

CRITIQUE OF THE NECROPOLITICAL ECONOMY OF THE INTERNET OF THINGS: BRAINS, BIOHACKING, AND SOCIAL APARTHEID

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ABSTRACT

Science and technology are converging with centralized political and economic interests in research fields and industries such as neurology, weapons manufacturing, AI, biosurveillance, and human augmentation. This convergence is international in scope and entails a technoscientific intensification of anti-democratic governing procedures. It therefore poses an international challenge to democracy. In this paper, I critically survey diverse applications of a key governing procedure according to which this convergence is being engineered. I also highlight apposite features of the political/libidinal economy through which it operates. To do so, I merge Achille Mbembe's analyses of necropolitics/necropower with Deleuze and Guattari's diagrammatic analyses of paranoid-fascisizing procedures of unconscious social production, linking both to the IoT. With the latter established as a universal infrastructure, necropower deploys global and specific (in contrast to partial and nonspecific), anti-democratic integrative procedures in both scientific R&D and geopolitics to decode the human brain, hack biosystems, and engineer social apartheid.

KEYWORD

Internet of Things (IoT), Human Brain Project (HBP), Cognitive Warfare, Biohacking, Necropolitics

1. INTRODUCTION

In chapter two of *Anti-Oedipus*, Gilles Deleuze and Felix Guattari state in explicit terms a key principle of their critique of psychoanalysis, which is everywhere implicit throughout the text: the unconscious is a “battlefield,” they assert using a term that appears only a handful of times in their oeuvre, “and not an [Oedipal] scene from bourgeois theatre” [1, p. 97]. Deleuze and Guattari are not the first to make this observation in the modern era. At least as early as Le Bon's crowd psychology [2], which exercised a profound impact on imperial military thought throughout the first half of the twentieth century [3], the social unconscious has been targeted as a key battlescape for a wide variety of special interests and influences. As a tool to aid in theorizing this battlescape (in part as a field of unconscious libidinal investments, disinvestments, and counter investments), Deleuze and Guattari draw a diagram.

This paper rethinks Deleuze and Guattari's diagram of unconscious social investments in and for an era of cognitive warfare, biohacking, and necropower. Diagrams, as theorized by Deleuze and Guattari, are ideal means by which to conceptually explore orders and connections between discursive and physical systems. A concatenation of both (and more), the Internet of Things (IoT) sutures neuronal networks and biological systems to a necropolitical power-knowledge ensemble (at once discursive and institutional) by means of *global* and *specific* integrative techniques or *syntheses*. Logically bivalent, global and specific syntheses both produce and enforce vertical command and control political economies of technoscientifically governed populations; they

select for inclusion that which is amenable to being integrated into universalized social, economic, and political policies, dysselecting for exclusion whatever proves to be intractably resistant to integration. Following Achille Mbembe [4], I reconceptualize Foucault's notion of biopower/biopolitics [5], characterized by the sovereign's power to "make live and let die," in more precise and explanatorily powerful terms as necropower/necropolitics. In a necropolitical economy of technoscientific governance, rights are suspended and populations culled through state of emergency/state of siege warfare (or "policy by other means" [6]); those who are selected for inclusion in a population are maintained as a useful, exploited class [7], while the dysselected and/or unselectable are deemed disposable and deprived of their basic means of subsistence [4].

2. OVERVIEW: AN ERA OF COGNITIVE WARFARE AND BIOHACKING

The IoT denotes a global infrastructure linking digital communication systems to living bodies and institutional power-knowledge ensembles with codified operational standards and formalized (though flexible) rules of engagement enshrined in technoscientific discursive practices. This definition is broadly consistent with Karanja et al.'s survey of IoT definitions, characterizations, and applications [8]; however, the specific quality of the IoT with which this paper is most concerned is largely absent from those surveyed in [8], since the latter only indirectly capture the quality of the IoT as a "web of weapons" [9, p. 106] in and through which hi-tech cognitive, psychological, informational, biological, and kinetic (including nuclear) wars may be waged. Schneier [10] and, more recently, Dyer-Witheford and Matviyenko [9] and Scharre [11], have more directly elaborated this facet of the IoT. The quality of the IoT as a multi-operationalizable battlescape is a direct function of its ubiquity as it intersects and newly integrates multiple critical ecologies – including cognitive/neuronal, biological, social, political, economic, and geographical – into a common (digital) infrastructure. In this paper, I focus on the IoT as an integrative medium of cognitive and biological ecologies through which the latter come under the control of a distinctly necropolitical diagram of power. Operationalized through state of exception politics, the diagram of necropower metabolizes the materials over which it traverses in a permanent state of siege, assimilating and transforming some materials and expelling others. The emergence of the diagram of necropower coincides with the dawn of an era of cognitive warfare and biohacking.

2.1. Cognitive Warfare

Neurotechnologies and neuroscience systems have converged with the IoT, creating novel means of human augmentation and warfare engagement [12]–[15]. "Cognitive warfare," in this paper, refers specifically to the application of neuroscientific systems and neurotechnologies to nonkinetic battlefield engagements. Aerosolize self-assembling nanoparticulate propulsion devices (which can be disguised as fountain pens), nanoscale biosensors, computational brain-machine interfaces, and neuro-psychopharmacological substances are all examples of cognitive warfare weaponry [14]. Cognitive warfare is therefore both practically and theoretically distinct from psychological warfare and cyberwarfare, though the means and methods apropos each may at times intersect and/or overlap with one or both of the others. Broadly speaking, the discursive matrixes of psychological warfare have historically included philosophical, sociological, anthropological, psychoanalytic, and mediatic disciplines; those of cyberwarfare mediatic, psychological, cybernetic, computer scientific, and computational disciplines; and those of cognitive warfare computational, mediatic, psychological, neurological, biophysical, chemical, and toxicological disciplines. This paper is concerned primarily with neurological and biophysical discursive matrixes and the socioeconomic institutions to which they are operationally linked.

2.2. Biohacking

Biohacking combines tactics of both cyber and cognitive warfare. Its means include state-of-the-art computational and algorithmic technologies combined with sophisticated biophysiological knowledge and nanoscale biosensors. Its methodology involves delivering biosensors into living bodies to collect biometric information, creating a real-time data feed to advanced AI machines which then produce a cache of computational data believed by some proponents to enable its owner(s) to exercise total control over the living bodies hosting the biosensors [7, 16]. In both public and private sectors, the collection of biometric data has become the latest holy grail of political and economic control. According to two-time World Economic Forum (WEF) Annual Meeting keynote speaker, Yuval Noah Harari, biohacking is likely to give rise to “data colonialism” [7] and to ramify inequalities such that they are no longer merely economic, but also biological, as those who control the data will be able to put it to use in realizing various transhumanist bioengineering projects [16]. In class terms, Harari predicts that biohacking will bifurcate humanity – the audience to whom he makes this prediction at the WEF not included – into a useful, exploited class and a new, useless class [7]. This paper takes Harari’s prediction seriously and sees it as consistent with the means and methods of necropower.

3. GLOBAL AND SPECIFIC INTEGRATION IN TECHNOSCIENTIFIC DISCOURSE

The English word “science” translates Latin’s “scire,” which in turn translates “*epistēmē*” in Greek, meaning “knowledge.” Classically and popularly understood, modern scientific knowledge is knowledge based upon observation combined with rigorous practical and discursive methods of verification. It is distinguished from mere belief and/or opinion based upon hearsay or authority. In actual practice, however, the modern discipline of science has always been intimately tied to authority. The relationship of science to authority is sometimes straightforward, as when one considers the hierarchical institutional structures in and through which it is practiced; and sometimes it is more subtle and complex, as when one critically explores philosophical [17]– [27], technological [18]–[22], hermeneutical [23]–[24], sociological and axiological [18, 22, 25], historical and cultural [25]–[27], state and military [21], [28]–[36], political [21], [25]–[37], economic [36], [38]–[41] and/or other dimensions of scientific practice. This paper treats relatively straightforward (though too often unacknowledged and unquestioned) hierarchical relationships between modern scientific practice and economic power/authority – albeit in ways that draw on less straightforward theoretical modes of analysis to highlight more complex aspects of these relationships. Specifically, it surveys multiple applications of a common procedure by which economic power organizes a multiplicity of discursive and physical systems into a monolithic, anti-democratic structure of socioeconomic and political control. Adapting a concept from Deleuze and Guattari [1], I refer to this procedure as one of global and specific integration.

3.1. The Human Brain Project (HBP)

The HBP is a well-funded, pan-European effort to create “a European Research Infrastructure to Decode the Human Brain” [42]. Axiological, technological, and political-economic dimensions of modern scientific R&D are all discernible in its discursive presentation. As presented by Amunts et al. [42, p. 574]:

“Decoding the human brain is perhaps the most fascinating scientific challenge in the 21st century. The Human Brain Project (HBP), a 10-year European Flagship, targets the reconstruction of the brain’s multiscale organization. It uses productive loops of experiments,

medical, data, data analytics, and simulation on all levels that will eventually bridge the scales. The HBP IT architecture is unique, utilizing cloud-based collaboration and development platforms with databases, workflow systems, petabyte storage, and super-computers. The HBS is developing toward a European research infrastructure advancing brain research, medicine, and brain-inspired information technology.”

In addition to its evident (though not to be taken for granted) imbrication with the latest technological tools of inquiry and analysis, it is noteworthy that Amunts et al.’s discourse on the HBP has recourse to terminology that is religiously laden. “The HBP is *predestined*,” they write (emphasis added), “to establish itself as *the* European research infrastructure for brain research and brain-inspired technology development” (emphasis in original) [42, p. 574]. However, most noteworthy for the purposes of this paper is the HBP’s discursive application of a global and specific mode of R&D infrastructural integration.

In *Anti-Oedipus*, Deleuze and Guattari theorize three syntheses of desiring-production, which, they argue, together constitute a single circuit of reality-production. These syntheses, or modes of integrating human desire with its social reality such that the latter is produced in conformity with the former, are the connective, the disjunctive, and the conjunctive. Together they form a tripartite unity of desiring-production which may be governed by either of two opposing regimes of unconscious social investment: the paranoiac-fascisizing and the schizorevolutionary. I will elaborate on these two regimes in the subsequent section; here I am concerned only with the connective mode of social-libidinal integration as governed by a paranoiac-fascisizing regime.

Desire is an unconscious coder/decoder of the social world in and through which it produces/reproduces its inhabited realities. When governed by paranoiac-fascisizing regimes, unconscious social desire codes or axiomatizes its realities from the top down: “The prime function incumbent upon the [paranoiac-fascisizing] socius [or social body] has always been to codify the flows of desire, to inscribe them, to record them, to see to it that no flow exists that is not properly damned up, channelled, regulated” [1, p. 33]. Through top-down axiomatization of the flows of desiring-production, orders of connection and coupling are established that engender strictly hierarchized social bodies which are proficient in reproducing themselves. Deleuze and Guattari describe such modes of connection or social integration as *global* and *specific*, which they contrast with the *partial* and *nonspecific* modes of connection definitive of schizorevolutionary regimes.

Consider as an example the capitalist mode of mass-producing kitchen tables. Under this mode, connective integration is global and specific: a universal standard/model is established, then coded into the manufacturing process where it is applied to each specific instance of production. Imagine a warehouse containing row after uniform row of kitchen tables that are identical to the extent that their production has been axiomatized in relation to the generic model. (By way of contrast to a global and specific mode of table manufacturing, Deleuze and Guattari offer as an example of partial and nonspecific integration the “schizophrenic table,” the production of which is unmediated by any hierarchically ordered codes. Instead, it is “a table of additions, much like certain schizophrenics’ drawings, described as ‘overstuffed’...not intended for any specific purpose...[it] lent itself to no function...denying itself to service and communication alike” [1, p. 6]. I will return to this concept of partial and nonspecific integration in the conclusion.)

The HBP is likewise organized in accordance with global and specific integrative procedures.

“The approach taken in the HBP is highly coordinated and very broad: it brings together a dozen or more disciplines, drawn from 117 partner institutions in 19 countries in Europe, as well as some 120 nationally funded Partnering Projects. Some of these Partner Projects are the fruit of

transnational calls set up by the EU's FLAG-ERA research coordination mechanism, and funded by European national funding agencies” [42, p. 575].

While the HBP's approach may appear horizontal, boasting as it does so many partner nations and institutions, both its funding structure and model for implementation are fully hierarchized and centralized. In terms of implementation, the HBP adopts a “structured and targeted approach” entailing “a very significant integration engineering effort” [42, p. 575]. Project engineering is tightly controlled through funding. With a budget of nearly €80 billion [43], the distribution of these funds is entirely determined by the European Commission Directorate General “in the framework of the EU's Horizon 2020 research funding program” [42, p. 574].

“Over the project's 10-year overall lifetime, EC funding is awarded in 2-year increments, subject each time to the favourable review and acceptance of a formal proposal for a new SGA [i.e., the first specific grant agreement]. These increments provide the opportunity to bring in additional partners when new capabilities are needed to fulfil the roadmap, or to remove partners who have not contributed as expected” [42, pp. 574-5].

Thus it is funding – i.e., capital flows – and the interests to which it is tied, and not the unsullied pursuit of true knowledge, that ultimately determines the fate of research proposals competing for investment. If this strikes the reader as perfectly normal and even natural, it is only because such procedures are indeed a normalized/naturalized part of doing scientific business under capitalism. Modern technoscientific research as conducted in every major research institution in Europe and North America is governed by capital flows. Therefore, it is those who control these flows who exercise final authority over the direction(s) technoscientific research takes. When deemed “favourable,” projects receive the necessary financial support to continue; but when subordinate ‘partners’ are deemed to “have not contributed as expected,” their funding is withdrawn and their research horizons de facto expunged.

The logic of this organizational structure is neatly summarized in the European Commission's “Intervention logic of Horizon 2020 interim evaluation” flowchart [44]; and it is discursively elaborated in their “Interim evaluation of Horizon 2020” Executive Summary [43]. In [43, p. 42], financial stakeholders are said to “orientate EU R&I towards...ambitious EU policy objectives,” these necessarily being “in line” with stakeholders’ “needs.” The Executive Summary also calls for “closing the gap between R&I” by “coordinating the various stakeholders to ensure a stronger alignment of basic/fundamental research with [their] future needs” [43, p. 55]. One need only replace “needs” with “desires” to arrive at a clear discursive expression of a global and specific mode of integrating technoscientific projects like the HBP with the financial/libidinal investments of those who exercise last-instance control over their realization. “As the project moves forward,” Amunts et al. report [42, p. 575], “components and contributions from HBP member countries will be integrated to complete specific parts of the research infrastructure.” In this way, global and specific integration is not only applied at the level of the individual researchers but at that of EU member states as well, with each member state fulfilling its assigned role according to the specifications of those transnational R&I apparatuses through which “ambitious EU policy objectives” are conceived and implemented. That the determination of such objectives excludes EU member state citizens is a point acknowledged but elided in the Horizon 2020 Executive Summary as its authors purport to speak on behalf of the citizenry, asserting that “close-to-the market activities and radical technological breakthroughs” are “concerns shared by all European citizens” [43, p. 51]. The document does not provide any evidence to substantiate this claim.

4. DIAGRAM OF NECROPOWER

In a 2018 lecture delivered at West Point's Modern War Institute, accomplished U.S. military advisor, scientist, professor, author, and task leader of the HBP, James Giordano [14], assures an auditorium of cadets that "the brain is, and will be, *the* 21st-century battlescape in many ways. End of story.... I'm here to tell you," he continues: "that *you will encounter some form of neurocognitive science that has been weaponized not only in your military career but in your personal and professional lives* – irrespective of whether those two things coincide or not." The Georgetown professor goes on to survey the "potential, possibility, and probability of what the brain sciences can do, and *will do*" with respect to neurocognitive weaponization.

"What are these techniques and technologies that have rendered this capability and, if you will, geopolitical, military, and social power?" the HBP task leader questions. They are, he explains, advances in neuroscientific capabilities to decode the human brain coupled with advances in "interventional technologies," including neuromicrobiologicals, organic neurotoxins, and nanoneurotechnologicals. In other words, drawing together remarks made by Giordano throughout the lecture, it is thanks to joint efforts by state, academic, philanthropic, and other public-private contributors – including the HBP – to build an infrastructure that allows scientists to decode the human brain that the cadets to whom he lectures are certain to encounter weapons aimed at manipulating, disrupting, damaging, and/or destroying their neurochemical ecology.

With an HBP task leader's explicit acknowledgement of the shared private and military interest in building an infrastructure to decode – and weaponize – the human brain, a direct link is established between such projects as discursive formations, on the one hand, and as practical formations with recognized value apropos "geopolitical, military, and social power," on the other. To display and more fully unfold these dynamics, it is useful to deploy a diagram.

Among other functions not to be discussed in this paper, diagrams are means by which to expose relations between abstract forces. Following Deleuze's commentary on Michel Foucault's panoptic diagrammatics of modern disciplinary societies [45], abstract forces may be distinguished into two fundamental types: discursive and non-discursive, articulable and visible, semiotic and physical, regimes of signs and regimes of bodies. Displaying relations between both regimes, a diagram functions as "a cartography that is coextensive with the whole social field" [45, p. 34]; it maps visible and articulable practical formations according to the manner in which these two heterogenous systems are composed in given society. Discursive formations involve "statements," which, as Foucault writes in *The Archaeology of Knowledge* [46, p. 85], are always "produced (articulated, drawn, made, traced) in one way or another." However, mere producibility alone is not sufficient to constitute a Foucauldian statement. To be a statement in Foucault's sense, that which is articulated must also evince a link to something outside of itself. That is, it must be linked to something non-discursive, such as an institution(s), political event(s), economic process and/or other non-discursive formation. Foucault offers by way of example the letters A, Z, E, R, and T on a French keyboard. Insofar as they are merely letters on a keyboard, they do not form a statement; but when they appear listed in a typewriting manual, they become a statement by virtue of their now containing an implicit link to an "outside" of institutional standardization of keyboards in the French language, specific patterns and techniques of inscribing words and sentences with one's hands, the advent and mass manufacturing of the typewriter, and so on. Elaborating Foucault's analyses, Deleuze raises the question of how these two formations – the one articulable/discursive, the other institutional/non-discursive – are formally linked? How, for example, are penal law and the prison system linked such that the two formations refer to one another? Or, to pose the same question in relation not to a diagram of disciplinary societies, but instead to one of necropower and its unique organization of discursive and non-discursive formations, how are the statements issued by Giordano, Amunts et al., and the

European Commission discussed above linked to the IoT? What shared characteristics can be discerned between both formations, and how do they operate under a necropolitical diagram of power?

The answer put forward in this paper, which is by no means exhaustive, suggests that one way in which necropower organizes the societies in relation to which it operates is by means of global and specific integration. I have shown how a global and specific mode of integration is discernible in one highly consequential technoscientific discourse that has emerged contemporaneously with the IoT – namely the HBP. It remains to be shown how such discourses coincide with an IoT infrastructure, the latter being understood as a veritable “web of weapons” into which living bodies and brains are being systematically integrated by unelected actors and institutional bodies.

The diagram below, adapted from Deleuze and Guattari’s *Anti-Oedipus*, maps the abstract functions of necropower’s visible and articulable power-knowledge ensemble. It merges Deleuze and Guattari’s two regimes of madness (paranoic-fascisizing and schizorevolutionary), corresponding to two modes of group investment (subjugated group and subject-group), with Achille Mbembe’s descriptions of necropower [4] as a globalized “plantation system” the abstract functions of which are operationalized through state of exception/state of siege politics.

Like all human artifacts, the IoT is produced neither by accident nor according to a fully conscious grand plan. Its design is as much conscious and deliberate as it is the product of unconscious social investments. The predominate unconscious influence on its formation is that of the status quo – the paranoic-fascisizing – as contrasted by Deleuze and Guattari with schizorevolutionary group investments in the following key passage [1, p. 277]:

“Delirium is the general matrix of every unconscious social investment. Every unconscious investment mobilizes a delirious interplay of disinvestments, of counterinvestments, of overinvestments. But we have seen in this context that there were two major types of social investment, segregative and nomadic, just as there were two poles of delirium: first, a paranoiac-fascisizing type or pole that invests the formation of central sovereignty; overinvests it by making it the final eternal cause for all other socials forms of history; counterinvests the enclaves or the periphery; and disinvests every free ‘figure’ of desire – yes, I am your kind, and I belong to the superior race and class. And second, a schizorevolutionary type or pole that follows the lines of escape of desire; breaches the wall and causes flows to move; assembles its machines and its groups-in-fusion in the enclaves or at the periphery – proceeding in an inverse fashion from that of the other pole: I am not your kind, I belong eternally to the inferior race, I am a beast, a black.”

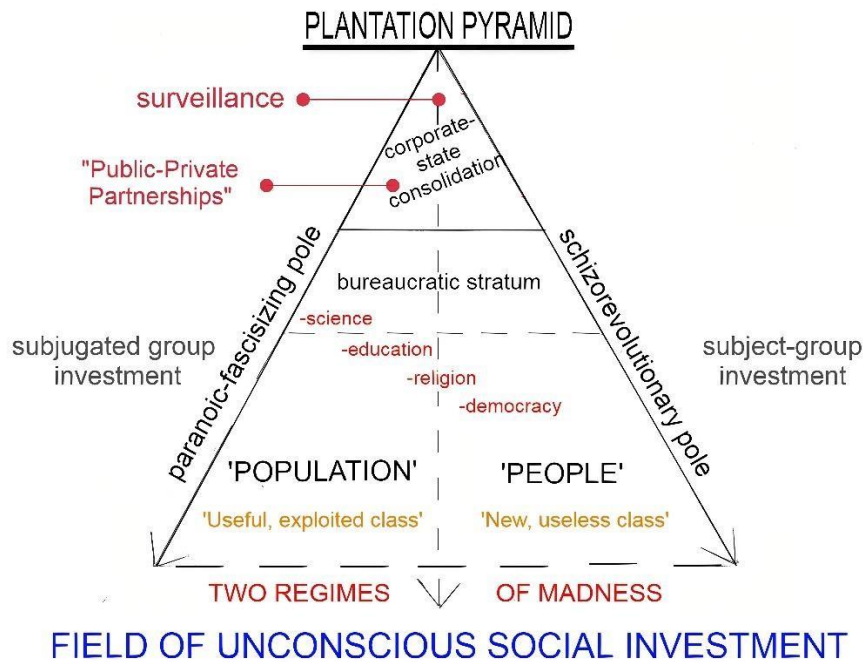


Figure 1. Diagram of necropower

In the concluding section of this paper, I reflect on possibilities of nomadic or schizorevolutionary resistance (otherwise described as partial and nonspecific); here the key point to note is the segregative function ascribed to the fascisizing regime: investing the formation of central sovereignty, this regime disinvests all who refuse to come under its control. In Mbembe’s description [4, pp. 78-83], necropower establishes and enforces a “politics of verticality” and “vertical sovereignty” by means of which communities get separated along a y-axis. In this case, the Cameroonian philosopher writes, “sovereignty means the capacity to define who matters and who does not, who is *disposable* and who is not.” Necropower institutes “forms of separation on the model of an apartheid state.” Entire populations become “the target of the sovereign” and are subjected to scientific planning for purposes of control. In the words of Yuval Noah Harari to the World Economic Forum already paraphrased and inserted as a Foucauldian statement into the diagram of necropower above, the new “digital colonialism” made possible by the IoT bifurcates humanity into a ‘useful, exploited class’ and a ‘new, useless class’ [7]. Or, as Foucault put it in his lectures published in English under the title, *Security, Territory, Population* [5, p. 66]:

“[T]he people do not really belong to the population. What are they? Well, the people. The people comprise those who conduct themselves in relation to the management of the population...as if they were not part of the population...as if they put themselves outside of it, and consequently the people are those who, refusing to be the population, disrupt the system.”

Elaborating on the dynamics of social apartheid under a distinctly necropolitical diagram of power, Mbembe observes that those who are absorbed into the population become subjected to “absolute domination” as “[d]aily life is militarized” and “[m]ovement...requires formal permits,” while the uncooperative are “deprived of their means of income” and denied access to basic subsistence-supporting systems. All of this, he notes, is “thanks to a military-technological revolution that has intensified the capacity for destruction in unprecedented ways” [4, pp. 82-3]. Or, using metonymic shorthand for the gamut of such technologies, it is thanks to the IoT [9].

According to Mbembe, this military-technological revolution involves a concatenation of biohacking, surveillance, and mediatic methods of manufacturing constant terror. Control over such tools of domination belongs primarily to transnational biosecurity state apparatuses and necropolitical economic forces, the latter two having merged to form extra-legal interlocking directorates, which Mbembe describes using Deleuze and Guattari's notion of war machines.

War machines, in Mbembe's account, are "polymorphous and diffuse organizations" – including political parties, non-profit and philanthropic organizations, law firms, mediatic regimes, transnational banks and corporations, and forums like the WEF which "enjoy complex links with the state form" [4, p. 85]. As advertised by the WEF, these links represent progressive "public-private partnerships" that are poised to save the world from the throes of crisis. Together they form what Mbembe characterizes as a synchronized necropolitical economy of war and terror specializing in resource extraction, the creation of political dependents through debt, and the manufacturing and sale of weapons.

Among the weapons manufactured by Mbembe's war machines are tools for biohacking and surveillance. In a series of publicly infamous talks and interviews, Yuval Noah Harari links these two together, declaring that humans have become "hackable animals" [7] subject to monitoring by a presently operative biosurveillance regime that has gone "under the skin" [47]. Deploying "the biggest game-changer of all" – biometric sensors – biosurveillance regimes, Harari claims, are in the process of transforming at least some humans into a new, biologically enhanced species [16]. A quintessential "Davos Man," Harari serves as an apologist – indeed, a lauded prophet – of and for the biosurveillance regime the arrival of which he announces. "The whole idea that humans have this soul...and...free will," the historian authoritatively relays to an uninitiated public, "and [that] nobody knows what's happening inside me, so whatever I choose, whether in an election or...in the supermarket, is my free will – *that's over*" [48]. From now on, as brains and bodies are increasingly integrated into the IoT, it will be those who control the biometric data thereby produced who will make decisions for the rest of humanity. Some humans will be integrated into the global population as a permanently expropriated and exploited underclass, while others may be made to serve an alternative purpose – equally characteristic of the operations of necropower – of what Mbembe describes ominously as an "immense therapeutic liturgy" of routinized massacres [4]. Such is the universal truth of the twenty-first century human condition as announced by one of the foremost spokespeople of those who are invested in such a future.

5. CONCLUSION

What are the people to do? Have we reached the end of democracy, as Coles [49] has compellingly argued, echoing other commentators [31, 36], [50]–[56] who are concerned with contemporary, anti-democratic political events? How are the global and specific integrative forces of fascisizing regimes to be resisted? How can resistance groups-in-formation respond to the top-down control programs being promulgated – and enacted – by an ascendant ensemble of necropolitical war machines armed with surveillance tools and weapons like those described by Mbembe, Giordano, and Harari? Are currently existing democratic institutions, such as courts of law and electoral apparatuses, of any use to those who would decommission necropolitical systems of governance in the name of democratic self-determination? Can further social bifurcation be forestalled? If so, how? And should the IoT be targeted for attack by resistance actors?

I do not think that targeting the IoT for attack is an advisable tactic; nor would I advocate for any form of violence. A violent response to the mounting pressure for every free figure of desire to be brought under the control – morally and emotionally as much as physically [54]–[57] – of a

global necropolitical regime will only justify, from the viewpoint of its enforcers, a swift and disproportionate retaliation. As this survey illustrates, necropower’s global and specific integrative procedures are generative of a so-called ‘useless class’ the sociopolitical exclusion of which is marketed to the ‘useful class’ as an imperative of public security [4, 32], [55]–[56]. Accordingly, any act of incitement, such as an attack on necropower’s supporting infrastructure, is apt only to be used as an excuse to intensify and accelerate its apartheid procedures [56].

Resistance actors and groups-in-information must instead opt for alternatives. Here again a tactical concept borrowed from Deleuze and Guattari may prove useful. Procedures of global and specific integration can be circumvented through a schizorevolutionary lifestyle of *partial* and *nonspecific* self-determination. Whereas procedures of global and specific integration – whether economic, social/moral, and/or psychological – are designed to code individuals according to “molar” or universal standards and expectations, a partial and nonspecific manner of relating to the world “proceeds in an inverse fashion” [1], refusing such axiomatizations in favour of less generic and more open and creative possibilities. Instead of obeying mediatic regimes that broadcast their solemn moral dictates under auspices of, for example, “the science says,” a schizorevolutionary raises questions and conducts research, arriving at their own considered viewpoints on matters that bear directly on their life, their livelihood, and their communities. Instead of launching reactive attacks on the IoT infrastructure, a schizorevolutionary appeals to more constructive calls, such as the call issued by Penn [58] “to reject structural dependencies on digital tools” via strategies of “algorithmic silence” and “decomputerization.” Instead of allowing themselves to be slotted into either-or schemas – either avail oneself to exploitation and afford survival or be deprived of a means of income and lose access to all subsistence-supporting systems, for example – the schizorevolutionary creates ad hoc alternatives: or we will reject and protest these options while organizing mutual-aid networks with likeminded peers; or we will build our own newly invented democratic institutions and modes of democratic self-organization from the grassroots; or, adapting Mbembe’s most recent reflections on the matter [54], we will enact a new generation of inalienable human rights based upon the abolition of all forms of social apartheid currently being engineered by an anti-democratic ensemble of necropolitical war machines; or...or...or....

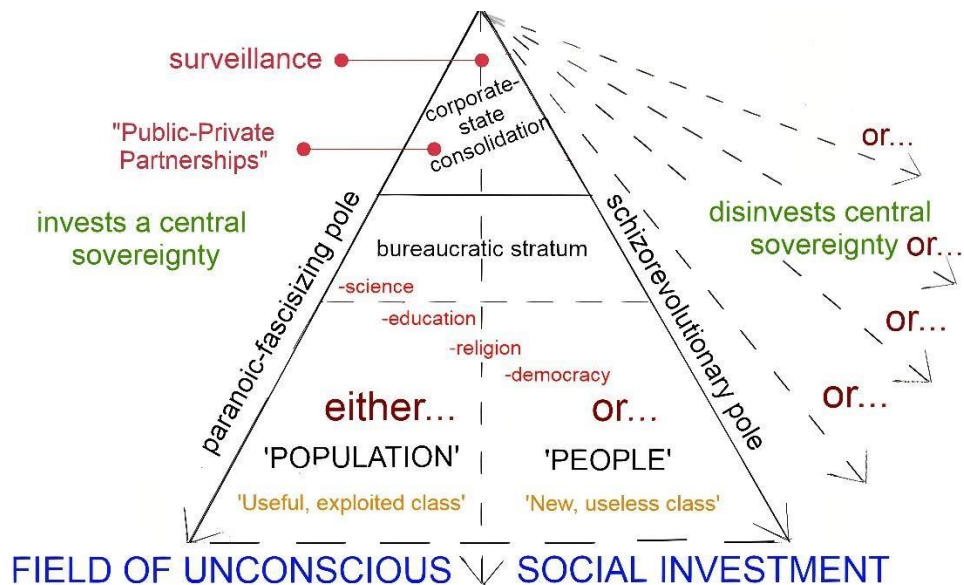


Figure 2. Partial and nonspecific resistance

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