the market place in order to function. Indeed, the spaces which manage to survive are those that “cut a deal” with the State, which suggests that autonomous spaces can only minimize rather than eradicate the influences of State and Market upon them (Draper, 2010, p. 8).

Social centres need to be financially viable and sustainable. One activist explains that these centres have to recognise that they have one foot in the capitalist world, which brings certain pressures and criteria for success or viability. He argues that social centres must be realistic in the way they set themselves up and take this into account as ‘they are a useful stepping stone on the way to achieving the society that we desire, but still a long way from it so it is wrong to develop their business models on a world we don’t live in yet’ (Gastone, 2008, p. 28).

This does not mean to say, however, that this parasitic relationship with the state and market is a bad thing or is somehow morally inferior. Even if providing an alternative to the state involves having a business model that the state would be proud of, it is still an alternative space. The discussion about renting or buying space rather than squatting illustrates this. The state may have an element of control over the centre by forcing it to abide by certain rules and regulations, but this does mean that the centres are able to offer alternatives without the threat of eviction.

The interesting thing about this embodiment of the politics of the act and the politics of demand happening together is that for many activists this does not seem to be a distinction or a contradiction that they are bothered by. Many of them see that

pragmatism is sometimes worth considering or, to couch it in the terms of this thesis, that the politics of demand does not negate the politics of the act that is at work. For instance, Paul at the Common Place states that:

Down the Common Place, we live by contradictions, strung up between the pragmatic and the ideological. At the end of the month we have to pay the rent, but at the same time we are trying to build another world. But one of the strengths of this place is that we are good at being pragmatic about our politics. We try and live by our principles, but we are happy to reconsider them when they don't work and we make compromises when we have to. Renting this building for example is one compromise we were happy to make to get a social centre and a semi-permanent base for political activity in Leeds (Paul, 2008, p. 37).

Thus for some activists this just represents one compromise among several, and does not have added weight because it is a morally inferior option. Paul does not see the social centre project as being completely defined by their desire to avoid contact with the state, and they are happy to engage in a politics that seeks state recognition and legitimation. Although they do not demand rights from the state, they do demand the right to exist and be recognized as legitimate.

In regards to this debate, many activists have argued that the two approaches are not mutually exclusive (Various, 2008, p. 3). Yes, rent involves recognition by state apparatus and 'by going permanent through renting or buying it is true in many cases that we have lost the oppositional culture that goes hand in hand with squatting. But we have, in many cases, also built deeper bonds of solidarity locally, especially with those who may not for whatever reason come to a squatted space'. This again shows that the politics of demand makes visible the politics of the act in this instance, as it encourages people who wouldn't necessarily be comfortable in a squatted space to come to a legitimate, recognised social centre and find out more about what motivates them.

This suggests that as theorists we should be aware that activists see little problem when the politics of the act produces a politics of demand. Although they recognise there are two different political logics at play, activists also recognise that pragmatism and the opportunity to reach out to a wider number of people should prevail. Thus 'we should also be wary of creating a false division. There are many examples of really close, productive links between more temporary and permanent spaces where there is mutual support and where they feed off each other's strengths' (Various, 2008). Another way of expressing this is that summed up by Hodkinson and Chatterton when they argue that

‘by creating a false binary opposition between the evils of legalization (compromised/co-opted) and the radical purity of the OSC [Squatted Centres], critics fail to understand the dialectical relationship between them’ (Hodkinson & Chatterton, 2006, p. 313).

I believe that these examples have made an important start in identifying how the politics of demand can be produced from a politics of the act, and I would suggest that this points to the need for much more to be done to add substance to this discussion. I have only been able to offer a few reflections on how these two modes of politics are related in the activities of Food Not Bombs and the social centre movement, but it offers a glimpse of the kind of work that needs to be done on the range of activities that practice a withdrawal from the state, and how they do it. Although the theory of the Temporary Autonomous Zone has been well used, there is less on the social centre as a Permanent Autonomous Zone and whether that is indeed possible or desirable.

I would also argue that considered thought needs to go into the way in which activists themselves differentiate between a politics of demand and a politics of the act, if they do at all. It is clear in the discussion above that they do see a contradiction in what they are doing on the one hand to avoid the state, and on the other in the way they interact with it, and I would suggest that there is much more that could be done to recognize and explore the tension between the two. Further to this is the way in which activists view these different modes of politics as both being part of their range of political practices, and it seems that they do not draw an ethical distinction between the two – they may see one as more ideal than the other, but are also able to take a more pragmatic view and to do what is necessary to achieve the ends that are most important to them without feeling that they are acting in an inferior way or taking the easy way out. This begs the question of whether theorists have created a dichotomy that is not recognized by activists on the ground – and whether work such as this thesis is actually discussing a dichotomy which for many activists simply doesn’t exist.

Chapter 5: Horizontal organising structures – Critical Mass and Indy Media Centres

The activities I will discuss in this chapter, Critical Mass and Indymedia Centres, can be seen as good illustrations of the second indicator of the politics of the act – horizontal organising structures. Whilst drawing on Deleuze and Guattari's concept of rhizomes to deepen our understanding of what horizontal organising might look like, I also contend that the rhizome also offers added value to understanding the relationship between the politics of the act and the politics of demand in the way in which it shows how a politics of demand can crystallise through a politics of the act. The key moment when this happens is when the rhizome introduces elements of hierarchy or control in order to make it recognisable to state and society and to challenge and disrupt existing molar segments, and this will be explored at the end of the chapter in relation to both case studies.

Critical Mass and Indymedia Centres have been valorised by post-anarchists such as Day (Day, 2005, pp. 9, 38-39), and the authors of the *Contemporary Anarchist Studies* anthology suggest that anarchist tactics of the 21st century such as Critical Mass are exemplified by such practices (Amster, DeLeon, Fernandez, Nocella, & Shannon, 2009, p. 4). Marshall similarly describes groups like Critical Mass as exemplifying a kind of practical anarchy (Marshall, 2008, p. 697), and Curran cites Critical Mass as evidence of the anarchist influence in the Global Justice Movement as Critical Mass events, like Reclaim the Streets parties, are 'spontaneous, autonomous and diverse, characteristics central to its anarchical temperament' (Curran, 2006, p. 185). I will offer a narrative description of the two case studies that exemplify horizontal organising – Critical Mass and Indymedia Centres, and will explore how each demonstrates the rhizome in turn, by showing how Critical Mass has no centralised leadership and anyone can decide on the route a Mass takes, and how IMCs show connectivity by using a model that is infinitely expandable and produces creative and unexpected connections as it expands. I will then return to Critical Mass to examine how it exemplifies the characteristic of mapping rather the tracing. Finally, I will return to the rhizome and demonstrate that Deleuze and Guattari offer a unique 'added value' by offering a way of breaking out of the dichotomy between the politics of act and the politics of demand. I will do this by focusing on the key moments when the rhizome crystallises into the politics of demand through taking on some of the characteristics of the centralised arborescent structure,

and will then suggest where this might be found in the activities of Critical Mass and Indymedia centres, and how this line of enquiry might be developed further.

Before looking at these two activities in turn, I will briefly remind the reader of the three main areas in which rhizomes will help us to show the politics of the act through horizontal organising structures. Firstly, in a rhizome there is no command centre or group/individual in charge. Rather in a rhizome difference has ontological priority over identity. Differences resonate together which means that everyone is equal, as there are many different parts that are all equal to each other and no one part needs to lead the others. This means that everyone has the right to be heard, and horizontal organisations create process and structures in which decisions are made on this basis.

Secondly, everything in a rhizome is connected to everything else, and different elements can be added to the rhizome, thus there is no limit to the elements involved. A rhizomatic organisation or activity can make connections with anyone, anywhere, and these connections will change the nature of the activity or organisation. Thus rhizomes connect with other rhizomes in order to cross the whole range of social struggles and activism, they do not exist in isolation. Tormey notes that rhizomes carry on multiplying, they are about recovering spaces that have been lost ‘and creating new spaces outside and beyond the control of elites, permitting people to reclaim that which is rightfully theirs/ours’ (Tormey, 2004, p. 162).

The way in which a rhizome makes connections and changes in nature through these connections leads to the third point – that rhizomes are involved in mapping new activity rather than tracing existing activity. This often results in productivity coming from lots of unexpected directions that could not be predicted. Those activities that exemplify a politics of the act will not necessarily follow a pre-determined path in the way they act politically, but will be open to newness and creativity.

I will now examine Critical Mass and Indymedia Centres in turn, to see how the three elements of the rhizome can help us to understand these activities, before concluding with a return to Deleuze and Guattari and the relationship between the politics of the act and the politics of demand, in order to see what this relationship might look like, and offer a few reflections on how this could be seen in the activities of Critical Mass and IMCs.

Critical Mass

Critical Mass began life in San Francisco on Friday 25th September 6pm in 1992 as a group of cyclists met to protest at the unfriendliness of the streets for cyclists, and to reclaim the streets for a brief period. This first gathering was called 'Commuter Clot' and 48 people took part. This cycling event started to take place on the last Friday of every month and numbers grew rapidly, so that by 1993 there were around 500 cyclists attending. The name Critical Mass is taken from Ted White's 1992 documentary film about bicycling, 'Return of the Scorcher' (White, 2002, p. 147). In the film, George Bliss describes a typical scene in China, where cyclists often cannot cross intersections because there is automobile cross-traffic and no traffic lights. Slowly, more and more cyclists amass waiting to cross the road, and when there is a sufficient number of them - a critical mass as Bliss called it - they are able to all move together with the force of their numbers to make cross traffic yield while they cross the road (Critical Mass, 1998).

People in other cities got to hear about the rides and the idea caught on, along with the name Critical Mass, and there are now Critical Mass rides in around 32 countries and around 325 cities in the USA, Canada, South America, Europe, Australia, New Zealand, Israel, Asia and Africa (Critical Mass). There are around 40 in the UK alone (Madden, 2003). The main sources of information about Critical Mass are a book celebrating 20 years of CM written in 2002, which collects contributions from participants around the world, and numerous websites and wikis that have sprung up to share information and pictures of CM rides.

Most Critical Mass rides happen around 5pm on the last Friday of every month, and can vary from a handful of riders to several thousand. Participants range from bike messengers, bike commuters and students, to casual bike users and everything in between. It is impossible to describe a 'typical' Critical Mass ride, as every ride is different. They are generally guided by the principle of reasserting the rights of cyclists to ride on the roads, and the enjoyment of cycling. To the questions 'What's the philosophy? What is the ride like?' the Critical Mass info website replies 'Critical Mass has a very different flavor from city to city; there's a big variety in size, respect of traffic laws (or lack thereof), interaction with motorists, and intervention by police. So if you want to know more about Critical Mass, you'll really need to find out what your local

ride is like' (Critical Mass, 1998). The principle activity though is clear – as summed up by Chicago's CM website: 'Critical Mass is a bike ride plain and simple. The ride takes place on the Last Friday Of Every Month (in Chicago anyway). A Critical Mass is created when the group of riders comes together for those few hours to take back the streets of our city' (Chicago CM).

Critical Mass may have a simple objective as stated above, but it means many things to many people. There are some themes that run through the groups such as reclaiming public space and celebrating community. In any community there are many different reasons why people are involved, and like any community Critical Mass serves many different needs. For some, Critical Mass is a highly political activity, but for others its political nature is not what attracts them – they are drawn to it for the element of solidarity among cyclists or just because it is fun. One participant notes that even if the safety of cyclists through measures such as the introductions of bike lanes are taken on board, the fact that CM does continue is testament to the sense of community and thinking differently that is generated and that 'in the end, the ride is likely to continue as long as people need a place to express frustration about invisibility and, conversely, to celebrate human-scale community. Critical Mass is as much about daisies and bugles as it is about global warming and SUV domination' (Higgins, 2000).

However, for some participants Critical Mass is very much animated by political issues. Critical Mass is described as a social movement and explicitly linked with contesting corporate globalisation by one of its original members Chris Carlsson. He also makes it clear that Critical Mass bike rides 'are no protest movement as we commonly imagine. Instead, riders have gathered to celebrate their choice to bicycle, and in doing so have opened up a new kind of social and political space, unprecedented in this era of atomization and commodification' (Carlsson, 2002, pp. 5-6). Thus this is seen as a different way of acting politically from the more traditional form of protesting – it opens up a different kind of political space that is claimed by its participants as a space of celebration of alternatives rather than a space of demanding rights or recognition: 'Critical Mass is a celebration of the alternatives to cars, pollution, accidents and the loss of public spaces and freedoms' (Nottingham CM).

This idea of opening up new spaces is similar to the social centres and the Deleuzian concept of the war machine as discussed in the previous chapter in the way they try to

provide a positive alternative space that ignores the state or makes it irrelevant. One participant reinforces the idea that rather than protest, CM offers a different type of politics when he notes that:

Critical Mass resonates with so many because it exemplifies the very act of taking matters into one's own hands. It does not protest for change, it simply changes. Critical Mass doesn't try to force anyone to join or do anything, it simply does its thing...Critical Mass challenges Authority by ignoring it. Or perhaps it doesn't so much 'ignore' Authority as render it irrelevant' (Stender, 2002, p. 89).

One of the interesting things about Critical Mass is that it reaches out beyond an activist base to everyone – whether they are bike couriers, students, kids on skateboards or those who ride a bike for fun. One English newspaper columnist first attended a Critical Mass ride in Paris completely by accident and then found out it was a worldwide phenomena. He writes about his experience in the Telegraph as finds himself returning his bike to the hire shop and being caught up in the experience in Paris, and then deciding to join in the London Critical Mass ride:

Fast forward a few months and I am in London one dark November night giving the UK version of Critical Mass a road test. My wife has declined to come with me but by the time the ride sets off from beneath Waterloo Bridge at around 7pm there are more than 70 of us. In the summer, a veteran tells me, there are sometimes well over a thousand.

We are a motley but cheerful crew. I meet Andy from Glasgow, a reformed alcoholic; Martin from Essex, who speaks so quietly I can't hear what he's saying; Nigel in a wheelchair, who looks as if he'll last longer than all of us; and a matronly lady on a sit-up-and-beg bone-shaker.

Again the experience proves a revelation. Everything with an engine is brought to a stand-still by our escort of cycling police, a special unit on mountain bikes equipped with flashing blue lights and wailing klaxon horns. Our route today takes us over Waterloo Bridge, down the Strand, through Trafalgar Square, along Pall Mall and up and around into Piccadilly Circus. "Get a life!" shouts a car junkie out of his window but his words are drowned out by a cacophony of fog horns and bicycle bells...I finish my ride with a celebratory pint with a group of new-found friends, an enthusiastic new recruit to the cause of mass city cycling (Madden, 2003).

This shows the huge appeal of Critical Mass, which extends to anyone being welcomed and encouraged to join in. Another way in which Critical Mass as an idea can have a broad appeal comes through the simplicity of the idea. All you need for a CM ride are a few bikes, rather than high-tech equipment, internet access or large amounts of money. A Critical Mass ride can happen as easily in Bolivia as it can in Belgium or Bangalore, and this makes the idea inclusive and easily transferable.

The mass is open to anyone, and the Chicago CM group note that ‘the Mass itself has no political agenda, though, no more than the people of any other community do. Critical Mass is open to all, and it welcomes all riders to join in a celebration of riding bicycles’ (Chicago CM). Indeed it is not just cyclists who are welcome on the ride as the London Critical Mass site explains: ‘It isn't just for cyclists, sometimes there are wheelchairers, skateboarders, roller bladers, roller skaters and other self-propelled people’ (London CM). Madden also makes reference to the variety of participants involved in the London CM ride, with a variety of transportation. No permission is needed to join the ride or to leave it, as anyone is free to come and go as the ride pedals along (Nottingham CM). People also see the spaces that are opened up by mass cycling in a different way to normal – the landmarks in the above account are ones that most Londoners will have passed by, but joining with others to reclaim the streets for cyclists allows people to see the city in a different way. Madden is not too sympathetic with the ‘car junkie’ at Piccadilly Circus and speaks with pride at the way he was drowned out by the bells and fog horns of his fellow cyclists.

Critical Mass is an idea rather than an organisation or group. In a ‘how to start a Critical Mass’ guide the writes explain that the first thing one has to do is to understand the nature of Critical Mass, which they describe as follows: ‘CM has no leaders. It's an event, not an organization. There is no national group that licenses local rides. In every city that has a CM, one or more cyclists just picked a day and time and started handing out fliers. If your city doesn't have a CM, that's what you'll do. You don't need anyone to authorize your ride. You just do it’ (Critical Mass).

Critical Mass has no leadership structure or set of values that participants are asked to sign up to. It is described as ‘an ‘unorganised coincidence’, and takes place when a lot of cyclists happen to be in the same place at the same time and decide to cycle the same way together for a while (urban75). Many Massers celebrate its anarchic nature, arguing that ‘these masses are anarchic, leaderless, and powerful. Sometimes they follow the 'rules of the road', sometimes they don't’ (Kessel, 2000). Thus they have no leadership structure where one person or committee is ultimately responsible for the ride, and anyone can have a say in the direction a ride takes.

Many in the media find it frustrating that there is no representative or spokesperson that they can liaise with: the common answer to the question ‘who is in charge?’ is ‘nobody is in charge!’ Participants are happy with the way the Mass is run on a non-hierarchical basis without the need for leaders:

I love Crit Mass for its anarchic nature. No one leads it, no one controls it, no one plans its routes and no one is its spokesperson. Whenever anyone has attempted to take control of any part of it they’ve always been unsuccessful – and I, for one, am glad of that...

Its anarchic nature has also made it difficult for the cops and mainstream media to pin it down. Doubtless the cops would love it if there were “leaders” they could hold accountable, meet with before, during and after the monthly rides – and threaten if they weren’t getting things to their liking...I think its very nature of no leaders, bosses or appointed spokespeople is the main reason the Ride has lasted a full decade (Blaug, 2002, pp. 73-74).

Due to the fact that there is no central control centre, it is difficult to destroy or influence Critical Mass as a whole because of the way in which it is organised along non-hierarchical lines. There is no ‘command centre’ that can be attacked or appealed to by the media or authorities that can have affects over the whole network of Critical Mass rides, as it is very decentralised. This particular writer identifies this characteristic as being anarchist, which bears out anarchists such as Day in their valorisation of Critical Mass as an exemplar of the politics of the act.

This also means that there is no group or community that can be definitively identified as ‘Critical Mass’. This suggests that the Deleuzian understanding of rhizomes that are based on an ontology of difference is relevant here, as there is no one identity or standard that is held up as being the form of ‘Critical Mass’, but rather there are multiple different versions of Critical Mass, all of which equally embody the spirit or the idea of Critical Mass in their own way.

Beyond the basic idea of cycling through the streets en masse, Critical Masses are able to develop in many different directions and to address different issues in different areas – there is no set ‘party line’ that they have to adhere to. One Critical Mass participant explains that:

No pledge of allegiance nor singular goal is necessary. In the recognition of our commonality; in voluntary and enjoyable participation, everyone gets back what they put into it – there is a pride of ownership. Organisation from the ground up allows maximum individual expression as well as a cohesive group...Critical Mass can

claim success. It has grown and spread worldwide. It has served the end of bicycle activism, environmental activism, of generating social awareness and building community. It has done so without any leaders or agenda or mission statement or membership (Stender, 2002, p. 89).

This suggests that, contrary to those who think that a movement or tactic cannot be built without leadership and organisation, Critical Mass has managed to do just that. Perhaps part of its success is the fact that the founders did not set out to export this particular idea or set of principles to a wider audience, and it seems that this is what is attractive about it. As the quote above points out, the way in which Critical Mass is organised from the ground up offers individuals the chance to express themselves whilst also belonging to a particular shared idea or community, or in Deleuzian terms it allows many differences to resonate together, which allows people to feel a sense of ownership over their participation in the ride. Critical Mass rides suggest an imperative for enactment in which each participant is encouraged to take responsibility for their own part in it, their own line of flight, and to express themselves both individually and as part of the collective ride. This imperative for enactment is possible because by riding in a Critical Mass, cyclists presume equality with other road users, they act on their right to share the road (May, 2010, p. 10). It also allows them to express their politics if they choose to – whether they are concerned with cycling, the environment or the commodification of public space – and to be part of creating an alternative.

Another participant explains that this is not necessarily what people expect when they first come into contact with Critical Mass:

Each participant is urged to be responsible for herself or himself. As the monthly rides got bigger, Critical Mass in SF got to be the hot thing to do. Many people would come down to the start of the ride and look for a map or a leader to tell them where to ride. They were uncomfortable with the idea of group decisions and the fluidity of everything. After being asked where the ride was going time after time by new people, I began to respond with ‘Where do you want it to go?’ and ‘Didn’t you make a route?’ (Klett, 2002, p. 92).

This demonstrates that for many, this decentralised, non-hierarchical way of organising doesn’t come naturally, and it is often difficult to break out of the pattern of expecting someone to direct them as to what to do and when. Thus this challenges people’s assumptions of collective action and how it is organised, and encourages people to take responsibility for their own actions, which ultimately makes the experience much more rewarding, and ‘participants in these demonstrations...often return with much more

profound sense of empowerment from the decentralized, consensus-based decision-making processes that have evolved around these events' (Kessel, 2002, p. 109).

The aspect of Critical Mass that this refers to – the way in which a Critical Mass happens without a leader – is a clear expression of non-hierarchy in terms of how the ride itself is organised. Nottingham Critical Mass explain that 'each one is different and they follow no set route, with the direction being spontaneously chosen as people cycle along' (Nottingham CM). On a typical Critical Mass ride, participants gather at the agreed starting point, which is usually the same place every time there is a ride. The day, time and location are the only things that are agreed in advance. There is generally no agreement when the Mass starts about the direction of the ride, and the ride follows those who are at the front. One author writing about the experience of the Toronto Critical Mass describes how the local authorities would try and engage with the ride:

They would sometimes show up at the beginning of the ride demanding a route map or wanting to talk to the leader. Both of these requests were met with blank stares. Toronto Critical Mass has always been adamant that there is no pre-determined route and there is no hierarchy. Whoever is in front is the person who leads the ride wherever they want to go' (Bruidoclarke, 2002, pp. 40-41).

As Bruidoclarke explains, the ride is led by whoever happens to be at the front at the time. This is in constant flux as riders move from the back to the front and vice versa, ensuring that the same riders do not always lead from the front. One of the tactics that Critical Mass rides use is called 'corking' by which the people at the front of the ride block the intersections of the road through which the Mass will be travelling by putting themselves in front of the traffic to allow the Mass to pass safely through. This means that the leaders of the ride will then be at the back of the mass, and others will be leading and be responsible for deciding where the mass is going.

Some Critical Mass rides do decide on a route in advance, but still aim to do this as democratically or 'horizontally' as possible, and Critical Mass rides have developed the practice of 'xerocracy' to explain the way in which decisions are made. Xerocracy is the principle that anyone can create a route map or a flyer and distribute it. Rides are not decided upon in advance but anyone who wants to offer a route can photocopy (or Xerox – hence the name) a proposed route, and if there is more than one proposed route then CM participants vote on it. In a guide to starting a Critical Mass, xerocracy is described as follows:

There is no one in charge. Ideas are spread, routes shared, and consensus sought through the ubiquitous copy machines on every job or at copy shops in every neighborhood – a “Xerocracy,” in which anyone is free to make copies of their ideas and pass them around. Leaflets, fliers, stickers and ‘zines all circulate madly both before, during and after the ride, rendering leaders unnecessary by ensuring that strategies and tactics are understood by as many people as possible. Xerocracy promotes freedom and undercuts hierarchy because the mission is not set by a few in charge, but rather is broadly defined by its participants (D’Andrade et al., 2002, p. 239).

This is a way of decision-making that follows the principle of non-hierarchy as closely as possible. Anyone can make a proposal that their route be followed, and this way it does not have to end up falling to the same people every time. This makes it less likely that informal leadership hierarchies will develop. The process of deciding the route in a democratic way is as important a characteristic of Critical Mass rides as the way in which the leaderless rides are spontaneously decided. One participant notes that ‘Critical Mass’s radical nature lies in its processes. It is a means of moving, not a particular destination’ (Kessel, 2002, pp. 109-110).

Critical Mass exemplifies the lack of central command and hierarchy that is the first characteristic of the rhizome. As we have seen in the account of activists, the non-hierarchical nature of Critical Mass is one of its most distinct and attractive qualities, and Critical Mass participants are encouraged to take responsibility for deciding the route when on a ride. All participants are valued as equal, and as the example of xerocracy shows, Critical Massers take great care to ensure that, as far as possible, the opportunities for informal hierarchies to crystallise are minimised. Every Critical Mass ride is different as there is no one ‘identity’ of Critical Mass from which all other Masses are judged against, and neither is there a desire for one. Critical Mass as an idea continues to be very popular, and it seems that there are a steady stream of new Masses starting up. Another idea that has seen remarkable worldwide growth is Indymedia Centres, and I will turn to them now.

Indymedia Centres

Indymedia Centres exemplify the areas of rhizomes Deleuze and Guattari describe as connection and multiplicity. Indymedia Centres (IMCs) are the collective effort of hundreds of independent media makers from around the world who are dedicated to providing a forum for independent reporting about social and political issues. Several

hundred media activists, many of whom have been working for years to develop an active independent media through their own organizations, came together in late November 1999 in Seattle to create an Independent Media Centre to cover protests against the World Trade Organization (Sellers, 2004, p. 190). During this week the site, which uses a democratic open-publishing system, logged more than 2 million hits, and was featured on America Online, Yahoo, CNN, BBC Online, and numerous other sites. One member puts this success down partly to the fact that Indymedia reporters were talking *to* people, allowing them to speak for themselves and their voices to be heard through direct engagement, whereas CNN and others were just talking *about* people (Bocanegra, 2003, pp. 239-240). Their website tells of its origins in Seattle:

The center acted as a clearinghouse of information for journalists, and provided up-to-the-minute reports, photos, audio and video footage through its website. Using the collected footage, the Seattle Independent Media Center (seattle.indymedia.org) produces a series of five documentaries, uplinked every day to satellite and distributed throughout the United States to public access stations (IMC).

The aim of the first Indymedia Centre was to give an alternative account of the protests that is free from the stereotyping that is often portrayed by the mainstream media of police acting in self-defence to protect the city from 'violent anarchists'.¹⁹ This kind of reporting, argued the founders of Indymedia, needs to be counterbalanced by reporting that creates 'radical, accurate, and passionate telling of the truth' as the corporate media can distort stories, in the event that they are actually willing to report on them in the first place (IMC).

The organisers of the first Indymedia Centre were aware that by basing an entire network on the internet they were feeding into a 'digital divide', in which the vast majority of the world would be absent as they did not have access to the internet or even telephone lines. To minimise this division, IMC Seattle posted content in a variety of media – audio, video, text and photos that were easy to download. In this way community radio stations or cable stations could access the material and broadcast it through their own channels. Organiser Jeff Perlstein shares an example of Radio Havana, who downloaded the audio feed as they had an internet connection in their office, and rebroadcast it using the FM dial so that people all over Cuba could hear it on the radio without needing access to the internet (Bocanegra, 2003, pp. 232-233). Not

¹⁹ For example a BBC article carried a picture of a gas-masked man standing against a backdrop of fire in the streets of Seattle with the caption 'masked anarchists mingled with the protesters' (Piggot, 1999).

only were Indymedia concerned with providing an alternative to the corporate media, they were also trying to make this available as widely as possible, ensuring that the model could be replicated across the world, and that access to technological resources was not necessarily a barrier to running an IMC.²⁰

In much the same way as Critical Mass, IMCs have captured the imaginations of activists around the world, and in the years following Seattle through a decentralized and autonomous network, ‘hundreds of media activists set up independent media centers in London, Canada, Mexico City, Prague, Belgium, France, and Italy over the next year. IMCs have since been established on every continent, with more to come’ (IMC). The scope is genuinely global and not just concentrated in the Western world – there are 184 IMCs listed on their website around the world (IMC, 2010), from countries such as Palestine, Nigeria, Indonesia, Ecuador and Zambia, to most countries in Europe and multiple IMCs in the US and Canada (Notes-from-Nowhere, 2003).

Indymedia is a good exemplar of rhizomatic organising, in terms of the way in which it is non-hierarchical and infinitely expandable, and can include anyone who wants to get involved through posting an article or reading one. IMCs try to expand and develop their working relationships ‘in a manner that is non-hierarchical, autonomous, and based upon mutual aid and solidarity’ (IMC). A desire for non-hierarchical forms of engagement is promoted as one of IMCs operating procedures, and this commitment can be seen in the open access given to anyone to post an article. No journalism training is required to be an Indymedia contributor, rather the principle is that everyone has their own voice and is free to write what they like, thus the articles do not all come from the same perspective on the radical Left. This is a genuine attempt to create greater diversity and ‘anyone may participate in Indymedia organizing and anyone may post to the Indymedia newswires... there’s nothing in any Indymedia mission statement that declares people who are involved must be of any particular mindset, as long as they do not work contrary to the values espoused in Indymedia’s mission statement’ (IMC-

²⁰ Despite this concern, and aiming to be as heterogeneous and diverse as possible, organisers of the Seattle Indymedia do recognise that those who volunteered to be part of the first IMC were white, progressive activists who already had access to many of these technologies, although the idea was to provide under-represented groups who may not have access to such resources with an opportunity. The organisers recognise, however, that those who had free time to offer at short notice were those who had existing privileges – and that privilege in all its forms needs to be the subject of continual internal critiques of such projects (Bocanegra, 2003, p. 238).

Ireland, 2009). There is no designated Indymedia editorial collective that edits articles posted to the newswire so anyone is free to express themselves as they wish.

Indymedia has no central office and no paid members of staff, although it does have a support office that deals with technical issues relating to the website. All Independent Media Centres act independently of each others: 'each IMC is an autonomous group that has its own mission statement, manages its own finances and makes its own decisions through its own processes' (IMC). The global nature of Indymedia means that making decisions that affect everyone are difficult. They are currently developing a global decision-making process that will enable all IMCs to make decisions across the network. The current proposal is for Indymedia to form a "global spokescouncil" that will confirm decisions on global Indymedia issues that local IMCs have made through their own decision-making processes.

Indymedia exemplifies the connectivity and multiplicity that are characteristic of the rhizome in the sense that they are infinitely expandable and can include as many participants as it wants. One of the reasons for this is the use of the internet – which means that IMCs exist in a virtual space that has no limits. This virtual space also allows participants to be changed through their interactions with others and the way in which they present themselves in this type of space. One activist notes that 'deterritorialization through geographies of protest also affects notions of identity. Markers like gender, age, class or ethnicity are less obvious in cyberspace, although they are by no means irrelevant' (Hamm, 2006). Thus in theory identity becomes less of an issue and participants are more able to exist as differences resonating together, because there are fewer markers that distinguish each person in cyberspace.

Another area of connection and multiplicity comes with the blurring of boundaries between 'reporter and activist, documentation and spectacle, expert and amateur, techie and content-producer, cyberspace and real space' (IMC-UK, 2003, p. 242). Because the Indymedia newswire encourages people to become the media by posting their own articles, analysis and information to the site this can lead to such a blurring of boundaries: 'Indymedia set out to erode "the dividing line between reporters and reported, between active producers and passive audience: people are enabled to speak for themselves"' (IMC-UK).

Because Indymedia activists report on events and publish them on the local IMC website, they are constantly making connections and allowing others to connect up through them. IMCs started out with the intention of providing an alternative account of protests or events to that which is reported in the mainstream media, but in this way Indymedia can also change the nature of the event in the way they report on it. By instant reporting from events, IMCs are also shaping these events; as people are receiving pictures and information via mobile phones and the internet during protests or other events as Hamm explains:

Traditional temporal definitions where a protest is followed by reports are collapsing into each other, when events are reported by activists live on the Internet through websites, blogs and streams in a collaborative social process. This does not only change the subjective experience of those who participate online. It can also provide a navigation system for those in the streets' (Hamm, 2006, p. 107).

This allows activists to connect in both a virtual space and a physical one, sometimes at the same time, which changes the nature of both the event on the ground and the perception of it in the virtual world. This activist notes the interaction of the two, and how they can change each other, with reference to the way in which Indymedia in London was involved in the London Halloween Critical Mass ride in 2005. A feature on the ride was created on the London IMC site, and Indymedia volunteers participated from different places – from bedrooms to social centres, London to Birmingham to Germany – in reporting from a dedicated chat room on incoming news from phones, texts, Indymedia newswires and others forms of communication. Many participants in this activity of 'doing dispatch' online felt that they were 'participating in' rather than 'reporting about' the event (Hamm, 2006, p. 105).

She goes on to note that the atmosphere of intensity and immediacy that is felt on a mass street gathering was similar to the atmosphere in the virtual chat room explaining that 'participation in such events triggers emotional and physical responses, whether they are transmitted through keyboards, wires, software and boxes or the sound of a samba band or the physical experience of cycling in a Critical Mass' (Hamm, 2006, p. 106). Thus this displays the idea of connection in a rhizome where any elements that are added to the rhizome also change it in nature – by participating in such an event, even in a virtual space – you can be changed by the process. Hamm concludes that:

However, the physical space is as important as the virtual one, as one of the whole points of IMCs is to reclaim or carve out space for interactions, dialogue and

exchange of ideas, and although this can happen in the virtual realm, it happens most powerfully in physical spaces when people can come together face-to-face (Bocanegra, 2003, p. 234). The London Halloween Critical Mass as a classic intervention in urban public space, connected to digital channels of alternative communication, illustrates how physical and virtual spaces are intersecting to form a hybrid communication space. 'Weaving channels, so that words may travel all the streets of resistance' means opening up spaces of resistance, temporary autonomous zones as well as ongoing technical infrastructure (Hamm, 2006, p. 109).

Thus the way in which Indymedia Centres set themselves up exemplifies the characteristic of connection and multiplicity. Anyone can contribute to an IMC site by posting an article, and because they are based on the internet the range of participants is infinitely expandable. Connections can be made in multiple ways, through both physical and virtual encounters, and these connections have the capacity to change the nature of the experience, for example with those reporting events also shaping them as participants at events gather their information from the IMC websites.

Mapping not tracing

The third aspect of rhizomes outlined by Deleuze and Guattari is that of mapping rather than tracing. Mapping is the creation of newness, as opposed to reproducing what already exists – which Deleuze and Guattari call tracing. Mapping is also about challenging the way we understand things such as political activity, and offering new and different ways of thinking, or in other words 'it is an expression of how many people think differently from mainstream society' (Higgins, 2000). Both Critical Mass and Indy Media Centres exemplify this creation of newness in various ways, but I am going to focus on Critical Mass here, as I believe they offer the most striking example of mapping.

Critical Mass is a very literal example of map creating rather than tracing. As discussed earlier, Critical Mass rides often have no set route, and riders set off and spontaneously decide on where they are going. Others rely on participants in the ride to suggest a route before they set off, although this is often developed in new directions during the ride. Chicago CM website explains that 'the Mass may not wind up where you think it will wind up. Just think of it like real life. You never know how it will turn out. If you don't want to follow the Mass, don't. Head your own way. Start a splinter Mass. The world is your oyster' (Chicago CM).

This follows the principle of mapping, as rather than tracing a route already prescribed by Critical Mass organisers, genuine newness is able to take place as no one can predict how Critical Mass will turn out. An organisation that attempts to reproduce itself as a fixed structure is unable to create newness, whereas a concept that is taken as a starting point but allowed to develop in its own way is more likely to create the conditions for newness and genuine creativity. This does not necessarily mean that it will be exciting every time, but that any particular ride will always be unpredictable even when it turns out to be less than exciting (Klett, 2002, p. 93).

Because the route is spontaneously decided, two Critical Mass rides even in the same city will never be identical to each other, even if they follow the same route. One participant describes the ever-changing nature of Critical Mass rides:

As the participants change, so does the nature of the beast. It changes from month to month and season to season just within the same city...the ride constantly synthesizes the amalgam of desires and allow for collective and individual responses to motorists, pedestrians, bus riders, authorities, and the various neighbourhoods through which it passes (Klett, 2002, p. 90).

Thus rides are different every time, not just because of the whims of the riders, but also in the way in which the ride interacts with those it comes into contact with. Rides can be antagonistic or peaceful, joyful or stressful, depending on the attitudes of motorists or pedestrians, the weather, contact with the police and many other factors. This gets to the heart of Critical Mass as difficult to explain and pin down, as lacking a fixed and rigid identity, as no two rides will ever be the same.

It also the case that any one ride will also be experienced in multiple ways, as every participant will have been part of a different ride within the ride itself:

One of the most important, fragile and overlooked aspects of Mass is how dense a society it is. Each act of spontaneous congregation creates hundreds of interactions and environments, and each individual comes away with impressions of hugely different aspects of the same event...We all experience different versions of Mass, and often a Mass of any size breaks into different groups with differing routes (Veysey, 2002, p. 161).

Thus there is newness for each rider in the way they experience the ride, and the same event can be a different experience for every rider. There is no expectation on participants to behave in a certain way or experience a particular feeling and emotion – how they participate in the Mass and what they take away from it are for each rider to

decide, and each has the capacity to create something new or unexpected if they are open to this – the responsibility of participation is theirs and no-one else's.

Critical Mass is set up in such a way that as much as possible about a ride is created through participation rather than being decided upon beforehand. This structure allows as much as possible for genuine newness rather than reproducing what has gone before. It forces people to think about how their participation can contribute to the overall experience of the ride, and as I discussed earlier, it challenges people's preconceived ideas about what Critical Mass is like as it forces them to experience the ride without anyone telling them what to do. However, even with the best will in the world it is easy to see how these practices could become sedimented, and for the ride not to challenge people to think differently as they have been participating regularly and have fallen into set patterns of behaviour or set routes. Deleuze and Guattari would argue that this is only natural, as rhizomes have elements of the tree-structure in them, and it is to the relationship between the rhizome and the tree, and the politics of act and demand that I now turn.

Rhizomes and the politics of demand

Even some animals are [rhizomes], in their pack form. Rats are rhizomes. Burrows are too, in all of their functions of shelter, supply, movement, evasion, and breakout. The rhizome itself assumes very diverse forms, from ramified surface extension in all directions to concentration in bulbs and tubers. When rats swarm over each other. The rhizome includes the best and the worst: potato and couchgrass, or the weed (Deleuze & Guattari, 2004, p. 7).

Rhizomes show how both individuals and collectives can be understood as being structured on a basis of difference, rather than identity. For Deleuze, difference is ontologically prior to identity, and rhizomes are the basic structure of organisation from which identity and arborescent structures are crystallised. The rhizome is non-hierarchical in the sense that all participants are differences that resonate together without a hierarchical structure of identity – in which every difference is measured against the dominant identity and found wanting. A rhizome has no limits of connectivity – it is infinitely expandable and can be added to in many different ways, and new elements that are added to a rhizome do not just add volume or numbers but also change the rhizome in nature. A rhizome takes on a life of its own, it becomes like a swarm of rats or ants which moves in unexpected directions and takes on its own characteristics – or in other words a rhizome becomes more than the sum of its parts.

Rhizomes are war machines in the sense that they provide an alternative way of thinking about the way we organise ourselves as individuals and collectives. The concept of rhizomes forces us to think differently about leading and being led, the way we connect with others and the way we produce new things out of these connections. Creativity and newness are explored through the distinction between mapping and tracing. Rhizomes allow us to break out of the dichotomy of binary segments and create new ways of thinking: ‘that is why bands in general, even those engaged in banditry or high-society life, are metamorphoses of a war machine formally distinct from all State apparatuses or their equivalents, which are instead what structure centralized societies...the war machine answers to other rules’ (Deleuze & Guattari, 2004, p. 395).

Mapping involves breaking out of modes of thinking that we already inhabit, it means thinking and acting in new, previously unimagined modes of thinking – to move beyond what we know and what we have experienced in the past and extend our experience in new directions. Tracing, on the other hand, involves working within what we already know, and replicating the ways we think along lines we have already explored.

Rhizomes are, however, also subject to becoming crystallised into arborescent structures – rhizomes can also become fixed and rigid and sedimented over time, just as arborescent structures contain rhizomatic elements that can create new ways of thinking: ‘trees have rhizome lines, and the rhizome points of arborescence’ (Deleuze & Guattari, 2004, p. 38). The ‘added value’ that Deleuze and Guattari offer is that they conceptualise how these two ways of organising fold into one another:

The important point is that the root-tree and canal-rhizome are not two opposed models: the first operates as a transcendent model and tracing, even if it engenders its own escapes; the second operates as an immanent process that overturns the model and outlines a map, even if it constitutes its own hierarchies, even if it gives rise to a despotic channel. It is not a question of this or that place on earth, or of a given moment in history, still less of this or that category of thought. It is a question of a model that is perpetually in construction or collapsing, and of a process that is perpetually prolonging itself, breaking off and starting up again’ (Deleuze & Guattari, 2004, p. 22).

Thus rhizomes and arborescent structures can be seen as points along a continuum, with organisations often starting at one end of the spectrum but shifting towards the other at times, in a relationship that is not clear-cut but is constantly breaking and re-starting somewhere else. This offers a useful way of thinking about how the politics of demand

can be crystallised from the politics of the act, which is rhizomatic in character. This crystallisation into a politics of demand may be useful for achieving a particular goal or for making more concrete changes to society, for example Critical Mass participants might also create some agreed demands and take them to local government to improve the roads for cyclists, perhaps by getting cycle paths put in alongside highways.

How might this be shown in the activities of Critical Mass and Indymedia Centres? It might be shown in a variety of ways. It might be in a moment when particular differences crystallise into identities or fixed ways of doing things – familiarity turns into routine where one thing becomes the standard to which others are measured up. The institutionalisation of Critical Mass rides may slip into a recognised pattern every month, which allows them to be found easily by participants, but also by police who may stop them from riding. This has parallels with Food Not Bombs as being a visible presence but at the same time opening oneself up to arrest or repression. The politics of demand can benefit Critical Mass in that by making the ride visible and regular, participants can open dialogue with pedestrians, police, motorists, those on the rides, local government and others that may lead to challenges to the dominant discourses that surround cycling and cyclists.

Another way in which the politics of demand may crystallise moments of the tree-like structure is in the creation of an identity that offers solidarity to those on the ride. It may be that Critical Mass rides create a binary of superiority/inferiority in relation to motorists who antagonise the ride, thus creating a standard of ethical priority for cyclists to which motorists can never measure up. As Madden noted in his description of a London Critical Mass ride, the motorist who suggested they ‘get a life’ was booed and drowned out with whistles and bike bells. This creation of an identity where the Mass as a whole treats motorists with contempt is a way of providing safety and solidarity to those on the ride, and may be dissolved as soon as the ride finishes, as many of the participants will also be motorists. Nevertheless it serves a function for a short amount of time.

Perhaps, despite their intentions to the contrary, informal hierarchies may develop in Critical Mass rides if there are certain people who consistently lead the rides or produce a map beforehand. If participants do not want to contribute to the direction of a ride and are happy to be told what to do and where to ride, it will be down to a few individuals to

take control every time. This may lead to sedimented practices where tracing rather than mapping takes over. The important thing is not whether the ride goes on a different route every time, but on the attitude of those involved – are they looking for newness in some way or are they following previous patterns because they are tired of creating something new?

Indymedia Centres provide an interesting example of the politics of demand in the creation of an identity to which others have to measure up. To start a new IMC and be given the domain name there is a particular working group to which you must apply, and you must read the guidelines and advice on how to do so. There is then a set procedure that has to be followed:

Once you have read the information on those sites and explored the other Indymedia sites to get a good idea of what IMCs do, send an e-mail to the New-IMC working group to tell the group about your interest in forming an IMC. Someone from the working group will contact you with detailed information about how to go about forming an IMC. Though each local IMC is an autonomous organization, there are several simple things each local IMC must do before the Indymedia global group opens its local indymedia.org domain, such as develop a mission statement and editorial policy and assure the Indymedia global group that it is ready to put substantial effort into building a sustainable Independent Media Center' (IMC).

This shows that although there is a generally rhizomatic and egalitarian structure to Indymedia, there is a hierarchy practiced through the creation of a group who have the authority to decide what is acceptable in terms of mission statement and editorial policy and a judgement that is made by some over whether a potential new IMC is 'viable'. This involves holding up a certain identity as being a standard to which all potential IMCs must measure up.

This seems to be a good example of the politics of demand, in the sense that certain element of IMC practices have developed into a tree-like structure in order to maintain some degree of quality control. This suggests that for Indymedia activists, there is an element of efficiency that needs to be undertaken to support and document new groups as they emerge, and they have decided that this is an instance where a more centralised structure is necessary.

With the whole Indymedia network connected virtually rather than physically, it is difficult for informal or formal hierarchies not to spring up, as again it encourages

efficiency and 'getting things done'. It is not clear how IMC participants become members of working groups, but obviously those with more time and resources are likely to find it easier to get more involved. None of these informal hierarchies are inherently bad or inferior, and it seems that all who sign up to Indymedia accept them as part of the particular nature of organising and connecting in a virtual space, which is bound to be different to the physical spaces of Critical Mass. Thus it appears that the distinction between centralised and decentralised, hierarchical and non-hierarchical forms of organisation are recognised by participants, but they also seem to see and tolerate the need for both to happen to achieve a degree of conformity and efficiency as well as openness and inclusivity.

This throws up some significant questions about the dynamics and power relations of IMC working groups, and how this produces a politics of demand. Questions need to be addressed in areas such as who decides what working groups are set up? Who decides who participates in these groups? What is the 'grievance procedure' if a working group decision goes against you? How transparent are the deliberations of the working groups? Is physical distance a practical barrier? The need for efficiency in decision-making when an organisation is infinitely expandable is clearly important, and it would be interesting to determine how much Indymedia activists prize the horizontal organising of the politics of the act over the centralised organising of the politics of demand, especially as the network continues to grow.

The idea of creating a hierarchy in order to give some semblance of identity and cohesiveness to both Critical Mass and Indymedia Centres is an important line of enquiry that needs to be developed. The characteristics of the rhizome all point to a diffuse network of differences rather than a strong sense of solidarity, and it would be valuable to develop further lines of enquiry that tackle the issue of what is at stake in only have diffuse networks, especially those that only exist in cyberspace. One Indymedia participant claimed that the feeling of solidarity was almost as strong in a virtual chatroom as it is 'on the streets', and it would be interesting to know whether this is a common feeling among Indymedia activists.

This understanding of how the politics of the act produces the politics of demand and the function of the politics of demand with reference to Critical Mass and Indymedia Centres clearly needs to be considered further. Although examples of the way in which

the politics of demand operates in relation to Indymedia Centres seems to be fairly obvious, with the challenges of network organising across a vast virtual space, it is less obvious as to how the politics of demand can be useful for Critical Mass. It may be that this hints at a limit to this approach, with some activities not lending themselves to both modes of politics being enacted, and so more work also needs to be done to define the limits of this approach.

Chapter 6: An imperative for enactment – Guerrilla gardening and the Rebel Clown Army

In this chapter I will consider some of the more unusual elements of the politics of the act that are a feature of the creative direct action nature of the Global Justice Movement – guerrilla gardening and the Clandestine Insurgent Rebel Clown Army (CIRCA). Both the Rebel Clown Army and guerrilla gardening have been tactics used at various protest events (Harvie, Milburn, Trott, & Watts, 2005), from the mass guerrilla gardening May Day protest which involved turning Parliament Square in London into a vegetable patch in 2000, to the clowns that appear when George W Bush or the G8 are in town, confounding the police with their colourful costumes and feather dusters. These two activities will be examined in regard to the third indicator of the politics of the act – an imperative for enactment. Lines of flight offer a conceptual framework through which to understand activities that embody this imperative for enactment, or an encouragement that individuals can change their world for the better by taking responsibility for their own liberation. Lines of flight also helps us to understand the relationship between the politics of the act and the politics of demand in the way in which they show how a politics of demand can crystallise through a politics of the act. The key moment when this happens is when lines of flight are slowed by connection with molecular lines, their pure creativity and speed are tempered to some degree, and they are made visible and recognisable to society and the state. This then produces a politics of demand that allows the molar segments to be challenged by offering something that does not conform to pre-established patterns but changes the way we live or act.

I will offer a narrative description of guerrilla gardening and the Clown Army and explore how each demonstrates the line of flight in turn, by showing how guerrilla gardening is an easy way for people to create and follow their own line of flight – as there are no rules or specialist knowledge that is needed – and how the Clown Army exemplifies an attitude of experimentation and self-transformation. I will then look at how both guerrilla gardening and the Clown Army challenge existing modes of thinking and seek to redefine the dominant discourses with regards to understanding public space and challenging authority by holding it up to ridicule. Finally, I will return to the line of flight and demonstrate that Deleuze and Guattari offer a unique ‘added value’ by offering a way of breaking out the dichotomy between the politics of act and the politics of demand. I will do this by focusing on the moment where the line of flight is slowed

and made visible by molecular lines, and will then suggest how this might be found in the activities of guerrilla gardening and the Clown Army, and what further questions this might open up.

Before looking at these two activities in turn, I will briefly remind the reader of the characteristics of an imperative for enactment that can be seen through the concept of the line of flight. The first characteristic is the ability of anyone to create or follow a line of flight – either a personal or a collective line. Taking part in a line of flight doesn't require any particular skills or equipment, just a willingness to take experiment and try new things.

Experimentation and self-transformation is the second characteristic of a line of flight. Transformation comes through the nature of lines of flight which are creative and experimental. Lines of flight are the productive ground upon which molecular and molar lines can be crystallised and made visible, and so even though they may not have a specific end in mind this does not matter, in fact it is the way in which newness and creativity can be encouraged through a willingness to experiment. The line of flight is a journey rather than a specific end point, and creativity or unpredictability are measures of success in themselves, even, or perhaps particularly, if the line of flight does not turn out as planned.

Thirdly, lines of flight transform society by disrupting the molar segments not by taking power but by introducing new elements that force the segments to reshuffle and incorporate them, changing the landscape of what is possible as they go. Thus they do not act in a way that tries to take control and create new hierarchical binary relationships, but rather aim to redefine the segments that we live by – to ask questions of what we think is fixed and rigid. A line of flight is one of absolute speed, but can either hurtle into self-destruction or be slowed by a molecular line, which enables it to question the fixity of the molar segments and allow us to think about things in a different way.

Guerrilla gardening

Guerrilla gardening activity generally falls into two main categories. There are those who take vacant and abandoned lots or spaces and turn them into areas to benefit the community such as gardens, allotments and social spaces, and those who try to create

beauty in an urban environment by planting urban features such as roundabouts, verges or raised beds that are neglected.

One of the most important uses of the term ‘guerrilla’ gardening was the ‘green guerrillas’ started by Liz Christy in New York in the 1970’s. She and a few friends were inspired by the tomato plants growing up in an area of derelict land and decided to scatter seeds. The eventual outcome of this was the creation of a community garden that still exists today. One writer explains that the Liz Christy garden was a catalyst for other gardens:

The Liz Christy Bowery-Houston Community Garden, as it later became known, was a lightning rod for do-it-yourself greening, inspiring passersby to create similar plots in their own neighbourhoods. The Guerrillas held training sessions and set up a phone line so people could call to find out where to get free plant and trees. They also lobbed “seed Green-Aids” – balloons or Christmas-tree ornaments stuffed with peat moss, fertilizer, and wild flower seeds – into fenced-off lots and along highways and street medians across the five boroughs. “It was a form civil disobedience,” recalls Amos Taylor, another early GG member. “We were basically saying to the government, if you won’t do it, we will” (Ferguson, 1999, p. 84).

Creating useable spaces for communities is an important motivation for many guerrilla gardeners. As well as raising questions about public space, this also embodies a withdrawal from the state - the first indicator of the politics of the act. In many communities there is nowhere else for people to come together and socialise, be creative or simply enjoy being in a positive space without having to pay money to do so (Reynolds, 2008, p. 44) and, rather than waiting for permission, guerrilla gardeners around the world are taking matters into their own hands to create the space that they want to see, or that they need. In this instance, the state is seen as part of the problem rather than the solution, as they will often not do anything about absentee landlords that leave derelict land in the middle of communities. New York has hundreds of community gardens today of all shapes and sizes that have been inspired by the work of these early guerrilla gardeners.

Guerrilla gardening has been around in one form or another for centuries, and can be explicitly political. One guerrilla gardener traces the movement of cultivating land that is not one’s own back to the Diggers of the 17th century, explaining that:

Rising food prices and unemployment, combined with ample waste ground and a strong sense of injustice, motivated Gerrard Winstanley and his band of Diggers to cultivate St George’s Hill in Surrey in 1649. Other guerrilla gardeners soon

mobilized in Wellingborough, Northamptonshire. ‘We have spent all we have; our trading is decayed; our wives and children cry for bread; our lives are a burden to us,’ wrote Richard Smith and associates in *A Declaration by the Diggers of Wellingborough* (Reynolds, 2008, p. 36).

Thus the concept of using the land to register a protest as a form of civil disobedience is not new, and there are many reasons for doing this. In this instance the social situation of food scarcity and rising food prices coupled with unemployment led activists to grow fruit and vegetables in a public space, to highlight the lack of choice that they have. There are mass movements that practice this type of resistance now, such as the *Movimento dos Trabalhadores Rurais Sem Terra* (MST) in Brazil, who organise landless and impoverished farmers to realize their civil rights through taking possession of land that they consider to be unproductive and not meeting its social function. They are then able to farm the land which enables them to make a living.

As well as the political issues of food scarcity and derelict land, there is another aspect of guerrilla gardening that is more symbolic and pre-figurative, but no less powerful. Peter Lambourn Wilson (aka Hakim Bey) sees the political potential in creating the revolutionary world in the here and now rather than waiting for some imagined utopia: ‘a worldwide culture of resistance presently hovers on the verge of coherence. The moment it begins to come into focus at both the global and local levels, gardening will suddenly appear in its true light, as a vital tactic of resistance, and as a means of achieving a bit of “Utopia Now”’ (Lambourn Wilson & Weinberg, 1999, p. 33). One of the ways in which people create this ‘utopia now’ is to create beauty where there is only dereliction.

One of the more unusual examples of creating beauty through guerrilla gardening is that of an inmate at Guantanamo Bay. One guerrilla gardener describes it as follows:

Detainees in Guantanamo Bay have been guerrilla gardening as a diversion from their incarceration. One of them is Saddiq 754, a Uighur from Afghanistan, who has been held in the Camp Iguana section since 2002. He built his garden in the grounds of the prison by softening the sun-baked soil with water at night and gradually scratching away at it with a plastic spoon until he had enough soil to plant seeds saved from meals. He and fellow inmates have grown watermelon, peppers, garlic, cantaloupe and even a tiny lemon plant (Reynolds, 2008, p. 37).

David Tracey also notes the gardening at Guantanamo Bay. Sabin Willet, the lawyer of one of those prisoners, declares this to be a triumph of hope and beauty: ‘We [America] tried to withhold beauty, but from the grim earth of Guantanamo they scratched a few

square meters of garden – with spoons. Guantanamo is ugly, but man’s instinct for beauty lives deep down things’ (quoted in Tracey, 2007, p. 22). This is an extreme example of creating beauty, but there are many more everyday examples that include roadside verges, roundabouts, and even potholes! (see <http://thepotholegardener.com>). Whether guerrilla gardening is the greening of a local landmark or growing food for families, guerrilla gardening exemplifies a pre-figurative politics. As we have also seen with other activities in this thesis, guerrilla gardening also raises questions about how we view and use public spaces and how we interact with the environment around us. It challenges the sanctity of private property in the case of absentee landlords, where gardeners choose to put the needs of the community before the needs of the landlord. It also challenges the notion that we have to leave the creation of beauty in an urban landscape to the authorities, and encourages people to think creatively about the space they exist in.

Guerrilla gardening is not limited to the participation of any particular constituency or group of radical activists, rather it is an idea that can be grasped and developed in any number of ways as one guerrilla gardener explains:

The idea behind the movement is as simple and unstoppable as a plant poking up through a crack in the pavement. We’re made up not of rulers and subjects but of every part of society itself. We are diverse. The pursuit of gardening cuts across the usual social divisions of class, ethnicity, age and everything else...Guerrilla gardening thrives on differences. Different gardeners, different styles, different attitudes, different tactics – all leading to the same result: a healthier environment and a better city (Tracey, 2007, pp. 30-31).

Thus guerrilla gardening fits well with the characteristic of the rhizome as being based on an ontology of difference, where many elements resonate together, and there is no centralised leadership. It also demonstrates multiplicity, as the number and type of guerrilla gardeners is infinitely expandable. This connects with the first characteristic of the line of flight – that anyone can journey on one. In some ways guerrilla gardening is the most inclusive activity of all, in that it requires very little in the way of resources – some seeds and a trowel – and a space that could be improved by some creative planting. Some, like the MST, may garden because they have no other choice but to take the land back for themselves, others may see this as a hobby as well as political protest; but as Tracey argues above, the idea of guerrilla gardening can be expressed in so many ways, and cuts across boundaries of class, race, ethnicity and age.

Guerrilla gardening has as many facets as it does participants and anyone can carry out their own version of guerrilla gardening. Gardeners act by seeing what could be changed and acting on this vision – they consciously decide to take that journey, that line of flight without waiting for anyone to tell them to do it, or how to do it. Above all, guerrilla gardening is about personal expression through creativity. Reynolds argues that ‘gardening is a vivid form of expression. Doing it in public, on land that is not yours, sends an even stronger message. Society needs this kind of creativity’ (Reynolds, 2008, p. 52). He likens guerrilla gardening to the project of the Situationist International movement, suggesting that ‘only guerrilla gardeners are truly living the situationist utopian vision’ of creativity as a social act (Reynolds, 2008, p. 59). Whether it is for food or for beauty, there is something wonderfully creative and subversive in the act of guerrilla gardening. There is no right or wrong way to go about it, it is about experimenting with different places and plants and being as creative and expressive as you dare.

There are no limits to where guerrilla gardeners can express their creativity: indeed ‘you are limited only by your imagination when it comes to finding places to do guerrilla gardening’ (Tracey, 2007, p. 47). Guerrilla gardeners garden anywhere from empty parking lots, back alleys, industrial areas to the strip beside railways, public utilities, underbridges, and the planter boxes outside flats and public buildings. Even in the most heavily developed parts of a city there will be ample opportunities for guerrilla gardening, it is simply a case of letting one’s imagination run wild. Some guerrilla gardening is completely random, for example those who create seed bombs – a mixture of seeds and soil – in various shapes and containers, and simply throw them onto motorway verges as they drive past.

Anything, even a roadside verge, can offer potential for a positive impact both personally and collectively, and although it may seem like a small step, the power of taking such a line of flight is to question what makes for a good social space by offering an alternative vision of what our towns and cities could look like. Reynolds argues that making this first step is important as ‘we know we should take greater responsibility for the health of the planet by changing our patterns of consumption and production. Gardening is one step in the right direction – and guerrilla gardening is making that step regardless of the obstacles. Choosing to cultivate someone else’s neglected land is taking responsibility where others have not’ (Reynolds, 2008, p. 247). By taking

responsibility to go on this journey ourselves, we are taking seriously an imperative for enactment, as we demonstrate that we can be responsible for our own pre-figurative gesture in order to change the environment around us for the better. No one else may share this vision, but that doesn't matter as we can all have our own lines of flight.

Lines of flight can be collective as well as personal, and some examples of guerrilla gardening bring a whole community together. As part of the G8 protests in Scotland, guerrilla gardeners transformed a deprived area of Glasgow that was due to make way for a supporting pillar for the proposed M74 motorway – a raised motorway that would tear through that part of the city. This was an attempt to link global struggles with local ones, to make a lasting difference to the local community, and to show that creative resistance politics can be part of everyday life (Roman, 2005, p. 235). Those who envisioned the project got locals involved in creating a community gardens on land that the council had neglected for 20 years. As we have seen with the activities in previous chapters, the way in which participants are encouraged to create their own project and take responsibility for their own line of flight is very empowering, if a little difficult to get used to. One member of the team in Glasgow explains that:

One of the first things people would ask when they wanted to get involved in the work was, 'Who's in charge?' And our answer of 'Nobody!' always shocked them: they were amazed that so much work could be happening without a leader. We would explain to them that they could get involved with any of the work happening by just asking someone what they were up to, or that they were welcome to start a new project if desired. Most would choose the former rather than the latter, but a few people who spent many days working in the gardens were inspired to take on one of their own ideas (Roman, 2005, p. 245).

This ability to take your own idea and experiment with it is an empowering one, especially when it is within the context of a group project. It is brave, especially for someone who has not experienced working in this way before to be inspired to create their own project, and this is why not everyone has lines of flight. For some it is just too much, and they prefer to live their lives according to the identities and functions they have been given, but there is a danger that they miss out on the opportunity to follow a line of flight and see where it goes, and to know that they have created something that is entirely theirs.

Clandestine Insurgent Rebel Clown Army

The Clandestine Insurgent Rebel Clown Army was founded in November 2003 to mark the occasion of George Bush's visit to the UK (Klepto & Up Evil, 2005, p. 244). This 'Clown Army' is a group of activists who seek to push the boundaries of activism and to engage in new methods of non-violent direct action that goes beyond the binary of protestor/police, and to break down some of the hostility through laughter and absurdity. CIRCA brings together the ancient practice of clowning and the widely used practice of non-violent direct action and tries to develop new methods of radical activism. It is more than a tactic, as it is considered to be 'a deeper process that liberates people with weapons of love and laughter' (CIRCA, 2005c, p. 5).

CIRCA is not an organisation as such with a physical office or statement of principles, but rather a group of people who come together at various moments to offer creative resistance. Because of the insurgent nature of their activities it is difficult to quantify how many clowns there are, or how many groups. However, there are several groups in the UK and other clown armies listed on the clown army website include Australia, Belgium, France, Germany, Denmark, Holland and the USA. Protests are mainly where clowns gather (a clown gathering is known as a gaggle), and at the G8 summit in Gleneagles in 2005 about 200 clowns came together to play their particular role in the protests (Koogie, 2005, p. 130). They have been involved with actions from Bush's visit to the UK in 2003 and the 2004 Republican National Convention in New York, to G8 protests and guerrilla gardening to the Climate Change Summit in Copenhagen in December 2009. These are mainly but not exclusively protest summits, and show that clowning associates itself with the types of events the Global Justice Movement mobilises for.

The clowns attempt to engage with the police and other authority figures and the divisions are fairly stark at summit protests with the distinction between order and protestors; authority and chaos being made clear by the media, police and sometimes the protestors themselves. One reporter explains that at the G8 summit in Heiligendamm, Germany clowns were engaged in actions such as surrounding police vans, squirting water pistols and telling jokes, and that three clowns 'drove a police checkpoint to distraction with bad jokes and a mock silver-foil machinegun' (Boyes, 2007), but he thought that these clowns were mainly there to act as a distraction from the more violent or disruptive elements of the protest.

One participant describes what it meant to be part of CIRCA during the G8 action in Gleneagles in 2005:

CIRCA was *clandestine* because without real names, faces, or noses, the spectacle of celebrity was refused: activists took ridiculous military names such as Private Joke, Corporal Punishment, Major Disaster, and General Panic. CIRCA was *insurgent* because it had suddenly risen up from nowhere and was everywhere – having emerged from various cities in the UK, and from the US, Ireland, Belgium, and France.

CIRCA were *rebels*, because they celebrated life, happiness, and continuous rebellion more than “revolution,” CIRCA were *clowns* because they believed that inside everyone is a lawless clown trying to escape, and because nothing undermines authority like holding it up to ridicule (Routledge, 2009, p. 84).

Thus the Clown Army has a real sense of fun; from their choice of names to the way in which they celebrate life and happiness. However, there is also a serious point to what they are doing, by trying to undermine authority by holding it up to ridicule and questioning the received notions about protester and those who ‘defend’ the G8 from these protesters. They also suggest that everyone has this capacity to be clowns – both fellow protesters and the police who they come into contact with – and if we are open to finding our ‘inner clown’ then we will be able to take part in creative, experimental and transformative lines of flight.

The Clown Army are great believers that the experimentation involved in clowning is a hugely transformative process, both at a personal and collective level. Being prepared to experiment on oneself, as well as those one comes into contact with, is very important. They argue that in order to rebel or protest, one needs to be prepared to transform oneself: ‘rebels transform everything – the way they live, create, love, eat, laugh, play, learn, trade, listen, think, and most of all the way they rebel’ (CIRCA, 2005d). This involves a conscious effort to think about our actions as protesters and the way we interact with others as activists. It is about being prepared to question the way we think about every aspect of radical resistance, and to then be prepared to transform the way we think, feel and act, as these clowns explain:

We wanted to change the way we think and feel as much as the way we fight. For us the psyche, the body and the street should be seen as equally important zones of struggle and areas in need of radical transformation... We don’t want people to adapt to a new established society, rather we want society to adapt to a new person. Mixing the ancient art of clowning with contemporary forms of civil disobedience,

we developed a methodology that tries to provide tools for transforming and sustaining the inner emotional life of the activists as well as being an effective technique for taking direct action (Klepto & Up Evil, 2005, p. 247).

This fits well with Deleuze and Guattari's celebration of the line of flight as being intensely creative and self-transformational. Participants in the Clown Army are intentional about their transformation, it is a deliberate attempt to take responsibility for changing not just the nature of the protest they are part of and their relationships with authority, but also themselves.

This act of self-transformation is ongoing rather than a one-off activity. It is always a work in progress as Commodore Koogie explains: 'a clown is not made in a day – or even in two days – or a week or year. It's a changing, intrinsic part of a human being, and cannot be 'finished' any more than any other aspect of a person' (Koogie, 2005, p. 128). Thus, like Deleuze and Guattari's lines of flight, once you learn to open yourself up to them and live on this particular political plane, it is not something that leaves you – even if a line of flight turns out badly – because it opens up another world, where the aim of acting politically is this ability to change oneself through action. As Commodore Koogie notes above, this is an ongoing process rather than a one-off event:

Finding one's own clown is about learning to cultivate a state of being rather than a technique. It doesn't matter how well you can throw a custard pie, fall over or tell a joke, if your entire being has not taken on the state of clown and isn't committed to staying with that state, then it becomes a pretence, mere acting. Clowns become through their bodies, they think with their hearts and feet, and they play with everything and everybody. Play requires surrendering to spontaneity, losing all our expectations of success, stopping the compulsion to be clever, letting go and trusting the flow - Something many activists find hard to do' (CIRCA, 2005d).

Clowning is not just a tactic but also a state of mind, a willingness to engage in an activity that involves surrendering to spontaneity and redefining what it is to achieve success in political activity. It is not about setting particular goals for a successful outcome through which clowning can be measured to see how it went, as the goal is spontaneity and creativity, and letting yourself be carried at speed along a line of flight. This is where the most basic, foundational politics takes place, in the spontaneity and confusion of play and disorder, or as one clown describes the G8 protest at Gleneagles 'we were "circa" because we were approximate and ambivalent, neither here nor there, but in the most powerful of all places, the place in-between order and chaos' (Routledge, 2009, p. 84).

At the heart of the Rebel Clown activity is the desire to experiment, to be creative and to produce unexpected outcomes that don't fit into the molar binary of being either 'successful' or 'unsuccessful'. This is a core element of their philosophy as they explain: 'Because ideas can be ignored but not suppressed and an insurrection of the imagination is irresistible. Because whenever we fall over we rise up again and again and again, knowing that nothing is lost for history, that nothing is final' (CIRCA, 2005a). The Clown Army appreciate that time is not simply a linear progression from one segment to the next: 'because history doesn't move in straight lines but surges like water, sometimes swirling, sometimes dripping, flowing, flooding – always unknowable, unexpected, uncertain. Because the key to insurgency is brilliant improvisation, not perfect blueprints'. This demonstrates an understanding of history similar to that of Deleuze and Guattari, where time is not simply linear but also circular (Deleuze & Parnet, 1987). It is too simplistic to think that we can only build up political activity according to set patterns, where one thing has to be done before the next thing, as this limits the way in which we act, and suggests that experimentation for its own sake might not be the most efficient way of acting. It questions the notion of success in terms of political action – as the journey becomes more important than the result.

Thus newness and creativity is possible as the world is not unfolding according to any set teleology, but is unknowable and open to many different paths. Improvisation is a necessary part of a politics that seeks to disrupt the status quo, even if only for a moment, and show that there is another way of living. A participant sums it up as follows:

Clown actions contained an element of dissimulation, or the unexpected – what Sun Tzu termed “being unknowable in the dark” – by mixing together the crucial attributes of fluidity, adaptation, and the interchange of surprise unorthodox movements and orthodox direct confrontation... In this manner, we tried to remain open to the spontaneity of clowning and of the event, so as not to become too rigid in our action and play (Routledge, 2009, p. 86).

Just because the clowning itself is about surrendering to spontaneity, this does not mean that clowns do not prepare for this event. Paul Routledge explains how the clown army prepared for the G8 protests in Gleneagles. Clown gaggles for mass actions are based on the affinity group model (Routledge, 2005, p. 114), which allows for fluidity and decentralisation of the groups, both as individual groups and as a collective mass action. During the actions in Gleneagles 2005 there were fifteen distinct clown affinity groups.

These different affinity groups came together for ‘clowning workshops’ in order to practice and refine clowning techniques:

These provided a common repertoire of clowning practices – including group play, movements, gestures, and language – that were shared by all CIRCA participants. Second, all CIRCA “clownbatants” shared a common “multiform.” We wore personalized clown faces and rebel clown attire that was deconstructed, decorated, and subverted according to the individual creativity of each person and/or group... Feeling part of a rebel army and sharing aspects of appearance and language – while at the same acting autonomously in affinity groups and having our own specific clown characters – was empowering and fostered a deep sense of solidarity (Routledge, 2009, p. 85).

Thus we see again that lines of flight can be personal and collective – sometimes simultaneously. Experimentation and self-transformation are important here, and we see that once again it is described by activists as being a very empowering activity. In this example there was freedom and room for both individual and collective experimentation within the same space – at the personal level with individual outfits and clown personas that reflected participants’ individual creativity; at an affinity group level with meetings particularly for their groups; and collectively with the whole group workshops that gave all the clowns the ‘multiform’ of shared tactics that identified them as being part of the Clown Army.

This element of creativity and improvisation allows these activists to enter the spaces in between the molar segments, to escape through the cracks and therefore not become bound by the constraints of only living at the level of molar and molecular lines. Clowns do not want their smooth spaces to become striated, to be subject to rigidity and familiarity, as that slows down a line of speed, of pure creativity. These lines of flight occupy a strange space that aims to disrupt the binary segments that we are classified by, or are expected to move from one to the other (school-army-work-retirement). They come and goes between the molar and molecular lines; between law and order/carnival, life/art, chaos/order as CIRCA explains:

Clowning, like carnival suspends and mocks everyday law and order and like carnival the clown exists on the borderline between life and art, in a particular midzone. In all ecosystems, it is the spaces in between, the edges (such as where land meets water) where the most evolution and bio-diversity takes place. Clowns take this magical no-man's land, wherever they go, spreading a spirit of creativity that dances on the edge of chaos and order (CIRCA, 2005d).

This link between clowning and carnival is a well-used one, the Notes from Nowhere record of activists' experiences and the reasoning behind it is a good indication of the need for creativity and experimentation. On the subject of carnival the editors note that 'you can't predict the outcome of a carnival and neither can you predict history' (Notes-from-Nowhere, 2003). The idea of carnival resonates with activists because it goes back to a basic human desire for play and the ability to lose oneself in the spontaneity of the moment without knowing what the outcomes will be, or having some specific purpose that one must achieve. This ability to lose oneself in play is not, however, an easy thing to do, and is predicated on a desire for practices of self-transformation. The carnival is one way in which one can transform oneself because of the unpredictability of carnival with its total subservience to spontaneity, where any individual can shape her environment and transform herself into another being for an hour or a day.

The Clown Army exemplify the second characteristic of the line of flight, the need for experimentation and willingness for transformation. Clowns seek genuine newness and creativity and are prepared to let themselves be taken over by spontaneity and are committed to play as an insurgent technique of political resistance. By becoming clowns, the participants not only transform themselves but also those around them, and try to open up a space to disrupt established binaries such as protester/police, order/chaos, success/failure. It is this disruption that allows the Clown Army to be truly transformative.

Disrupting molar segments

Both guerrilla gardening and the Rebel Clown Army exemplify the third characteristic of lines of flight in that they aim to disrupt the molar segments by asking questions of binary markers of identity that appear to be rigid and fixed. Guerrilla gardeners do this around assumption of social and public space, and clowns do this by trying to subvert the binaries such as police/protester. I will look now demonstrate how they exemplify this by looking at each one in turn.

On the face of it gardening might not be everyone's idea of political resistance, but there are many who see its revolutionary potential to challenge the status quo. One author argues that it is a creative rebellion that is positive rather than one that simply reproduces existing ways of thinking:

It actually produces good food and other benefits that exist outside the complex of exchange, or at least somewhat outside...Moreover, it is an art form, an area of creativity as rich and promising as any symbolic activity, and one which can roughly but easily transpire beyond the realm of representation and mediation. It can function as an important part of “everyday life” in the radical sense of that term (Lambourn Wilson & Weinberg, 1999, p. 25).

Thus it is an act of rebellion but also one that is creative and has the potential to be radical in a sense of the politics of the everyday. One of the ways in which it disrupts and asks questions of the status quo is by questioning accepted ideas of public space – what it is for, who it is for, who takes responsibility for it and so on, as ‘Guerrilla Gardeners occupy space in which there is a political vacuum, the untended public spaces of the modern city’ (Zanetti p.57). David Tracey argues that:

Guerrilla gardening is political...when you’re a guerrilla gardener, you’re an active participant in the living environment. You’re no longer content to merely react to what happens to the spaces around you. You’re a player, which means you help determine how those spaces get used. And when you’re in tune like this, every plant counts (Tracey, 2007, p. 33).

Many guerrilla gardeners are unhappy about the prevalence of commercial advertising in public spaces and come up with creative ways of expressing their dissatisfaction such as growing ivy up the side of billboards. One interesting example documented by Reynolds is that of Sandy in Portland, Oregon, who subverted the logo of America’s oldest Mercedes-Benz dealership by turning their three-pointed star-in-a-circle, made from 8 ft wide box hedge, into the CND symbol. Reynolds reports that ‘for three weeks no one at Mercedes noticed this change to their corporate identity. It took a routine inspection from the dealership’s landscape contractor to remove Sandy’s bush, but she soon spotted it dumped nearby and restored it for another fortnight’ (Reynolds, 2008, pp. 93-94).

One group of activists in London also seek to change a commercial space through ‘Operation Ivy League 2009’. They explain that:

Operation Ivy League is an attempt to sow the seeds of dissent within the strict architecture and culture of the City of London. First dreamt up by the now antipodean Agent Ladybird, the plan is simple – creep into the city at the crack of the weekend (the streets are deserted and the security guards half asleep). Then start planting. Ivy, wildflowers and other fast growing plants. Everywhere. In nooks, in crannies, in drainpipes, down manholes, on ledges, at edges. Everywhere (Space-Hijackers, 2009).

This decision to grow plants, vegetables, or merely to create beauty somewhere disrupts the established understanding of what public space mean. Gardeners are doing something to ask what it says about public space if it is illegal to carry out activities that are only beneficial to the space. The community gardens that have been set up in disused parking lots with absentee landlords is another way of questioning the use of that space, and the general provision of public space in the area must be brought into question if people need to take land themselves.

The pothole gardener started out by planting flowers in potholes to raise the issue of how badly the roads and pavements are in need of repair, and in doing so attempts to help cyclists and pedestrians avoid riding/walking through the potholes. He describes his activity as follows:

What is 'The Pot Hole Gardener' all about then? Well it's a combination of things. My neighbourhood has a distinct lack of green space; I'm a gardener with no garden. I want to spruce up my 'hood, be it for just a few colourful moments. After almost falling over walking home with my shopping thanks to a well placed pothole, I'm making it my mission to highlight how crap our roads and footpaths are. This is a project that's part creative pursuit, part passion and part urban experiment' (www.potholegardener.com).

Here we see that this is a good example of an activity that is trying to make a serious point about the state of the roads in London and lack of green spaces in an urban environment, and thus offer a political challenge to established notion of space but in a way that is creative and innovative rather than confrontational.

CIRCA also show how lines of flight operate below the molar level, where we make changes to ourselves and to the space around us rather than seeking to take power and recreate existing hierarchies in a different order: 'We are rebels...Because we don't want to change 'the' world, but 'our' world. Because we will always desert and disobey those who abuse and accumulate power' (CIRCA, 2005a).

One of the main ways that rebel clowns do this is by subverting the distinctions between protester and police through humour and laughter. This calls into question the nature of authority and undermines it by holding it up to ridicule. This is deeply subversive as offers a challenge to dominant discourses around the role of police defending the general public and the G8 delegates against the 'violent' protesters by refusing to act in the way that has been assigned to them. It is more powerful in disrupting the molar

segments of the state precisely because it confounds and confuses. As the Clown Army point out, this is difficult for the authorities to deal with ‘because fools are both fearsome and innocent, wise and stupid, entertainers and dissenters, healers and laughing stocks, scapegoats and subversives’ (CIRCA, 2005d).

CIRCA do not use confrontation but confusion to make their point – confrontation is the language of authority, which they reject. Being vulnerable is an important part of this – it is a very subversive type of politics, especially when attending highly charged political events – which protests generally are – and deliberately putting one’s body on the line by choosing to be vulnerable. One clown explains how this sense of vulnerability changes the dynamic of interaction with the police:

I didn’t see how clowning would work on the streets, in the ‘front line’ of direct action, during the training in Bristol. I wouldn’t really understand properly until a moment on July 2 when two clowns stood in front of a line of policemen, who had encircled and contained a group of activists in Edinburgh, all looking stern and grim, but still wearing bright yellow jerkins nonetheless, and started singing the banana song: One banana, two banana, three banana, four...

One by one a larger group of us joined in, the song gathering volume and beautiful harmonies (we started to sound really good) as we went. It took on a life of its own and suddenly we were more clown than not clown and at some point the faces in the line in front of us started to twist and contort in the strangest ways. One guy’s eyebrows went into a steep 45-degree angle and his lips pressed together tightly, as his mouth got wider and wider. And then it dawned on me. They were desperately trying not to laugh. They failed, of course, and I finally understood how it was our vulnerability, standing there with nothing but our humanity to protect us, that was our best defence against repression. For a few magical moments, the police were no longer a ‘thin blue line’, absurdly protecting society against itself, or the rich and powerful few against the mass whose lives have become a poor second place to capital, but fellow human beings with different personalities and, weirdly enough, even a sense of humour (Koogie, 2005, pp. 129-130).

Thus not only are the clowns themselves transformed by their clowning, but that those around them are also transformed for a moment, with the police being fellow human beings sharing a joke. One clown notes that ‘during CIRCA operations, I witnessed police officers smiling and laughing in interaction with rebel clowns, and even mimicking the clown salute’ (Routledge, 2009, p. 88). This disrupts the binaries of protestor/police, trouble maker/law enforcer by calling established roles that are characterised as binary opposites into question. Deleuze and Guattari are constantly trying to overcome dualisms, and the intent of the clowns illustrates this. Both police and protesters can display the characteristics that are conferred on each group, and many

other characteristics that don't fall into either the police or protester categories. Another clown explains that this is a conscious part of clowning:

Behind its white-faced façade of stupidity, it is a serious attempt to develop a form of civil disobedience that breaks down the binary and oppositional thinking that is still so inherent within protest movements. Dichotomies between the personal and the political, the classic us and them, activist and non-activist, violence and non-violence and, of course, protestors and police, seem outmoded ways of thinking in a movement that has been inspired by numerous types of thinking (from post-modern, ecological, late feminism or anarchism) which emphasise processes, continuums, relationships, systems and networks (Klepto & Up Evil, 2005, p. 244).

This is an example of an activity that seems, on the face of it, quite trivial but has the power to disrupt our assumptions, breaking through for one moment so that the molar segments are disrupted and forced to reshuffle.

Lines of flight and the politics of demand

At the same time, again, there is a third kind of line, which is even more strange: as if something carried us away, across our segments, but also across our thresholds, towards a destination which is unknown, not foreseeable, not pre-existent. This line is simple, abstract, and yet is the most complex of all, the most tortuous: it is the line of gravity or velocity, the line of flight and of the greatest gradient...This line appears to arise afterwards, to become detached from the two others, if indeed it succeeds in detaching itself. For perhaps there are people who do not have this line, who have only the two others, of who have only one, who live on only one (Deleuze & Parnet, 1987, p. 125).

Lines of flight are lines of absolute speed that exist on a different plane to molar and molecular lines. They embody the war machine in being alternatives to molar segmentation and rhizomes in their unpredictability. Lines of flight produce creativity and newness, they disrupt the sedimented patterns and categories that we live by and that make us feel safe. Lines of flight involve creativity and experimentation – they are about being prepared to transform oneself by choosing to journey on a line of flight. There is no way of telling when one embarks on a line of flight whether the line will be driven to pure joy or destruction, or whether it will end up being reterritorialized and folded into the molar segments. Lines of flight can be dangerous and can lead people to generate microfacisms that close them off from one another when they create their own molar segments – binary divisions between ‘us’ and ‘them’. Lines of flight are destabilising and unsettle us. They also generate an imperative of action through self transformation and suggest an imperative to take responsibility for our own acts of liberation: ‘the prudence with which we must manipulate that [molar] line, the precautions we must take to soften it, suspend it, to divert it, to undermine it, testify to a

long labour which is not merely aimed against the State and the powers that be, but directly at ourselves' (Deleuze & Parnet, 1987, p. 138).

Lines of flight are mutating rather than overcoding – in other words they offer a different way of thinking about politics that is a-systemic rather than anti-systemic as it does not have taking control of the state apparatus as its aim. Being anti-systemic would be to overturn the binarised segments and replace them with different segments, but these segments would still be based on an ontology of identity. Rather the line of flight challenges this ontological basis of binarised identities and is predicated instead on an ontology of difference where there is no standard of identity to which we are compared and then classified. It is an action of deterritorialization that destabilises the existing machines of overcoding.

How is the politics of demand crystallised from a line of flight? It is crystallised when it comes into contact with a molecular line, that stabilises it and allows it be folded into molar segments: 'Now, any assemblage necessarily includes lines of rigid and binary segmentarity, no less than molecular lines, or lines of border, of flight or slope' (Deleuze & Parnet, 1987, p. 132). This is still productive, as a line of flight on its own is neither productive nor unproductive but is of a different nature, an absolute speed. By connecting with molecular lines, lines of flight can be made sense of. When a line of flight is slowed down it is then that we see the politics of demand as something we can make sense of and hold onto - a concrete shift that we can understand. But how might this be exemplified in the activities of guerrilla gardening and CIRCA?

One way in which the politics of demand is produced is when these activities become a 'victim of their own success' in the sense that the state chooses to engage with them and legitimise them, thus making their activities less subversive. Like the social centres discussed in Chapter 5, guerrilla gardeners who create community gardens are sometimes faced with the dilemma of whether to allow their spaces to become recognised in this way. Some community gardens buy the land they have previously occupied from the state, and thus become landlords themselves, which opens them up to control by the state through the meeting of a set of rules and regulations. This does, however, give them a permanency that allows the community garden to concentrate on fulfilling its need as a space for the local community to enjoy. It can give greater confidence that efforts will last, and allows people to take on bigger challenges. One

guerrilla gardener in New York sums this up when he notes that ‘Guerrilla gardening is how you get something started, but community gardening is the follow-through’ (Reynolds, 2008, p. 225). Others agree that sometimes concessions have to be made and gains might have to be sacrificed for this process of legitimisation. Adam, another community gardener in New York explains the difficulty, but necessity, of accepting this:

192 community gardens were still in limbo-land, poised for classification as part of the Department of Parks and Recreation, but frustratingly ‘some far-left anarchist groups and men in flower suits refused to sit down at the table to discuss how best to do this’. Adam shook his head with the distressing memories of those days. ‘Even a socialist utopia has rules,’ Adam told the protesters, and he implored them to go legitimate so that the majority of gardens could be saved (interview with Reynolds, p. 233).

Other individual guerrilla gardeners have also experienced recognition by the state, which has then given them permission to garden a particular area. This is in some sense a victory, and an example of the politics of demand in action. It may make the activity less subversive, but a concrete gain, in this case the agreement that a particular area might be gardened, is also made. This may seem like ‘selling out’ to some, but it ensures that the projects that the guerrilla gardeners have put time and effort into creating are guaranteed to be able to continue.

Some community gardens, especially in New York, also have generated so much interest that they have now operate on a membership basis, and only those who are signed up as members of the garden are able to access the space. Certain gardens have locks on the gates that allow only those with a key to access them; some have prescribed opening hours. They may do this on order to keep out those who would try and destroy the gardens they have created, but this raises interesting issues of the notion of whether such a community space is still able to meet the needs of the community. It may be, however, that this is the only sustainable way of keeping the garden running, and so by using what we might call a politics of demand, they are allowing the garden to serve its rightful purpose.

Another way in which the politics of demand may be enacted by these activities is in the use of training members in order to act in a particular way, which enables a line of flight to be slowed somewhat and made sense of by others. One guerrilla gardener, Richard Reynolds, has created a website (www.guerrillagardening.org) to which new guerrilla

gardeners can sign up and learn about guerrilla gardening. Participants from all around the world have signed up to share their experiences. One of the things that is interesting about this is the occasional 'call to action', the latest being the designation of 1st May 2010 as 'International Sunflower Day' where gardeners were encouraged to all plant sunflowers on one particular day. Over 6000 people took part, which suggests that, as we saw with Indymedia, there is a need for solidarity of independent activists who want to create an identity of some kind in order to feel part of something bigger. 'International Tulip Day' is planned for 9th October 2010. This suggests the politics of demand in some way, as it uses centralised decision making and action as a way of molecular lines making sense of the lines of flight by making them visible – to other guerrilla gardeners as much as to the general public, especially as the sunflowers or tulips will not be visible until a few months after they are planted, which means that it is possibly only guerrilla gardeners will recognise the significance of sunflowers suddenly springing up on roundabouts and verges all over the world. Thus a politics of demand can also work internally to make lines of flight visible, as well making them visible to others.

CIRCA, although recognising the importance of individual experimentation through clowning, do insist that all who take part in the Clown Army need to be trained. CIRCA have strict recruitment processes that involve undertaking Basic Rebel Clown Training, which covers the theory behind clowning, various manoeuvres for groups of clowns at a direct action event or protest, improvisation and creativity techniques, how to work as a clown 'gaggle' or affinity group, and their decision making techniques both in their gaggles and in larger clown councils. Clowns are not allowed to take part in CIRCA activities unless they have had the Basic Rebel Clown Training (CIRCA, 2005b), as their website explains:

Following Basic Rebel Clowning Training (BRCT), during which recruits begin the process of finding/uncovering their "clown" and learning NVDA [non-violent direct action] skills, clownbattants take part in various forms of action against war and capitalism...We see innovative forms of action as key for building dynamic social movements, but realise that the psyche is as important a site for struggle as the street. CIRCA believes that a self destructive tendency within many social movements is forgetting the inner work of personal liberation and transformation. This is an area our rebel clown trainings works on deeply, while also providing creative tools to confuse and befuddle authority (CIRCA, 2005c).

This means that although in theory anyone can take part in clowning, there is an element of leaders and led, with potential participants not being allowed to embark upon

this line of flight without being instructed in how to go about it first. This is a good example of the politics of demand being enacted in order to give clowns the tools they need to undertake clowning activity.

There is also a sense in which the group training discussed above highlights the need for some element of conformity in their clown actions, and for members of the Clown Army to be recognisable as such, thus invoking an element of identity that is necessary in order for other protesters and the public to see that it is the Clown Army that are engaging in these actions.

CIRCA is a well-organised, centralised organisation that nevertheless highlights the need for individual self-expression and a subversion of authority. Participants do not seem to see a division between individualisation on the one hand and centralisation on the other, and I think this is significant for theorists who make a distinction between different modes of politics. As I have suggested about all the activities examined in this thesis, we are perhaps guilty of reinforcing a distinction that protesters do not see as important, and this distinction needs to be interrogated further both theoretically and empirically.

Conclusion: Beyond the politics of demand and the politics of the act: where now?

‘If Seattle was the movement of movements’ coming-out party then maybe Copenhagen will be a celebration of our coming of age’ (Klein, 2009).

The Global Justice Movement had its 10 year anniversary last November at the United Nations Climate Change summit in Copenhagen, and as John Jordan and Naomi Klein suggest in the quote above, it seems that the type of politics that was first brought to the attention of the world in Seattle is going from strength to strength. It is also changing, with less emphasis on summit protests and more on the prefiguring of alternatives that exist alongside the state, as demonstrated by the activities I have examined in this thesis. However, there are occasions important enough to generate mass protests, and the Climate Change summit was one of them – which provided a good opportunity to assess the state of the movement 10 years on.

Anarchist influences on physical interventions against the state and intergovernmental organisations, affinity groups and creativity of direct action are still much in evidence in the movement – for instance in the bike bloc that was formed to roam the streets of Copenhagen and was ‘an irresistible new machine of resistance...made from hundreds of old bicycles and thousands of activists’ bodies’ (Climate-Justice-Action, 2009). There is also evidence of the politics of the act’s desire to rewrite the scripts by offering a new way of thinking and practicing resistance, as Klein argues that most activists were determined ‘not to play into the tired scripts of cops versus protesters’ (Klein, 2009) by responding to the police with violence. Laying aside debates about whether this is a new type of politics we are witnessing, it is clear that this kind of resistance politics seems to be here to stay, for the moment at least. It also demonstrates that the types of political activity I have chosen to examine here embody a much wider range of activities that have yet to be adequately theorised. Day’s politics of the act seems to be a good way of capturing something of the concerns that are animating these activists.

However, in this example of Copenhagen, there is also evidence of the politics of demand. Activists went to Copenhagen to suggest concrete and credible alternatives around the issue of climate change – whether it is sustainable and local agriculture, alternatives to fossil fuels or respect for indigenous land rights. It seems to me that

these solutions are possible and achievable, but cannot be brought into action simply by withdrawing from the state. Thus some state involvement is necessary, and when you have the ‘developing-country governments ready to bring activist demands into the summit’ (Klein, 2009) it would be difficult to justify not engaging with them, especially on an issue with the level of urgency that climate change has.

It seems to me that Copenhagen sums up both sides of the argument – there have to be prefigurative alternatives to the state in the here and now in order to show that it can be done, that another world is possible. However, there also have to be moments when these alternatives are communicated to those who actually have the ability to make changes. Climate change cannot be tackled simply by creating alternatives to the state, this is a global problem that requires global solutions and a huge amount of international will.

In this thesis I have tried to disrupt the dichotomy that has been sustained historically and theoretically by anarchist and Marxist understandings of politics, culminating in one of clearest examples – Richard Day’s distinction between a politics of demand and a politics of the act. Day is right to distinguish between two meaningfully different modes of politics, with different normative conceptions of politics that have a long history crystallised particularly in the anarchist/Marxist debates around political theory and practice. Although I have tried to disrupt the dichotomous thinking that pits these modes of politics against each other, I am not suggesting that we should not recognise that they have different normative aims that are cashed out tactically in different ways. Suggesting that these modes of politics are not actually different is as undesirable as suggesting that one can be privileged and the other dismissed.

However, I have argued in this thesis that this dichotomy between a politics of demand and a politics of the act has been overemphasized, and have enlisted the help of Deleuze and Guattari to suggest that one way of viewing the relationship between the two is by seeing the politics of the act as ontologically prior to the politics of demand. The politics of the act is the creative basis from which the politics of demand is produced through the crystallisation of the politics of the act in various ways at particular points in time. Thus the politics of the act and the politics of demand exist in a relationship where one produces the other, and it is therefore impossible to recognise one’s existence and dismiss the other. Deleuze and Guattari are clear that although the politics of the

act is afforded an ontological priority over the politics of demand, this does *not* mean that a politics of the act is also given ethical priority over the politics of demand. Rather, both are part of a politics of resistance.

This claim that neither the politics of demand nor the politics of the act should be afforded ethical priority over the other has, I believe, significant implications for both Marxists' and anarchists' understanding of radical politics. By privileging one mode of politics over the other, whether as a normative claim about what radical politics is, or as an ethical claim about the consequences of practicing this mode of politics, we are in danger of fetishising one mode of politics as superior and dismissing the other as inferior, and in some cases unnecessary. I believe that there are two things at stake by this move of privileging one at the expense of the other.

Firstly by fetishising a politics of the act, anarchists such as Day are in danger of lapsing back into a trap of essentialism that they have critiqued classical anarchism for. Rather than basing their conception of politics on the faith in a humanist epistemological framework, Day and others are instead putting their faith in a 'new politics', which dismisses traditional Left forms of politics as at best ethically and normatively inferior, and at worst unnecessary. As I have shown, many of the activists engaged at the sharp end of political resistance do not make this distinction between different modes of politics, or if they do they do not make an ethical distinction between the two. Perhaps then as theorists we are overdrawing a distinction that is not reflected by those 'on the ground'.

Secondly, if we only conceptualise and put into practice the politics of the act and dismiss the politics of demand, we will limit ourselves to a small part of a wider range of potential political action available to us. It would be a shame to dismiss a particular activity or mode of politics to achieve a specific end just because it was in some way considered to be an ethically inferior choice. Deleuze and Guattari claim that all three lines of politics – the molar, molecular and lines of flight – are necessary components of political life, so it does not seem necessary to dismiss one mode of this as having no place in a radical politics of resistance. Even if we are not comfortable with theorising or enacting a politics of demand, it seems to me that to deny its function is to make such a politics of resistance unnecessarily narrow.

It should be obvious from my use of Deleuze and Guattari to develop a sustained engagement with the politics of the act and the empirical work in this thesis that my aim is not to ignore or devalue the politics of the act – indeed I hope this thesis contributes to the anarchist literature that has already made visible some of the most interesting activities that exemplify aspects of the politics of the act. Neither am I suggesting that (post)-anarchist theorists and activists should abandon their principles and practices of providing alternatives to the state, horizontal organising and the logic of affinity, and the encouragement for all to take responsibility for their action. These kinds of politics provide the basis of creativity and producing new ways of thinking and acting that have the potential to challenge the dominant hegemony. It simply means that they ought not to dismiss others who see their kind of politics as making these creative flows resonate with the wider society, and are prepared to involve themselves with state mechanisms in order to bring about some elements of change.

The disruption of the dichotomy between the politics of demand and the politics of the act also has wider implications for thinking about a radical politics of resistance politics, as it calls into question the binary distinctions many theorists make between different modes of politics as existing in isolation from each other, either in theory or in practice. Those who argue that the Global Justice Movement makes visible a new type of politics that embodies only a politics of the act could do more to recognise that the politics of demand is also produced by the types of activities I have examined in the thesis, and that the politics of the act and the politics of demand flow into and out of each other, often imperceptibly. We may only realise it after the event.

Deleuze and Guattari's three lines of politics and the way this maps onto a politics of demand and a politics of the act also allows us to conceptualise both the relationship *between* governance and resistance, and the relationship *within* a radical politics of resistance. I would suggest this opens up the need for further theoretical research into these two different lines of enquiry, and the way in which both can be made visible by the anarchist influence of the Global Justice Movement. More theoretical work needs to be done to understand the relationship between the two modes of politics as part of a wider politics of resistance, and it may be that there are other groups of political theorists and activists who can offer valuable insights into this relationship. The debate between different ways of acting politically to achieve radical change is not new, and this distinction between act and demand will be characterised differently in other

disciplines. Feminist theory, for example, has done much work on the different identities and interactions within social movements (e.g. Eschle & Maiguashca, 2010; Freeman, 1972; Mohanty, 1991), and I suggest it would be fruitful to bring these different ways of thinking about different types of politics *within* resistance politics into conversation with each other.

There is also a huge amount of empirical work to be done on activities that are valorised as exemplifying a politics of the act, such as the ones I have examined in this thesis. Although, as I have shown, many of these activities are heralded as examples of this ‘new kind of politics’, there has been very little in the way of detailed, empirical study of them. I have only been able to offer a broad brush stroke of Food Not Bombs, social centres, Critical Mass, Indymedia Centres, guerrilla gardening and the Clown Army in this thesis, and in doing so have tried to highlight the variety of activity out there. More work needs to be done to build a more detailed picture of what these activists are doing, how they understand what they are doing and how this feeds into the bigger picture of a resistance politics made visible by the Global Justice Movement.

There is also theoretical work to be done in identifying areas in which the politics of the act leads to crystallisation into a politics of demand, and how the politics of demand dissolves back into a politics of the act. In this thesis I have only been able to hint at the way in which this might happen, yet I believe that this instinct will yield interesting results if developed through further research. More empirical research that gets alongside activists on the ‘front line’ of resistance politics to find out whether they are comfortable with enacting both a politics of the act and a politics of demand is necessary. Although most activities I have studied aim to be as inclusive as possible, it is still the case the majority of activists are white, privileged, progressive activists – as are the people who are studying them. Is there something to be asked about the circumstances that give rise to the politics of the act, and certain situations in which the politics of demand is favoured?

In this thesis I have contributed to the development of a politics of the act, as I believe that less attention has been paid to this mode of politics in IR. I hope that this begins to make visible some of the diverse and innovative practices that are valorised by Day and others as being part of the Global Justice Movement. Not only have I been able to highlight some of the specific practices, but I have also tried to use Deleuze and

Guattari to develop a more robust conceptualisation of the politics of the act. I have argued that the politics of the act has strong affinities with anarchism, but that this requires a reworking of some of the principles of classical anarchism. Building on the work of postanarchist theorists Saul Newman and Todd May, I believe that I have added to this radical reworking and shown how this form of postanarchism provides a way of understanding the political practices I have highlighted here.

However, it is my contention that the postanarchist project would be strengthened by a recognition that the politics of demand is also part of a radical politics of resistance, and it is in this vein that I will offer a few suggestions of a way in which this could be conceptualised. I intend to call this the ‘politics of the molecular’. I have chosen this term as, following Deleuze and Guattari, the molecular line of politics is present in both the politics of demand (interaction with molar lines) and the politics of the act (interaction with lines of flight). The politics of the molecular has an ethical dimension that is based on an ontology of difference rather than identity. This means that it does not start from a position of identity to which everything is measured up and subtracted from, but celebrates difference as something that allows many differences to resonate together.

This could be contrasted to Chantal Mouffe’s conception of the political as developed in her book *On the Political* (Mouffe, 2005), where she outlines what it is that constitutes the foundation for politics and the political. Mouffe distinguishes between ‘politics’, which is a series of manifold practices and conflicts that is the concern of political science, and ‘the political’, which is the domain of political theory and refers to ‘the way in which society is instituted’ (Mouffe, 2005, p. 9). She argues that we need to articulate the political in a way that recognises the unfixed and contingent nature of subjectivity and the social. Drawing on Carl Schmitt, Mouffe claims that this un-fixity of the social is based on an understanding of identity as being understood only in relation to something else – for the existence of any “us” necessitates the existence of a “them”. This leads her to define the political as ‘the dimension of antagonism which I take to be constitutive of human societies’ (Mouffe, 2005, p. 9). The political is the set of conditions in which antagonisms will emerge, and politics is the struggle for hegemony that is played out, and politics makes the contingency of the social order visible as it reveals that society could be something other than what it currently is and open to contestation and change.

For Mouffe, the goal of democratic politics is not an overcoming of the we/they opposition within a politics of resistance but creating a space in which these different identities can be established. Democratic thinking involves ‘drawing the we/they distinction in a way which is compatible with the recognition of the pluralism which is constitutive of modern democracy’ (Mouffe, 2005, p. 14). Mouffe’s declares that her project involves reclaiming democratic politics from the liberal-democratic paradigm that suggests we have moved ‘beyond left and right’, and argues that democratic politics must take account of our passions and will therefore always have a partisan character (Mouffe, 2005, p. 6).

Mouffe suggests that any political project then – the *within* of resistance to the dominant order – is a place where antagonism and conflicting demands is a natural part of the political, and to deny this is to deny politics all together. To ignore these different identities, which will often have demands that conflict with others within the same political movement, is to deny the existence of politics. Ignoring or trying to eliminate conflict by excluding it from legitimate political discussion will actually lead to a far more destructive agonistic conflict, and so ‘the task for democratic theorists and politicians should be to envisage the creation of a vibrant ‘agonistic’ public sphere of contestation where different hegemonic political projects can be confronted’ (Mouffe, 2005, p. 3).

In order do to this, Mouffe develops the concept of ‘agonism’ to show how we can accept that there are irreconcilable differences between conflicting groups who are all striving to create a new hegemony while treating those different to us with respect rather than hostility. She suggests that ‘agonism is a we/they relation where the conflicting parties, although acknowledging that there is no rational solution to their conflict, nevertheless recognize the legitimacy of their opponents. They are ‘adversaries’ rather than ‘enemies’ (Mouffe, 2005, p. 20). Pluralism is constitutive of modern democracy, and it is important that we allow space for our adversaries to exist and that we have a shared symbolic space where we all understand the rules of engagement (Mouffe, 2005, p. 121). These different groups then have to negotiate or (respectfully) fight each other to gain control of a new hegemony that can then challenge the dominant order in order to bring about change.

This understanding of politics as existing in a democratic space which is conflictual and has antagonism at its heart can be contrasted to my politics of the molecular in several ways, but in one way in particular – its foundations. The most important difference is that the politics of the molecular is based on an ontology of difference rather than identity. This eliminates the need for an essential site of antagonism *within* a resistance politics. Rather than being set up in opposition to each other, all those involved in a radical politics of resistance are seen as differences resonating together – they are not being measured up to a particular identity or only being able to determine one’s own identity in relation to an other. A politics of the molecular is not oppositional and irreconcilable, but instead recognises that different politics and strategies of resistance will flow into and out of each other, rather than existing in a permanent sense of antagonism. In other words, the politics of the molecular is about thinking outside the of the dichotomous thinking that forces us to place all demands or alternatives to the state into categories of us/them, as this is simply replicating the ways of thinking of the dominant order. The politics of the molecular doesn’t see adversaries but opportunities for connection in unexpected places and is always open to newness that changes the whole dimension of resistance.

So what does this politics of the molecular look like? I would like to suggest three characteristics that I think a politics of the molecular will possess. Firstly, the politics of the molecular is creating and working at the margins of society – in the spaces opened up by non-state thought. Those practicing a politics of the molecular are engaged in *withdrawal from the state*, they stay beneath the state’s radar to create alternative ways of living that evade state control and recognition, such as the subversive activity of the guerrilla gardeners gardening in the middle of the night to avoid being arrested or questioned by the local authority, or the reclaiming of spaces that have been abandoned by everyone else and their transformation into social centres and squats.

Although an on-going resistance to the domination of the state is the key aim of this kind of radical politics, there are also concrete gains that can be made by the state in order to improve the material situation of those who are offered no protection or rights by the existing order. A politics of the molecular understands that to alleviate unnecessary domination for such groups by making demands of the state does not lessen the work being done to create alternatives. Recognition from the state can allow activists to give stability or permanency to these alternative ways of living that are

allowing people to think at the limit of state possibilities, that allows people to think and act outside of state thought. Although this may mean that some aspect of the original resistance is compromised and taken under the control of the state apparatus; it also means that creative thought and practices that destabilise the dominant order by exposing the state's inability to provide for its citizens can flourish, and can be experienced by those who have never come into contact with this kind of resistance politics.

Secondly, the politics of the molecular is committed to *horizontal organisation*, it embraces contingency and is open to multiple and heterogeneous possibilities and opportunities. It is a politics that is based on a celebration of difference and has no central identity from which everything else must be derived. The politics of the molecular is diverse and embodies many different interpretations of similar ideas that are practiced differently everywhere, for example in the way Critical Mass or Food Not Bombs share a common sense of purpose but operate differently in every town or city. Even in one city a Critical Mass ride still takes on a different character every month, depending on the participants, other road users, weather etc.

However sometimes in order to achieve a specific aim or to make sure there is a common understanding of what constitutes acceptable, non-dominating behaviour a leadership structure may be the best way of allowing an activity to flourish, for example in creating a set of standards to which prospective Indymedia Centres have to adhere in order to ensure a level of consistency and to protect those posting articles from personal attack or vilification by others. Leadership does not have to be fixed and can dissolve again as soon as the particular task has been achieved. A politics of the molecular also recognises that certain practices can be sedimented as regular and expected so that routines can be created to make activities more visible or reliable, such as the way in which Critical Mass rides around the world all meet on the last Friday of every month, or the regular meeting places specified for Food Not Bombs groups. These routines are always open to disruption or questioning however, and would not take for granted the routine sedimentation of any particular activity.

Thirdly, a politics of the molecular encourages activists through an *imperative for enactment*. Activists do not sign up for a specific programme, but are able to create their own activities of resistance and to experiment without being judged specifically by

the criteria of 'success' and failure. A politics of the molecular involves taking responsibility for personal transformation as well as transforming dominant systems of control, such as the self-transformative potential of clowning. It is also something that can be done anywhere, by anyone, to subvert notions of public space and authority, as shown by the guerrilla gardeners who redefine public space to include grass verges and roundabouts as places of beauty.

These creative activities can be hugely subversive in redefining the binary opposites that the dominant order of society ask us to classify ourselves and others into, such as public space/private space, police/protester, authority/chaos, but they can also allow themselves to be recaptured by the state and to be legitimated by them, such as guerrilla gardeners being given permission to garden an area of public space which is sanctioned by the local authority. This may diminish the ability to disrupt the state order at that moment, and take away responsibility from the government to meet the needs of the community, but it does allow the public space to be enjoyed by everyone and to be gardened by someone who enjoys the creativity of doing so.

To sum up, a politics of the molecular can, I believe, be seen as one possible way in which a postanarchist project could be furthered. I should make it clear that, although a politics of the molecular does embrace both the politics of act and the politics of demand within it, I am not suggesting that both have equal ontological weight, but that the politics of the act, an anarchist politics, is the creative basis from which another mode of politics can be useful in crystallising into specific recognisable 'moments' that interact with the state and social order in order to achieve specifically articulated gains.

A politics of the molecular is firmly anarchist in character, but it also accepts that different modes of politics, captured in this thesis as the distinction between a politics of demand and a politics of the act, are bound up together, and flow into and out of each other. This kind of politics comes from an understanding that to dismiss one mode of politics at the expense of another is to miss out on the fully transformative power of a radical politics of resistance. A politics of the molecular is anti-domination in the sense that it seeks to disrupt the dominant order, but recognises that sometime this may mean engaging with it. A politics of the molecular organises itself in decentralised, horizontal ways that do not have 'command centres', but recognises that sometimes in order to achieve a specific aim or to make sure there is a common understanding of what

constitutes acceptable, non-dominating behaviour a leadership structure is most efficient. A politics of the molecular is creative, experimental and encourages everyone to pursue their own lines of flight, both individual and collective, but recognises that sometimes in order to disrupt the identities that we are encouraged to fit ourselves, and others into, a unified approach envisioned by leaders can have a greater impact.

In this thesis I have attempted to pursue my own line of flight in order to disrupt some of the assumptions we make about the nature of resistance politics. I hope that in some small way I have been able to contribute to the reshuffling of some binarised molar segments around the discourse of the politics of demand and the politics of the act, and that the politics of the molecular represents a way of thinking beyond this historic and theoretical dichotomy.

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