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THE POLITICAL ANATOMY OF DOMINATION

BÉATRICE HIBOU



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It's all relationships. And if you want to give it a more exact name, then call it ambiguity. (...) Music is ambiguity as a system. Take this note or this one. You can understand it like this or again, like this, can perceive it as augmented from below or as diminished from above, and, being the sly fellow you are, you can make use of its duplicity just as you like.

Thomas Mann, Doctor Faustus, (New York: Vintage International), p. 51

PREFACE

This book, based on the analysis of situations usually characterized as authoritarian or totalitarian, tackles one of the most classic questions of political science: the exercise of domination and the relations based on it. This issue sometimes seems hackneyed, and is to some extent considered outdated, but it remains fundamental in many ways. Still, was this sufficient reason for attacking such a monster head-on, without being restricted to a particular ‘field,’ and tackling it generically? This task would have obliged me to read at least three quarters—perhaps all—of the books on political science, not to mention a significant proportion of the output of the other social sciences. If I had followed the dictates of scientific rationality and lucid foresight, I would never have ‘gone for it.’ But chance encounters, the vicissitudes of research, the vagaries of scientific life—intellectual adventure, in a word—impelled me to take this direction, somewhat in spite of myself. The music of domination had become ever more obvious to me: it seemed to be developing in rich and ambiguous ways that were sometimes traditional and sometimes surprising, seemingly repetitive but always singular.

Unlike my other works, the fruit of lengthy fieldwork and often solitary reflections arising from circumscribed readings and discussions, this book was truly born from my repeated confrontation with specialist colleagues from other ‘cultural areas.’ It was the debates that followed the publication of my book on the political economy of domination in Tunisia that gave me the idea of writing these pages.¹ Indeed, the wealth of interactions and new lines of thought have come less from specialists in Tunisia, North Africa or the Arab world than from researchers—mainly political

scientists but also historians, anthropologists and sociologists—working not only on Russia and the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics (USSR), on fascism or Salazarism, on the former Eastern bloc, on China or sub-Saharan Africa, but also, more surprisingly, on France, Italy and contemporary democracies. These exchanges of ideas, always fruitful and friendly, first led me to try to write a methodological article that, under the impact of enthusiasm and interest kindled by my reading, gradually turned into a comparative book on the political economy of domination. I gradually got caught up in the game and set to work conceptualizing the relations and exercise of domination on the basis of totally heterogeneous experiences in time and space. To achieve this, I obviously drew inspiration from different approaches, although what initially gave me food for thought was the historical sociology of the political especially as developed by the Africanist studies that formed me intellectually.

I would quite logically describe as Weberian² my conception of political economy if Weber had not (yet again) become a fashionable author, so that extremely different schools or approaches, some of them poles apart, now lay claim to the heritage of the grand master of Heidelberg. The vision I have of political economy is that of a ‘social and cultural science,’³ which means that the economy involves a special meaning in a given society and history, and our understanding of the economy depends mainly on how a society considers phenomena and directs its interests: in more modern terms, we would, like Bourdieu, state that the economy is a social construct.⁴ In this perspective, the contours of the economy are not defined in advance and the ‘invention of the economic’ results from a complex process related to both the construction of the national state and to the social reality and the disciplinary exercise of power.⁵ Political economy is also an empirical science, a science of the real or rather a science of ‘historical reality,’⁶ of ‘man and [concrete] types of behavior,’⁷ of the ‘living man’ and ‘individual subjective life’⁸ which, by definition, includes multiple dimensions. This approach takes seriously what Max Weber calls ‘human foolishness,’ in other words the fact that reality does not conform to economic theory.⁹ This conception, clearly, is adamantly opposed to that of economic science as a set of formulas, formal models and any ‘abstract and mathematical utopia,’¹⁰ and argues for an empirical and concrete approach.

I would also like to say a word about the comparative approach I have chosen and that may be seen as ‘daring.’ This approach brings different historical situations into dialogue: my reflection borrows from both

the political regimes of the early twentieth century and those of the early twenty-first century, those of late antiquity as well as those of the Ancien Régime, industrialized as well as developing countries, in Africa and Asia as well as Europe. To put it briefly, I propose a comparison not of situations, relations and practices of domination, but of their modes of problematization. This approach is directly inspired by Paul Veyne's methodological proposals who in his inaugural lecture at the Collège de France, invites us, through the analysis of a situation that is totally alien to us, distant and remote—that of the Roman Empire—to come 'out of ourselves' and 'make explicit the differences' that separate us from that distant past.¹¹ This approach has been developed further by Jean-François Bayart, who proposes that we juxtapose ways of conceptualizing totally heterogeneous contemporary situations.¹² This is what I intend to do in this book by comparing situations deemed 'incomparable'¹³ in time and in space. Domination is, as I have said, one of the most discussed subjects in social science, but over time our way of understanding it has changed. Moreover, the languages used to analyze and problematize the exercise of domination are different in space, depending on the intellectual tradition specific to a cultural area, a thematic field or disciplinary trajectory, and depending too on the historical situations being analyzed and the different sets of circumstances that are taken into account. These differences and discrepancies can help us conceptualize this universal practice precisely because the work of abstraction and increasing generality—necessary if we are to highlight the major springs of the multiple and ambiguous practices of domination—that this comparativism requires leads us, paradoxically, to leave all-encompassing analyses behind. The following pages attempt to clarify the originality and practices of domination in relation to a number of issues, to bring out the different ways in which these practices are expressed and explained, and to show the subtle variations that these general and universal themes produce. They do so on the basis of everyday life, small concrete facts, 'human foolishness' and such fundamental things as the quality of sausage¹⁴ or, I would add in tribute to Bernard and Françoise Poujade who welcomed me to Còquou (in Ardèche, France) to complete my manuscript in peace and quiet, nut tart! This obviously does not mean I advocate a return to an empiricism devoid of theoretical questions, but that I conceive concepts or ideas in their heuristic validity as instruments and approaches that can be used in other specific situations. This comparative essay is thus the opposite of studies that analyze types of regime—for example totalitarianism, which Slavoj Žižek rightly

points out is a notion that ‘relieves us of the duty to think and even actually stops us doing so,’¹⁵ and more generally everything that is labeled as one of the ‘-isms’ (totalitarianism, authoritarianism, absolutism, reformism, populism, despotism etc.), which are more often ‘death to free feeling and frank thinking.’¹⁶

Thus, this book is different from classificatory definitions that say nothing about the modes of government and the concrete exercise of power. Therefore, from this perspective—in which I compare problematics and not situations—it can also be read with the aim of understanding, between the lines, the contemporary democracies in which we live. It goes without saying that in a democracy, as in any political situation, there are relations of domination. Organizing my thinking not by the criteria of classification of ‘regimes’ but by socio-economic practices and their political significance, the analyses in this book enable us to understand certain universal forms of domination. Such is the case, for example, of the analysis that grants primacy to pragmatism and economic efficiency over any other form of political rationality, or explanations that highlight the ‘historical necessity’ of a certain mode of government, decision or alliance. The same applies to our consideration of ideology: we discuss the forms ideology takes in the exercise of domination (and particularly the fact that it does not exercise its influence through its contents, but through the games it allows us to play with rules and laws), the place of technocracy and expertise in its development and in its (as it were) invisible nature, and the strength of formalism and the effects of consensus reinforced by international bodies—and these discussions are part and parcel of what can be observed in neoliberal democracies. We could also mention the problematics of the concrete construction of hegemony, whose complex modalities make general considerations on concurrence or opposition outdated, or the problematics of the political ambiguity fed by the plural notions of security and stability or by the desire people feel for state, protection and justice.¹⁷ This does not mean that I agree with the increasingly common idea that contemporary democracies are ‘slipping’ into regimes that can be treated as authoritarian. The approach developed in this book provides an understanding of different political situations by highlighting not their similarities and convergences but on the contrary their differences and their specificities.

Two types of sources have provided me with the concrete basis for this comparative work: first, the ‘fieldwork’ in areas that I know well and where I have already conducted research, including not only Tunisia¹⁸ and

Morocco but also a certain number of countries in sub-Saharan Africa; and second, historical situations that I ‘discovered’ for this occasion, including fascism and Salazarism, the Third Reich, Greater China, the USSR and Eastern countries, and more specifically the German Democratic Republic (GDR). From the outset, this juxtaposition struck me as fruitful: the lack of common reference points associated with the convergence of certain conclusions convinced me of the importance of continuing along this path, especially as all these works venture only to a very small degree into a comparative approach. When they do so, they confine this approach to situations deemed a priori comparable (Stalinism and Nazism; different forms of fascism or authoritarianism; authoritarianism in the Arab world etc.) and to very specific objects (mass violence, ideology, the concept of totalitarianism or authoritarianism etc.). While Africanist work is generally open to research coming from outside its favored fields or fields that are ‘close,’ the converse is not true. Thus, even the most innovative historiographical work on fascism, Nazism and Stalinism does not refer to the wide research on the historical sociology of the political developed in the 1980s relating to non-Western countries (mostly former colonies, starting with Africa). Nor do they take into account certain older historical situations which in a similar way, albeit via different paths and theoretical reference points, had already challenged the duality of ‘dominant/dominated’ and the simplistic alternative ‘resistance/obedience,’ instead showing the plurality of space–time structures prevalent in societies and the ambiguity of power relations. In contrast, the opening of archives in the East and disputes among historians in Germany have profoundly changed our way of understanding these problematics and have reignited the debate about the practice of domination. While research previously emphasized the role of ideology and belief, the strength and consistency of these regimes, the charisma of the chief, the way he was subject to veneration or stigmatization, the identification of classes or social groups supposed to be naturally ‘collaborationist’ or ‘resistant,’ the exceptional status of the authoritarian or totalitarian moment vis-à-vis the historical trajectory of the country or region, and the uses of fear and violence, the new historiography has staked out its territory *against* these positions. First, it rejected the abstract visions of totalitarianism and authoritarianism (those that follow Hannah Arendt, one might say disrespectfully), the allegedly monolithic nature of these regimes and the thesis of a secular religion; it then challenged the functionalism and structuralism of these interpretations and the melding of regimes, and relativized the role of state institutions and ruling elites in the rise and

acceptance of the latter.¹⁹ More positively, these new readings showed that we were dealing less with systems and constraints imposed from above than with subtle and diffuse terms of domination and persuasion; that the complex and ambiguous processes that shaped a hegemony also operated by inclusion and accommodation beyond the mere exercise of physical and institutional coercion orchestrated by political machines (especially the police); and that we could not just describe behavior as ‘collaboration’ or ‘resistance,’ ‘participation’ or ‘refusal,’ but that what needed to be emphasized was, rather, the multiplicity of arrangements whose political meanings are ambiguous. This work has highlighted practices as diverse as the actors involved, the degree of unexpectedness and randomness in the socio-political dynamics that operate, and the segmentation of the places of decision. Similarly, Africanist work is now experiencing a renewal, particularly around issues of the police (here we find the tradition of the openness of Africanism to themes and reflections developed in other cultural areas) and the control of social ‘elders’ over their ‘juniors,’²⁰ in the field of witchcraft, for example.

It became apparent to me however, that neither group has given much importance to the political economy of domination. Although economic historians can be read and their work used with this in mind, they have rarely played much part in this debate. Based on this observation, and my own research on Tunisia, various sub-Saharan African countries and Morocco, this book is specifically aimed at taking a first step in this direction and proposing an analysis of domination from the point of view of comparative political economy. Of course, I was not starting out from scratch. Early on, for example, Janos Kornai attempted to examine the relation between economic practices, political systems and bureaucratic functioning in communist countries. If his description of the ‘economics of shortage’ helps us understand the practical cogs of the interdependencies between actors and institutions,²¹ his economicism led him to understand the political as a ‘separate’ sphere, well defined and fully differentiated from the economic, in a mechanistic view of power that gives a fundamental weight to ideology as a system of thought.²² In my own approach, governed by political economy, I propose less to analyze the economy of a political regime—whatever its nature and type—than offer a political analysis of the economic that shows how the most banal economic dispositifs and the economic functioning of everyday life simultaneously involve mechanisms of domination. This approach is not new. Specialists in monetary and financial issues, public policy, labor relations

and the functioning of businesses, researchers studying the ordinary life of people, sociologists of statistics, experts in despoliation and ‘economic collaboration,’ and sociologists and anthropologists of material culture have already produced work of this kind, emphasizing the banality of power mechanisms and the dispositifs of everyday life’s management. They have thereby demonstrated the usefulness of analyzing authoritarian or totalitarian regimes with instruments forged for other situations, and the need to make the analysis more sophisticated by integrating the socio-historical context, differences of temporality, relational practices and feedback. Two historiographical traditions seem to me particularly rich from this point of view: *Alltagsgeschichte* (the history of everyday life), on the one hand, especially Alf Lüdtke, who definitively challenged to any classifications in terms of ‘acceptance’ and ‘refusal,’ suggesting the significance of the socio-political context, lifestyles, economic practices and daily micro-decisions in the perceptions that different actors have of a political situation and the meaning they give it²³; and a more classic trend in economic history, of which Adam Tooze is one of the most illustrious representatives. In a monumental study, this British historian has highlighted economic mechanisms of domination in all their subtlety through his systematic and detailed analysis of the Nazi war economy.²⁴ I intend to continue this line of thought, in a way that is both more modest (in terms of erudition and mastery of the material) and more ambitious (because of my comparative approach), analyzing everyday life in its properly economic dynamic and considering the economic as a place of power, a non-autonomous field, a site of analysis of power relations and power games.

My approach is therefore located at the crossroads of this double historical filiation and a Weberian–Foucauldian approach to domination. Weber showed that, insofar as ‘any real relation of domination involves a minimum of willingness to obey,’ it was important to analyze concrete, singular and historically situated situations to understand these ‘special interests in obeying.’²⁵ This proposal has been understood primarily in political terms. Without being exhaustive, we can think of Michel Foucault and his heterogeneous conception of power, ‘a series of complex, difficult relations that are never functionalized and, in a sense, never function.’²⁶ Power relations, in his view, lie within conflicts, compromises, arrangements and, in general, social relations: domination and discipline cannot therefore be apprehended outside of their exercise. Also worth mentioning is Norbert Elias’ sociology of interdependence and his notion of ‘configuration’: mutual dependencies that bind individuals to each

other constitute the matrix of society; these interdependencies are historically situated and so, understanding power requires that we understand concrete functions, relations and concrete relations.²⁷ Note also Antonio Gramsci's conception of hegemony, which is not only coercion but is also a form of cultural and ideological managing that emerges from power relations, social struggles, negotiations, compromise, co-option, representations and shared beliefs.²⁸ I will not cover this already well-known ground again. However, it seems important to pursue a direction that is rarely taken, one that combines this approach with one based on political economy and therefore includes a better understanding of the economic dimension of power dispositifs in the analysis of domination, of discipline, of 'voluntary servitude,'²⁹ of community enslavement³⁰ and hegemony. Concrete economic practices play an active part in power struggles and power relations. The objective of this work is to analyze, within this tradition, economic techniques in the same way as political, institutional, security or cultural techniques, which involves being sensitive to the multiplicity of actors, rationalities, understandings and logics of action at stake, so to question causal relationships, simplistic explanations, the imputation of motives and the quest for paternity. The theoretical implications of the approach proposed by economic history, especially *Alltagsgeschichte*, overlap with Foucauldian analyzes, even though neither of these refers to the other: both approaches emphasize the importance of struggles and power plays, conflicts and tensions, and the power struggles in the way domination is shaped. The additional interest of the history of everyday life is that it takes seriously economic objects and economic dynamics—something that the analyses proposed by Foucault and especially by those researchers inspired by him too often neglect. In this, *Alltagsgeschichte* converges with the analysis of political economy advocated here, which seeks to combine a Foucauldian understanding of power with an approach attentive to concrete economic practices: it is Weberian in that it takes into account the 'effects of composition' and the 'constellations of interests' in play³¹; Marxist, in that it considers that 'labor' as such does not exist, that there is only 'practical work.'³² Thus, it does not aim to find one cause for 'voluntary servitude,' normalization and the authoritarian exercise of power, but is instead sensitive to the incomplete nature of practices and explanations, to causal plurality and the diversity of the processes involved and their possible interpretations within society.

Deepening the scope of my reflection on the disciplinary or repressive exercise of power by going into actual mechanical workings of the

economy has demanded that I bring out their dimension and their political rationalities through a ‘political anatomy of the detail,’³³ more particularly of economic detail. In this perspective, the processes involved appear much more subtle than might be suggested by claims that the ‘political’ manipulates and instrumentalizes the ‘economic,’ or assumptions that assert the existence of an ‘exchange’ between the ‘politicization’ or ‘political uses’ of the economy, or interpretations that highlight an ‘economy’ in the service of the ‘political’ (or its somewhat banal variant, the ‘economic miracle’ that makes ‘political stability’ possible). These proposals all imply a separation between distinct ‘spheres’: economic, political and social. They imply that the relations between these ‘spheres’ are unequivocal in nature, and they convey a mechanistic and utilitarian view of social dynamics and relations. Instead, Weber’s political economy, as I understand it, aims to understand the economy politically, in its own technical nature and mechanisms. For Weber, ‘it is obvious that the boundaries of the “economic” phenomena are fluid and cannot be precisely defined.’³⁴ He recalled that ‘it is equally obvious that, for instance, the “economic” aspects of a phenomenon are in no way *solely* “economically conditioned” nor do they *solely* have “economic effects.”’ More importantly for the purpose of this research, he pursued saying that ‘generally speaking, it goes without saying that a phenomenon will have an “economic” character only to the extent that, and *only* as, our *interest* is exclusively focused on its *importance* for the material struggle for existence.’³⁵ This approach allows us to restore the ambiguity and incompleteness of mechanisms and dispositifs of control and discipline, taking into account the complexity of social relations, the plurality of practices of domination, and the multiplicity and ambiguity of the meanings that different actors give to them.

Finally, I would like to say what my work is *not*, or, more precisely, what it has deliberately decided not to dwell on, namely violence, coercion and fear. I chose to focus on those forms of ‘insidious leniency’ referred to by Michel Foucault,³⁶ which, in the daily practices of domination, play simultaneously on the mutual dependence of subjects, on their autonomy and desire for emancipation. Not that violence should be left out: quite the opposite. Authoritarian and totalitarian situations are most often analyzed from the perspective of violence. Yet no government, including the most totalitarian (such as Nazism or Stalinism), is based exclusively on violence. Therefore, to understand the exercise of domination in all its ambiguity, I thought it would be more interesting and original to focus my research on economic dispositifs and practices, even analyzing their relationship

with violence and fear as with more traditional dispositifs and practices of control, surveillance and discipline (such as mechanisms of persuasion, hierarchical dispositions, and institutional and administrative cogs). This methodological choice must be interpreted as a way of bringing out more clearly the violence and fear involved: their centrality does not reside in their direct and intrinsic presence; rather, it is their integration into everyday life—in the most insignificant dispositifs and the most mundane practices—that gives them all their power.

You will of course not find any new analyses of Nazism, fascism, Stalinism in this chapter, or even of the contemporary situations in the societies on which I worked directly. Nor will you find any general conclusions, or any lessons. I aim rather to articulate ways of thinking and problematizations that will echo one another and may be mutually enriching, in an attempt to abstract practices of domination and render them intelligible, rising to a somewhat higher level of generality so as better to identify the simultaneity of close or similar practices and situations—and thus meanings—that are very different, even poles apart. Thus, the comparative political economy of the exercise of power in authoritarian situations does not appear ‘interesting for itself,’ but comprises a ‘place of fieldwork’ where one can learn more about domination and the countless modes of its exercise; it is, in other words, a ‘means of producing a general anatomy’ of domination.³⁷ In the space afforded me by a comparative essay, there is obviously no question of developing a general theory of the political economy of domination. I first have to defend an approach that could be called eclectic, or ‘metadoxal,’ insofar as it attempts to articulate approaches inspired by Foucault, Weber, de Certeau and Veyne; it thereby attempts to understand domination simultaneously as a complement and contrast to three dominant interpretations of it: a reading ‘from above’ that insists on the uniform and intentional ubiquity of mechanisms of domination; an ‘infra-political’ reading that sees resistance everywhere; and an ‘anarchic’ or ‘individualistic’ reading that highlights the confusion of everyday life, the lack of overall consistency and the disparate and disorganized blossoming of power relations. I also aim, through examples from my own research and especially from a wide range of reading, to show how this approach provides material for the debate on two main questions of political sociology at the heart of Weber’s work: the legitimacy of power and processes of legitimation, and the problematics of intentionality. The first question is fundamental if we are to grasp the plurality and heterogeneity at work behind the practices of domination and to deepen the question of

obedience by not viewing as submission such phenomena as acceptance, silence and participation and by not understanding docility as acceptance. The second question is essential if we are to enter the complexity and ambiguity of domination, which emerges not only from a vision or dispositifs that are consciously constructed by state actors, but is a largely unconscious and contradictory complex historical process, made up of conflicts, negotiations and compromises between groups and individuals.

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NOTES

1. B. Hibou, *The Force of Obedience: the Political Economy of Repression in Tunisia*, transl. Andrew Brown (Cambridge: Polity Press, 2011) [1].
2. I initially developed this understanding of political economy through a reading of the various texts on the theory of science by Max Weber collected as *Max Weber. Collected Methodological Writings*, ed. H.H. Bruun and S. Whimster, transl. H.H. Bruun (London & New York: Routledge, 2012) [2]; I further refined it with the help of new French translations of Weber, and the readings of Weber put forward by my colleagues: historians, sociologists and philosophers, such as H. Bruhns, 'À propos de l'histoire ancienne et de l'économie politique chez Max Weber,' in M. Weber, *Économie et société dans l'Antiquité* (Paris: La Découverte, 1998), pp. 9–59 [3]; C. Colliot-Thélène, *Études wébériennes. Rationalités, histoires, droits* (Paris: PUF, 2001) [4]; S. Kalberg, *Max Weber's Comparative Historical Sociology* (Chicago, IL: Chicago University Press, 1994) [5]; H. Bruhns (ed.), *Histoire et économie politique en Allemagne de Gustav Schmoller à Max Weber* (Paris: Éditions de la Maison des sciences de l'homme, 2004) [6]; and especially J.-P. Grossein, 'Présentation,' in M. Weber, *Sociologie des religions* (Paris: Gallimard, 2006), pp. 51–125 [7] and 'Présentation,' in M. Weber, *L'Éthique protestante et l'Esprit du capitalisme, suivi d'autres essais* (Paris: Gallimard, 2003), pp. v–lviii [8].
3. M. Weber, *Collected Methodological Writings*.
4. P. Bourdieu, *The Social Structures of the Economy* (Cambridge: Polity, 2005) [9].

5. See T. Mitchell, ‘Society, Economy, and the State Effect’ (pp. 76–97) in G. Steinmetz (ed.) *State/Culture. State-formation after the cultural turn* (Ithaca, NY: Cornell University Press, 1999) [10].
6. A. Gramsci, *Écrits politiques I (1914–1920)* (Paris: Gallimard, 1974) [11], especially ‘Einaudi ou “de l’utopie libérale”’ (1919).
7. Weber, *Collected Methodological Writings*.
8. See K. Marx, *Grundrisse: foundations of the critique of political economy (rough draft)*, translated and with a foreword by Martin Nicolaus (London: Allen Lane, New Left Review, 1973) [12] and *Capital: A critique of political economy*, transl. Ben Fowkes (Harmondsworth: Penguin in association with New Left Review, 1976) [13]. This dimension has been highlighted by M. Henry, *Le Socialisme selon Marx* (Cabris: Sulliver, 2008) [14].
9. M. Weber, ‘The meaning of “value freedom” in the sociological and economic sciences’ in *Collected Methodological Writings*, p. 332.
10. Gramsci, ‘Einaudi ou “de l’utopie libérale”’: the quotation in full states that the economy is ‘a scheme, a pre-established plan, one of the paths of Providence, an abstract, mathematical theory that has never had and never will have any point of contact with historical reality’ (p. 234).
11. P. Veyne, ‘The inventory of differences,’ transl. E. Kingdom, *Economy and Society*, 11(2) (May 1982), p. 176 [15].
12. J.F. Bayart, ‘Comparing From Below,’ *Sociétés Politiques Comparées*, 1, January 2008 (available on the FASOPO website, <http://www.fasopo.org/reasopo/n1/comparerparlebas.pdf> [16]); ‘Comparer en France. Petit essai d’autobiographie disciplinaire,’ *Politix*, 21(83) (2008): 205–232 [17], and *L’Islam républicain. Istanbul, Téhéran, Dakar* (Paris: Albin Michel, 2010) [18].
13. The expression ‘incomparable’ is, of course, taken from M. Détienné, *Comparing the Incomparable*, transl. Janet Lloyd (Stanford, CA: Stanford University Press, 2008) [19].
14. I am here alluding to A. Zinoviev, *The Radiant Future*, transl. Gordin Clough (New York: Random House, 1980) [20] in which Tamurka, one of the characters in the novel, says: ‘If you’ve got any idea of attacking the system, [...] don’t behave like those idiotic dissidents. They spend all their time debating all those high-flown ideas like freedom of speech, creative individuality, and the

- right to emigrate, and never a word about what really matters—that there isn't a sausage worthy of the name (p. 28).
15. S. Žižek, *Did somebody say totalitarianism?: five interventions in the (mis)use of a notion* (London: Verso, 2011), p. 3 [21].
 16. A. Mérodack-Jeanneau, 'Kandinsky. La gravure sur bois, l'illustration,' *Les Tendances Nouvelles*, 26 [22], Christmas 1906 (quoted in the Kandinsky exhibition, Centre Pompidou, 8 April–10 August 2009).
 17. Analyses of this kind are appearing, implicitly or explicitly, in ever more studies. See, for example, G. Burchell, C. Gordon and P. Miller (eds), *The Foucault Effect. Studies in Governmentality* (Hemel Hempstead: Harvester Wheatsheaf, 1991) [23]; A. Barry, T. Osborne and N. Rose (eds), *Foucault and Political Reason. Liberalism, neoliberalism and Rationalities of Government* (Chicago, IL: The University of Chicago Press, 1996) [24]; N. Rose, *Powers of Freedom. Reframing Political Thought* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1999) [25]; A. Ogien, *L'Esprit gestionnaire. Une analyse de l'air du temps* (Paris: EHESS, 1995) [26] and A. Ogien and S. Laugier, *Pourquoi désobéir en démocratie?* (Paris: La Découverte, 2010) [27]; L. Boltanski, *Rendre la réalité inacceptable. À propos de la production de l'idéologie dominante* (Paris: Demopolis, 2008) [28] and especially *On Critique: A Sociology of Emancipation*, transl. Gregory Elliot (Cambridge: Polity Press, 2011) [29]; P. Dardot and C. Laval, *The New Way of the World: On Neoliberal Society* transl. Gregory Elliott (London: Verso, 2015) [30]; F. Gros (ed.), 'Nouvelles menaces, nouvelles sécurités: de la sécurité nationale à la sécurité humaine,' *Raisons politiques*, 32(4) (2008): 5–127 [31].
 18. Insofar as this book was written between June 2008 and October 2010, my analyses of the situation in Tunisia concern the country as it was in that period, under the Ben Ali regime. I conducted fieldwork there between 1995 and 2005.
 19. This is, of course, an overall presentation that cannot do justice to the temporal and thematic specificity of these new trends that vary with each country, context and field. For this, see the specialists working on each of these historical trajectories. See, for example, for the USSR, N. Werth, 'Le stalinisme au pouvoir. Mise en perspective historiographique,' *Vingtième siècle. Revue d'histoire*, 69 (January–March 2001), pp. 125–135 [32]; for Nazism, I. Kershaw, *The Nazi Dictatorship: Problems and Perspectives of Interpretation*, 4th

- edition (London: Arnold, 2000) [33], or the special issue of the *Journal of Contemporary History* on ‘Understanding Nazi Germany,’ 39(2) (April 2004): 163–294 [34]; for the GDR, A. Lüdtke, ‘La République démocratique allemande comme histoire. Réflexions historiographiques,’ *Annales HSS*, 1 (January–February 1998): 3–39 [35]. For a comparative analysis of the intellectual trajectory of totalitarianism, E. Traverso, *Le Totalitarisme. Le XXe siècle en débat* (Paris: Le Seuil, 2001) [36].
20. This terminology is taken from Marxist anthropological studies and is used to analyze relations of power and domination by J.F. Bayart in *L’État au Cameroun* (Paris: Presses de la FNSP, 1979) [37] and in *The State in Africa. The politics of the belly*, 2nd edition (Cambridge: Polity Press, 2009) [38].
 21. J. Kornai, *Economics of Shortage*, 2 vols (Amsterdam; Oxford: North-Holland, 1980) [39].
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- Penguin Books, 1979) [49] and ‘*Society must be Defended*’: *Lectures at the Collège de France, 1975–76*, ed. Mauro Bertani and Alessandro Fontana; transl. David Macey (London: Allen Lane, 2003) [50], especially the lecture of 7 January 1976.
27. N. Elias, *The Society of Individuals*, ed. Michael Schröter; transl. Edmund Jephcott (Oxford: Basil Blackwell, 1991) [51], and *What is sociology?*, transl. Stephen Mennell and Grace Morrissey; with a foreword by Reinhard Bendix (London: Hutchinson, 1978) [52].
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 29. É. De La Boétie, *Discourse on Voluntary Servitude*, transl. by James B. Atkinson and David Sices; introduction and notes by James B. Atkinson (Indianapolis, IN; Cambridge: Hackett, 2012) [57] and its contemporary readers, notably C. Lefort, ‘Le nom d’Un,’ P. Clastres, ‘Liberté, malencontre, innommable’ and M. Abensour and M. Gauchet, ‘Présentation. Les leçons de la servitude et leur destin,’ in É. De La Boétie, *Le Discours de la servitude volontaire* (Paris: Payot, 1993), respectively pp. 247–307, pp. 229–246 and pp. vii–xxix [58–60].
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 34. M. Weber, ‘The “objectivity” of knowledge in social science and social policy,’ in *Collected Methodological Writings*, p. 109.
 35. *Ibid.*, p. 109. Marx would not have denied this conception: see his defense, in *Grundrisse*, of the idea that the economy *as such* does not exist. His whole investigation turns on this question: what enables a reality to become, at a given moment, in a given context

for given individuals and groups, an *economic* reality? The work of K. Polanyi, meanwhile, suggests that the political project of a separate economy is not viable—in other words, that the institutional separation between ‘economics’ and ‘politics’ is utopian. See K. Polanyi, *The Great Transformation* (Boston, MA: Beacon Press, 1957) [62] and the analysis by A. Buğra, ‘Polanyi’s concept of double movement and politics in the contemporary market society,’ in A. Buğra and K. Ağartan eds. *Reading Karl Polanyi for the 21st Century: Market Economy as a Political Project*, Palgrave MacMillan, 2007, pp. 173–189 [63].

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The Legitimation of Authoritarian Domination: Dispositions to Obey and Constellation of Interests

INTRODUCTION

Tackling the question of domination in authoritarian or totalitarian regimes by analyzing the process of legitimation may seem paradoxical, if not provocative. In fact, traditional approaches tend implicitly to contrast legitimacy with coercion, legitimacy with fear and the use of force, or legitimacy with constraint, even submission, in what is basically a traditional reading of the nature of political systems. In this reading, only democratic regimes are recognized as legitimate.¹ Even works that highlight the diversity of types of legitimate domination (legal–rational, traditional, charismatic) remain inadequate because they are often trapped in a literal and restrictive reading of the writings of Weber, too rigidly attached to showing the correspondence between the type of legitimacy, the type of domination and the type of motivations of social actions involved. By not fully exploring the ‘thickness’ of power relations, they are more an analysis of ideal types than of the reality of situations; they amalgamate different levels and targets of legitimacy and confuse ‘legitimate’ and ‘reasonable.’² In a comparable manner, the typologies produced by Europeanist work (legitimacy can be acquired by procedures, foundations or results) do not capture modes of government that do not necessarily rest on the ‘common good,’ the ‘general interest’ and ‘popular representation.’³ As Michel Dobry has noted, these two approaches consider the process of legitimation too narrowly and unambiguously as ‘a *vertical* relationship between rulers and ruled,’ in which ‘the docility of the latter has as its necessary counterpart’ the correspondence between government actions and the

‘beliefs, values, dispositions or emotions of the governed.’ This explains why this perspective does not really help us understand the ‘reality of the phenomena it seeks to explore.’⁴

The sociology of legitimacy does not appear, then, to be conducive to a description of concrete dynamics, and is incompatible with an approach committed to daily life that takes the trouble to produce a ‘political anatomy of the detail,’ especially the economic detail. The fact is that the question of processes of legitimation in authoritarian regimes remains fundamental: how are we to explain the often secondary or marginal character of violence and physical coercion in most authoritarian regimes and even, for the majority of people, in the daily life of totalitarian regimes? What lies behind the ‘insidious leniencies’ of the exercise of power? The issue of legitimacy strikes me as more important than these studies would suggest, or than the social sciences generally acknowledge. More important because legitimacy can take different shapes from those traditionally presented; it can, for example, be based on the desire for normality and the desire for the state, in all its variations and dimensions—dimensions that can be understood only from as detailed and localized an analysis as possible, and that are informed by an approach based on political economy. More important, also, because we can have a reading of legitimacy that is not opposed to violence and does indeed incorporate a dose of coercion, like that proposed by Antonio Gramsci, particularly around the concept of hegemony.⁵ More important, finally, because we can take another look at this classic problem: contrary to the admirably expressed view of Paul Veyne, even when the question of legitimacy is not openly asked—or is asked only when there is explicit contestation, precisely because it is starting to evaporate—an analysis of it will still show the ambiguity of the dispositifs and practices of domination.⁶ Taking into account the daily debates, demands, expectations, tensions and micro-clashes facing society betrays friction points that frequently allow (often between the lines) the emergence of problematics related to the legitimacy and credibility of power, forms of behavior or ways of thinking that partly reveal the way people conceive the legitimate exercise of domination. The issue is less the legitimacy (or lack of legitimacy) of a government than the nature of its legitimacy, or even more, the criteria and motives of the complex and heterogeneous processes of legitimation.

The issue of ‘normality,’ for example, enables us to measure the value of an analysis of legitimacy’s vectors in authoritarian situations. The search for a ‘normal’ life, the need to live ‘in accordance’ with the established

rules of life in society, are among the most important motives behind acceptance of, or accommodation to, such modes of government. This is what is suggested by concrete research on Italian fascism, East German socialism, Nazism and Soviet communism. Overwhelmingly, people seek to go with the flow, according to the ‘rules’ (whatever they are), and not to get themselves noticed. They undoubtedly season their acceptance with a dose of apparent submission, cynicism or even skepticism, but the fact that a government conveys an image of tranquility, predictability and ‘normality,’ especially after revolutionary or disturbed periods, economic crises or periods of instability, definitely gives it a certain legitimacy. It will suffice to recall how Kádár was able to build up his own legitimacy even though he had come to power in 1956 in the wake of the Soviet tanks: for the Hungarian population, he embodied predictability and the return to (a certain) normality.⁷ Similarly, when Putin came to power, he was popular among Russians precisely because he met their expectations in terms of assurance, security and a return to order—on the part of very different categories of the population: entrepreneurs, the poor, the elites of the economic and security administration, the elderly who are nostalgic for the Soviet past, and the young.⁸ Through Zimin, the hero of *The Radiant Future*, Alexander Zinoviev very clearly emphasizes that ‘[w]hen Solzhenitsyn criticizes Marxism and individual facts of Soviet life, he fails to see all the *horrifying normality* of communism [...]. The communist way of life is very profitable for a huge part of the population of the country. For the time being this society satisfies the overwhelming majority of the population. Not in all respects, of course, but by and large it does.’⁹ This quotation suggests the subtleties of the mechanisms of legitimation: the legitimacy granted is never complete and obviously has to compromise with discontent, worry, partial rejections and recriminations; it is less synonymous with adhesion, support and active participation than with accommodation; it primarily reflects a relative and intermittent judgment because individuals do not constantly ask themselves whether the state or the government are legitimate and because the rules by which they assess normality can be plural and refer to different (even contradictory) hierarchies of values.

Under these conditions, how can we make compatible questions about the legitimacy of power on the one hand, and on the other, the approach ‘from below,’ which adopts a heterogeneous and relational conception of power and is concerned by the daily life of economic practices? Even if he does not link it with these theoretical approaches to the

political, Michel Dobry provides us with a particularly interesting line of research thanks to his reading of the work of Weber, a reading that takes into account the ‘complications’ both of reality and of political theory. Legitimate domination, he says, cannot be reduced to the ‘command-obedience’ couple usually highlighted by the sociology of legitimacy: the disposition to obey represents only one mode of domination. There is a second, which Weber conceptualized in terms of ‘constellations of interests’¹⁰: domination is often ‘difficult to perceive or ascribe to social actors’ insofar as it ‘passes through situations where heterogeneous interests meet.’¹¹ Michel Dobry invites us to follow Weber in understanding domination beyond the ‘command-obedience’ couple alone and beyond the mere identification of cases of the will to dominate, while being sensitive to the individual interests and the various logics of action of the dominant. For my part, I would also read his contribution as an invitation to conceptualize legitimate domination outside the ‘will to obey’ and outside the ‘dispositions to obey’: the governed view their practices and their social relations in many different ways and give them meanings that are not necessarily those of governments; this allows them to act independently of the will of the latter. Taking ‘constellations of interest’ into account in this way has the advantage that we can understand the plurality and heterogeneity at work behind practices of domination, not equating acceptance, silence or participation with obedience or submission and not taking docility as adhesion. It also helps to link together Foucault’s analysis of power, de Certeau’s conception of practices and daily life, and Weber’s approach to domination. For this author, whose methods and concepts have strongly inspired me for this book, “domination” does not mean that a stronger force of nature somehow prevails, but that the action (“command”) of certain people is related in terms of its meaning to the action (“obedience”) of certain other people, and vice versa, so that one *may*, on the average, count on the realization of the expectations according to which the action of both sides is oriented.’ Legitimacy can thus be understood by people’s self-justifications,¹² by what actors say explicitly, but even more by a critical analysis of daily practices, behaviors and interactions between actors, by what they allow us to see that may go beyond or against what they say.¹³ In the chapters that follow, I would like to highlight the potential diversity and complexity of the mechanisms involved, taking particular account of the ‘constellations of interests’ scattered among economic dispositifs and logics.

NOTES

1. Thus the book edited by A. Hurrelman, S. Schneider and J. Steffek, *Legitimacy in an Age of Global Politics* (New York: Palgrave MacMillan, 2007) [1], to take one example, does not even refer to non-Western non-democratic countries. Likewise, the latest book by Pierre Rosanvallon discusses democratic legitimacy, with the implication that the mainsprings of legitimacy in non-democratic situations do not in the least arise from the same problematic. See his *La Légitimité démocratique. Impartialité, réflexivité, proximité* (Paris: Le Seuil, 2008) [2]. The older book by Maurice Duverger, *Dictatures et Légitimité* (Paris: PUF, 1982) [3], starts out from the hypothesis that dictatorship is by nature a break with legitimacy. Almost all texts spend more time showing the diversity of types of dictatorship and the way the meaning of this word has developed over the course of time than on analyzing the processes of legitimation that might have existed in those regimes. Recent studies that try to tackle the question in more general terms are trapped in the great fashions in political science, and relapse into quantification, classification and the adoption of an extremely institutional and formal vision of the political: see, for example, B. Gilley, *The Right to Rule. How States Win and Lose Legitimacy* (New York: Columbia University Press, 2009) [4].
2. J. Lagroye, ‘La légitimation,’ in M. Grawitz and J. Leca (eds), *Traité de sciences politiques 1. La science politique, science sociale, l’ordre politique* (Paris: PUF, 1985), pp. 395–467 [5].
3. N. Luhmann, *La Légitimation par la procédure* (Quebec; Paris: Presses de l’Université de Laval and Éditions du Cerf, 2001) [6]; F.W. Scharpf, *Governing in Europe. Effective and Democratic?* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1999) [7].
4. M. Dobry, ‘Légitimité et calcul rationnel. Remarques sur quelques “complications” de la sociologie de Max Weber,’ in P. Favre, J. Hayward and Y. Schemeil (eds), *Être gouverné. Hommages à Jean Leca* (Paris: Presses de Sciences Po, 2003), pp. 127–147 [8].
5. See his *Prison Writings and Selections from political writings (1921–1926)*, translated and edited by Quintin Hoare; with additional texts by other Italian Communist leaders (London: Lawrence and Wishart, 1978) [9]. See also the discussion by H. Marcuse in *Eros and Civilization: A Philosophical Inquiry into Freud*, with a

new preface by the author (London: Sphere, 1969) [10], J. Habermas, in *Legitimation crisis*, transl. Thomas McCarthy (London: Heinemann, 1976) [11], P. Bourdieu and J.C. Passeron on the question of the legitimacy of symbolic violence in their *Reproduction in education, society and culture*, transl. Richard Nice, 2nd edition (London: Sage in association with Theory, culture & society, 1990) [12], Lagroye in ‘La légitimation’ and Bayart, ‘Hégémonie et coercition en Afrique subsaharienne.’ This is also apparent in the new readings of Weber’s work by the authors mentioned in note 2 of the Preface. For a similar approach, see also K. Hammou, ‘Le troisième protagoniste des rapports de domination. Resituer la direction administrative au cœur de la *Herrschaftssoziologie* de Max Weber,’ *Tracés*, 14 (January 2008): 129–151 [13].

6. Veyne, *Le Quotidien et l'Intéressant*, where he says: ‘A regime [...] is always presumed legitimate and the necessity of proof falls onto the party that might question this, as he will often be described as a hot-head and who will bring repression down on everyone [...] In a situation of uncertainty, of an unknown future, in other words all the time (in politics at least), there is an intellectual regression: the tried and tested status quo is preferred to any innovations,’ p. 99.
7. A. Capelle-Pogăcean, ‘Hongrie des pères, Hongrie des fils,’ in P. Michel (ed.), *Europe centrale. La mélancolie du réel* (Paris: Autrement, 2004), pp. 81–96 [14].
8. G. Favarel-Garrigues and K. Rousselet, *La Société russe en quête d'ordre. Avec Vladimir Poutine?* (Paris: Autrement, 2004) [15].
9. Zinoviev, *The Radiant Future*, p. 187 (my emphasis).
10. See Weber, *Economy and Society*, and Dobry, ‘Légitimité et calcul rationnel.’
11. Dobry, ‘Légitimité et calcul rationnel’, pp. 130 and 131.
12. L. Boltanski and L. Thévenot, *On Justification: Economies of Worth* (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press; new edition, 2006) [16]; L. Boltanski and È. Chiapello, *The new spirit of capitalism*, transl. Gregory Elliott (London: Verso, 2007) [17].
13. P. Veyne, *Le Pain et le Cirque. Sociologie historique d'un pluralisme politique* (Paris: Le Seuil, 1976) [18]. There is a version in English, but it is unfortunately abridged: *Bread and circuses: historical sociology and political pluralism*, transl. Brian Pearce (London: Allen Lane, 1990) [19].

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Desire for Normality, Normative Processes and Power of Normalization

The question of normality cannot be reduced to the imposition of norms set unilaterally by the governing, or to the encounter between command and desires for obedience. What do this normality and this conformity exactly consist of? What do they mean for different actors? Does their content have any influence on the nature of legitimacy and the criteria of legitimation? Do the factors that contribute to shaping legitimacy themselves emerge from modes and styles of government, from the population's ways of understanding power and the reflexive relation that power has with itself? Some studies try to answer these questions by arguing that consent is the 'portion of power added by the dominated to that which the dominant directly exercise over them.'¹ Legitimacy is rarely the expression of outright support, an osmosis between the objectives, strategies and ways of thinking of the 'dominated' and the 'dominant,' to use the terms of Maurice Godelier. Societies are multidimensional: segments of the population can be carried by specific trajectories, distinct from that of the State, without being opposed to it.² The legitimation process also proceeds from operational misunderstandings between governing and governed, or perhaps more precisely from a peaceful coexistence between aims, interests, ways of being, of living and understanding, ways of accumulating and represent oneself, ways of behaving and interacting with others. By going into the concrete details of this process, the Weberian political economy approach I advocate allows us to analyze in more detail

the exercise of domination by taking into account these constellations of heterogeneous interests.

LIVING 'NORMALLY'

For a government, the concern to ensure a 'normal,' 'decent' or 'good' life for its population is commonplace and widespread; it has been highlighted as one of the main vectors of legitimacy for authoritarian situations, for example, in the Soviet Union and one-party Turkey.³ More specifically, studies that focus on the dynamics of compensation or exchange between 'power' and 'society' emphasize the importance of economic well-being in the acceptance of the regime. According to these studies, growth, development and economic success seem to make it possible to support the lack of freedom and violations of the most basic human rights. The main argument in the interesting and controversial book by Götz Aly lies precisely in this idea⁴: Hitler, he claims, *bribed* the Germans by providing jobs, a certain standard of living, and access to property, starting with a sufficient level of food, especially during the war, thus safeguarding them from the devastating effects of inflation. Later on, I shall offer a systematic critique of this vision of the political as exchange,⁵ but we can already perceive its limits if we set this argument back in the context of the search for normality. Does this not allow us to understand such concern as the expression of a response to a demand for 'normality' rather than as a 'bribe'? Can we not talk about a certain form of legitimacy based largely, if not primarily, on the regime's ability to meet the demand of the people (the German and 'Aryan' people, of course) to live as 'normally' as possible and more precisely to regain a certain 'economic normality,' through choices and public policies?⁶ In this post-Depression period, access to employment and secure remuneration, even at the cost of lower wages and increased working hours, was for most people essential. The legitimacy of the regime was thus realized through a participation in its political economy. Obviously, this 'participation' did not express an ideological conversion but rather the hope of seeing one's 'ordinary' needs and 'normal' desires satisfied. This hope and this demand for intervention contributed, often without the actors knowing, to the extension and reproduction of a regime that tried on its side to reply, at least in part.⁷ We must also understand this demand for 'normality' in a historical trajectory. Studies that emphasize the continuity between the Weimar Republic, the Nazi regime and the Federal Republic suggest as much, especially those which see the Third

Reich as a 'pathological' variant of the 'normal' modernity of twentieth-century Germany.⁸

The national trajectory is only one element in this understanding. We should also take into account the modes of the international integration of a country and the specificities of the regional group to which it belongs if we are to analyze the factors producing legitimacy through economic growth, development, miracle or normality.⁹ Thus, in countries like the German Democratic Republic (GDR) in the years 1960–1980 and Tunisia in the period 1980–2000, political criticism was impossible in the name of the national economic and financial situation, as it was far better than in comparable countries nearby.¹⁰ This argument was of course a facade, a tactic of domination. But beyond that, it was taken up by a very large portion—nearly all—of the population precisely because it reflected a genuine, legitimate concern, that of living 'well' and 'normally' or at least of living 'decently'¹¹; and because the assessment of 'well,' 'normal,' 'good' and 'decent' was also made by reference to 'others,' by comparison with neighbors or with situations deemed to be similar. And this highlights the international and comparative dimension of the vectors of legitimation: the definition of the normal and desirable, of expectations and horizons, is not only influenced by the historical context and the national trajectory, by the social, economic or professional position of individuals or groups, by modes and styles of government but it is also circumscribed by the place occupied by the society under analysis in a regional area. The political economy of domination cannot be thought of outside a space—of movement of goods, ideas and people—which transcends national boundaries. Of course, if the international environment still plays an important role, resorting to these spatial scales of comparison is always a specific matter. The example of Tunisia illustrates a situation of generalized support for the discourse of the public authorities. Apart from some opposition activists (of whom there were very few), Tunisians took up the official discourse on Tunisia—a country far more peaceful and productive than Algeria, more egalitarian and industrial than Morocco, more stable and respectable than Libya, incomparably better developed than the countries of sub-Saharan Africa—while obscuring any comparison with the 'tigers' of Asia, even though this comparison would have been quite logical given the continuous references to the theme of emerging countries. In contrast, the example of East Germany illustrates the possible disjunctions between official discourse and the perceptions of the population and suggests the full ambiguity of the comparison¹²: in the eyes of the leaders, the

legitimate comparison was the one with other East European countries, especially with Poland and Czechoslovakia; the population, however, perceived its situation solely in comparison with West Germany.

This quest for economic normality is obviously not homogeneous and does not find expression only in the general objective of survival and the desire to have a decent life. Certainly, legitimacy is often expressed in the wish to satisfy basic needs and, in many countries, bread plays an important role in the representation of normality that is accessible to all, or should legitimately be so. In Nazi Germany, the image of bread made it possible to reach the entire population, since it implied the actual consumption of the basic commodity par excellence, while also acting as a metaphor for the enjoyment and satisfaction of material needs.¹³ The Christian reference to ‘daily bread,’ indeed, was meant to reveal the protective role of the state, the father of the German nation: protection of workers as well as the bourgeoisie, of dwellers in towns as well as the countryside, of the poor as well as the rich. The Nazi state saw it as its duty to provide everyone with labor, food, profit, suitable employment and the security of a normal life, that is, the ‘bread’ of each person. In Tunisia, people refer to *el khobza* (bread) both to explain morally reprehensible behavior and to justify corruption and embezzlement, to ask for a job, help or protection, to excuse (or apologize for) acts of denunciation, informing or compromise, or to legitimize their rebellion.¹⁴ To some extent, the popular legitimacy of Ben Ali’s regime stemmed from this ability to let these ‘khobzist’ trends flourish.

However, ‘normality,’ contextualized and relational, without any moral or ethical presuppositions behind it, is conceived differently by different individuals and population groups. It finds expression both in the ambition to get rich and increase one’s purchasing power—and thus social status—and in the desire to find recognition at work or a job in one’s special area. In Germany in the 1920s and 1930s, for example, the idea that democracy had lost its authority because it had failed to manage the economy was very widespread, and it is partly this that legitimized (and gave real form to) the discourse calling for democracy to be ‘sacrificed’ in the name of the economy.¹⁵ And, in fact, Nazism was a ‘golden age of authoritarian normality’¹⁶ for industrialists and small employers. The destruction of the Left, the weakening of the labor movement, the freezing of wages, the destruction of unions, a public policy favorable to the establishment and strengthening of cartels, all these factors explain the support of this category of the population for whom National Socialism

was a concrete form of the ordinariness and normalization of the ‘dictatorship of leaders’¹⁷ within the world of productivity. Obviously, not everyone adhered and these same industrialists and small businessmen could criticize Nazi protectionist and interventionist policy, or the government’s opposition to any devaluation. But, in fact, the improvement of their working conditions and the huge profits they made led to them viewing the regime overall very favorably. These mechanisms of legitimation worked well for this category of the population but not, however, for everyone, especially not for workers and employees. Still, workers and employees gave their support to the regime for other reasons mentioned above, such as the return to work, the existence of social programs or the improvement of housing conditions. This recognition of the government’s contribution to economic normality was not immediately apparent in 1933, when the legitimacy of the Nazi regime was more of a negative implication, based on a massive rejection of the Weimar Republic. It gradually acquired momentum, especially from 1936 onwards, as a result of the ‘success’ of the policies pursued by the Third Reich in terms of employment and improvements in social life, and even more because the international economic situation improved, state authority was restored, the Nazi regime gained international legitimacy, people got used to the new political habitus, the Nazi vocabulary and propaganda numbed the population, and so on. In short, legitimacy is not one and indivisible, but appears instead to be fragmented, fluctuating and largely circumstantial, changing with the times, and with the way it entails habituation and it transforms the dominant values—in other words, changing the criteria for assessing legitimacy itself.

But we cannot be content with a simple, not to say simplistic understanding of this quest for ‘normal life.’ The quest for normality is not limited to obtaining bread, a quiet life and a ‘decent’ level of well-being, or to access to goods and lifestyles considered to be ‘normal.’ It must also, and perhaps primarily, be understood as the mastery—or at least the sense of mastery—of a system that works; in this case, a political economy whose citizens feel they know how it works and how they should behave if they are to live and profit from it.

Let us consider an indirect example, one that seems confusing compared to conventional analyses of ‘authoritarian regimes’ and that ipso facto will help to shed light on the importance of this broad understanding of normality: the management of imports into most African countries. This management, made up of a subtle blend of fierce protectionism and

a complete absence of protection is not merely anecdotal; it is, rather, a fundamental *dispositif* in the exercise of power and domination in Africa. In fact, imports are a total social fact, a massive political fact. In their multiplicity, commercial networks are unavoidable organizations of state formation, since they compose the essential cogs of access to external resources.¹⁸ That is why the management of imports, whether these pass through ‘formal’ or ‘informal’ channels, is tightly controlled. For the formal as for the informal, it is important to be part of the power networks and to be accepted so as to be able to go through customs, gain access to markets, receive credit and enjoy tax exemptions. Given the weakness of the national productive fabric and the importance of economic relations with the outside world, international trade is one of the fundamental resources of African states. These are financial resources of course, but above all political and social resources: imports play a part in the construction of power by providing African elites with opportunities to increase their prestige and by fueling the system of obligations that lies at the basis of the political and social order. Through the management of access to import sectors, leaders make use of relations of dependency, help to promote some entrepreneurs and condemn others, participate in dazzling success stories and collapses that are no less brutal—in short, they partly control the business world.¹⁹ However, these strategies are simultaneously considered legitimate for two reasons related to the issue of normality. On the one hand, they are not only ‘constructed’ from voluntarist state action, they are ‘formed’ by the strategies and behaviors, sometimes conscious, often unconscious, of the many economic actors who thus benefit from the situation.²⁰ It is precisely this joint ‘formation’ or co-production that comprises the normality of this operation, and this essentially political understanding, of import channels. On the other hand, these strategies enable the integration of the largest number of people in the mechanisms of redistribution and sharing-out of the fruits of an unorthodox management of international integration that emphasizes power relations over productivist logic in what Jean-François Bayart has called the management of extraversion.²¹ But this is not reserved for the elite or even the main players in these import channels; its legitimacy stems precisely from its ability to potentially reach the entire population, which can hope to ‘live normally’ through its participation in this political economy of extraversion that is taken for granted by all, despite its elusiveness. Liberalization policies that were intended to challenge a system considered—by the mainstream and by the economists of international organizations—as based on

a *rentier* economy, unequal, corrupt and inefficient, have been perverted by the very people who were supposed to benefit from them precisely because these policies undermined their historically constituted relationship to the central government.²² This is not specific to politics in sub-Saharan Africa. In Tunisia, the entrepreneurs also prefer the complex and politically sensitive system of systematic interventionism to an economic liberalization that could undermine their political sociability; and ‘liberalization without liberalism,’ characteristic of the political economy of the country during the 1990–2000s, results in some ways from a more or less conscious adjustment of the different actors to a liberal globalization that preserves the types and forms of relations of power and moral economy. In this sense, it was one of the bases of the relative legitimacy of Ben Ali’s regime.²³ Similarly, in the Soviet Union under Stalin, internal trade policy was perceived less as a management of things than it was understood as a government of men, a way of regulating urban and rural interest groups.²⁴ So it was not only an instrument of economic policy but was also, and above all, part of a certain social policy that favored town dwellers and, through the hierarchy of prices, it expressed the power struggles between different ‘classes.’ It was legitimate despite the repression, bureaucratic control and inequalities it generated because it was largely predictable; based on a relatively simple representation of classes (three in number only) and thus of consumer demand, actors were relatively in control of the rules of the game. These examples illustrate the aforementioned bias toward predictability and familiarity: people often prefer an established system of domination if they can master its usages, and are more or less familiar with the ways of reducing its negative effects, to a new system that is supposedly more egalitarian or open but where they do not control its cogs or the new rules.²⁵

It is not just a matter of legitimizing a regime perceived as the only one possible; more subtle aims are at work. It suggests that the desire to ‘live normally’ cannot be reduced to a simple acceptance of clearly identified norms and that would seem to have their own power and act as an external constraint. This desire must be understood in its dynamics, as a complex process linked to a more or less mastered game that plays with norms that are indefinite in that they ‘are not predetermined or pre-constituted.’ Instead, ‘they produce themselves and define their bearing as and when they act, in situ, straight on the very contents they aim to regulate,’ developing ‘in accordance with the same antagonistic process which makes and unmakes the forms of this human life.’²⁶ This analysis, here voiced

by Pierre Macherey (who is in turn inspired by the work of Canguilhem and Foucault), is fundamental to understanding the exercise of domination. It undermines a static and passive vision of norms that would be set in advance and prescribe what normal life in society should be, and instead proposes a dynamic understanding of this. Norms only make sense in practice in individual experience. This is the only way they assert their normative value. And this is another indication that we are dealing not only with reactive feedback, workarounds, fiddling, interpretations and adaptations: instead, players also have a degree of autonomy, their own capacity for manufacturing things which, while starting from and integrating the constraints imposed on them, actors allow for the expression of something singular, in accordance with independent logics.²⁷ In this sense, opposition movements may also participate in diffuse consent and the overall process of legitimation. By allowing for the expression of differences and even conflicts, they allow specific logics to unfold—logics that, because they do not question the political and moral economy of the government, legitimize the system of domination by expanding the possible terms of power relations. Strikes and protests (such as those of the miners and the people of Gafsa Basin, in southern Tunisia, which took place in 2008, and those of petty smugglers which took place in August 2010 in Ben Guerdane²⁸), as well as civil disobedience movements (see e.g. what happened during the ‘Dead Cities’ operations in Cameroon in 1990²⁹) often lead not so much to delegitimizing the regime as to devaluing, circumstantially, certain power dispositifs or certain political practices. However, these objections are a form of negotiation, one that is admittedly violent but real, and also a form of acceptance by appropriation of the political situation, or a process of legitimation. In fact, they can play a part in the redefinition (within the framework of the regime and its political economy) of the nature of interactions between actors, their ways of adapting to each other, and the control mechanisms and practices of domination involved. They contribute thereby to obtaining compromises: new arrangements and negotiations, games and tactics, the reinterpretation of situations and the revaluation of the balance of forces all directly shape political hegemony. The case of Morocco under Hassan II is particularly illuminating in this regard. The strategy of legitimation of power there is based in part on the capacity to maintain dissent (*siba*) and pluralism. Dissent—which has historically been embodied in student movements, left-wing opposition and the Polisario, and currently finds expression in Islamism and the opposition press—is a ‘place for power rejuvenation,’

a place that is neither a ‘direct threat to the system’ nor any evidence of ‘dysfunction,’ but rather a guarantee of regeneration to the extent that ‘the government as well as dissidents see it as a demand for integration.’³⁰ It is understood as subversive only when it becomes a political alternative. Yet such alternative could only occur in Morocco in two theoretical cases that have never found any significant practical expression until now: a challenge to the monarchy by a republican project or the claim for the ascendancy of the Sherifs. In almost all political situations, dissent is thus under control, itself ‘normalized.’³¹ Quite apart from the case of Morocco, this configuration suggests that the system of domination can be considered legitimate precisely because it allows for the development of independent logics and strategies, permits adjustments and leaves room for maneuver—in other words, allows for a ‘normal’ functioning without necessarily normalizing everything. This is true of police states and dictatorships, too. Recent work on the Third Reich suggests as much: ‘ordinary Germans,’ the vast majority of whom did not have to endure the terror of the regime, did not espouse the values or motives of Nazi policies. But they largely accepted a regime that allowed them ‘a relatively wide degree of latitude to give vent to their everyday frustrations.’³²

CLIENTELIST LEGITIMACIES

Demands, aspirations and desires are obviously conditioned by the context in which they are expressed. Thus, in the GDR, the housing question was crucial, not only because of the war and destruction, of course, but also because of the ensuing population movements. One of the processes of legitimization of the East German government, especially in the years 1960–1970, resided precisely in this response to an urgent request, as organized by the state through the Party, by drawing on clientelist relationships. The SED (the Socialist Unity Party) was less a machine imposed on the East Germans, removing all their autonomy, than a cog by which leaders could discover the aspirations of their population. ‘Clientelism at a distance’ was thus a way of building strongholds and clienteles, which had the added benefit of making the Party seem closer to the people and providing leeway for local officials; but it also made it possible to respond in a very concrete fashion to requests for ‘normal’ life—in this case access to decent housing conditions—while feeding into the channels through which the population could be known and thereby fueling the control mechanisms.³³ These clientelist relations were obviously not

restricted to housing; they were characteristic of access to consumption in general: belonging to networks was fundamental, as were relationships and connections not only in obtaining goods and services but also in fueling social relations.³⁴ The entire ‘second economy’ on which consumerism in the East largely rested was based on networks of family, region and, even more, clientelism. These networks also operated as intermediaries between the state and villages, ensuring the dissemination of certain principles and certain norms and thus contributing to a diffuse process of legitimizing the regime. Similarly, the ‘lip-smacking public celebration of commodities’³⁵ explained the legitimacy of the Soviet clientelist system in the 1930s and 1940s in conditions of economic shortage: playing on power relations was the only way to live ‘normally,’ that is to say, to possess and especially to have access to the consumption of material goods. Even if, at that time, the question of ideological conformity was central to Soviet political life, with its operations of ‘purification’ and dekulakization, social and political conformity, embodied in respect for the bonds of kinship and clientelism, allowed people to gain access to this consumerist ‘normality.’³⁶ Hence, it partly consolidated and legitimized a system that worked by managing privileges and increasingly including people within the *nomenklatura*.³⁷ The Nazi regime, meanwhile, made extensive use of its clientelist legitimacy vis-à-vis elites drawn into a ‘frenzied race for self-enrichment.’³⁸ Worldly status and politico-personal bonds woven over time acted simultaneously as mechanisms of normalization and as dispositifs for legitimating power³⁹; forms of micro-solidarity strengthened the sense of Nazism’s normality while granting access to prebend and privileges; client loyalty allowed people to benefit from the process of ‘Aryanization,’ that is, the process of dispossession of ‘Jewish’ goods and capital in favor of ‘Aryans,’ while making it commonplace. In its employment policy, Italian fascism⁴⁰ played on the same register, as indeed did Salazarism in Portugal.⁴¹ Clientelism was unquestionably a response to the demand for recognition, promotion and comfortable living in particular on the part of elites avid for important and lucrative positions in public and semi-public officialdom, while having the advantage of bringing them into line and making them comply with the new rules of good behavior.

The interest of studies of the specific forms that these networks have taken in the socialist world lies in their analysis of the clientelist relations—an analysis that goes beyond moralistic and normative debates about corruption, investigating instead the economic and social anthropology revealed by the legitimizing dimension of clientelist normality. Russian

blat, for example, has been defined as ‘the use of personal networks and informal contacts to obtain goods and services in short supply, and to find a way around formal procedures.’⁴² The shortage economy of the years 1950–1970 was characterized by a system of state privileges and closed distributions. It could not function without *blat*, networks of patronage (*protektsiya*) and reciprocal connections (*sviazi*).⁴³ Paternalistic clientelism, which had certainly always existed, was erected into a form of government once, after periods of political turbulence and a prevailing uncertainty, the ruling elites were led to participate in its consolidation so as to stabilize their positions and ensure themselves a safe and comfortable life.⁴⁴ These practices were rooted in personal relationships, in access to public resources, and in political power relations: they were both a mode of adaptation of ordinary people to the structural constraints of the Soviet economy, a means of acquiring desired goods, finding work, obtaining official decisions and solving problems, and a way for networks and individuals to expand their powers, to ensure a decent material life and political tranquility for themselves while helping the population to benefit more generally from these advantages.

Blat has often been interpreted as a cultural practice⁴⁵ and as a counter-ideology to the Soviet system.⁴⁶ But more convincingly, Alena Ledeneva has shown that these practices were the result of a tacit agreement, made between the authorities and the population, as to the combination of formal and informal criteria. In this sense, they were to some extent part of the process of legitimation of the Soviet system.⁴⁷ One might have some reservations about the normative analysis that leads this author to talk about ‘negative legitimacy’ when suggesting the impotence of authorities forced to turn a blind eye, about her dualistic analysis that makes her talk of ‘official counter-ideology’ and think in terms of ‘paradoxes,’ and about her functionalism that leads her to understand *blat* as an economic practice ‘necessary’ for survival in the Soviet system. Her detailed analysis does, however, have the advantage that it criticizes references to a double morality, suggesting the ambiguity and the elusive nature of these practices and emphasizing the primacy of everyday life. Similarly, while I may not entirely share the dualistic analyses in terms of ‘second economy’ and ‘second polity,’ studies showing that clientelist practices act as ‘functional equivalents of the law’ have the merit of suggesting in their turn this element of consensual ambiguity.⁴⁸ These networks of clientelism and patronage are also mechanisms that legitimize political life because they help to establish norms for the recruitment and mobility of elites. They

ipso facto facilitate decision-making and the implementation of economic policies. *Blat* can thus be seen as a legitimate practice that legitimizes a political economy of production, consumption and trade, as it allows, at least in part, people to satisfy those desires for ‘normality,’ ‘security’ and ‘guaranteed life.’⁴⁹

We can go further in our understanding of clientelist legitimacy thanks to the less dualistic and normative studies produced by Nadège Ragaru. She suggests that *uslugi*—the Bulgarian equivalent of *blat*—crosses the boundaries between ‘formal’ and ‘informal.’ She rejects analyses that have seen them as an apolitical social practice or an expression of the illegitimacy of the state, revealing the corruption that subverts power relations. She shows that the political and moral economy of socialist Bulgaria was largely founded on the strategic use of relationships and exchanges of favors. She suggests that *uslugi* constituted practices that were somehow inclusive: they were not necessarily involved in any circumvention of the state, because the population could use a relationship to activate a decision that, in fact, could have been legally made; they were not necessarily conducted outside the state, as the interactions were ‘personal’ and wove the whole of society together, from the most ordinary individual to the highest ranks of the nomenklatura and the Party; but they were situated both apart from and with the state, in parallel and in symbiosis with it.⁵⁰ Under these conditions, the practice of *uslugi* was all the more legitimate and legitimizing of state actions as the individuals involved in these relationships—that is, everybody—could not live without; the population appropriated them for its own use, drawing in particular on social *imaginaires* that predated communism but were redeployed and reworked during the socialist period. Once naturalized, these relationships legitimized the means by which power was exercised.

Not all clientelism, however, works in accordance with the same logics. The historical and social context, the political *imaginaire*, the economic conditions, the relations of forces confronting one another and more generally the contours and nature of power relations were fundamental in differentiating the compromise arrangements based on mechanisms of legitimation and explaining their changes.⁵¹ The GDR of the 1970s and 1980s is interesting in this respect because we can see how the mainsprings of consumerist clientelism were transformed in it. Whereas, after the Second World War, the issue of consumption took a back seat in comparison to the struggle against Nazism and the construction of a new society, from the 1970s onwards increased attention was given to consumption by

‘actually existing socialism,’ guided in particular by the economic ‘miracle’ of the Federal Republic of Germany.⁵² The economy of shortage had, in previous years, increased the power of people and institutions involved in the allocation of goods, including clientelist networks linked to the Party and local distribution networks involving family, friends and fellow professionals. The Honecker reforms, which were precisely intended to increase access to consumption in order to build up political authority and hence legitimacy, paradoxically had the opposite effect.⁵³ The rather incoherent choice of an external debt (e.g. to import modern technologies) and a currency devaluation (to increase export resources and reduce the attractiveness of goods from the West), while extending the implantation of Intershop stores (to obtain foreign exchange from the sale of Western products in Deutschmarks), had various consequences: it did not eliminate the ‘second economy’ and the power of clientelist networks, but transformed them by institutionalizing a dual monetary economy. From then on, it was contacts with the West and access to the Deutschmark that comprised the factors governing access to goods, and clientelist networks evolved in this direction, increasing inequality and social differentiation between groups and actors. Contrary to the desired effect, the Honecker policy intensified even more the expectations and frustrations of the people as it increased the discriminatory role of clientelist networks, conflicted with the egalitarian ideology of the party, and implicitly denigrated East German currency and products.⁵⁴ Similarly, the 1970s Russia mentioned above was not that of the 1930s mentioned above: economic, political and social conditions had changed dramatically, to the point that the ‘shameless worship of material goods’ now found expression in an exacerbated frustration and, in this sense, in the illegitimacy of a regime unable to provide even the most basic consumer goods.⁵⁵ This implicitly shows up the specific conditions that, at a very precise moment of the 1930s, had laid the basis for the legitimacy of a consumerist clientelist system that at the same time was haphazard and discriminating: the absence of a consumer society, the belief in the developmentalist and modernizing project of the state, the real improvement (for a large part of the population) of its living conditions after the Revolution and the First World War, and especially the hope—firmly anchored and corroborated by the trajectory of whole segments of the population—of a social mobility and integration into networks granting access to these goods.⁵⁶

The 1970s Russia was not like the Ivory Coast in those years, either. In the configuration characterized by the ‘politics of the belly’—that

is to say, by a political life that largely coincided with the search for accumulation, and by the localization of the stakes of social struggles not in the distribution of power but in the distribution of the fruits of its exercise—wealth was not a discriminating factor, a symbol of social inequality, but much rather a factor of legitimacy: it guaranteed the ability to redistribute.⁵⁷ The sentence uttered by Houphouët-Boigny in the 1970s to delegitimize an opponent is still well known: he ‘didn’t own anything, not even a bicycle.’⁵⁸ These words relativize the transformation of ‘figures of success and power’ highlighted by recent research. However, these studies do have the great merit of stressing the diversity of the repertoires of legitimation, and the relationship that they have with the modes of subjectivation, the *imaginaires* of power and the main moral values of a society at a historical given moment.⁵⁹ Nor is Ivory Coast the same as Angola, a country in which the elites do not show off their wealth, unlike their Kenyan or Ivorian counterparts, but try to hide it, export it and invest it abroad.⁶⁰ Clientelist legitimacy does not here derive from an ostentatious strategy of redistribution by elites enriched by oil revenues, but, in a more diffuse and tenuous way, from the opportunities left available to the population so that it can live its life in more or less decent conditions, with access to essential goods and services, under the protection and security provided not by the state but by some segments of the elite. However, this configuration is itself unstable; the mainsprings and criteria of legitimacy, the concepts of rights and duties, have been transformed in Angola itself, mainly because of the length of the civil war. Clientelist practices are today linked to what was ‘socially necessary over the last twenty years (theft, embezzlement, *cunhas* [literally “corner” or “ship’s hold,” meaning also “pulling strings”], illegality and allegiances)—and what has been integrated as a normal legitimate practice or claimed as a right,⁶¹ including social inequality and the use of relationships of protection and clientele, and more generally of the state, for one’s own personal ends.

In Chinese territory, the situation is different again, which sheds doubt on the culturalist paradigm of clientelism. Contrary to what some studies claim, the legitimacy of corruption certainly does not stem from allegedly specific Asian values. It is instead the expression, made possible by clientelist relations, of interests and especially principles that are constitutive of the political bond. In contemporary People’s Republic of China, the corruption of bureaucrats is not abnormal, a departure from the norms, a dissipated form of behavior: it is a political link of another

nature, one that does not pass through official channels, norms and principles.⁶² Local clientelist relationships make it possible at one and the same time to pursue particular economic, bureaucratic and political interests and to protect oneself from the arbitrary fiat and the constraints of the central government and fragmented local interests. They define the contours of legitimate economic intervention, including industrial planning, and guide local development priorities, so that they belong to the modes of economic government.⁶³ Clientelism illustrates the ability of the political to grant a place to what is non-institutional, non-official and non-central, to represent society through processes of informal and particularistic delegation that highlight local leaders and develop relationships between administrative power, local political power and economic actors.⁶⁴ In Taiwan during the years 1970–1990, clientelism was a main component in the policy of Taiwanisation (or indigenization), that is, in the system of co-optation of the majority group (the Taiwanese, descendants of Chinese settlers on the island before the Japanese colonization that lasted from 1895 to 1945) by the ruling minority on the mainland.⁶⁵ The spread of clientelism was based on the ethics of reciprocity and generated an interpenetration of political, bureaucratic and entrepreneurial spheres. So what we have here are two different and sometimes opposite logics. In the case of mainland China, clientelist legitimacy derives from the tensions between central and local government, the large-scale commercialization of personal relationships and the micro-factionalism underlying the mechanisms of power; this legitimacy is certainly one of the modes of formation of the ‘distended state,’ characterized not only by the maintenance of the scrambling of legal distinctions between public and private and the importance of ‘intermediaries’ and ‘interfaces’ between a business and its environment but also, simultaneously, by the penetration of state norms into society.⁶⁶ In Taiwan, however, the clientelist legitimacy at the heart of the Kuomintang state is directly derived from nationalist logics of state formation in a more inclusive and centralizing sense because of the security concerns that overdetermine the political sphere in the island.⁶⁷

The case of Taiwan also suggests that tiny shifts and often imperceptible changes can alter the meaning of a policy and the nature of legitimacy. So it is with the ambiguous role of developmentalist rhetoric, and especially the economic practices related to this strategy in the nature of the political regime. It is indeed striking that the (‘bad’) practices that characterized the period of one-party and martial law continue to lie at

the heart of democratic Taiwan's political economy.⁶⁸ We see the same factionalism based on rent-seeking, the same practice of despoliation, the same inability of political parties to discipline their members, the same clientelist practices, the same competition between ruling groups for economic resources, the same competition between bureaucratic feudal bodies, and the same tangle of politics and business. Similarly, the 'national burden,' that is, the relationship with China, bolstered the authoritarian regime for decades and continues to underpin the process of democratization. But the 'national burden' furthers this process differently, especially today, by fragmenting the political spectrum into multiple divisions—a new development.⁶⁹ The authoritarian regime had based its strength and legitimacy on the economic issue by appealing to the economic miracle and affirming a developmental state: now, the democratization of Taiwan is also being brought about by focusing on the economic issue, albeit problematizing it in terms of economic relations with mainland China. Small and Medium Enterprise (SMEs) have been able to link up together so as to negotiate with the various authorities, reducing their historical atomization. By developing collective actions, these entrepreneurs have invested the political space in a new way, fuelling public debate and competition between parties.⁷⁰ The economy—the foundation of the authoritarian regime—has emerged as an indispensable counterpoint to the pluralization of political life and its normalization. For the terms of its expression differ, and now trade liberalization with China is no longer perceived as a challenge to the survival of the country; it is the precondition of the status quo between the two Chinese entities. It was essentially favorable to democracy insofar as it dropped the fiction of unity and authorized the renewal, by universal suffrage, of national authorities, which allowed Taiwanese society to be reappropriated by populations originally from the island. In one sense, indeed, the exacerbation of rent-seeking, corruption, the race for resources, and clientelist relationships have gone together with political liberalization and strengthened Taiwan's democracy by opening the scope of possibilities and multiplying the terms of relationships between politicians and businessmen. In short, it has pluralized power relations. This last example highlights a fundamental point: economic dispositifs, and even practices, in themselves tell us nothing about the exercise of domination. The latter makes sense only when contextualized, because actors give it a different meaning depending on circumstances and events.

THE GIFT ECONOMY AND THE LEGITIMATE EXERCISE OF DOMINATION

The political economy of gift and donation can be examined through the analysis of clientelism and its complex relationship to domination. Relationships comprising financial payments, exchanges in money and especially in kind, access to certain privileges (in the case of certain categories of the population linked to the ruling elites), relationships mediated by the exchange of goods and services—all these normalize the authoritarian management of social forces while legitimizing it; the fact of giving gifts is a practice of ‘laundering,’ in the various meanings of the term—a practice, in other words, of normalization.

A gift allows one, first and foremost, to ‘hold’ and to ‘bribe.’ This was the case, generally speaking, in Nazi Germany: the economy of the gift and munificence here constituted an ‘incomparable instrument’ for building up a clientele and obtaining confidential information, favors and benefits.⁷¹ The distribution of gifts at Christmas, birthdays, holidays and family events was systematic and massive. These gifts, paid for out of public funds but offered personally by Hitler, Himmler and the most powerful Nazi leaders, were designed to retain the fidelity of the executives and leaders of Nazi Germany. But the mechanisms of clientelist allegiance could also function as it were in reverse, demonstrating another dimension of the political economy of the gift: not ‘holding’ and ‘bribing,’ but ‘obliging’ someone to grant permanent recognition. In Fascist Italy, senior officials of semi-public businesses made financial donations to Il Duce and handed these sums to him in a way that was both very ritualistic and very bureaucratized.⁷² These gifts were neither spontaneous nor made public; their amount, equal for all, was defined in advance by Mussolini’s government departments and their annual regularity was meant to express the constant renewal of their loyalty to him. Normalization had to be constantly affirmed, activated and renewed. A gift, finally, can be equated with an offering and open the way to redemption: under the Nazi regime, the payment of money to charities allowed one to ‘redeem’ behavior that was not in line with the prevailing atmosphere, for example, giving equal treatment to German and foreign workers (mainly Polish) or having an intimate relationship with a ‘non-German.’⁷³ Gifts can, ultimately, be the concrete expression of a legitimizing and normalizing allegiance. This allegiance may involve the highest elites of the regime, such as the personalities of fascist Italy who regularly sent gifts to the children of Il

Duce and personally presented him, in accordance with a pre-arranged scenario, with the profits of the businesses they ran. This ‘gift’ of the profits, both financial and symbolic, of the public and semi-public economy, was presented to the Chief with the main purpose of fueling clientelist relationships based on the control of public offices.⁷⁴ These mechanisms of allegiance may equally well involve smaller players. ‘Aryanization gifts,’ for example—which economic agents close to local Nazi authorities or seeking their favors gave to the party to qualify a recipients of confiscated property—legitimized the most questionable practices that were current before and after the laws of 1938, that is, the economic exclusion of ‘Jews.’ Hence, they legitimized at least part of the coercive exercise of power.⁷⁵

Behind this diversity, the political economy of the gift symbolizes the convergence of clientelism and the mechanisms of domination. In the case of Angola, it reflects a process of concentration of powers. The Eduardo dos Santos Foundation (FESA), created by the president of the Republic of Angola to finance roads, electricity and water supply and social infrastructures, represents ‘the culmination of the general system of clientelist domination and the sign of the strengthening of presidential power.’⁷⁶ Such financing existed previously but were directly made by large companies in a classic paternalistic tradition. Since 1996, donations to the FESA not only by large foreign and Angolan companies but also by small businesses represent a centralization and privatization of such funding for the benefit of the engineer Eduardo dos Santos in person. These gifts are both mandatory—if you neglect to make them, you are excluded from the Angolan political economy—and completely voluntary, as all these entrepreneurs want to be close to the government and appear as benefactors. They also feed an entire patronage network of associations and actors in so-called civil society who also benefit, thanks to this support, from international funding. In Tunisia, the National Solidarity Fund, which also belonged to the President, more commonly called the ‘26.26,’ after the number of its postal account, came under the same logic. Established in 1993, it was supposed to receive donations from individuals and Tunisian entrepreneurs for the poor living in ‘zones of shadow.’ It was primarily a mechanism for controlling the entire population, the beneficiaries who were ‘selected’ as well as the donors who were ordered to give.⁷⁷ In this case, as in that of Angola, this disciplinary technique could, however, work only because it was partially legitimate: it was embedded in networks of power in which individuals circulated; everybody was certainly a ‘victim’ of such practices (whether they are called ‘forced donation,’ ‘private

taxation,' 'levy,' 'racket' or 'extortion'), but people were also the best way of furthering them. When individuals played on hierarchical relationships within the business or the government, pushing for subordinates to make a donation; when they tried to avoid the more or less explicit pressure of the Party or the associations connected with it by giving; when they tried to avoid political constraints by paying up; when they anticipated the expected sanctions by buying their conformity; in short, when they were enrolled in various forms of sociability and sought 'normality,' these individuals were often turned, despite themselves and unwittingly, into intermediaries for the central government, and vectors for the legitimacy of payments. These gifts were political instruments, irrespective of how they were made and financed.

The examples of Angola and Tunisia illustrate the fact that these levies were private, yet they could equally well be more public and stem from more traditional fiscal logics. At the end of the Ottoman Empire, for example, Sultan Abdülhamid II turned his civil list into a machine for distributing gifts⁷⁸: estimated at between 6% and 10% of government revenues, the list not only did indeed allow the sultan to maintain the court, his bodyguard and a third of the officials of the Sublime Porte, but it also made possible the distribution of tips, rewards, additional wages and gifts. These simultaneously made it possible to ensure the loyalty of his servants, foster philanthropic and charitable works, including the construction and maintenance of hospitals, asylums, schools and mosques, and distribute food, clothing and fuel. They were also the expression of the prestige of the empire, which flaunted its wealth and offered gifts to its foreign guests. 'It is the royal fountain of favors that produces the best crop in the field of sovereignty'⁷⁹: this saying, quoted by the Sultan, suggests the importance of the gift and clientelism in the Hamidian system, which was based on the mobilization of material resources for targeted redistribution. They were all the more central in that, in a political reading of Islam, they linked solidarity to obedience and self-discipline. Beyond the circle of the imperial court, this technique of domination spread throughout society via Islamic ethics, the training of officials, and logics of association (rather than exclusion) of a large number of people.⁸⁰ One could give many more examples from East Germany, China, or post-Soviet Russia,⁸¹ but the argument is clear: relations of mutual dependence and chains of interdependence fuelled by the circulation of gifts and donations nourish political sociability and thereby play a part, at least to some extent, in the legitimacy of the government. By ensuring a certain share in prosperity

or wealth, and establishing the latter as a donor power, it is a ‘remarkable corrective to the experience of the state as a “cold monster.”’⁸²

Making a detour through studies of clientelism in modern democracies (especially Italy) will help to bring out the level of legitimacy that is fostered by this form (a particular but extremely common form) of the relationship to the political. The legitimacy or illegitimacy of such a quasi-universal mechanism depends primarily on being made part of one’s own social history.⁸³ Clientelist relationships are based on a system of mutual obligations and forms of personalization of social relations, ipso facto suggesting their validity⁸⁴: exchanges of service and the pragmatic use of public resources are mechanisms that legitimize modes of domination by public figures, with clientelism appearing as the ‘result of the appropriation by certain social groups of institutions that emerged as a result of modernization.’⁸⁵ Clientelist relationships may indeed be mediated relationships between local and national levels that also allow the state to become rooted, constituting one norm among the many others that govern the relationship to politics.⁸⁶ Clientelism is legitimate because it reflects to a particular form of representation of interests, these networks constituting the best channels of transmission and response to demands, including material demands, made by the population.⁸⁷ It is legitimate, too, because it allows both the pursuit of social relations (even if the terms of these relations are thereby renewed) and the entrenchment of public action (even if the state’s project is thereby modified).⁸⁸ The legitimacy of state action comes precisely from the ability of local society to shape it by making it pass through clientelist networks, that is to say the recognition of practices spread across the whole field of social relations. This is why ‘clientelist relationships are much more natural than the market and the modern state,’ why ‘clientelism is an institution,’ ‘a fundamental and lasting instrument of social and political integration.’⁸⁹ It is not a pathology, a deviance or a characteristic of underdeveloped, archaic or authoritarian regimes.

In this context, we can better understand Vaclav Havel (if we disregard the moralism underlying his analysis) when he says that ‘everyone is bribed’⁹⁰ or Fabrice d’Almeida when he claims that once the Nazi system was consolidated, the entire country went into a ‘frenzy of brown-nosing’⁹¹: people would accept a certain post that provided them with a certain privilege, join a certain institution enabling them to benefit from a certain right, participate in a certain activity or event that opened up a certain possibility, multiply support and ingratiate themselves with the

‘powerful’ in return for various benefits. These tactics express the aspirations to an easier life as well as the adaptations, perhaps superficial but powerfully normalizing, made by these actors to enhance their place in society. They are thereby involved in the acceptance and legitimacy of this particular but widespread type of exercise of power. The entire political economy of ‘constant and routine interventions’ that we find in Tunisia, as in many other countries with a statist tradition, also falls within this logic.⁹² Games are played with arrears to the Internal Revenue or to Social Security, with late repayments from banks, with fuzzy regulation of labor, with laws and legal texts, with the effective implementation of more or less precisely defined norms, rules or standards, with respect for and enforcement of judgments, and so on. All these games open up many opportunities for clientelism and interventionism. A whole system of more or less harmless constraints and small service supplies the whole of society and enables power relations to unfold in the interstices of these economic games. Sometimes experienced as forms of negative, intrusive or inappropriate interference, they are always regarded as inevitable by economic actors and are most often interpreted positively, as ways of dealing with a problem, overcoming a difficulty, gaining access to a market or opening the field of economic opportunities. Because they are consubstantial with the compromise arrangements made with the rules, and often allow the pursuit of a ‘normal’ life, they also fuel the legitimacy of state interventionism. This is not specific to Ben Ali’s Tunisia. This role played by compromise arrangements is also seen in the legitimacy of state and public policy in many other situations, as studies on the consent to taxation have particularly clearly highlighted.⁹³ But clientelism and its form of legitimacy are not characteristic of bureaucratic statist societies alone. In sub-Saharan Africa, for example, the combination of a specific understanding of wealth, based on ‘wealth in people’ as a form of wealth in knowledge, power and influence,⁹⁴ and a political and moral economy characterized by flexibility, uncertainty, instability and insecurity (a situation Sara Berry summarized by the phrase ‘no condition is permanent’⁹⁵) makes patronage, clientelism, the management of extraversion and the ‘politics of the belly’ absolutely normal and legitimate, especially because these latter are based on ongoing negotiations on property and value. This obviously does not prevent the exercise of domination, insofar as these negotiations take place in very hierarchical social networks, based on asymmetric relations and logics of the marginalization or ousting of certain social groups.

Clientelism appears as a widespread apprenticeship in the political sphere, an apprenticeship that may also concern political pluralism, and therefore different forms and meanings of domination.⁹⁶ In Benin, for example, the democratic process has not resulted in the disappearance of the ‘politics of the belly,’ but in its transformation, including its pluralization through the dissemination and the ‘democratization’ of the political *imaginaire* of eating and of clientelist practices; voters may sell their votes several times over and ultimately decide to go for the candidate of their choice.⁹⁷ In Morocco, in the new political conditions of electoral pluralism, clientelist practices have enabled slum dwellers to have a big influence in local politics and have led politicians to take into account the demands and needs of these populations.⁹⁸ Clientelism is not confined to the electoral period and the electoral dispositif: negotiations between those elected and the representatives of government and big businesses supplying public services have also allowed for a change of power relations, locally. These transformations of clientelism occur across the country. They result in sources and channels of distribution of money multiplying and diversifying, but especially in the shift of its use, and with it, a shift in the index of political morality.⁹⁹ Indeed, we see immediate self-interest being replaced by the group’s interest postponed in time, that is to say, the transition from the classic purchase of votes a few days before the election to collective bargaining over services and goods for an ad hoc group formed at election time: the building of roads or souks, the water supply for a certain territory, the electrification of a certain district, obtaining a piece of machinery to make paths, the appointment of a member of the group to the administration and, more generally, access to employment. It is thus interesting to note that the integration of group members into the campaign staff, who are paid 100 dirhams a day (more or less 10 euros), ensures the candidate will receive, thanks to the interplay of ties of family and friendship, at least 500 voters. So that today the system of purchasing votes is no longer widely available to all comers, but has become a very fine and varied system where only the votes that count are targeted and where the capacity for appropriating and tricking voters is taken into account.¹⁰⁰ Clientelism does not appear as a legitimate form related to a given regime (Morocco during the 1970–1990s); it also accompanies political change and the pluralization of power relations.¹⁰¹ The fact of negotiating a public service, particularly, is not perceived in moral terms, as the corruption characteristic of clientelism. In a system where political rents remain significant, people believe that anyone who seeks to obtain

such rent must pay and redistribute through these clientelist networks. It is considered 'normal' and even 'moral,' and thus doubly legitimate, that the candidate will reward those who help him 'rise,' according to the principle of the ladder.¹⁰² Clientelism and its element of corruption thus appear as the ultimate consequence of a form of political liberalization; elections are a place of action and negotiation for a group that rationalizes its choices in a composite political system characterized by the juxtaposition of several modes of government.

The gift belongs to this moral and political economy of clientelism, and therefore is no more characteristic of authoritarian or totalitarian situations than of what we find in political pluralism, or even democracy as the Italian example has illustrated. But this economy of gift must be historicized because its meaning differs from one period to another, from one society to another, from one group of actors to another, from one socio-political or economic situation to another. In late antiquity, as Paul Veyne has magnificently shown in *Bread and Circuses*, evergetism, the gift donated by the notables and the wealthy to the people, was the ultimate expression of the political.¹⁰³ The question was then to master 'gifts' through time: circuses and games should only be offered at specific times so as to better control and discipline the population; it was also a question of prestige, as the symbolic act of giving suggested that those who were able to offer, able to show off their own magnificence, were in the service of the governed. In this context, unlike the situations described above, the gift was not an exchange between, on the one hand, privileges granted to the propertied class and, on the other, the position of power of the ruling class. It was not a monopoly of state power, a vector of constitution of clienteles, of obtaining loyalty in a logic of compulsion and latent and hidden violence. It materialized political pluralism in that it epitomized a personal relationship between the benefactor and the plebs; the state did not fear this direct relationship that exceeded it and arose more from the informal pressure of public opinion than from coercion. Domination was exercised in a different way, through social ascendancy and cultural hegemony. In contrast, in authoritarian situations, charity derived from the register of wealth and redistribution. In Morocco, under Hassan II for example, the gift was mostly indirect, passing through intercessors. Evergetism thus gave shape to a personal relationship between the person giving—who was thus discharging a religious obligation—and the recipient of the gift who, as an intermediary of the supreme power, ensured the completion of the vow and thus performed a certain transfer of wealth

while preserving the monopoly of political power of the king.¹⁰⁴ Today in Morocco and Egypt, where Islamic charity takes the form of a direct payment, the state perceives these evergetic strategies as attempts to establish personal relationships that bypass it and as competition from other actors, including ‘Islamist’ opponents. Distributing gifts becomes a place of political competition in which the central government tries, often successfully, to limit or eliminate its competitors.¹⁰⁵ However, while it was not a form of redistribution, the evergetism of antiquity was indeed linked to the problematic of domination and obedience: first, gifts, which also reflected the fear aroused by the people, should not give them ideas of revolt; second, evergetism reflected the political, social and economic superiority ascribed to the wealthy and was a concrete form of their natural superiority and subjective right to command; finally, it expressed the existence of rivalries in relative freedom, an intended display of refinement that needed to be kept under control.

The example of evergetism stresses the ambiguity and plurality of meanings of the gift, which often serves merely to reinforce the part it plays in the legitimacy of modes of government. It also suggests the multiplicity of logics of legitimization and the diversity of the modes by which domination is accepted. That is why it seems to me difficult to contrast legitimacy with loyalty, or rather to define loyalty as a state strategy specifically developed to address the lack of legitimacy.¹⁰⁶ Clientelist loyalty is legitimate precisely insofar as, beyond the official rhetoric of the regime, such relationships can overcome gaps between, on the one hand, promises and commitments, and, on the other, actual achievements. The ‘invention of everyday life’ also consists of this set of different, unthought rules through which misunderstandings become productive, practices effective, and forms of behavior normal and legitimate.

FIGHT AGAINST THE DEVIANT: THE EXAMPLE OF ANTI-CORRUPTION

As we have seen, the processes of normalization and bringing into compliance are widely accepted in the name of certain demands, certain desires, certain shared visions, but also in the name of certain fundamental principles, starting with justice and equity, and in the name of certain representations, such as a world without conflict and a sanitized conception of politics. The relative legitimacy of the normalizing and conformist slogan explains the commonplace quality of the fight against economic

deviance: even if there is not always a social consensus on the definition of ‘deviant’ and the forms of ‘deviation’ are more or less acceptable, based on multiple values and temporalities, the fight against deviance always targets daily practices in the name of justice and equal treatment for all. Legitimate power is ‘power whose claim is just,’ that is, one for which justice is at the heart of the claimed legitimacy.¹⁰⁷ The latter also depends above all on the existence of recognized formal rules that govern life in society and define what is allowed and forbidden, legal and illegal, just and unjust.¹⁰⁸ This is suggested by studies on situations as diverse as the GDR, the Tunisia of Ben Ali, contemporary China, Salazar’s Portugal and Nazism in the 1930s, which converge to show the spread of this rejection of the deviant beyond the political and ideological dimension of the fight against corruption.¹⁰⁹ This is indicative of a legitimacy that derives its strength from the (universal) demand for justice and fairness. In the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics (USSR), except Khrushchev, the fight against corruption has accompanied the coming to power of every new government.¹¹⁰ These campaigns have obviously taken, over time, different forms, and they have focused on different topics at different times, but the new government has tried to make its presence felt by some moralistic statement to ensure the legitimacy of its power. Brezhnev responded in part to the ‘base,’ that saw the privileges of the nomenklatura as causing shortages; in the *glasnost* of the 1980s, denouncing the ‘injustice of the system’ seems to have been a fundamental element in the legitimacy of the leaders supporting the reforms: for instance, Gorbachev denounced ‘illicit incomes’ and Yeltsin privileges and corruption of the elite. Even today, Putin’s legitimacy lies partly in denouncing the injustices, corruption and illegalities committed by economic and political elites (the corrupt higher civil servant, mayor or governor.)

In this game between legitimacy, compliance and the exercise of domination by means of the fight against economic deviance, the international dimension is these days fundamental. The discourse of the main organizations for international cooperation and aid for development focuses on the loss of legitimacy of states related to corruption. Economic, political and social crises are largely attributed to these practices which, feeding the lack of transparency and integrity, lead to bankrupt states or result in their failing.¹¹¹ Inspired by Weber, Olivier Vallée analyzes this rhetoric as the expression par excellence of the ‘moral policing of anticorruption’¹¹²: the Merida Convention and the discourse of good governance have outsourced the production of norms and transformed this question into

a global issue bringing it within the diplomatic field of representation and action of the major Western powers. The fight against corruption has imposed rules and values with a variable geometry: the aid-receiving countries and those under the structural adjustment of the International Monetary Fund (IMF) and the World Bank are scrutinized and judged in ways that are incommensurate with respect to donor countries; and anti-corruption becomes a means of domination on the international scene, giving fresh life, in new forms, to relations of subordination.¹¹³ But anti-corruption is not just rhetoric, an imposed morality, a form of power and domination on the international scene: it is also an ‘industry.’¹¹⁴ An industry with two aspects. Behind the rhetoric of good governance, there are networks of committees, offices, experts and non-governmental organizations (NGOs) belonging to the great global technology of Bretton Woods which spread a normative administrative science, a new organization of bureaucracy discrediting ministries and officials and honoring agencies, logics of profitability and a whole process of ‘privatization’ of public functions and utilities.¹¹⁵ They thus play a part in the task of redefining the criteria of legitimacy by promoting certain principles of action, denigrating others and reconsidering the norms against which interventions are to be judged. Simultaneously, these networks belong to the sphere of business¹¹⁶: by generating a market for evaluation, auditing and checking accounts, by contributing commercially to the dissemination of techniques of control and ‘good’ practices in public policies and in the dispositifs of management, they have also turned anti-corruption into a business like any another. This commodification and marketization inevitably interfere, often without the knowledge of the actors, in the processes of political legitimation, as they contribute to re-shaping the contours of public intervention in designating what is ‘good,’ ‘pure’ and ‘moral,’ and what is not. However, by referring to vague concepts whose meaning is constantly shifting and by associating corruption with different concepts over time, corruption and anti-corruption are constantly being redefined in terms of opportunistic and functional ‘values’ and ‘moralities,’ and contribute to the emergence of singular interpretations in accordance with local circumstances.¹¹⁷

In fact, in given political spaces, international legitimacy means nothing by itself. It is the affinities between local dynamics, internal processes of legitimation and international logics of legitimacy that make sense, and that can be extremely effective. In many African countries, according to the logic of extraversion mentioned above that turns any external con-

straint into a motive for internal domination, national strategies against corruption adopt a critique of the state similar to that developed by the IMF and the World Bank¹¹⁸ while giving it a religious dimension, as hunting down corrupt persons takes on a redemptive dimension.¹¹⁹ The cases of Nigeria and Cameroon are emblematic of this convergence and are particularly interesting as they relate to two of the most internationally stigmatized countries. In Nigeria in the 1990s and 2000s, Western discourse and the techniques that accompany it were taken up and emphasized the need to fight against corruption, both in the promotion of democracy and in economic liberalization and development; so this struggle took the form of a messianic discourse of the crusade. The registers of conversion, of Christian renewal and moral redemption were mobilized by the declaration that wealth was illegitimate and needed to be transformed through redistribution. In the Cameroon of those same years, it was another dimension of the international discourse that was selected, a much more bureaucratic dimension: the publication of lists.¹²⁰ Behind this compliance with international discourse, we find some very traditional political configurations. The fight against corruption allows the two countries to control and contribute to the reconfiguration of networks of power and accumulation in favor of the new leaders (Obasanjo and later Yar'Adua in Nigeria) or to intervene in the factional game and to establish oneself as a mode of government by the individualization of the way the corrupt are treated (Biya in Cameroon).¹²¹ In Nigeria, by denouncing rigged and fraudulent elections, the fight against corruption legitimizes the military state. In Cameroon, it perpetuates, in other forms, the party-based way the state functions and the conquest of the bureaucratic organization of the state in the frame of clientelist compromises.

This analysis, however, is insufficient to understand the games of reshaping being played out in the processes of legitimation, which make it necessary to go more deeply into the specifics of the modes of the government and political *imaginaires* of each of these two countries.¹²² In Nigeria, the fight against corruption is first and foremost part of the management of federalism and its electoral and administrative clientelism; it accompanies, for example, recent trends toward a 'centralized federalism with localized conflicts' and tries to manage the spread of communal violence.¹²³ It also helps the growth of new redistributive logics through the realignment and redefinition of alliances with local oligarchs at the expense of identity logics.¹²⁴ It thus turns into a 'channel for the reformulation and reorientation of dissent,' but of a dissent that is part of a biased 'modus vivendi' that

allows one elite to alternate with the next.¹²⁵ This fight against corruption, however, does simultaneously permit the repression of protest movements in ‘dissident’ regions including the Delta region, by criminalizing them and impeding economic activity. It plays a part in the restructuring of the places and mechanisms of enrichment, and thus of capitalism, including by ‘indigenization’ and the emergence of new national fortunes, particularly in the financial sector. In this sense, it belongs to the logics of strengthening national economic sovereignty and partly undermines previous arrangements with multinationals. In Cameroon, the fight against corruption both reveals and generates multiple effects and dynamics that anchor its legitimacy. It appears as a form of liberalism, of the dissemination of market rules and simultaneously of the coercion of the weaker.¹²⁶ It participates in the reformulation of disciplinary power relations between the ‘chief’ and the populace, operating by both bringing people into line and occupying the public space, and therefore as the symbol of a new lifestyle.¹²⁷ It also contributes to ongoing changes in the modes of operation of the state apparatus by promoting a process of modernization, technocratization and reshaping of state intervention in the form of ‘discharge.’¹²⁸ It plays a part, finally, in the transformations of compromise between different segments of the elite and between them and the populace through the redefinition of spaces, places and times of repression and concession of freedom or relative *laissez-faire*.¹²⁹

The example of contemporary Morocco also suggests that the fight against corruption may, in certain circumstances, legitimize liberalization and soften the forms of domination. In the 1980s and 1990s, the fight against corruption, especially in the form of the ‘clean-up campaign’ (for instance that of 1996 against informal smuggling and the illicit drug trade), was largely a process of redistribution of political cards launched by the central power, and a reaffirmation of the latter and its monopoly of enacting the norm, that is, a classic manifestation of domination, a process of centralization through intrusion in the factional game, even if it also reflected hybridization between international requirements and national political dynamics. Its legitimacy was based on symbolic and political repertoires, on Moroccan moral values that were themselves very diverse, based simultaneously on the community law of segmental societies, on Islamic law and on the positive law of an authoritarian government.¹³⁰ At present, the dispositifs of the fight against corruption is still perhaps part of a process of co-optation of a whole swathe of political society¹³¹: after a period of latency and reshaping in civil society, especially in the

fight against corruption, the old radical and revolutionary Left, repressed and imprisoned during the ‘years of lead’ (the late 1960s to the 1980s), is now in turn the object of close attention of the Palace, which aims to include it in the ‘seraglio.’ But the Palace is not alone in initiating this encounter. It certainly carries out a fundamental role: ultimately it is the Palace which accepts or refuses to accept the integration of any one political circle. However, the influence of the associative movement has been crucial in this rapprochement, which has been made possible thanks to its tenacity, professionalism and organization, thanks to the echo, especially, which its political struggles have met with in society, and the tensions they have caused. Moreover, the ‘changeover government’ (‘gouvernement d’alternance’—an expression that implies that the alternation was decided by Hassan II, not in accordance with the election results, but arbitrarily, exactly as authoritarian, self-proclaimed ‘enlightened’ rulers had done) was a crucial moment, not because the balance of power has shifted from the side of the ‘democratic reformers’ from the ‘authoritarian conservatives’ but because the actors then became caught up in the game of a model of political alternation that, for the first time in the history of Morocco, gave legitimacy to a possible tilt in the power relations.¹³² The current legitimacy of the struggle against corruption resides precisely in the elasticity of conceptions of power and wealth, what is legal and illegal, moral and immoral. There is not necessarily a convergence between rulers and ruled as to what should be prosecuted and what can be tolerated. An analysis of national and local elections, of the petty corruption of subaltern officials, those who in Morocco are called ‘enforcement officers,’ of business involving relatives of the sovereign, and of the fight against drug trafficking, highlights the multiplicity of situations and logics of action at work in the question of corruption, its perception, its political significance and the role it is given in power relations. But the very fact that today these relations can be queried on behalf of the fight against corruption legitimizes the current power, especially because it shows in concrete form the present enlargement of the repertoires of action, understanding and interpretation that are available to Moroccans, even though the initial impetus, too, was not necessarily thought in terms of political openness.

The multiple modalities of the struggle against the deviant, of the quest for well-being, of the mastery of a certain moral and political economy, of clientelist relations, of the dynamics of the gift, of demands for order and tranquility: all these form a confused and luxuriant tableau of the production of normality and compliance. These teeming declensions of a common-

place mechanism—the quest for normality—allow us to enter fully into the complexity of the processes of legitimation of power. The examples given suggest that domination is exercised through complex paths, that it passes through situations that bring together—without making them converge into a homogeneous unity—different and indeed divergent logics of action, values, understandings and interests. ‘Normality,’ contextualized and relational, is a vector for the legitimation of authoritarian power. But it is so not because it is imposed by the dominant actors as the supreme value, not because it reflects any desire to obey on the part of the dominated but because it is conceived differently by different people and categories of the population, because it is the object of different interpretations on the part of the dominant and the dominated, and especially because it can only be understood in its dynamics. Norms are not defined ‘from above’ but develop in social interactions, in the meeting of a constellation of heterogeneous interests.

NOTES

1. M. Godelier, *The Mental and the Material: Thought Economy and Society*, transl. Martin Thom (London: Verso, 2011), p. 13 [1]; see also J.-F. Bayart, ‘L’énunciation du politique,’ *Revue française de science politique*, 35(3) (1985): 343–373 [2], who quotes these words.
2. J.F. Bayart, A. Mbembe, C. Toulabor, *Le Politique par le bas en Afrique* (Paris: Karthala, 2008; first edition 1992) [3].
3. For the Soviet Union, see S. Fitzpatrick, *Everyday Stalinism: Ordinary Life in Extraordinary Times. Soviet Russia in the 1930s* (New York; Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1999) [4]. Fitzpatrick suggests the importance of things and the materiality of progress. K. Azarova, in *L’Appartement communautaire. L’histoire cachée du logement soviétique* (Paris: Éditions du Sextant, 2007) [5] analyses the importance of accommodation; and T.H. Rigby, ‘Introduction. Political legitimacy, Weber and Communist mono-organisational system,’ in T.H. Rigby and F. Fehér (eds), *Political Legitimation in Communist States* (New York: St Martin’s Press, 1982), pp. 1–26 [6] emphasizes the contractual nature of legitimacy in the USSR, contrasting a legitimacy based on the rationality of the objectives assigned—something supposedly proper to the USSR and Communist regimes—and the legal-rational legitimacy of demo-

- cratic countries. For Turkey, A. Buğra, *State and Business in Modern Turkey. A Comparative Study* (Albany, NY: State University of New York Press, 1994) [7] shows the importance of the logic of ‘national well-being’ followed by unelected Turkish governments.
4. G. Aly, *Hitler’s Beneficiaries: Plunder, Racial War, and the Nazi Welfare State*, transl. Jefferson Chase (London: Verso, 2007) [8].
 5. See Chap. 6.
 6. This is also pointed out in other books on the Third Reich: see, for example, the eye-witness account by Joachim Fest, *Not I: A German childhood*, transl. Martin Chalmers (London: Atlantic Books, 2013) [9], which relates how greatly the populace at large appreciated not only the return to employment but also the increased ability to attend stage shows, operas and dramas. From a theoretical point of view, this is also brought out by Michel Foucault in his analysis of ordoliberalism: the governmental response to demands of an economic kind is a vector of domination. See M. Foucault, *The Birth of Biopolitics: Lectures at the Collège de France, 1978–1979*, ed. Michel Senellart; general editors: François Ewald and Alessandro Fontana; transl. Graham Burchell (Basingstoke: Palgrave Macmillan, 2010) [10].
 7. D.F. Crew, ‘General introduction,’ in D. F. Crew (ed.), *Nazism and German Society, 1933–1945* (London; New York: Routledge, 1994), pp. 1–37 [11]; T. Mason, *Nazism, Fascism, and the Working Class* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1995) [12].
 8. D. Peukert, *Inside Nazi Germany. Conformity, Opposition and Racism in Everyday Life* (New Haven; London: Yale University Press, 1987) [13].
 9. I am thankful to Nadège Ragaru for this remark that helped me develop my ideas.
 10. It goes without saying that the legitimate comparison, in the view of East Germany’s leaders, was with Communist countries, and not with West Germany. On this dimension, see M. Fulbrook, *Anatomy of a Dictatorship. Inside the GDR, 1949–1989* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1995) [14]. For Tunisia, B. Hibou, ‘Les marges de manœuvre d’un “bon élève” économique: la Tunisie de Ben Ali,’ *Les Études du CERI*, 60 (December 1999), available at <http://www.ceri-sciences-po.org/publica/etude/etude60.pdf> [15], and ‘Surveiller et Réformer. Économie politique de la servi-

- tude volontaire en Tunisie,' habilitation thesis, Sciences Po, Paris, 2005, Chap. 2.
11. For some general thoughts on decency, see G. Le Blanc, *Vies ordinaires, vies précaires* (Paris: Le Seuil, 2007) [16].
 12. J. Zatlin, *The Currency of Socialism. Money and Political Culture in East Germany* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2007) [17].
 13. A. Lüdtke, 'Où est passée la "braise ardente"? Expériences ouvrières et fascisme allemand,' in Lüdtke, *Des ouvriers dans l'Allemagne du XXe siècle*, pp. 110–114.
 14. This is one of the main arguments in Hamza Meddeb's PhD thesis: *Courir ou mourir. Course à el khobza et domination au quotidien dans la Tunisie de Ben Ali* (PhD in political science, 5 October 2012, Sciences Po, Paris) available at http://www.fasopo.org/sites/default/files/jr/th_meddeb.pdf. See also H. Meddeb, 'La Tunisie, pays émergent?,' *Société politique comparée*, 29 (November 2010), available at fasopo.org/sites/default/files/article_n29.pdf (accessed 30 May 2016) [18] and 'L'ambivalence de la course à el khobza. Obéir et se révolter en Tunisie,' *Politique africaine*, 121 (March 2011): 35–51.
 15. K. Polanyi, 'Economy and Democracy' (transl. Kari Polanyi Levitt), available at http://www.karipolanyilevitt.com/wp-content/uploads/2013/10/5_KP-Economy-and-Democracy.pdf [19].
 16. Tooze, *The Wages of Destruction*, p. 103.
 17. *Ibid.*, p. 109.
 18. B. Hibou, *L'Afrique est-elle protectionniste? Les chemins buissonniers de la libéralisation extérieure* (Paris: Karthala, 1996) [20].
 19. *Ibid.*, as well as J. Igue and B.G. Soulé, *L'État entrepôt au Bénin. Commerce informel ou solution à la crise?* (Paris: Karthala, 1992) [21]; J. Igue, *Le Bénin et la mondialisation de l'économie. Les limites de l'intégrisme du marché* (Paris: Karthala, 1999) [22]. For the same logic in connection with exports, B. Losch, 'Le Complexe café-cacao de la Côte d'Ivoire. Une relecture de la trajectoire ivoirienne,' PhD thesis, University of Montpellier, 1999 [23]. For the *longue durée* perspective, J.C. Miller, *Way of Death. Merchant Capitalism and the Angolan Slave Trade, 1730–1830* (Madison, WI: The University of Wisconsin Press, 1988) [24]; A. Sheriff, *Slaves, Spices and Ivory in Zanzibar. Integration of an East African*

- Commercial Empire into the World Economy, 1770–1873* (Athens, Oh.: Ohio University Press, 1987) [25].
20. This is the distinction between ‘construction’ and ‘formation’ highlighted by John Lonsdale in connection with the colonial political sphere in Kenya in ‘The conquest state of Kenya, 1895–1905,’ in B. Berman and J. Lonsdale, *Unhappy Valley. Conflict in Kenya and Africa* (London: James Currey, Eastern African Studies, 1992), pp. 13–44 [26], and systematized by J.F. Bayart in his review of the book: ‘Hors de la “vallée malheureuse” de l’africanisme,’ *Revue française de Sciences Politiques*, 44 (1) (February 1994): 136–139 [27].
 21. J.F. Bayart, *The State in Africa: The politics of the Belly* (London: Longman, 1993) [28].
 22. B. Hibou, ‘The “social capital” of the state as an agent of deception, or the ruses of economic intelligence,’ in J.F. Bayart, S. Ellis and B. Hibou, *The Criminalisation of the State in Africa* (Bloomington, IN: Indiana University Press, 1999), pp. 69–113 [29], and *L’Afrique est-elle protectionniste?*
 23. B. Hibou, ‘Le libéralisme réformiste, ou comment perpétuer l’étatisme tunisien,’ *L’Économie politique*, 32 (October 2006): 9–28 [30], and *The Force of Obedience*, Chaps. 8 and 9.
 24. J. Hessler, *A Social History of Soviet Trade. Trade Policy, Retail Practices, and Consumption, 1917–1953* (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 2004) [31].
 25. J.C. Scott says this about the moral economy (J.C. Scott, *Moral Economy of the Peasant. Rebellion and Subsistence in Southeast Asia* (New Haven, CT; London: Yale University Press, 1976)) [32] and J.C. Scott and B.J. Kerkvliet say the same about clientelism (J.C. Scott, ‘Patron-client Politics and Political Change in Southeast Asia,’ and J.C. Scott and B.J. Kerkvliet, ‘How Traditional Rural Patrons Lose Legitimacy. A Theory with Special Reference to Southeast Asia,’ in S. Schmidt, L. Guasti, C.H. Lande, and J.C. Scott (eds), *Friends, Followers, and Factions* (Berkeley, CA: University of California Press, 1977)) [33]. See also, on East Germany, B. Müller, ‘Pouvoir et discipline, du monde du plan à celui du marché,’ *Cahiers internationaux de sociologie*, XCV (1993): 333–353 [34]; on Poland, F. Bafoil, ‘From Corruption to Regulation: Post-Communist Enterprises in Poland,’ in B. Hibou (ed.), *Privatizing the State* (London: Hurst, 2004), pp. 48–76

- [35]; and, on Russia, G. Favarel-Garrigues, 'Privatisation and Political Change in Soviet and post-Soviet Russia,' in *ibid.*, pp. 183–210.
26. P. Macherey, *De Canguilhem à Foucault. La force des normes* (Paris: La Fabrique, 2009), pp. 10 and 131 [36].
 27. This, of course, is the lesson of *The Practice of Everyday Life* and Michel de Certeau's other works.
 28. B. Hibou, 'Work discipline, discipline in Tunisia. Complex and ambiguous relations,' *African Identities*, 7(3) (August 2009): 327–352 [37]; A. Allal, 'Réformes néolibérales, clientélismes et protestations en situation autoritaire. Les mouvements contestataires dans le bassin minier de Gafsa en Tunisie (2008),' *Politique africaine*, 117 (March 2010): 107–125 [38]; Meddeb, 'L'ambivalence de la course à *el khobza*.'
 29. A. Mbembe and J. Roitman, 'Figures of the subject in times of crisis,' *Public Culture*, 7(2) (1995): 323–352 [39] and J. Roitman, 'La garnison-entrepôt,' *Autrepart*, 6 (1998): 39–51 [40].
 30. M. Tozy, *Monarchie et islam politique au Maroc* (Paris: Presses de SciencesPo, 1999), pp. 62 ff [41].
 31. *Ibid.*, p. 71.
 32. E. A. Johnson, *Nazi Terror: The Gestapo, Jews, and Ordinary Germans* (New York: Basic Books, 2000), p. 297 [42].
 33. J. Rowell, *Le Totalitarisme au concret. Les politiques du logement en RDA* (Paris: Economica, 2006), p. 315 [43].
 34. D. Berdahl, *Where the World Ended. Reunification and Identity in the German Borderland* (Berkeley, CA: University of California Press, 1999) [44].
 35. Fitzpatrick, *Everyday Stalinism*, p. 90.
 36. *Ibid.*, and A. Blum and M. Mespoulet, *L'Anarchie bureaucratique. Pouvoir et statistique sous Staline* (Paris: La Découverte, 2003) [45], and M. Lewin, *The Making of the Soviet System: Essays in the Social History of Interwar Russia* (London: Methuen, 1985) [46].
 37. M. Volensky, *Nomenklatura. The Soviet Ruling Class* (New York: Doubleday & Co., 1984) [47].
 38. Expression taken from F. Bajohr, 'Le processus d'"aryanisation" à Hambourg,' *Revue d'histoire de la Shoah*, 186 (January–June 2007): 99 [48].
 39. F. D'Almeida, *La Vie mondaine sous le nazisme* (Paris: Perrin, 2006) [49].

40. J.Y. Dormagen, *Logiques du fascisme. L'État totalitaire en Italie* (Paris: Fayard, 2008) [50].
41. F. Rosas (in collaboration with F. Martins, L. Do Amaral, and M. F. Rollo), *O Estado Novo (1926–1974)*, vol. 7 of *História de Portugal*, ed. J. Mattoso (Lisbon: Círculo de Leitores, 1994).
42. A. V. Ledeneva, *Russia's Economy of Favours. Blat, Networking and Informal Exchange* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1998), p. 1 [51].
43. J.P. Willerton, *Patronage and Politics in the USSR* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1992) [52].
44. F. Fehér, 'Paternalism as a mode of legitimation in Soviet-type societies,' in Rigby and Fehér (eds), *Political Legitimation in Communist States*.
45. S. Berliner, *Factory and Manager in the USSR* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1957), pp. 180 ff [53].
46. For some, this counter-ideology paradoxically ensured that the Soviet economy could function (e.g. G. Grossman, 'The second economy of the USSR,' *Problems of Communism*, XXVI(5) (September–October 1977): 24–40) [54], while, for others, it was synonymous with corruption and subverted the economy by introducing dysfunctional elements (e.g. Volensky, *Nomenklatura*, especially pp. 178–197).
47. Ledeneva, *Russia's Economy of Favours*.
48. Willerton, *Patronage and Politics in the USSR*, and Z. Bauman, 'Comments on Eastern Europe,' *Studies in Comparative Communism*, XII(2–3) (Summer–Autumn 1979): 184–189 [55].
49. Willerton, *Patronage and Politics in the USSR*, and Fehér, 'Paternalism as a mode of legitimation.'
50. N. Ragaru, 'Les écrans du socialisme. Micro-pouvoirs et quotidieneté dans le cinéma bulgare,' in N. Ragaru and A. Capelle-Pogăcean (eds), *Vie quotidienne et pouvoir sous le communisme. Consommer à l'Est* (Paris: Karthala, 2010), pp. 277–348 [56]; 'Quelques remarques sur les échanges de services et l'appropriation de l'ordre politique en Bulgarie communiste,' in S. Kott and M. Mespoulet (eds., in collaboration with A. Roger), *Le Postcommunisme dans l'histoire* (Brussels: Éditions de l'Université de Bruxelles, 2006), pp. 51–62 [57], and 'Uslugi. The role of political favors and connections in post-Communist Bulgaria,' in

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Believing and Getting Others to Believe: The Subjective Motives of Legitimacy

The processes of legitimation appear to be flexible, groping their way along in an often paradoxical and unexpected manner in political situations that are all the more moving, in that they contain a plurality of logics. However, we need to make two qualifications that complicate still further the question of the relationship between legitimacy and normalization. The processes of compliance do not have much to say about what people actually think or what they feel in their heart of hearts about the ins and outs of their interests, projects or types of behavior. Conformist people are, for all their conformity, not ‘puppets,’ in the words of Alf Lüdtke,¹ even if their compliance is simultaneously the condition of the bureaucratic order as a social production of indifference. The concept of *Eigensinn*, or capacity for autonomy and indifference, suggests that compliance is not necessarily passivity, but may correspond instead to distancing. This concept tries to cover the diversity of both feelings and attitudes about the authoritarian exercise of power²: it allows us to express the simultaneity of indifference and curiosity, of distancing and the ability to undertake individual actions, the desire to give our own meaning to our actions and take into account the constraints that are involved, the capacity for stubbornness and distancing, autonomy and the detached acceptance of discipline. In other words, *Eigensinn* expresses the flexible, fluid and multiple ways in which people try to preserve their existence. By purely personal adjustments in behavior and actions, it allows for the expression of certain

forms of leeway, initiatives and liberties, and thus it is not necessarily synonymous with normalization even though this autonomy from the regime of domination is also a condition of its acceptance. As shown by Michel de Certeau, subordinate groups may develop autonomous actions, and their approach is not reducible to the rationality of the state order.³ This is also demonstrated by studies produced by the school of *microstoria*⁴: actors strategically use social rules; they play with them not to prevent forms of domination but to condition and modify them, hence the importance of observing the gaps between competing normative systems to understand the effective exercise of domination and the development of new mechanisms and new practices.

Moreover, the issue of normality and compliance is primarily a question of representation: the representation of the border—itself blurred—between compliant and noncompliant, between normal and abnormal; the representation above all, perhaps, of the ‘dangerousness’ (or not) of noncompliance and abnormality. In the German Democratic Republic (GDR), for example, noncompliant behavior (using informal networks of supply, listening to forbidden music, dressing ‘Western’ style) was widespread, and not usually condemned as such, according to a widespread logic of implicit authorization or tolerance for anything that was not forbidden; such behavior was not politicized by the regime as long as it remained localized, isolated, uncoordinated.⁵ Workers could be ‘unhappy but loyal’ and their behavior could be noncompliant with respect to certain criteria (labor discipline, exemplarity and performance of the German economy), but acceptable insofar as it was consistent with other criteria, starting precisely with the expression of this political loyalty.⁶ In Tunisia, people who did not pay the ‘26.26’ (the theoretically voluntary contribution to the fight against poverty that was in fact mandatory and set up as a means of control, as I mentioned above) were more numerous than was generally accepted. In the end, they were not risking very much, suggesting that the expression of forms of dissent was not inconsistent with the consolidation of the regime.⁷ In other words, normality—and thus the question of the legitimacy it transmits—is also a question of appearance, anticipation, subjective assessment and representation, a mode of enunciating the political, and proof of mastery of the grammar of power. These remarks and the examples discussed in the previous chapter suggest that there is a certain circularity between persuasion and legitimacy, between rhetoric and legitimacy. The clientelist logic mentioned above, as well as the dynamics of normalization through the quest for compliance, is thus irreducible to material processes, including when

economic issues are at stake. It is in fact through these discourses and narratives, these ways of shaping things in linguistic forms that clientele networks work, rules are negotiated and power relations between groups and individuals played out: one must learn to behave in a certain way, know how to say things as they need to be said and when they need to be said, according to certain criteria, certain norms and certain forms, while also knowing how to play with the rules. It is not the arguments as such or the content of these ideologies that matters, but the discursive and persuasive characters of these, that make it possible to serve interests, to influence groups or individuals, and to create networks of clientele and dependence.

NORMALIZATION, PERSUASION AND THE LANGUAGE OF THE POLITICAL

Language and ideology are not ‘illusions’ external to society.⁸ Even if ‘everydayness is a life stronger than thought,’⁹ ideology reflects a certain kind of life, certain experiences and concerns. So, with Zinoviev and others, we can agree that ideology is a ‘relationship to social reality and to one’s own position in it, and not to ideology in itself,’ which ‘is formed under the influence of factors such as the shortage of essential products, disinformation, a fear of worse to come.’¹⁰ In other words, the world of ideas is not autonomous, and ideology is not something preexistent; on the contrary, it is rooted in life itself, it offers a representation of it, and it interprets it by highlighting needs, sufferings, hopes and aspirations, which are all demands for normality and vectors of legitimacy.¹¹ The ways in which people understand and interpret their lives depend on life itself. Ideology does not only produce propaganda. It is not only a technique for manipulation and the organization of a consensus: the ideas that it conveys have largely come from society and penetrate it as well. This is what Marx said when he spoke of ideology as ‘the language of real life’¹²; this is what Victor Klemperer meant to convey when he analyzed the language of the Third Reich as ‘revealing ways of thinking’ and an ‘expression of a man’s style’¹³; it is also what Emilio Gentile showed about fascism as the expression of beliefs, ideas and myths stemming from a particular experience, that of the Great War and the antisocialist reaction of the middle classes.¹⁴ Ideology is far from being external to society, not least because it is not defined solely ‘from above,’ by the experience of those who ‘bear’ power and run the country, but because in the final analysis it is widely shared by the whole population through the experiences of everyday life.

Language plays a singular role in the exercise of power in defining the contours of the problematics and legitimate expressions of the political. Specialists in the dictatorships of the twentieth century have shown how language was certainly the most powerful means for the dissemination of ideology¹⁵: expressions, turns of phrase, syntactic forms, automatic expressions of an anonymous and impersonal power are imposed by the repetition of messages and slogans and their mechanical, unconscious and ‘hypnotic’ adoption by the population.¹⁶ This other process of normalization also operates by the force of words, phrases and clichés transmitted by discourse, a force even more powerful, in that they are chosen from ordinary language, that of the man in the street, the average man.¹⁷ As shown so magnificently by Victor Klemperer in his analysis of *Lingua Tertii Imperii* (LTI), language leads to an individual losing his individual essence, anesthetizes his personality, transforms him into a ‘head of cattle’ without thought or will; clichés ultimately exert influence on people because ‘language is the expression of thought’; it imposes itself and thinks instead of people, by carrying out shifts in meaning. By repeating propositions that have the form of ‘suggestive orders,’ preaching becomes prescription; by the repetition of formulas or combinations of words, fixed images are imposed. Language quickly loses its richness of meaning, its ambiguity; it is reduced to its political functioning¹⁸; it assumes the task of shrinking and distorting the meaning of words, phrases and discourses so that meanings are imprisoned and, as it were, petrified. As a result, the monstrous nature of what is being said no longer appears: this is how the word ‘fanatic,’ under the Nazi regime, took on a positive connotation, becoming synonymous with passion; it is how rigged elections can be called ‘free,’ and how a despotic government can be seen as a ‘democracy.’¹⁹ This exclusion of other modes of thought, these hijackings of words and this prescriptive and suggestive order gradually prevent one from thinking: the language that imposes images hinders the development of expressions and concepts, making contradictions insignificant and acceptable; it becomes difficult to express differences, distinctions or separations. Language becomes ‘intimidation and glorification.’ It becomes an alibi because it describes and judges at the same time.²⁰ These changes do not affect only the meaning of words, they do not only stop people from thinking; they also inflect the core values to which people actually refer by making it possible to pass judgments about a social order, to identify friends and foes, to direct feelings, to redefine social relations (e.g. peaceful relations are seen in the sense of conflict or even war, and labor rela-

tions in a paternalistic sense).²¹ It is important to note, for our discussion, that these ongoing semantic shifts and this gradual erosion of values alter the criteria of the 'natural' and 'normal,'²² as well as routine functioning, the weight of constraints, the desire to do well, shifts in temporality and interpretation, and the importance of context and interactions with others.²³ Language is effective not because it makes people believe but because people act in accordance with it.²⁴

Yet this language is not born from nothing, it is not imposed from above, it is not, above all, unique. If it 'takes hold,' it is also because ambiguity is its main feature, which allows one to play on possible understandings and interpretations and give the impression, the illusion or the opportunity of sharing common values. In this sense too, the language of power can be the vector of a certain legitimacy. For this legitimacy results not only from listening, from the attention and from the material responses given by a government to meet the expectations of its population; it also appears as an expression of how power conforms to the way of thinking of a nation about the 'common good' or the 'general interest.' It requires a minimum agreement on imprecise and consensual values such as freedom, reason and justice.²⁵ But such an agreement cannot be reached by opinion alone; it requires a reasonable opinion, that is to say, the idea that values can initiate action and lead to works.²⁶ Insofar as agreement on values is never absolute, never fixed, never total, but rather partial, provisional and often conflicting, the law occupies a fundamental place, as we shall see in the next chapter, because it allows these conflicts to be 'muted,'²⁷ particularly through playing with the rules. But the law is not enough and the language of power is fundamental in the way it plays on ambiguities, misunderstandings and tacit suggestions that make it possible to present a basis of common values. It is understood that, in this context, the political game, including in authoritarian situations, requires a common political language to be shared, one which will provide strong images from which ideology can be formed, but can also be the object of appropriation, interpretation or even subversion.²⁸ This language must therefore be understood as 'a set of symbols which sum-up, by allegory, myth and metaphor, the core values which ought to (but seldom do) govern the always disputable relationships between individuals and any society in their provision for the future, which is implicit in the way they reproduce the present out of the past.'²⁹ This conception of a common political language has the merit of emphasizing that, on the one hand, conflict and antagonism are necessarily expressed in a recognized political language,

in a language understandable by all, and that, on the other hand, the language of power is not external to society, it is not unique to leaders, it does not exclude the population. Legitimacy also stems, therefore, from this ability possessed by the language of power to speak to the population and to make acts of power consistent with the values that the population defends; in other words, persuasion is also found on the side of the population, in its ability to convince leaders that they have an interest in appropriating these common values.³⁰ Which, of course, does not mean that the central authority renounces its exercise of domination, but that it does so through audible and understandable expressions that are ipso facto ambiguous and plural. Only this conception of discourse and the language of power can help us understand how persuasion works, defined, for example, by Robert Hariman as the ‘strategic enactment of motives in discourse to induce cooperation.’ This discourse and language, indeed, are neither autonomous in relation to actions nor completely other from society; they ‘structure our perceptions and are structured by the situations in which they are used.’³¹ For domination to be exercised, persuasion thus requires a cunning and credible staging of common values. That is why (and I shall return to this later in regard to formalism) governments need to pay attention to appearances in an attempt to integrate them as best they can through techniques of the enunciation of the political that are linked more or less loosely, more or less directly, to policy decisions. These discussions, arising from an approach based on political sociology, need to be extended to the economy: political language also influences, and often more importantly, the economy, and borrows from it certain phrases and arguments. It does not stop at the ‘political field,’ which, as we have already seen, is impossible to circumscribe. It covers all of life in society, including and perhaps especially its economic dimensions insofar these are inseparable from materiality.

POLITICAL LANGUAGE AND THE INTERPRETATION OF LIFE IN SOCIETY

By mechanisms of both normalization and persuasion, the language of power is spread especially through labor relations, social relations and even in the privacy of individual understandings. We can interpret in these terms the *paideia* that Peter Brown has so magnificently analyzed.³² The educational system of Late Antiquity, addressed to the elites of the empire, was the site in which were developed rigorous codes of courtesy

and self-control related to the ideal of benevolent and civilized authority. It was a political culture that allowed all the elites of the empire to share a common language and a common way of understanding social life and, thanks to the shared sense of a common culture, that of excellence, enabled those elites to live in relative harmony even though they were permanently caught up in conflict. ‘Formalized, elevated, reassuringly predictable, and invariably fulsome, rhetoric provided a permanent background music to the consensus in favor of Roman rule skillfully fostered among the civil notables of the Greek world,’³³ says Peter Brown: this shared culture allowed for immediate communication from one end to the other of the empire through *paideia* which gave ‘a shared imaginative landscape’³⁴ to all notables even if these notables did not give the same nuances to this landscape; it was a culture that allowed the exercise of persuasion and the development of a language that could be understood by both the elites and the emperor and his local representatives. *Paideia* thus played a key role in ensuring a fragile consensus and the exercise of a power passing through often violent practices of patronage and alliance between imperial officials and provincial elites. But Peter Brown has also showed how the new Christian elite invested and emerged from this culture, imposing its presence and imposing with it new forms of domination and new power relations in the Eastern empire. Because *paideia* brought with it the legitimate way of exercising power, Christianity picked up that same *paideia*.

This subtle analysis of the relations between language of power, persuasion and the exercise of domination in Late Antiquity is extremely instructive if we are to understand the role of ideology and more widely the enunciation of the political in contemporary authoritarian situations. Let us consider again the case of Tunisia and its political economy, where reformism can be considered to be the great political story, the very ideology of the Ben Ali regime. I have shown elsewhere how economic reforms—one of the most powerful springs of the international and internal legitimacy of the Tunisian government—could only be understood in relation to reformist ideology and that this latter was less a system of well-defined ideas issuing from a specific theoretical corpus than a fuzzy, ever-changing set of beliefs, aspirations and behaviors.³⁵ Reformism is a constructed ‘tradition,’ a myth proceeding from the concealing of the historicities proper to the various reformist movements and experiences, from simplifications, historical shortcuts, confusions between written records and actual achievements or between representations and facts, the

forgetting of contingencies and conflicts between social groups, instrumentalizations and processes of legitimation. The use of the past is a classic exercise of domination.³⁶ In Tunisia, it can be analyzed as a cunning ploy to legitimize power, playing a key role in the deepening of national identity, particularly in this reformist cultural identity. And indeed, the use of the past worked for 23 years, via official discourse, to fill a void, that of the historical legitimacy of Zine El Abidine Ben Ali. The use of reformism helped consign Bourguiba to the shadows and preempt an indisputable source of legitimacy precisely because reformism was the legitimate problematic of the political in Tunisia for the supporters of the regime as well as for its opponents, all factions of the elite together. Reformism was, and remains, the ‘field of the politically thinkable,’ which finds expression in hijacked meanings but simultaneously by the reinforcement of patterns of thought and implicit actions of the habitus of the elite.³⁷ Obviously, the conceptions held by different people of reformism differ widely, but all refer to reformism as ‘good government,’ unintentionally reinforcing the discourse of the ‘regime.’ Reformism is, however, legitimate and could become a myth only because it relied on *imaginaires* and representations that were widespread in society. In the years 1950–1960, participation in the national struggle and in nation-building popularized reformism as what was ‘good’ in political terms and made of it a common language. Today, reference to reformism is not just an evanescent discourse, the mimicry of the ‘bottom’ latched onto the official discourse of the ‘top.’ It is based on diffuse representations considered to be legitimate, on the demands of the population itself, on aspirations that, so as to be heard by the leaders, are formulated in the language of power, that is to say, specifically with reference to reformism: a systematic call to the far-sighted state, a massive participation in the political economy characterized by constant interventions from state administration and therefore a legitimization of the bureaucracy as the main vector of reforms, a belief in rational progress and material modernization, a sharing of developmentalist ideology, an expectation that there will be protection for and preservation of sources of accumulation endangered by globalization, a sensitivity to the loss of sovereignty and the undermining of Arab-Muslim identity, a desire for rules and laws, a critique of nepotism and corruption, a demand for the rule of law and so on.³⁸

The strength of reformism lies precisely in the absence of any specific content regarding the transformations and the direction of the changes to be made, thereby making it possible to encompass absolutely any break,

any continuity, any policy and any intercession. Yet they are shaped by the dominant language, by the ambient discourse on reformism as good government, demands are no less real. They make it possible to integrate as many people as possible, to make claims audible and acceptable, to channel discontent and to express the concern of the state. In this respect, reformism is an essential component of the process of legitimizing the exercise of power in Tunisia: it helps individuals gain access to power structures, to master (relatively speaking) power relations, to participate in sociability and to support the idea that, by adopting such a speech and such practices, people are ‘merely’ respecting the norm. Thus, reform is not confined to the world of ideas, but produces particular modes of existence by promoting state voluntarism, bureaucratized interventionism and the quest for ‘security’ and ‘stability.’ For, conversely, orders given with reference to reformism brook no disagreement: they are by definition legitimate and must be, if not scrupulously executed, at least presented as reasonable and desirable. Being primarily a process, a way of thinking, a belief, reformism under Ben Ali thus simultaneously operated as the main process of legitimizing the regime and as a highly concrete technology of power, allowing coercion and support, discipline and flexibility, normalization and dissent. As the language of persuasion, reformism was a rhetoric that permitted the exercise of power, a discourse that served the interests of the system, manipulated the factions, and created clientele networks: it made it possible to set in motion very concrete actions, to play on the balance of power and dependency relationships while opening up spaces of freedom or, at least, ‘margins of approximation.’³⁹

Thanks to the richness of its very specific political *imaginaire*, Morocco offers a completely different configuration of the dissemination of ideology and the nature of the process of legitimation. Mohamed Tozy showed that the Sherifian monarchy was not based on a contractual legitimacy, but that the latter rested on two closely interlinked dimensions: an ideological dimension that interprets the Islamic doctrine of power and normalizes relations of domination and obedience, and a cultural dimension, expressed by a very sophisticated court etiquette.⁴⁰ One of the central arguments of Tozy’s *Monarchie et islam politique au Maroc* (*Monarchy and political Islam in Morocco*) is that the religious legitimacy of the king cannot be understood apart from a process of invention of tradition that is thoroughly secular—a tradition which, through the rehabilitation of the *bay’a* (ceremony of allegiance), reduced the importance of positive law and ruled out contractual procedures for the exercise of power so as to

maintain a ritual of submission. The status of Commander of the Faithful goes beyond the symbolic and spiritual dimension and is characterized above all by the monopoly of the definition of the political and its lexical content. This aspect is fundamental. The sultan is the sole provider of the system when it comes to symbols of authority, representations and images. *Dar al Makhzen* (the royal house) is the central place where the culture of power is constructed: it fixes the repertoire of gestures, the practical rules of action, know-how and the art of living (*le savoir-faire et le savoir-être*). Etiquette works as a collective training that shapes the body and mind. This political culture is not restricted to the court or to the elite, but spreads into all strata of society, in a very profound process of normalization of behavior. The assimilation of etiquette is a 'sign of integration both for insiders within the seraglio and for ordinary people,' notes Mohamed Tozy.⁴¹ In this context, the legitimation processes play on three registers simultaneously: the Caliphate (the religious register), the Sherifs (the tracing of the monarchical dynasty back to the Prophet Mohammed) and the *Makhzen*. It is this latter dimension that shapes the contours of what is politically thinkable: legitimacy is measured by the capacity of the state and the *Makhzen* to spread the sense of political concepts to the whole society and, as we have seen above in our discussion of the integration of dissent into the process of legitimation of power, this ability is great indeed. Political actors, whether they belong to the seraglio, to the co-opted parties or to spaces of 'controlled dissent,' mainly seek influence and positions allowing them control of resources; the populations, indeed, do not perceive them as their representatives, but as intercessors with the ultimate source of power, the monarch. But the influence of etiquette and political culture obviously does not stop at the borders of what can be called the 'political field.' Economic actors also interpret their inclusion in society in these terms, which is why, once again, a Weberian approach based on political economy is fundamental: in the mid-1990s, entrepreneurs saw the 'cleanup campaign' (the aforementioned operation of struggle against corruption and economic illegalities) in terms of *harka* and the reaffirmation of the monopoly on enacting the norm held by the sovereign; nowadays, they interpret the call for technocrats as 'co-optation' and a form of renewal of the *Makhzen*; they see the call for contributions to the National Initiative for Human Development (NIHD) less as a social policy, an instrument in the fight against poverty, in short an instrument of public policy, than as a chance to express their allegiance, or at least a special relationship, to the King.⁴²

THE FORCE OF FORMALISM

These examples show that ideology is also and perhaps mainly a matter of shaping, of presenting, of interpreting life in society; it is closely linked to the question of formalism, which plays a part in these diffuse processes of normalization. Indeed, ideology is reproduced and incorporated by highly diverse expressions of formulas and rituals often emptied of meaning, and the force of persuasion is more related to trivial repetitions, more or less varied comments that reinforce everyday life, than by rhetorical talents or an art of convincing by reasoning and the judicious articulation of ideas.⁴³ Ideology often takes side roads, via the path of indifference and distancing—routes that thus prove to be ‘a very active social force’⁴⁴: people go to meetings and official events out of indifference; out of a sense of ease and distancing, they act out staged performances all of which are integration mechanisms for automatisms of language and behavior and implicit support for the regime. These ritualized formulas, words, figures of speech, gestures and endlessly repeated behaviors eventually create a ‘sclerotic’ aspect which also has the advantage of making situations, language and behavior predictable⁴⁵; we know what will be said, we know what answers need to be given, we know what we should do and when we should do it. Respect for codes is a form of security, a form of self-control. However, this formal respect for etiquette leads each individual to behave as if he or she believed in these discourses, to tolerate them or be on good terms with those who enunciate, broadcast or popularize them. The respect for established rules of social life and daily life can thus be understood in terms of ‘make-believe,’ concealment and indifference, involving neither support nor normalization: ‘it reinforces the system, it completes it, it creates it, it *is* the system,’ noted Vaclav Havel.⁴⁶ The Czechoslovak vegetable vendor story is a good illustration of this. Every morning, the seller hangs a banner saying ‘Workers of all countries, unite.’ Obviously, he does not believe a word of this slogan. Deploying this banner each morning has a quite different meaning: it shows that he accepts appearance as if it were reality, accepts the rules of the game and, thus, even if he does not endorse it, makes clear that he is joining in the game. Here again we see the force of ideological formalism that is not outside practices, but is an integral part of them: it allows the construction of a system of beliefs (however misleading) from which social relationships are built. This is another aspect of the force of form Pierre Bourdieu analyzed in terms of ‘symbolic violence’: law, but also the language imposed and the established rituals are what

shapes this symbolic power of naming and showing: ‘The law is the quintessential form of “active” discourse, able by its own operation to produce its effects.’⁴⁷ Those who manage to perform this symbolic violence ‘thanks to their knowledge of formalization and proper judicial manners, are able to put the law on their side. When they need to, these are the people who can put the most skillful exercise of formal rigor (*summum jus*) to the service of the least innocent ends (*summa injuria*).’⁴⁸ Had the vegetable seller been so bold as to remove the banner, the issue would not have been his participation in society only, but the very rules of the game, because it is a game indeed. That is why the only solution for the regime would be to expel him from social life by putting him in prison, forcing him to exile, or disqualifying him, for example.

However, analyzing these practices in terms of make-believe, indifference or acceptance of the rules of the game is still not enough; in particular, this interpretation misses what is really being said: when citizens take part in political meetings in a single-party country and acquiesce in all the proposals, when they deploy slogans on banners, what we have is not only an agreement that is dissimulation, silence and, ultimately, acceptance. Although the massive silence gives weight to these statements, the discourses, the gestures, the assent actually say something else.⁴⁹ Participants show that they know the system, they recognize its mechanisms; their behavior shows that they know how to behave (properly) in a ritualized context so as to reproduce or improve their social status without thereby accepting or rejecting the rules of the political game.⁵⁰ They neither acquiesce in nor criticize the content of a statement or the literal meaning of what is said. Raising their hands and deploying banners are the answers to another question, that of social life: the person who raises his hand or deploys a banner signifies that he is a social actor who understands and acts according to the rules of the ritual being enacted, in conjunction with a much broader system of relations of power. We find these same mechanisms at work in many authoritarian countries, like Morocco in the years 1960–1990, where the photo of Hassan II was literally everywhere, or in Tunisia before 14 January 2011. Not a single place was free of the photo of Ben Ali: in public areas, the poles, shutters and other objects were painted purple, the president’s favorite color. Certificates of payment into the presidential charities (especially the famous National Solidarity Fund, or ‘26.26’), nicely framed, were arranged on the walls.⁵¹ Again, these signs did not express any belief in the benefits of the ‘solicitude’ shown by the president; they did not praise his ‘forward-looking spirit’;

they did not declare the ‘faith’ of the citizens in a protective regime. But they were part of a formalized ritual that made it even more possible for power to make itself visible and to legitimize itself in space and in time now that it was shared socially. This collective dimension was fundamental. The meaning ascribed to gestures, behaviors or beliefs was not direct. It went via other people.⁵² Participation in ritual, and sometimes even belief in certain aspects of it, only had meaning in relation to the party executives, work colleagues, neighbors, competitors and officials, in a society of suspicion, denunciation and social control. It was in this context that one needed to understand how these acts and rituals also and indeed mainly comprised forms of ‘laissez-passer.’⁵³ In individual neighborhoods, any small shop, any stand or commercial location, any office (a lawyer’s, accountant’s or doctor’s) was subjected to the incessant round of party members or neighborhood committees, representatives of the police or other disciplinary authorities, ‘informers’ of any kind, in open sight of all—and asking for money or commitment. These intermediaries, whether accredited or not, openly chanted: ‘We can all help you’; but, for all this, the photo of President Ben Ali had to be displayed in your shop, your concierge’s lodge, your work premises or your office, with a certificate on show attesting that you had provided for the welfare of the neighborhood or made donations to the ‘26.26,’ to the party or the organization set up for the 7 November celebrations.⁵⁴ At one level or another, these oiled the mechanisms of control. They allowed you to obtain certificates that allowed free parking for a professional vehicle or the obtaining of bank loan facilities; they smoothed relations with this or that economic department; they unraveled problems with the Inland Revenue, customs or Social Security; they opened the network of relationships able to foster economic activity, to coax the health services or get the local representative of power on your side. Not to have one meant you drew suspicion to yourself and were increasingly seen and considered as an ‘enemy.’

Behind the reproduction of phrases, words, sentences or gestures, however, are hidden transformations, often infinitesimal, sometimes more significant, which gradually give different meanings to these imposed forms. In other words, rituals do not bear the same meaning. Attention needs to be paid to the way ‘forms effect meanings’ and to the ‘relation of form to meaning’⁵⁵; there is less a contrast here than an interplay between them that must be analyzed in each context. A joke circulating in Tunisia helps to understand how the identical reproduction of terms, phrases, words and explanations simultaneously paved the way for active and singular

interpretations of these formalities.⁵⁶ The scene takes place just after the medical coup d'état of 1987, which ousted Bourguiba and put Ben Ali in his place. Everyone renames his business in honor of 7 November. At daybreak, the neighborhood wakes up with its 'Bakery of 7 November,' its 'Bar of 7 November,' its 'Market of November 7,' its 'Tobacconist of 7 November.' The butcher decides to do the same and puts up his new sign: 'Butcher of 7 November.' Immediately, the police arrive, requiring him to remove his new sign and ordering him to return to the former name. And he says, 'But why can't I be like everyone else?' This story is even more revealing, in that the coup d'état of 7 November was not bloody. It suggests that respect for forms is an unavoidable rule of the game, so long as, in its concrete implementation, it does not affect—consciously or not, to the knowledge of the actors or not—its original meaning, namely, the expression of a knowledge of the rules of the game, endorsement of the norm and participation in social life. In the Tunisian anecdote, transgression of meaning by an absolutely strict respect for forms takes on a grotesque appearance; but often, transgressions are not visible. This was the case with the late socialism of the Soviet Union, subtly analyzed by Alexei Yurchak. His analysis of the principle of the 'uncompromising attitude towards bourgeois ideology and morality' shows that the coexistence of formalities and fully ritualized rules with the meanings that the population ascribes to this formula gives it considerable leeway by allowing for the development of divergent and creative practices in relation to the dominant official norms: this applied to listening to rock music or Western clothing and cultural practices—even though they were strictly prohibited by virtue of their origin, they were tolerated precisely because they had absolutely no link, for young people and for those who ran the Komsomol, with bourgeois culture. Behind the identical reproduction of ideological forms, these different meanings pave the way for often invisible transformations, expanding the range of possibilities and leaving room for the unexpected. These invisible cracks caused the Soviet edifice to shake, says Yurchak, without anyone noticing until it suddenly collapsed.⁵⁷ In fact, a conformist discourse does not necessarily mean conformity: on the contrary, it can enable you to say something else. Precisely because individuals can express themselves only in the common political language, they cannot act without using this socially developed language.⁵⁸ But by preserving the form, this language opens the door to interpretation and sometimes even subversion.⁵⁹ This is what is known in Tunisia, quite picturesquely, as 'stamped language' (*lougha madbrouba*).⁶⁰ Used in a dif-

ferent sense, in another register, the words and expressions of ordinary language make it possible to suggest an implicit meaning, sometimes opposite or even subversive, in a kind of falsification of normalized language and even of government rhetoric. It is a language that is deployed in the margins of what is serious and playful, of truth and lies, of euphemism and the ridiculous; flexible and ambiguous, it has multiple meanings that are part of the repertoires of resourcefulness and of survival, but also of cunning, of finding some accommodation that means you can live normally. This is not specific to Tunisia and is found everywhere, in more or less similar forms. It may well take the form of the language of political mockery, as in Togo, where it combines imagination, triviality, sexuality and aggression. It plays on the duplication of the usual meaning of words and expressions so as to create a ‘vocabulary that is ambiguous with regard to official political discourse.’⁶¹ People seize on language and discourse as they seize on dispositifs of power, to say something else, express dissatisfaction or rejection, and especially to play on relationships and constraints they are supposed to support, or even reverse the relationship others are trying to impose on them. In other words, the hegemony of the form helps to shape beliefs and transcend the logic of believing and not believing. This analysis is close to that of Michel de Certeau’s discussion of the enunciation of the political, for example. The latter suggests that speaking means ‘living in several voices’ that refer to each other, that say the same words but do understand them in the same way and thereby also provide people with the tools for living.⁶² It is less important to look at the act of believing than at that ‘ways of believing’; similarly, formalism and ideology do not count as such but in the ways they enunciate dogmas, comply with the forms and slogans that promote order, live and experience formalism: these are ways that allow people to live as normally as possible, as decently as possible, and sometimes in as much in line as possible with aspirations that contravene the formal and ideological discourses.

The Everyday Life of Ideological Statements

Ideology does not float above reality, it has an impact on the concrete aspects of everyday life. The ‘ideological state apparatus,’ to use the words of French philosopher Louis Althusser, whatever form it takes, acts by virtue of its mere existence and operation.⁶³ This is why ideological formalism produces extremely important effects whose impact comes less from their content—since ‘believing’ assumes many forms and individuals

are not forced to ‘believe’—than from the behaviors that it shapes and the representations that it transmits: ideology makes it possible to guide action, especially because it has a ‘practical, not a theoretical function; it offers models of behavior rather than suggesting methods of knowledge.’⁶⁴ A political anatomy of economic detail appears fundamental to an understanding of the modes through which these influences pass and their transformations. The case of former socialist countries is a good example.

In the 1950s and early 1960s, democratic centralism in the GDR founded techniques internal to enterprise.⁶⁵ These techniques led to the elimination of former unruly Communists and the replacement of the ‘militant’ by the ‘cadre,’ this ‘disciplined character who bases his pre-eminence on unconditional obedience to the hierarchy.’⁶⁶ Democratic centralism consolidated hierarchical operation within enterprise and the mechanics of submission associated with it. Gradually, it also resulted in the dissemination of practices, words and linguistic phrases, of frameworks of understanding reality. For example, elections did indeed aim to express the appearance of democracy, but they mainly turned out to be an excellent way to engage employees, control them and maintain a common identity among members of the enterprise. In the 1960s, the new ideological slogan, ‘unity of politics and economics’ did not remain a dead letter and inert discourse because of any disconnection from reality. The gap between the concrete life of the enterprise, the alleged omnipotence of the party and the affirmation of the symbiosis of economic and political interests was reflected in the development of apotropaic practices such as self-criticism, and the redefinition of areas of competence of party members and employees of the enterprise. These practices undermined the very functioning of the enterprise, especially because they reduced every technical problem to political causes. Self-criticism was certainly a way to reaffirm locally the fiction of an omnipotent power and to attribute shortcomings in the organization of the enterprise to one’s hierarchical superior; in so doing, it prevented any questioning of political choices and contributed to perpetuating the legitimacy of the party, and more generally the central government. Similarly, the fiction of the ‘party of the working class’ was not merely an ‘ideological chimera’⁶⁷: it initially played a part in the process of legitimation of the new East German government, in a way all the more significant in that the historical location of industries in the east of the Reich, the departure of the ‘bourgeois’ to the West and the influx of refugees from formerly German regions had ‘proletarianised’ the population of the GDR after the Second World War. This merging of

the party and the working class was still a fiction, however, in the sense that workers were never the majority in the country and the proportion of them, even in a vague understanding of this category, steadily declined in the East German labor force. However, it did partly shape the subjective representation of people who broadly defined themselves as ‘workers’ or as ‘belonging to the lower class.’ It shaped economic and social policies insofar as Soviet-type industrialization and planning never ceased to privilege workers’ jobs, opting for import substitution and the internalization of social functions within the enterprise itself. This influence of ideological discourses and concepts used by the East German regime was profound, reflecting a real endorsement—even though this allowed for interpretations and left some latitude for action—of the principles and values that underlay it. Proof of this came particularly in the discomfort and suspicion of East German officials integrated into the civil service of a reunified Germany and the difficulty with which these new officials accepted and understood the concepts of ‘common interest’ or ‘public service,’ even though the Federal Republic rested on them: not as the expression of togetherness and national community, but as vague and arbitrary concepts, fostering political clientelism.⁶⁸

The theory of class struggle in the Soviet Union of the 1920s and especially in 1930 provides another example of the daily and very practical consequences of a theory that was a priori abstract.⁶⁹ This influence was primarily exerted through the process of invention of ‘classes.’ After the October Revolution, a real statistical industry was established, one of whose aims was to identify social classes, and to order and quantify them. Developing names and labels is a socially and politically very sensitive operation, all the more difficult as, in the USSR, the use of numbers and classification was, from the beginning, one of the foundations of the regime’s legitimacy. The argument rested on the need to make political action scientific and to transform ideology into a tool of decision and an instrument of power. However, very concretely, this process of identification and categorization resulted in the creation of various legislative and bureaucratic structures in accordance with different categories of the population who thus gained access, in various different ways, to rights and modes of integration into economic and political society. This differentiation produced very real effects, allowing the pursuit of more or less good and rewarding studies, an easier or harder (or even impossible) entry into the Party or Komsomol, the possibility or impossibility of gaining access to social services, and the paying of more or less tax. In other

words, the theory of social classes was very concretely reflected in the categorization of citizens in accordance with their rights and their relationship to the state. These differentiations were at first merely imposed, but they were quickly appropriated: people were defined by membership in a particular class and, when they were able to do so, played on the possibility of belonging to different classes. This game went so far as to involve manipulation, deception, concealment and falsification: these strategies were often regarded as the fastest and most reliable ways of becoming a 'good' Soviet citizen and gaining social acceptance.⁷⁰ But this extreme ability to change class identity was simultaneously an acceptance of the latter and their concrete implementation in everyday life. The very real transcription of these socio-institutional configurations also spread a language and social and economic practices that, in turn, intensified class consciousness. Beyond its rhetorical dimension, 'class struggle,' in the context of the late 1920s and 1930s, must be understood as a concrete practice. It authorized the dismantling of hierarchies within organizations and offered opportunities for social mobility; more specifically, it made dekulakization and collectivization possible. The notion of 'class enemies' fuelled suspicion between people and between the population and the regime, and it justified the use of denunciations and targeted repression of the usual suspects. Here we see, very concretely illustrated, the impossibility of distinguishing clearly between discourses and practices, ideology and social reality, but also the interplay between different registers of legitimacy and between legitimacy and coercion. The regime's legitimacy is also measured by this capacity to appropriate notions of 'class' and 'class enemies' by the population, and the often differentiated and strategic usages the people could have of these notions.

These processes whereby ideas imbue daily practices are not the privilege of the regimes with powerful, well-structured ideologies. This magnificently illustrated, in many sub-Saharan African states, by the significance of ethnicity, which is also not unrelated to the Soviet example we have just examined: ethnic categories and theories of ethnos have been as plentiful in the USSR as in Africa, and they have influenced each other.⁷¹ We now know that ethnicity is not an ancient tradition, a structure, but a social and political construction, one repertoire of action among others, an instrument of domination, a 'myth in the service of (state) machines.'⁷² The usual Africanist view now claims that it was a colonial 'invention.' Things are obviously a bit more complicated. On the one hand, ethnic groups, clans and lineages were part of the ideology of precolonial power in

an Africa where the formation of political entities came about by fission.⁷³ Tensions within the population between ‘first comers’ and ‘newcomers,’ between civilizers, clients and captives, caused a perpetual creation of new borders and new political communities that found their justifications in these clans, tribes and lineages that were constantly being reformulated. Second, and more importantly, this colonial ‘invention’ was extremely complex. It not only emerged from an ideological vision of Africa and the European obsession with classification; it was itself the product of multiple logics: divide and conquer, govern indirectly and inexpensively, manage movements of population, and appropriate natural resources, including land.⁷⁴ During colonization, chiefdoms were the key elements in colonial domination in its modernizing project, in the name of tradition: in this sense, ethnicity as a moral, social and economic practice was at the interface of coercion and legitimacy, exploitation and redistribution, openness to globalization, economic modernization and the reproduction of custom.⁷⁵ Through ethnicity, colonizers conceptualized the territories and peoples they had conquered, ‘inventing’ chiefs and tribes and establishing a ‘decentralized despotism’⁷⁶ which reflected the alliance, at the level of each ‘ethnic group,’ between the colonial power and the so-called traditional leaders. But—and this is important—in this period, ethnicity ‘took hold.’ The colonial state was able to ensure what Catherine Newbury has called the ‘cohesion of oppression,’ that is to say, the conversion of violence into an authority accepted by Africans and mediated by existing institutions.⁷⁷ Ethnicity was immediately invested by the auxiliary of colonization, those intermediaries who made a bridge between settlers and the indigenous society. They were neither fools, nor naïve, nor collaborators, they did not necessarily ‘believe’ in this new ideology; but, because they had historically played a role as intermediaries, they quickly saw this a place of power, a dispositif for reshaping political relations, a form of redeployment of the means of exerting pressure necessary for the acquisition of property and power. This was particularly the case for older members of the lineage and the most highly educated. Ethnicity, in fact, was ambiguous in relation to inequality and domination precisely because it was not only an instrument of privatization of chiefdoms and the enrichment of their leaders, because it did not play just a functional role in national integration, in industrialization, urbanization and migration management, because it did not only hide the wealth and domination of a class and because it did not only echo the need for benchmarks and community for populations that had experienced significant social and political turmoil.⁷⁸ Ethnicity was

thus more of a ‘consciousness of interaction’ between the colonial authorities and the colonial subjects than it was a strategic colonial invention.⁷⁹ It was also an expression of modernity, reflecting new ideas and institutions; simultaneously, it constituted a space for social and political struggle, incorporating much of the population through the duty to protect members of the ethnic group and the existence of a minimum of redistribution.⁸⁰ It represented, finally, one of the ‘central metaphors of civic virtue,’ transmitting multiple discourses on life in society, including on responsibility and particularism.⁸¹ After independence, this ambiguity was given a new lease of life by the nation-building process: ethnicity was (and remains) a determining factor in education, in access to employment and credit, in the construction of markets, in access to factors of production and accumulation, in the establishment of health and educational facilities in the regions, and in the construction of roads and communications—in short in the ownership and sharing of the State.⁸² Ethnicity thus appears in a quite different complexity and cannot be analyzed only in terms of invention of ideas or cultural and political construction on the part of the dominant. It is a habitus, an *imaginaire*, a moral economy and therefore, to that extent, a belief system—but a very fluid system. It is a process of cultural and identity structuring that is inseparable from politics and the state. Ethnicity is a form of (real) political consciousness of the state and its moral economy rather than the expression of political alienation, a form of false consciousness.⁸³ It is a major site for social and economic struggle, especially between men and women, seniors and juniors, a dispositif of social change and, more precisely, the ‘channel through which redistribution is demanded, as well as being a means of accumulation.’⁸⁴ These struggles partly determine the actual political significance of ethnicity that conveys ideas of justice, freedom and accountability, but equally those of autochthony, ghettoization and inequality.⁸⁵ The language of ethnicity is sensitive to the power games, the relations of forces and historical contexts in which it unfolds; it does not demonstrate any elective affinity with any one type of regime, one practice of domination, or one criterion of legitimacy. Insofar as there always coexist other logics of action, other loyalties or other forms of consciousness—such as social class, religion, nationality, profession or age group—it ‘serves’ to legitimize authoritarian practices as well as democratic practices.

These examples are obviously not all of the same nature, and there is no question here of establishing a scale of the force of formalism, a categorization of the greater or lesser place of ideology in the exercise

of domination. Heterogeneous and incomparable, they suggest different ways to problematize the exercise of domination, they show that formalism can give rise to a multiplicity of meanings. They emphasize the diversity of possible articulations and therefore possible procedures for the exercise of power in contexts where ideas, concepts and political enunciations are explicitly mobilized. Finally, they suggest the full importance of the concept of political economy developed here, based on an empirical and concrete approach that is reluctant to use concepts and ‘big words,’ and sensitive to the dangers of their reification. The above examples have shown that the use of concepts is inevitable, but because they often function as ‘figural language’ for something else, the utterances, localized knowledge and, most importantly, effective practices that accompany them must be taken into account.⁸⁶ Providing an approach based on practices and everyday life involves showing that without any contextualization or historical perspective, without any analysis of concrete situations, it is useless and even dangerous (because indiscriminate) to use concepts that are too general. This is especially true because these concepts are widespread in the international community, they convey an ideology, or rather they convey dogmas—a catechism.⁸⁷

Normality in Imagination and in Actual Experience

The preceding discussions suggest that legitimacy is also a question of believing and making other people believe, of interpreting and playing with competing meanings, of the accepted definitions of ‘truth’ and ‘reality.’ It must therefore be asked whether the perception and imagination of the exercise of power at the source of processes of legitimation are as important as or even more important than what its concrete modalities actually trace in society. How is an evaluation made of the ‘performances’ of leaders and their actual ‘achievements’ in relation to their proclaimed and proposed goals? Do the differences between the former and the latter affect the assessment of the leaders and the legitimacy of power? How are discursive constructions on the benefits of a government or the objective necessity of this or that action perceived, and are these constructions performative and if so, through what channels? To try to answer these questions, the example of the strategic use of the concept of ‘economic miracle’ is of great interest especially since, as I have shown above, the economic dynamics was crucial to understanding the mainsprings of the exercise of power. The question of whether the economic ‘normality’

‘realized’ by governments is effective or not then becomes fundamental. Are economic well-being, the ability to provide a decent life, success and even the economic ‘miracle’ claimed by the leaders real, or are they just talk? Answering this question means inquiring into the nature of legitimacy and the dynamics of legitimation from a new angle.

The case of the Nazi regime is instructive. Contradicting the analysis of Götz Aly, Adam Tooze suggests that the measures implemented by the Nazis were not so effective as all that in creating civilian jobs, and tax policy was not so eager to protect German taxpayers, while the militarization of the economy led to deadlocks, the programs meant to produce goods for the people—the famous *Volk* products such as the Volksempfänger (radio), Volkswohnung (apartment), Volkskuehlschrank (refrigerator), Volkstraktor and Volkswagen—led to systematic failures, particularly in relation to excessive ambitions. The economic miracle from which the population was supposed to have benefited was above all a matter of staging and media promotion, as the levels of private consumption and investment were still lower than before the Depression; the ‘miracle’ resulted less from industrial programs, the policy of the strong Reichsmark and the fight against inflation, than from the repudiation of debt and the extent of public investment in weapons and the military sphere.⁸⁸ Tooze notes that for reasons of power however, leaders did actually intend to put the economy back on its ‘normal course’ and that, to do this, they were genuinely concerned about living conditions, prosperity and a relative improvement (especially compared to other Europeans) in the country’s economic health. For certain segments of the population, this ‘miracle’ was also quite practical. The workers saw their working and living conditions improved, far from the best years of the Weimar Republic, but certainly compared to the years of the Great Depression, which remained the reference point for the ideologues of the ‘miracle’ as well as for the populations affected by the crisis.⁸⁹ Similarly, the Tunisian ‘economic miracle’ was an ‘elaboration’ in the Freudian sense of a ‘fantasmatic elaboration.’ It was largely the result of a construction of the economic ‘truth,’ a falsification of reality, a concealment of the past, an appropriation of specific social dynamics and a staging of quantitative data in the context of one-dimensional thinking and the prohibition of any debate.⁹⁰ The fact remains that the ‘concern’ for economic success is very real, especially when compared to neighboring countries. The desire to consolidate the ‘middle class’ is a veritable obsession, the economic attractiveness of the country is a high priority,

and these concerns are actually translated into bureaucratic activism, a great number of programs, and perpetually reformulated reforms.⁹¹

In both cases, the causal relationships are less important than the economic results, actual or implied. Regardless of whether job creation in Germany during the 1930s was due less to economic programs than to the militarization of the economy and the improvement in the international economic situation; regardless of whether, in contemporary Tunisia, the growing number of reforms and industrialization programs contributed only marginally to job creation, which is primarily the result of the informal sector and remittances from Tunisians living abroad,⁹² the situation is improving or people perceive or imagine, according to the case, an improvement, stagnation or deterioration that is less than it could have been or what their neighbors are supposedly experiencing. In other words, processes of legitimation also rely on representations (of the economic situation of the country and neighboring countries), on images (programs implemented, measures taken, laws enacted), on perceptions (the impression that they have escaped the worst, that they could not be doing any better), on styles⁹³ (a bureaucratic style that showcases responsible institutions and formal procedures, a realist style that rationalizes economic effects and attributes them to specific decisions) and on an *imaginair*e (the voluntarism, or more precisely the voluntary illusion of an omnipotent state). The political economy of domination does not only raise the question of legitimacy, it simultaneously raises the question of belief and persuasion or, more precisely, of belief and persuasion in the formation of contours of legitimacy. The examples of 'economic miracles' suggest that it is not the 'object of belief' (the effectiveness of an economic program, public policy, or technological invention) that matters, but the 'modes of enunciation'⁹⁴ of this miracle. Talking of a 'miracle' means you are willing to believe in it, if we understand 'willing' not necessarily as an expression of voluntarism but as a vision, a hope, a way of being and acting. Talking of a 'miracle' is of course, for political leaders, a matter of wanting people to believe in miracles by identifying the object of belief and the act of believing (we believe in the policy that 'created' the miracle because we believe in growth that creates jobs), by relying on the knowledge and mastery of reality, by organizing symbolic events (medals are awarded, the company is celebrated, a day of solidarity is organized), which are all 'acts of faith,' by citing quotations praising the miracle of other leaders or other authorities (you cite the international institutions that cite the gov-

ernment, the Minister for the Economy cites the Minister for the Army etc.).⁹⁵ Talking of a ‘miracle’ also means articulating a vision, revealing norms and principles; above all, it means seeking to legitimize the actions taken and to legitimize oneself. But, for the population, talking of a ‘miracle’ means being willing to believe in it, helping oneself to live, allowing oneself certain types of behavior, fuelling a status quo that any critique might upset. It thus means taking part in the process of legitimation of the current power. In other words, belief in the miracle is not only the result of technical arguments, objective assessments and economic reasoning; it involves ‘behavior in which intentions, facts and a certain strategy all combine.’⁹⁶ But this logic of belief is ambiguous in its relationship to state legitimacy. The current protest movements in Tunisia also suggest that the discourse on the economic miracle arouses expectations, creates hopes and feeds frustration. As de Certeau showed in another context, ‘the discourse that makes people believe is the one that takes away what it urges them to believe in, or never delivers what it promises.’⁹⁷ This raises the question of intentionality, which I will be discussing in the second part of this book. Believing involves conditions that differ from one place to another, from one moment to another, modes of dissemination and impregnation of codes, norms and values enshrined in the official discourse, the means by which the things which must be believed are represented. Because ideologies are always partly independent of structures, behavior of values and words of things, reading, decoding and interpretation are never totally controlled or constrained by discourses and representations, and the gap between an interpretation and any unambiguous meaning of discourse is always possible.⁹⁸

In sum, formalism, the ‘falsification’ of the facts, a process both insidious and deliberate that occurs under the influence of ideologies, and the art of persuasion are all mechanisms that make the fictional world ever more real and the relationships of power thus defined ever less vulnerable to challenge: ‘To govern is to make people believe,’ said Richelieu, while Salazar claimed the reign of formal appearances when he said ‘o que parece é’ (what seems, is). Fiction is everywhere constitutive of the social sphere and the exercise of power. But the tangled webs of discourses—and of the fictions that are told—are different, and the ways in which they emerge define, in a given situation, the arts of governing, the conditions of what is doable and thinkable.⁹⁹ The processes of legitimation belong equally to the former and to the latter.

NOTES

1. On workers in Germany in the 1930s and 1940s, see A. Lüdtke (dans 'La domination au quotidien. "Sens de soi" et individualité des travailleurs avant et après 1933 en Allemagne,' in Lüdtke, *Des ouvriers dans l'Allemagne du XXe siècle: le quotidien des dictatures* (Paris: L'Harmattan, 2000). p. 71) [1], who emphasizes practical and personal experiences.
2. Lüdtke, *History of Everyday life: Reconstructing Historical Experiences and Ways of Life*, transl. William Templer (Princeton, NJ; Chichester: Princeton University Press, 1995) [2], and *Des ouvriers dans l'Allemagne du XXe siècle*. The first text in which Lüdtke explicitly discusses the idea of *Eigensinn* is 'Cash, coffee-breaks, horseplay. *Eigensinn* and politics among factory workers in Germany circa 1900,' in M. Hanagan and C. Stephenson (eds), *Confrontation, Class Consciousness and Labor Process* (New York: Greenwood Press, 1986), pp. 65–95 [3].
3. M. de Certeau, *The practice of everyday life*, transl. Steven F. Rendall (Berkeley, Calif.; London: University of California Press, 2011) [4]; see also J.-F. Bayart, *The State in Africa: The politics of the Belly* (London: Longman, 1993) [5], which draws inspiration largely from de Certeau's approach.
4. G. Levi, *Le Pouvoir au village. Histoire d'un exorciste dans le Piémont du XVIIe siècle* (Paris: Gallimard, 1989) [6], and 'On microstoria,' in P. Burke (ed.), *New Perspectives on Historical Writing* (Philadelphia, PA: Pennsylvania University Press, 1992) [7]; C. Ginzburg, *The cheese and the worms: the cosmos of a sixteenth-century miller*, transl. John and Anne Tedeschi (London: Penguin, 1992) [8].
5. M. Fulbrook, *Anatomy of a Dictatorship. Inside the GDR, 1949–1989* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1995) [9].
6. P. Hübner, 'Les ouvriers en RDA. Étude d'histoire sociale,' *Annales HSS* 1 (January–February 1998): 41–68 [10]; A. Lüdtke, "'Les héros du travail". La loyauté morose des ouvriers de l'industrie en RDA,' in Lüdtke, *Des ouvriers dans l'Allemagne du XXe siècle*, pp. 189–222.
7. Hibou, *The Force of Obedience*, p. 196; S. Khiari, *Tunisie, le délitement de la cité. Coercition, consentement, résistance* (Paris: Karthala, 2003) [11].

8. This, of course, is an allusion to François Furet's analysis of Communism in *The Passing of an Illusion: the Idea of Communism in the Twentieth Century*, transl. Deborah Furet (Chicago, IL; London: University of Chicago Press, 1999) [12]. For Furet, the totalitarian exercise of Communist power was subordinated to an ideology whose mentality and aims were pure fictions.
9. Veyne, *Le Quotidien et l'Intéressant. Entretiens avec Catherine Darbo-Peschanski* (Paris: Les Belles Lettres, 1995), p. 165 [13].
10. Zinoviev, *The Radiant Future*, p. 247.
11. M. Henry, *Le Socialisme selon Marx* (Cabris: Sulliver, 2008) [14]; P. Veyne, *When our world became Christian*, 312–394, transl. Janet Lloyd (Cambridge: Polity, 2010) [15].
12. Karl Marx, quoted by M. Henry, *Le Socialisme selon Marx*, p. 55.
13. V. Klemperer, *The Language of the Third Reich: LTI, Lingua Tertii Imperii: A Philologist's notebook*, transl. Martin Brady, new edition (London: Continuum, 2006) [16].
14. E. Gentile, *Origins And Doctrine of Fascism: With Selections from Other Works*, ed. and transl. A. James Gregor (Piscataway, NJ: Transaction Publishers, 2004) [17].
15. J.-P. Faye, *Langages totalitaires. Critique de la raison, l'économie narrative* (Paris: Hermann, 1972) [18].
16. This is also shown by Victor Klemperer in a technical analysis of these mechanisms (see *The Language of the Third Reich*) and by Herbert Marcuse (from whom the description 'hypnotic' is drawn) in *One-dimensional man: studies in the ideology of advanced industrial society*, 2nd edition (London: Routledge, 1991) [19]. See also Vaclav Havel's denunciations of the Czechoslovak regime (V. Havel, *Essais politiques*) and Joachim Fest's account of his father's life in *Not I*.
17. G. Châtelet, *Les Animaux malades du consensus* (Paris: Lignes, 2010) [20]; Marcuse, *One-dimensional man*.
18. Marcuse, *ibid.*
19. *Ibid.* and Klemperer, *The Language of the Third Reich*.
20. R. Barthes, *Writing degree zero*; transl. Annette Lavers and Colin Smith (London: Cape, 1967), p. 20 [21].
21. E. Gentile, *Origins and Doctrine of Fascism.*; Klemperer, *The Language of the Third Reich*.
22. Klemperer, *ibid.*; Havel, *Essais politiques*; Marcuse, *One-dimensional man*; Barthes, *Writing degree zero*.

23. A. Collovald and B. Gaïti, 'Questions sur la radicalisation politique,' in A. Collovald et B. Gaïti (eds), *La Démocratie aux extrêmes. Sur la radicalisation politique* (Paris: La Dispute, 2006) [22], especially pp. 43ff; N. Mariot, 'Faut-il être motivé pour tuer? Sur quelques explications aux violences de guerre,' *Genèses*, 53 (December 2003): 154–177 [23].
24. P. Veyne, *Bread and Circuses: Historical Sociology and Political Pluralism* (London: Penguin Books, 1992), pp. 38–39 [24]. The English translation of Paul Veyne's book is abridged. Quotes from the French original version of the book have therefore been transl. Andrew Brown.
25. S. Cotta, 'Phénoménologie de la légitimité,' in Institut international de philosophie politique, *L'Idée de légitimité*, pp. 61–86.
26. Polin, 'Analyse philosophique de l'idée de légitimité.'
27. Passerin d'Entrèves, 'Légalité et légitimité,' p. 35.
28. J. Lonsdale, 'African pasts in Africa's future,' *Canadian Journal of African Studies*, 23(1) (1989):126–146 [25].
29. Ibid.: 127.
30. J.-F. Bayart, *Global subjects: a political critique of globalization*, transl. Andrew Brown (Cambridge: Polity, 2007) [26]. This is also suggested by T. H. Rigby for the Communist worlds ('Introduction').
31. R. Hariman, *Political Style. The Artistry of Power* (Chicago, IL: University of Chicago Press, 1995), p. 178 [27].
32. P. Brown, *Power and Persuasion in Late Antiquity: Towards a Christian Empire* (Madison, WI: University of Wisconsin Press, 1992), especially chapters 2 and 4 [28].
33. Brown, *Power and persuasion in late antiquity*, p. 40.
34. Brown, *Power and persuasion in late antiquity*, p. 41.
35. B. Hibou, 'Tunisie, d'un réformisme à l'autre,' in J.-F. Bayart, R. Bertrand, T. Gordadze, B. Hibou, and F. Mengin, *Legs colonial et Gouvernance contemporaine*, 1, FASOPO, Paris (December 2005), http://www.fasopo.org/publications/legscolonial_bh_1205.pdf [29], and 'Le réformisme, grand récit politique de la Tunisie contemporaine,' *Revue d'histoire moderne et contemporaine*, 56–4 bis (Supplement 2009): 14–53 [30].
36. F. Hartog and J. Revel (eds), *Les Usages politiques du passé* (Paris: Éditions de l'École des Hautes Études en Sciences Sociales, 2001) [31]; J. Revel and G. Levi (eds), *Political Uses of the Past. The*

- Recent Mediterranean Experience* (London: Franck Cass, 2002) [32].
37. P. Bourdieu, *Distinction: A social critique of the judgement of taste*, transl. Richard Nice, with a new introduction by Tony Bennett (London: Routledge, 2010), pp. 398–467 [33].
 38. Hibou, *The Force of Obedience*, chapter 8, and ‘Le réformisme.’
 39. The expression is taken from Paul Veyne, albeit in a completely different context (*Le Quotidien et l’Intéressant*).
 40. Tozy, *Monarchie et islam politique au Maroc*.
 41. *Ibid.*, p. 40.
 42. Hibou, ‘Les enjeux de l’ouverture au Maroc’; Hibou and Tozy, ‘Une lecture d’anthropologie politique de la corruption au Maroc’; B. Hibou and M. Tozy, ‘De la friture sur la ligne des réformes. La libéralisation des télécommunications au Maroc,’ *Critique internationale*, 14 (January 2002): 91–118 [34]; I. Bono, *Cantiere del Regno. Associazioni, sviluppo e stili di governo in Marocco*, doctoral thesis, University of Turin, February 2008 [35], and *In nome della società civile. Un caso di sviluppo partecipato in Marocco* (Milan: Guerini e Associati, 2010) [36].
 43. M. Foucault, ‘The Order of Discourse,’ in Robert Young (ed.), *Untying the text: a post-structuralist reader* (Boston, Mass.; London: Routledge & Kegan Paul, 1981), pp. 52–64 [37]; Hariman, *Political style*.
 44. Havel, ‘Open Letter to Gustav Husak.’
 45. Peter Brown also brings this out in the very specific context of Late Antiquity: see Brown, *Power and Persuasion*.
 46. V. Havel, ‘The power of the powerless,’ available at: http://vaclavhavel.cz/showtrans.php?cat=eseje&val=2_aj_eseje.html&ctyp=HTML [38].
 47. P. Bourdieu, ‘The Force of Law: Toward a Sociology of the Juridical Field,’ *The Hastings Law Journal* 38 (July 1987): 839 [39].
 48. Bourdieu, ‘The Force of Law’: 850.
 49. M. de Certeau, *La Faiblesse de croire* (Paris: Le Seuil, 1987) [40].
 50. This is well analyzed by Alexei Yurchak in *Everything Was Forever Until it Was No More. The Last Soviet Generation* (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 2006) [41].
 51. Hibou, *The Force of Obedience*.

52. This idea is developed by M. de Certeau in *The Practice of Everyday Life* in connection with belief in political parties. He summarizes his analysis in these terms: ‘the “I know perfectly well that it’s so much hogwash” of many voters has as its counterpoint their assumption that the managers of the political apparatus are moved by convictions and knowledge. Belief thus functions as the basis of the reality-value that one assumes “all the same” in the other, even when one “knows perfectly well,” all too well, to what extent “It’s a pile of crap” in the place where one is oneself’ (p. 188).
53. Hibou, *The Force of Obedience*, chapter 5.
54. Ben Ali took power on 7 November 1987.
55. The words are those of D.F. McKenzie, quoted by R. Chartier, *On the edge of the cliff: history, language, and practices*, transl. Lydia G. Cochrane (Baltimore, MD; London: Johns Hopkins University Press, 1997), p. 94 [42].
56. Thanks to Hamza Meddeb for sharing this anecdote with me.
57. Yurchak, *Everything Was Forever Until It Was No More*.
58. This is also noted by historians of private life who put forward a political and social analysis on the basis of letters and diaries. For the case of the USSR, see O. Figes, *The Whisperers: Private Life in Stalin’s Russia* (London: Allen Lane, 2007) [43].
59. De Certeau, *The Practice of Everyday Life*; Hariman, *Political style*.
60. H. Meddeb, ‘Surveiller les hommes, contrôler les flux. La coercion au quotidien en Tunisie,’ paper given at the conference ‘Coercition et subjectivation,’ Turin, 3 and 4 December 2009.
61. C. Toulabor, ‘Jeu de mots, jeu de vilains. Lexique de la dérision politique au Togo,’ in Bayart, Mbembe and Toulabor, *Le Politique par le bas en Afrique noire*, p. 99.
62. De Certeau, *The Practice of Everyday Life* and *La Faiblesse de croire*.
63. Many authors mention this phenomenon, especially specialists in the USSR. The novels of Zinoviev strike me as particularly eloquent here. He states that ‘[t]he ideological apparatus affects the minds of men quite independently of its content, by the very fact of its existence and its methods of operation. This apparatus works in imperceptible ways to weave a delicate net within human consciousness, a new net in which the newborn human “I” struggles in vain. And when this “I” matures, it is too late. It is completely imprisoned by this invisible ideological net. There must be

- exceptional circumstances to permit this net to be torn or to avoid it ensnaring your soul,' A. Zinoviev, *The Radiant Future*, pp. 209–10. See also V. Havel, *Essais politiques* (Paris: Calman-Lévy, 1989) [44], and E. Gentile, *Origins and Doctrine of Fascism*.
64. Gentile, *Qu'est-ce que le fascisme?*, p. 126.
 65. Mainly based on Kott, *Le Communisme au quotidien*, and on M. Christian, 'Aux frontières de la dictature. L'implantation du SED dans les entreprises est-allemandes pendant les années soixante,' *Revue d'Histoire Moderne et Contemporaine*, 49(2) (April–June 2002):145–175 [45].
 66. Christian, 'Aux frontières de la dictature,' p. 149.
 67. Hübner, 'Les ouvriers en RDA,' p. 42; see also Kott, *Le Communisme au quotidien*, and Fulbrook, *Anatomy of a Dictatorship*.
 68. M. Gravier, *Good bye Honecker! Identité et loyauté dans les administrations est-allemandes (1990–1999)* (Paris: Presses de Sciences Po, 2008) [46], and the excellent review by Fabien Jobard in *Critique internationale*, 43 (April–June 2009): 173–176.
 69. This analysis draws on S. Fitzpatrick, 'L'usage bolchevique de la "classe". Marxisme et construction de l'identité individuelle,' *Actes de la recherche en sciences sociales*, 85 (November 1990): 70–80 [47]; Blum and Mespoulet, *L'Anarchie bureaucratique*; A. Stanziani, *L'Économie en révolution. Le cas russe 1870–1930* (Paris: Albin Michel, 1998) [48]; M. Mespoulet, *Construire le socialisme par les chiffres. Enquêtes et recensements en URSS de 1917 à 1991* (Paris: INED, 2008) [49].
 70. S. Fitzpatrick, *Tear Off the Masks! Identity and Imposture in Twentieth-Century Russia* (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 2005) [50], especially chapter 1, 'Becoming Soviet.' See too, for an illustration of this interpretation, the life stories related by O. Figes in *The Whisperers*.
 71. P. Skalnik, 'Union soviétique—Afrique du Sud. Les "théories" de l'ethnos,' *Cahiers d'Études africaines*, 110, XXVII(2) (1988), pp. 157–176 [51].
 72. Bayart, *The State in Africa*; Berman and Lonsdale, *Unhappy Valley*; L. Vail (ed.), *The Creation of Tribalism in Southern Africa* (Berkeley, CA: University of California Press, 1989) [52]; J.-P. Chrétien and G. Prunier, *Les Ethnies ont une histoire* (Paris: Karthala-Acct, 1989) [53]; J.-L. Amselle and E. M'bokolo (eds), *Au cœur de l'ethnie*.

- Ethnies, tribalisme et État en Afrique* (Paris: La Découverte, 2005) [54]. Quotation from Skalnik, 'Union soviétique—Afrique du Sud,' p. 72.
73. I. Kopytof (ed.), *The African Frontier. The Reproduction of Traditional African Societies* (Bloomington, IN: Indiana University Press, 1987) [55].
 74. L. Vail, 'Introduction. Ethnicity in Southern African History,' and P. Harries, 'Exclusion, classification and internal colonialism. The emergence of ethnicity among the Tsonga-speakers of South Africa,' in Vail (ed.), *The Creation of Tribalism in Southern Africa*; M. Mamdani, *Citizen and Subject. Contemporary Africa and the Legacy of Late Colonialism* (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 1996) [56].
 75. J.-F. Bayart, 'La démocratie à l'épreuve de la tradition en Afrique subsaharienne,' *Pouvoirs*, 129 (2009): 27–44 [57].
 76. Mamdani, *Citizen and Subject*.
 77. C. Newbury, *The Cohesion of Oppression. Clientship and Ethnicity in Rwanda, 1860–1960* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1988) [58].
 78. A. Mbembe, *La Naissance du maquis dans le Sud-Cameroun (1920–1960)* (Paris: Karthala, 1996) [59], and Vail, 'Introduction. Ethnicity in Southern African History.'
 79. Bayart, 'La démocratie à l'épreuve de la tradition en Afrique subsaharienne.'
 80. Mbembe, *La Naissance du maquis*; Bayart, 'La démocratie à l'épreuve de la tradition en Afrique subsaharienne.'
 81. Lonsdale, 'African pasts in Africa's future,' p. 137.
 82. Bayart, *The State in Africa*.
 83. J. Lonsdale, 'The moral economy of Mau Mau: poverty and civic virtue in Kikuyu political thought,' in Berman and Lonsdale, *Unhappy Valley*, pp. 315–466.
 84. Bayart, *The State in Africa*, p. 57.
 85. Lonsdale, 'The moral economy of Mau Mau'; Harries, 'Exclusion, classification and internal colonialism'; J.-F. Bayart, P. Geschiere and P. Nyamnjoh, 'Autochtonie, démocratie et citoyenneté en Afrique,' *Critique internationale*, 10 (January 2001), pp. 177–194 [60]; P. Geschiere, 'Autochtony and citizenship. New Modes in the Struggle over belonging and exclusion in Africa,' *Forum for Development Studies*, 32(2) (2005): 371–384 [61].

86. De Certeau shows this (in *La Faiblesse de croire*, p. 81) with regard to those ‘big words’ such as ‘freedom,’ ‘democracy’ and ‘nation.’
87. Many studies have brought this out in connection with liberalism, *dirigisme* or interventionism, socialism and *étatisme* or government control. See, for example (from among many other studies): on *dirigisme*, P. Minard’s work on the economic doctrines associated with Louis XIV’s Finance Minister Jean-Baptiste Colbert known as *colbertisme* in *La Fortune du colbertisme. État et industrie dans la France des Lumières* (Paris: Fayard, 1998) [62]; on English liberalism, J. Brewer, *The Sinews of Power. War, Money and the English State* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1990) [63]; on the meaningless distinction between liberalism and *étatisme* in contemporary Turkey, Buğra, *State and Business in Modern Turkey*; in sub-Saharan Africa, Hibou, *L’Afrique est-elle protectionniste?*; on Russia, O. Kharkhordin, *The Collective and the Individual in Russia. A Study of Practices* (Berkeley, CA: University of California Press, 1999) [64] shows that describing the USSR as collectivist or socialist tells us nothing about the reality on the ground and developments over time.
88. Tooze, *The Wages of Destruction*, especially chapters 2 and 5.
89. Crew, ‘General introduction.’
90. Hibou, ‘Les marges de manœuvre d’un “bon élève” économique,’ and *Surveiller et Réformer*, chapter 2.
91. Hibou, *The Force of Obedience*, chapters 7 to 9.
92. Meddeb, ‘Tunisie, pays émergent?’
93. This typology of styles is proposed by Robert Hariman in *Political style*.
94. De Certeau, *The Practice of Everyday Life*.
95. Nazi and Tunisian practices are easily recognized here. But it is a general practice, and M. de Certeau has given us an incisive analysis of it: see in particular *The Practice of Everyday Life*, where he writes: ‘Citation thus appears to be the ultimate weapon for making people believe. Because it plays on what the other is assumed to believe, it is the means by which the “real” is instituted. To cite the other on their behalf is hence to make credible the simulacra produced in a particular place [...] Replacing doctrines that have become unbelievable, citation allows the technocratic mechanisms to make themselves credible for each individual *in the name of the others*. To cite is thus to give reality to the simulacrum produced by a power,

by making people believe that others believe in it, but without providing any believable object' (pp. 188–9).

96. Veyne, *Le quotidien et l'intéressant*, p. 294.
97. De Certeau, *The Practice of Everyday Life*, p. 105.
98. Veyne, 'The Inventory of Differences'; Chartier, *On the edge of the cliff*.
99. M. Sennellart, *Les Arts de gouverner. Du regimen médiéval au concept de gouvernement* (Paris: Le Seuil, 1995) [65].

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Desire for the State and Control Dispositifs

The exercise of power is not only a matter of obedience and prohibition, fear and violence. It must provide the framework for a good life in society and persuade people of the benefits of its actions and speeches; it also claims to provide a full and decent life, or improved living conditions, to promote growth and industrialization, to create jobs and an environment conducive to business, to protect activities and ensure social stability, to promote well-being and consumption, to reduce inequalities and promote solidarity, to enhance the international integration of the country and attract foreign investment, and so on. Power is not only imposed from above but it also plays on desires, on those positive elements that lead individuals to act. Desire—which should not be here understood in its psychological conception and its usage as inspired by Bataille or Legendre, but in its popular sense—becomes ‘accessible to government technique,’¹ as Michel Foucault put it, also because it is ‘the desire for the state.’² This is a new dimension of legitimacy that I would like to discuss now, the generalized demand for a superior intervention, that is, one that comes from the public authorities, a demand that is linked to security and stability as much as to the protection and construction of the nation, or to justice and equality.

REQUESTS FOR PROTECTION AND THE POLITICAL CULTURE OF DANGER: THE CASE OF TUNISIA

The example of Tunisia is particularly explicit. ‘Danger’ was the watchword that oriented modes of government: not only the danger of Islamism, of course, but also the danger of poverty and inequality, as vectors of Islamism; the danger of excessive Westernization that would feed Islamism; the danger of the economic crisis that would lead to unemployment and de-socialization, as factors of Islamization; the danger of globalization, openness and foreign competition. A genuine political culture of danger prevailed and was constantly being updated. Obviously, the ultimate danger was Islamism. The role of political power and the state was to ensure safety and order in the face of Islamism, not only by repression and by example but also, and especially, through positive measures, social programs, public policies, economic guidance and international alliances. The single party³ developed, alongside its purely police techniques, a comprehensive approach enabling it to pose as a guarantee against these dangers and as techniques directly aimed at ensuring the sacrosanct security: from 1987, and especially 1989, education and women advancement were generalized, deprived provinces of the country were no longer to be isolated, and transfer payments reached the high level of 20% of GDP. What was primarily being sought was a security that could be described as societal, to differentiate it from the social security guaranteed, in Western countries, by veritable institutions. In Tunisia, security resulted less from institutional mechanisms than from social relations and a system of interdependence in which the central authority intervened and played with these tangled relations.⁴ The state was the giver of goods, of modes of being and of life in society and, through these mechanisms, guaranteed society from the dangers that threatened it. The state played on solidarity, the fight against poverty, and police surveillance of forces that might potentially prove destructive to the social order. If there was any legitimacy, this was where it resided—more precisely in the ability to deliver ever greater economic and social security, ever increasing prosperity that met the ‘desire for the state’ and incessant demands for interventions as diverse as society itself⁵: the demand for protection and funding in face of the dangers of the international openness of the economy; the demand for assistance to facilitate vocational retraining; the demand for compensatory mechanisms to cope with the hazards of liberalization; the demand for political interventions to override administrative and judicial bottlenecks; the demand for access

to places of economic and social advancement; the demand for arbitration in case of dispute; and the demand for employment and integration into economic life. This ‘desire for the state’ was, then, also the expression of a strong sense of national identity, even though state and nation are not identical. These demands and expectations were clearly conditioned by an *imaginaire* legitimating the state.⁶

The state’s permanent solicitude found expression primarily in an assurance that it would bring order and tranquility. From a material point of view, it was the good functioning of a certain society of consumption and well-being. Tunisian authorities made it a point of honor to list the benefits they provided to their ‘middle class,’ and it was no coincidence that their speeches were specifically focused on this dimension, highlighting the voluntarism of the state: it was claimed that annual growth was raised to around 5%, fuelling real development in the country; nearly 80% of families were homeowners thanks to public programs; the car was ‘popularized’ by both aid purchase programs and, in times of rising oil prices, the subsidizing of petrol; more than 90% of the population had benefited from electrification and water supply thanks to public investment; the telephone had become more accessible, and the Internet too; fertility was declining and population growth was limited by an active policy of family planning, and so on. This discourse embellished the country’s economic performances, and in particular appropriated results that were most often the product of the populace’s own dynamics or of political and economic choices prior to the ‘Change.’⁷ The fact remains that the desire to improve the lives of Tunisians while maintaining order and stability was perfectly real. Debt was the central mechanism for obtaining this security, not only through consumer credit and micro-credit but also through financing hidden subsidies. The social treatment of unemployment, the targeting of subsidies to certain categories of the population or to certain products such as petrol, the mastery of sustained growth despite the vicissitudes of the international situation, the building and maintaining of a good image to guarantee the obtaining of foreign loans at a low cost, the pursuit of a social policy through programs that were largely symbolic but still functional—all these were part of a protection system built up by the government for the welfare of its population. ‘Priority given to the social sphere’ was not just rhetoric but also formed a fundamental element of the legitimacy of the Tunisian government at the same time as it reflected a real fear about the dangers of poverty and its political consequences. Thus, the norms for the protection and social conditions of the workers were among

the highest in the region and, in this regard, Tunisia had no reason to be ashamed at international comparisons.⁸ Unlike other countries that had massively chosen zones of production, service or marketing not subject to the rules (particularly the fiscal, administrative and social rules) in force in the country—in short, countries that had gone for the offshore option—these Tunisian zones were not ‘zones of oppression.’⁹ Moreover, even though it was not nearly as inclusive and effective as government rhetoric claimed, the Tunisian social protection system was by far the most extensive among countries in the region in terms of population coverage.¹⁰ The state conveyed the idea that it was undoubtedly the only body capable of meeting these requirements: justice and care for the poor, the satisfaction of basic needs, social integration and ascension. The care of the state, however, was not confined to material issues. The other facet of state participation in consumption, rising incomes and living standards, growth and redistribution was a way of life. Although, as we have seen above, these mechanisms were widely accepted and legitimized by the quest for a ‘decent,’ ‘normal’ life that was ‘in conformity’ with the rules of life in society, redistributive programmes were also mechanisms for making those who had been ‘left out’ dependent and keeping them under control. Similarly, policies promoting consumption offered the opportunity to play with dependencies and surveillance methods.¹¹ In the absence of counter-powers and alternative channels for integration, those who could not or would not access these consumer loans, these social programs or modes of sociability found themselves marginalized by the very interplays of the Tunisian political economy and its institutions.

THE DEMAND FOR ORDER, SECURITY AND STABILITY

The combination of a disciplinary exercise of power and a kind of economic and social productivism, the desire to look like a ‘good student’ at all costs, the obsession with Islamism, an economic and political nationalism in the shape of a constantly renewed reformism, an extremely extensive social control and a statist *imaginaire* of the mastery of urban, educational and social transformation, was an essential aspect of Ben Ali’s Tunisia. But the demand for order, security and stability is still widely shared. In South East Asian countries, for example, material expressions of security and stability seem to outweigh political demands.¹² The discourse on ‘stability’ is central in China because this notion covers multiple assertions and can therefore mobilize different arguments that are, for all

their difference, complementary to the consolidation of the ‘regime’¹³: beyond its—widely denounced—security dimension, the Chinese government mobilizes the register of stability to highlight an efficient state able to attract foreign investment, ensure growth, improve the economic situation of whole segments of the population and put the country on an upward path; the reference to stability is also a way to legitimize factional games—the fight against corruption makes it possible to eliminate competitors while responding to popular demands for ‘clean government,’ equality and the condemning of excessive wealth; it serves to remove the issue of political representation by feeding the fear of democracy—considered as the exacerbation of conflicts in a society presented as fragmented and anarchic—so as to focus on rights and condemn personal wrongdoing; it is, finally, a way of solving the issue of redistribution in terms of social policy, aid to migrants and all those measures meant to ‘stabilize society.’ In China, and even more elsewhere, resorting to the need for stability is all the more effective in producing mechanisms that will legitimize the exercise of power as it encounters the soothing rhetoric of donors who talk of the benefits of stability. This discourse may be based on other arguments (attracting foreign investment, permitting continued growth thanks to the trust placed in markets, participating in international stability) while nevertheless being compatible with the discourse of Chinese or Tunisian authorities or any other authoritarian government.¹⁴ But it sometimes follows their lines of reasoning, for example, when the United Nations Development Program (UNDP) draws on the concept of ‘human security.’ This concept aims to restore the idea that protecting people is fundamental to the security of the state and the nation, and that life free from fear and needs is not only a fundamental element of the legitimacy of regimes both national and international but also the expression par excellence of the political sphere—though this is a very specific political sphere, largely instrumentalist, designed without conflict and directly related to the issue of development by the emphasis it places on risk and safety.¹⁵

The dimension of providing social security is fundamental, as is also suggested by studies on public health. A clear social and political recognition of any public action promoting the security of health explains what may appear at first sight to be a paradox: the legitimacy of control, observation, monitoring and standardization in the name of public health, in other words the legitimacy of biopolitics.¹⁶ This is what Didier Fassin coined ‘bio-legitimacy,’ showing that the ‘political demonstration’ of which public health is the object has emerged not only from managerial

concern and political (or electoral) considerations on the part of elected officials but also that it is linked to a ‘veritable utilitarian credo’ mixing moral prescription, an assurance of the integrity of the body and the quest for social justice and public order.¹⁷ We know how the evocation of ‘public order’ can be instrumental and allow any kind of investment in social life, starting with political repression. It remains a fundamental element of the legitimate exercise of domination, as exemplified by contemporary Russia.¹⁸ The ‘quest for order’ today reflects the aspirations of a populace faced with the vulnerability, uncertainty, insecurity and social unpredictability caused by the end of the Soviet order. This demand for order finds expression as the demand for a ‘strong state’ and an ‘iron fist’ to control prices, regulate economic activities, clarify public interventionism in the economy, provide access to health and education services and their smooth functioning in a logic of preserving the achievements of the previous period and aspiration to egalitarianism. It also involves the exaltation of political voluntarism, the modernizing assertion of power and the acceptance of an extensive role for the police and security forces. Similarly, the Stalinism of the 1930s cannot be understood if it is confined to its coercive dimension, made of purges, famines, crackdowns and liquidations; Stalinism was simultaneously legitimate in the eyes of a large part of the population because it allowed the emergence and functioning of a welfare state in important areas such as education, health and culture, and it opened real opportunities for advancement enabling the social ascent of an ever-increasing number of individuals and ensuring the permanence of mechanisms of micro-social integration for the workers.¹⁹ In the former GDR, the objective of security and stability came first and was not limited, contrary to appearances, by the issues of border and armaments: paternalism was not just a control mechanism based on clientelism but also reflected a positive ambition to develop trusting relationships with the German people, and to work for the interests of the people, at least as they were perceived and interpreted by the authorities.²⁰ The majority of the population aspired to security and economic success, access to or possession of consumer goods, the desire to have adequate housing and a strong, stable German currency.²¹ Similarly, the growing legitimacy, in the 1930s, of the Nazi regime can be partly explained by the development of mechanisms for the protection and strengthening of economic and social rights²²: the extension of the system of social welfare provision to mothers, soldiers and their families, and miners; pension reform and the introduction of health insurance; the improvement of working conditions

and housing for workers who had good ‘ideological values’; the establishment of a support system for young couples and reduction of working time; a corporatist system to simultaneously protect professional interests, an increasing state intervention, and to guarantee high profits and the modernization of certain segments of the industrial fabric. At that time, it mattered little to the majority of the population that these improvements were quite limited and confined to ‘true Germans,’ that the corporatist system simultaneously allowed for purges to be carried out and that the ‘social contract’ between the regime and the Germanic people resulted in a few benefits for ‘Aryans’ to the detriment of all other ‘races,’ starting with the ‘Jews.’²³ The legitimacy of the system was unaffected due to the technical nature of the mechanisms at work and, above all, the effectiveness of nationalist, racist and anti-Semitic rhetoric.²⁴

VARIATIONS OF STABILITY: SALAZARISM IN ALL ITS FORMS

These examples, different in space and in time, suggest that the quest for order, security and stability is an invariant of the exercise of domination, provided that, with Paul Veyne, we remember that in history an invariant is an ‘operator of individualization.’ To go further in the ‘inventory of differences’²⁵ and fill out our analysis, it is important to understand in more detail what is meant in each of these situations, by the terms ‘security’ and ‘stability’ in specific cases. It is obviously not possible for me here to discuss all the situations mentioned but, after the example of Tunisia, Salazar’s Portugal provides us with a twofold opportunity: it suggests, first, that stability can be found in many different dimensions; it then allows us to see how the ‘demand’ for stability and the ‘response’ to this demand can be deconstructed. Therefore, the Portuguese situation in the years 1940–1960 reveals divergent and incompatible logics, which nevertheless coexist, and the very ambiguity of the process of legitimation by a discursive and practical construction of stability.

The leaders of Salazarist Portugal valued stability and balance as absolutes, almost obsessively, as was perfectly expressed by one of the regime’s main slogans and political projects: ‘viver habitualmente.’²⁶ ‘The desire to endure’ was, so to speak, a logical and mundane goal, but it was far from the only one; it was necessary to respond to real issues with certain categories of the population, protect the ‘Portugal of little things,’²⁷ and in particular to prevent the destruction of that vast, rural, under-productive, archaic and miserable world. This world was indeed the only one able to

ensure the survival of large land owners and farmers while encouraging *rentier* and trade interests and protecting merchants and artisans, small uncompetitive industrial enterprises whose profitability could be guaranteed only by the exploitation of an underpaid proletariat.²⁸ In other words, ‘viver habitualmente’ meant both looking after the daily life of the Portuguese and preventing any disturbance to the established order, considered to be fair, calm and balanced. The government’s quest for stability and balance resulted in a rejection of change in economic structures; this was also illustrated by the previously mentioned idea of ‘the Portugal of small things.’ It was also materialized by a desire to mitigate the effects of competition, the rules of the market and capitalist development, and therefore by a particularly significant intervention in economic matters: ‘industrial packaging,’²⁹ a complex system of permits for commercial activities, wage and price freezes, state arbitration and regulatory interventions. It was, finally, illustrated by the establishment of a corporatism designed as an alternative to the welfare state which Salazar and the Portuguese right thought were synonymous with communism.³⁰ In the economic sphere, Portuguese corporatism was aimed at consolidating the political principles of the regime (namely charity, the values of the Christian family, nationalism), reorganizing the economy after the 1929 crisis and disciplining people’s behavior and conscience through the recognition of certain rights in order to prevent revolts, civil disorder and social upheavals.³¹ This led to the creation of an institute of assurance (the INTP: Instituto Nacional do trabalho e da previdência social), professional and sectorial funds, maximum working hours, collective bargaining, compensation and protection mechanisms for workers, admittedly minimal and often formal, but laid down in the regulations. The wording of these was often ambiguous because they contained clauses on social and political discipline, which also facilitated dismissal and punishment. Indeed, the corporatist system was not very social, not very corporatist (in the sense that corporations took a long time to be created and did not work, or worked only poorly) and completely statist³²: it was less the expression of a desire, on the side of ‘labor’ and ‘capital,’ to work together for the good of the country than of state action carried out primarily on behalf of ‘capital,’ but above all on behalf of the restoration of state authority.

The objective of order and stability also resulted in the institutionalization of the first Social Security system in Portugal, a process concomitant with the establishment of the Estado Novo³³: under the constitutional monarchy, as under the Republic, social service had been left to the

goodwill of secular and Catholic charities. For the first time, the role of the state was recognized: the 1933 Constitution institutionalized the fact that the state was indeed confined to the arbitration, coordination and control of Social Security, but it was duty-bound to promote and encourage it.³⁴ Even if this policy was officially delegated to the Catholic Church and corporate organizations in the 1930s, the state had no choice but to get involved in 1940. Social policy emerged simultaneously as a response to the crisis and an accompaniment to industrial development, as a desire for order and social peace, as an instrument for legitimizing the corporatist order, as a dispositif for social rehabilitation and the normalization of consciences and as an instrument of struggle against competing institutions, starting with the mutual aid societies.³⁵ As was happening elsewhere in Europe, this social service was evidently conceived as a planning technique and way of finding out about the population, in which the state refrained from intervening too directly but never held back from using its disciplinary powers.³⁶ It is also clear, however, that it allowed the ‘social question’ to be recognized.³⁷ What was more specific to Salazarist Portugal was the combination of this ‘social question’ with the obsession with stability, social peace and a political order based on the hegemony of a landed and commercial oligarchy. Thus conceived, social service was aimed in part to prevent social participation, including that of the emerging labor movement; it tried to reduce the trade union movement’s capacity for intervening and to erase the memory of the cooperative movement and in particular the ‘houses of the people.’³⁸ Although they were primarily driven by an obsession with balance and security, the ruling elites were also concerned that the poorest—or at least those they perceived as the most dangerous of the poor, namely the urban proletariat—should see their living conditions improve. Salazarism thereby met a desire for the state, a desire for protection on the side of very different categories of the population: a working-class elite benefiting from its services, industrialists indirectly benefiting from improved living conditions for their employees, a bourgeoisie reassured by the existence of a certain safety net against the dangerous classes. Also, it thus partly based its legitimacy on this institutionalization.³⁹

The Reform of 1962—which oriented the social system toward a development of the general regime, an extension of welfare in rural areas and state centralization—was an attempt to make the corporate model compatible with the welfare state in other European countries.⁴⁰ This process of extending benefits was partly related to the industrial development

that started in the late 1950s and the new needs for labor on the part of industrial groups in the context of recent urbanization, mass migration and Portugal's entry into the European Free Trade Association. But it also resulted from political tensions that arose from the growing criticism of the regime by part of the Catholic Church and the supporters of Humberto Delgado, and the colonial wars and the concomitant attempt to renovate the regime as a 'welfare state,' especially on the part of technocrats enrolled in international networks of expertise where the model of the welfare state was seen as crucial.⁴¹ Again, the issues of effectiveness and efficiency appear significant but paradoxical: the Portuguese social security system was at that time very limited and offered little protection, for a wide variety of reasons. The principles of government—simultaneously non-liberal and non-socialist—were based on minimal intervention, as illustrated by the construction of social policies. But the central power was gradually forced to intervene to coordinate these different dispositifs, to fill the gaps in corporate organizations and to cope with dysfunctional relations between administrative entities, lack of staff and resources, poor training of professionals, the very low presence of the dispositif in rural areas—even though this was where most of the population lived—and the very high degree of bureaucratization of the process.⁴² There was indeed a contradiction between the corporatist political philosophy of the regime and its methods of legitimation by managing the social question and focusing on the quest for efficiency. This contradiction was inherent in the voluntarism with which the government aimed to ensure stability in all its various dimensions. It is always the case that political stability may require radical economic and social changes while economic stability can cause social and political tensions in some segments of the population. In this case, while the goal of protecting the 'Portugal of little things' and 'living life as usual' required minimal interventionism, anticipating the demands for stability and protection required a growing interventionism in the context of the economic, urban and international transformations of the 1960s. Nevertheless, the Estado Novo was the first Portuguese government to concern itself with the question in organizational, bureaucratic and modern terms, and it was widely perceived as positive at the time. The regime's major concern was always to neutralize those intermediate layers that were likely to 'swing over' into demands and opposition; the embryonic social policy and all the barriers placed in the path of the free market openly demonstrated this goal.

Beyond its specificity and in the context of a comparative analysis, the Portuguese example has the advantage of suggesting the ambiguity of the process: demand for protection is not necessarily expressed in terms of stability and order; but, when formulated as such, it becomes audible and legitimate. Conversely, when the government assesses power relations, tensions, latent conflicts and difficulties, this can lead to the deployment of actions that are not necessarily compatible with its manifest political or philosophical orientation, without this involving duplicity, pretense or opportunism.

THE STATE'S SOLICITUDE AND THE DEMAND FOR JUSTICE

In both of these cases, the positive assessment stems from the fact that the authorities appear 'responsible,' the government 'attentive' to material demands, the state 'anxious' to ensure the prosperity of the country. The social security mechanisms are unquestionably protective dispositifs—or 'protective systems,' to use Polanyi's lexicon.⁴³ Because they are translated into concrete daily interventions, they are more suitable than the law to protect the population against the dangers that threaten it and they represent the 'ubiquitous solicitude'⁴⁴ of the state in its most intense form. This is also why these interventions are 'accessible to government technique' and represent a particularly commonplace modality of the exercise of domination. The use of social programs is one of the great classic cases of authoritarian clientelism, as studies on Mexico, Angola, Singapore, Tunisia and Portugal have all shown.⁴⁵ These programs express a desire to ease social relations and to obtain security in the societal order; they simultaneously reflect a desire for control and monitoring. The political and security orientation, in both senses of these terms, of social programs is most often recognized: the solicitude of the state is inseparable from the dependency it creates. The more security is offered to individuals, the more their dependence is increased. This link between security and dependency was highlighted by Michel Foucault,⁴⁶ and widely repeated after him. But we cannot generalize this analysis and apply it indiscriminately to any situation. It always requires contextualization.⁴⁷ On the one hand, not all security dispositifs create the same type of dependence, with the same intensity, or the same effects, or according to the same mechanisms; and these differences are a reflection of the different forms and methods of domination. A security dispositif does not in itself express domination, but, in its practical operation, it reveals the specificity of the localized exercise

of domination. It does not in itself produce dependency; however, it does play on existing dependencies. And, here again, the relationship between the one and the other is not univocal: playing on mutual dependencies does not only mean creating a dependency but can also open room for maneuver or spaces of freedom. In short, a security mechanism is not necessarily a mechanism of domination, even though it will create greater dependency, especially if counter-powers and freedom of expression are weak or non-existent, the alternatives are ineffective or absent, the actors involved cannot mobilize other resources or other networks, sociability is tightly controlled, and the actors have not mastered the rules of the game.

On the other hand, these security mechanisms, social programs or protective interventions also aim to provide a certain justice or at least reduce the most glaring injustices. The quest for stability and order is often coupled with a search for lower inequality, for a response to requests for economic and social justice through redistribution. If they can also mobilize links and mechanisms of submission, they nevertheless represent important vectors of state and government legitimacy. Thus, in the Soviet Union of the 1930s as in contemporary Russia, although differently, the legitimacy of the state rests in part, as we have seen, on its ability to suppress economic behavior that is borderline, or indeed quite frankly, illegal.⁴⁸ In the GDR, this desire for equality and justice was expressed differently, notably in the form of a very specific economic institutionalization and conception of the moral and political economy: sensitivity to these issues was not merely a matter of propaganda and presentation; it echoed daily aspirations and also practices, and partly legitimized the economic organization promoted by the authorities, especially a conception of productivism which included full employment and a modernity that was quite 'other' from Western modernity.⁴⁹ This could also find expression in the sensitive area of consumption, which was not just access to a certain set of goods but also revealed a lifestyle, a certain socialization, a specific conception of money and value, and a particular—modern—way of existing in the public space.⁵⁰ China offers another variant of the quest for justice. Here, it is the judiciary which is particularly the focus—and legal reforms are indeed intense—as a result of economic reforms. Even if these changes can be explained in many ways, there is no longer any doubt that the judiciary enjoys a certain legitimacy. It is a central mode of mediation in Chinese local society and reflects the existence of new spaces of expression leaving room not for democracy and pluralism, but for the exercise of certain rights by the population and a general search for justice at the local level.⁵¹

The case of Angola in the 1990s and early 2000s illustrates this question in a quite different way, one that makes it even more complex—and in a very particular context, that of the normality of the war, where normality is sought even in war. It shows that the legitimacy of power also lies in its ability to ensure daily ‘arrangements’ capable of providing a decent, normal and secure life.⁵² The population undoubtedly suffered from the war, from widespread lawlessness and violence, from the deficiencies of the state system and the concentration of powers. Yet the population perceived positively potential ‘arrangements’ with the chiefs, elders and economic elites, with influential party members, players in the illegal economy, and armed men; in short, with all these actors representing, if not a state order, at least a power that mediates it. And this is precisely because the primary concern of the population is for security, and poverty has weakened all forms of solidarity, whether of family, region, religion, friendship or locality. The legitimacy of these practices—which redounds in part on the ‘regime’—can be explained not only by this hope, and sometimes this real access to a ‘normal’ if not ‘decent’ life, but also by a certain redistribution, and therefore a minimum of justice, which do not exclude either popular resentment or feelings of vulnerability, inequality and even humiliation and lack of consideration. We can better understand the ambiguity of the relationship between justice, the solicitude of the state and the legitimacy of power—legitimacy related to its ability to provide protection, normality and safety—and the importance of historical trajectories that shape this always-special relationship. In the case of Angola, the indifference of the state, linked to the ways the civil war was managed and power exercised, did not prevent the expression of demands for protection and security, stability and normality, and the expression of a certain ‘desire for the state,’ even if this desire was expressed differently.⁵³

DEMAND FOR THE STATE AND NATION-BUILDING

The solicitude of the state turns out to be inseparable from the desire for justice and harmony with the public authority benevolently ruling the nation: the issue of economic and social security is often a national issue that stems from the desire for national unity.⁵⁴ Protection from the outside world, from the Other, is an essential responsibility of the state’s action. States can then be considered as ‘social-national states,’⁵⁵ if we adopt Étienne Balibar’s definition of Western welfare states, despite their differences: the intervention of the state in the reproduction of the econ-

omy and in the education of individuals is systematic, and the existence of individuals is always subordinated to their status as ‘national.’ We know what happened in Nazi Germany with the ‘non-Aryans’ and ‘non-German Aryans.’ But this is one of the most widespread characteristics of political systems, whatever their modes of repression, their dispositifs of domination and their processes of inclusion. The inextricable links between nation-building, economic development and formation of a national bourgeoisie in Turkey between the 1910s and 1950s were thus woven around the ‘Turkification’ of the economy, which means, in more plain and simple terms, the (often violent) dispossession of non-Muslim economic actors.⁵⁶ Far from being a dispositif influenced solely by its German ally in 1942, the ‘accursed law on capital,’ which was the most effective instrument for despoiling Jews, Greeks, Dönme and Armenians—irrespective, of course, of the genocide of the latter—was only one of the last steps taken by successive governments from the Union and Progress government at the end of the Ottoman Empire until the new Republic of Turkey⁵⁷: this involved a requirement for foreign companies to employ Muslim Turks, with most or all of the business capital belonging to Muslim Turks, the obligation to speak and write accounts and professional exchanges in Turkish, jobs in the public administration as well as certain private sector professions being reserved for Muslim Turks, a population exchange under the Treaty of Lausanne and the institutionalization of discriminatory provisions, and so on. However arbitrary and unfair, these measures have right up to the present played a part in the legitimacy of state interventionism brought to bear on Turkish economic actors who have managed to develop their activities and grow rich as a result. They therefore also boost the legitimacy of the mechanisms of reward and punishment, of approval and reprimand that they inevitably convey. These dispositifs, at first informal and then gradually enshrined in law, eventually comprised the ‘birthmark’ of Turkish entrepreneurs and lay at the basis of their relation of dependency on the state.⁵⁸

Similarly, it is necessary to take into account the inextricable intertwining of economic backwardness, rapid industrialization, the threat of war, political violence, nationalism and state-building to understand the legitimacy of the governments that succeeded each other in the Soviet Union, including the legitimacy of Stalinism.⁵⁹ Today, studies on Cambodia suggest that political control is inseparable from a nationalism and nation-building that involve the ‘invention’ of a specifically Khmer tradition. Thus, the neo-traditional title of *okhma* is offered to businessmen, supporters of the regime: embodied in the straddling of positions of power and positions

of accumulation, this title reflects the patriotic symbiosis of tycoons and political leaders.⁶⁰ The central government derives a definite legitimacy from this, especially as, in the context of the post-genocide situation and emancipation from Vietnamese tutelage, it is the only one that provides a relatively stable basis for wealth creation among those national entrepreneurs. Angola's 'phony peace' since the mid-2000s goes together with a discourse on national sovereignty, unity and reconciliation. While it barely conceals People's Movement for the Liberation of Angola (MPLA) hegemony over society, this discourse nonetheless has a performative effect.⁶¹ The 'enemies of the people and the nation' thus created are largely part of a minority, as people seek above all to be included in society and in the 'national economy,' through the 'arrangements' mentioned above. The 'two parties,' respectively gathered around the MPLA and National Union for the Total Independence of Angola (UNITA), shared the same political and moral economy, as well as identical practices marked by arbitrariness, violent political and social relationships, illegality and unaccountability. In particular, it is the desire to end the war and make do 'with the peace we have' that prevails.⁶²

The issue of security-oriented legitimacy arises in yet another way in Tunisia, where the national movement and the struggle for independence are structured around the issue of economic and social security.⁶³ The constitution of the Neo-Destour and the radicalization of the nationalist movement crystallized around the issues of development and management of the Great Depression, in opposition to the discriminatory policy of the Protectorate and the antagonisms between populations thus created by the colonial authorities. Before the Neo-Destour, however, the colonial state also sought societal security, following the logic of the health-oriented state, and aimed to enhance the territory and its population; from the 1930s onwards, it tried to integrate the indigenous populace by keeping the country under surveillance and ensuring a certain redistribution of wealth. This legacy traced the outline not only of the social policy followed throughout the first three decades of independence⁶⁴ but also those of the continuous and current formation of state legitimacy.⁶⁵ Taiwan provides us with one final variant of this diptych, combining the desire for the state with nation-building. Martial law and the exemption provisions remained in force there until 1987 and 1991, respectively; they justified the postponement of elections pending reunification, a reunification required for the renewal of the institutions established in Taiwan after fleeing the 'communist insurgency.' Taiwan's situation was very unusual as the majority of the population (the Chinese who settled on the island

before the Japanese colonization, in 1895) was excluded from senior administrative posts and central political power, and the legitimacy of the state was precisely based on its unrepresentative nature, in the name of security and nation-building.⁶⁶ This is a configuration that has the exceptional merit of showing the plurality of the meanings of notions of security and nation-building, and the always-ambiguous multiplicity of the legitimation processes related to them.⁶⁷ In the name of security, economic development was seen as mode of affirmation legitimizing modernization and national affirmation; but the economic practices that made development possible have merely continued to violate the rules and objectives of security, in the name of the ‘economic miracle’ that partly contributed to the legitimation of power despite the silencing of political life.

Yet they would have deserved a longer discussion, all these examples converge to show how commonplace is the configuration combining state, nation-building, the authoritarian exercise of power and the process of legitimation. However, they suggest that this configuration, a sort of invariant of domination, comprises developments that are always highly specific, depending on the international context, internal political issues, the *imaginaires* of the state and life in society, the relationship of forces at a given moment, and possible modes of the mediation and expression of difference.

DESIRE FOR THE STATE AND STATE VIOLENCE

The objective of this work is, as I said in the introduction, to produce an analysis of the dispositifs and practices that turn domination into an ‘insidious leniency’ in ways that are widely accepted, even deliberately sought and often legitimate, and not the purely repressive nature of the exercise of power, the use of fear and violence. As the previous discussions have suggested, at least implicitly, it is however not possible to completely avoid this dimension, first because the desire for the state is not necessarily inconsistent with state violence. Clientelism, negotiations and more generally the solicitude of the state can go together with other modes of the exercise of domination, modes that can be explicitly coercive while also being involved in the search for normality and the processes of legitimation. In addition, the dispositifs that meet the demands for justice, order, stability and improvement of everyday life can be simultaneously vectors of state violence. For, contrary to what is often assumed in political science, including among specialists in authoritarianism and totali-

tarianism, the question of legitimacy cannot be dissociated from that of violence. Legitimacy is not the opposite of coercion, fear and the conditions of submission, nor an alternative to them; what we see, rather, is that repressive constraints complement and coexist with mechanisms of legitimation, as shown by Tim Mason in his seminal work on Nazism.⁶⁸ Physical violence, the most terrible repression of the Gestapo and camps, and the state of exception coexisted with practices that neutralized opposition movements and especially with policies that focused on including people through the development of social policies, seducing them with material bribes and offering them social recognition. Not only did these dynamics coexist but also, nested one within the other, they were mutually reinforcing.

The case of the Bolshevik revolution and Stalinism is exemplary in this regard and shows, first, not only the sequential link between state violence, the spread of fear and withdrawal into silence but also, simultaneously, the (often successful) attempt to create total immersion in the Soviet political and moral economy. For most Russians, the only way to overcome fear and to survive was to fully adhere to the ideals of socialism, to participate in the workings of the Soviet system, to be accepted as a full member by joining the Komsomol, the Young Communists, the Party, and so on. Gradually, behaviors, reflexes and ways of thinking, in short, ways of understanding life in society were acquired, which were based on the thought of the state, and played on the desire for the state and the responses it provided to the demands for a normal, tranquil life.⁶⁹ This also explains how embedded the Soviet state was—an extremely violent police state, at least during its years of civil war and terror. This resulted from different but simultaneous logics: the spread of fear, the use of silence, a frantic search for compliance related to the intensity of the fear and the threat of death, and the desire to become a ‘Soviet citizen.’ It can therefore be explained, negatively, by fear and coercion, by powerlessness too, by the idea that things could not be otherwise and there was no point in struggling.⁷⁰ But there were positive motives at work⁷¹: many individuals and social groups took at their word the concrete discourses of the Soviet state (but also some of its acts) on justice, development, modernization, equality, the public service and service to the public, state voluntarism and the effectiveness of modernization (e.g. with the five-year plans and major work on building up the infrastructure), and the restoration of the sovereignty and authority of the state. They could also respect the military ethos and its virtues of obedience and conscientiousness, the will to overcome difficulties and

to bypass obstacles, and its hierarchical organization and its principles of obedience, honesty and uprightness. They could also enjoy the internationalism of the revolution and the Soviet state. The excitement generated by the latter cannot be overlooked: the cult of struggle and admiration for the construction of a new and more just social order, which aimed to give everyone a chance, made all sacrifices permissible, including those caused by state violence against the family, private life and certain social groups. Violence and struggle were also experienced at that time as norms of social life and the solicitude of the state, as suggested by the legitimacy of the terms ‘battle,’ ‘offensive’ and ‘fronts’ to describe the five-year plan⁷² or the campaigns whose ambition is to ‘eradicate’ economic crime.⁷³ Terror and the utopian belief in a benevolent state were not contradictory. In the population, the idea gradually spread that something great and exceptional could not be built solely on the basis of goodwill: a minimum of coercion was inevitable and was part of ‘historical necessity.’ Even the Great Terror of 1937–1938 and the purges were partly understood in these terms. Confessions undoubtedly reflected the most brutal and most terrible state violence; but they also expressed acceptance of this violence in the name of serving the state. The construction of the ‘great things’ being undertaken could not have a price fixed on it.⁷⁴ In a similar way, informing on others was also seen as a patriotic duty, even if it was also triggered by fear.

Other configurations, less well known, can help us advance in this understanding of a certain legitimacy of state violence in the name of the desire for the state. Such is the case of many states in sub-Saharan Africa, where ‘fear and violence are the doors of the political’⁷⁵: both support and dissent proceed from the exercise of coercion. Thus, what is called inter-ethnic violence, often presented as one of the major forms of state violence, is actually an extremely complex phenomenon. Africanist studies have shown that it could not be reduced to the political use of ethnicity, including when state violence went as far as ethnic cleansing (as in Kenya in the 1990s) or genocide (as in Burundi in 1972 and Rwanda in 1994). We have already seen this in connection with the daily life of ideological statements, but we need to repeat it here in connection with violence: ethnicity simultaneously reflects a political consciousness and a moral economy, and, in this respect, a certain configuration of the demand for and desire for the state, simultaneously in the form of social recognition, access to state resources, and the legitimacy of the exercise of state coercion.⁷⁶ The Tutsi genocide in Rwanda, for example—like

that of the Armenians in the Ottoman Empire and the Jews during the Holocaust—occurred only because it was carried out by or on behalf of the state: violence and legitimacy are here inseparable. But violence is not always or mainly murderous. Jean-François Bayart has shown how violence in sub-Saharan Africa is part and parcel of the quest for hegemony and that the ‘politics of the lash’ is one facet of ‘governmentality of the belly.’ This latter does not just arise from the colonial experience but it is also equally driven by the *imaginaires* of power formed by the trafficking of slaves (not only across the Atlantic but also internally), by institutions, practices and social representations that go back to the pre-colonial *longue durée*.⁷⁷ Many social groups and social institutions—such as not only the schools, the church, the army, but also the workshop and the family—thus convey the practices and discursive repertoires of coercion. The use of caning, for example, is both a widespread social practice that partly defines the relationship of authority and seniority and a political practice considered legitimate: flogging now appears to be a commonplace political technique for control and repression, which is considered normal, even desirable, for supervising young people, punishing offenders, suppressing protesters, and also containing demonstrators, cracking down on political activists and controlling neighborhood residents during raids, dispersing crowds at demonstrations, and getting past roadblocks. These practices are certainly challenged by those who are targeted by them, but they are widely accepted, precisely because they have a social legitimacy. At school, in relationships between teachers and students, at home between parents and children, in workshops between employers and apprentices, in the streets and in ‘ghettos’ between leaders of bands and their protégés, corporal punishment is practiced on a wide scale and justified in the name of education, discipline and the awakening of conscience. Corporal punishment is thus conceived as a legitimate attribute of power. Violence is obviously expressed in many other ways than the ‘politics of the lash.’ Richard Banégas has shown that the language of autochthony and ethno-nationalism in Côte d’Ivoire had become, in the years of crisis, a major mode of self-assertiveness and the demand for rights (including civil and democratic rights).⁷⁸ Laurent Fourchard stressed the significance of that very specific form of violence known as ‘vigilantism’ in Nigeria.⁷⁹ Essential to the building of the post-colonial state, this partly represents a state violence that takes the (very specific) form of a ‘privatized’ violence, one that is ‘discharged’ onto militias and vigilantes, that is, onto the population itself. This strategy

is legitimate for various reasons: it responds to a demand for security, it promotes groups and individuals and it is understood as a strategy of political mobilization to defend a certain order and fight against 'social degeneration.'⁸⁰ This violence is not exercised against the state, but proceeds from it in many ways; it is alternately tolerated, encouraged, restrained, fought against, helped and protected. This violence is also legitimate for another reason: it responds in part to a desire for the state, a desire for another state, a state that is not federal and hyper-centralized, treating national states in an authoritarian manner and clientelizing their elites.⁸¹ We here have an interesting configuration that further complicates the relationship between demand for the state and state violence by introducing conflicts and opposite points of view of what are the concrete conceptions of the 'desired' state: in Nigeria, this violence expresses a longing for another type of national state, more autonomous from the federal government and, simultaneously, the demand for a better redistribution of oil revenues. But, in this respect, it is simply legitimizing violence as an expression of the political and at the same time endorsing the state as supreme authority and the target of demands for security and protection.

In sub-Saharan Africa, this question of the relationship between the exercise of domination and violence is also a question of political economy.⁸² On the one hand, state formation, inseparable from the process of primitive accumulation and constitution of the ruling class, has admittedly gone through developmentalist policies backed by a commitment to national integration, but it has also necessitated displacements of the population, forced labor, the exploitation of the labor force, and the use of physical violence. On the other hand, the exercise of domination is legitimate, despite its share of violence, because it alone opens the way to accumulation and wealth. Multiple social networks are invested by the rhizome state, which thus multiplies the necessary allegiances for access to resources. However, these multiple and flexible social resources (which depend simultaneously on ties of kinship, descent groups, common traditions, and clientelistic relations) are inseparable from relations of exploitation, inequality, subordination and violence. This forms a whole, which is thus often considered legitimate because it embodies the desire for the state as a desire for economic normality, wealth, prestige and social mobility. In Africa, the accumulation and exercise of power are inseparable from violence and comprise one of the mainsprings of its legitimacy, however paradoxical this may seem.

ON THE DIFFERENTIATED ARTICULATIONS OF VIOLENCE AND THE EXERCISE OF DOMINATION

The dispositifs that respond to the desire for the state do not produce the same effects and do not produce the same practices; they are not necessarily the same but depend on the degree and nature of the fear, according to the everyday presence (or lack of it) of the police apparatus, and according to the public's perception of the effectiveness and efficiency of law-enforcement institutions. The practices of domination are not similar, they do not take on the same meaning, they are not experienced in the same way, they are not integrated in the same way in political games and are not based on the same sources of legitimacy following the type, nature, intensity and modes of exercise of violence.⁸³ I mentioned above that the analysis of security mechanisms always needed to be contextualized, that any individual mechanism in itself said nothing, or almost nothing, about the development of dependency and the exercise of domination, but it drew its meaning from its integration into a specific history, society and environment. Violence must also be defined more closely, because it takes radically different forms: it can be physical, symbolic, open, hidden, explicit, latent, potential, generalized, focused, limited, diffuse, and none of these characteristics excludes the others. By having a different impact on perceptions of what cannot be done or said, by contributing differently to the delineation of the nature and expressions of fear, by being integrated in different ways into the dispositifs and the practices that play on obedience, these forms of violence are all involved, each in its own particular way, in shaping the contours of domination.

Thus, even within a given society, state violence does not, over time, assume the same shape; it does not produce the same effects and is not linked in the same way with other modes of the exercise of power. Such is the case of the GDR. From the late 1940s to the mid-1950s, the government made an explicit use of violence. In this context, state legitimacy was expressed by adherence to anti-fascist and anti-Nazi values, by the desire to build up the nation, and by the hope of a fairer world that would be more open to the disadvantaged social classes. It was linked to state violence through the belief in the 'historical necessity' of coercion to bring about the categorical imperative of de-Nazification and consummate the great egalitarian project of building socialism by land collectivization and economic expropriation. State violence and a certain

state legitimacy went together: but this combination came with the fear of physical elimination, a fear that was widespread throughout society as a whole.⁸⁴ Thereafter, however, the renunciation of the explicit use of violence took away this fear of physical removal and gave a completely different shape to the link between state violence and other forms of government, transforming the nature of the processes of legitimation.⁸⁵ The renunciation of the explicit use of violence did not mean that all forms of violence had disappeared, witness the building of the Wall and the intensification of the surveillance network. However, this latent and hidden violence was not necessarily perceived as such because everyday life was accepted, as was the attempt to tame its constraints, domesticate it, use it and turn it into something else.⁸⁶ The services of the Stasi, as we have seen, were largely geared toward personal and professional interests and they often played the part of arrangers or intermediaries.⁸⁷ In addition, their room for interpretation was enhanced by their overweening belief in visual surveillance and by the difficulties and errors in their interpreting of these data. This situation was exacerbated by the fact that this work was delegated to superiors in the hierarchy who did not necessarily make the actions of the Stasi clear to their citizens,⁸⁸ which created some latitude in understanding the forms of the exercise of power possible (including coercive forms). In this context, the legitimacy of the authoritarian state also came from this ability to provide security and to highlight considerations of national sovereignty and protection while allowing individuals and social groups room for freedom and opportunities for expression independent of the political realm. Similarly, the police—who, in the end, was always there—did not fulfill the same functions as in the 1940s and early 1950s. Certainly everyone was fully aware that it was impossible to cross the border illegally and, if necessary, the police did not hesitate to shoot. Arbitrary physical violence was always present in 1960s–1980s, but people knew that its use was limited: indeed, physical violence functioned as deterrence but it was not used. This impression corresponded to reality. Police violence was then completely channeled, and this transformation of the police into an intermediary of power continued to increase⁸⁹: there was an overinvestment on the part of the police in deterring public gatherings, in the ‘education’ of the population and mobilization campaigns, an underdevelopment of techniques for using and controlling force and a total dependence on the political sphere. All this conspired to make the police unable to counter the protest and emancipation movements in the late

1980s and ultimately to prevent the fall of the Wall. The development of the *Volkspolizei*, in particular, symbolically illustrates this evolution⁹⁰: in close contact with the population, its area delegates were, from their creation in 1945, expected to know every detail of the economic, social, cultural and political lives of their citizens. But it was after the ‘June events’ (1953) that their work was truly integrated into the machinery of surveillance. From that date, they were required less to suppress than to know, persuade and educate. Under these conditions, their ‘total immersion’ made them familiar to the population, and fear was largely offset by the social functions of arrangement, which could sometimes even turn into clientelism.

Likewise, similar coercive practices may, in different contexts, assume different and even contradictory meanings. Such is the case of the games played with people’s legal vulnerability and with the feeling, widespread in these conditions, that ‘we are all to blame for something.’⁹¹ In the Soviet case of the 1920s and 1930s, people’s legal vulnerability stemmed at once from the never-ending changing of rules, from a failure to follow the intricacies of the legal revolution, and from a resistance to these new rules, including collectivization. This vulnerability was exploited in the context of the influence of the security services on social and economic life, purges, repression of the kulaks and other ‘enemies of the people,’ from the violence of forced collectivization and the use of prison camps. Thus, this exploitation was the vector of a generalized diffusion of fear; it made room for maneuver impossible, stopped the potential for flight and the arts of ‘making do,’ and thus fed into exclusion. In contemporary Russia, this exploitation of people’s legal vulnerability is also inseparable from the sense of fragility of the economic elites, the repressive and moralistic campaigns against corruption, and legal offensives against iconic figures of national capitalism, and even their elimination. But insofar as these practices are extremely circumscribed, restricted to certain very specific segments of the business world, journalism and politics, they are absolutely not comparable to the first decades of the Soviet system in terms of the spread of fear and the processes of legitimation.⁹² The case of contemporary Tunisia, however, is almost the exact opposite of these Soviet and Russian examples. Exploiting people’s legal vulnerability is also common there—to a massive degree, indeed. But it takes place in quite another context, made up of ongoing negotiations. The political economy of the constant and routine interventions I mentioned above means that the exploitation of people’s legal vulnerability is guided more

by inclusion than by exclusion, by negotiation rather than prohibition.⁹³ The way roadblocks are managed is a particularly good example. The police and customs officials and soldiers who form these roadblocks are part of an environment that spreads a continuous fear of checks and the repression of illegal activities that are unevenly and randomly tolerated. Despite this danger, people ‘try their luck,’ ‘take a risk’ and ‘play dangerous games’ with illegality by trying to bribe the agents of authority and persuade them of their *bona fides*.⁹⁴ Smuggling and the informal sector are in fact a fundamental dimension of the Tunisian economy and are in no way marginal: the political economy of economic illegalities has trivialized and normalized the interlinked activities of coercion–corruption; this is an inevitable fact for the actors of the informal sector and smuggling, and one with which they must learn to live. Even if the rules of the game are asymmetric and always favor the representatives of the coercive body, it is always possible for these professionals of the informal sphere to control the cost of this game, at least partially. They simply need to know how to minimize risk (passing through at certain times of day, waiting for a familiar customs official to arrive), to control hazards (avoiding working with certain actors or unknown partners), to find means of protection (holding their one-party card, taking advantage of a pass granted by the party or getting by in the same group as someone who has such a pass) and to make sure they can pass in safety (providing related remuneration for the various representatives of the central government). In other words, exploiting people’s legal fragility takes place in a context where the violence of customs and police officials is tamed, something that is well expressed by the word that summarizes this management of uncertainty and vulnerability: ‘the program.’ This term, which stems directly from administrative and managerial language, also expresses a certain desire for the state, the importance of the bureaucratic *imaginaire* and the incorporation, into the ways of viewing integration into society, of arrangements and practices necessary to the domestication of hazards and police violence.

Often, however, the violence is not necessarily perceived as such. Strategies for building consensus or demands for the rule of law suggest as much: legitimation may appear as a process by which constraint, hierarchy and repressive power assume the form of objective reason; the injunction to be reasonable—that is, to internalize norms—is one of the expressions of state violence in the guise of being a response to desires for the state.⁹⁵

COERCIVE MAKING OF THE ECONOMIC CONSENSUS: TUNISIA AS A CASE STUDY

Everywhere, consensus stems from the latent violence of a closed world where any criticism is prohibited. Objections, dissensions, irritations and disagreements do exist, of course; but they are banned from the public domain, and as it were forced into the private sphere. In fact, as has been shown by many authors influenced by Walter Benjamin, by appearing as a fundamental ideal of pacification by removing conflicts and even misunderstandings, all the ambiguity of thought, consensus ‘constitutes a formidable kind of political violence.’⁹⁶ It simultaneously hides the violence of a certain exercise of power, that which kills debate, which submits those who consent to a verbal agreement or a hegemony of meaning without really believing in it.⁹⁷ It flushes out anything that could adversely affect the whole; and in this respect, it is the ‘degree zero of democracy.’⁹⁸ This is well known, although it is always necessary to remember it, as statements on the virtues of ‘consensual democracy’ and calls for unity and consensus to resolve the ‘crisis’ or a particular ‘problem’ are now such a major part of the overall political landscape.⁹⁹ However, I should like to highlight a further aspect of this critique: the fundamental importance of the economic dimension in this construction of consensus as political violence.

Tunisia before 14 January 2011 provides us with an example of such a configuration, where the processes of legitimation belong to the order of the violence, a hidden and latent violence of course, but one that is no less real.¹⁰⁰ Here, consensus presents itself as an art of harmonious government and as an ethos characteristic of the ‘people’ or the ‘national identity’; it is a ‘golden haze’¹⁰¹ that hides the vulgarity of power relations, struggles and negotiations that are after all ubiquitous in Tunisian society, as we have seen. In a reading of the state and its power relations inspired by the work of Schmitt, consensus here is the result of an antiliberal critique of pluralism¹⁰²: multiplicity, pluralism, the conflictual nature of social forces all conceal chaos within themselves; eliminating it can only come from the unity of a state form and from consensus. The distinction between friend and enemy is fundamental in this discourse: the homogeneity of the Tunisian people stems from its unified action against the external enemy—the colonial power, external forces that support internal dissensions, imported ideologies, the Islamic ‘Internationale.’ Patriotism and nationalism are inseparable correlates of consensus, and come with an obligation to identify with the nation alone: a certain set of dualistic

oppositions—with/against the nation, inside/outside, for/against the national interest—is drawn on to ensure that any opposition is treason, complicity with an outside enemy.¹⁰³ The National Pact signed in 1988, and described as the ‘basis of an unwavering consensus’¹⁰⁴—defines the contours of the politically thinkable, in that it mentions national identity, the role of the state, political culture¹⁰⁵ and the consensual values of the Tunisians.¹⁰⁶ All refer to portmanteau words—such as Islam, nationalism, modernity, rationality and reformism—that erase any dissent, in the illusion of the unity and harmony of all in One: state, nation, party or head of state.¹⁰⁷ This consensus-building also relates, and perhaps most importantly, to the economic sphere: the government’s legitimacy rests not only on the ‘economic miracle’ but also on its ‘attention to the requests’ of entrepreneurs and consumers. In this area, the discourse of consensus highlights the originality of the forms of government in Tunisia: sensitive to the issue of reforms, public authorities claim to be particularly good at ‘listening’ to the economic world, aware of its difficulties and its demands (often considered legitimate). Many of the economic actors interviewed emphasize, almost unanimously, the element of ‘listening’ involved and the real willingness of governments to support businesses. Ministerial commissions, meetings and councils dedicated solely to economic issues are extremely numerous; the growth rate, the conditions of development of economic activities, the improvement of the employment situation are all real concerns of the state.¹⁰⁸ This ‘listening’ finds expression in speeches about the need to integrate entrepreneurs into public life and about their economic and social responsibility, as well as in the rhetoric of ‘participatory citizenship’ symbolized by the awarding of decorations, prizes and other honors handed out by the highest authorities, or even the president himself.¹⁰⁹ This finds concrete expression in a proliferation of programs defined in accordance with professional organizations and the participation of the latter in the implementation of economic policies and reforms, by the participation of all in the fight against poverty, and by the generalized and unanimous investment of the party and professional bodies.¹¹⁰ The myth of consensus contributes to persuading citizens that the paths adopted have been chosen by them or at least with their consent: in this respect, it appears as a core technology of power. It reduces the recent but now pervasive perception of the constraints of the political and the frustrations arising from the lack of public debate.

Needless to say, this consensus is a construction. It is a fiction that the central government attempts to naturalize, in repetitive speeches and the

rhetoric of *the* middle class and ‘Tunisian-ness.’¹¹¹ However, this fiction is performative and there is no complete break between the complex reality and the language of consensus. Existing social relations are interpreted in the light of a story that has never ceased to exploit the ideal of unity and an *imaginaire* made of a centralized power and the denial of otherness.¹¹² The rule of consensus is thus not specific to relations between ‘state’ and ‘society,’ but permeates all social relations. No board meeting, for example, can be conceived without unanimity; breaking the consensus is shocking and dissent is frowned upon.¹¹³ Highlighting these types of consensus clearly involves showing that the various economic and social actors are involved in the creation of policies and that they accept decisions that thereby become indisputable; it also means demonstrating the unity of a social body whose members, despite the different positions they adopt, cannot fail to be at odds with one another.¹¹⁴ In fact, resorting to consensus in this way conceals a certain violence in the exercise of power. In Tunisia, consensus is primarily obtained by subjection to administrative and political logic, the rule being the ‘appearance of decisions “agreed upon” with the government in fact being their main architect.’¹¹⁵ Ultimately, ‘the business appears as an extension of the administration, placing the economic sphere under the supervision of the political’¹¹⁶: potential ‘problems’ and points of friction do not emerge from participatory processes but are identified by the government, and the ‘solutions’ are suggested by the administration; they do not originate from debates or demands. The consensus is thus not only an administrative construction but it is also built up through fear and the effectiveness of the ‘strategy of the periphery,’¹¹⁷ through silence and enforced acquiescence and by the strategies of accommodation on the part of entrepreneurs primarily concerned not to stand out in a confined environment, willing to compromise and accept half measures rather than risk uncertain power relations. These accommodations are also accepted by Tunisians in general, launched into the ‘race after *el khobza*’ and mainly concerned with their life (or survival) on a day-to-day basis.¹¹⁸ It also results from another kind of violence: the silencing and concealment of conflicts. Consensus is thus inseparable, too, from silence. It allows entrepreneurs to convince themselves that they will be ‘almost unaffected by the negative effects of the regime’; that this imposed consensus ‘isn’t as serious as all that,’ and does not endanger them, ‘while any head-on opposition is deadly.’¹¹⁹ But, by dint of their silence, they accept positions contrary to their interests, or their behavior, and even more their way of seeing the world. Because they

are gradually imprisoned by their own silence, these contradictions are necessarily muted and even concealed. Similarly, subaltern populations have accumulated frustrations and resentments by staying silent. Here we see a subtly disciplinary interpretation of a tangible and objective reality: ‘consensus’ actually results from power struggles, from ongoing negotiations, and simultaneously from coercion, all of which are hidden. To reject consensus is to oppose the natural social order. The consent of individuals therefore involves support and self-interest, but simultaneously silence and an imposed if latent violence. Even when it was muted, the element of coercion was no less intrusive and was increasingly difficult to bear. The popular uprising—which began in Gafsa in 2008 and spread in December 2010—and its transformation into a social revolution made this clear. One of the drivers of these movements was precisely the rejection, finally made explicit, of violence, of a consensus that violated the most basic values: respect, dignity and recognition.¹²⁰

THE VIOLENCE OF CONSENSUS

This rhetoric of consensus is not specific to Tunisia; it is found in very different political situations where it takes on specific political meanings. This is particularly the case in sub-Saharan Africa, where the independence of most countries in the subcontinent was accompanied by a writing of history around the myth of consensus¹²¹: in a quest for the consolidation of power, custom was formalized and institutionalized in the form of an ‘illusion of unanimity.’¹²² Traditional Africa, it was suggested, had never experienced social classes, let alone class struggle and ideological conflicts. This conceptualization, which avoided any pluralistic discourse on the past, and thereby any pluralistic vision of the present, expressed, without any doubt, a certain political violence; but this violence was then justified by the context of state formation and nation-building. Consensus thus became the ideology of the ruling elite, making it possible to define the limits of cultural hegemony and legitimate political language.¹²³ This reading has achieved the status of a rediscovered ‘tradition,’ and continues to hold sway to this day in many countries.

In contemporary Mali, for example, the president governs by fabricating a ‘consensus’ that becomes a functional myth to which everyone adheres: the opposition parties, the more or less self-appointed representatives of so-called civil society, and donors.¹²⁴ Consensus, which was conventionally mobilized at the time of independence to legitimize the

single party in the name of national unity, nation-building and the sovereignty of the country, is again invoked in times of political openness, economic liberalization and pluralism through this ‘unanimist’ rereading of history and through the (also typical) invention of tradition mentioned above: it is presented as the most appropriate political form to the historical experience of Mali thanks to the participation of all those in power, and especially thanks to the supposed ‘return’ of the ancestral function of the palaver and the Great Mandingo Councils, representing ‘Mali’s political culture’ par excellence.¹²⁵ It is meant to allow national sovereignty to be strengthened in economic terms too, vis-à-vis donors as well as foreign companies. Above all, consensus makes it possible to neutralize any potential challenge to clientelist and patronage networks, any attempt to challenge the terms of access to resources and the exercise of power. In Mali and Tunisia, this consensus is violence—a violence expressed by the impossibility of an open and frank opposition, since all political forces are in government and are involved in decision-making, including the very parties and movements that had opposed the president. The violence of consensus also means that debates are powerless since, when they actually exist, they have no grip on reality. It is also embodied in the institutionalization of clientelist legitimacy: ensuring that all parties have access to the resources necessary to maintain their structure is based on a pyramid of dependencies that makes it impossible to establish an independent political force apart from the state power and its monopoly on national resources. This violence, finally, is expressed in the vocabulary of politics itself, since the strategy of national unity, explicitly rejected, would have meant the recognition, institutionalization and respect of divergent forces.¹²⁶

This feature is not unique to the contemporary situation. Studies of Italy between the two world wars have shown the importance of the unification process and consensus building in the exercise of fascist power. This was carried out at the heart of the state, whose main function was to unify and integrate complexity and social pluralism, to ensure harmony, thanks to the single party, and to promote moral, political and economic unity.¹²⁷ In Singapore, consensus building took place in the years 1970–1980, based on the ideology of communalism and pragmatism and the construction of a ‘national interest,’ namely survival in a hostile environment,¹²⁸ while in Taiwan these categorical imperatives crystallized in the years 1960–1980 on the basis of the consensus on security and economic development.¹²⁹ However, the contemporary period is specific in that it sees international institutions playing a greater role in the spread and

legitimization of consensus as a mode of government. Despite the different configurations found in Mali and Tunisia, for example, the legitimacy of a consensual power is indeed co-constructed there—and in this regard made more effective, efficient and embedded in society—by the rhetoric adopted, claimed and legitimized by the international community.¹³⁰ In a vulgarized use of the term, consensus is glorified by international organizations as an expression of intellectual convergence and reasonable economic thought, as the expression of a general agreement on the economic remedies to be followed.¹³¹ Consensus is promoted as a technique of government, a rule of procedure, a mode of management: management techniques are used to achieve it. Its aim is to enable people to make decisions without challenge or the use of constraint, unlike the ‘conditionalities’ long imposed by institutions of aid for development. The consensus focuses on minimum targets that no one can argue with: who would dare to oppose the ‘fight against poverty’ or ‘the encouraging of decent work?’ In an instrumental vision, it is not necessary to define the means to do so, but simply to set out various international rules for sharing, to affirm ‘common values’ or vague goals that actually involve necessarily divergent positions and that contain asymmetrical relations. This very specific international context—which Chomsky has characterized as a ‘thriving consensus industry’ and Bernays as a ‘factory for consensus’¹³²—is also symbolized by the multiplication of consensuses, starting with the famous Washington Consensus. In this context, the consensus that is affirmed (even if we do not know what it is about), serves ‘not so much to reaffirm the agreement (of the) stakeholders as to *close down any deliberation*: neither those who share the consensus nor those who deny it will any longer have a right to legitimate speech’¹³³: international bureaucracies impose, in different ways, not only the legitimate problematic of development but also the instruments and means of action to achieve the objectives thus implicitly indicated. This international consensus is spread at national level, particularly in the countries like Tunisia and Mali that glorify the ‘culture of consensus.’ It then becomes all the more easily interwoven into the balance of power and has a repressive, if not disciplinary force, prohibiting any dissonant utterances and eliminating those who impede the unity of meaning and thought. Consensus produces knowledge and a normalization of thought and understanding; it exerts significant effects of power, starting with the oblivion and silence that spread throughout society, in all activities, in everyday behavior. Among themselves, in board meetings and at dinners, in universities and cafes, in the National Assembly and on

television, people never stray from the consensus. Imbued with ‘mediate violence,’¹³⁴ consensus makes it possible for a bureaucracy and its political logics to be imposed and thus, very concretely, makes it possible to bring down an entrepreneur, to spread fear among the ‘ants’ of cross-border trafficking and the informal economy, to force a rebel trade unionist to toe the line, to scare a rebellious servant, to marginalize an aggressive opponent, to keep independent civil society within certain limits, to force a recalcitrant individual into internal exile and to condemn a rebel Islamist to ‘social death.’

VIOLENCE OF THE RULE OF LAW AND ASYMMETRIC GAMES WITH RULES

The demand for the rule of law is one of the possible forms consensus may take, and in this sense it also expresses a certain violence, a violence that is admittedly latent and hidden, or even euphemistic and painless, but no less present. For, beyond an ethereal and irenic vision of the rule of law, we now know that it is not synonymous with democracy. Many studies of ‘authoritarianism’ or ‘totalitarianism’ emphasize in this regard the importance of law, the desire of these states always to present themselves as subject to the ‘rule of law,’ and to operate under the legal standards set by them. Sub-Saharan Africa since independence, Salazar Portugal, Vichy France, Fascist Italy and even Nazi Germany: all claimed a respect for the law and the rule of law.¹³⁵ In the case of Italy, for example, Emilio Gentile uses the term ‘legal revolution’ in his analysis of the approval by Parliament of a set of authoritarian laws, and to show how fascism could destroy the parliamentary system while apparently keeping intact the façade of constitutional monarchy; all political innovations were introduced by formal laws.¹³⁶ Legal instruments were one of the most important of the techniques of domination used in the Mussolini period; indeed, lawyers were not repressed when they disagreed with the Fascist authorities, and one of the most famous of them, despite having no links to a political party, was appointed head of the State Council precisely to show the importance attached by the regime to the law and its independence.¹³⁷ What did change, of course, was the political style, the style of government, those attitudes and behaviors that transformed (or rather gave a different meaning to) legality. But all the lawyers who defined the Fascist state as a totalitarian state also defined it as subject to the rule of law. Indeed, it was this rather disturbing fact that, at the end of the Second World War,

prompted lawyers to develop a substantialist vision of the rule of law.¹³⁸ In these circumstances, it is impossible to avoid the question of the relationship between violence and law. Walter Benjamin helps us find an answer: his reflections showed that the law primarily protected itself¹³⁹ and thereby protected law in the order of the state. The law ‘imposes its violence as a system of norms, as a law requiring obedience, first as law, only then as force. Established authority identifies the legitimacy it demands with the legality it imposes, that depends on it and is a simple fact, by expressing the systematic and general character of the norms it establishes.’¹⁴⁰ This is the Weberian problematic of rational legal legitimacy, in other words the legitimacy of power based on law which is nothing but a ‘system of rules deliberately set up’¹⁴¹ and on obedience to these rules.

I will not enter into discussions on the differentiated relations between legitimacy and legality, which depend on the conception of law characteristic of a political situation, including the differences between Roman law and common law, or the debates that followed the Second World War and the Shoah. But it seems important to emphasize that the rule of law is, for different peoples, the expression of the desire for the state, while being an instrument of a certain state violence. In fact, demands for compliance with the legislation and laws, and more generally the rules of the game, are one of the most conventional demands expressing an aspiration to justice and equality; so that the definition and implementation of, and compliance with, laws and rules of life in society largely form the basis for the legitimacy of the sovereign.¹⁴² The legalism of the population, that is to say, compliance with laws, norms set out by the state, and operational rules in force not only in ‘political’ life (as is often noted)¹⁴³ but also in ‘economic’ life,¹⁴⁴ is a powerful vector of legitimacy, and thereby of obedience. In the logic of normality and conformity, compliance with existing rules is the norm. The law is not only an expression of the will of the sovereign; ‘it is a way of thinking, acting and living’¹⁴⁵ shared by members of society. Because ‘a right, in its real effects, is much more linked to attitudes and patterns of behavior than to legal formulations.’¹⁴⁶

This does not exclude the fact that, generally, the law is a privileged instrument of the reproduction and preservation of the social and relational capital of leadership circles,¹⁴⁷ a ‘privilege of the powerful.’¹⁴⁸ It is also a dispositif that hides domination, which marks the legal obligation of obedience. Thus, Moroccan law appears not as an exception but as the heuristic example of a certain exercise of domination by the use of law: the reinvention of the *Makhzen* and the rehabilitation of the *bay’a* (act of

allegiance) by Hassan II reduced the place of positive law by turning it into a 'simple institutional form of the historical authority that pre-existed the state itself.'¹⁴⁹ Thus, the power of law is explicitly framed by the (higher) principles of allegiance and submission. But in all the situations mentioned so far, even if the juridical order appears less overtly subordinate to the political than in Morocco, persistent reference to the law makes it possible to link people discreetly together, by simultaneously legitimizing the rulers and the ruled. The former respect the formality of law, are willing to establish rules that institutionalize them as the supreme power even though they will then need to respect the rules; the latter, meanwhile, 'merely' comply with the law.¹⁵⁰

The subordination of the legal order to the political is found in another form: the law must ensure the satisfaction of citizens' needs for existence, security, a sense of order and the proper functioning of ordinary life. The law embodies, and is embodied in, an order of the state that claims to guarantee everyone's safety.¹⁵¹ It means the legitimate power can be defined and, most importantly, the enemy within pursued—an enemy whose crime lies precisely in the violence done to the law. We are then in a functional law that defends a particular social and political order,¹⁵² or a state law in the guise of the rule of law.¹⁵³ Vladimir Putin expresses this very clearly when he proclaims he wants to establish a 'dictatorship of the law' and sets up a project designed explicitly to restore the state. This is not synonymous with the pursuit of justice or respect for fundamental freedoms, but strictly defines the rules of the game and demands respect for the boundaries between legal and illegal, public and private, economics and politics.¹⁵⁴ The violence of the rule of law appears here to its fullest extent: the monopoly of legitimate violence by the law is less justified by the protection of legal ends than by the protection of the law itself, in other words the protection of an established order.¹⁵⁵ So there is always, in reference to the rule of law, a confusion between law and order, between the legal system and the administrative system, in other words an integration of law within the order of the state; 'Law consecrates the established order by consecrating the vision of that order which is held by the State.'¹⁵⁶ What differentiates political systems, then, is not the question of the application of the law, but the (much more complex) question of the interstices of the law and the processes of interpretation thereof,¹⁵⁷ the question also of the dynamic relations and the games that are played in the balance of power between legitimacy, legality and effectiveness of power.¹⁵⁸ The principle and the mechanisms of normalization are less

important than whether or not they can be evaded. In other words, violence in a given society is revealed by the absence, or ineffectiveness, of the 'right to non-compliance.'¹⁵⁹

RULE OF LAW AND STATE OF EMERGENCY: STATE VIOLENCE IN THE SERVICE OF EFFICIENCY

Moreover—and this strikes me as even more important because it is less discussed—the problematization and the adoption of the rhetoric of the rule of law in the context of the priority given to economic concerns form part of a legitimate but coercive exercise of power. Instrumental and utilitarian approaches to the law that we encounter almost systematically in so-called authoritarian or totalitarian countries do indeed play on a second criterion of legitimacy, social and economic functionality. The law appears less a guarantor of a certain justice and humanity than as intent on playing a role in social engineering and as a facilitator of economic development. Since the effectiveness of power is fundamental in proving its legitimacy, ideas cannot remain in the abstract, they must be put into action, given concrete shape, organized functionally through law—a law that is able to adapt to the demands of the real and is the expression of this enhanced pragmatism.¹⁶⁰ Again, the international dimension reinforces this hegemony of the rule of law in the service of economic development, the application of the rules of the market and private sector development, thanks to fixed, irreversible and predictable rules¹⁶¹: in spite of the vagueness and normativity of the concept,¹⁶² international organizations have made it a central instrument of their recommendations by reducing it to an administrative and managerial technique.

Donors and national authorities put more emphasis on procedures, rules and law than on the substance of public action, modes of intervention, and the concrete details of practices, in other words on legal formalism and a vision of the rule of law as an instrument of socio-economic efficiency. They also share the same apolitical conception of power: we know that international organizations have adopted the language of governance and the rule of law precisely to avoid the political 'problem,' here following a certain reading of the rule of law in the social sciences which claimed hegemony for law in social regulation.¹⁶³ The rule of law is then seen as the 'rule of consensus, security and reason,' unlike the political, which is a 'reign of division, uncertainty, and power play.'¹⁶⁴ It goes without saying that the relationship to law varies from one society to another, and

that singular historicities affect the modes of legal formalization through specific modes of state-building, just as they affect the type of bureaucratic functioning or the nature of the relationship between state and society. But, based on the belief that the law is less a neutral than a neutralizing technique of social relations, and thus stands above and outside of political techniques, we find, in all these authoritarian situations that reify the law, the idea that legal rules and decisions based on law depoliticize measures and play on collective representations of ‘normality.’¹⁶⁵ The rule of law thus appears primarily as a ‘depoliticized political discourse’¹⁶⁶: while priority is given to well-being and economic development, it becomes a consensual paradigm that expresses values that are recognized (or supposedly recognized) by everyone; it makes it possible to understand the individual and to repudiate the political ‘in the name of a hegemonic conception of law and its role in social regulation.’¹⁶⁷

This focus on economic efficiency and functionality leads us to consider the law and the rules from a different angle: the latter turn out to be not so much principles applicable to all, rules to be observed at all costs, as they are reference points on the basis of which the game can be played. This clearly leaves the door open to domination and inequality.¹⁶⁸ Thus, the legal disorder and the extensive use of oral rather than written sources promote this random exercise of law and of the rule of law. In Ben Ali’s Tunisia for example, it was common for decisions to be made without any legal basis, like those announced in a presidential speech that came into force without ever giving rise to the publication of laws or decrees, or those decrees that took precedence over the law, as illustrated by the case of regulations on foreign investment.¹⁶⁹ The word *talimaat* (Arabic) refers to unwritten instructions or orders that have the force of law, and are sometimes even more powerful than the law; what must be done but cannot be written and that applies most commonly in situations of refusal without explanation, precisely so as to avoid having to give any.¹⁷⁰ The administration rarely wrote down its grounds for rejecting a decision, and did not even provide a document notifying the rejection. The civil servant gave an oral negative response when, for example, a document was not issued, someone was not chosen during a recruitment or the creation of an association or any authorization or organization of a public event was refused, specifically so as to block any resort to law. As in the case of torture, no trace was to be left. And the officer in contact with the citizen could do no more, in all honesty, than repeat that he was ‘applying the *talimaat*’ when he announced to the investor that he could not increase

his share in the capital of a company, when he told the villager that he could not fence in his field or build a shed on his land, and informed the city-dweller that he could not straighten out or quite simply obtain his property deeds. This is by no means unique to Tunisia; the *talimaat* exist in different forms and for different purposes, almost everywhere, in the name of efficiency. Decisions cannot be refuted, criticized or questioned, precisely because the parties concerned do not know what rules (all of them partly legal or legitimate) to apply. Hannah Arendt points out that the replacement of laws by decrees, and constant legal uncertainties, are ‘characteristic of all forms of tyranny, where government and due process of law are replaced by administration and anonymous decisions.’¹⁷¹ What lawyers describe as vagueness, reversibility and intermittence, as waivers or laxity, can be read in terms of temporal suspensions of the legal system, in other words as the recurrence of ‘states of emergency.’¹⁷² We are therefore faced with a mixture of rule of law and state of emergency justified by the pragmatic imperatives of the ‘economic’ and the ‘social’ that make facts and law ‘indistinguishable.’¹⁷³ For many recipient countries, especially those who aim to promote consensus as a form of government, the rule of law makes it possible to comply with the catechism of their major donors, but it is mostly a political resource allowing the legalization of disciplinary or repressive practices. Let us again consider the example of Tunisia under Ben Ali, where the adoption of this discourse by the central government had deprived the opposition of one of its major themes. The National Pact reflected that forced convergence, and thus it has been said that, ‘in this way, the concept of rule of law has been transformed into a program shared by the government and the opposition.’¹⁷⁴

Consensus, unanimity and the demand for the rule of law are sometimes interpreted as furthering or even revealing a process of democratization. But this interpretation betrays a narrowly economist and mechanistic vision of this political process and a particularly poor definition of democracy. It suggests the ambiguity lurking in these portmanteau words. The violence of the rule of law appears here quite nakedly, through the overly normative nature of the use of this concept, which reveals a certain conception of power, that labels certain modes of government as ‘legitimate,’ and which transmits a specific vision of the state.¹⁷⁵ But this conception is a conception of the police state, of the ‘increase of state forces *in the correct order*.’¹⁷⁶ The rule of law must first of all bring prosperity and material progress. The analysis of economic and social mechanisms that I am setting out here suggests, however, that consensus, especially a consensus

that takes shape around the concept of rule of law, is certainly one of the most powerful mainsprings of obedience, especially because it is built on a silent and often painless violence, but a violence that is no less real.

NOTES

1. M. Foucault, *Security, territory, population: lectures at the Collège de France, 1977–78*, ed. Michel Senellart, François Ewald and Alessandro Fontana; transl. Graham Burchell (Basingstoke: Palgrave Macmillan, 2007) [1], especially the lecture of 25 January 1978, p. 71.
2. M. Foucault, ‘Méthodologie pour la connaissance du monde. Comment se débarrasser du marxisme,’ interview with R. Yoshimoto, in *Dits et Écrits III, 1976–1979* (Paris: Gallimard, 1994), 235 (25 April 1978) [2]. Here, Foucault speaks of a ‘sort of gigantic, irrepressible thirst that forces people to turn to the state. One might call it a desire for the state,’ p. 618. See also *The Birth of Biopolitics*, lecture of 7 March 1979, pp. 159–184. This point has been highlighted by M. Senellart, ‘Course Context,’ in M. Foucault, *Security, territory, population*, pp. 369–70.
3. The Rassemblement constitutionnel démocratique (Democratic Constitutional Rally or RCD) was established in 1988 to succeed the Parti socialiste destourien (Destourian Socialist Party or PSD), the single party since the country’s independence. The name change was due to the desire for ‘change’ expressed by the new president and the institutionalization of the multiparty system. But it remained a mere façade: fake opposition parties in the pay of the regime were created while real opposition parties were banned from having any effective presence, by law or de facto, since it was in practice impossible for them to reach the public and widen their audience. In fact, the RCD had remained the single party. See, for example, M. Camau and V. Geisser, *Le Syndrome autoritaire. Politique en Tunisie de Bourguiba à Ben Ali* (Paris: Presses de Sciences Po, 2003) [3].
4. Following Pierre Rosanvallon, Ezzedine Bouslah speaks of a ‘tutelarary state that establishes the social sphere’ or more simply of a ‘redistributive, clientelist and authoritarian state,’ suggesting that the number and significance of social policies, and the additional interest for ‘the social,’ did not for all that create a welfare state:

- E. Bouslah, 'Politiques de protection sociale et sociétés. Quelques réflexions théorico-méthodologiques,' *Revue tunisienne de droit* 2000 (Tunis: CPU, 2001): 195–204 [4]; see also D. Chamekh, 'État et pauvreté en Tunisie. Assistance et/ou insertion,' DEA (diplôme d'études approfondies) dissertation, Université de Tunis III, Faculté de droit et de sciences politiques, academic year 1998–1999 [5].
5. Hibou, *The Force of Obedience*, especially chapters 3, 5 and 6.
 6. This dimension is also highlighted by Fariba Adelhah for the Islamic Republic, especially in *Being modern in Iran*, transl. Jonathan Derrick (London: Hurst & Co. in association with CERI, Paris, 1999) [6]; see also the revised and enlarged edition of the original French, *Être moderne en Iran* (Paris: Karthala, 2006) [7].
 7. 'The Change' was the name given to itself by the Ben Ali regime.
 8. The glowing report is given by specialists of international institutions such as the ILO (International Labour Organization) and the confederations of trade unions: annual reports of the International Confederation of Free Trade Unions, *Tunisia, Annual Survey of Violations of Trade Unions Rights*. It is of course repeated by the Tunisian authorities, who try to create a brand label on the basis of this glowing report and attempt to save the label. This good social image is transmitted by donors (*Stratégie de coopération République tunisienne—Banque mondiale, 2005-2004*, The World Bank, Washington, D.C., December 2004) and by industrialists (e.g. the Gherzi Report of 2004, Cettex-Gherzi, *Mise à jour de l'étude stratégique du secteur textile-habillement*, summary note, Tunis, May 2004) for whom the good social conditions of labor are one of the few strong points of the Tunisian textile industry.
 9. J.P. Cling and G. Letilly, *Export Processing Zones. A Threatened Instrument for Global Economy Insertion?*, DIAL working document, Paris, DT/2001/17. [8]
 10. M. Catusse and B. Destremau (ed.), *La Protection sociale dans les pays du Maghreb. Une synthèse des recherches*, mimeographed (Paris, Mire, Ministry for Social Affairs and Health, February 2008) [9]; M. Catusse, B. Destremau and E. Verdier, *L'État face au 'débordement' du social au Maghreb. Se former, travailler et se protéger* (Paris: Karthala-IREMAM, 2009) [10].
 11. H. Fehri, 'Économie politique de la réforme. De la tyrannie du statu quo à l'ajustement structurel,' *Annales d'économie et de ges-*

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12. B.H. Chua, *Communitarian Ideology and Democracy in Singapore* (London; New York: Routledge, 1995) [14]; C. Crouch, *Government and Society in Malaysia* (Ithaca, NY: Cornell University Press, 1996) [15]; A. Ong, *Flexible Citizenship. The Cultural Logics of Transnationality* (Durham, NC.: Duke University Press, 1999) [16].
 13. J.L. Rocca, *La Condition chinoise. La mise au travail capitaliste à l'âge des réformes (1978–2004)* (Paris: Karthala, 2006) [17]; and paper given at the session 'Situations thermidorienne' of the seminar 'Limites du politique, politique des limites,' EHESS, Paris, 14 January 2008.
 14. On this argument in the case of Tunisia, see Hibou, 'Les marges de manœuvre d'un "bon élève" économique,' and in particular S. Elbaz, 'Quand le régime du "Changement" prône la "stabilité". Mots et trajectoire du "développement" en Tunisie,' *Revue Tiers Monde*, 200 (October–December 2009): 821–835 [18].
 15. UNDP, *Human Development Report, 1994* (New York, 1994), <http://hdr.undp.org/en/content/human-development-report-1994> [19]; Commission sur la Sécurité humaine, *La Sécurité humaine maintenant. Rapport final*, New York, 2003 (<http://www.humansecurity-chs.org/finalreport/index.html>) [20]; see also the portal on human security <http://www.humansecurity-gateway.info> and S. Tadjbakhsh, 'Human Security. Concepts and Implications with an Application to the Post-Intervention Challenges in Afghanistan,' *Les Études du CERi*, 117–118 (September 2005) [21].
 16. D. Fassin, 'Biopouvoir ou biolégitimité? Splendeurs et misères de la santé publique,' in M.C. Granjon (ed.), *Penser avec Michel Foucault. Théorie critique et pratiques politiques* (Paris: Karthala, 2005), pp. 161–181 [22].
 17. *Ibid.*, p. 174.
 18. Favarel-Garrigues and Rousselet, *La Société russe en quête d'ordre*.

19. Fitzpatrick, *Everyday Stalinism*; A. Vichnevski, *The Sickle and the Rouble. The Conservative Modernisation in the USSR* (Moscow, 1998, 2010) [23] (in Russian); Werth, 'Renaissance et dilemme du mouvement ouvrier en Union soviétique.'
20. Fullbrook, *Anatomy of a Dictatorship*, especially pp. 29–30.
21. Rowell, *Le Totalitarisme au concret*; Lüdtke, 'La République démocratique allemande comme histoire.'
22. Crew (ed.), *Nazism and German Society*; Mason, *Nazism, Fascism, and the Working Class*; Aly, *Hitler's Beneficiaries*.
23. Tooze, *The Wages of Destruction*; U. Herbert, 'Labor as spoils of conquest, 1933–1945' and C.R. Browning, 'One day in Josefow. Initiation to mass murder,' in Crew (ed.), *Nazism and Society*. A. du Closel has shown the same for musicians: A. Du Closel, *Les Voix étouffées du IIIe Reich. Entartete Musik* (Arles: Actes Sud, 2005) [24].
24. Peukert, *Inside Nazi Germany*; Johnson, *Nazi Terror*.
25. Paul Veyne, *L'Inventaire des différences*, Paris, Editions du Seuil, 1976 [25].
26. This expression literally means 'living as usual.'
27. This image is given by F. Rosas and forms the title of the first part of the major series edited by him (in collaboration with F. Martins, L. Do Amaral and M.F. Rollo), *O Estado Novo (1926–1974)*.
28. F. Rosas, *O Estado Novo nos Anos Trinta, 1928–1938* (Lisbon: Editorial Estampia, 1996) [26], and *O Estado Novo, 1926–1974*.
29. 'Industrial packaging' is the name given by the Portuguese administration to all measures of protection and assistance to nascent national industries; it is the equivalent of the import-substitution policies that developing countries (especially those that were later called 'emerging countries') implemented during the 1960s–1980s.
30. A.M. De Castro Martins, *Génese, Emergência e Institucionalização do Serviço Social Português* (Lisbon: Fundação Calouste Gulbenkian/FCT, 1999) [27].
31. On the corporatist system, see M. Lucena, *A Evolução do sistema corporativo português*, 2 volumes (Lisbon: Ed. Perspectivas e Realidades, 1976) [28], and F. Patriarca, *A Questão Social no Salazarismo, 1930–1947*, 2 volumes (Lisbon: Coleção Análise Social, Imprensa Nacional, Casa da Moeda, 1995) [29].
32. A. Garrido, 'Politique et institutions économiques. Le corporatisme portugais, ou le capitalisme possible de l'État Nouveau.'

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33. A. Carvalho and H. Mouro, *Serviço Social no Estado Novo* (Coimbra: Cenhela, 1987) [31].
34. F.M. Maia, *Segurança Social em Portugal. Evolução e tendências* (Madrid: Organización Iberoamericana de Seguridad Social, 1984) [32].
35. P. Guibentif, ‘Discursos e aparelhos nas transformações políticas. O caso da segurança social,’ *Análise Social*, XXI(87–89) (1985): 945–959 [33], and ‘Génese da Previdência Social. Elementos sobre as origens da segurança social portuguesa e suas ligações com o corporativismo,’ *Ler História*, 5: 27–58 [34]; D. F. Da Soledade Carolo, ‘A Reforma da Previdência social de 1962 na Institucionalização do Estado Providencia em Portugal,’ Master’s thesis, ISEG, Universidade técnica de Lisboa, September 2006 [35].
36. Guibentif, ‘Génese da Previdência Social.’
37. Patriarca, *A Questão social no Salazarismo*.
38. P. Guibentif, *La Pratique du droit international et communautaire de la sécurité sociale. Étude de sociologie du droit de la coordination. L’exemple du Portugal*, Faculté de droit de Genève (Basel; Frankfurt: Helbing & Lichtenhahn, 1997) [36].
39. M. Lucena, ‘A revolução portuguesa. Do desmantelamento da organização corporativa ao duvidoso fim do corporativismo,’ *Análise Social*, XIII(51) (1977): 541–592 [37]; Guibentif, *La Pratique du droit*.
40. Soledade Carolo, *A Reforma da Previdência social de 1962*.
41. Guibentif, *La Pratique du droit*; P. Ramos Pinto, ‘Housing and Citizenship: “building” social rights in Twentieth-Century Portugal,’ *Contemporary European History*, 18(2) (2009): 199–215 [38].
42. M. Lucena, ‘Transformações do Estado português nas suas relações com a sociedade civil,’ *Análise Social*, XVIII(72–74): 897–926 [39].
43. Polanyi, *The Great Transformation*.
44. The words are those of M. Foucault in ‘Michel Foucault: la sécurité et l’État,’ *Dits et Écrits III*, 213, pp. 383–388.

45. A. Bizberg, 'La transformation politique du Mexique. Fin de l'ancien régime et apparition du nouveau?,' *Critique internationale*, 19 (April 2003): 84–91 [40]; Messiant, 'La Fondation Eduardo dos Santos (FESA)'; B.H. Chua, *Communitarian Ideology and Democracy in Singapore* (London; New York: Routledge, 1995) [14]; Hibou, *The Force of Obedience*, Chap. 7; J. C. Valente, *Estado Novo e Alegria no Trabalho. Uma Historia Politica da FNAT (1935–1958)* (Lisbon: Edições Colibri & INATEL, 1999) [41].
46. Foucault, 'Michel Foucault: la sécurité et l'État.'
47. Thanks to Alfio Mastropaolo for urging me to think about this question, so often evaded by mere reference to Michel Foucault.
48. Favarel-Garrigues, *Policing Economic Crime in Russia*.
49. Kott, *Le Communisme au quotidien*; A. Lüdtke, 'The world of men's work, East and West,' in K. Pence et P. Betts (eds), *Socialist Modern. East Germany Everyday Culture and Politics* (Ann Arbor, MI: University of Michigan Press, 2008), pp. 234–250 [42].
50. D. Berdahl, 'The spirit of capitalism and the boundaries of citizenship in post-wall Germany,' *Comparative Studies in Society and History*, 47(2) (April 2005): 235–251 [43]; I. Merkel, 'Consumer culture in the GDR'; Ragaru and Capelle-Pogăcean, 'Introduction.'
51. I. Thireau, 'The moral universe of aggrieved Chinese workers. Workers' appeals to arbitration committees and letters and visits offices,' *China Journal*, 7(50) (2003): 83–103 [44]; Rocca, *La Condition chinoise*; Lubman, *Bird in a Cage*.
52. Messiant, *L'Angola postcolonial*, 2.
53. See also, in other African situations, the special issue of *Politique africaine* (61, March 1996: 3–71) devoted to the 'need for the state' and, for the case of the RDC, the work of A. Maindo: as well as his thesis, 'Survivre à la guerre des autres. Un défi populaire en RDC,' *Politique africaine*, 84 (December 2001): 33–58 [45] and 'La "République de l'Ituri" en RDC. Un far west ougandais,' *Politique africaine*, 89 (March 2003): 181–192 [46].
54. Lefort, 'Le nom d'Un' and P. Clastre, 'Liberté, malencontre, innommable,' in La Boétie, *Le Discours de la servitude volontaire*.
55. É. Balibar, especially in 'The Nation Form: History and Ideology' in É. Balibar and I. Wallerstein, *Race, nation, class: ambiguous identities*, transl. Chris Turner (London: Verso, 1991), pp. 86–106 [47].

56. Buğra, *State and Business in Modern Turkey*; R. Bali, *The 'Varlık Vergisi' Affair. A Study on its Legacy* (Istanbul: The ISIS Press, 2005) [48]; A. Aktar, 'Economic nationalism in Turkey. The formative years, 1912–1925,' *Review of Social, Economic and Administrative Studies, Bogazici Journal*, 10(1–2) (1996): 263–290 [49] and "'Turkification" policies in the early republican era,' in C. Dufft (ed.), *Turkish Literature and Cultural Memory. Multiculturalism as a Literary Theme after 1980* (Wiesbaden: Harrassowitz Verlag, 2009), pp. 29–62 [50].
57. Bali, *The 'Varlık Vergisi' Affair* and especially A. Aktar, 'Economic nationalism in Turkey,' 'Turkification policies in the early republican era,' and 'Homogenising the nation, turkifying the economy. The Turkish experience of population exchange reconsidered,' in R. Hirschon (ed.), *Crossing the Aegean. An Appraisal of the 1923 Compulsory Exchange Between Greece and Turkey* (New York; Oxford: Berghahn Books, 2003), pp. 79–95 [51].
58. Buğra, *State and Business in Modern Turkey*.
59. A. Gerchenkron, *Economic Backwardness in Historical Perspective. A Book of Essays* (Harvard, Massachusetts: Harvard University Press, 1962) [52]; Fitzpatrick, *Everyday Stalinism*; Vichnevski, *The Sickie and the Rouble*.
60. S. Heder, *Cambodian Communism and the Vietnamese Model, I: Imitation and Independence, 1930–1975* (Bangkok: White Lotus, 2004) [53], and 'Hun Sen's consolidation. Death or beginning of reform?,' *Southeast Asian Affairs* (2005): 113–130 [54]; E. Gottesman, *Cambodia after the Khmer Rouge. Inside the Politics of Nation Building* (New Haven, CT: Yale University Press, 2003) [55]; J.F. Bayart, R. Bertrand, B. Hibou, R. Marchal and F. Mengin, *Le Royaume concessionnaire. Libéralisation économique et violence politique au Cambodge*, FASOPO, Paris, December 2004. (<http://www.fasopo.org/publications.htm>) [56]; J.F. Bayart, 'Le concept de situation thermidorienne. Régimes néorévolutionnaires et libéralisation économique,' *Questions de Recherche*, 24 (March 2008), CERI, Paris (www.ceri-sciences-po.org/publica/question/qdr24.pdf) [57].
61. Messiant, 'L'Angola et la question du déterminisme historique' and 'Multipartisme sans démocratie.'
62. This is a translation of *essa paz que estamos com ela* which is analyzed by C. Messiant and expresses the humor and resignation that

- accompany the ‘phoney peace.’ See ‘Multipartisme sans démocratie,’ p. 331.
63. E. Longuenesse, M. Catusse and B. Destremau, ‘Le travail et la question sociale au Maghreb et au Moyen-Orient,’ *Revue des mondes musulmans et de la Méditerranée* [online], n°105–106, placed online 1 March 2005 (<http://remmm.revues.org/document2340.html>) [58].
 64. M. Kraiem, *Pouvoir colonial et mouvement national. La Tunisie des années trente*, vol. 1, (Tunis: Alif, 1990) [59]; A. Mahjoubi, *Les Origines du mouvement national en Tunisie, 1904–1934* (Tunis: Publications de l’université de Tunis, Faculté des Lettres, 1982) [60]; A. Larguèche, *Les Ombres de la ville. Pauvres, marginaux et minoritaires à Tunis (XVIIIe-XIXe siècles)* (Tunis: Centre de Publication Universitaire, Faculté des Lettres de Manouba, 1999) [61]; A. Guelmami, *La Politique sociale en Tunisie de 1881 à nos jours* (Paris: L’Harmattan, 1996) [12].
 65. Hibou, *The Force of Obedience*, Chap. 7.
 66. T.W. Ngo, ‘The political bases of episodic agency in the Taiwan state,’ in R. Boyd and T.W. Ngo (eds), *Asian States. Beyond the Developmental Perspective* (London; New York: Routledge, 2005), pp. 83–109 [62].
 67. F. Mengin, ‘A contingent outcome of the unfinished Chinese civil war. State-formation in Taiwan by transnational actors,’ paper given at the Franco-British conference, ‘Économies morales et formation de l’État dans le monde des extra-européens,’ CERI, Paris, FASOPO, Paris and Trinity College, Cambridge, 27 May 2005.
 68. Mason, *Nazism, Fascism, and the Working Class*.
 69. The various portraits presented by Orlando Figes in *The Whisperers* show this in a very vivid and concrete way.
 70. Ibid. This dimension is given a theoretical analysis in J. Habermas, *Legitimation crisis*.
 71. Figes, *The Whisperers*. This dimension, in fact, is brought out by Foucault in *Discipline and Punish*, more in the form of the legitimacy of torture, especially in public.
 72. Figes, *ibid.*; N. Werth, *L’Ivrogne et la Marchande de fleurs. Autopsie d’un meurtre de masse, 1937–1938* (Paris: Tallandier, 2009) [63].
 73. Favarel-Garrigues, *Policing Economic Crime in Russia*.
 74. Such feelings are evident in novels such as those by A. Koestler, *Darkness at Noon*, transl. Daphne Hardy (London: Cape, 1940)

- [64] and A. London, *On trial*, transl. Alastair Hamilton (London: Macdonald & Co., 1970) [65].
75. Bayart, 'L'énonciation du politique,' p. 369.
 76. Lonsdale, 'The conquest state of Kenya, 1895–1905'; Berman and Lonsdale, *Unhappy Valley*; Bayart, *The State in Africa*.
 77. Bayart, 'Hégémonie et coercition en Afrique subsaharienne.'
 78. R. Banégas, 'Côte d'Ivoire: patriotisme, ethnonationalisme et autres "écritures africaines de soi,"' in C. Deslaurier and D. Juhé-Beaulaton (eds), *Afrique, terre d'histoire* (Paris: Karthala, 2007), pp. 609–626 [66].
 79. L. Fourchard, 'Violences et ordre politique au Nigéria.'
 80. L. Fourchard, 'A new name for an old practice: vigilante in South-western Nigeria,' *Africa*, 78 (1) (2008): 16–40 [67].
 81. R. Suberu, *Federalism and Ethnic Conflict in Nigeria*, United States Institute of Peace Press, Washington, 2001 [68]; L. Fourchard, 'Violences et ordre politique au Nigéria.'
 82. Bayart, *The State in Africa*; B. Berman, *Control and Crisis in Colonial Kenya. The Dialectic of Domination* (London: James Currey, 1990) [69]; Berry, *No Condition is Permanent*; A. Mbembe, 'Pouvoir, violence et accumulation,' *Politique africaine*, 39 (September 1990): 7–24 [70].
 83. Thanks to Gilles Favarel-Garrigues and Fabien Jobard for their pertinent remarks and criticisms, which forced me to make this link clearer.
 84. S. Combe, 'La Stasi,' in J.-P. Brodeur and F. Jobard (eds), *Citoyens et Délateurs. La délation peut-elle être civique?* (Paris: Autrement, 2005), pp. 52–66 [71].
 85. I owe my development of these ideas to discussions with Fabien Jobard.
 86. Lüdtke, 'La République démocratique allemande comme histoire.'
 87. Combe, *Une société sous surveillance: les intellectuels et la Stasi* (Paris: A. Michel, 1999) [72]; D. Boyer, 'Censorship as a vocation. The institutions, practices and cultural logic of media control in GDR,' *Comparative Study of Society and History*, 45(3) (July 2003): 511–545 [73].
 88. J.R. Zatlin, 'Out of sight. Industrial espionage, ocular authority and East German communism, 1965–1989,' *Contemporary European History*, 17(1) (2008): 45–71 [74].

89. F. Jobard, 'Analyse narrative d'une dynamique d'écroulement' and 'L'État au quotidien. Histoire de la Volkspolizei,' *Crime, Histoire et Société/Crime, History and Societies*, 9(1) (2005), online review (<http://chs.revues.org/index389.html>) [75]; Lindenberger, 'Towards surveillance and education.'
90. Lindenberger, 'La Police populaire de la RDA.'
91. These were the words of a person I interviewed, Tunis, December 2003.
92. Favarel-Garrigues, *Policing Economic Crime in Russia*, and Favarel-Garrigues and K. Rousselet, *La Société russe en quête d'ordre*.
93. This is one of the arguments put forward in B. Hibou, 'Domination and control in Tunisia. Economic levers for the exercise of authoritarian power,' *Review of African Political Economy*, 108 (June 2006): 185–206 [76].
94. This analysis of road blocks and the political economy of smuggling is to be found in Hamza Meddeb's PhD, *Courir ou mourir* as well as in his paper 'Surveiller les hommes, contrôler les flux.'
95. Marcuse, *One-dimensional man*.
96. É. Balibar, 'Vers une citoyenneté imparfaite,' *Les Cahiers de la Villa Gillet*, 8 (April 1999): 97 [77].
97. B. Lautier, "'Qui ne dit mot consent. Qui consent ne dit mot"... L'usage du mot "consensus" dans le vocabulaire du développement,' *Économie et institutions*, 12 (first semester 2008): 45–72 [78].
98. J. Baudrillard, *The Gulf War did not take place*, translated and with an introduction by Paul Patton (Bloomington, Ind.: Indiana University Press, 1995), pp. 84–85 [79].
99. Châtelet, *Les Animaux malades du consensus*.
100. Hibou, *The Force of Obedience*, especially Chaps. 5 and 7.
101. I am here using the very expressive metaphor suggested by P. Brown in *Power and persuasion*, p. 30.
102. Following the interpretation by É. Balibar in 'Le Hobbes de Schmitt, le Schmitt de Hobbes,' in C. Schmitt, *Le Léviathan dans la doctrine de l'État de Thomas Hobbes. Sens et échec d'un symbole politique* (Paris: Le Seuil, 2002) [80]. For an English translation of Schmitt's work, see *The Leviathan in the state theory of Thomas Hobbes: meaning and failure of a political symbol*, foreword and introduction by George Schwab; transl. George Schwab and Erna Hilfstein; with a new foreword by Tracy B. Strong (Chicago, Illinois; London: University of Chicago Press, 2008).

103. One of the organic intellectuals of the ‘Ben Ali regime,’ Sadok Chaabane, summarizes the president’s project in these terms: ‘Ensuring the invulnerability of Tunisia, in the context of a fairly balanced society within which difference becomes agreement and dialogue consensus. This way, the specters of fanaticism and extremism, as well as all imported ideologies, will be banished forever. There will be only one way, that of pluralism (sic!). There will be only one ideology, that of patriotism attached to Tunisia, and to Tunisia alone’: from *Ben Ali et la voie pluraliste en Tunisie* (Tunis: Cérés Éditions, 1996), p. 141 [81].
104. Ben Ali, speech given on 21 March 1989 in Carthage.
105. All these notions are mentioned in the National Pact (www.tunisie-info.com/references/pacte). This states that ‘The identity of our people is a specific Arabo-Islamic identity rooted in a glorious distant past’; ‘We proclaim that our supreme objective is to strengthen the foundations of the state’; ‘the Tunisian state must support these rational guidelines that proceed from *ijtihad* and work to ensure that *ijtihad* and rationality will have a clear impact on teaching, religious institutions and the media of information,’ and ‘The new culture which we strive for is a culture rooted in our civilisation’s heritage and in particular the legacy of *ijtihad* and Arabo-Islamic rationalism, while being open to the human spirit in general and in tune with the modern world, so as to assimilate the latest discoveries of science and technology.’
106. The text mentions Arabism and Islamic identity, membership of *ijtihad* and rationalism, independence, tolerance, the banishment of extremism and violence.
107. S. Benachour, ‘Les municipales de 2005: des élections... oui, pour quoi faire?’, paper given at the international conference in Tunis on ‘La démocratie représentative devant un défi historique,’ Faculté des sciences juridiques, politiques et sociales, University of Tunis, 7–8 April 2005 [82]; I. Marzouki, *Un compromis atypique, ou les alliances dangereuses*, mimeograph, Tunis, 2003 [83], and ‘La culture de la différence. Une redéfinition des réformes démocratiques,’ introduction to the conference on ‘Le processus de démocratisation au Maghreb,’ Tunis, 11 March 2005; Camau and Geisser, *Le Syndrome autoritaire*, Chap. 6; J.P. Bras, ‘Élections et représentation au Maghreb,’ *Monde arabe, Maghreb-Machrek*, 168 (April–June 2000):3–13 [84].

108. M. Bouchrara, *Sept millions d'entrepreneurs, and L'Économie tunisienne entre sa légalité et son identité. Douze propositions pour ramener la confiance économique*, mimeograph, Tunis, 1995 (journals published for instance in *La Presse*, 22 March 1995); Hibou, 'Les marges de manœuvre d'un "bon élève."'
109. J.P. Cassarino, *Tunisian New Entrepreneurs and their Past Experiences of Migration in Europe. Resource Mobilisation, Networks, and Hidden Disaffection* (Aldershot: Ashgate Publishing, 2000) [85].
110. M. Cammett, *Globalization and Business Politics in Arab North Africa. A Comparative Perspective* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 2007) [86].
111. Bras, 'Ben Ali et sa classe moyenne.' For a critique of the political usage of the middle class (in the 1970s, though the analysis is still valid), see A. Zghal, 'Classes moyennes et développement au Maghreb,' in A. Zghal et al., *Les Classes moyennes au Maghreb* (Paris: Éditions du CNRS, 1980), pp. 1–39 [87].
112. Focusing on the political history of the Jérid, J. Dakhli demonstrates this in *L'Oubli de la cité. La mémoire collective à l'épreuve du lignage dans le Jérid tunisien* (Paris: La Découverte, 1990) [88].
113. Interviews, Tunis, March 2005.
114. H. Béji, *Désenchantement national. Essai sur la décolonisation* (Paris: Maspero, 1982), pp. 51ff [89].
115. Fehri, 'Économie politique de la réforme,' p. 104.
116. A. Bédoui, 'Les relations sociales dans l'entreprise,' in *L'Entreprise et l'environnement social* (Tunis: IACE, 1990), pp. 159–223 [90].
117. Expression coined by Michel Foucault in 'La stratégie du pourtour,' *Dits et Écrits, III, 1976–1979*, pp. 794–797, in reference to the events at Longwy.
118. Meddeb, 'L'ambivalence de la course à *el khobza*.'
119. All these expressions are taken from interviews, Tunis, March 2005.
120. Special issue 'Tunisie: économie morale d'un mouvement social,' ed. B. Hibou, *Politique africaine*, 121 (March 2011) [91].
121. Lonsdale, 'African pasts in Africa's future.'
122. P.J. Hountondji, *Sur la 'philosophie africaine.'* *Critique de l'ethnophilosophie* (Paris: Maspero, 1976) [92].
123. Lonsdale, 'African pasts in Africa's future.'

124. V. Baudais and G. Chauzal, 'Les partis politiques et l'"indépendance partisane" d'Amadou Toumani Touré,' *Politique africaine*, 104 (December 2006): 61–80 [93].
125. On this rereading of the past and the myth of unity in the great Mandingo empire, J.L. Amselle, *Les Négociants de la savane. Histoire et organisation sociale des Kodoroks (Mali)* (Paris: Anthropos, 1977) [94]; J.-L. Amselle, Z. Dunbya, A. Kuyate and M. Tabure, 'Littérature orale et idéologie. La geste des Jakite Sabashi du Ganan (Wasolon, Mli),' *Cahiers d'Études africaines*, 73–76, XIX (1–4) (1979): 3–27 [95]; S. Bagayoko, 'L'État au Mali. Représentation, autonomie et mode de fonctionnement,' in E. Terray (ed.), *L'État contemporain en Afrique* (Paris: L'Harmattan, 1987), pp. 91–122 [96].
126. Baudais and Chauzal, 'Les partis politiques.'
127. Gentile, *Origins and Doctrine of Fascism*; B. Sordi, 'Le droit administratif sous le fascisme,' lecture given at the seminar 'Administration et dictature,' led by M.O. Baruch and Y. Dormagen, EHESS, 8 April 2005.
128. Chua, *Communitarian Ideology and Democracy*, especially pp. 9–39.
129. Mengin, *Trajectoires chinoises*, and 'Taiwanese politics and the Chinese market.'
130. Hibou, *Surveiller et Réformer*, Chap. 2, and Baudais and Chauzal, 'Les partis politiques.'
131. For a very fine—and ironic—analysis of the usage of consensus and the techniques of government inspired by this concept, see Lautier, "Qui ne dit mot consent. Qui consent ne dit mot," and 'La bureaucratie du consensus building,' paper given at the Deuxièmes rencontres européennes of the FASOPO (<http://www.fasopo.org/reasopo.htm#rencontres>) on 6 February 2009 on neoliberal bureaucratization.
132. Quoted in Châtelet, *Les Animaux malades du consensus*.
133. Lautier, "Qui ne dit mot consent. Qui consent ne dit mot," p. 65 (my emphasis).
134. W. Benjamin, 'Critique of violence,' in *One-way street, and other writings*, transl. Edmund Jephcott and Kingsley Shorter (London: NLB, 1979), pp. 132–154 [97].
135. This is shown, in the case of Africa, by Bayart, *The State in Africa*. For Portugal, see Rosas, *O Estado Novo, 1926–1974* and *O Estado Novo*

- nos Anos Trinta, 1928–1938*. For the Vichy Régime, M.O. Baruch, *Servir l'État français. L'administration en France de 1940 à 1944* (Paris: Fayard, 1997) [98]. For Mussolini's Italy, Gentile, *Origins and Doctrine of Fascism*, and Sordi, 'Le droit administratif sous le fascisme.' For Nazism, C. Schmitt, *Dictatorship* (Polity, 2013), and, for the most violent aspects, the different contributions to the special issue of the *Revue d'histoire de la Shoah*, 186 (January–June 2007), dedicated to 'Spoliations en Europe.' More generally, see H. Arendt, *The Origins of Totalitarianism* (London: Deutsch, 1986) [99].
136. Gentile, *Origins and Doctrine of Fascism*.
 137. Sordi, 'Le droit administratif sous le fascisme.'
 138. Baruch, *Servir l'État français*; M. Miaille, 'L'État de droit comme paradigme,' *Annuaire de l'Afrique du Nord*, XXXIV (1995): 29–43 [100]; L. Israël, *Robes noires, années sombres. Avocats et magistrats en résistance pendant la Seconde Guerre mondiale* (Paris: Fayard, 2005) [101].
 139. Benjamin, 'Critique of violence.'
 140. Polin, 'Analyse philosophique de l'idée de légitimité,' p. 21.
 141. Passerin d'Entrèves, 'Légalité et légitimité,' p. 30.
 142. See P. Brown's discussion of Ancient Rome in *Power and Persuasion*.
 143. See, for a general view, Abensour and Gauchet, 'Présentation. Les leçons de la servitude et leur destin,' in La Boétie, *Le Discours sur la servitude volontaire*, pp. vii–xxix; Foucault, *Discipline and Punish* and 'Truth and juridical forms' in *Essential works of Foucault, 1954–1984*, transl. Robert Hurley and others, 3 vols, vol. 2: *Aesthetics, method, and epistemology*, ed. James Faubion (London: Penguin Books, 2002), pp. 1–89. For examples in specific contexts, see Fulbrook, *Anatomy of a Dictatorship*, for the GDR; J. Heurtaux, 'Le changement de régime au prisme des usages politiques du droit. 1989 et l'entrouverture de la compétition politique en Pologne,' in Kott and Mespoulet (eds, in collaboration with A. Roger), *Le Postcommunisme dans l'histoire*, pp. 37–50 on Poland; Gentile, *Origins and Doctrine of Fascism* for fascist Italy and its 'legal revolution.' For Portugal, there is V. Pereira, 'L'État portugais et les Portugais de France de 1957 à 1974,' doctoral thesis, IEP de Paris, Centre d'Histoire de Sciences Po, Paris, 9 February 2007, especially Chaps. 5 and 6.
 144. On Tunisia, see Hibou, *The Force of Obedience*. On the Third Reich, Tooze, *The Wages of Destruction*, which discusses the legal basis for

- the exclusion of Jews from economic life, the extortion of Jewish goods and the pillaging of conquered lands. On Turkey, Bali, *The 'Varlik Vergisi' Affair* and Aktar, 'Economic nationalism in Turkey,' which discusses the legality of the extortion of Armenian goods. On Portugal, Pereira, *L'État portugais et les Portugais de France*, Chap. 7.
145. Bobbio, 'Sur le principe de légitimité.'
 146. M. Foucault, 'The social triumph of the sexual will,' in *Essential works of Foucault, 1954–1984*, transl. Robert Hurley and others, 3 vols, vol. 1: *Ethics, subjectivity and truth*, ed. Paul Rabinow (London: Penguin Books, 2002), pp. 157–62 (p. 157).
 147. Y. Dezalay and B.G. Garth, *The Internationalization of Palace Wars* (Chicago, University of Chicago Press, 2002) [102].
 148. Benjamin, 'Critique of violence.'
 149. Tozy, *Monarchie et islam politique au Maroc*, p. 35.
 150. See for example Havel, 'The power of the powerless.'
 151. B. Karsenti, 'Le criminel, le patriote, le citoyen. Une généalogie de l'idée de discipline,' *L'Inactuel*, 2 (1999): 115–128 [103].
 152. M. Foucault, '*Society must be defended*': *lectures at the Collège de France, 1975–76*, ed. Mauro Bertani and Alessandro Fontana; transl. David Macey (London: Allen Lane, 2003) [104].
 153. J. Chen, *Chinese Law. Towards an Understanding of Chinese Law, its Nature and Development* (The Hague; London: Kluwer Law International, 1999) [105]: the author talks of 'rule by law,' not of 'rule of law.'
 154. Favarel-Garrigues and Rousselet, *La Société russe en quête d'ordre*.
 155. See Benjamin's 'Critique of violence,' where he pursues his argument by pointing to the way that 'For the function of violence in law-making is twofold in the sense that law-making pursues as its end, with violence as the means, *what* is to be established as law, but at the moment instatement does not dismiss violence; rather, at this very moment of law-making, it specifically establishes as law at an end unalloyed by violence, but one necessarily and intimately bound to it, under the title of power. Law-making is power-making and, to that extent, an immediate manifestation of violence. [...] in the beginning all right was the prerogative of the kings or the nobles—in short, of the mighty; and that, *mutatis mutandis*, it will remain so as long as it exists. For from the point of view of violence, which alone can guarantee law, there is no equality but, at the most equally great violence,' pp. 149–150.

156. Pierre Bourdieu, 'The Force of Law: Toward a Sociology of the Judicial Field,' *The Hastings Law Journal* 38 (1987): 838 [106]; see also M. Foucault, 'The political technology of individuals,' in *Technologies of the self: a seminar with Michel Foucault*, ed. L.H. Martin, H. Gutman and P.H. Hutton (London: Tavistock, 1988) [107].
157. B. Gaïti and L. Israël (eds), 'La cause du droit,' *Politix*, 23(62): 15–190 [108]; Israël, *Robes noires, années sombres*.
158. Bobbio, 'Sur le principe de légitimité.'
159. This is brought out by Polanyi in *The Great Transformation*. See also A. Buğra, 'Karl Polanyi et la séparation institutionnelle entre politique et économie,' *Raisons politiques*, 20 (November 2005): 37–56 [109].
160. Polin, 'Analyse philosophique de l'idée de légitimité'; Bobbio, 'Sur le principe de légitimité'; Cotta, 'Phénoménologie de la légitimité,' in Institut international de philosophie politique, *L'Idée de légitimité*, pp. 61–86.
161. Hibou, 'The Political Economy of the World Bank's Discourse'; B. Campbell, 'Governance, institutional reform and the state. International financial institutions and political transition in Africa,' *Review of African Political Economy*, 28(88) (June 2001): 155–176 [110].
162. J. Ohnesorge, 'The rule of law, economic development and the developmental states of northeast Asia,' in C. Antons (ed.), *Law and Development in East and South East Asia* (Richmond: Curzon Press, 2002) [111], and 'État de droit et développement économique,' *Critique internationale*, 18 (January 2003): 46–56 [112].
163. This idea emerged directly from economic neo-institutionalism, whose most illustrious representative is D.C. North in *Institutions, Institutional Change and Economic Performance* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1990) [113]. See M. Dakolias, *Court Performance Around the World*, World Bank Technical Paper, 430 (1999) [114]; R.C. Effros, 'The World Bank In A Changing World. The Role Of Legal Construction,' *The International Lawyer*, 35, 1341 (2001) [115]; *Initiatives in Legal and Judicial Reform* (The World Bank: 2002) [116]. For a critique of this position, Hibou, 'The Political Economy of the World Bank's Discourse'; G. Hermet, 'La gouvernance serait-elle le nom de l'après-démocratie? L'inlassable quête du pluralisme limité,' in

- G. Hermet, A. Kazancigil and J.-F. Prud'homme (eds), *La Gouvernance. Un concept et ses applications* (Paris: Karthala, 2005), pp. 17–47 [117]; Ohnesorge, 'The rule of law, economic development and the developmental states of northeast Asia' and 'État de droit et développement économique,' Miaille, 'L'État de droit comme paradigme' speaks of the 'repudiation of politics in the social sciences,' p. 37.
164. Miaille, *ibid.*, p. 41.
165. Bourdieu, 'The Force of Law: Toward a Sociology of the Judicial Field'; D. Lochak, 'Les catégories juridiques dans les processus de radicalisation,' in Collovald and Gaiti (eds), *La Démocratie aux extrêmes*.
166. Bourdieu, 'Description and prescription. The conditions of possibility and the limits of political effectiveness', *Language and Symbolic Power*, edited and introduced by John B. Thompson; transl. Gino Raymond and Matthew Adamson (Cambridge: Polity Press, 1991), pp. 127–136.
167. Miaille, 'L'État de droit comme paradigme,' p. 37.
168. See, for example, Boltanski, *On critique*, especially Chap. 5.
169. N. Baccouche, 'Regard sur le code d'incitations aux investissements de 1993 et ses démembrements,' *Revue tunisienne de droit* (Tunis: Centre de Publication Universitaire, 2000), pp. 1–47 [118].
170. This information—of which I have not come across any published analysis—was given to me in interviews conducted in Tunis, December 2003 and January–March 2005. See the conclusion of B. Hibou, *The Force of obedience*.
171. H. Arendt, 'Authority in the Twentieth Century,' *The Review of Politics*, vol. 18, no. 4: 403–417 [119].
172. Highlighted by C. Schmitt and subsequently by G. Agamben. See Schmitt, *The Leviathan in the state theory of Thomas Hobbes* and Balibar, 'Le Hobbes de Schmitt, le Schmitt de Hobbes,' preface to Schmitt, *Le Léviathan dans la doctrine de l'État de Thomas Hobbes*. See also G. Agamben, *State of exception*, transl. Kevin Attell (Chicago, Illinois; London: University of Chicago Press, 2005) [120].
173. Agamben, *State of exception*.
174. R. Ben Achour, 'L'État de droit en Tunisie,' *Annuaire de l'Afrique du Nord*, XXXIV (1995): 246 [121].
175. Ohnesorge, 'The rule of law, economic development and the developmental states of northeast Asia,' and 'État de droit et développement économique.'

176. As analyzed by M. Foucault in his lectures of 29 March 1978 and 5 April 1978 at the Collège de France (Foucault, *Security, territory, population*).

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Modernity and Technocratization

The desire for the state also takes the shape of a widespread demand for modernity. The attraction of technical progress, of technological advances and material and symbolic expressions of scientific knowledge, is also a vector of domination. While it is widespread, the affinity between the processes of legitimation and the process of modernization is, however, complex. It depends simultaneously on the period, the overall historical context and the national modes of integration into this context, on the trajectories proper to each society, the nature and speed of urban, demographic, educational and economic transformations, and different national and regional temporalities. As a result, the relationship between state and society, the expectations placed in modernization, and the social *imaginaires* at stake are themselves highly differentiated from one situation to another, shaping the nature of the relationship between modernization, legitimation and the exercise of domination.

DESIRE FOR THE STATE AS DESIRE FOR MODERNIZATION

The *imaginaire* of modernization was central in the international context of the early twentieth century, more specifically the years 1920–1930. It was characterized by a total and as yet untroubled belief in the idea of progress and technical and instrumental rationality as a means of emancipation.¹ For example, Italian Fascism was not only certainly comprised

partly of conservative, even reactionary logics, but it also and above all represented the ‘conquest of modernity’ illustrated by the Futurist movement, giving birth to a new nationalism, ‘modernist nationalism.’² The latter aimed to promote modernization and industrialization while subordinating them to the requirements of the ‘totalitarian state’ in order to strengthen the nation and make Italy an actor in world politics.³ Similarly, the Nazi regime was forever referring to the importance of modernity: this was part of the spirit of the times and, in this sense, represented a certain conformity. This reference was rhetorical: it included the idea of a modern conception of a German society that needed to be created, or referred to the Soviet or American models in the field of the organization of industrial work, architecture and psychiatric reforms. But it was not just a question of building an image; this reference to modernity was reflected concretely in the type of public actions undertaken.⁴ The Nazi regime accomplished this through programs of universal consumption and dissemination in a new mass consumerism, incentives for productivity and rationalization of industrial processes, emphasis on technical progress, the project of a colonial settlement in the territories of the East and the violent transformation of the structures of German agriculture.⁵ The modernizing concerns of the Third Reich were perfectly real (in spite of often disappointing results) mainly because of the methods chosen to achieve this goal, and they often followed quite new paths. The Wehrmacht played a fundamental role in this field.⁶ Indeed, it made it possible to spread a modern style of consumption and way of life and thereby responded to the deep desires of a large proportion of the population—especially large in that Germany was an almost completely militarized society. Rationalization and mass consumption were effective, even if they were achieved more through the army than by any improvement in the conditions of production and distribution in the sectors of the civilian economy. In this context too, the *imaginaire* is inextricably mixed with the real, and the representations, modes of enunciation of the political, themes and rhetoric that are selected sometimes contribute as much as actual actions to the legitimation process: even when modernization was not effective, the modernizing endeavors of the regime—a fundamental criterion of its legitimacy—were not necessarily challenged by the population. This was the case, for example, of the young people who had not been socialized in the labor movements of the beginning of the century, and who saw the regime as embodying the hope, for the first time in the country’s history, of a possible emancipation from the ‘traditional’ economic, social and cultural horizon of the working class.⁷

In the USSR at the same period, the logic of modernization was also decisive. This is the argument put forward by Anatoly Vishnevsky who, in his book on conservative modernization, shows that the Soviet governments drew their legitimacy from various processes of modernization: economic, demographic, urban, cultural and political. The increased role of the state was partly a response to the aspirations to modernity found in different social strata; the mobilization of economic resources and social energy for this purpose allowed an ever-growing number of people to benefit from them.⁸ The complex changes that resulted were often contradictory and involved a certain cost to society; but, mostly, these modernization processes were received positively, particularly because of the legitimacy of a hierarchical bureaucratic apparatus that was deemed to be dedicated to the objectives assigned it by the government in accordance with the indicators and assessments that it regularly published.⁹ Indeed, the fetishism of numerical data and the obsession with quantification were inseparable from the Soviet state's claim to be scientific and modern. This claim was consistent with the spirit of the times: the general development of the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries valued quantification, the rationalization of modes of government and the belief in progress and development. Exchanges between Russian and European statisticians, including from France and Britain, were very frequent.¹⁰ Statistical realism, in other words the idea that statistical work fulfilled a social function, was a very powerful trend even if the Bolsheviks put forward a very different, albeit equally 'modern' vision. For the former, statistics were considered to be a reflection of reality, a means of finding out about society and, in this context, they had to be placed in the service of a modern political project, in the service, especially, of values of justice and social change. For the latter, statistical knowledge was an instrument in the service of the socialist project, to be used pragmatically to transform society through the definition of new policies and new actions. But these two visions had sprung from the same origin, with statistics reflecting the modernity of scientific knowledge, the expression par excellence of a modern management of the state and its economic policies.

The legitimacy of the Bolshevik state rested on this skilled, modern ability to rationalize, calculate, predict. The political argument was constantly mobilized: the actions implemented were the right ones, because they were based on knowledge, measurements, estimates and projections. The decisions made were necessarily objective, indisputable and legitimate in the eyes of a population avid for modernity.¹¹ Again, the undeniable portion of rhetoric and staging must not obscure either the reality of popular enthusiasm for

modernization—embodied, for example, in the general interest in Fordism and Taylorism¹²—or the reality of the demands placed on the state. Advertising for products that most people could not buy should obviously not be construed as a technique for disposing of products, or even as the state telling lies about the realization of this consumerist modernity. Such advertising conveyed the legitimacy of a lifestyle, the legitimacy, above all, of the dynamics of modernization, the logic of progress that the state had promised to achieve even if it met with undeniable practical difficulties in attaining this goal.¹³ In this sense, ideology—the ideology of modernization and the radical transformation of society—was not merely utopian. Or, more precisely, this utopia was also an experience. It was even the everyday experience of Soviet citizens, which resulted in the systematic nature of the ‘reconstruction of everyday life,’ for example, through the collectivization of land, housing policy and major heavy industrialization projects.¹⁴

Although Nazi Germany and the Stalinist Soviet Union shared the same modernizing zeal, the same desire to destroy diversity and political pluralism and the same desire for change and the creation of a new man, the link between the modernizing project, state legitimacy and the exercise of domination or even repression was very different and gave another meaning to modernity. Such is the interest of these comparisons: suggesting differences in meaning behind seemingly similar forms, the very inversion of the relations behind externally homogeneous factors. Thus, Stalinist modernity, a veritable religion which was embodied mainly in a fetishism of science, took shape in various grandiose projects¹⁵: authoritarian planning, forced industrialization and collectivization, the systematic displacement of the population and the deportation of entire groups. The Gulag symbolized the link between modernizing project and state violence; the camps were guided largely by economic rationality¹⁶: whatever the cost in terms of human lives, the essential thing was to build railways, to introduce electricity, to build bridges, to create factories and to develop the country. However, this was not the aim of the Nazi camps, where extermination was the main purpose. In Nazi Germany, the relationship between modernity and the exercise of power was, as it were, the complete opposite.¹⁷ The violence of the camps was not meant to serve the modernizing project, as in the Soviet camps; on the contrary, economic, administrative and technical rationality would serve the political project of domination by ‘Aryans’ and the German people. The two projects of modernization had nothing in common. On one side, there was an altogether traditional project aimed at creating a ‘civilization’ both economic and technical; on

the other, a project aimed at the destruction of the socio-political order in the name of racial purity. As summarized so aptly by Enzo Traverso, Soviet modernity ‘wanted to develop the economy at the cost of appalling injuries to the social body,’ while Nazi modernity

wanted to reshape humanity by imposing the rule of a “master race”. The difference is significant and is fundamentally part of their antithetical relationship to the Enlightenment. Despite its crimes under Stalin, communism was one of the heirs of this process, while National Socialism was the ultimate culmination of a vast trend aimed at the destruction of the Enlightenment, a movement that emerged from the counter-revolution and was then extended by the conservative revolution and radicalized by the different fascist movements.¹⁸

Differences in trajectory, in conception, and in the variously entangled dispositifs of power are crucial factors if we are to explain the variations existing in the relationship between the desire for modernization and the exercise of domination, but the general temporal context is equally important. Today, for example, reference to modernization, which is no less present than it was in Europe in the early twentieth century, must be understood in an entirely different way, especially because it is integrated in a very different ideological and cultural hegemony. On the one hand, after the Second World War and the Holocaust, technical and instrumental rationality is freed from its emancipatory aims and reduced to a technique of government; on the other, violence (be it expressed in the form of wars or revolutions) is no longer—or is much less—present in the *imaginaires*, attitudes, ideas, representations and practices of actors.¹⁹ This is why these days, more than ever, reference is made to logical expertise and the professionalism of power’s dispositifs.

As in the past, however, the specificity of the trajectories of different states shapes the relationship between modernization and the legitimacy of state domination. In China, for example, the legitimacy of reforms undertaken over the last 20 years now falls within the dual logic of modernization and nationalism. The entrepreneur, a ‘hero of the economy’ and ‘defender of the people’ is not only the new imaginary but also political figure of success and power.²⁰ This modernization takes on specific forms: for example, it has not become embodied in institutions, it is not opposed to socialism and it operates differently across different sectors, regions and actors. Modernizing legitimacy comes precisely, in the Chinese context, from these partial and differential transformations that give rise to a

new governmentality, that of the ‘distended state.’²¹ Sub-Saharan Africa presents a different configuration. Far from being a product imposed by colonization, the state in this part of the world was, until the 1980s, legitimate in spite of its violent and coercive power, precisely because it embodied many things simultaneously, all related to the ideal of modernity. The state thus represented the modernizing aspirations of the people through respect for the administration, and, to a certain extent, what is known as the Weberian ideal of the state. But it was also embodied in the voluntarist illusion and the state’s capacity to mobilize economic and social energies, including through the ‘white elephants’ and often excessive projects of industrial development, or in the hope for a better and fairer life through the widespread ambition of entering the administration or receiving a certain protection and a more open access to economic opportunities.²² In this sense, the ‘politics of the belly’ should not be understood as the spread of corruption and cronyism; it is, instead, the mode of appropriation of a hegemonic project that integrates the entire population, a process of making access to the state and its ‘benefits’ more widespread.

In contrast, the role of international actors in the processes of legitimation through modernization is perhaps more important and significant today than yesterday. International actors do not lag behind in legitimizing governments in the name of their modernizing endeavors. This is the case for Tunisia, presented and perceived as a reformist country, which has always benefited from the so called ‘visionary work’ of leaders wishing to modernize their country, despite the repressive dimension of the policies carried out on its behalf.²³ Such is the case, too, of Turkey, which saw the restructuring of its property and agriculture financed by the Marshall Plan in the name of economic modernization, despite the latter’s politically and morally incorrect underpinnings, namely ‘Turkification’ and the nationalization of land ‘abandoned’ by the Armenians.²⁴ The ‘Asian model’ promoted by the World Bank is based on ‘values’ that are not only open and technically pro-Western but also disciplinary and one-dimensional.²⁵ Finally, decentralization, supported by all Western donors for its beneficial reforms of political life, often relies on local elites heavily involved in the political economy of discrimination, marginalization and even the exclusion of entire social groups.²⁶

In sum, the construction or restoration of public authority, as well as state voluntarism and the capacity for economic mobilization all appear to lie at the foundation of these processes of legitimation, as they alone are able to respond to the ‘desire for the state,’ a state as a supra-political

entity above parties, conflicts, divisions and special interests, a state that can act as the vector of consensus and unity. It is obviously a particular conception of the political that thus emerges, a conception that leaves no room for debate, pluralism, the singular factor or diversity, but a conception that is, by other criteria, no less legitimate. The example of the role of technocracy in the disciplinary and even totalitarian exercise of power is emblematic in this regard. Technology is often the source of illusions, but it is obvious that political control and control of knowledge are one and the same.

TECHNOCRATIC LEGITIMACY AND THE 'SOCIAL PRODUCTION OF MORAL INDIFFERENCE'²⁷

In the Third Reich, the myth of a technocracy capable of achieving an economic miracle despite all the ideological madness is difficult to sustain. The technocrats in charge of economic and technical decisions were primarily politicians. Backe, head of Agriculture and Speer, in charge of Armaments, are the very types of technocrats presented as efficient and apolitical. Yet they were simultaneously Nazi ideologues, just as involved as were, more explicitly, Himmler and Goebbels.²⁸ Backe's work consisted mainly in rationalizing a problem shared by all European countries, that of an inadequate food supply, and ensuring national security in this area too, at all costs. The measures he put in place made it possible to legitimize agrarian protectionism as well as colonization and, especially, the 'conquest of new territories' in the East (the notorious *Lebensraum*). This was done through the establishment of a highly technical bureaucratic system, including through the *Reichsnährstand*, which set agricultural prices and controlled production. All these measures were taken in the name of food security and the maintenance of a rich agricultural community. They were necessarily political²⁹: the German agricultural community was thought of as the source of German racial vitality; the *Reichsnährstand* defined the level of income of all country-dwellers and farmers, and affected the consumption of all German families by directing the nature of the meals they ate; the extension of land and the objective of food security necessitated nothing less than massacres and organized famines for the elimination of Slavic populations living on confiscated land. The conquest of new territories thus accelerated the decision to implement a 'management of people' which contributed to the extermination of whole groups of the population.

The image of Speer is even more misleading. Built on his technicity and his supposedly apolitical character, it is simply false: Speer was actually a member of the Nazi party from 1931 onwards, responsible for propaganda, and his whole career was the result of his contacts in the party and the exploitation of his proximity to Hitler. Moreover, he never ceased to put his technicity at the service of ideology, not only by concentrating it on the weapons program, of course, but also and especially by presenting it as the story of a technical and economic ‘miracle’ which experts on the Third Reich have since shown was a shame, a pure pretense. He staged technocracy and technical efficiency as ‘one more instance of the Triumph of the Will.’³⁰ His management techniques, his ability to adapt to a staging and rhetoric of reform and rationalization (itself associated with technocracy) were simultaneously the expression of National Socialist ideology. The political background of these measures was highly ideological. The (apparently technical) idea of reconciling the Germans with the economy stemmed directly from the rejection of the Weimar Republic and its ‘bourgeois’ values.³¹ National Socialism pretended to have overcome the contradictions of nineteenth-century capitalism, reconciling the German people with its economy, and destroying the corrupt roots of the bourgeoisie. This does not mean that the technocracy of the Third Reich was not effective. Quite the opposite: it was able to manage economic difficulties on a daily basis, innovating and knowing when to change strategy, as was the case in 1942, and it allowed the regime to survive for many years.³² It was precisely this efficiency coupled with technicity, the distancing effect created by bureaucracy, the primacy of instrumental rationality and the normality of the everyday work of these officials or experts that produced indifference.³³ This technocracy was also entirely in the service of the political, including when it was ‘only’ a matter of the daily, routine operation of the administration. This was demonstrated by Hannah Arendt’s definitive analysis of the ‘banality of evil’ and is suggested by Slavoj Žižek in his stigmatization of the ‘blind effects’ of public policies.³⁴ Technocracy was even more deeply linked to the political, of course, when highly significant ideological choices were made. So it was the competence and technicity of the administration that helped to develop the practical techniques of theft and money laundering associated with the Aryanization and looting of occupied countries.³⁵

These affinities are obviously not unique to the Nazi regime. They characterize any political situation, precisely because it is impossible to separate, in the exercise of power, technique from political ideology.³⁶

‘Instruments are nothing but theories materialized,’ Gaston Bachelard reminds us, so that phenomena ‘bear the stamp of theory throughout.’³⁷ The difference, depending on the situation, lies in the presence or absence of counter-powers, in the nature of the relationship between techniques and the general orientation of economic policies, and in the existence or non-existence of alternative ideologies. In the USSR in the late 1920s, all alternative and critical thinking had gradually disappeared. Since the October Revolution, political changes drew also, indeed especially, on statistical and economic knowledge: the definition of categories and the subjection of statistical work to politico-ideological issues (as the discussion of social classes *supra* has noted), the definition of the pricing policy, the establishment of new relations between agriculture and industry, the organization of the peasantry, the definition of the rate of accumulation and so on.³⁸ The economy was perceived through statistical tools and measuring instruments in the service of the Plan, in a technicist vision pushed to the extreme and extending from the bureaucratic, quantified management of the smallest department in a particular business right up to the central planning office of the Gosplan. This is a very commonplace mode of production of indifference by creating a distance that is not spatial or temporal, as analyzed by Carlo Ginzburg,³⁹ but cognitive. Bureaucratization, quantification and classification into categories directly stemming from a new scientific knowledge created the distance from living people now treated as the objects of socialist knowledge: the peasant became a ‘petty bourgeois,’ a ‘kulak’ or, conversely, ‘poor,’ the entrepreneur had become an ‘enemy of the people,’ an individual might be a ‘*déclassé* element,’ another an ‘element to be suppressed’ and a certain group was labeled ‘people of the past.’⁴⁰ The revolution of 1917 did not express a break in real relations as much as it reflected a major shift in the perceptions of reality shared by the key groups of actors in terms of ideology.⁴¹ In 1920s Soviet Union, the educational posture adopted by technicians also betrayed their ideologized vision of the situation. Statisticians and economists thought they could influence the course of events, and their desire to join the government or enter positions in senior administration also corresponded to a disinterested desire to spread their vision, sharing explicitly the idea that knowledge is power and that power should be based on knowledge.

The claims of the Nazi regime to modernity, highlighted above, also took the shape of a glorification of technical progress, the institutionalization of science, and the dissemination of expertise. Many technical professionals and experts—not only architects, engineers, doctors and planners, but also

workers in the aerospace and automotive industry—were seduced by this aspect of the regime that provided them with real business opportunities and social recognition. But this enthusiasm was not politically neutral and resulted ultimately in these technocrats taking part in the functioning and maintenance of the regime.⁴² This is yet another modality of the ‘social production of moral indifference,’ a production that is not bureaucratic or cognitive but technical and expert. Senior officials and technicians in bureaucracies created mechanisms and structures for payment in foreign currencies, tax discrimination and the mobilization of economic forces in the war economy. Economic modernization, industrial rationalization and technological advances were necessary to modern mechanized warfare and racial conquest. Exclusionary projects and the Final Solution would have been impossible without these advances and this technical ‘assistance,’ and without the organization provided by these professionals. In other words, the technical and the ideological go well together. The affinity between them is symbolized by the profusion of words and turns of phrase that, in the ‘*Lingua Tertii Imperium*,’ belonged to the technical register.⁴³ This technicity created a certain distance and concealed the enslavement and dehumanization that were so prevalent.⁴⁴ Similarly, the economic and technical nature of the exercise of power in the Soviet Union were part of the normal practices of the government in the 1930s, fully integrated by public officials and spread to all areas including mass murder. They were the basic elements of the bureaucratic production of indifference, including by means of technicization, technocratization and the implementation of productivist measures in the control, surveillance and repression of ‘deviant elements.’ The role of statistics, accountancy and quantification, and the need to ‘turn out numbers,’ were decisive in the development of the Great Terror.⁴⁵ This *imaginaire* of modern, technical and rational knowledge—and its application in the organization of work—made this distancing effect possible—a distancing that lay behind the most inhumane events. What mattered, indeed, was not to kill as many people as possible but to ‘accelerate the movement,’ to ‘pull your weight,’ to ‘give’ for this or that ‘line’ on such and such a ‘contingent,’ to materialize the desire to ‘meet the plan,’ the duty and the desire to maintain a ‘high tempo’ through ‘towing brigades,’ to help ‘achieve the objectives,’ with ‘quotas’ that were ‘given,’ ‘allocated’ ‘knocked back,’ ‘increased,’ ‘extensions’ that were ‘distributed,’ and ‘supplements granted’ and so on.⁴⁶

This process of creating distance through technicity and bureaucratization is not always so deadly—far from it. It is much more diffuse than

we think, precisely because it emerges from an extremely commonplace configuration characteristic of all modern societies: the conjunction of the 'functional divisions of labor,' the 'substitution of technical for moral responsibility' and the constant emphasis on 'technical efficiency'.⁴⁷ It concerns, for example, the social question or the problem of inequality, the moral and political significance of which eventually disappears into the complexity and technicity of public policies. In the following pages, I will return in more detail to the question of expertise in development. However, I would like to emphasize here how commonplace it is, based on the technicization and quantification of the problem of poverty, and thus suggest how these technical, expert dispositifs, linked to a desire for modernization, can easily legitimize state actions that are also the vectors of an authoritarian exercise of domination. This production of indifference results here from both the dissociation between the final purpose of the action and technical and bureaucratic engineering, between the effectiveness of the action and any moral and political assessment of the objectives of the public action undertaken, the bureaucratic and technicist distancing of the objects of the action and the 'series of relations' required for development, as for any public action.⁴⁸ The depoliticization of what is after all the highly sensitive issue of poverty does indeed involve technicization, for instance in the form of a now necessary and inescapable quantification: poverty should be measured to assess its development and the impact of policies, so as to target the beneficiaries of the measures and make comparisons without taking into account the fact that, historically speaking, the development and reduction of poverty, for example, in Western Europe, occurred in the absence of this imperative, this engineering and this quantitative evaluation. This quantification forms part of the new bureaucratic practices that accompany the redeployment of the state in the neoliberal era.⁴⁹ These techniques and practices constitute a machinery for the production of moral indifference, a process of distancing that creates a suitable, presentable and acceptable phenomenon from something which is none of these things, insofar as it is no longer a matter of highlighting and studying poverty and marginalization in its economic, social and political considerations. But through quantified instruments, kits explained in textbooks, development tools such as micro-credit or 'income generating activities' and the establishment of reproducible models, experts are asked to implement 'programs,' to draw 'lessons' from comparable experiences, to apply 'recipes,' to pursue 'good' economic policies and discover the formulas of 'good' governance. The violence of social relations, political

conflicts and the many different vectors of inequality are obscured by ‘distaning’ and the ‘chain’ of acts, decisions, individuals and measures that end up obscuring the purpose and the outcome of the actions of development being put into place.⁵⁰ All that is left are neutral techniques that euphemize the political and social complexities of poverty and perpetuate the relations of domination which underpin its acceptance.

VARIATIONS ON THE AMBIGUITIES OF LEGITIMACY THROUGH KNOWLEDGE

In the GDR, knowledge and culture too were central to nationalism and more generally in the exercise of power, even if they had consequences that were less dramatic than in Nazi Germany or the Soviet Union. This largely explains how it was that the control of knowledge and cultural and scientific life was constructed as a real political issue. The example of East Germany is interesting because it shows that it was precisely this centrality that made the exercise of censorship subtle and complex, stemming as it did more from the normalization and affirmation of the legitimacy of the system than from any absolute prohibition or control.⁵¹ Knowledge needed to be placed in the service of the people and the nation; its supervision and control stemmed from a ‘vocation,’ from technique, from the professionalization of the exercise of power. The parallel drawn by Dominic Boyer between this normalization of knowledge in the GDR and the current process of ‘peer review,’ the evaluation and dissemination of ‘best practices’ in the Western scientific community, is highly instructive: it focuses on the leveling out of rough edges, on the centrality of statistics and benchmarking, on the homogenization of scientific and cultural production and the role of ‘gate keeper’ filled by censors and ‘referees’ in the name of the culture of performance—in other words on the normalizing dimension of evaluation in the name of science and the professionalization of scientific practices. The rhetoric of bureaucratic centralism and the defense of socialist ideals was thus not merely a discourse and an alibi, it rested on a veritable belief and on adherence to certain values; it was part of the cultural hegemony. But because of this importance, censorship resulted primarily in negotiations, interviews and the reproduction of an epistemic and conceptual order; prohibitions were ultimately only marginally and occasionally imposed. In the case of journalists, for example, the official censors saw themselves as ‘engineers of the soul,’⁵² whose job was to improve the level of journalistic activity and the way it was received by

the ‘masses’: in interaction with journalists, extensive professional work was carried out, focusing on the productivity of the word, the negotiating of arguments and the subtlety of interpretations, with the result that it led to that normalization sought through a refinement of the language of the media.

The affinity between the technological and the political is, of course, not expressed uniformly, and the weight of knowledge in the political and moral economy of a given historical and political situation is always special. The Soviet and East German examples have shown us a specific configuration, where knowledge was central to the exercise of power. This is not the case in Ben Ali’s Tunisia. The manufacture of the ‘reformist tradition’ emphasizing the statist and technocratic dimension of the experiences of reform in the nineteenth century, to the detriment of the social, intellectual and cultural dimensions of this movement,⁵³ suggests the absence of any such centrality of knowledge in the path followed by Tunisia, and explains that censorship there was much more massive, ubiquitous, arbitrary and insensitive to the negotiation and transformation of meaning.⁵⁴ Besides police intimidation or the outright ban on appearing or being published, control of the media took the shape, first, of the economic dispossitions of repression (the reduction of the financial resources of newspapers, including advertising for private enterprises, and economic and social pressures brought to bear on potentially independent journalists) and, second, of conventional and relatively crude, but still effective discursive techniques, such as the repetition of formulas, empty rhetoric, self-referential quotations and so on.⁵⁵ Intellectual life was almost non-existent because public debate was prohibited and there was massive emphasis on consensus. Academics often worked on general, abstract issues, remote from Tunisian realities, or on highly technical questions, or they kept silent thanks to the effective games played with promotions, the allocation of expertise, and the distribution of consultations. The economic, political and cultural integration of Tunisia—and the importance in it of international donors and partners—also explains why the knowledge that was valued was technocratic knowledge more than intellectual knowledge and scientific development.⁵⁶ It was the same in Portugal in the late 1960s. Technocrats played an important role in the consolidation and evolution of the *Estado Novo* as they were given the opportunity to direct industrialization policies and carry out reforms, and contributed in particular to revealing the tensions, conflicts and compromises between actors.⁵⁷ But they were primarily related to Western technocratic networks and poorly

integrated with Portuguese and European scientific and intellectual circles.⁵⁸ Modernizing authoritarianism was inseparable from this technocratization of economic and social policies, and it is impossible to distinguish between ideology and technicality in most of the measures adopted: legislation on family, work, social policy and so on resulted as much from Salazarist ideology in its most archaic dimensions (including the edifying discourse on the moral benefits of low wages and poverty) as from the interests of various relatively powerful economic groups and the modernizing and technicist pretensions of Portuguese administrators, often from a social Catholic background or close to the Socialist civil opposition.⁵⁹ Portugal's example highlights how ambiguous the relationship between power and knowledge is, between technocratic modernity and the exercise of domination. Portuguese technocrats played an important role in several undeniably positive developments in the Portuguese economy and social security system; and even if they participated, so to speak, in spite of themselves in the durability of the corporatist regime and the continued repression of independent social movements, they were major players in the Marcellist 'spring' (1969–1973) and the reforms implemented in the early days of the Carnation Revolution.

The Ottoman Reform Movement (the *Tanzimat*) provides us with one final example of the relationship between modern technocratic knowledge and the exercise of power. In particular, it stresses how the exercise of power may vary with the social class concerned. It is now well known that the *Tanzimat*, a form of 'social engineering' par excellence, were not only a reaction to the onslaught of the West. They were also a response to demands for reform from within: in a proactive and interventionist posture, technocratic, competent and 'enlightened' elites pursued these policies in a centralized and authoritarian manner with the explicit goal of transforming society.⁶⁰ The etymology of the word *Tanzimat* speaks volumes: the term *tanzim* means 'to bring order.'⁶¹ The *Tanzimat* was part of the modernizing and even modernist movement of the time, which was extremely ambiguous: it aimed at building up the state while limiting state power, it defended freedom but discipline was the first of the qualifications demanded, it called for egalitarianism while being highly elitist, it was Europhile but anti-imperialist, it wanted to modernize but its priority was order, it advocated a return to traditional Islam while glorifying novelty and change.⁶² Despite the liberalism it proclaimed, the reformist model was that of the centralized state, the state control of social relations and a *dirigisme* that had more affinity with absolutism than with political

liberalism. Many studies have shown that ‘reformist’ thought had little to do with Western political liberalism⁶³: the state was conceived as centralized but not as democratic; the Constitution and the bureaucratic apparatus were certainly central, but the democratic organization and functioning of the political sphere were not considered; representation was interpreted in a limited way, mostly confined to the elites of knowledge and power, and popular sovereignty was not even considered. Economic, intellectual and cultural elites undoubtedly benefited from reforms that promoted a certain cultural openness and political pluralization. However, in the context of the Ottoman Empire, it was the authoritarian, voluntarist and disciplinary dimension that eventually prevailed for the great mass of the population. Despite the emphasis on openness and the emergence of new social structures, the world of the reformers was, in the nineteenth century, a closed world: the bureaucrats were mostly recruited from a closed and narrow society that benefited from a restricted access to knowledge and power. Reformers valued the reason of state rather than the principles of freedom, justice, representation and the separation of powers. Increased state control over society was most often a coercive or violent process, and political and bureaucratic centralization favored the development of the Sultan’s despotism.⁶⁴ Şerif Mardin has shown how the modernizing reforms of the Ottoman Empire had finally placed authority in the hands of those who, at the head of state, held power and had arrested the circulation of authority and wealth.⁶⁵

This affinity between technocratic modernity, legitimacy and the exercise of domination has long since been demonstrated. Max Weber spoke of the everyday handling of administrative techniques as a ‘true exercise of domination,’ a ‘casing of servitude’⁶⁶: his argument focused on highlighting the correspondence between, on the one hand, the process of legitimation of a legal, rational, modern and technical state exercise, based on specialization of labor, training, rational techniques and the division of powers, and, on the other, the coercive, domineering and disciplinary dimension of this bureaucracy, that also operated by ‘hierarchical dependence,’ ‘discipline of service,’ regulations and relations of obedience. Putting very different economic and political situations and historical contexts side by side helps to bring out more clearly the singular nature of each of these configurations, the extremely broad range of potential links between the expression of knowledge and the exercise of power, of techniques of government and ‘powers of disposition’ in the service of the sovereign, and the mediations through which pass the processes of legitimation. But it can also expose

the degree of contingency and the unexpected links in the political shape given to more or less abstract technical knowledge.

TECHNOCRACY OR THE VICTORY OF POLITICAL RENEWAL

The call for political ‘renewal,’ ‘change’ or ‘renovation’ is part of these techniques of government which, beyond all rhetoric, aim to exploit the desire for modernity, the expectation of changes and the *imaginaire* of a neutral and apolitical technology. Criticism of the ‘old politics’ is a classic move in authoritarian regimes which, behind the emphasis they place on technique, objective knowledge and science, in reality hide another vision of the political. In this context, the ability to act and influence the course of events is fundamental: the demand for legitimacy convinces and makes sense only if it is accompanied by actions that are ‘effective,’ in other words by the effective or apparently effective exercise of power.⁶⁷ Hence the importance of voluntarism, although it is systematically overestimated by governments seeking legitimacy; this need for action also partly explains the Manichean vision of the state and the voluntarist illusion into which rulers systematically fall. In Italy, Fascist corporatism, for example, corresponded to this rejection of liberal politics.⁶⁸ The development of technical parastatal institutions, of ad hoc agencies outside the traditional administrative framework, of management practices based on the model of private enterprise (the spread of stock companies, labor contracts of a private kind, salaries modeled on the private sector etc.) accompanied the fight against the bureaucracy and red tape of the ‘old regime’ and the development of a Fascist economy.⁶⁹ Yet, despite the technocratic rhetoric, never had public entities and parastatals been so politicized: appointments of directors and executives were at the discretion of the political sphere and necessarily impelled people to show ‘loyalty’ and adopt ‘compliant’ political behavior. These parallel administrations were the main venue of the system of spoils and, more often than not, technicians participated systematically in this political patronage. Like fascism, National Socialism partly based its legitimacy, as we have seen, on technological modernity and the technical rationalization of political, social and economic apparatuses. In this conception, technological reality was meant to transform the social world into a set of instrumentalities: it was meant to bring about another policy that would materialize the domination of nature in the domination of human beings.⁷⁰ The legitimation process of the political renovation resulted from a display of listening and respect, dynamics of power and

rules of the game which emphasized ‘the people’ and the ‘masses’ in a new way. To symbolize this break, the rituals were reversed: going out to the people, and more generally the workers, was a posture that power adopted to give concrete shape to the abolition of hierarchies and the recognition of the honor of non-intellectual work and the greatness of ordinary people.⁷¹ This reversal also resulted in a transformation of the language of power, which became more technical. The economic ‘miracle,’ like the Zionist or international ‘danger,’ were based on quantitative data, precisely to show this break with the old order.⁷² The essential function of this quantification—here as elsewhere—stemmed from awareness-raising and decontextualization. It was, on the one hand, necessary to become aware of economic transformations, positive developments or, conversely, the existence of a danger that would have remained unknown to the population if it had not been made visible by the numbers.⁷³ In other words, a new unified and coherent order needed to be created in a new homogeneous political society. On the other hand, it was necessary to make people forget the ‘broader context,’ that is, what gave meaning—in its ambiguity and plurality—to the ‘established’ facts⁷⁴: the statistics, the numerical data, the measures of quantification used to isolate from the concreteness and ambiguity of reality so as to give a unique meaning to what was thus shown, and suggest the novelty, the complete change in the situation.

This function of quantification is universal. Quantification, as a ‘tool of proof’ and ‘the most common form of technocracy,’ is not just the description of a reality, it does not only show clearly what people want to show, it also helps to build the “new” reality.⁷⁵ Martine Mespoulet has shown that statistics and quantification had ‘built socialism’ in the sense that a new form of production of quantified data was supposed to build the new Soviet state.⁷⁶ In November 1917, Lenin said that ‘socialism is accountancy’ and ‘accountancy and control, are what matters.’⁷⁷ The construction of new classifications and new categories transformed reality by leading actors and groups not only to be ‘shaped’ in accordance with them but also to appropriate them: the double operation of reification of new categories and their technocratic use directed the economic and social policies that were becoming increasingly real. This process is not unique to authoritarian situations. Emmanuel Didier has showed that in the United States, in a political context that, being democratic, is quite different, statistics had somehow built the New Deal, as Martine Mespoulet would have put it. While they were primarily intended to stabilize the markets, mobilize the population and fight against the negative

effects of certain economic policies before the Great Depression, and were based on the method of ‘volunteer correspondents,’ the statistics became tools for direct state intervention during the 1930s, mainly in the field of public works and social assistance, and they were produced by random sampling.⁷⁸ The New Deal was not ‘invented’ by these new statistical methods; it was developed, gropingly, by politicians facing unprecedented turmoil in the US economy. But the development of interventionist policies and statistical surveys went hand in hand, and it is this combination that allowed the crisis to be overcome and a new society to be created. In other words, in the Soviet Union as in the United States, the use of quantitative language was a fundamental tool in the process of affirmation and legitimation of the authority of the new regime. Quantitative language thus appeared as an extremely powerful ‘technology at a distance’⁷⁹: quantitative data proved that the new decisions were the right ones, and thus showed how efficient the new regime was—they even replaced other forms of argument. Quantification is just one way of enunciating the political, a tool that simultaneously makes it possible to show the (new) way of thinking about society, the (new) modalities of action deployed by power and the (new) modes of describing society.⁸⁰ This enunciation is part of the process by which governments seek to strengthen their legitimacy. Deciphering these new practices of quantification (new lexical units, new taxonomies, new classes, new codes and new distinctions) makes it possible to characterize the new political system, its challenges and the ways it exercises power and domination.⁸¹

The distinction between ‘old’ and ‘new,’ however, is not as clear as these discourses would wish. The case of contemporary Morocco will help us move forward in understanding the relationship between processes of legitimation and the affirmation of the break with the old order, suggesting the ambiguity of the relationship between different periods, and between public policies presented as opposite—and thereby highlighting the significance of different historical paths. After a ‘consensual alternation’⁸² that was considered politically disappointing, the new political discourse—that emerged at the end of the reign of Hassan II but flourished with Mohamed VI—favored technocrats: these skilled, apolitical men were deemed to be the only ones able to meet the economic and social challenges facing the country. Above partisan interests and parochial quarrels, they were viewed as able to develop a managerial and economic vision adapted to the challenges of international competitiveness. The movement that aims to discredit the administration and the

government, both judged to be partisan, politicized and incompetent was accompanied, as in many countries, by an overvaluation of technocratic structures that were supposedly objective and competent. However, this overall process, largely fuelled by neoliberal rhetoric, took on special significance in Morocco, because technocratic structures are always backed by the Palace.⁸³ Today, there are technocrats in governorships (formerly left to the army and police), ministries (formerly left to politicians and allies), and at the head of public companies and regulatory agencies. What we can see at work here is the reactivation of a know-how that has existed since the nineteenth century and was reinforced by colonization⁸⁴: the doubling-up of institutions by personalized links and the development of a system of cooptation that targets minority groups and people without tribal roots and unable to mobilize support outside the seraglio. Contemporary technocrats resemble yesterday's *kbadim*, those clerks whose ultimate ambition is to serve, whose power is built and maintained in the shadow of the caliph. Playing on the register of depoliticization, the technocrats thus seem to reformulate the duality that the *Makhzen* cultivated since independence, and express the desire to be distinguished from the administration and government. They thus fuel the discrediting of the political sphere as embodied by parties, Parliament and elections, and they ultimately turn out to be perfectly political themselves. In a configuration that is typical in Morocco, they clearly contribute to the strengthening of the Palace not only in politics but also (and this is a newer development) in economic and financial life.⁸⁵

The main policies are indeed less set out by the Ministry of Economy or of Finance, or the technical ministries, than by men of the Palace scattered around in the strategic places of power. The Hassan II Fund, the Caisse des Dépôts et de Garantie (CDG), the Casablanca Urban Agency and the Agency of the North are decisive instances of the major works that characterize the economic strategy of Mohamed VI.⁸⁶ All the leaders of these institutions are men of the *Makhzen*, or technocrats. These latter can be from political parties. The CDG, for example, recruited a number of executives from leftist movements on their release from prison; but, having been chosen for their expertise and especially for their integrity, they were integrated into a machinery that serves the Palace and cannot fail to strengthen it. Similarly, the bulk of social policy is not laid down by the Ministry of Social Affairs, the Ministry of Education or the Ministry of Health. It is the Social Development Agency and, more importantly, the NIHD that coordinate the fight against poverty. They are both royal

initiatives, and as such benefit from financial and political support that are often denied to ministries responsible for these areas. Thinking about the future of the country is something that happens outside government⁸⁷: the report on human development, which involved more than 120 people under a councilor of Mohamed VI, Abdelaziz Meziane Belfkih, was designed and implemented in the Palace; the people who participated in the preparation of various reports were carrying out the ‘job of a citizen at the request of the king,’ not a ‘political job’: they were proposing scenarios and choices for the sovereign.⁸⁸ This widening of the spheres of political participation was largely controlled by the *Makhzen* in a reinterpretation of *shura* (consultation) that is not the recognition of a power, but of a competence meant to illuminate, at least partially, the holder of power without compromising his supremacy⁸⁹: despite the personal positions of each party, the political sphere continues largely, as in the past, to be ‘defused.’⁹⁰ This leaves skills in the service of the central power and a refinement of the mechanisms of co-optation, dispositifs for political and economic control, and technologies of domination and inclusion. As a result, the legitimacy of the central power is stronger than ever, the technocratic skills involved in the (at least apparent) modernization of its exercise and, conversely, the technocrats finding their government legitimacy and capacity for action strengthened because they are backed by the Palace.

We again encounter, as it were, the same thing as has been revealed by studies on expertise: a questioning of the distinction between expertise and politics, and the interplay between them as the two areas cannot be clearly separated.⁹¹ This is not just a matter of the many different positions that can be adopted, as technocrats are also politicians, like Backe or Speer under Nazism. Expertise appears as a constructed vision of the political, knowledge of government, a form of political engineering, an instrument in the hands of a power, a state control of the economic and social spheres, and a return to the norms of policing in economic and social life. It is the expression of another policy that involves the critique of the political, the introduction of doubt and uncertainty, the transformation of the asymmetry between experts and non-experts, the naturalization and reduction of the realm of what can be discussed, the proliferation of choice, political realignments around competing types of knowledge and the mobilization of sensitive notions such as the emblematic concept of risk. But it is in no way similar to any kind of depoliticization, contrary to the claims of the proponents of political renewal by technocracy.

EXPERTISE IN DEVELOPMENT AS AN ‘ANTI-POLITICS MACHINE’⁹²

In this area, the question of ‘development’ is interesting because it complicates the issue even more by introducing an international dimension and, more specifically, the interplay of internal legitimacy and international legitimacy through the issue of economic expertise. Through their targeted objectives, their agenda filled with projects and concrete tasks, and their necessarily instrumentalist vision, experts transform the economy into a thing, a stable, manipulated, calculable and controllable object on which they can act. They perform, often without their knowledge, a task of naturalization, disciplining and domination, and thus reduce the economy to a technical dimension, an autonomous reality, an object of knowledge and intervention.⁹³ As a result, expertise plays its part in the task of organizing society, reformulating the processes of inclusion and exclusion: it defines the economy, and transforms political issues into technical problems, notably through a process that focuses its interest on the ‘economy’ treated as a thing, not on the actors. This is especially true in the area of ‘development.’ Programs of structural adjustment, conditionalities and the imposition of the neoliberal order are achieved by a technocratic process that depoliticizes the eminently political issues of development and the fight against poverty. These issues—which in reality raise the questions of the production and government of social inequality, the distribution of income and wealth, and redistribution policies—are presented in terms of the ‘adequate’ techniques of public policy, the ‘appropriate’ rhythm for reforms and ‘good’ governance. In what is of course a quite different historical and political configuration, the ‘civilizing mission’ of donors is not unlike that of the colonizers who, in the guise of ‘modernization,’ ‘development’ and ‘technology transfer,’ did not hesitate to displace whole populations, to establish the coercive power of self-proclaimed or appointed leaders, assign statuses and identities to populations, and to force them to work.⁹⁴

The process of depoliticization by international actors operates first by moralizing the issue of development: the issue of inequality and the distribution of wealth, for example, is perceived solely through the categorical imperative of the ‘fight against poverty,’ whose strategic and intellectual relevance is, for moral reasons, not even discussed.⁹⁵ Who can be *for* poverty, and who can oppose the fight against poverty? Depoliticization of this question also involves, as we saw above, the technicization of social

policies; this technicization is now inevitable, it creates distance and helps remove the politically unacceptable character of poverty. Depoliticization also plays a part in the process of the ‘naturalization’ of the expertise of development: what becomes ‘natural’ is neutralized, the complexity of social and political realities is suppressed, the simplicity of nature and essence constructs a world without contradictions, without tacit implications, without misunderstandings, without oppositions, conflicts or ambiguities.⁹⁶ ‘Development’ isolates the target as if it were independent of other forces, power relations and other economic, social and political issues; it presupposes the problem as technical and therefore expects a technical result. The policies it advocates need to be reproducible because expertise in development is based on the belief that the problems are similar, that laws and rules can be established, that success stories can be defined and good practices and appropriate technical solutions identified—whether these latter are promoted by major international organizations or by big NGOs.⁹⁷

‘Development’ is a mechanism of legitimization and, simultaneously, of domination, and is all the more effective insofar as it is an ‘antipolitics machine.’⁹⁸ Discourse—and the development practices that are attached to it—is of course extremely political. It is a ‘depoliticized political discourse,’⁹⁹ another version of the anti-politics¹⁰⁰: it shares with the latter a radically negative view of the political held by politicians themselves, in a posture which is simply a variant of populism; it promotes common sense, simple explanations and individualism; it criticizes the pressure of the special interests of the ‘great,’ the ‘powerful’ and the ‘rentiers.’ In this sense, ‘development’ modifies the representations of the state and the political space and thereby the process of legitimation. The state is now legitimized by its ‘results’ in the fight against poverty or in liberalization, in technical measures adopted and reforms carried out, in its capacity to expand the market space, to delegate and to create the conditions for private wealth, whatever the reality of the situation and the context.¹⁰¹ By euphemizing social violence, development delegitimizes conflict and it is no coincidence that international organizations promote, in this context, techniques of so-called consensus building that disqualify opposition and antagonism and evade power struggles. I mentioned above the full violence of consensus, whether this consensus focuses on economic orientations and policies, on the objectives to be reached or the conception of a world without tensions and political conflicts.¹⁰² The depoliticization of major political affairs is an operation that situates the political in places that are ‘dismissed cases’—as

it were, 'non-places,' spaces without polemics, without conflict.¹⁰³ The consensus of development reveals, as elsewhere, a certain exercise of domination. It hides and reveals the great desire of those who govern: they wish to govern without the people, to govern without politics; and this, indeed, is expressed very clearly in the idea of governance.¹⁰⁴

In this technical and depoliticizing, even anti-political, dimension, development expertise is an extraordinary place for the political, one which legitimizes another order, not only by effects of power but also by material benefits. In the name of a scientific knowledge infused with pragmatism, the principles of simplification, quantification, evaluation, correlation and comparison as promoted by donors introduce a significant ideological bias and thus transform power relations in favor of extraverted elites.¹⁰⁵ Expertise in development is invested by certain actors and at one and the same time makes it possible to co-opt a certain political personnel and create a certain style of government. It reinforces the hegemonic designs of dominant groups: politicians as well as officials. These groups can find in the bureaucratic apparatuses a legitimacy that strengthens their position and power, either directly within their administration, in their country of origin (and this is particularly the case of financiers, statisticians and experts in public finance),¹⁰⁶ or indirectly, passing through international organizations before finding a dominant position in their country,¹⁰⁷ or, finally, through the market, through the creation of subsidiaries of large consulting firms or private bureaus.¹⁰⁸ Administrative modernization in particular justifies the rise of the body of officials in the Finance Ministry who colonize departments and extend the state's control procedures within the departments of administrative and financial affairs, departments of studies and planning, and departments responsible for public procurement. While holding the juiciest positions for gaining access to the rents from tenders, these officials are responsible for promoting the public policies of the day, including the simultaneity of strategies of rationalization and budget modernization, tracking of sectorial policies and promotion of the welfare state, or at least its social safety nets. So they must master to the best of their abilities the techniques of resource management and allocation of credits to persuade and obtain maximum public funds for their ministry; at the same time, they have to listen out for orders coming from the top of the state hierarchy, particularly in terms of budgetary cuts.¹⁰⁹ They then develop discretionary room for maneuver for their ministries by diversifying contacts, for example, with donors or other extra-budgetary circuits, sometimes even within the Ministry of Finance.

EXPERTISE IN DEVELOPMENT: A NEGOTIATED
REDEPLOYMENT OF CONTROL AND DOMINATION

The new positions of power and the new processes of legitimation related to this technicity and the professionalism that comes with it are inseparable from transformations in the exercise of power. In the case analyzed here, for example, administrative modernization, what we see is a reconfiguration of the ‘straddling’ characteristic of the state in Africa, where positions of accumulation and positions of power are mutually reinforcing, and shape the contours of domination.¹¹⁰ Although based on ill-defined instruments, modernization of budgeting techniques and planning is an essential vector of this reconfiguration: it results in restructuring within the state apparatus that transform power relations, the terms of ‘straddling’ and access to resources and, thereby, the exercise of power. This is by no means unique to the current neoliberal period and the techniques of assessment, accounting and audit; in the years 1960–1970, the same processes were deployed around the expertise in planning.¹¹¹ Real change came mainly from the dispositifs being mobilized. ‘New’ places appear, such as markets of expertise and the statistics and finance departments of ministries. These are all ‘new’ arenas of power, defined in part by internal actors and in part by international organizations and the great powers through different fashions in development assistance. Today, for example, micro-credit, the fight against poverty and the protection of the environment are fashionable. But these new places are not necessarily invested by new actors. Instead, using their wealth (material and human, monetary and social), it is often best-established ones that grasp most quickly and effectively the potentials offered by these new configurations and opportunities for redeployment. In the name of modernity and future renewal, these old elites do not hesitate to reject the previous arrangements. This is a commonplace configuration of the anti-politics which means that the critique of past policies, the construction of the economic ‘crisis’ and the hope of building a ‘new’ order often—indeed, more often than not—turn out, when achieved, to favor those who enunciate this discourse, and not necessarily to favor a new political and administrative personnel.¹¹²

These new places are determined by the concrete, practical modes of expertise: assessment and audit, for example, are control techniques par excellence, characteristic of surveillance bodies. But precisely because they operate by internalization, self-discipline and normalization, they are not imposed from above and are invested by actors integrated into power

relations and political struggles that feed back into them. As Michael Power has shown, the imprecision of auditing, both in its aims and in its methods of action and even its definition, only works through interaction and negotiation between the 'auditor' and 'auditee'.¹¹³ It is a mechanism which at the same time props up the legitimacy of the state in its effort to modernize and provide accountability, and undermines it since it is supposed to question previous modes of government, and continually puts forward refinements and reforms. Insofar as the audit is not an inspection meant to provide contradictory information and fuel public debate, but a technique of risk treatment and production of certainty, its main rationality lies in easing internal tensions and finding places of compromise while discharging responsibilities. An audit does not impose norms defined in advance, but, in concrete experience, in negotiations and power relations, it produces a normative process.¹¹⁴ As such, it is an exemplary metaphor for the political economy of domination discussed in these pages: the legitimacy, at least in part, of coercive and disciplinary practices; the involvement, albeit passive and involuntary, of a majority of the actors in these processes; the necessary arrangements and improvisations deployed in the daily performance of these practices. This does not mean that what is created is a world without rough edges and antagonism: quite the contrary. It obviously does not preclude expertise, technicization and their 'depoliticized' choices creating new internal divisions between actors: they redefine the tensions, conflicts and places of internal opposition, for example, between consumers and producers, between consumers and politicians, between public entities guaranteeing different interests, between economic and social networks and between social classes. The points of contrast are as diverse as the definition of the beneficiaries of a reform, the management of extraversion, national sovereignty, the common good and public service, access to resources and power, access to information and the redefinition of the contours of knowledge. For example, the establishment—following the fashion of the moment—of a public/private partnership in the management of water and electricity in Mali, in the early 2000s, revealed many divisions, between foreign private partners and national public authorities, of course, but especially between national actors supporting sometimes incompatible views.¹¹⁵ There was a visible contrast between the promotion of common goods and budgetary and financial discipline; between the logic of liberalization, the logic of adaptation to the (low) purchasing power, financial and managerial logic and developmentalist logic; between financial, symbolic, technicist,

nationalistic and power interests; and between different conceptions of regulation, partnership and economic rationality. The management of these differences is in its nature sensitive, but it is necessarily political, no matter what the proponents of expertise, deregulation and the technocracy of development may say. In the case of public/private partnerships devoted to common goods, the political must be at the crossroads of the need for efficiency in reforms, necessary investments in infrastructure, user expectations, budgetary constraints, external pressures, ideological influences and the interests of networks of power and accumulation. Very concretely, the tariff structure, the quantity of goods supplied and their quality (in terms of spatial and temporal availability, continuity, safety and environment) are thus fundamental elements that require political rearrangements in favor of certain actors and to the detriment of others. These rearrangements are sometimes the product of choices and trade-offs, they sometimes result from power relations and compromises that are less consciously constructed. But they always express domination.

We could give many further examples: dam construction and public works, relocation of villages and resettlement, the transformation of informal and artisanal activities into ‘self-enterprises’ through microfinance are so many development techniques that are simultaneously disciplinary techniques affecting power relations and authorizing the exercise of domination in the name of technical progress, financial efficiency, economic rationality and transparency.¹¹⁶ The reforms of liberalization and financial and economic rationalization that are currently underway in Africa, for example, must be understood in this context: the changes in economic policy and managerial instruments that are promoted by donors in a technocratic way do not so much call into question the economic mechanisms, methods of production or quality of state intervention than they do the conditions in which the quest for resources—not only economic and financial but also political and social—takes place.¹¹⁷ Privatizations prove to be less a change in management procedures (the shift from ‘economic nationalism’ to the ‘exploitation of market opportunities’) than a change in the terms of the economy of rent, even the ‘economy of looting’ (the shift from the siphoning off, by elites, of public resources to a sharing of the national cake by purchase or participation, by these same elites, in privatized enterprises).¹¹⁸ Commercial liberalization is less a change in the strategy of development (the shift from ‘import-substitution’ to ‘export-led development’) than a modification of the terms of access to the resources of extraversion (the shift from rents of protection by licenses,

quotas, currency restrictions and state monopolies to rents of liberalization by control by private monopolies or oligopolies, access to 'informal' networks, access to credit, and the channeling of economic opportunities).¹¹⁹ In other words, these technocratic reforms that seek to change the terms of operation and foster economic, financial and managerial rationalities, in fact alter the conditions of access to resources and are thus transformed into mechanisms of social and political change. In the context of the rhizome-state, the fragmentation of power and the inequality of African societies, liberalization is often a mechanism of exclusion and concentration of powers.

In fact, the tensions and developments experienced by the legitimation processes under the impact of international interactions alter the modes of government. These changes sometimes take unexpected forms: thus, liberalization and conditionalities have accelerated the invisibility of power in sub-Saharan Africa and the duplication of its structures.¹²⁰ In fact, in many African countries (e.g. Sierra Leone in the 1980s and 1990s, Rwanda between 1990 and 1994, Cameroon, Chad, Central African Republic, Congo and Kenya), hidden and collegial power structures surround and control the president and his government.¹²¹ They take advantage of the privatization of the legitimate use of coercion and the liberalization and deregulation of the economy demanded by donors, through nominees and networks. These hidden power structures have contributed to 'soften' or make 'invisible' the exercise of domination or even outright repression by the mere fact that relatively background characters, or without any formal function, can exert considerable political influence and hold economic positions incommensurate with their institutional visibility. They have played a decisive role in the process of 'authoritarian restoration,' resorting to privatized coercion and investment in the economy, including the criminal economy. External pressures and the desire on the part of the ruling elite to take maximum advantage of the management of extraversion have accelerated this duplication of African social systems between a 'legal country,' the partner of multilateral institutions and western states, and the 'real country.'¹²² Not only are donors at a loss when faced with such duplicated structures of power and accumulation but they also increasingly fuel, often despite themselves, the difference between 'legal country' and 'real country.' And in doing so, they contribute to authoritarian excesses and the often violent exercise of power. For the constraints with which they must operate are numerous: as bankers, they must maximize projects and disburse ever more so as to be reimbursed; as agencies of

development, they must carry out sustained and visible actions and prove the indispensability of their interventions; as missionary institutions, it is difficult for them to admit the problematic conditions of their interventions, the continued poverty and underdevelopment and, in general, the inconsistency of the results obtained; as an international bureaucracy, they are populated by officials who must manage and succeed in their career, but they are simultaneously directed by representatives of donor states who are themselves subject to political constraints and to an aversion for instability.¹²³ These different constraints inevitably lead donors to expedients, to positivist interpretations and compromise at any price—in other, more concrete terms, to accepting illusory reforms, to accommodating to these hidden structures of power and strengthening them.

Expertise in development produces, finally, hegemony on a global scale because it works on a community of interpretation.¹²⁴ It is obviously a reflection of the international domination of large nations, through multilateral organizations and major NGOs: it illustrates the state of power relations through more or less explicit conditionalities, through, in particular, the definition of a consensus on development and reforms to be implemented, and finally through the hegemony, in ideas and culture, of categorical imperatives and legitimate figures of the political.¹²⁵ Experts play a role in the linking of global and local spheres, participating in standardization, the formatting of the social and thus the imposition of a certain form of legitimacy or certain of its modes. They help to make sense, to bring out legitimate problematics of the political. The same applies to the intermediaries of quantification, which broadcast a hegemony—the hegemony of statistics, new management tools, benchmarking, and ‘strategic frameworks’—which becomes a ‘pidgin,’ a common language of negotiation. For the linking of the global and the local does not fall within the logic of taxation¹²⁶: numbers are negotiated, as are the conditionalities and reforms to be implemented, and they reflect the state of the balance of forces at any given time. But in all these situations, this community of interpretation favors the authoritarian exercise of domination.

The mechanisms and processes described in this first part convey, as the reader will have noted, very specific types of legitimation operating by criteria that involve mechanisms of inclusion as much as they do the efficiency of power in terms of success, economic well-being or a ‘decent life,’ stability and improved living conditions, the protection or restoration

of the state and its sovereignty, or the principles of greatness and influence. Above all, they configure themselves differently with representations of power, the historical trajectory of modes of government, and the material and symbolic cultures of the state. We are far from the classical figures of legitimacy, those of representativeness, the expression of the majority, the defense of the general interest or the incarnation of the ideal of rational and competent government. In some areas, the latest thinking on the legitimacy of impartiality, reflexivity or proximity, or on legitimacy by procedures, by the realization of more or less implicit ‘contracts’ or by the management of insecurity and fear, are not unrelated to what I have tried to suggest here.¹²⁷ But this thinking, based on very specific experiences (Western Europe and the United States) is inevitably influenced by this political and (above all) intellectual history and do not exhaust—far from it—the richness of relationships between the exercise of domination and the process of legitimation. I obviously do not mean that a technique of legitimation, a technology of power, is specific to the regime that deploys it. Social protection, for example, certainly reflects a recognition of the ‘rights of citizens’ in certain types of democratic regimes, but in other situations, those studied in this essay in particular, it reflects the ‘ethical-moral principles’ of a certain doctrine¹²⁸ or the ‘objective values’ of a certain ideology, that have nothing democratic about them.¹²⁹ The demand for intervention in the economy, likewise, is a response to demands for protection, demands that are commonplace and widespread; but the meaning of ‘the state’s solicitude’ differs from one context to another, from one socio-political configuration to another, from one historical period to another—and may also be the vector of normalizing and disciplinary practices¹³⁰ as much as it is the expression of an emancipation or empowerment of the family, religion or other singular communities,¹³¹ or even of attention to particularities and social differentiations.¹³² This suggests the importance, not of techniques, but of their singular political significance: of their differentiated arrangement with other practices of the exercise of power, and of their ideational bases circumscribed in time and space.

This question of practices is fundamental, as it is true that we cannot here confine ourselves to the analysis of the justifications and rationalizations expressed by the actors themselves. Criticism of a decision, an option or a regime does not mean that it is illegitimate, as we have seen, and indeed frequently contributes to its regeneration. Describing something as ‘illegitimate’ should be done only with a great deal of caution, taking into account the gap between words and deeds, and even more the subtexts,

the unspoken, what people say without knowing it (and which is often the expression of demands or simply of personal interests). From this point of view, Paul Veyne's remark that people do not ask every day if their government is legitimate and are interested only rarely and intermittently in the political (what he calls their 'natural apoliticism')¹³³ does not in my view mean we should marginalize the issue of legitimacy, but rather give it greater complexity and range. That is why it is important to take daily practices and, above all, ambiguous behavior into account. This is what I have done, re-thinking legitimacy from a Weberian point of view that takes into account the 'constellations of interests' that comprise domination, on the basis of economic practices. All these discussions and disparate, heterogeneous and contradictory examples were intended to show that the problem of legitimacy is not confined to questions of 'limited' and fragmented legitimacy but also raises questions in terms of fluidity, instability, movement, evolution and historicity, not only of fragmentation, of encounter, but also of the coexistence of heterogeneous and conflicting interests, of interpretation and appropriation, accompanied by various feedback effects.¹³⁴ In other words, the processes of legitimation are baroque, historically and locally situated, and any analysis must take into account a multiplicity of parameters and criteria. Among these, we must certainly take into account the coexistence of membership and rejection, avoidance and solicitation, distancing and the deepest yearnings of individuals vis-à-vis forms of political authority. Legitimacy is not only a matter of state strategies that have their own logic and develop independently but it also follows, and often most importantly, from the daily practices of all the actors, their personal and collective strategies.¹³⁵ The diversity of the arrangements and combinations in time between figures of legitimation and figures of dissent, challenge, or quite simply questioning makes the processes of legitimation very relative. This relativity is also the result of sequences of interdependencies and relationships with others.¹³⁶ Insofar as the behavior of individuals is always determined by the sequence of old relationships and by current relationships with others, and actions are always relationships with others, legitimizing practices and the springs of legitimacy evolve, diversify, scatter and break up according to the vagaries of social life. Individuals emerge from networks of human relations that existed before them and they are part of networks of relationships that they help to shape. In this sense, legitimacy may be partial, segmented, fragmented, but it remains a common substrate, which stems precisely from the popularity of the figure of the state, a state that may provide

little or no welfare but that is certainly a protecting state. This is not only well known in the West but is also true outside of it, as suggested by the research carried out by Sudipta Kaviraj on India or by Jean-François Bayart on sub-Saharan Africa and, from an economic point of view, the studies of Boris Samuel.¹³⁷ Legitimacy is historically constituted, but this does not mean that it is historically homogeneous since there is not necessarily any equivalence between the regime of historicity of a political order and the regime of historicity of a state; different time scales may overlap and history is ‘flaky,’ as Michel de Certeau vividly put it.¹³⁸ Times, places and social levels are discontinuous and relationships between different strata are enigmatic; doctrinal representations and popular beliefs do not coincide, but the former are neither more nor less true than the latter. Beliefs are localized and not universal. Nevertheless, we find invariants. Everywhere, the stabilizing, protective and defensive role of public authorities in the face of market imbalances has acted as basis for the legitimacy of the state.¹³⁹ This stabilizing function remains, and it is often activated by regimes in power—even though it takes different forms—mostly through intermediaries.¹⁴⁰ This relativity also results from the variability, in space and time, of representations of the political, of assessments of what is normal, just, fair, feasible, hoped for and what is not. It also depends on representations of what a desirable social order would be, assessments of the conditions of success thereof, of the *imaginaires* and figures of success, prestige and power.¹⁴¹

The springs of legitimacy, as we have seen, are partial but multiple, fragile, depending on circumstances, dominant interpretations, configurations and the resolution (or not) of tensions between opposing or divergent representations. Between movement and innovation on the one hand and, on the other, immobility and repetition, legitimacy is a ‘living and creative reality.’¹⁴² Conflicts and tensions are not necessarily synonymous with a questioning of the legitimacy of a system, but often, on the contrary, the expression of its vitality. In sub-Saharan Africa, we have seen that the struggles between groups were a paradoxical mode of acceptance of the state: the factional games, which for instance define access to wealth, the use of wealth, fuel the driving force of the state and characterize it, mainly because of the extreme particularization of power relations, a fundamental phenomenon in the symbiosis between central power and often highly fragmented territories that comprises the state in the quasi-majority of countries in the subcontinent. In this sense, conflict (not only physical but also symbolic and political, fought over values or policy choices)

is part of the legitimation of the state and political regimes. If we accept, with Benedict Anderson, the idea that the nation-state is an amalgam of ‘legitimate fictions’ and ‘concrete illegitimacies,’¹⁴³ any understanding of the ambiguity of legitimacy and its relation to the exercise of domination finally needs to take into account the ways in which ideology is integrated, not in its content, but as fiction, ritual and contribution to the interpretation of reality.¹⁴⁴ The same applies to the shifting borders separating the religious and political spheres, or the production of symbolic goods that generate acceptance of state authority.¹⁴⁵ The issue of legitimacy thus appears ever more complex and multifaceted. It cannot be seen as merely a vain and futile ‘academic fiction.’¹⁴⁶ This first part has shown, rather, that entering into an analysis of its mainsprings and its criteria—multiple and shifting, ambiguous, historically and locally situated—has brought to light practices that permitted a better understanding of the dynamics of the exercise of domination, games between actors, transformations of power relations and modes of government, and political representations, *imaginaires* and subjectivities. The attempt to analyze more closely the springs of legitimation processes and the criteria of legitimacy thus helps us to problematize the exercise of domination in a different way.

NOTES

1. E. Traverso, *Fire and Blood*; see also Mason, *Nazism, Fascism, and the Working Class*.
2. E. Gentile, ‘*La nostra sfida alle stelle.*’ *Futuristi in Politica* (Rome: Editori Laterza, 2009) [1].
3. Gentile, *The Origins and Doctrine of Fascism*.
4. Crew, ‘General introduction.’
5. Z. Bauman emphasized this modernizing dimension to the Third Reich in *Modernity and the Holocaust* (Cambridge: Polity, 1991) [2]. See also Peukert, *Inside Nazi Germany*, where the author shows that modernity was not only fundamental to the Nazi regime but also that this modernity was ambiguous, especially with regard to the political sphere.
6. A. Lüdtke quoted by Tooze, *The Wages of Destruction*.
7. P. Reich, *La Fascination du nazisme* (Paris: Odile Jacob, 1993) [3]; Crew, ‘General introduction.’
8. Vichnevski, *The Sickie and the Rouble*; Zinoviev, *The Radiant Future*.

9. Rigby, 'Introduction.'
10. On this influence of the international community of statistics in the USSR and the spread of ideas on this question, see Blum and Mespoulet, *L'Anarchie bureaucratique*, and Mespoulet, *Construire le socialisme par les chiffres*.
11. Mespoulet, *ibid.*
12. *Ibid.*, and Azarova, *L'Appartement communautaire*.
13. Fitzpatrick, *Everyday Stalinism*; this analysis is taken up in Žižek, *Did somebody say totalitarianism?*
14. Fitzpatrick, *Everyday Stalinism*; Azarova, *L'Appartement communautaire*; Vichnevski, *The Sickle and the Rouble*.
15. Vichnevski, *ibid.*; A. Brossat, *Le Stalinisme entre histoire et mémoire* (La Tour-d'Aigues: Éditions de l'Aube, 1991) [4].
16. Traverso, *Le Totalitarisme*; Figes, *The Whisperers*.
17. Traverso, *Le Totalitarisme*.
18. *Ibid.*, p. 96.
19. Traverso, *Fire and Blood*.
20. Kernen, *La Chine vers l'économie de marché*; Rocca, *La Condition chinoise*.
21. Chevrier, 'L'Empire distendu.'
22. Bayart, *The State in Africa*.
23. Hibou, 'Les marges de manœuvre d'un "bon élève" économique.'
24. The great specialist on this question is Zafer Toprak. Unfortunately, his work on this area is in Turkish. But, see E.J. Zürcher, *Turkey. A Modern History* (London: Tauris, 1993) [5] and Aktar, 'Economic nationalism in Turkey.'
25. A. Ong, *Spirits of Resistance and Capitalist Discipline. Factory Women in Malaysia* (Albany, New York: State University of New York, 1987 [6], especially Chap. 7); B. H. Chua, *Communitarian Ideology and Democracy in Singapore* (London: Routledge, 1995) [7].
26. For Cambodia, see Bayart, Bertrand, Hibou, Marchal and Mengin, *Le Royaume concessionnaire*; for African countries, E. Fantini, 'Good Governance e Restaurazione autoritaria in Etiopia,' doctoral thesis, University of Turin, 2008 (www.fasopo.org/reasopo/jr/th_fantini.pdf) [8]; M. Tidjani Alou, 'La décentralisation en Afrique. Un état des lieux de la recherche en sciences sociales,' in M. Gazibo and C. Thiriot (eds), *Le Politique en Afrique. État des débats et pistes de recherche* (Paris: Karthala, 2009), pp. 185–207 [9].
27. Bauman, *Modernity and the Holocaust*, p. 18.

28. See Tooze, *The Wages of Destruction*, Chaps. 6 (agriculture) and 17 (armaments).
29. Ibid., Chap. 6 (see also the work of Christian Gerlach, unfortunately available only in German).
30. Ibid., p. 554.
31. Highlighted by Polanyi in 'Economy and Democracy.'
32. Tooze, *The Wages of Destruction*, Chap. 16.
33. Bauman, *Modernity and the Holocaust*.
34. H. Arendt, *Eichmann in Jerusalem: A report on the banality of evil*, revised and enlarged edition (Harmondsworth: Penguin, 1977) [10]; S. Žižek, *Did somebody say totalitarianism?: five interventions in the (mis)use of a notion* (London: Verso, 2011), p. 65 [11].
35. On the role of administrative bureaucracy in the functioning of the Nazi regime, see the magisterial work of R. Hilberg, *The Destruction of the European Jews* (New York; London: Holmes & Meier, 1985) [12]. On the particular case of money laundering, see Aly, *Hitler's Beneficiaries*.
36. Marcuse, *One-dimensional man*.
37. G. Bachelard, *The New Scientific Spirit*, transl. Arthur Goldhammer (Boston, MA: Beacon Press, 1984), p. 12 [13] (the original French text was first published in 1934).
38. Blum and Mespoulet, *L'Anarchie bureaucratique*, and Mespoulet, *Construire le socialisme par les chiffres*.
39. C. Ginzburg, 'To kill a Chinese mandarin: the moral implications of distance,' in Ginzburg, *Wooden eyes: nine reflections on distance*, transl. Martin Ryle and Kate Soper (London: Verso, 2002), pp. 157–72 [14].
40. The way things are distanced by classifying them in accordance with dehumanizing categories is clearly brought out in Werth, *L'Ivrogne et la Marchande de fleurs*.
41. Stanziani, *L'Économie en révolution*, especially Chap. 17 and the conclusion.
42. A. Lüdtke, 'The "honor of labor". Industrial workers and the power of symbols under National Socialism,' in Crew (ed.), *Nazism and German Society*, pp. 67–109 [15]; C. Browning, *The Path to Genocide. Essays on Launching the Final Solution* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1992) [16].
43. Klemperer, *The Language of the Third Reich*, Chap. 23.
44. Ginzburg, 'Preface,' in *Wooden Eyes*, pp. xiii–xv.

45. Werth, *L'Ivrogne et la Marchande de fleurs*.
46. All these terms are taken from *ibid.*
47. Bauman, *Modernity and the Holocaust*, pp. 98–100.
48. These factors are highlighted by Bauman, *ibid.*, Ginzburg, *Wooden Eyes* (from which I have taken the expression ‘series of relations in which we are all caught up,’ p. 166) and Traverso, *Fire and Blood*.
49. B. Hibou, *The Bureaucratization of the World in the Neoliberal Era*, trans. Andrew Brown (London: Palgrave Macmillan, 2015) [17], Chaps. 1 and 3; B. Samuel, ‘Les cadres stratégiques de lutte contre la pauvreté et les trajectoires de la planification au Burkina Faso,’ *Sociétés Politiques Comparées*, 16 (June 2009) (www.fasopo.org/reasopo/n16/article.pdf) [18]; I. Bono, ‘Le phénomène participatif au Maroc à travers ses styles d’action et ses normes,’ *Les Études du CERI*, 166 (June 2010) [19]; R. Peñafiel, ‘L’Événement discursif paupériste, lutte contre la pauvreté et redéfinition du politique en Amérique Latine, Chili, Mexique, Vénézuéla, 1910–2006,’ doctoral thesis, Université du Québec, Montréal, January 2008 (http://www.fasopo.org/reasopo/jr/these_penafiel_vol1etvol2.pdf) [20].
50. Traverso, *Fire and Blood*, p. 117.
51. Boyer, ‘Censorship as a vocation.’
52. S.C. Jansen quoted in *ibid.*, p. 522.
53. B. Tlili, ‘Des paradoxes de la pensée réformiste tunisienne moderne et contemporaine (1830–1930),’ *Africa* (Rome), XXX, 3 (September 1975) [21], reproduced in B. Tlili, *Nationalismes, socialisme et syndicalisme dans le Maghreb des années 1919–1934* (Tunis: Publications de l’Université de Tunis, 1984), 1, pp. 25–60 [22]; Hibou, ‘Tunisie: d’un réformisme à l’autre,’ and ‘Le réformisme, grand récit politique de la Tunisie contemporaine.’
54. Hibou, *Surveiller et réformer*, Chap. 2.
55. See the work of L. Chouikha, especially ‘Fondements et situation de la liberté de l’information en Tunisie. Essai d’analyse,’ *L’information au Maghreb* (Tunis: Cérés Production, 1992) [23]; ‘Autoritarisme étatique et débrouillardise individuelle. Arts de faire, paraboles, Internet comme formes de résistance, voire de contestation,’ in O. Lamoum and B. Ravenel (eds), *La Tunisie de Ben Ali. La société contre le régime* (Paris: L’Harmattan, 2002), pp. 197–211 [24], and J.P. Bras and L. Chouikha (eds), *Médias et Technologies de communication au Maghreb et en Méditerranée* (Tunis: IRMC, 2002) [25].

56. Hibou, *Surveiller et réformer*, Chap. 2, and ‘The Political Economy of the World Bank’s Discourse.’
57. Rosas, *O Estado Novo (1926–1974)*; P. Guibentif, *La Pratique du droit international et communautaire de la sécurité sociale*, and Soledade Carolo, *A Reforma da Previdência social de 1962*.
58. Guibentif, ‘Génese da Previdência Social.’
59. Thanks to Victor Pereira for sharing with me the first results of his ongoing unpublished research on Portuguese technocrats between 1952 and 1974. See also Ramos Pinto, ‘Housing and citizenship.’
60. F. Ahmad, *The Making of Modern Turkey* (London; New York: Routledge, 1993) [26]; D. Quataert, *The Ottoman Empire, 1700–1922* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2000) [27].
61. S. Mardin, ‘Des Tanzimat aux réformes du gouvernement AKP en Turquie,’ lecture given at the FASOPO conference, 17 May 2006, Paris.
62. C. Kurzman, ‘Introduction: the modernist Islamic movement,’ in Kurzman (ed.), *Modernist Islam, 1840–1940. A Sourcebook* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2002), pp. 3–27 [28].
63. Mardin, *The Genesis of Young Ottoman Thought*, and Tlili, *Les Rapports culturels entre l’Orient et l’Occident*, and Kurzman, ‘Introduction. The modernist Islamic movement.’
64. Georgeon, *Abdulhamid II, le Sultan-Calife*.
65. Mardin, *The Genesis of Young Ottoman Thought*.
66. The expression ‘stahlhartes Gehäuse’ has been transl. Parsons as ‘iron cage’ and became famous in sociology (I quote it here from ‘Parliament and Government in Germany’ but we find it in a lot of other of Weber’s writings). In English (as well as Jean-Pierre Grossein in French), Stephen Kalberg has criticized this translation and propose ‘steel-hard casing’ arguing that “‘cage’ implies great inflexibility and hence does not convey this contingency aspect as effectively as ‘casing’” (which, under certain circumstances, can become less restrictive and even peeled off”) (Max Weber, ‘Asceticism and the Spirit of Capitalism’ in *The Protestant Ethic and the Spirit of Capitalism*, The revised 1920 edition, translated and introduced by Stephen Kalberg, Oxford University Press, 2011, footnote by S. Kalbert, 133, pp. 397–398).
67. Polin, ‘Analyse philosophique de l’idée de légitimité.’
68. Lupo, *Le Fascisme italien*, and Gentile, *Qu’est-ce que le fascisme?*

69. Dormagen, *Logiques du fascisme*, et ‘La contribution technocratique à la radicalisation du régime fasciste italien,’ in Collovald and Gaiiti (eds), *La Démocratie aux extrêmes*, pp. 175–200.
70. Klemperer, *The Language of the Third Reich*; Marcuse, *One-dimensional man*.
71. Lüdtke, ‘The “honor of labor.”’
72. Tooze, *The Wages of Destruction*.
73. Karsenti, ‘Le criminel, le patriote, le citoyen.’
74. Marcuse, *One-dimensional man*.
75. These expressions are taken respectively from A. Desrosières, *The Politics of Large Numbers: A History of Statistical Reasoning* (Harvard, MA: Harvard University Press, 2002) [29] especially Chap. 4, and T. Porter, *Trust in Numbers. The pursuit of objectivity in science and public life* (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 1995) [30], and ‘Préface,’ in Mespoulet, *Construire le socialisme par les chiffres*.
76. Ibid.
77. Quoted in *ibid*.
78. E. Didier, *En quoi consiste l’Amérique? Les statistiques, le New Deal et la démocratie* (Paris: La Découverte, 2009) [31].
79. Porter, *Trust in Numbers*, and Barry, Osborne and Rose (eds), *Foucault and Political Reason*.
80. A. Desrosières, ‘Historiciser l’action publique. L’État, le marché et les statistiques,’ in P. Laborier and D. Trom (eds), *Historicité de l’action publique* (Paris: PUF, 2003), pp. 207–221 [32], and *The Politics of Large Numbers*. Emmanuel Didier illustrates this very well in connection with the United States (in *En quoi consiste l’Amérique?*), when that country shifted from the liberalism of the 1920s to the interventionism that inaugurated the New Deal.
81. De Certeau, *The Practice of Everyday Life*.
82. In Morocco, ‘consensual alternation’ is the name given to the government established by Hassan II in 1997, which included the historical opposition in its own ranks. This decision was not the result of the election results but the will of the Prince. It was however considered ‘consensual’ insofar as all parties, starting with those of the former opposition, had been awaiting this decision for years.
83. Tozy, ‘Islamists, technocrats and the Palace,’ and B. Hibou, ‘Maroc: d’un conservatisme à l’autre,’ in J.F. Bayart, R. Banégas, R. Bertrand, B. Hibou, J. Meimon, and F. Mengin, *Legs colonial et*

- gouvernance contemporaine*, 2, FASOPO, Paris (December 2006), available at http://www.fasopo.org/publications/legscolonial2_bh_1206.pdf [33].
84. Tozy, *Monarchie et islam politique au Maroc*.
 85. For the very specific case of this process in the telecommunications sector, see Hibou and Tozy, 'De la friture sur la ligne.'
 86. Primarily the Mediterranean port of Tangier, the Casablanca marina and the development of the Bouregheb valley in Rabat.
 87. Hibou, 'Le Maroc: d'un conservatisme à l'autre.'
 88. These are the expressions used by persons interviewed in Casablanca and Rabat, May 2007.
 89. Tozy, *Monarchie et islam politique au Maroc*.
 90. Tozy, 'Représentation/intercessions. Les enjeux de pouvoir dans les champs politiques désamorçés au Maroc,' in M. Camau (ed.), *Changements politiques au Maghreb*, special issue of the *Annuaire de l'Afrique du Nord*, XVIII (Paris: Éditions du CNRS, 1989): 153–168 [34].
 91. S. Brint, *In an Age of Experts. The Changing Role of Professionals in Politics and Public Life* (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 1994) [35]; M. Callon, P. Lascoumes and Y. Barthes, *Acting in an Uncertain World: An Essay on Technical Democracy* (Harvard, MA: MIT Press, 2009) [36]; T. Osborne, 'On mediators. Intellectuals and the ideas trade in the knowledge society,' *Economy and Society*, 33(4) (November 2004): 430–447 [37]; Y. Barthes, *Le Pouvoir d'indécision. La mise en politique des déchets nucléaires* (Paris: Economica, 2005) [38]; F. Burton, 'De l'expertise scientifique à l'intelligence épidémiologique. L'activité de la veille sanitaire,' *Genèses*, 65 (April 2006): 71–91 [39].
 92. I take this expression, of course, from J. Ferguson's *The Anti-Politics Machine. 'Development,' Depoliticization and Bureaucratic Power in Lesotho* (Minneapolis, Minn.: University of Minnesota Press, 1994) [40].
 93. See Timothy Mitchell's enlightening discussion, based on the case of Egypt: T. Mitchell, *Rules of Experts. Egypt, Techno-Politics, Modernity* (Berkeley, CA: University of California Press, 2002) [41]. See also M. Callon (ed.), *The Laws of the Markets* (Oxford: Blackwell, 1998) [42], and 'L'Égypte et les experts,' *Annales des Mines*, 86 (December 2006): 12–26 [43].
 94. Bayart, *The State in Africa*, Chap. 1; Mbembe, *La Naissance du maquis dans le Sud-Cameroun*.

95. R. Peñafiel, *L'Événement discursif paupériste*.
96. On the process of naturalization, see R. Barthes, *Mythologies*, selected and transl. Annette Lavers, revised edition, with an introduction by Neil Badmington (London: Vintage, 2009) [44]. On the naturalization specific to 'development,' G. Rist, *Le Développement, histoire d'une croyance occidentale* (Paris: Presses de Sciences Po, 1996) [45]; Ferguson, *The Anti-Politics Machine*; Hibou, 'The Political Economy of the World Bank's Discourse.'
97. For a critical reading of this rhetoric on the fight against corruption, see Vallée, *La Police morale de l'anticorruption*; on the fight against poverty, Peñafiel, *L'Événement discursif paupériste*.
98. Ferguson, *The Anti-Politics Machine*.
99. Bourdieu, 'Description and prescription,' p. 131.
100. A. Schedler, *The End of Politics? Explorations in Modern Antipolitics* (London: Macmillan, 1997) [46]; A. Mastropaolo, *Antipolitica. Alle origini della crisi italiana* (Naples: L'Ancora, 2000) [47], and *La mucca pazza della democrazia. Nuove destre, populismo, antipolitica* (Turin: Bollati Boringhieri, 2005) [48].
101. Hibou, 'The Political Economy of the World Bank's Discourse' and 'From privatizing the economy to privatizing the state'; B. Samuel, 'Les cadres stratégiques, nouveaux fétiches des politiques de développement?' paper given at the conference on 'Les Mots du développement,' Paris, November 2008.
102. See Chap. 3. For 'consensus building,' see Lautier, "Qui ne dit mot consent. Qui consent ne dit mot." On the consensus in development policies and the rejection of the political sphere by donors, see Hibou, 'The Political Economy of the World Bank's Discourse'; G. Rist (ed.), *Les Mots du pouvoir. Sens et non-sens de la rhétorique internationale*, Nouveaux Cahiers de l'IUED, 13 (Paris: PUF, 2002) [49]; J.L. Siroux, 'La dépolitisation du discours au sein de l'Organisation Mondiale du Commerce,' *Mots. Les langages du politique*, 88 (2008): 13–23 [50].
103. J. Rancière, *Hatred of democracy*, transl. Steve Corcoran (London: Verso, 2009) [51].
104. G. Hermet, 'Un régime à pluralisme limité? À propos de la gouvernance démocratique,' *Revue française de science politique*, 54(1) (February 2004): 159–178 [52], and 'La gouvernance serait-elle le nom de l'après-démocratie?'
105. Bayart, *The State in Africa*; Hibou, 'The Political Economy of the World Bank's Discourse.'

106. Samuel, 'Les cadres stratégiques de lutte contre la pauvreté.'
107. J.F. Bayart, 'L'Afrique dans le monde. Une histoire d'extraversion,' *Critique internationale*, 5 (October 1999): 97–120 [53], and 'Africa in the World. A history of extraversion,' *African Affairs*, 99(395) (April 2000): 217–267 [54].
108. Vallée, *La Police morale de l'anticorruption*.
109. Boris Samuel has given a detailed demonstration of this for Burkina Faso in different chapters of his thesis (in progress), and in his article 'Les cadres stratégiques de lutte contre la pauvreté.'
110. Bayart, *The State in Africa*.
111. Samuel, 'Les cadres stratégiques de lutte contre la pauvreté.'
112. Mastropaolo, *La mucca pazza della democrazia*.
113. M. Power, *The audit society: rituals of verification* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1999) [55].
114. Macherey, *De Canguilhem à Foucault*.
115. For further details on this case, see B. Hibou and O. Vallée, 'Energie du Mali, or the paradoxe of a "resounding failure"', AFD- Paris, working document 37, January 2007 (available at http://www.fasopo.org/sites/default/files/EnergieMali_fr_eng.pdf) [56].
116. On big construction projects and sedentarisation: J.C. Scott, *Seeing Like a State. How Certain Schemes to Improve the Human Condition Have Failed* (New Haven, Connecticut: Yale University Press, 1998) [57]. On the political meaning of the auto-entrepreneurial class: J. Elyachar, *Markets of Dispossession. NGOs, Economic Development, and the State in Cairo* (Durham, North Carolina: Duke University Press, 2005) [58]; A. Buğra, 'Poverty and citizenship. An overview of the social-policy environment in republican Turkey,' *International Journal of Middle East Studies*, 39(1) (February 2007): 33–52 [59]; I. Bono, 'L'activisme associatif comme marché du travail. Normalisation sociale et politique par les "activités génératrices de revenus,"' *Politique africaine*, 120 (December 2010): 25–44 [60].
117. Hibou, 'The Political Economy of the World Bank's Discours.'
118. The expression 'economy of plunder' is taken from W.G. Hoskins, *The Age of Plunder. The England of Henry VIII, 1500–1547* (London: Longman, 1976) [61] in regard to the England of Henry VIII. The term refers to the appropriation, by representatives of the public power, of economic resources for private ends. I applied this term to Africa in B. Hibou, 'The "social capital" of the

- state as an agent of deception or the ruses of economic intelligence,' in Bayart, Ellis and Hibou, *The Criminalisation of the State in Africa*, pp. 69–113 and Hibou, 'From privatising the economy to privatising the state.'
119. Hibou, *L'Afrique est-elle protectionniste?*
 120. Bayart, Ellis and Hibou, *The Criminalisation of the State in Africa*, especially Chap. 1, 'From kleptocracy to the felonious state?,' pp. 1–31.
 121. Reno, *Corruption and State Politics in Sierra Leone* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1995) [62]; J.F. Bayart, 'Conclusion,' in P. Geschiere and P. Konings (eds), *Itinéraires d'accumulation au Cameroun* (Paris: Karthala, 1993), pp. 335–344 [63].
 122. J.F. Bayart, 'Fin de partie au sud du Sahara?,' in S. Michailof (ed.), *La France et l'Afrique. Vade-mecum pour un nouveau voyage* (Paris: Karthala, 1993), pp. 112–129 [64].
 123. Hibou, 'The Political Economy of the World Bank's Discourse.'
 124. Bayart, *Global Subjects*.
 125. Siroux, 'La dépolitisation du discours au sein de l'OMC'; Diouf, 'Les poissons ne peuvent pas voter un budget pour l'achat des hameçons'; Campbell, 'Governance, institutional reform and the state.'
 126. Samuel, 'Les cadres stratégiques de lutte contre la pauvreté'; O. Vallée, *Pouvoirs et Politiques en Afrique* (Brussels Desclée de Brouwer, 1999) [65]; B. Hibou, 'International Financial Institutions: the World Bank,' in P. Schraeder (ed.), *Making the World Safe for Democracy? The International Dimension of Democracy Promotion* (Boulder, Col.; London: Lynne Rienner Publishers: 2002), pp. 173–191 [66], and 'Les marges de manœuvre d'un "bon élève" économique.' For further discussion, see Chap. 7 below.
 127. Rosanvallon, *La Légitimité démocratique*; F. Peter, *Democratic Legitimacy* (New York: Routledge, 2009) [67] the special issue of *Politique et Sociétés*, 27(2) (2008): 3–218, on the construction of legitimacy in the public space; Hurrelmann, Schneider and Steffek, *Legitimacy in an Age of Global Politics*; M. Foëssel, 'Légitimation de l'État. De l'affaiblissement de l'autorité à la restauration de la puissance,' *Esprit* (March–April 2005): 242–256 [68], and 'La sécurité, paradigme pour un monde désenchanté,' *Esprit* (August–September 2006): 194–207 [69]; M. Grimes, 'Organizing consent. The role of procedural fairness in political trust and compliance,'

- European Journal of Political Research*, 45(2) (March 2006): 285–315 [70].
128. For example, the ‘ethical and moral principles of the corporatist social doctrine’ in Portugal (Carvalho and Mouro, *Serviço Social no Estado Novo*, p. 124); a ‘spirit of charity and beneficence’ (Castro Martins, *Génese, Emergência e Institucionalização do Serviço Social Português*, p. 377).
129. For the USSR, see Mespoulet, *Construire le socialisme par les chiffres*; Fitzpatrick, *Everyday Stalinism*.
130. Foucault, *Discipline and Punish*; Sémellart, *Les Arts de gouverner*, and ‘Course Context’; for Tunisia, Hibou, *The Force of Obedience*.
131. J.J. Rousseau, *Du contrat social* (Paris: Hachette Littératures, 2005) [71], ed. B. de Jouvenel; for an English translation, see *Of the social contract and other political writings*, ed. Christopher Bertram, transl. Quintin Hoare (London: Penguin, 2012). See also M. Weber, *The Protestant ethic and the spirit of capitalism*; new introduction and translation by Stephen Kalberg (Los Angeles, California: Roxbury Pub. Co., 2002) [72], as well as *The Vocation Lectures: ‘Science as a Vocation’ and ‘Politics as a Vocation,’* edited and with an introduction by David Owen and Tracy B. Strong, transl. Rodney Livingstone (Indianapolis, Ind.: Hackett Publishing Co., 2004) [73]. See also Foucault, *Security, territory, population*.
132. Rosanvallon, *La Légitimité démocratique*.
133. Respectively in *Le Quotidien et l’Intéressant*, and *Bread and Circuses*.
134. This has often been underlined by political philosophers (see e.g. the contributions to *L’Idée de légitimité*; Polin concluded his article in that collection by saying that legitimacy is a ‘complex and precarious construction, in constant formation,’ p. 27), but it has, paradoxically, rarely been shown in analyses of the sociology of the political.
135. This is also brought out by Alf Lüdtke in ‘La République démocratique allemande comme histoire.’
136. Elias, *The Society of Individuals* and *What is Sociology?*
137. S. Kaviraj, ‘On the enchantment of the State. Indian thought on the role of the state in the narrative of modernity,’ *Archives européennes de sociologie*, 46(2) (2005): 263–296 [74]; Bayart, *The State in Africa*; Samuel, ‘Les cadres stratégiques de lutte contre la pauvreté et les trajectoires de la planification au Burkina Faso.’

138. De Certeau, *La Faiblesse de croire*, p. 119.
139. Polanyi, *The Great Transformation*.
140. B. Hibou (ed.), *La Privatisation des États*, English version *Privatising the State*, transl. Jonathan Derrick (London: Hurst and Co., 2004) [75], especially the 'Preface to the English edition,' pp. vii–xvi.
141. Banégas and Warnier, 'Les nouvelles figures de la réussite et du pouvoir.'
142. Cotta, 'Phénoménologie de la légitimité,' p. 78.
143. B. Anderson, *Imagined communities: reflections on the origin and spread of nationalism*, revised and extended edition (London: Verso, 1991) [76].
144. Havel, *Essais politiques*; Zinoviev, *The Radiant Future*.
145. I have not analyzed this dimension here, as my approach is based on political economy, but it is discussed, for example, by Senellart, *Les Arts de gouverner*.
146. Lüdtke, 'La République démocratique allemande comme histoire.'

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The ‘Complications’ of Domination: A Critique of the Problematics of Intentionality

INTRODUCTION

Tackling head-on the issue of intentionality provides us with a complementary perspective and allows us to advance in the analysis of the practices of domination. Intentionality lies at the heart of the way the political is understood by people acting in a given society, as illustrated by the widespread nature of explanations in terms of plots and secrets; it is also at the center of analyses of authoritarian or totalitarian regimes, and emerges from questions about the responsibility of the ‘chief,’ of the ‘leaders,’ of the police, the single party or a particular category of the population in acts of repression. Intentionality also informs questions about the role of a policy or a measure in the exercise of domination, in the imposed (or conversely accepted) character of control, the place of coercion and the use of force. Even if it is rarely made explicit, the intentionalist hypothesis underlies the analysis that ‘politicizes’ the games of players, who think in terms of bribery and compensation, highlight the capacity for instrumentalization and adaptation of regimes in place, and try at all costs to find explanations for historical situations. The attention paid to the practical dimension of economic dispositifs, the detail of effective procedures of domination and the practices of actors leads to a much more ambiguous conclusion. On the one hand, it is impossible to deny the fundamental role of the ‘chief’ or ‘top leaders,’ the often extreme centralized nature of the political and administrative organization, the arbitrariness of decisions handed down ‘from above,’ the intensive use of police techniques, and the desire to control and intrude into private life. On the other hand, however,

the analysis of everyday life suggests the tangibility of compromise and negotiations—and thus of the intentions of other people, with their own, indeed independent logics—as well as the element of contingency and inevitable improvisation, and the possibility of escaping political influence, if only through detachment and indifference, and therefore also the existence of room for maneuver and the exercise of freedom alongside constraints, demonstrations of force or even the use of violence.

It is therefore important to extend our analysis of the 'complications'¹ that can account for this everyday reality. I would now like to show this concretely through a critical examination of several economic forces and configurations, trying to think the situation through in terms other than contradiction and paradox. To do this, I have adopted an analytical approach that considers power to be the result of interactions: it is relational, and thus domination can be exercised only through mutual dependencies, the balance of forces, games of power and social relations. This is the counterpart of the cautious attitude to 'big words' (Michel de Certeau) mentioned above, which pays attention to practical and empirical situations. It is also very Weberian: the universal reflections and the rising level of generality developed by the author of *Economy and Society* always stemmed from extremely accurate and concrete research. Weber has always insisted on this approach: 'It is always by the demonstration and solution of problems of *substance* that new sciences have been established and their methods further developed; on the other hand, purely epistemological or methodological considerations have as yet never played a crucial role in those respects.'² Again, contrary to what is often emphasized, this approach is not far from that of Karl Marx when he says that it is not general entities that lie at the basis, for example, of contradictions and laws, but specific realities, defined and unique, so that everything happens in concrete experience.³

The desire to consider concrete, singular and historically situated states of affairs requires us, first, to highlight the role of practices, games and interpretations of actors, the unexpected factors that arise simultaneously from shifts in time, uncontrollable chains of decisions, the ambiguity of situations, and the plurality of meanings; in short, a whole series of mechanisms that mean that voluntarism is often illusory, the concrete dispositifs of domination have not necessarily been conceptualized as such, 'participation' in domination is not necessarily intentional and control is never absolute. To do this, it is important not to take utterances for reality, including voluntarist discourses on population control, mastery of the

situation, the effectiveness of action, the performativity of statements—all of which are characteristic postures of authoritarian situations. In other words, it is important ‘not to trap words’⁴ by assuming that a statement necessarily produces what it states. This does not mean contrasting discourses and practices, discursive utterances and social impact, but putting them into perspective in a way that is not necessarily causal. Words, indeed, are sometimes uttered as defining elements of the configuration of behavior. Yet, most often, the relationship between them is more complex and requires a further elaboration of words and utterances. In his writings on history, Paul Veyne called this elaboration a ‘veil of words’:⁵ we cannot take people at their word although it is important to take their words and what they say seriously, insofar as, far behind their words, there exist practices that are indubitably at work. Marcuse had previously come up with some similar ideas when he insisted that we cannot take literally what people say, ‘not because they lie, but because the universe of thought and practice in which they live is a universe of manipulated contradictions.’⁶ Words and concepts thus appear as a ‘figurative language’⁷ pointing to something else, which requires that practices, in all their multiplicity, are taken into account: this method is all the more necessary if we are to analyze voluntarism, actions and decisions taken in the name of the state and the general interest, since in authoritarian situations the governing classes most often present themselves as demiurges, as omnipotent and omniscient actors. Relativizing the intentional nature of the exercise of domination gives another scope to utterances: it means they now reveal values, ideas and disparate and contradictory justifications, and highlight the variety of possibilities, motivations, intentions and constraints.

Second, going beyond the problematics of intentionality requires that the analysis focus less on the result (the absence of opposition, consensus, the stifling of conflict, genocide, police repression) than on the processes by which it happens, the life behind the immobility or the stabilized situation. This is what Michel de Certeau has long encouraged us to do, analyzing everyday ‘ways of making’ so as to clarify the ‘ways of operating,’ the ‘schemata of action’ and the ‘systems of operational combination’ at work.⁸ This means taking into account the construction of improvisations, tips and tricks, not as anecdotes and deviant practices, but as the very foundation of practices and actions; and it especially means understanding how daily life is invented by the ‘thousand ways of poaching’ deployed by users, consumers, the ‘lowest of the low,’ the little people, and more generally all those who, without being passive or docile, are nevertheless

more 'dominated' than 'dominant.' It is, in other words, to use very concrete and detailed analyses as a basis for identifying the terms in which everyday life is 'manufactured' and thus the relations of power specific to these 'dominated' populations, relations which do indeed stem from strategies and power relations defined by the dominant, but are no less autonomous and particular, following their own logics and even able to comprise an 'antidiscipline' by 'vampirizing,' 'subverting,' 'appropriating' and thus 'inventing' completely new forms.⁹ 'The "ordinary man" is not without ruse or refuge in face of all the forces that attempt to dispossess and domesticate him':¹⁰ this is also what is proposed by Michel Foucault in his 'anthem to small things,' when he suggests that we need to analyze the microscopic operations proliferating within formal and institutional structures, and when he speaks, as we have already pointed out, of the need for a 'political anatomy of the detail,' echoing Marx's call for an 'anatomy of capital.'¹¹ This relatively precise localization of analysis leads us not to seek *one* cause for 'voluntary servitude,' normalization and the authoritarian exercise of power, but instead encourages us to be sensitive to the unfinished nature of practices and explanations, to causal plurality and what Max Weber called the 'composition effects.'¹² This approach allows us to uncover all that is incomplete, unexpected and unintentional, to counter theories of absolute control, to distance ourselves from big concepts and favor instead a 'secular history.'¹³ This has been demonstrated by writers and 'dissidents.' Although the specific circumstances in which they wrote these texts, and the (often moralistic and normative) posture which they adopted or which was ascribed to them, may mean their writings have to be read with a critical eye,¹⁴ they express something fundamental and to some extent universal. Through his novels, Alexandre Zinoviev shows the 'importance of the little things'¹⁵ in the way Soviet society worked, precisely because these 'little things' comprised its real substance and the state, 'grandiose in its little things,' viewed itself as the state of the 'reconstruction of everyday life.'¹⁶ In emphasizing the need to understand the 'concrete individual,' the political writings of Vaclav Havel on the Czechoslovak regime suggest that coercion and mechanisms of domination shifted 'into the sphere of the conditions of life,' and that to understand the exercise of power, the passivity and indifference of ordinary people, it is necessary to focus in detail on the distribution of privileges, the conditions of labor and social promotion, material aspirations, the

distribution of goods and wealth, and so on.¹⁷ This is also demonstrated by academic studies. Investigations into Salazarism have highlighted, as we have seen, the importance of the 'world of little things' for Portuguese leaders who were filled with anxiety by capitalism and modernization, primarily concerned with defending the 'small' (petty officials, small traders, craftsmen and industrialists, small services, etc.), with knowing, respecting, maintaining and controlling a world of things that were socially and economically small, pulverized, varied and contradictory, while maintaining the balance between forces and groups with often divergent interests.¹⁸ Several recent studies of the Third Reich have shown how the small procedures of everyday life, micro-decisions and the practical implementation of measures may lead to the worst disasters,¹⁹ while work on the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics has stressed the need to 'come down' as close as possible to local, sectorial and individual cogs to understand the dynamics of domination and even repression.²⁰

Thus, grasping domination requires that we first look at the reactions of all actors to economic development and the system of sampling, redistribution and control by the central government, the 'strategic usages' (Michel Foucault) they make of social rules and norms, the tactical reactions and usages that are not known in advance and open unexpected spaces. But it is necessary, subsequently, to discover the strategies, intentions, desires and visions proper to actors and the interaction of these latter with those of their rulers. This is the whole point of the distinction between 'construction' and 'formation' given by John Lonsdale for the case of Kenya, and systematized by Jean-François Bayart: domination results not only, and does not result primarily, from a vision and a program that are consciously constructed by state actors; rather it is a complex, largely unconscious and contradictory historical process, made up of conflicts, negotiations and compromises between groups.²¹ Understanding this complexity of the exercise of domination thus requires that, first and foremost, consideration be paid to the 'interstices of normative systems already established or in the process of formation,' the spaces of autonomy of these 'subaltern' or 'dominated' actors who can also 'mark political reality with a lasting impression, not preventing the forms of domination, but conditioning and modifying them.'²² The intentionalist hypothesis collides with these unexpected modifications and conditionings, these specific rationalities and strategies (different from those of the state apparatus), and the ambiguity of the rules.

NOTES

1. I am here alluding both to Michel Dobry's discussions of Weber's thought (M. Dobry, 'Légitimité et calcul rationnel') and to those of Claude Lefort on the blind alley in which end up analyses of totalitarianism as an ideal-type which drastically over-simplifies the historical realities (C. Lefort, *La Complication. Retour sur le communisme* (Paris: Fayard, 1988 [1]). Also quoted in Traverso, *Le Totalitarisme*).
2. M. Weber, 'Critical studies in the logic of the cultural sciences,' in *Collected Methodological Writings*, p. 140
3. Quoted in Henry, *Le Socialisme selon Marx*, pp. 31 ff.
4. Fassin, 'Biopouvoir ou biolégitimité?'
5. The subtitle of one of the chapters in P. Veyne, *Le Pain et le Cirque*, p. 38 (he continues his discussion of this theme in the following pages).
6. Marcuse, *One-dimensional man* (London and New York: Routledge, second edition, 1991) p. 198.
7. De Certeau, *La Faiblesse de croire*, p. 81.
8. De Certeau, *The Practice of Everyday Life* (all the expressions in quotation marks are those used by the author in his general introduction, pp. xi–xxiv).
9. Ibid. (the expressions are those of M. de Certeau). See also the earlier work by H. Lefebvre, *Critique of everyday life*, transl. John Moore, with a preface by Michel Trebitsch, 3 vols (London: Verso, 2008; first published in French 1946–1981). In another intellectual lineage, this is also shown by C. Grignon and J.C. Passeron in their critique of the contrast between 'popular culture' and 'high culture': *Le Savant et le Populaire. Misérabilisme et populisme en sociologie et en littérature* (Paris: Le Seuil-Gallimard, 1989) [2].
10. R. Chartier, 'Michel de Certeau: History, or Knowledge of the Other,' in *On the Edge of the Cliff*, pp. 39–47 (p. 46).
11. This intellectual line of descent is highlighted in Lüdtké, 'La République démocratique allemande comme histoire.'
12. Weber, *Economy and society; Political Writings*, and *The Protestant Ethic*.
13. Quotation taken from Minard, *Les Fortunes du colbertisme*, p. 13.
14. See, for example, the—extremely subtle and pertinent—critique of Havel's works in A. Yurchak, 'Soviet hegemony of form. Everything

- was forever until it was no more,' *Comparative Study in Society and History*, 45, 3 (July 2003), pp. 480–510 [3].
15. Zinoviev, *The Radiant Future*. The full quotation reads: 'But you are all unable to leave your romantic clouds and come back down to the dirty ground of reality and judge it impartially. You'll never understand our society, for you don't have the means to do so. More precisely, you'll never be able to gauge at its proper worth all the significance of the little nothings of our lives. Little nothings, let me repeat it! If our system is grand, it is through its nothings, it's a grandeur of nothing at all—and that's the whole problem,' p. 672.
 16. Azarova, *L'Appartement communautaire*, title of Chap. 2.
 17. Havel, 'Open letter to Gustav Husak.' Available at http://www.vaclavhavel.cz/showtrans.php?cat=eseje&val=1_aj_eseje.html&typ=HTML
 18. Rosas, Martins, Amaral, and Rollo, *O Estado Novo (1926–1974)*.
 19. For a general account, see Gellately, *Backing Hitler*. For a first systematic account of the critique of intentionalist and functionalist analyses of Nazism, see Mason, 'Intention and explanation. A current controversy about the interpretation of National Socialism,' in Mason, *Nazism, Fascism and the Working Class*, pp. 212–230.
 20. N. Werth, 'Le stalinisme au pouvoir. Mise en perspective historiographique,' *Vingtième siècle. Revue d'histoire*, 69 (January–March 2001), pp. 125–135 [4]; Fitzpatrick, *Everyday Stalinism*; F.-X. Nérard, *5% de vérité. La dénonciation dans l'URSS de Staline (1928–1941)* (Paris: Tallandier, 2004) [5]; Favarel-Garrigues, *Policing Economic Crime in Russia*.
 21. Lonsdale, 'The conquest state of Kenya, 1895–1905'; Bayart, 'Hors de la "vallée malheureuse" de l'africanisme,' and 'L'invention paradoxale de la modernité économique.'
 22. Levi, *Le Pouvoir au village*, pp. 12–13.

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Neither ‘Collaborators’ Nor ‘Opponents’: Economic Actors Caught Up in Different Logics of Action and in Random Sequences

All studies on the way major figures in capitalism have played a key role in running authoritarian or totalitarian regimes have postulated a certain intentionality. Such is the case, for example, of many studies on ‘Aryanization’ and the decisive role of major industrialists in the elimination of the Jews, or the involvement of ‘big capital’ in Portuguese and Italian fascism. I want to show here that it is simplistic to try to identify a specific decision made at a given time, a decision to submit, to ‘collaborate,’ to ‘participate’ in the major policies of a regime, or on the contrary to ‘oppose’ them. It is even impossible to describe the actors, in other words to define, for given individuals or groups of actors, a major project and a course of action, a clear vision and intentions. What we have here, rather, is a multiplicity of micro-decisions made over time, a variety of logics of action and endless possibilities of interactions that only rarely affect domination, but can make it assume unforeseen modes, unexpected shapes, giving significance to this or that initially neglected actor or, conversely, constraining the exercise of power by taking into account essential intermediaries. So it is difficult to speak of ‘collaborators’ or ‘opponents,’ as these ‘participations’ are often not conscious, and acts of ‘resistance’ are contingent.

AN OVER-POLITICIZED HISTORY, I: THE 'PARTICIPATION' OF MAJOR ENTREPRENEURS IN THE NAZI POLITICAL ECONOMY

The analysis of the mechanisms of integration of large companies into the Nazi political economy is particularly illuminating. One persistent and common view, supported by some academic work, is that things were virtually written in advance by the very nature of the actors, and the links between certain major industrialists and the Nazi regime were particularly intimate.¹ One of the contributions of the new historiography relating to this period of German history is precisely to have shown that the relationship between 'entrepreneurs' and the 'regime' was more the result of a series of ad hoc decisions, often technical or professional, made at the time in accordance with strategies proper to these economic actors, without the political stakes of these strategies being clearly assessed.² The alliances between the German state and major national companies actually intensified as a mechanical effect of technological choices, policies of modernization and rationalization of the German productive apparatus, the extension of assembly lines, the often partial understandings of the socio-political issues at stake in the latter, financial interests, and fear of competition. The desire for domination certainly existed, but it was an economic and technological domination in a particular sector, not a political domination and a participation in the physical elimination of the Jews. These dependencies were created and gradually strengthened as a result of international economic problems, economic policies and the state management of access to foreign exchange and commodities. They also resulted from the evolution of the 'business environment' for industrialists who profited from opportunities opened up by the regime more than dispossessed themselves of what they had invented or triggered: the introduction of modern forms of wage employment related to productivity or a system of occupational medicine, the delegation of social policies to employers during the Great Depression, and the use of fear of the Gestapo to intimidate workers, all formed a set of measures that gave industrialists an unprecedented basis for the control of their labor force.³ These interdependencies were also the result of shared understandings that themselves largely stemmed from historical conditions, the effects of propaganda and Nazi ideological influence, such as the idea that interventionism was not a political choice, but 'an inevitable product of "historic necessity."' ⁴ Here again, we see the very concrete dimension of ideology, its implementation, through the

dissemination of ready-made explanations that are not up for discussion, of simplifying shortcuts that reduce complex processes to one-way causal relationships and of historicizing interpretations that are particularly inadequate but appear seductive thanks to their apparent obviousness.

Although the situation in the agricultural world was less ambiguous, it is controversial to talk about 'collaborators' in connection with what have been called the 'big agrarian interests.' The links between them and the Schutzstaffel (SS) were intimate, built on the convergence between two logics: a logic of strengthening the German agricultural sector as a social class, and the logic of managing the national food supply.⁵ This intimacy was reflected in highly concrete measures: a relentless protectionism and high taxes on imports, partial tax exemption, credit legislation and above all a very favorable pricing policy for large farmers. However, even in this case, it is difficult to attribute an active and inevitable role to the agrarians in the evolution of the Nazi regime. It was not agricultural difficulties that led to the radicalization of the regime, but when the latter wanted to put into practice its ideological policy of *Lebensraum* (the 'vital space' which took the form of the conquest of new territories), it met with support from landowners who then actively participated in the occupation of eastern Europe. However, we cannot analyze the agricultural sector as a whole. The peasants were largely constrained by this economic policy that they often interpreted as a relic of the 'coercive economy' of the First World War and the early years of the Weimar Republic.⁶ They took a dim view of any system of surveillance and control, including the restrictive measures that prevented them from dealing with their usual suppliers of cattle, traders now described as 'Jews' who often sold at much lower prices than their 'Aryan' competitors. Peasants did not express open opposition, however, nor call into question the regime, not only because of fear (of course) but also because whole swathes of other Nazi policies met with their approval.

Great entrepreneurs of industry did not necessarily share the same goals as the Nazi leaders. Monographs on leading German groups published over the past 20 years reveal an extremely varied range of behavior in the Third Reich and possible understandings of it. They suggest not only the diversity but also the ambiguity of 'participation' in the Nazi political economy that often, indeed more often than not, happened incidentally, insidiously, invisibly and by stealth, rather than by a decision in due form. This was the case, for example, with a company like IG Farben, despite its being notorious for the location of its plants in the concentration camps and its use of inmate labor, starting with Jews who were condemned to

die. However, its involvement in the workings of the Nazi political economy is more complex than it appears and highlights, on the one hand, the weight of past technical constraints and decisions (including economic decisions) and, on the other, the unexpected effects of playing on mutual dependencies, the distanced cynicism of the leaders and their quest for power, expansion and profit at any price.⁷ There was nothing very political about the way the company first approached the German state: this came from the fact that, even before the Nazis came to power, IG Farben had decided to specialize and modernize in synthetic chemistry, particularly in the production of artificial fuel. This sector was, however, rapidly and strongly supported by the government for reasons of national independence and enhanced performance of the war economy. Subsequently, what was basically a commonplace set of arrangements was set up, exploiting mutual dependencies and interests: the need for funding and a quest for the establishment of a monopoly on the part of the company, and the need for advanced technology on the part of the government; the continued profitability of chemical production by increasing tariff protection on the side of the manufacturer, and the desire for self-sufficiency and sovereignty on the side of the political. The multiplicity of points of negotiation and compromise on highly technical and specific issues (access to foreign currency, the need for labor, the sectorial distribution of raw materials, and profit sharing) in a highly controlled bureaucratic environment ultimately brought the protagonists closer, including through the management of ongoing requests for administrative facilities. This closeness was facilitated by the penetration of Nazi ideology within the elite, particularly among the leaders and cadres of IG Farben, including at lower levels, and the process of Nazification of the company through the deepening of relations with the party, including corruption.⁸ All these ideological choices and affinities eventually lead to an inextricable entanglement of the chemical giant with the Nazi regime, and an undeniable involvement of the company in carrying out the Holocaust. It is easy to see, however, that this was neither written in advance, nor the result of a project designed and methodically applied by politicized industrialists.

Degussa AG illustrates another mode of operation, that of ‘participation’ by economic opportunism and the unexpected convergence between an industrial strategy and National Socialist policy.⁹ If we follow the analysis of Peter Hayes, until 1937, Aryanization in favor of Degussa was, so to speak, moderate or non-voluntary: companies repurchased from Jews were bought at reasonable prices, although over time, these transactions

became ever less favorable for sellers; Degussa did not exert pressure on the companies purchased, and sometimes even acquired them to 'help' 'Jewish' entrepreneurs known to the company's management. Of course, at that time the company was the winner, and these purchases undoubtedly profited it, but it was not yet the real predator that the laws of 1938 and the political context led it to become. From that date, the company did not hesitate to exert pressure to buy other companies at low prices, to use corruption and power relations to avoid paying the amounts due, or to steal patents. The work of Hayes also shows that the participation of Degussa in Aryanization was due more to the company's industrial strategy than to the ideological and political convictions of its leaders: from the early 1930s, the company decided to guide its growth by diversifying through mergers and acquisitions; the Aryanization policy promoted by the regime thus represented a new and unprecedented opportunity to carry out this industrial strategy quickly and efficiently.

Allianz illuminates another configuration of this uncontrolled chain of events and highlights the specific strategy of a financial actor whose singular constraints and particular interests partly shaped its relationship with the Nazi government.¹⁰ Unlike the businesses mentioned above, a number of the leaders of the insurance company were close to the regime right from the start, with some of them being members of the National Socialist Party and one of them even becoming Minister of Economics in 1933. But this feeling was not straightforward and, in 1935, the team of Allianz oscillated between skepticism toward the policies and guidelines of the regime and the desire to promote the company in response to requests or orders from the government. This position was not, however, the overall one, either at every time or in all matters. For example, officials protected their Jewish employees, at least until 1937, and did not use forced labor, unlike the vast majority of German companies. But again, an analysis in terms of political economy shows that general talk of 'collaboration' is meaningless. The lines of Allianz's 'involvement' in the expropriation of Jews were indeed less dictated by choices, commitments or consciously made political alliances than by techniques specific to the insurance sector, which were therefore partly imposed by the rules of the profession: as they were unable to steal a life insurance policy—which constitutes a value solely for the owner and the beneficiary, and only when the premiums have actually been paid—insurance companies played no direct role in the expropriation of the Jews. They did however participate indirectly in plundering the latter's capital wealth by applying the laws in force¹¹: the law

on the ‘flight tax’ of 1931, mainly used against the Jews from 1933, and especially from 1934; the 1933 law on recovery of assets from enemies of the people; the tax law of 1934, which allowed employees of the Inland Revenue to assess arbitrarily and at their own discretion the amount of taxes; the ‘emigration tax’ of 1934; the specific tax on the Jews of 1937; and the ‘tax on Jewish property’ of 1938. However, the occasional desires for active ‘collaboration,’ for example, by transfer of names of beneficiaries of insurance policies to the Gestapo and the Ministry of Finance, were made difficult by the sector’s specificities. This does not mean that Allianz did not try to take advantage of the situation, quite the contrary. The pursuit of profit at all costs led the company to look after the production and equipment of the ghettos, the SS factories in concentration camps, and the transport of confiscated property, and to acquire securities stolen from Jews in the Netherlands.¹² In other words, the ‘collaboration’ between Allianz and the regime was less the result of specific initiatives taken by its leaders—who were publicly known to be Nazis—than of the overlap between the logic of contract, greed for gain, and fiscal policies in a political context which led to the gradual elimination of the distinction between ‘normal’ business and ‘shady’ business; it was less dictated by political logics than by logics of efficiency, competition and economic opportunism in a situation characterized by widespread violence and a social and bureaucratic production of moral indifference.

AN OVER-POLITICIZED HISTORY, 2: TUNISIAN ENTREPRENEURS, BETWEEN ‘RESISTANCE’ AND ‘UNWAVERING SUPPORT’

This over-politicization is not unique to studies that analyze the ‘collaboration’ of powerful economic actors or their ‘participation’ in the exercise of power. It equally characterizes studies of the proven ‘opposition’ of certain categories of the population or the ‘rejection of the political’ among other categories. Offering two opposing accounts of relations between entrepreneurs and politicians, the case of Tunisia under Ben Ali’s rule may again prove of interest.¹³

The first story is that those known as the ‘big traditional entrepreneurs,’ whose motto is ‘stay small to protect yourself from power,’ are hampered by fear of the direct interference of ‘family,’ ‘clans’ and ‘friends,’ by widespread predation and corruption, by the fear of arbitrary and unpredictable tax inspections, and above all by the anxiety that they may

appear too powerful and stir up the lust of the authorities. They therefore decided on purpose, or so the claim goes, to stay outside power games, to organize in such a way as to remain small and to minimize their potential power by a proliferation of small companies all independent of each other so as to ensure a significant increase in their activities without falling foul of power. According to this narrative, if they avoid appearing in the public arena, they are perceived and perceive themselves as potential members of the resistance, or as opponents. The facts are indeed capable of supporting this interpretation of a strategic development: one can definitely observe a propensity to diversify businesses rather than consolidate them, and to maintain family structures, while the level of the opening of capital is low, and there are very few large or even medium-sized enterprises. Thus, the largest Tunisian group, Poulina was actually, at the beginning of the 2000s, a holding of 74 subsidiaries with about 4000 employees, having long been a mere conglomerate of small businesses. However, a more detailed economic analysis puts the existence of such a strategy into perspective. A narrow market, a dual industrial fabric organized around an onshore sector for the domestic market (a sector subject to intrusive regulation) and an offshore export sector (which benefits from tax and administrative exemptions), the absence until the late 2000s of a legal framework for holding companies, tax incentives for certain sectors and for the creation of new structures, relief of labor law, absence of consolidated accounts and therefore an exploitation of profits, losses and credit demands, risk diversification, maintenance of 'informal' structures and logics, and the recycling of previous professional practices: these are all factors that can explain the choice, quite a rational one in economic terms, of this strategy of dispersal and diversification. The preference of entrepreneurs to remain within family structures, opening up neither the principal nor the accounts of the company, is primarily due to economic and social factors, such as the desire to maintain control of a business created *ex nihilo*, the fear that transparency and any external inspection would damage the health of the company, and the preference for improvisations, arrangements, and tricks with the tax and all other administrative authorities.

It is true that this 'preference' for discretion and dispersal can be perpetuated by the behavior of political leaders, including by the predatory practices of those 'close to Power,' and by rumors circulating on such practices and the fear they might be implemented. But it cannot at all be interpreted as a conscious strategy of 'opposition': for reasons of economic opportunity or because it does not affect their modes of opera-

tion, these entrepreneurs do not hesitate to participate in the regime's propaganda events, to make donations to the single party or the charities under the aegis of the president of the Republic, to bow to pressure from the administration, to applaud the bringing to heel of the single trade union, or to enter into exchanges of service with agents of authority. It is here that we come to our second narrative: entrepreneurs, it is claimed, were *de facto* forced to align themselves with, and provide 'unstinting support' for, the central government for fear of reprisals and exclusion. And, indeed, all entrepreneurs of any importance are part of the UTICA (Tunisian Union of Industry, Trade and Handicrafts), the sole employers' association created by the central government, and they are mostly members of the Democratic Constitutional Rally (RCD), the single party, in one of its professional or territorial cells. In this sense, they are seen as real 'collaborators of the Ben Ali regime,' since business success involves an alliance with the central government, and this alliance takes the form of membership in the UTICA and RCD (as we have seen) and indeed as a matrimonial alliance with the president's family or 'clans' that surround him, at least in the case of the most important ones.

What narrative should we prefer? Were entrepreneurs mostly 'collaborators' or mainly members of the 'resistance'? The political economy advocated in this book allows us, in fact, to overcome this apparent contradiction, and the interpretation in terms of paradoxes—both due to intentionalist arguments. First, we must understand that unanimous membership of UTICA and RCD did not represent anything concrete; it was essentially a symbolic value, signifying a certain behavior—not membership but non-opposition, in a kind of different space that could be summarized by 'we're not outside, but that doesn't mean we're inside, either.' Membership in these bodies reflected a variety of logics of action that was more linked to professional reasoning than to political commitment, just as the strategy of scattering and dispersion resulted primarily from economic, social and administrative rationality. In other words, the images of membership and of resistance are the result of an analysis that over-politicizes entrepreneurial behavior by overestimating the central actors (the president and his entourage, party institutions) by an instrumental and utilitarian vision of politics and by a simplification of the logic of action. This over-politicized analysis does not, however, involve any failure to take account of political issues. If we adopt another vision of the political, one which is not confined to the politicians' issues and the logics of 'for' and 'against' but takes into account the balance of forces deployed

in the business world, the relationships between the entrepreneurs and actors in society, the conflicts and trade-offs between these and actors of state and party, we can produce a subtler political reading of the entrepreneurial game. This is the second point in my argument: Tunisian entrepreneurs were neither collaborators nor members of the resistance, but they were political in that they also fashioned the political—and thus, the exercise of domination—through their behavior and the way they interpreted events and behaviors, transforming the contours of power relations within society. The ‘constant and routine interventions’ analyzed above, interventions with which entrepreneurs had to play on a daily basis, make it possible to grasp this in concrete form.¹⁴ Interventionism was diffuse: it extended from measures involving the most conventional public policies to the demonstrations of an equally commonplace clientelism, from sectorial subsidies to exceptional aid, from tax exemptions to monitoring of health standards, from exploitation of arrears from official bodies to the demands for continuous clarification of regulations, from decisions on bad loans to arbitration claims on more or less well-defined rules, from management of prices and remuneration to the way pressure is applied on people to make them participate in public events, from the definition of criteria for giving and participation in national solidarity to the definition of funding arrangements for the party or promoting the country abroad, from authorizations for marketing to factory licensing, from judicial involvement to the informal but unavoidable agreement of the police, and so on. You could certainly blame ‘the system’ for creating these interventions and situations of dependency for the purposes of manipulation and control, as did the regime’s opponents in Tunisia. But this interpretation is difficult to sustain: it gives in to the voluntarist illusion, and attributes to the state a coherent vision of its role and direction of the economy and, more importantly, an almost absolute capacity for action. It underestimates how powerless it can be, and the ‘art of doing’ of the entrepreneurs; it smoothens out the business community and does not reflect the tensions, conflicts and opposing interests, the multiplicities of behavior within it. Police power was unable to impose a particular disciplinary organization of the economy to regulate the working masses and win over domestic and foreign capitalists. And this was not generally its purpose. We must therefore look elsewhere for the reason behind these daily interventions. In reality, these ‘incessant interventions’ were imposed and suffered less than they were accepted, used or even requested by the economic actors themselves.¹⁵ They were accepted because they were painless, because they were

commonplace, and because, above all, they could be reversed. An excerpt from an interview allows us to grasp the logic of reciprocity and mutual benefits of these ‘insidious leniencies’ of which Foucault spoke: ‘It’s not painful, we can manage with it even if in the long run, it’s exhausting,’ but it is also ‘very beneficial because nothing is impossible in Tunisia!’ In other words, these entrepreneurs were even more chained to these practices as they had to think about the future of their businesses and ‘watch their backs,’ and could play with these mechanisms and ‘profit’ from them.¹⁶ These interventions were simultaneously requests and intercessions as they were often desired in a logic of a systematic demand for the state from entrepreneurs used to aid, subsidies, tax exemptions and other ad hoc arrangements: it was possible to use these relationships not only to get the company’s requests agreed to, gain acceptance for guidelines and decisions and to ‘set up’ one’s vision, but also, more prosaically, to ‘pass a message on to the union,’ to ‘wipe the slate clean after a silly mistake’ or ‘sort out a misunderstanding.’ In other words, the mechanisms felt—in part or not—to be binding were popular because they were simultaneously protecting, rewarding and safe; they could be used in strategies and games of alliance, in conflicts and reconciliations.

This emphasis on negotiations, arrangements and requests ‘from below’ calls into question an interpretation in terms of independence and withdrawal, but in terms of submission as well. The Tunisian situation is therefore much more ambiguous. Neither opposition nor collaboration, but practices largely influenced by the specific characteristics of the economic sector, the national and international business environment, the structure of the company, the nature of labor relations, and the origin of the entrepreneur: these are all autonomous factors vis-à-vis the political, but inevitably interact with it and help shape the contours of life in society.

THE LACK OF DEFINITION OF THE POLITICAL AND THE ECONOMIC SPHERE, OR THE ‘BLIND EFFECTS’ OF MICRO-DECISIONS

In all cases, progressivity, interlinking and temporal shifts are fundamental to understanding the tightening (or loosening) of mutual dependencies, and the deepening (or relaxing) of shared interests. They also explain the ‘loss of scruples’ to speak in normative terms, that is, the integration of political ‘normality’ and the relativity of other human, moral and social values. This is what entrepreneurs express when they say, as Ernst

Buseman, head of Degussa AG, has put it, that 'swimming against the current makes no sense'¹⁷ or, as one Tunisian manager whom I interviewed said, 'entrepreneurs will never take to the bush (i.e. go into covert opposition).'¹⁸ Contrary to what is claimed by the thesis of collaboration or opposition, neither group defines a political strategy a priori and definitively, nor do they know a priori the contours of the political: as we are reminded by Karl Marx, Max Weber and Karl Polanyi, the delimitation of the political sphere (and the economic, too) is neither fixed, nor absolute, nor definitive; it all depends on contexts, historical moments and actors involved.¹⁹ Because it is 'fluid and cannot be precisely defined,'²⁰ the economic sphere is impossible to separate from the political, all the more so since the boundaries between them are not known or even defined. Just as economic decisions do not stem from purely economic reasoning and rationality, they do not produce purely economic effects.²¹ But, conversely, their political meanings are not predetermined, or fixed or immutable; it all depends on how society focuses its interests and determines the issues of power, the balance of forces at the time, the actors on stage and the circumstances.²² The entanglement of all these factors necessitates a localized analysis that will take into account this fundamental question: what makes a reality become a political reality at a given time, in a given context, for specific individuals and groups?

Entrepreneurs are simultaneously apolitical actors and major political actors. From a certain point of view, they are largely outside the political arena: they are after neither 'regime change' nor 'democracy'; they can call for more freedom for enterprise, more transparency and predictability, more technical discussions and less arbitrariness, or respect for the 'rule of law'; they can criticize meddlesome bureaucracy, corruption and favoritism, excessive interventionism or incompetence, or a particular public policy or economic orientation; but they rarely have political demands, and in this sense are not involved in the exercise of political domination. However, this apoliticism is largely just apparent insofar as it is more the result of political conditions and, in the context of the authoritarian regimes analyzed here, the latent violence of a world where criticism is impossible, confrontation vain and coercion never absent. Hiding the 'disturbing complexity of reality,' silence, detachment, distance, tacit acquiescence and confinement to technicity and professionalism protect economic actors while benefiting state power.²³ In this sense, entrepreneurs are highly political because these behaviors, which are primarily a tactic designed not to come up against circumstances or political constraints, or

professional and financial opportunities, are integrated into practices of domination. Their participation in the political economy of ‘interventions’ also makes them very political actors, in another way: without being aware of it, and without this being part of any grand strategy, they affect the balance of power, types of behavior, and modes of government by fueling demands for protection and financial assistance, using regulations and laws and giving them consistency, taking advantage of political opportunities, not denying a request for a favor, and accepting constraints in the name of aid they could receive would they be faced to problems later on. The political economy proposed here simultaneously challenges economic monism, the strict definition of spheres (economic and political), and any analysis in terms of unambiguous links and obvious causal relationships. It criticizes implicitly the traditional and reductive reading of Weber’s texts that contrasts categories of the ‘ethics of conviction’ and ‘ethics of responsibility’ and suggests instead that they are always connected and intertwined, but in different and ever-changing ways.²⁴ Indeed, political economy as I see it is sensitive to ‘complications,’ to the multiplicity of arrangements and the links between variables, and the complexity of relationships, according to a (different) Weberian tradition which focuses on the ‘contributions,’ the ‘partial contributions’ and the ‘unexpected,’ the ‘fragmented reasons,’ the ‘various and heterogeneous motivations’ the ‘causal plurality,’ the ‘tangle of reciprocal influences’ and the effects which occur ‘unbeknownst to’ actors.²⁵ The effects of domination emerge from these complex processes that leave a fundamental element to the unexpected, the partial nature of certain decisions, the unconscious dimension of certain choices and even of types of behavior and ‘participatory’ strategies undertaken without the knowledge of the actors themselves. It is therefore less a matter of intentionality—in this case, the intention to support the regime in which these entrepreneurs operate—than of the ‘blind effects’²⁶ of micro-decisions, routines and temporal shifts, different ways of understanding, specific logics of action, and interests that are convergent but not necessarily identical.

THE AMBIGUITY OF THE WORLD OF LABOR

As analyses of the world of labor—the other major ‘variable’ of capitalism—have also shown, we cannot view workarounds or distancing processes as opposition or resistance.²⁷ Regimes of whatever kind cannot penetrate certain sections of society and impose full compliance with the norms in force. Without these groups, individuals or actors actually forming part

of the opposition, their behaviors are obstacles to the achievement of the regime's objectives, even if this is not intentional; conversely, they can 'participate,' including by silence or distancing, in the exercise of domination without this action being either thought through or even conscious.

These studies show, first, that nobody is (or is born) resistant or collaborator by nature, but that behavior is largely subject to the vagaries of time and the progressivity of constraints, to routine functioning in society and its imperceptible shifts, in constraints as in the norms in force, differences of interpretation, context, interaction with others, conflicts and power relations, events which occur in private life, the differentiated significance of political or social constraints, and the desire to do well.²⁸ Vaclav Havel underlines this when he says that "dissidents" are in fact neither more nor less than those people whom fate, chance, the logic of things and their work, of their character, have led to say aloud what others are certainly aware of but dare not say.²⁹ These hazards, slips and changes, even small, can open opportunities, widen or narrow the range of what is possible and thinkable, and modify the links between elements of the system. Thus, the sense of professional responsibility (saving the equipment of French companies under the Occupation, preventing workers from going off for compulsory work service), the 'job well done' (the famous 'quality of German work' or 'serious' attitude of soldiers during the war, the 'specifically socialist conception of material production') and the defense of corporate interests (among both the workers and managers of factories) were partly used to explain the 'opposition' or 'participation' of economic actors in the repressive or disciplinary exercise of power.³⁰ These concerns may also allow the creation of room for maneuver and spaces of freedom, like the East German workers who, in the absence of any alternative, invested organizations—such as work brigades—created by the central government, both to support them and to supervise them, and invent internal strategies for emancipation on the basis of existing rules.³¹ They can even turn a scrupulous, docile worker eager to maintain normal conditions into a 'dissident.' This was the story of that brewery employee of whom Vaclav Havel writes in *The Power of the Powerless*. Initially, this employee was eager just to do his job; but when he complained about professional dysfunctions, his denunciation is seen as a pamphlet, an 'opposition,' by his supervisor. After a long process of pressures, explanations, negotiations, tensions, persuasion and misunderstandings, there was thus a "dissident" in the breweries of eastern Bohemia, an 'enemy' of the people.³² This suggests that a behavior labeled 'resistant' is not only the result

of a pure experience of freedom, an individual choice, a commitment, but also is due to the professional status of the actor, his membership in particular social and professional networks as well as by constraints and visions proper to the social and professional world to which he belongs.³³ For experience (of work, inter alia) is always multidimensional, combining specific requirements and the loose acceptance of constraints, fears and hopes, mobilization and detachment, independence and incorporation of obligations, and so on. In addition, human beings are plural and fragmented by nature, they live different realities, they understand different events in different ways (often simultaneously), they mobilize different *imaginaires*, different temporalities, different rationalities and values. This multidimensionality is not always, not continuously, not necessarily seen as a contradiction: identities are constructed, multiple and polychromatic, in that they do not oppose each other but overlap; they are most often experienced not as plural, but as capable of being linked to each other without necessarily creating tensions.³⁴ It is therefore only through an accurate and localized analysis of political economy, by going into the details of professional practices, for example, that we can highlight these different understandings, these multiple identities, these microscopic, subtle movements, these developments and their political significance.

Second, ‘labor’ (like the ‘capital’ we analyzed above) is not in an elective affinity with any specific political behavior, it is not, by nature, tempted by ‘resistance’ rather than by ‘collaboration’ or vice versa. Workers are human beings like everybody else, actors who simultaneously experience feelings that are varied or in any case different and not necessarily homogeneous. The portraits sketched by Orlando Figes, for example, bring this out very clearly for the beginning of the Soviet era³⁵: as good citizens, workers overwhelmingly accepted their new situation, their new social status, their new role in the professional space. In short, they tried above all to comply with and adopt the standards of the new regime—with the exception of their relationship to religion, which they often practiced in secret, though this did not turn them into opponents of the regime. Even the former professional elites (lawyers, doctors, teachers, engineers and architects) were integrated and often incorporated into the new Soviet political economy despite their ‘bourgeois origins.’ On the one hand, labeling them as ‘enemies of the people’ was neither widespread nor systematic; it was based on circumstances, it was random, and it was defined, above all, by the political strategies of the moment. Second, and most importantly, those professional elites who remained in the Soviet Union did their best

to enhance their skills in the hope of preserving at least a part of their lifestyles and their former privileges and see their know-how and expertise recognized. However, it is difficult to describe their members as 'collaborators.' The latter were indeed simultaneously guided in their behavior by passivity, fear, desire for withdrawal, shame and inferiority (linked to their status—known or hidden—of 'bourgeois' or 'kulaks') and by the will to live, to be recognized for their work, their intelligence, their values, the desire to climb and not fall down the social ladder. For all these groups, it was therefore less a matter of personal or political identity (i.e. 'resistant' or 'collaborator') than a professional and social question: to be recognized, to be integrated as a 'normal' and 'decent' member into society, to show their success through their dynamism and assiduous attendance at work. In any political context, different forms of rejection and attraction, fear and hope, demobilization and motivation are closely intertwined; the multidimensional nature of work is not thought of continually, or necessarily, as contradictory.³⁶ As studies of censorship and political policing suggest, there is another reason why it is not possible to argue in the binary terms of 'resistance'/'support' in the world of labor: the political meaning of the labor done is not necessarily understood or, in the daily routine, is gradually lost, blurring the awareness both of 'collaboration' and of 'distance,' 'indifference' and 'opposition.' In the case of the GDR, for example, the effectiveness of the Stasi and 'participation' in political surveillance could not be explained solely by the logic of a job well done, by fear and gratification, by the assurance of well-being and a decent life. This efficiency entailed adherence to certain values and the general objectives of the socialist project (equality, redistribution, access to another type of well-being) and the national project (based on patriotism, the struggle against fascism and the defense of the country), and it was also linked to professionalization and the desire to safeguard professional standards in dynamics that were neither known in advance nor controlled.³⁷ It was also explained by all the processes of the professional and social production of indifference, such as the diffuse techniques of repression, whose coercive character was concealed by the use of technocratic procedures, such as the acronyms OPK and OV³⁸: by making it possible to ward off unwanted questions, these latter referred to what was institutionalized, and thus indisputable: they thereby lost their meaning.³⁹ Other processes at work were the socialization of police officers, informers and censors and the desire to 'be like everyone else,' like other police officers, informers and censors: in short, a process of normalization. People were thus in the

presence of a ‘hermeneutic power’ (Bourdieu), or a ‘cultural hegemony’ (Gramsci), which rationalized interpretative and representational practices in line with a political ideology, which defined, institutionalized and reproduced the parameters of legitimate knowledge, and thus rendered censorship and control increasingly vague and indefinite, less and less discernible and opposed to the ‘normal’ work of actors, whether they were workers, bankers, merchants, intellectuals or artisans.

Primo Levi produced a marvelous account of these ambiguities in his account of ‘grey zones’ where he shows how impossible it was to distinguish between and contrast ‘victims’ and ‘oppressors.’⁴⁰ Starting from the famous novel by Manzoni and his ‘love of distinctions,’ he showed that there is a need, in the process of understanding, of increasing the number of criteria of analysis and differentiation in order not to fall into a simplistic and misleading Manichaeism: actions and decisions need to be broken up as much as possible. In other words, one needs to take into account, in an analytic way, the multiplicity of behaviors and almost infinite diversity of their sources, understandings and meanings⁴¹; and one needs to agree with Weber that, more often than not, we can only ‘shed light on a fragment of connections between conditions and actions,’ and not offer any totalizing explanation.⁴² If we think about the ‘grey zones,’ we will cease to think in binary terms. They force us to tackle head-on the far more complex and disturbing issue of that mass of ‘witnesses,’ in the words of Raul Hilberg,⁴³ who are neither victims nor executioners, neither those who enforce repression nor those who suffer it, neither collaborators nor members of the resistance, but the vast majority of people, that ‘grey zone in the middle whose attitude is often decisive for the outcome of a conflict,’⁴⁴ although, for reasons as diverse as life, they were unable or unwilling to clearly and consistently choose a ‘camp.’ From this point of view, which decisively takes into account the element of contingency, domination cannot be regarded as a controlled exercise of power, of strategies or certain decisions, but as a process that is simultaneously uncertain, incomplete and partial, a process of multiple actions and various and concomitant understandings of reality.

NOTES

1. Aly, *Hitler’s Beneficiaries*.
2. H.A. Turner, *German Big Business and the Rise of Hitler* (New York: New York University Press, 1985) [1], was one of the first to

show that the role of large-scale industry had been exaggerated and the regime had been mainly financed by the Party and by the traditional economic segments of the German Right and Extreme Right, while T. Mason, 'The primacy of politics. Politics and economics in National-Socialist Germany,' in S.J. Woolf (ed.), *The Nature of Fascism* (New York: Vintage Books, 1969) [2] suggested that the Third Reich had been an 'exceptional' form of the modern state that had achieved an unusual degree of autonomy from the forces and interests of capital. See also Tooze, *The Wages of Destruction*, Chap. 4, and Crew, 'General introduction.'

3. Crew, 'General introduction.'
4. Tooze, *The Wages of Destruction*, p. 114.
5. *Ibid.*, Chap. 6.
6. Kershaw, *Popular Opinion and Political Dissent in the Third Reich, Bavaria, 1933–1945* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 2002; first published in 1983) [3].
7. P. Hayes, *Industry and Ideology. IG Farben in the Nazi Era* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1987) [4].
8. This has been demonstrated by the latest research on the group: S.H. Lindner, *Inside IG Farben: Hoechst during the Third Reich*, transl. by Helen Schoop (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2008) [5].
9. P. Hayes, *From Cooperation to Complicity. Degussa in the Third Reich* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2005) [6].
10. G.D. Feldman, *Allianz and the German Insurance Business, 1933–1945* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2001) [7].
11. On the analysis of these tax laws and their fundamental role in the implementation of the discriminatory laws against the Jews, see S. Meinl, 'Stigmatisés, discriminés, pillés. Les lois fiscales anti-sémites dans l'Allemagne du IIIe Reich,' *Revue d'histoire de la Shoah*, 186 (January–June 2007): 109–129 [8]. More generally, on the administrative harassment of the Jews, see Bajohr, 'Aryanisation' in Hamburg.
12. Feldman, *Allianz and the German Insurance Business*.
13. Hibou, *The Force of Obedience*, especially Part III ('Negotiations and Consensus') and "'Nous ne prendrons jamais le maquis". Entrepreneurs et politique en Tunisie,' *Politix*, 21(84) (2008): 115–141.
14. See Chap. 1.

15. Hibou, *The Force of Obedience*, especially Part III.
16. All these expressions and commentaries, and those that follow, are taken from interviews carried out in January–March 2005.
17. Buseman, quoted in P. Hayes, ‘Les “aryanisations” de la Degussa AG. Histoire et bilan,’ *Revue d’histoire de la Shoah*, 186 (January–June 2007): 70 [9].
18. Interview, Tunis, March 2005; these ideas are developed in Hibou, “Nous ne prendrons jamais le maquis.”
19. For Marx, the economy as such did not exist: see, for example, *Grundrisse*. For Weber, the economy is by definition hazy and free-floating, dependent on the context and the interests of every society: see, for example, his *Collected Methodological Writings*. Meanwhile, Polanyi suggests that the political project of a ‘disembedded’ economy is not viable: as we have seen, the institutional separation between ‘economics’ and ‘politics’ is utopian: see Polanyi, *The Great Transformation*, and the analysis of this in A. Buğra, ‘Karl Polanyi et la séparation institutionnelle entre politique et économie.’
20. M. Weber, ‘The “objectivity” of knowledge in social science and social policy,’ p. 109.
21. Ibid.
22. Ibid.
23. Brown, *Power and Persuasion*, Chap. 4, which develops this argument on the basis of the ‘ideology of silence,’ a notion taken from C.J. Halperin; A. Lüdtke, *Des ouvriers dans l’Allemagne du XXe siècle* develops this idea on the basis of the concept of *Eigensinn*.
24. Traverso shows this for the period 1914–1945, which he describes as a ‘European Civil War’: Traverso, *Fire and blood: the European civil war 1914–1945*, transl. David Fernbach (Brooklyn, NY: Verso, 2016) [10].
25. This point is made particularly clear in the works by Colliot-Thélène, Kalberg and especially Grossein quoted above (note 2 to the Preface), and by Dobry, ‘Légitimité et calcul rationnel.’ For a discussion in terms of the social sciences, based on concrete field-work, Bayart (ed.), *La Réinvention du capitalisme*, especially the introduction, ‘L’invention paradoxale de la modernité économique.’
26. S. Žižek, *Did somebody say totalitarianism?*, p. 65.
27. T. Mason, ‘The containment of the working class in Nazi Germany,’ in Mason, *Nazism, Fascism and the Working Class*, pp. 231–273;

- A. Lüdtke, *Des ouvriers dans l'Allemagne du XIXe siècle*; Kershaw, *Popular Opinion and Political Dissent in the Third Reich*; N. Werth, 'Renaissance et dilemme du mouvement ouvrier en Union soviétique.'
28. Among many others, for a general, theoretical point of view, Foucault, *Security, territory, population*, lecture of 1 March 1978, and 'The Subject and Power,' in *Essential works of Foucault, 1954-1984*, transl. Robert Hurley and others, 3 vols, vol. 3: *Power*, ed. James D. Faubion (London: Penguin Books, 2002), pp. 326-48. On radicalism in general, C. Collovald and B. Gaïti, 'Questions sur la radicalisation politique.' On anti-Semitism, Gellately, *Backing Hitler*. On routine, the defence of corporatist and personal interests, and work well done in East Germany, see Combe, *Une société sous surveillance*. On the way, people had to compromise with existing rules and invent internal strategies, Hübner, 'Les ouvriers en RDA.' On the conditions in which the Tunisian judge Yahyaoui went over to the opposition, see Ligue tunisienne des droits de l'homme, *Rapport annuel 2003*, Tunis, and Hibou, *The Force of Obedience*, especially pp. 146-7 (Chap. 5).
 29. Quoted by J. Vladislav, 'Vaclav Havel ou la responsabilité en tant que destin,' in V. Havel, *Essais politiques*, p. XII.
 30. R. Paxton, *Vichy France: old guard and new order, 1940-1944* (New York: Columbia University Press, 2001) [11]; J. Sweets, *Clermont-Ferrand à l'heure allemande* (Plon: Paris, 1996) [12]; P. Burin, *La France à l'heure allemande, 1940-1944* (Paris: Le Seuil, 1995) [13]. See also Collovald and B. Gaïti (eds), *La Démocratie aux extrêmes*; Mariot, 'Faut-il être motivé pour tuer?,' and Kott, *Le Communisme au quotidien*. More generally, Žižek, *Did somebody say totalitarianism?*, pp. 138 ff.; he describes socialist material production as 'the site of creative fulfilment' (p. 135).
 31. A. Lüdtke, *Des ouvriers dans l'Allemagne du XXe siècle*; Hübner, 'Les ouvriers en RDA.'
 32. Havel, 'The power of the powerless.'
 33. This has been shown in L. Israël's work on French lawyers in Vichy France: see Israël, *Robes noires, années sombres*; for lawyers and judges in Tunisia, see Hibou, *The Force of Obedience*, and especially E. Gobe and M. B. Ayari, 'Les avocats dans la Tunisie de Ben Ali: une profession politisée?,' *L'Année du Maghreb* (2007): 105-132 [14].

34. For the historical analysis, see A. Lüdtke, *The history of everyday life: Reconstructing historical experiences and ways of life*, ed. by Alf Lüdtke, transl. William Templer (Princeton, NJ; Chichester: Princeton University Press, 1995) [15] and S. Abrevaya Stein, 'The permeable boundaries of Ottoman Jewry,' in J. Migdal (ed.), *Boundaries and Belonging. States and Societies in the Struggle to Shape Identities and Local Practices* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2004), pp. 49–70 [16]; in terms of the historical political sociology, see J.-F. Bayart, *The Illusion of Cultural Identity* (Chicago: The University of Chicago Press, 2005) [17]; in terms of political philosophy, see for example Rancière, *Hatred of Democracy*.
35. Figs, *The Whisperers*.
36. For the GDR, but also for a more systematic and theoretical approach, see A. Lüdtke, *The history of everyday life*.
37. On the Stasi, see Combe, *Une société sous surveillance*; Boyer, 'Censorship as a vocation,' and Zatlin, 'Out of sight.'
38. F. Jobard, 'L'ajustement et le hiatus. La prison allemande au cours de l'unification,' in P. Artières and P. Lascoumes (eds), *Gouverner et enfermer. La prison, un modèle indépassable?* (Paris: Presses de Sciences Po, 2004), pp. 83–110 [18]: OPK meant 'personal investigation' and OV, 'operational process.'
39. Marcuse, in *One-dimensional man*, does not analyze the police and prison system of East Germany but the acronyms symbolizing the international system such as NATO.
40. P. Levi, *The drowned and the saved*, transl. Raymond Rosenthal; introduction by Paul Bailey (London: Abacus, 1989) [19]. 'The Grey Zone' is the title of Chap. 2.
41. For an analysis of the book by P. Levi, *ibid.*, and of Manzoni's novel *The Betrothed*, see C. Ginzburg, 'Un document à la loupe,' lecture given at the IHTP-CRIA seminar, 20 June 2006, EHESS, Paris.
42. Colliot-Thélène, *Études wébériennes*, p. 19.
43. R. Hilberg, *Perpetrators, victims, bystanders: the Jewish catastrophe 1933–1945* (London: Secker & Warburg, 1995) [20].
44. Traverso, *A feu et à sang: de la guerre civile européenne. 1914–1945*, p. 11, commenting on Hilberg's work on the triangular relationship between executor, victim and witness in mass violence.

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Neither ‘Bribery’ Nor ‘Compensation’: Unforeseen Configurations

The idea of intentionality also runs through the thesis of ‘bribery,’ ‘compensation’ and ‘exchange.’ Governments, on this view, implement economic policies *so as* to keep ‘hold’ over their population, to seem attentive to their needs, to offer an image of caring. They seek to encourage people to accept losing some of their freedom or the existence of discriminatory measures *in return* for economic or social benefits. It is one of the strengths of Götz Aly’s view of the Third Reich, ‘a dictatorship in the service of a people’¹: as perfect demagogues, the Nazis ensured a fair distribution of food, maintained the stability of the Reichsmark, paid the families of soldiers, developed the welfare system and set up many job creation programs *so as* to win the approval of the population, especially the most vulnerable among them. *So as* to ensure these gains, the regime pursued a policy of struggle against inflation, it rejected devaluation and introduced a complex system of quotas for foreign currency, centralized clearing of imports and exports and differentiated exchange rates. It decided not to increase taxes and even to reduce them for certain categories of the population.

HOW HITLER FAILED TO BRIBE THE GERMANS

One can criticize this argument on several levels. From an abstract, theoretical point of view, accepting this interpretation would amount to assuming a well-defined causal relationship between economic measures and political

outcomes, a capacity for a subtle, well-informed (but also ‘objective’ and irrefutable) overall analysis on the part of the rulers, a mastery of all the cogs of the mechanisms involved, the absence of events that might constrain or disturb the order thus decreed, an ability to effectively mobilize the necessary resources and dispositifs, the knowledge and especially the control of interactions between these state strategies and the games played by actors, the compatibility of these latter with government ambitions, and the implementation of policies with known and unambiguous effects.

Critique can be more concrete, based on a historical and empirical analysis of the situation in question. The economic historian Adam Tooze explicitly challenged this far too mechanistic and functionalist vision through a detailed, contextualized analysis of the Nazi economic policies. Without being exhaustive here, or claiming to summarize a work that is impressive for the delicacy and detail of its demonstrations, I would like to highlight some of its most striking conclusions. Tooze shows that the expected economic benefits were achieved only at the cost of a total militarization of society (with radically more destabilizing effects), of a staging or a falsification of the data, and of widespread restrictions in economic development. He notes especially the intricacies of decision-making processes, the weight of constraints arising from historical circumstances and past policies, the diversity of the reasons leading to the choice of a particular policy, the inability to anticipate the consequences of those choices, and the ‘snowball’ effects that were often unexpected and difficult to control. Many measures were implemented for other purposes, like the jobs that were created by the militaristic orientation of the Third Reich more than by civilian employment programs. Similarly, decisions were made under duress, such as the decision not to raise taxes. Tooze also demonstrates that the expected ‘virtuous’ consequences did not happen; thus, stripping the Jews of their property and looting occupied countries ultimately contributed to only a small part of the financing of the war, so that the government had to make the Germans bear most of its weight. Conversely, there was no uniformity of opinion among the Nazi leaders, and political choices dictated economic measures whose consequences had to be managed as best they could. For example, the decision not to devalue was primarily a nationalist act aimed at asserting sovereignty and Germany’s rediscovered grandeur, and it created constraints that could be overcome only by the arms race and the outbreak of war.

The previously published research of Alf Lüdtke and the historical sociology of *Alltagsgeschichte* also comprise another type of implicit critique

of the functionalist and intentionalist interpretation proposed by Götz Aly.² They highlight the ambiguity of the actors—and their practices—when faced with the decisions made by the leaders of the Third Reich. Basically, the Germans did not accept the Nazi order because they were 'bribed' by the benefits offered to them; they were not necessarily able to make a sort of 'balance' sheet of what they could clearly identify as a 'loss' and a 'gain.' More certainly, they could be sincerely convinced by certain decisions or certain arguments, they shared certain presuppositions of the regime, they saw in it opportunities for social advancement or recognition, they wanted to live normally, they derived a benefit from certain measures, they did not give political meaning to certain events or certain actions, and they had, on a daily basis, to 'get by' and preserve their normal existence. Contrary to some criticisms that have been made of it, *Alltagsgeschichte* cannot be considered to be a depoliticized social history, ignorant of politics and the ways in which decisions are made; instead, this historical trend highlights, with subtlety and nuance the diversity of ways of exercising power, including among that part of the population often portrayed as passive or submissive. In this sense, it suggests that the Nazis could not bribe the Germans: in contrast, the contours of Nazi domination were admittedly defined by political violence and ideological projects of the government, but in interaction with the logics of action and the specific interests of different segments of the population (whose understanding of the measures taken and current developments was itself differentiated). Other studies have shown that people were not interested and motivated by their belonging to a particular social class or profession; formed by a multitude of vectors, they could be lukewarm in their response to certain data from a professional or social point of view, but could be more positive about other measures, styles or political postures, such as the restoration of national sovereignty and Germany's place in the concert of nations.³ What did convince the German workers—for example, the improvement of working conditions, the development of social policies, and the recognition of the honor and the quality of German work—could be offset by Nazi attacks against the Catholic Church, by overt racism and the campaigns explaining and promoting euthanasia. The thesis of 'bribery' is here, too, shown as inadequate: Nazi leaders did not necessarily know how this or that measure would be understood and how their general action would be assessed.

Finally, as in any other situation, the assessments made by individuals were guided by singular and personal impulses that did not necessar-

ily take into account the political dimension in which they lived. These individual experiences were diverse and silence might be an expression of acceptance or a desire to keep one's distance, a wait-and-see attitude or a form of disinterest. In other words, it is impossible to infer the existence of a causal relationship between a specific measure intended to express the solicitude of the state and the (even tacit) acquiescence of the population. Although the contours of the exercise of domination are partly shaped by the interaction between a state project, the way it is understood by the actors concerned, and professional and social strategies, these power relations bring into play not a homogeneous people or even well-defined classes, categories, or groups, but what Karl Marx called the 'living human being' or 'individual subjective life,'⁴ which renders our perceptions and ways of understanding reality infinite in number. It is in this sense, too, that Max Weber's insistence that we be sensitive to the 'jumble of infinitely manifold, possible valuations'⁵ is particularly relevant: we do not know in advance how a particular individual or a particular group will react to any measure, or how an actor will understand a certain decision. The contours of domination are also made up of these uncertainties and these attempts, which adds a degree of randomness to projections and makes the 'bribing of the population' unlikely.

THE DEVELOPMENTAL STATE'S VOLUNTARISM IS AN ILLUSION

Asian countries were analyzed in terms of 'developmental states' in the 1990s, which will allow me to return, in greater detail, to a dimension of the thesis of bribery or compensation, namely an idealized and simplified analysis of the functioning of the state and its bureaucracy. Although some proponents of the developmental state openly say that the soft authoritarianism of Asian countries meets the needs and demands for development and economic growth,⁶ most of them do not explicitly put forward the link between economic efficiency and the authoritarian nature of the state. However, this relationship underlies their analysis, as suggested by the way they describe the success of the 'Asian tigers.' For them, in fact, growth and development are provided by a state—strong and authoritarian—which can choose, make decisions, and implement them; it knows what it must do, the directions that need to be followed, the resources that are to be mobilized. It knows the goals to be attained: industrialization, increased competitiveness, and the development of an export strategy.⁷

It plays an interventionist role for the well-being of the population by directing all economic decisions: it thus intervenes both extensively and selectively to promote plans, distribute subsidies, grant subsidized loans, create monopolies and protect competitive sectors or those which are becoming competitive. Through this activism, the state is legitimate and its authoritarian nature is, as it were, compensated by its economic efficiency⁸: because the state apparatus is composed of competent and honest technocrats rather than politicians who are always likely to be personally interested and corrupt, it is rational, dedicated to the primary objective of growth and development, and enjoys a particularly high degree of autonomy in relation to social and political pressures in that it knows its population, and responds to its requests (expressed in terms of economic and social rights rather than in terms of political demands); because it is rational, the state is able to calculate the efficiency and functionality of growth.

This thesis is very unpersuasive, despite its fame and success, largely due, it is true, to its adoption by international organizations and donors in need of intervention models and 'good' economic policies to promote.⁹ It is misguided, first, in its mechanistic and functionalist nature¹⁰: economic bureaucracy, as a representation of the state, is able to replace the political with administration. Bureaucrats rule, politicians reign. The function of politicians is, surprisingly, not to engage in politics but to create the necessary space for bureaucracy so that it can implement its development project.¹¹ In this context, the economic miracle was due to the operation and the very characteristics of the state apparatus, composed of technocrats selected on their merits and indifferent to the appetite for power, deaf to their personal interests, docile and always competent, all sharing more or less the same ideas, the same conceptions, the same assessments. We are therefore faced with a sanitized and instrumental conception of a state able, as in a bubble, of defining lines and projects, sticking to them and achieving its goals. This thesis conveys a particularly weak conceptualization of the state.¹² This is viewed as primarily rational, it is a decision-making apparatus that generates policies consistent with technocratic rationality conceived as unified and indisputable. Being synonymous with economic bureaucracy, the state is the instrument of pure economic reason. It is thus partly depoliticized. The distinction into defined and separated spheres of the administrative and the political annihilates the latter: politicians appear marginalized in the face of technocrats, technocratic rationality prevails over political rationalities, the autonomy of the state ensures a stability in which political games appear to be non-existent.¹³

This is the most ethereal expression of a depoliticized technocracy which is, as we showed above, empty and illusory.

The state appears to be *one*: it is presented as a coherent, single entity, unified and reified. Technocratic competence explains unity in decision-making and in the definition of economic policies; it allows for a clear definition of the hierarchized priorities; it results in cohesion between bureaucrats. Neither competition between skills and between different forms of expertise, nor alternative knowledges, nor diverse conceptions of knowledge and the concrete economic forms it takes are envisaged. There is neither tension nor any plurality of logics nor contrasts between financial criteria and development criteria, between economic projects and national security objectives, between the quest for national (or international) legitimacy and certain industrial or commercial decisions. In particular, the state appears isolated from society, outside of it. Labor relations are, to a surprising extent, overlooked by these studies, even though their analysis suggests a conflictual nature, an inconsistency and conflict that are quite incompatible with the irenic vision of the developmental state.¹⁴ There is no contradiction within modes of accumulation or between modes of accumulation and conventional political logics, whether these are driven by the need to ensure that the state is well ordered, that it can be maintained, or that it can survive. There is no specific economic dynamic outside the state and actors do not invest places of power, they do not appear active in the success of development projects or, if they are, they are merely responding to incentives from the state, its injunctions or its prohibitions. Intermediate bodies are not much in evidence, and structures of the party (or parties), associations, religious groups, trade unions and local, regional or community organizations seem to play a passive role or no role at all.¹⁵ Finally, this thesis is unambiguous and uni-causal: if there has been any development, it is through *this* form of state, the relevance of its economic policies and its legitimacy, a legitimacy that arises from this silent trade-off between growth, well-being and a certain form of authoritarian domination.

Things are of course much more complicated. In Korea, for example, the procedures for monitoring labor were not primarily aimed at the country's economic development, but were intended to meet security needs. The developmental state had, however, developed a corporatist system in the years 1960–1980, but this system was partly linked to an anti-Communist obsession and based on coercion. Strategies and repressive measures that were designed to prevent the labor force from becoming

organized radicalized the unions which constituted, for many years, a continuing challenge for the Korean state. Korea thus appears to be less of a strategist, less rational and developmentalist, than myopic, burdened by contradictions and inconsistencies in its actions, its assessments and its interpretations, often changing tactics depending on political circumstances and security concerns, and compromising, at regular intervals, its long-term economic strategy.¹⁶ This form of the exercise of power resulted in the complete opposite of the effects expected from the 'developmental state': it introduced conflict into social relations, it politicized the world of labor (which had mainly been refractory), and generated distrust of the state and 'its' public policies. In Taiwan, the population may have partly supported the state's developmental strategy, but it is undeniable that it was also disciplined by coercive means, as well as by the efficacy of anti-Communist discourse, the rhetoric of war, the national security and survival of the country, and the myth of the recapture of the mainland. The state was not obsessed with growth and development. The 'economic miracle' did not result from the coherence of economic state institutions, a particularly effective organizational structure or a competent and autonomous technocracy, but from a concatenation of factors including—in addition to massive US aid—political alignments, temporary alliances, the mobilizing of resources, including private resources, and pressures within the bureaucratic apparatus and outside it (pressures that, moreover, were tied to circumstances and ever-changing).¹⁷ Especially, due to the dispute between the People's Republic of China (PRC) and Taiwan, the development of trade and the economy was the result more of private initiatives than of any voluntarist policy. The irony of the story lies in the fact that the Taiwanese government did, on the contrary, significantly slow down this trade by trying to redirect Taiwanese investment from mainland China to Southeast Asia and by penalizing Sino-Taiwanese trade by a whole system of permits, prohibitions (e.g. direct sea and air links), quotas (including on imports) and bans (e.g. the involvement of Taiwanese banks in financing these operations).¹⁸ This does not mean that private entrepreneurs were the only ones to have a vision and to define economic policy. This policy was, instead, the result of the interaction between private dynamics and state policies that, though unilateral, were sometimes conflicting or contradictory, partly influenced by issues of security and sovereignty, partly by issues of growth and well-being, though equally nourished by the trans-nationalization of trade.¹⁹ Contrary to what is claimed in the usual caricatures and common preconceptions, the Taiwanese government was

neither united nor depoliticized; it was, instead, fragmented, ambiguous in its decisions and in its objectives; and its authority was riddled with conflict and competition for access to resources between factions and between the supporters of different economic policies; it witnessed a growth in patronage and cronyism. These different factions and tendencies did not hesitate to forge political alliances, to seal equally political compromises with segments of the party or more or less organized elements of society, including economic interests.²⁰ In short, the model of the developmental state definitely did not involve an authoritarian dirigisme as effective as it would have liked to suggest, and the thesis that promotes such an idea is in thrall once again to the voluntarist and rationalist illusion of a *deus ex machina*.²¹ Even if Asians ‘got by’ under authoritarian regimes, it is not sure that this is *because* they were conquered by the technocratic miracle of developmental state. The theory of the developmental state is unable to render the complexity of the relationship between public policy and actual results, the multiplicity of actors and logics at work, the tangle of interests and dynamic processes, the inconsistency of decisions, and the ambiguity of social and political relations.

THE IMPOSSIBLE MACHIAVELLIAN CALCULATION OF ‘DEPOLITICIZATION’ IN TUNISIA

The thesis of the ‘contract’ between the regime and certain categories of the population illustrates a second dimension of the voluntarist argument: not being formalized, it is claimed that this contract had a diffuse existence, materialized through various measures and public policies; the latter would therefore be difficult to challenge, as they might undermine the foundations of the exercise of power. The Tunisian case of consumer credit comprises an exemplary variation of a reading in terms of the Machiavellian calculation of ‘depoliticization.’

The popular interpretation has it that, despite the very high and thus dangerous level of household debt, the central government did not challenge the unbridled policy of consumer credit; this could indeed have destabilized the country and undermined the existing contract between the ‘regime of Ben Ali’ and ‘his’ middle class, a contract based on the trade-off between rising living standards and the lack of freedom. The idea of compensation underlies this interpretation: in any conflict with power, let alone attempts at rapprochement with an opposition that had been simmering since the late 1990s, consumers all had something to lose in

terms of well-being, standard of living and lifestyle.²² This interpretation is based on the implicit assumption that consumers and indebted households had something to defend, namely their material well-being, and would not rebel in case they were dispossessed of these advantages; and conversely, peaceful debt, over-consumerism and corruption are, as it were, the counterpart, silent but consciously constructed by the 'regime' to ensure social peace and the lack of political commitment. In other words, it is based on the assumption of a politicized consumption, which is often found, for example, in the analysis of the GDR of 1970–1980²³: the political identity of a member of the resistance is assigned to individuals through what they consume (in the case of products coming from the West, such as jeans, rock music recordings and stickers that advertised products unavailable in the East)—such is the argument inspired by the work of James C. Scott, which confuses being and doing, neglects the plurality of sources of consumption and their potential contradictions, destroys all the ambiguity of practices and *imaginaires*, and reifies actors and institutions by standardizing the social sphere and obscuring the diverse and complex linkages between state and society.²⁴

With this argument of contract and compensation, the idea of 'depoliticization' as an intentional political strategy emerges. Paul Veyne has undoubtedly provided one of the most trenchant critiques of this idea in his book *Bread and Circuses*. He denounced the theory of depoliticization as a Machiavellian calculation made by the Roman authorities, as an exchange against the granting of satisfactions to the people. For Veyne, men do not conform to the ideal of the autonomous, politicized citizen, they are not 'naturally' politicized and interested in politics; however,

politics, from the point of view of governments, consists in ensuring that the governed get involved as little as possible with what concerns them; more precisely (and everything lies in this nuance), the government manages to be the only protagonist to get involved because the governed are, I do not say conditioned, but rather spontaneously willing to let it do so; conditions can be added, of course; there are states that are more police-run and mystifying than others. But the depoliticization dear to dictatorships is nothing other than the forced culture of a natural apoliticism.²⁵

If we apply this line of argument to the case of the debt economy in Tunisia, we find that this did not involve a link between consumption, debt and corruption that was intended to depoliticize the population or keep it in a very convenient state of apoliticism; it was not the central

government that favored consumption on credit so as to depoliticize the middle class, or that created the debt economy. But, by accommodating to a situation that forced itself upon it, the central government tried to avoid this population becoming politicized by not impeding a dynamic process that was perceived positively by the latter because it allowed it to gain access to a lifestyle to which it aspired.²⁶ This interpretation is confirmed by the sequence of events, as long as we take into account the multiplicity of actors and strategies, and move away from official discourse and popular rumors. Consumer credit was neither created nor managed by public authorities: quite the opposite—the latter did everything they could to prevent its emergence and development. The Central Bank refused, until the mid-2000s, to let banks and specialized institutions open consumer credit activities, precisely because of the control issues involved. But, faced with an extremely strong popular demand and the interest of financial professionals, companies managed to enter this market surreptitiously. Thus, BATAM, an electrical appliance company, benefited from liberalization, the spread of ‘Western’ lifestyles and various legal loopholes to offer its customers consumer loans at usurious rates. In few years, BATAM virtually became one of the central institutions for the reproduction of the Tunisian political economy independently of any government action, though it ultimately enjoyed the tolerance of the authorities. The company was in fact responding to a real ‘social demand,’ constantly reproduced and constantly growing. Success was even greater as its activity echoed one of the regime’s favorite rhetorical themes, namely the well-being of the middle class; as well-advised actors, the owners of BATAM exploited this coincidence of interests by highlighting as often as possible this leitmotiv of power and their proximity to the country’s top government figures. The company found itself in trouble in 2002, and in 2003 had to file for bankruptcy and go into receivership.²⁷ The public authorities intervened vigorously: while the company and its managers should have gone to court for deliberate non-payment of suppliers and misuse of corporate assets, the reaction was the complete opposite, and focused on defending the economic and social order. ‘National protection’ was the line adopted by the authorities, who, instead of letting the liquidation of BATAM run its course, if only as an example, appointed as proxy an agent of the Central Bank—a former CEO of two of the largest banks in the country—and obtained a judicial settlement out of court. Everything was done to avoid collapse, and a crisis cell met for months, twice a week, to successfully reschedule and restructure the debt, consolidate the accounts and obtain new loans.²⁸

This rescue—as well as several others that followed—certainly suggests that the issue of consumer credit had become political not only because of the echo it met with in the population but also due to the conflicting strategies adopted by the public authorities: the rhetoric of the middle class and the modernization of Tunisian lifestyles was not necessarily compatible with the obsession with control and the low expectations on the part the authorities. But, simultaneously, this rescue shows that public authorities ‘ran after events’ rather than they shaped and even forestalled them: they were not the ones who imagined the practice of consumer credit taking place through companies selling household goods; they were not the ones who foresaw the positive fall-out of this dispositif or, subsequently, the negative fall-out when its mechanisms seized up. However, they were quick to take over a business that was doing well by granting it the label of ‘national champion,’ and by facilitating its borrowing and development needs; then they were quick to understand the political implications of the company going bankrupt and did everything to avoid popular discontent turning into political discontent. After the fall of BATAM and the authorization of the micro-credit given by the Central Bank to financial institutions, it took over companies selling credit according to a logic that, here too, had not in the least been anticipated by the regime²⁹: faced with the frenzy of consumption that, despite economic difficulties and macro-economic imbalances, refused to diminish, microcredit openly deviated from its stated objective and financed consumption more than it created activities. These diverted practices were not halted—not because this might upset an alleged contract between the state and its middle class, but because the mechanisms involved had emerged from the same logics of inventiveness and appropriation, uncertain attempts and a posteriori reactions—in a word, from improvisation. And also because ‘politics is not an exchange, even an unequal one, between homogeneous quantities’ but is an ‘accommodation to heterogeneous situations’³⁰—situations that, I might add, are unexpected.

TWISTS AND TURNS OF THE IVORIAN SOCIAL CONTRACT AND THE COFFEE AND COCOA COMPLEX

The third and final dimension of the voluntarist thesis takes the form of a critique of the social contract insofar as it allows domination. In this case, unlike the variant previously mentioned, the political objective is clear and is indeed openly proclaimed: political stability is sought through

the construction of compromise and the establishment of institutions. I want to show that the existence of an explicit contract does not prevent labyrinthine developments and an exercise of dominion that is much less predictable and clearly identified than what is claimed. Such was the case of the Houphouët-Boigny project in Côte d'Ivoire following the country's independence.

The organization of the coffee and cocoa sector in that country in the years 1960–1990 is often described as a ‘complex,’ a word which expresses, in concrete economic policy terms, the alliance between the state, producers (farmers and agricultural workers) and firms: very favorable and guaranteed prices to reinforce specialization, export quotas, a wide-scale opening of the country to migrants and the granting of land to those who work it so as to increase the acreage that can be cultivated, and a clientelist organization of the bodies for stabilization and regulation—including the Stabilization Fund (the Caisse de stabilisation, or Caistab). This set of measures and institutions symbolizes the political contract, the ‘bribing’ by depoliticization of the population and its acceptance of what is, after all, an authoritarian regime.³¹ In the guise of a *rentier* liberalism, Houphouëtism thus based its stability and legitimacy on an explicit political contract in the shape of a quintuple alliance: with the ‘bourgeoisie of growers,’ often coming from the administration; with international firms who participated closely in this extraverted patronage system; with immigrant labor, which was accepted provided that it supported the single party; with intermediary elites in the south, who were promised an upward social mobility based on educational capital and access to the administration; and finally, with the urban middle classes, direct or indirect beneficiaries of the rent. This clientelist social contract was combined with redistributive public policies (health, education, infrastructure) and an ideology touting prevarication and personal enrichment as legitimate ways of development, the philosophy of the ‘peanut roaster.’³² From the mid-1990s, this contract, it is suggested, disintegrated because the governing class had not been able to maintain its terms, which depoliticized the political economy of coffee and cocoa³³: on the death of Houphouët-Boigny, ‘father of the nation,’ the liberalization of the sector removed from the hands of the new leaders the tools needed to achieve this political compromise. In this context, community relations became tense, especially around the issue of land and more broadly the crisis experienced by the dispossited that made it possible for people to live together and integrate ‘aliens’ (immigrants and internal migrants).³⁴ Associated with a politicization from above of the

national question through the rhetoric of Ivorian identity, the development of xenophobia and the ethnicization of politics brought the country to the brink of civil war.³⁵

However, as in the case of Tunisia, this story should take into account the continuous practices of redefining arrangements, accommodations and the very conditions for alliances, especially because negotiations are pre-eminent over any other form of relationship, starting with a hypothetical attempt to depoliticize the main (economic) places of power. The economic policies developed during the first decades of independence clearly intended to build up a socio-economic contract. The coffee and cocoa complex of 1970–1980 was indeed very political. It reflected a business strategy and especially a political strategy whose ambition was quite explicit: to foster the emergence of an Ivorian capitalism with the help of the state, on the basis of a galaxy of small companies revolving around the Caistab and foreign businesses. This Ivorian capitalism was politicized from the outset³⁶: its history is that of conflicts, alliances, tensions and compromises over the division of the products of economic rent between national actors, between public and private actors, and between national and foreign actors. But, at that time, the compromise based on the coffee and cocoa sector was not the sole creation of the central power. While the modalities of regulation and the operation of the famous Caistab undeniably reflected the intention to control and the desire to stabilize the country, including politically, this system was not as effective as it seems. The growers' unions quickly became autonomous, and the history of the Caistab itself is a story of compromise and tension, of groping attempts and reactions (which were themselves often unpredictable) to government pressure as well as to the international situation, the positions adopted by traders and farmers' organizations, and the vagaries of the internal bureaucratic life of the Caistab and of Ivorian political life.³⁷ Moreover, it is difficult to say that the compromise depoliticized growers, traders and more generally the Ivorian population, so that Houphouëtist power could fully master the mechanisms of domination, a domination which was, in any case, not as absolute as is often said. It is more accurate to say that the compromise—which thus underlies the differences of opinion, tensions, power relations and conflicts between actors—contributed to shaping the contours of expression of the political and thereby domination, relying in particular on a logic of control via economic inclusion, through access to labor and land.

The crisis of the 2000s expresses less a deviant form of the complex and new or increased politicization of previously depoliticized economic actors

than the appearance of a new political configuration, one born of changes in the balance of power between the actors present. The modes of the exercise of power are more violent today than in years 1960–1980, more nationalistic, even xenophobic.³⁸ Liberalization has led to the restructuring and repositioning of political interests by expanding the private sphere and its specific modes of negotiation and political arrangement through the dismantling of the Caistab and its replacement by new private entities and new regulatory institutions in the sector.³⁹ Especially since the 2000s, despite the technocratic and neutral claims of donors, development mechanisms have largely been reshaped by the context of the civil war. In this sense, there is no disintegration of an allegedly depoliticizing contract, but its reconfiguration, one that is still political. Nor do we find any overdetermination of the conflict by the manipulation of wealth from coffee and cocoa,⁴⁰ but rather an investment of the conflict in all areas of Ivorian society, starting with its central segment, which has always been the coffee and cocoa sector.⁴¹ War and violence have exposed political divisions which had hitherto not been able to find expression, as they were stifled or took place in a policed world; they have highlighted conflicts that are now the subject of litigation or directly resolved by gunfire; they have brought into the political game new players, including new ‘big men’ from previously marginalized areas and elevated to the status of a newly favored elite by the coming to power of President Gbagbo. Associated with the economic liberalization of the sector, they have greatly contributed to this dynamic of pluralization and dissemination of logics of domination and control, providing new opportunities for accumulation to actors who were previously excluded.⁴²

What we have here, then, is not a new politicization of the sector and its instrumentalization by political actors in conflict, but rather a political restructuring which is also reflected in the economic field. This restructuring reveals tensions, compromises, and challenges, in short, power relations between actors that are far more complex than the theory of a socio-economic contract implemented by the central government would suggest. This restructuring is reflected in particular by the spread and the privatization of clientelism parallel to the dissemination of violence, in a process of increased complexity and diversification of the functions of patronage and clientelist regulation, which contributes to an increased fragmentation of the power of control that promotes opacity and predation.⁴³ Yet this restructuring is based on a liberalization of the coffee and cocoa sector that is, to say the least, random and chaotic with, for example,

new investors who find themselves, quite against their will forced to 'play the game' of political allegiances, and growers who have to deal with new rules and new local cronies. Those who drew up this compromise were also, from the start, numerous—this meant there were many interrelationships and made any interpretation in terms of compensation or bribery even less persuasive. The Ivorian compromise also worked on international alliances, between the state and foreign firms, and between the state and donors, starting with France.⁴⁴ Foreign firms opened the door to Ivorian capital. With liberalization, there was an initial movement empowering national actors over foreign actors; but soon, in the face of financial difficulties, dependencies vis-à-vis foreign companies were both reinforced and diversified with the arrival of new firms, especially American ones. In recent years, filled with violence and armed civil war, these international relations have also remained highly political, even if their meaning has changed. The term 'second independence'⁴⁵ has been used in this connection to refer to a political nationalism that, in order to assert itself, needed to oppose France, the former colonial power. This demand resulted, in the economic field, in a denunciation of large foreign groups, perceived as submarines sent out by donors, mainly from France, even if the main multinationals in the coffee and cocoa sector are American.⁴⁶ Strategies of extraversion form part of the modes of exercising power in Côte d'Ivoire and involve games of economic and political reconstruction, and thereby negotiated accommodations. The Ivorian example thus suggests that, even in the presence of a state strategy that explicitly contemplates political instrumentalization or even neutralization, the analysis in terms of contract and compensation is necessarily undermined by the 'arts of doing' of subaltern actors, by the vagaries of political and economic, national and international life, by the specific strategies of all the groups involved, by unexpected reactions to measures or events, by contradictions between objectives and clashes between interpretations.

By reducing the political to a relationship between the sovereign and his or her people, the thesis of the bribe, compensation, contract or exchange is both over-simplified and shows an 'institutionalized egotism.'⁴⁷ The sovereign is never alone, and each of his actions at the same time establishes his dependency on its subjects. Intermediaries always play a role and, in a given society, every individual plays a role in mediating or responding to someone else.⁴⁸ Yet, whatever their nature and power, these intermediaries have their own game to play, they interpret, each in their own way, guidelines and measures, they incorporate the more or less concealed constraints

of fear and violence in different ways, and they react to the actions of the sovereign unpredictably. Conflicts not only between leaders and elites but also between the single actors of the set of chains of interdependence that comprise society are as numerous as are their interests and their representations, and their understandings of things present and past. The intentionalist thesis of compensation ignores all these dynamics, these ever-changing patterns formed by individuals and society, the rulers and the ruled in their mutual relations and their mutual dependencies. It obscures the ambiguity of the political link and neglects the dangers of an analysis focusing on patterns of action and one-dimensional and unidirectional causal relationships. It ignores, finally, the fact that it is impossible to define a priori the limits of the political and thus the contours of domination.

NOTES

1. This is the subtitle of the French translation of Aly's book, *Hitler's Beneficiaries*.
2. Lüdtke, *History of Everyday life*, and *Des ouvriers dans l'Allemagne du XXe siècle*, as well as Crew (ed.), *Nazism and German Society*, and Mason, *Nazism, Fascism and the Working Class*.
3. Mason, 'The containment of the working class'; Kershaw, *Popular Opinion*, and 'The "Hitler Myth". Image and reality in the Third Reich,' in Crew (ed.), *Nazism and German Society*, pp. 197–215.
4. Marx, *Grundrisse*, and *Capital*: see the discussion in Henry, *Le Socialisme selon Marx*.
5. Weber, 'The meaning of "value freedom" in the sociological and economic sciences' in *Collected Methodological Writings*, p. 328.
6. For an academic analysis, see R. Wade, *Governing the Market. Economic Theory and the Role of Government in East Asian Industrialization* (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 1990) [1]. For a defence of this position by one of the protagonists of this policy, the former Prime Minister of Singapore, K.Y. Lee, *From Third World to First. Singapore Story, 1965–2000* (New York: Harper Collins, 2000) [2].
7. C. Johnston, *MITI and the Japanese Miracle* (Stanford, CA: Stanford University Press, 1982) [3]; M. Woo-Cumings (ed.), *The Developmental State* (Ithaca, NY: Cornell University Press, 1999) [4].
8. This is not merely an illusion shared by a great number of analysts, it is also a belief held by the politicians themselves. L.K. Yew, former

president of Singapore, demonstrates as much when, in his political testament, he speaks of the programs of accommodation and redistribution that, through the material benefits they procure, lead to political stability and the sharing of a common destiny fed by renewed nationalist feeling and gratitude for the state's solicitude: see Lee, *From Third World to First*.

9. See, for example, the report of the World Bank that holds up Asian policies as a model: World Bank, *The East Asian Miracle. Economic Growth and Public Policy* (Oxford: Oxford University Press for the World Bank, 1993) [5].
10. The following critique is mainly based on R. Boyd and T.W. Ngo (eds), *Asian States. Beyond the Developmental Perspective* (London; New York: Routledge, 2005) [6].
11. Wade, *Governing the Market*.
12. See especially R. Boyd and T.W. Ngo, 'Emancipating the political economy of Asia from the growth paradigm,' in Boyd and Ngo (eds), *Asian States*, pp. 1–18.
13. For a critique of this dualist vision that separates the administration from the political and naturalizes the institutional separation between economy and state in the frame of the developmental state, see B. Jessop, 'A Regulationist and State-theoretical Analysis,' in Boyd and Ngo (eds), *Asian States*, pp. 19–42, and more generally Jessop, *The Future of the Capitalist State* (Cambridge: Polity Press, 2002) [7]. In the context of African states, to whom donors hold up the Asian model as an example, see Ferguson, *The Anti-Politics Machine*, and Hibou, 'Political Economy of the World Bank Discourse in Africa' and 'International financial institutions.'
14. This is well brought out, in the case of China for example, by the works of J.L. Rocca and A. Kernen: Rocca, *La Condition chinoise*, and 'Three at once. The multidimensional scope of labor crisis in China,' in Mengin and Rocca (eds), *Politics in China. Moving Frontiers*, pp. 3–30; Kernen, *La Chine vers l'économie de marché*, and 'Des ouvriers chinois réapprennent la manif,' *Critique internationale*, 16 (July 2002): 14–23 [8]; J.-L. Rocca and A. Kernen, 'La réforme des entreprises publiques en Chine et sa gestion sociale. Le cas de Shenyang et du Liaoning,' *Les Études du CERI*, 37 (January 1998) [9].
15. In this area, the richness of the analyses contained in the various contributions in Mengin and Rocca (eds), *Politics in China*, and

- Boyd and Ngo (eds), *Asian States*, for example, contrasts with the poverty of those based on the notion of the developmental state.
16. H. Koo, 'Social contradictions of the Korean state,' in Boyd and Ngo (eds), *Asian States*, pp. 129–144.
 17. Ngo, 'The political bases of episodic agency in the Taiwan state.'
 18. F. Mengin, *Fragments of an Unfinished War* (London: Hurst, NY: OUP), 2015 [10].
 19. F. Mengin, 'Taiwanese politics and the Chinese market. Business's part in the formation of a state, or the border as a stake of negotiations,' in F. Mengin and J. Rocca (eds), *Politics in China*, pp. 232–257.
 20. Ngo, 'The political bases of episodic agency in the Taiwan state.'
 21. However, this voluntarist illusion is not confined to authoritarian countries. For a critical analysis of the voluntarist illusion in the case of French democracy, see R. Delorme and C. André, *L'État et l'Économie. Un essai d'explication des dépenses publiques en France, 1870–1980* (Paris: Le Seuil, 1983) [11].
 22. Interviews, Tunis, December 2002 and December 2003; Paris, November 2003 and February 2004. This is also clear from the communiqués of Raid/Attac-Tunisie. But this interpretation does not apply only to popular explanations and is also found in scholarly works such J.P. Bras, 'Croissance économique et autoritarisme politique en Tunisie: le dilemme,' *Naqđ*, 19–20 (Autumn–Winter 2004): 157–166 [12].
 23. K. Verdery, *What Was Socialism, and What Comes Next?* (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 1996) [13]; Berdahl, *Where the World Ended*.
 24. Scott, *Seeing like a State*; for a critique, see for example P. Geschiere, 'Le social standardisé. L'État contre la communauté?,' *Critique internationale*, 1 (October 1998): 60–65 [14], and Bayart, *The Illusion of Cultural Identity*.
 25. Veyne, *Le Pain et le Cirque*, pp. 93–94.
 26. This is the argument in Chap. 2 of my book *The Force of Obedience*.
 27. The explanatory factors of this failure are manifold: a headlong rush forward, poor management, under-capitalization and excessive debt, the laxity of the authorities and the firm's board of directors, and a blind confidence in the system of personal relations and reputation. All these data were obtained during my successive sessions of fieldwork in Tunisia, including December 2001, December

2002 and December 2003. Various articles (whose information was strictly controlled) came out in the press, for instance in the weekly *Réalités*.

28. Interviews, December 2003, and local press 2003.
29. H. Meddeb, *Courir ou mourir*.
30. Veyne, *Le Pain et le Cirque*, p. 660.
31. B. Contamin and H. Memel-Fotê (eds), *Le Modèle ivoirien en question* (Paris: Karthala, 1997) [15], especially B. Losch, 'À la recherche du chaînon manquant. Pour une lecture renouvelée de l'économie de plantation ivoirienne,' pp. 205–230.
32. See F. Akindès, *Les Racines de la crise militaro-politique en Côte d'Ivoire* (Dakar: Monographie du Codesria, 2004) [16].
33. P. Hugon, 'Côte d'Ivoire. Plusieurs lectures pour une crise annoncée,' *Afrique contemporaine*, 103 (Summer 2003): 107–125 [17]; D. Cogneau and S. Mesplésumps, 'Les illusions perdues de l'économie ivoirienne et la crise politique,' *Afrique contemporaine*, 103 (Summer 2003): 87–104 [18].
34. See the remarkable work by J.-P. Chauveau on this question: 'Question foncière et construction nationale en Côte d'Ivoire. Les enjeux silencieux du coup d'État,' *Politique africaine*, 78 (June 2000): 94–125 [19]; J.-P. Chauveau and K. S. Bobo, 'Crise foncière, crise de la ruralité et relations entre autochtones et migrants sahéliens en Côte d'Ivoire,' *Outre-Mer*, 11 (2005), pp. 247–264 [20], and 'La situation de guerre dans l'arène villageoise. Un exemple dans le Centre-Ouest ivoirien,' *Politique africaine*, 89 (March 2003): 12–32 [21].
35. See the issue of *Politique africaine* edited by Bruno Losch, 'Côte d'Ivoire, la tentation ethno-nationaliste,' 78 (June 2000) [22], and R. Banégas and B. Losch, 'La Côte d'Ivoire au bord de l'implosion,' *Politique africaine*, 87 (October 2002): 139–161 [23].
36. See for example Y.A. Fauré and J.-F. Médard, *État et Bourgeoisie en Côte d'Ivoire* (Paris: Karthala, 1982) [24], and, for a dependentist reading, S. Amin, *Le Développement du capitalisme en Côte d'Ivoire* (Paris: Éditions de Minuit, 1967) [25] See also B. Contamin and Y.A. Fauré (eds), *La Bataille des entreprises publiques en Côte d'Ivoire. L'histoire d'un ajustement interne* (Paris: Karthala, 1990) [26].
37. Losch, *Le Complexe café-cacao de la Côte d'Ivoire*.
38. R. Banégas, 'Côte d'Ivoire. Les jeunes "se lèvent en hommes"'. Anticolonialisme et ultranationalisme chez les Jeunes Patriotes

- d'Abidjan,' *Les Études du CERI*, n°137 (July 2007) [27]; and 'Côte d'Ivoire. Patriotism, ethnonationalism and other modes of selfwriting,' *African Affairs*, 105(421) (October 2006): 535–552 [28].
39. B. Losch, 'Libéralisation économique et crise politique en Côte d'Ivoire,' *Critique internationale*, 19 (April 2003): 48–60 [29].
 40. For analyses indebted to P. Collier see, among many others, 'Doing well out of war. An economic perspective,' in M. Berdal and D. Malone (eds), *Greed and Grievance. Economic Agenda of Civil Wars* (Boulder, CO; London: Lynne Rienner Publishers, 2000) [30], taken up by Global Witness in its analysis of the conflict in Côte d'Ivoire: see *Chocolat chaud. Comment le cacao a alimenté le conflit en Côte d'Ivoire* (Washington, DC: Global Witness Publishing, June 2007) [31].
 41. This is magisterially shown, in a very different context, by R. Marchal and C. Messiant when they criticize the aforementioned thesis: R. Marchal and C. Messiant, 'De l'avidité des rebelles. L'analyse économique de la guerre civile selon Paul Collier,' *Critique internationale*, 16 (July 2002): 58–69 [32].
 42. R. Banégas, A. Toh and Y. K. Adingra, 'Côte d'Ivoire. The political economy of a citizenship crisis,' in F. Gutiérrez and G. Schönwälder (eds), *Economic Liberalization and Political Violence. Utopia or Dystopia?* (Toronto: IDRC-Pluto Press, 2010), pp. 126–172 [33].
 43. Ibid.
 44. The word and the political idea of 'Françafrique' are in fact an invention of Houphouët-Boigny and not a critique of France's African policy. Indeed, the word then had a completely positive connotation. See J.P. Dozon, *Frères et sujets. La France et l'Afrique en perspective* (Paris: Flammarion, 2003) [34].
 45. J.F. Bayart, 'Gbagbo et les "nouveaux nationalistes",' *Le Nouvel Observateur*, 6 February 2003, p. 64 [35].
 46. Losch, 'Libéralisation économique et crise politique en Côte d'Ivoire.'
 47. Brown, *Power and Persuasion*.
 48. E. de La Boétie, *The Politics of Obedience: The Discourse of Voluntary Servitude* (Auburn: Ludwig von Mises Institute) [36]. He writes: 'the despot subdues his subjects, some of them by means of others,' p. 73. N. Elias, *The court society*, transl. Edmund Jephcott, revised edition (Dublin: University College Dublin Press, 2006) [37].

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No Absolute Control, but Convergences and Circumstantial Opportunities

The voluntarist illusion discussed in the previous chapter does not only take the form of the thesis of bribery, contract or compensation. It also flourishes in the thesis of the belief in mastery and in the effectiveness of the economic measures taken by the authorities for the purpose of control. I would, however, like to emphasize the role of chance, the circumstantial element and therefore the fragility of state dispositifs. They only make sense when they are put into practice, and this, to put it differently, also depends on the actions undertaken by other institutions, other groups, other individuals and on how the latter understand them. Often, more often than not, indeed, the exercise of domination is not the result of a policy implemented intentionally by the state, an illustration of the desire for control and efficiency of explicit mechanisms of surveillance. It is due, rather, to the encounter, often a result of the circumstances and vicissitudes of life, between these state endeavors and other interests or logics, other behaviors, other understandings and interpretations of reality—in other words, the integration of mechanisms of power into economic daily workings, in conflicts and the formation of compromises or less formal arrangements between actors.

CONVERGENCE OF INTERESTS BETWEEN NATIONAL
AND INTERNATIONAL ACTORS: THE EXAMPLE
OF THE CONTROL OF TOURIST ZONES

As well as other sources of income, tourism is the subject of increasing attention from governments of developing countries that have understood that this activity was being reinforced by globalization and becoming one of the main levers of growth. As a result, states are seeking to attract customers by promising exotic and curious things and simultaneously ensuring their comfort and safety.¹ Public authorities are also concerned about the tranquility of tourists, who are not to be ‘disturbed.’ In authoritarian situations, they aim to ‘contain’ the local populations that are put under surveillance and integrated into the mesh of the safety net. In this context, circumscribed tourist areas, types of enclaves in the country, are especially preferred as they can simultaneously be an additional technique of control.² Confining tourism to enclaves is, then, a strategy designed by the state, particularly in the Arab world, which have since the 2000s run an increased risk of violence.³ Yet if we stick to this interpretation, we will be taking too hasty a view of the current developments in the organization of tourism and yet again allowing another bias, another voluntarist illusion, to surface.

The case of Egypt suggests that political domination and control of the population located in tourist areas do not result only, or even mainly, from an explicit policy of isolation and surveillance. Control of Egyptian populations living in the cultural high spots of the Nile Valley is actually shaped by the unexpected conjugation and convergence of different dynamics that drive the major actors of the sector.⁴ The system of tourist enclaves around the main archeological sites is indeed an organizational and business strategy of the major tour operators, a strategy defined at the global level—and this has been the case since the nineteenth century, although this strategy is now deployed in the basis of new dispositifs.⁵ It is also, simultaneously, an option that is ideal for the state managers of tourism and the Egyptian security officials, who are desperate to keep tourists outside the ‘terrorist field’—which means outside of Egyptian society, in the current political context where Islam is widely equated with terrorism. This system is also supported by three types of global actors: transnational actors of land management, such as the UNDP and the World Bank, which operate by ‘projects’; international and national experts in tourism and urban geography who tout the fashionable credo of the attraction and

developmental effectiveness of territorial organization in gated communities; and specialists in the management of major archeological sites that advocate the logic of heritage. This confinement to specific areas, finally, is perceived very positively by the major private actors in Egyptian tourism: this organization encourages professionals to the detriment of individuals who are trying to eke out a living by their direct contact with tourists; it allows them to target tourism and thus centralize flows and favor large structures; it facilitates the uptake and concentration of the distribution networks of the tourist rent; and it helps to restructure clientelist networks in favor of those actors closest to the central government.

Although tourist policy in Tunisia is relatively different, being centered on another segment—beach tourism for the masses, mainly—we find a similar situation here and the ghettoization of this activity is only partly the result of a state strategy.⁶ At a time when domestic tourism was not considered, the geographical concentration on the coast, in well-defined areas, usually far from cities, was the result of careful planning and a rational vision on the part of state engineering. Tourist zones were defined and their land managed and serviced by the administration according to plans designed by it; so as to be able to enjoy the many benefits given to the sector, it was imperative to invest in one of these zones. Even in the 2000s, this strategy applies to attempts to diversify and increase quality: it is always the integrated projects and the model of complexes and holiday resorts that are favored by the authorities.⁷ In addition, the authorities discouraged contacts between foreign tourists and Tunisians, who were, for example, prohibited from entering hotel enclosures and the nightclubs or bars that are part of them. Whereas, in the years 1960–1970, young people visiting nightclubs sometimes had their heads shaved by the police during the ‘moralization campaigns,’ under Ben Ali, a law targeted Tunisians who pestered tourists.⁸ But this state ‘strategy’ of isolation is made possible and is effective only because it meets other logics, other objectives and other modes of organization that prove, at present, to be converging.⁹ First, as we have seen, major operators now prefer organizational structures closed on themselves, resulting, in the case of mass beach tourism, in specialized ‘club’ formulas, with ‘all inclusive’: the ideal type of these is medical tourism or tourism for senior citizens. They have their own strategy of strictly controlling access to resorts. For Tunisia, they also targeted a certain type of customer, with low income and social status, who prefers this type of organization.¹⁰ Second, despite the inherently international nature of the sector, Tunisian tourism is mainly in the

hands of national actors who follow the demands of their foreign contractors. But they are very dependent on the state because of the provision of their training, their drastic level of debt and their incessant demands for financing and protection, and so they have always followed the mode of development that receives most help. Therefore, the supply of tourism apart from hotel complexes and tourist zones defined bureaucratically is extremely low. We should also not overlook the administrative burden—which prevent them from taking measures required by professionals to diversify their supply—nor the Tunisian lifestyle which, largely influenced by the political life of recent decades, finds expression in a sociability that is very family oriented and not much concerned with external socio-cultural activities. Finally, the professionals of tourism and the political authorities share a common vision, that of a Tunisia that is safe, smooth, free of theft, scams or attempts to pick up sexual partners. This Tunisia guarantees the success of popular, family-oriented tourism and ensures that foreign currency can be obtained and international recognition won.

The thesis of a consciously designed and purposely built confinement as a mechanism to control populations thus seems too one-dimensional. It does not take into account the many reasons—sometimes specific to Tunisian and Egyptian societies or some of their actors, sometimes dependent on globalized economic and financial strategies, and sometimes dependent on caricatural representations or highly specific interests—that shape the forms of organization and functioning of the tourist sector, and thereby the relations of power in one of the most important sectors of their economy. For example, large groups operating in the sector would simply need to change strategy for the current convergence to be questioned, and with it the effectiveness of population control.

INDETERMINATE ECONOMIC DISPOSITIFS AND THE EXERCISE OF DOMINATION

There are many examples in other sectors, other countries, other times. And we should first point out that economic dispositifs are inherently indeterminate with respect to the exercise of power. The political significance they assume depends simultaneously on the economic environment, interactions with internal and external constraints and with other dispositifs, games played by actors and power relations between them, and practices largely dependent on contingent events and the vagaries of life in society.

Sheila Fitzpatrick has shown that rationing, the system of coupons and the closed distribution of consumer goods at work places in the USSR in the 1930s were absolutely not designed as technologies of power and were not knowingly implemented by the Soviet leaders to manage the economy of shortage and control the population in an ideological way. They resulted from trial and error, improvised measures and provisional dispositifs often adopted as emergency measures and never considered as permanent instruments.¹¹ But once these were in place, their perpetuation and consolidation can be explained by their relative effectiveness in ensuring the functioning of the economy of 'shortage' that was not only a matter of restriction and asceticism, and by the fact that the leaders found these dispositifs advantageous as they allowed them also to gain a dominant position, to organize their patronage networks and draw material and political benefits from them.¹² The way they took root was also an echo of the way the regime was not in full control and could not entirely impose its values on a 'wayward' society, chaotic and difficult to control, which deployed forms of 'resistance,' or rather strategies of bypassing and avoidance, despite the ideological straitjacket and the permanence of political violence.¹³ Such conducts, strategies and counter-conducts allowed people to play with the rationing system and closed distribution, making it tolerable, even, for some of them, advantageous. Indeed, one of the consequences, however unintended, of this system was to exacerbate the distance between the richest and the poorest. In no case was rationing imposed. Instead, there was an unexpected linkage between shortages (created by the imbalance between wages and prices, and production rates), consumer behavior (lack of alternatives for the poorest, and thus an increased shortage of the cheapest and most essential goods), and repression and bureaucratic control. This linkage also left room for the bazaar and small businesses alongside the second economy.¹⁴ Similarly, in Portugal, it was neither Salazar nor his cronies, nor the *rentier* and commercial oligarchy, nor the conservative landowners who ruled the country, set the pace for the plan, or defined the rules of discipline and the criteria for normalization. The exercise of domination was defined by the quest for a balance to be struck and constantly rebuilt between conflicting and competing interests, through endless arbitration, constantly updated, between different political tendencies and divergent economic logics.¹⁵ Over time these criteria arose from the subtle game that unfolded in infinite interactions between different dynamics, sometimes converging and often conflicting, which set different groups against one another: the

proponents of liberalism and protectionism, of opening up to Europe and falling back on the colonial empire, political liberalization and the strictest population control, the granting or not of benefits, the policy of industrialization and the pro-landlord and pro-landowner bias, the policy of the strong escudo and a nascent developmental strategy, freedom to migrate and control of labor, the modernization of the bureaucratic apparatus and the maintenance of notabiliary structures, corporatism and a certain economic liberalism, the deepening of transatlantic relations and the development of relations with Europe and Spain.

Even the exclusion of Jews from the local economy of the Third Reich followed, for example in Hamburg, much more indirect routes than those imagined by the Berlin authorities because of conflicts between the Ministry of the Reich Economy, the Economic Council of Hamburg and the party's base in the city, but mainly because local dynamics.¹⁶ While the main lines had indeed been drawn by the Nazi central authorities, local actors had substantially modified the course that was actually taken: 'anti-Semitism from below,' combined with conflicting directives from political and state entities at first had the paradoxical effect—quite contrary to that intended—of strengthening 'Jewish' businesses by encouraging them to increase their efficiency and to cope with levies. It was not until the late 1930s that economic exclusion took place mainly through the exploitation of professional disputes, by the liquidation of 'competitors' in favor of medium-sized 'Aryan' companies and by the 'revenge' of former employees who profited directly from Aryanization or used their knowledge of the business and their professional relationships to guide and define the terms of the appropriation. Aryanization as such did not happen to a huge degree until the laws of 1938.¹⁷ If 80 % of 'Jewish' companies in Hamburg had not been liquidated in 1937, this was admittedly not only because the city was a metropolis and the mutual assistance and organization of the Jewish community were effective but also because the 1933 boycott campaign proved a failure and the pressure on 'Jewish' firms had the unexpected effect of rationalizing them, modernizing them and making them lower their prices, leading them to innovate. Here we see the importance of the games played by the actors, and more specifically their strategic uses of established constraints and rules. After 1936 and especially in 1938, however, the setting up of institutional structures of repression suppressed the interstices between different normative systems, and therefore the possible room for maneuver. The most brutal repression could find expression more easily now that it encountered unscrupulous personal interests.

Under the Third Reich, too, the political economy of foreign currency exchange offers another illustration of these unintended sequences, this time not in the sense of a dilution of the responsibilities involved and the desired effects, but rather in the amplification of these and a change in the meaning of public policy.¹⁸ Choosing a centralized management for currency was the result, to begin with, of a nationalist vision of monetary and exchange policy, with the refusal to devalue the Reichsmark and an urgent need for foreign currency to rearm the country and elevate its status in the international arena. An entire complex system was thus established in 1934 to maximize reserves and the use of currency. Managed by the Office of Currency Control in 1936, this dispositif did not initially target the Jews in particular; it was primarily intended to regulate, in a highly centralized and interventionist way, quotas for currencies and their allocation to import companies on the basis of receipts brought in by exports, by a clearing system acting on differential values of the exchange rate. But, in a context where foreign exchange was in short supply, the departure of the richest Jews, driven to emigrate by the discriminatory laws, like the rest of their 'community,' was seen as problematic: the nation was thus 'stripped' of a significant portion of its wealth. Financial bureaucrats therefore devised a system to encourage Jews to leave without their resources, by means of predatory taxation, untimely administrative controls and a biased and perverted use of the currency clearing system. Jews who decided to emigrate had to deposit the majority of their assets with the Central Bank; in the absence of agreements with third-party states, they lost all their wealth. If bilateral agreements were signed, they could recover their money in part, but only after a payment in kind had occurred. Thus, contractors participating in *Haavara* (groups of businessmen based in Palestine) could buy German goods with funds from potential migrants, migrants being reimbursed only upon their arrival in Palestine, and only belatedly, as these goods imported from Germany needed to have been sold. It is clear that, in these circumstances, this system did not work: it just took too much time. Despite all the technocratic ingenuity, the forced emigration of Jews and the obsession with short-term currency were two conflicting objectives. The deadlock was complete and the administration calculated that, at the current rate, it would need to wait until the end of the 1940s (over a decade) for all the Jews to have left the country. The low level of emigration was partly explained by the fact that it now had a prohibitive cost due to the harassment of the financial and tax authorities, and mainly the bureaucrats who dealt with currencies. Obviously, this complex economic

policy alone cannot explain the failure of the forced emigration of Jews and the ‘decision’ to resort to genocide; but it is certain that the contradictions and dead ends of the financial, monetary and currency exchange policy of Nazi Germany contributed to the radicalization of the ‘treatment of the Jewish question’ from 1938 onwards. This example also highlights the fundamental part played by bureaucratic initiatives and by the contradictions, tensions, conflicts and trade-offs between conflicting objectives and the different decision-making bodies within the Nazi regime.¹⁹ Thousands of separate measures sent different messages and prevented a guideline for domination appearing clearly. Conflicts between departments, over currency, devaluation, the sectorial policy for raw materials and the management of labor, were reflected in the tensions and trade-offs, so the various logics of action could change meaning and lead to terrible situations.²⁰

ECONOMIC IMPROVISATIONS AND INTERPRETATIONS: HOW INVENTIVENESS AND FREEDOM SERVED DOMINATION

The political significance of economic dispositifs is not, as we have just seen, laid down in advance; similarly, the economic practices that arise from these dispositifs follow tangled paths that pave the way to improvisation and free interpretation of the political guidelines initially given. The following examples will show how these improvisations and interpretations may not only soften but also radicalize the expression of domination; in no case do they make it disappear, but they help to shape it.

‘Improvisation’ and tangled logics, intentional or not, also cover acts of pure repression. Nicolas Werth has shown that, in Stalin’s USSR, violence did not stem solely from an ideological and social logic, but that its dynamics also had to do with the historic importance of mass violence²¹: the varied forms of repression also operated by criminalizing deviant social behavior, a criminalization that was linked less to a systematic desire for extermination on the basis of the criteria of social class than it expressed a world of muddle, laissez-faire, chance and improvisation. Even in the massacres of the Great Terror, chance and misconduct, and the logic of enthusiasm, played a role, and a significant one at that. Although the ‘rationality’ of the murders was clear (with criteria of social origin, nationality, social deviance or the sensitive nature of economic activity), chance played an important role.²² It could take the form of chance encounter, as exemplified by the ‘drunkard’ and the ‘flower seller’—the eponymous book (*L’ivrogne et la marchande de fleurs*) by Nicolas Werth—who met

with law-enforcement agents at the ‘wrong moment,’ or the form of misconduct, and of the enthusiasm of a machine that had gone ‘crazy’ due to the logic of emulation, the need to ‘make the numbers,’ the ease with which objectives could be achieved through ‘group activities’ (with the invention of conspiracies and anti-Soviet organizations), or the permanent injunction to fill ‘quotas’ and ‘overtake’ the performances of neighboring regions. As a result of the social production of indifference by the systematic use of technical considerations and technocratic legitimacy, the meaning of acts of repression was forgotten. Simultaneously, this social production led to a loss of control of the current dynamics: ‘In an absolutely arbitrary environment, everything had become possible—*completely out of control*,’ as Nicolas Werth puts it.

This was indeed the paradox: apparently, the quota of victims allocated by the Center were supposed to regulate—at least in quantitative terms—the repressive activities of local officials. At the same time, the permanent injunction to “fill” ever-higher quotas, in the same way as one would exceed a production plan, could not fail to encourage criminal practices. This injunction opened *a great space for inventiveness and freedom* for NKVD (People’s Commissariat for Internal Affairs) agents, sometimes allowing to resurface an old background of violence comprised of practices rooted in the peasants’ ancestral know-how when it came to killing animals. But was not the reduction of the “enemy” to one “element” among thousands “to be eliminated” fundamentally part of the same approach in which the human target to be slaughtered was turned into an animal and dehumanized?²³

The political economy of quantification offers many other less dramatic examples of the contingent nature of practices of control and law enforcement and the role of invention and freedom in the exercise of domination. The analysis of the way statistics were administered under Stalin leads us, for example, to nuance the idea that the figures were intentionally falsified for the purposes of political conformity.²⁴ Economic and demographic data initially followed tortuous paths between administrations and within the administration that had gathered them. Each user processed the information differently, the priorities of each group being different and differently integrated into the formation of indicators and the interpretation of data. ‘Consumers’ of numerical data affected the production of these figures through the selection of data, and the whole process took place in the framework of the vagaries of political circumstances and economic conditions. As a result, the political economy of numerical data, which

plays a fundamental role in disciplining and disseminating state thought, appears, thanks to the Soviet experience, as more a matter of trial and error and ad hoc reactions than defined by clear ideological lines or definitive decisions. Admittedly, the influence of ideology was fundamental, diffuse but pervasive. As we have seen, Soviet statistics were not confined to the description of a reality, namely socialist reality, they contributed to building it through new categorizations, new methodologies, new tools, new frameworks, new interpretations, new uses of laws or statistical methods. But this rationalist, modernizing, centralist and totalitarian ideology was in its very nature uncontrollable. It led, for example, to an obsession with numbers and quantitative data that assumed such proportions that the mass of information collected was impossible to process. It exceeded the practical capacities of the administration, and even the limits of administrative rationality.²⁵ So there was no other way than to make room for adjustments, improvisation, choices, inventiveness which resulted from confrontations between statisticians, administrators and politicians with different trajectories and points of reference. Purges and the intervention of law-enforcement agencies, starting with the People's Commissariat for Internal Affairs (NKVD), proved that control had been lost. Despite the orders from above, the guidelines, constraints and fear of 'the Boss,' compromises and negotiations were inevitable due to the complexity of the decision-making processes, the multiplicity of administrations and places of influence, the conflicts and oppositions associated with the nature of work, one's position in the hierarchy, the objectives of the different departments, the training of officials and local constraints.

The political economy of numerical data has the advantage of showing concretely the ambiguity of all reference to transparency and objectivity in the very exercise of power. Figures are a place of opacity that allows domination and margins of autonomy, repression and freedom, at the same time. In Salazarist Portugal, the debate on the census figures—which showed a decline in population and which caused the cancellation of this census and the demand for a new survey showing that the population was in fact stabilizing—obscured the (prohibited) debate on emigration to other countries in Europe²⁶; it simultaneously allowed for the development of a coercive labor policy in rural areas, an economic policy favorable to commercial, land and property interests, and the continuation of the colonial enterprise, while developing spaces for autonomy and freedom in the form of illegal emigration (which was in fact tolerated and barely repressed). In developing countries, many studies have shown

how the numerical data (e.g. those for inflation, budget deficit, and major macro-economic aggregates in general) are negotiated between donors and recipient states, according to the international balance of power, the economic situation, and current political and ideological conditions, thus reducing the significance of conditionalities and giving more room for maneuver to governments of recipient countries to face their internal constraints.²⁷ In these countries, transparency is strictly tamed and officialized, thanks to its particularly obscure character: one can show successes, positive developments, progressions and results consistent with national and international expectations; one can publish information confirming these successes or in thrall to banality, neutrality or inconsistency. Failures, doubts and regressions cannot be mentioned. The opacity results as much from material problems, whose importance cannot be underestimated, as from a genuine desire to circumscribe discourse, the production of truths and the way the world is understood.²⁸ An almost exaggerated example of this game with transparency can be found in the way that, in June 2001, Tunisia joined the SDDS (Special Data Dissemination Standard), the name of the initiative proposed by the IMF to promote information transparency by providing certification for practices that meet such standards. Tunisia also participates in the ROSC (Report on Observance of Standards and Codes), which examines the basic standards used in the economic and financial information of the country. Participation in these operations makes mandatory the regular publication of certain data on the websites of the Tunisian government and the IMF. This participation is politically and technically binding, but the Tunisian authorities have always strictly complied with their obligations: the main monetary and macro-economic figures are published regularly, reports are posted online, the internationally accepted statistical norms applied. It has to be said that this transparency is highly selective: reports are toned down and often negotiated in advance, like all official publications of international organizations, as noted above; the IMF is ultimately interested only in aggregated data without taking into account their modes of composition. In short, 'sensitive figures are not really concerned.'²⁹ Above all, the initiative focuses essentially on methods of establishing and regularity in publishing statistics (coverage, periodicity and timeliness of data), on the formal nature of the data, on the application of preferred methodologies and the existence of overlaps; but, stemming from what is primarily a procedural and formal logic, it does not make it possible to judge the relevance of the published data.

Nevertheless, we can understand the value of membership in such an initiative. It primarily strengthens the image of a good student, an economic success, and thus contributes to Tunisia attaining 'good' marks and international ratings allowing access to cheaper refinancing and to negotiate new budgets capable of fostering the formation of internal consensus. It highlights the reformist and modernizing aspects of the Tunisian bureaucracy and actually contributes to a better macro-economic vision of the country, improving its room to maneuver vis-à-vis international financial markets. It is in perfect harmony with the formalist tradition, which does not exclude the use of fiction, as mentioned in the first part of this book. For donors, the operation is in turn part of their catechism and their civilizing mission, while stemming from an exercise to normalize the 'international community' and financial markets; it also plays a part in the fantasy of perfect information, inseparable from the myth of transparency.³⁰ Here we see concretely how the publication of figures and the glorification of transparency allow the exercise of domination, an international domination (with the imposition of financial and accounting standards and principles of 'good governance'), and especially an internal domination (with the self-glorification of the 'Tunisia of Ben Ali,' as transparent as it was well governed, and the consolidation of consensus on the 'economic miracle'). But, simultaneously, this policy of transparency opens spaces of freedom precisely because the SDDS is primarily a technology of power which, in a given formal framework, opens the way for negotiation³¹: as an acronym that refers to 'what is institutionalized' in a form that 'cuts it off from its transcendental connotation,' the sense of transparency becomes an 'official word' and loses any 'cognitive value.'³² Specifically, this formalism of transparency makes it possible to negotiate with donors, as we have seen, who want less to promote transparency as such than to successfully carry out a program, convince as many countries as possible to join the initiative, and show the principle of support for 'good governance'; it also allows for negotiations between Tunisian actors, insofar as the data that pose a problem are not discussed and these silences 'are a shelter for power, anchoring its prohibitions,' but they simultaneously 'loosen its holds and provide for relatively obscure areas of tolerance'³³: what is left unspoken permits practices that might have been thought 'illegal' on the basis of a discourse that seems so constructed that it seems to reduce the exercise of power to control and perfect mastery. These unspoken assumptions and these silences on the limits of transparency in reality give a great deal of room for maneuver to economic actors, starting with those

who are close to the ‘upper echelons of the state’ and who, in complete opacity, benefit privatization, liberalization and fiscal discipline. The lack of debate on the construction of transparency—and more generally the lack of debate in the public sphere—thus conceals negotiations that are ‘limited’ but no less real.³⁴

This interplay between domination and leeway, spaces of control and freedom, is not only specific to numerical data but can also be found in all technocratic economic practices. To continue with the example of Tunisia, the single party’s economic bodies allow for skillful compromise between different positions³⁵: people who disagree with the dominant position, but are willing to deal with the central authority, will accept the presidential will if this can find a new technical formulation that really limits its most negative effects. It is as if silence allowed only for arrangements, fluid and unstable by nature, that were likely to enable (despite tensions and occasional crises) actors with divergent interests to live together, including often divided economic elites, and thereby helped to shape the exercise of domination. Boris Samuel has brought this out very well in his discussion of Burkina Faso with its ‘strategic frameworks,’ those technocratic instruments that are deemed to present, in a homogeneous framework, a unified picture of the state’s economic actions and the objectives of public action.³⁶ Drawing on a detailed analysis of technocratic practices, constantly being transformed at the mercy of external conditionalities, internal constraints and technical innovations, he highlights the role of fuzziness and what he calls the ‘failure’ of these budgeting tools in the exercise of power: the loose conception of strategic frameworks simultaneously allows the exercise of other logics than the rationalization of public action (such as clientelist logics and the exploitation of a certain relational capital) and the development of recurring adjustments to cope with fluctuating and random international recommendations. Insofar as a strategic framework appears as a technical language that structures access to not only the material but also the symbolic resources of power, domination is carried out by an arbitration between the satisfaction of demands (of a ministry, a program, a department, a management) and the arbitrary choices of a few decision-makers. But this domination is not only defined ‘from above’ by reforms imposed by donors and by the highest authorities of the state. It is largely shaped by parallel negotiations in other arenas (access to different budgets of donors, to funds from the presidency, and to extrabudgetary resources of all kinds). The use of internal procedures gives rise to many games of persuasion authorized by the mastery of man-

agement and credit allocation techniques. Various social networks structure the community both of politicians and that of technicians, and they allow for multiple interests. It is therefore understandable that, in practice, innovations related to the implementation of strategic frameworks and techniques of new public management have been multiple and often contradictory.³⁷ Major donors have had to renounce the use of most of the statistical indicators for assessing budget support because they were unreliable and the time frame of their production was uncertain. They have found themselves forced to rely on processes of discretionary negotiation for the measures they wanted to see implemented, thus increasing the centralization of decisions and allowing for tighter control and domination. But, simultaneously, in a logic of modernization and promotion of techniques derived from new public management, these same donors have continued to demand that states use such indicators (however unreliable they are deemed to be) for their own assessment procedures, opening the door to a number of arrangements. Similarly, negotiations on the financing of public policies are based on the use of increasingly sophisticated statistical models that are, however, constantly being redefined and re-discussed but never clearly stabilized. This causes endless meetings about very vague notions: what, for example, is a 'really strategic' measure? It follows that the instructions given to governments to define their policies and defend their financial needs at the time of budget preparation are challenged even before being implemented, simultaneously opening up room for maneuver and discretionary margins of action for the different actors, through contacts with donors or other extrabudgetary circuits, sometimes even within the Ministry of Finance. In short, domination is not only outlined by public policy; it is largely shaped by these negotiations, these arrangements, these improvisations and these effects of persuasion that are far from being determined in advance, and all controllable.

THE UNEXPECTED BUT FUNCTIONAL ROLE OF CONFLICT

In the Soviet Union, contrary to what is often thought, community housing was not selected as the preferred form of housing, neither in ideological terms nor in policing and security terms. Its predominance resulted from highly specific circumstances, the vagaries of history, material and financial constraints, conflicts between administrations and the strategies of the administered.³⁸ Communitarization was initially a transitional measure, adopted as a matter of urgency in 1917 as a response to the cata-

strophic housing situation and the weaknesses in the housing sector. This measure was, indeed, politically incorrect because it used the framework of old bourgeois apartments. However, it was perpetuated for pragmatic reasons; the pace of construction of common houses and, especially, of individual social accommodation, was not sufficiently sustained and, due to the rural exodus, cities saw their population growing extremely rapidly. In addition, many conflicts arose over this issue. Between the services of the ministries concerned, these conflicts were ideological and political; they were linked to the choice of policy that was to be pursued, and led to arguments between intellectuals and architects of different trends, municipal departments, opposing political circles, proponents of urbanization and proponents of de-urbanization. They also concerned the practical implementation of measures even when these had been decided at the highest level, and set the central leadership of the Communist Party, local management committees and housing committees against one another. Anticipatory strategies adopted by the administered also contributed to the imposing of community housing, including the 'choice' of auto-densification. This 'choice' was adopted by families because it gave them the opportunity to select their own roommates and so avoided having to share their home with strangers. Thereafter, there was the weight of habit and the need to adapt to a very particular way of life, as well as the improvement in living conditions through the exchange of services and opportunities for meeting and communication, especially for the elderly. Furthermore, and against the assumption of an omnipotent state, able to fully implement the policies defined by it, the history of communal apartments is a story of the cunning ploys that the residents kept coming up with in the face of political injunctions: the falsification of the number of inhabitants per family, a fanciful interpretation of mandatory norms (sanitary and hygienic norms, the number of square meters per capita per habitant, per couple or per family etc.), the resorting to personal relations and corruption, trading between occupants even when they had not been given official permission, fictitious divorces to receive additional square meters, the transformation of housing into a workplace, the shifting of walls, the use of justice, and so on.

Although, since the early 1920s, communitarization was no longer the official and legitimate policy and was denounced by Khrushchev when he came to power, it made possible the repression through expulsion, especially at the beginning of the revolution and up to the late 1920s, of 'agents of the counterrevolution,' the '*nepmen*' and other 'enemies of

the people.’ Subsequently, these measures were rare, and targeted individuals, ‘asocial’ and ‘marginal’ elements (or people deemed to be so), in particular because of the institutionalization of softer and more imperceptible surveillance methods. The concierges were intelligence agents and, if they were not, they were in any case perceived as such; the use of informers increased, as did practices of denunciation. But this is also where the unexpected dimension of control, policing and surveillance becomes apparent: it was actually the countless conflicts (often trivial or insignificant) between residents of community housing that allowed the state to intrude and sometimes authorized it to discipline and punish (Foucault). Disagreements over square meters and the concrete modes of coexistence, denunciations of illegal practices, rivalries over the distribution of vacated space, conflicts over the choice of cohabitants, disputes on the location of furniture, the breeding of animals or salt meat kept in bathtubs: all these represented an opportunity for the militia to enter apartments, for janitors to intervene, for the Party to impose discipline and for the security services to increase their knowledge of the population. The enforcement of compliance also took the shape of surreptitious practices related to the community lifestyle: the tendency to listen to your neighbors is at once an expression of curiosity and a guarantee of personal safety; defining the rules of life in the community apartment, in terms of noises, smells and the places where objects could be put, all comprised disciplinary practices, as did the sharing of premises and the times they could be used. These lifestyles had a significant impact in normalizing social practices, which were admittedly different from those defined by the regime, but nevertheless contributed to the overall process of political normalization. Therefore, community housing was actually one cog among others in the surveillance of the population, a potential instrument of repression. However effective it was, its control still had effects that were unpredictable, being dependent on other factors, starting with the games played by various social actors.

This example highlights the use of conflicts in power relations. Or more precisely the double game of conflicts in the exercise of domination: the way central government invests in disputes between players on the one hand, and on the other, the way certain actors make strategic use of power relations in conflicts with other players. An analysis of denunciation and informing is very instructive in this context. It is extremely commonplace, and found on all continents, in situations of occupation, revolution and stabilized power, in Roman times as well as in contemporary societies.³⁹

It is based largely on personal conflicts, playing on the confusion between public and private and constituting 'a form of invasion of privacy' by the authorities.⁴⁰ The Nazi regime, for example, made widespread use of open professional conflicts, latent competition, and financial and material interests to detect hostile and dissident behavior, pursue opponents, discriminate against foreigners and repress the Jews.⁴¹ The Gestapo relied mainly on spontaneous denunciations, due to lack of staff, the lack of resources and the inadequacy of the bureaucratic organization of the police services. Denunciation arose less from ideology or political beliefs than from greed and the desire to follow one's own personal interests. The conflictual relationship to others and to society played a fundamental role in the shape of hatred, the expected benefits that would come from harming others, the lure of exercising a certain power over people weaker than oneself, the desire for emancipation and the lust for revenge. Prior to 1938, the gradual exclusion of Jews from the professions and commerce, and then from any economic activity, was achieved by playing on hostilities, professional competition, the knowledge of irregularities in people's situations, the invention of false accusations and various kinds of conflict. To denounce someone was to do a favor to the state, and the state did a favor to informers, by removing one of the parties to the conflict, by resolving a dispute or allowing the appropriation or acquisition at a 'good price' of the goods and property of persons denounced.

In her analysis of the GDR, Sonia Combe suggests even more clearly the double dimension of the game played with conflicts in the exercise of domination and thus the element of the unforeseen, the random and the contingent dimension in surveillance.⁴² The Stasi experienced a shift toward internal security in the late 1950s, when close monitoring of the population was seen as necessary after the revolt of June 1953, with increased migration to the West, dissent in Poland and the Hungarian Revolution of 1956. In order to achieve this goal, the entire population was called on to join in the surveillance; it was a matter of finding out more about society, pervading it and controlling or even repressing it. Associating the population with the mechanisms of surveillance in this way and including the latter in social practices inevitably involved investing in disputes. But, contrary to what had happened in the Third Reich, this 'collaboration' was guided more by the drive toward normalization, recognition, and the desire to live in accordance with the new social norms than by the lure of material gain. This is what explains the rapid spread of informing and the role of unofficial informers in the functioning of the Stasi. But this suc-

cess was the very cause of its relative inefficiency. The logic of surveillance by informing was, first, subverted by the Stasi's belief in its ability to see everything and know everything, a belief which—fueled by the 'fetishism of detail'⁴³—led to an inflation of often unnecessary information that could not be processed.⁴⁴ It was, second, reversed by the tactics and tricks played by the informers recruited, under pressure or the force of circumstances, who provided the Stasi with innocuous details, unreliable data, comments and general assessments rather than with useful information, often helping to produce empty reports.⁴⁵ Meanwhile, the Soviet Union presents us with another mode of the games played with conflicts in the exercise of power, though this mode, too, was based on the same illusion of the omniscience and omnipotence of a state deemed able to know everything and solve all problems, including situations of conflict and discontent.⁴⁶ Calling on people to inform and denounce was, so to speak, traditional in the practices of Russian power, and moral misgivings of part of the populace were no less traditional and widespread. Taking into account this ambiguity, the Bolshevik government immediately set up informing as a mode of government designed less to repress society than to listen to it, like a doctor listening to a patient. Above all, it institutionalized this practice by bureaucratizing it and opening a complaints office. The operation of the Soviet economic system quickly created a high degree of social tensions. However, it was difficult, if not impossible, to incriminate the economic organization of the regime, and discontent was transferred to certain categories of individuals. In bureaucracy, it especially targeted officials in *kolkhozes* and the administrations of districts or provinces, while in industrial organizations discontent was directed against the hierarchy, against managers or foremen. Thus, the complaints office did not really function as a body for improving the bureaucratic system and the control of officials. Over time, it became a mechanism for conflict management and defusing discontent, an instrument for getting your rights enforced and settling your accounts, and a way of showing, on an individual basis, that you were integrated into the regime and on the same side as those in power.

In both of these situations, denunciation appears as a 'refined technique of power.'⁴⁷ It is based on the tension between mutual use of conflicts in society and unequal control of the information thus provided. It works by privatization of the judiciary as well as the police power, of knowledge as well as of the interpretation of life in society. It is precisely this blurring between public and private that is simultaneously a mainspring of domination and organizes its lines of flight.

In general, political ‘intrusions’ policies are made possible only because of the oppositions and conflicts with which society is pervaded. This is the case of Tunisia, for example, where, as elsewhere, the ‘business world’ is the theater of competition, jealousy and petty blows.⁴⁸ Rivalries between different groups and individuals in the same sector are rarely hidden. Sometimes the weight of political connections, the role of party financing or the archaic nature of practices are underlined; sometimes the ‘corruption’ of one or the ‘bestial greed’ of the other are denounced. At all events, the attempts of central government to impose its control are part of the business world, both by an intrusion into existing conflicts between individuals or between visions and by a manipulation of these rivalries to decide between entrepreneurs and to maintain uncertainty—in short, to discipline the milieu. This does not, however, stop these entrepreneurs themselves exploiting these political relations for their own purposes: to disqualify a competitor, he needs simply to be defined as an opponent; to get a contract, you have to say you are close to the head of the cell, a particular adviser or president in person. Conversely, the party, the politicized administration and businessmen related to the ‘clans’ and the presidency invest the entrepreneurial field through these conflicts: they decide between the competitors by forging alliances, investing funds in ‘elect’ companies, directing aid and interventions in partisan or employer bodies, and by encouraging a trend to adopt one kind of policy rather than another. The intensity of these conflicts is amplified by the fact that, for an ambitious entrepreneur, investment in the managerial apparatus is in Tunisia, as in many other countries, a mainspring of economic success: regional employers’ associations and the single manager’s trade union provide a contacts and address book, with regional notables, economic actors and party officials. Managing a union or a regional chamber is sufficiently distinguished and interesting to make it a coveted object for which there is fierce competition; and this emulation is increased tenfold at the national level when it becomes necessary to create ‘balances’ between regions and show that residents of Tunis do not monopolize the reins of power. Similarly, in the Soviet Union in the late 1920s, social origin, political and scientific ideas, and frontal opposition to the Bolsheviks were sufficient to label ‘bourgeois specialists’ as enemies and identify them as people to be ostracized and removed from their working environment; but their outright elimination was often made possible by their internal rifts and the manipulation of these by the central government.⁴⁹

Tensions, contradictions and conflicts between individuals, groups or institutions certainly allow the central government to interfere in social and economic relations and, where necessary, to enforce repression. But they also allow the exercise of cunning and the persistence of places of relative autonomy. In the case of the denunciations and informing mentioned above, formalism plays a part as a force for the loosening of political constraint: in East Germany, the bureaucratization of these practices was finally such that they produced a lot of empty verbiage—too many details, provided in stereotypical language in accordance with formal rules.⁵⁰ This information was often unusable and allowed room for maneuver to grow—so much room in fact, that the Stasi was unable to manage the weariness and discontent that led to the fall of the Wall and the demise of the GDR. In the Soviet Union, the ‘bourgeois’ economists and the statisticians defending a policy rejected by the politicians ‘ought’ to have succumbed to successive Stalinist purges, but many of them managed to survive precisely because the diversity of positions, conflicts between factional groups and ‘bureaucratic anarchy’ opened up spaces for relative autonomy or at least discretion, however small and fragile they were, and however much they could be challenged at any time.⁵¹ The image of these Soviet citizens going to the soup kitchen suggests another form of this ambiguity, which leaves open different perceptions and consequently heterogeneous or non-compliant forms of behavior⁵²: experts in the art of presenting themselves as deserving poor, those citizens undoubtedly fueled the image of a state legitimate in its solicitude, a state which contributed to the improvement of their living conditions and to which they could express appreciation and gratitude; but, considering that the state was obliged to provide them with food, clothing, roof and employment, they could just as well blame it for the insufficient amount of soup distributed and, especially, for its uneven distribution, with the best food actually being reserved for the privileged. One or other of these assessments could win out, depending on events and moods, general conditions and power relations within the community in which they lived, perceptions of political developments and socio-economic situations. These assessments were highly fluid and uncertain, changing and subject to transformations that were often imperceptible but could ultimately prove significant.

Through an analysis of the mundane, the everyday nature of economic behavior and ordinary existence, these examples help to offer, implicitly, a critique of ontological and ahistorical approaches to domination.⁵³ They also highlight the element of contingency and randomness in the

exercise of power and the difficulty in identifying decisions in good and due form, in knowing and controlling decision-making processes, and controlling their effects.⁵⁴ This, of course, is not specific to the exercise of domination or the authoritarian and totalitarian situations analyzed here. Their specificity lies in the emphasis placed by these regimes on voluntarism and the ability to control, on their claim to monitor, control and, if necessary, repress. What perhaps makes them even more specific is the link between this inevitable domination and other dispositifs that are more coherent and more effective, and more based on coercion and violence. The fact remains that contingency is a particularly underestimated element in analyses of domination, and one that needs to be emphasized. The analysis proposed here has tried to show, however briefly, this element of randomness and highlight the way that improvisation, changes in direction and infinitesimal but significant changes resulted less from decisions as such—the arrival of a new leader, the enactment of a law, the implementation of an economic argument or the lessons learned from a failure—than from the unexpected and unscheduled actions of human beings, the life of conflicts and the reversal of power relations, the unexpected and the ‘rough times,’ the indeterminacy of things, the ‘anarchy’ or ‘insolence’ of everyday life, and the ambiguity of words and gestures.⁵⁵ ‘The forces operating in history do not obey destiny or regulative mechanisms, but the luck of the battle,’ as Michel Foucault put it. ‘They do not manifest the successive forms of a primordial intention is not that of a conclusion, for they always appear through the singular randomness of events.’⁵⁶ There is of course no question here of claiming that decisions are never taken, that actions do not have a definite purpose, or that explicit intentions are a mere chimera; but we do need to be sensitive to the complexity and ambiguity of the exercise of power. On the basis of this approach, the examples mentioned above contribute to complicating the question of the exercise of domination, including in the systems considered centralized, in situations of forced consensus and lack of debate. They show the extent of the possible interactions and surreptitious paths of domination: more often than not, there is no consistency in state practice, no clear definitions of policies, no specific decision taken, no stability of choice or uniqueness of representations, but rather a multiplicity of contingent negotiations with and between social groups, in a particular context that simultaneously provides the contours of interpretations, possible meanings and concrete practices of domination.

NOTES

1. V. Azarya, 'Globalization and international tourism in developing countries: marginality as a commercial commodity,' *Current Sociology*, 52(6) (November 2004): 949–967 [1].
2. T. Mitchell, 'Worlds Apart. An Egyptian Village and the International Tourism Industry,' *Middle East Report*, 196 (September–October 1995): 3–25 [2].
3. W. Hazbun, 'Explaining the Arab Middle East Tourism Paradox,' *The Arab World Geographer*, 9(3) (2006): 206–218 [3].
4. S. Gamblin, 'Tourisme international, État et sociétés locales en Égypte. Louxor, un haut lieu disputé,' doctoral thesis, IEP de Paris, December 2007, available at www.fasopo.org/reasopo/jr/th_gamblin.pdf [4].
5. Apart from the first, historical, part of Gamblin's thesis, see Mitchell, 'World Apart,' and *Colonizing Egypt*; Azarya, 'Globalization and international tourism in developing countries'; and W. Hazbun, 'The East as an Exhibit. Thomas Cook & Son and the Origins of the International Tourism Industry in Egypt,' in P. Scranton and J. Davidson (eds), *The Business of Tourism. Place, Faith and History* (Philadelphia, Pennsylvania: University of Pennsylvania Press, 2007, pp. 3–33) [5].
6. Hibou, *The Force of Obedience*, pp. 164–5.
7. W. Hazbun, 'Images of Openness, Spaces of Control. The Politics of Tourism Development in Tunisia,' *Arab Studies Journal*, Autumn 2007–Spring 2008: 10–35 [6].
8. Kerrou, 'Le mezwâr ou le censeur des mœurs au Maghreb.'
9. Apart from Hibou, *The Force of Obedience*, and 'Work discipline, discipline in Tunisia,' see W. Hazbun, 'Globalization, Reterritorialisation and the Political Economy of Tourism Development in the Middle East,' *Geopolitics*, 9(2) (Summer 2004): 310–341 [7].
10. World Bank, 'Stratégie de développement touristique en Tunisie. Rapport de phase 1,' UP'Management, KPMG, THL Consulting, JC Consultants, KA02R20, 13 July 2002 [8]; Fich Ratings, 'L'industrie touristique tunisienne,' Fich Ratings-Corporate Finance, New York and Tunis, 24 June 2004 [9] and 'Le secteur du tourisme en Tunisie,' summary sheet on the economic mission to the French Embassy in Tunisia, 13 December 2004 [10].
11. Fitzpatrick, *Everyday Stalinism*, Chap. 2.

12. On the multiplicity of practices and meanings covered by ‘the economy of shortage,’ see I. Merkel, ‘Au bonheur des petites gens. Publicité, étude des besoins et consommation au quotidien en RDA,’ *Le Mouvement social*, 206 (January–March 2006): 41–57 [11].
13. S. Fitzpatrick, *Stalin’s Peasants. Resistance and Survival in the Russian Village after Collectivization* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1994) [12]; Lewin, *The making of the Soviet system*; Werth, ‘Le stalinisme au pouvoir,’ and ‘L’historiographie de l’URSS dans la période postcommuniste,’ *Revue d’études comparatives est-ouest*, 30(1) (March 1999): 81–104 [13].
14. Hessler, *A Social History of Soviet Trade*.
15. For a general overview, see Rosas, *O Estado Novo, 1926–1974*. On particular sectors: Pereira, *L’État portugais et les Portugais de France de 1957 à 1974*, with regard to policies on migration; and A. Garrido, *O Estado Novo e a Campanha do Bacalau* (Lisbon: Circulo de Leitores, 2004) [14] on the policy of keeping up the supply of that symbolic good, cod.
16. Bajohr, ‘Aryanisation’ in Hamburg.
17. Ibid., an idea he develops to counter the interpretation proposed by A. Barkai in *From Boycott to Annihilation. The Economic Struggle of German Jews, 1933–1943* (Hanover, NH: University Press of New England, 1989) [15].
18. On the political economy of foreign currency in the Nazi regime, see Aly, *Hitler’s Beneficiaries*, especially Chaps. 3 and 8; Tooze, *The Wages of Destruction*, especially (here too) Chaps. 3 and 8; H. Safrian, ‘L’accélération de la spoliation et de l’émigration forcée. Le “modèle viennois” et son influence sur la politique anti-juive du IIIe Reich en 1938,’ *Revue d’histoire de la Shoah*, 186, ‘Spoliations en Europe’ (January–June 2007): 131–163 [16]; Meinel, ‘Stigmatisés, discriminé, pillés’; E. Laureys, ‘Le pillage dans le secteur diamantaire en Belgique,’ *Revue d’histoire de la Shoah*, 186 (January–June 2007): 217–248 [17]; Bajohr, ‘Aryanisation’ in Hamburg.
19. These elements are highlighted in Hilberg, *The Destruction of the European Jews*. See also the article by F. Brayard, “À exterminer en tant que partisans”. Sur une note de Himmler,’ *Politix*, special issue on the figures of decision, 82 (June 2008): 7–35 [18].

20. Gellately, *Backing Hitler. Consent and Coercion in Nazi Germany*, and, for the economic dimension, Tooze, *The Wages of Destruction*.
21. Werth, 'Le stalinisme au pouvoir.' See also Traverso, *Fire and Blood*, and *Le Totalitarisme*.
22. Werth, *L'Ivrogne et la Marchande de fleurs*.
23. Ibid., pp. 212–213 (my emphasis).
24. Blum and Mespoulet, *L'Anarchie bureaucratique*.
25. Mespoulet, *Construire le socialisme par les chiffres*.
26. Pereira, *L'État portugais et les Portugais de France de 1957 à 1974*.
27. The famous articles IV of the IMF and the reports of the UNDP and the World Bank are 'negotiated.' For Africa, see O. Vallée, *Le Prix de l'argent CFA. Heurs et malheurs de la zone franc* (Paris: Karthala, 1989) [19] and *Pouvoirs et politique en Afrique*, as well as B. Hibou, 'La politique économique de la France en zone franc,' *Politique africaine*, 58 (June 1995): 25–40 [20], and *L'Afrique est-elle protectionniste?* For Tunisia, Hibou, 'Les marges de manœuvre d'un "bon élève" économique.'
28. For this whole discussion of the meaning of transparency, I owe a great deal to Olivier Vallée and to Boris Samuel.
29. Interviews with international civil servants, December 2002 and December 2003. For the content and methodology of the NSDD initiative, see IMF, 'Normes et codes. Le rôle du FMI,' Services FMI, Washington, DC, April 2001 [21]; IMF, 'Transparence,' Services du FMI, Washington, DC, April 2001 [22]; Conseil économique et social des Nations unies, 'Rapport du Fonds monétaire international sur la Norme spéciale de diffusion des données et le Système général de diffusion des données,' Commission des statistiques, New York, E/CN.3/2002/22, 5–8 March 2002 [23]. For Tunisia, IMF, 'Rapport expérimental du FMI sur l'observation des normes et des codes: Tunisie,' Services du FMI, Washington, DC, September 1999 [24]. English-language versions can be accessed on the website of the IMF: <http://www.imf.org>
30. F. Lordon, 'Finance internationale. Les illusions de la transparence,' *Critique internationale*, 10 (January 2001): 6–11 [25].
31. On this whole argument (on the discourse of transparency and more generally the discourse on the 'economic miracle' in Tunisia), see Hibou, *Surveiller et réformer*, Chap. 2.

32. All these expressions and the analysis of the acronym are the ones used by Herbert Marcuse for NATO in particular, in *One-dimensional man*, pp. 117–118.
33. Foucault, *History of Sexuality, I. The will to knowledge*, p. 101.
34. Expression taken from O. Feneyrol, ‘L’État à l’épreuve du local. Le réaménagement du quartier “Bab Souiqa-Halfaouine” à Tunis (1983–1992),’ *Monde arabe Maghreb-Machrek*, 157 (July–September 1997), pp. 58–68 [26].
35. Hibou, *The Force of Obedience*.
36. Samuel, ‘Les cadres stratégiques, nouveaux fétiches des politiques de développement?’ and ‘Le cadre stratégique de lutte contre la pauvreté et la trajectoire de planification au Burkina Faso.’
37. F. Giovalucchi and J.-P. Olivier De Sardan, ‘Planification, gestion et politique dans l’aide au développement. Le cadre logique, outil et miroir des développeurs,’ *Revue Tiers Monde*, 198 (February 2009), pp. 383–406 [27].
38. Azarova, *L’Appartement communautaire*.
39. S. Fitzpatrick and R. Gellately (eds), *Accusatory Practices. Denunciation in Modern European History, 1789-1989* (Chicago, IL: Chicago University Press, 1997) [28]; Brodeur and Jobard (eds), *Citoyens et Délateurs*.
40. J.P. Brodeur, ‘Introduction. La délation organisée,’ in Brodeur and Jobard (eds), *ibid.*, pp. 4–23.
41. See especially Gellately, *Backing Hitler* and especially ‘The Gestapo and German society. Political denunciation in the Gestapo case files,’ *Journal of Modern History*, 6 (1998), pp. 654–694 [29]; K. M. Mallmann and G. Paul, ‘Omniscient, omnipotent, omnipresent? Gestapo, society and resistance,’ in Crew (ed.), *Nazism and German Society*, pp. 166–196 [30].
42. Combe, *Une société sous surveillance*, and ‘La Stasi,’ in Brodeur and Jobard (eds), *Citoyens et Délateurs*, pp. 52–66.
43. Combe, ‘La Stasi,’ *ibid.*, p. 60.
44. Boyer, ‘Censorship as a vocation,’ and Zatlin, ‘Out of sight.’
45. Combe, *Une société sous surveillance*.
46. Nérard, *5 % de vérité*, and ‘Délation, dénonciation et dénonciateurs en URSS,’ in Brodeur and Jobard (eds), *Citoyens et Délateurs*, pp. 39–51.
47. F. Jobard et J.P. Brodeur, ‘Conclusion. Le pouvoir obscur de la délation,’ in Brodeur and Jobard (eds), *ibid.*, pp. 195–211.

48. Hibou, *The Force of Obedience*, pp. 152–3 and “‘Nous ne prendrons jamais le maquis’.”
49. Stanziani, *L'Économie en revolution* and Blum and Mespoulet, *L'Anarchie bureaucratique*.
50. Combe, *Une société sous surveillance*, and ‘La Stasi’; Boyer, ‘Censorship as a vocation’; and Zatlin, ‘Out of sight.’
51. Blum and Mespoulet, *L'Anarchie bureaucratique*.
52. Fitzpatrick, *Everyday Stalinism*.
53. In a clear line of descent from studies of the ‘political from below,’ see especially J.F. Bayart, ‘Préface à la nouvelle édition,’ in Bayart, Mbembe and C. Toulabor, *Le Politique par le bas*, pp. 9–18.
54. Special issue on ‘Figures de la décision,’ edited by Yannick Barthe and Brigitte Gäiti, *Politix*, 21 (2008).
55. See Veyne, *Le Quotidien et l'Intéressant*, who talks of the ‘dangerous disorder of action’ and develops the idea that human beings make history but cannot know what history will be like; M. de Certeau in *The Practice of Everyday Life* emphasizes the importance of ‘indeterminate’ things (p. 198) and ‘casual time’ (p. 203) and reminds us of the often-forgotten truism according to which the time that passes is not programmed time and, picking up on the words of Lukács, characterizes daily life as the ‘anarchy of the chiaroscuro of the everyday’ (p. 198); in *La Faiblesse de croire*, de Certeau talks of the ‘insolence of the facts.’ See also the works of M. Weber that emphasize the contingency, the unpredictable and the incompleteness that opens up different possibilities, especially in *Political Writings*. Among the interpreters of Weber, see Grossein, ‘Présentation’ to M. Weber, *L'éthique protestante et l'esprit du capitalisme, suivi d'autres essais, édité, traduit et présenté par J.P. Grossein* [31] and ‘Présentation’ to M. Weber, *Sociologie des religions, textes réunis, traduits et présentés par J.P. Grossein* [32], as well as Kalberg, *Max Weber's Comparative Historical Sociology*.
56. Foucault, ‘Nietzsche, genealogy, history,’ in *Essential works of Foucault, 1954–1984*, transl. Robert Hurley and others, 3 vols, vol. 2: *Aesthetics, method, and epistemology*, edited by James Faubion (London: Penguin Books, 2002), pp. 369–392 [33].

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14. Garrido, A. 2004. *O Estado Novo e a Campanha do Bacalau*. Lisbon: Circulo de Leitores.
15. Barkai, A. 1989. *From Boycott to Annihilation. The Economic Struggle of German Jews, 1933–1943*. Hanover: University Press of New England.
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17. Laureys, E. 2007. Le pillage dans le secteur diamantaire en Belgique. *Revue d'histoire de la Shoah* 186: 217–248.
18. Brayard, F. 2008. “À exterminer en tant que partisans”. Sur une note de Himmler. *Politix*. 82(June): 7–35. special issue on the figures of decision.
19. Vallée, O. 1989. *Le Prix de l'argent CFA. Heurs et malheurs de la zone franc*. Paris: Karthala.
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Neither Expression of Tolerance Nor Instrument of Repression: Economic Laissez-Faire as an Improvised Mode of Domination

The debates over the ‘functionality’ of the informal, clandestine, contra-band, and underground spheres, and the second economy, in socialist countries or in developing countries often belong to the intentionalist argument also. In the studies that focus on getting round obstacles, on cunning ploys and other improvisations, these practices are sometimes interpreted in terms of resistance: initially tolerated because they are marginal and considered harmless, it is claimed that they gradually become dangerous for the established (and hence political) order as they are the expression of an opposition or at least of a ‘resistance associated with the economic pragmatism of a political economy, that of the personal connection and the primacy of relationships, which invalidates and renders obsolete the principle of bureaucratic organization based on ethics by which states agree to “fit” the economic sphere into the social order.’¹

The ‘second economy’ in Soviet times has sometimes been considered in these terms.² According to some authors, in fact, in a tradition of reifying the practices of survival and making do in a society independent of the state, this economy is said to have had the advantage of minimizing dependency relationships vis-à-vis the dominant actors, by avoiding any systematic use of power relations with officials, contributing to the disintegration of the system.³ This position is similar to that advocated by liberal economists who idealize the informal economy and civil society and represent them as the true expression of the ‘market economy’

and its independence from the political or even its foreignness.⁴ For other authors, according to the totalitarian hypothesis, the Soviet state was all-powerful, and the second economy expressed the granting of a concession whose aim was to improve the functioning of the national economy.⁵ For other schools of thought, finally the 'second economy' was seen in ideological terms, as an expression of Communist dysfunctions.⁶

But often, in the Soviet case, as elsewhere, it is the coexistence of extremely stringent prohibitions with the systematic circumvention of them that is highlighted.⁷ These tolerances are sometimes understood as safety valves in response to repeated constraints, the power of prohibitions or the exasperation provoked by the lack of freedom; in this sense, their illegal, illicit, transgressive character under the law is considered paradoxical in the face of the systematic monitoring of society and the daily surveillance of economic activities. These limits are, on other occasions, considered to be functional: informal trade, smuggling and other forms of economic illegality improve the operation of the planned economy or make up for the imperfections of the liberal economy; these practices enable the economic integration of otherwise excluded populations, particularly in times of crisis in the 'formal' economy, allow private accumulation, provide goods and services that are otherwise inaccessible, and promote the national integration of certain peripheral regions. Be this as it may, the openly displayed tolerance of the authorities is said to be inseparable from political strategies and is considered as a lever for the central government: these activities are tolerated *because* they allow control and monitoring through the clientelist practices that they criticize and encourage simultaneously, *because* they allow the maximization of the redistributive power of the state, and therefore its scope for action, *because* they make it possible to tackle shortage and contribute to the sustainability of the system, *because* they occasionally leave open the possibility of repression when it comes to making an example, frightening or punishing someone politically.⁸

When they are not normative and unambiguous, these interpretations therefore assume both the effectiveness of a certain state control and voluntarism, the effectiveness of rational calculation and the existence of a state 'thought.' Conversely, the interpretations mentioned above which focus on cunning and the implicit political opposition of the 'informal' sphere over-politicize these economic activities and impute precise intentions to actors who, most of the time, do not share them at all, or only partially, or only intermittently. Few studies consider the market economy

not as an expression of political ideology (including when it is bypassed or opposed), but as the outcome of contingencies, improvisation and sequences of events that are unexpected and often random.⁹

THE LESSONS OF AFRICANIST STUDIES OF THE 'INFORMAL ECONOMY'

The advantage of Africanist work on this subject lies in the fact that they have been carried out in a much less ideological context, and stem from an intellectual tradition that has ultimately been little influenced by strict disciplinary arguments (purely economic or purely political) and rarely focused on the question of domination. Admittedly, studies of the economy of survival, the informal economy or the economy of the bush have sometimes interpreted these activities as an 'escape from state coercion,'¹⁰ as the expression of 'uncaptured' actors who have chosen the 'exit option,'¹¹ participating in a 'civil society opposed to the state'¹² or even as a 'disobedience' that is as much a matter of taxes as it is of adopting civic positions.¹³ However, beyond these unambiguous expressions, some of these studies, and many others too, soon criticized these visions, showing the intertwining of 'formal' and 'informal' spheres,¹⁴ the weakness, indeed the inanity of this very concept,¹⁵ and above all the diversity of political logics underlying these practices.¹⁶ Fieldwork (in anthropology, in political and economic sociology) show that these 'informal' networks do not develop their activities outside the state, but in close collusion with it, as 'informality' (if we accept this term for a moment) is part of the state.¹⁷ Power relations, links to power, are among the most important means of action of these entrepreneurs: their social networks are more hierarchical and organized than solidary; client relations are constitutive of networks both within them and in relation to the state; the networks are many headed, sometimes hidden but extremely fluid, thereby able to play much more effectively with the complexity of African economies and societies.

These studies have showed that the actors who develop these activities in accordance with specific economic and financial logics know, and play on, power relations: fraud and smuggling reflect neither a rejection of economic policies nor a rejection of the state and its methods of control, but as a means like any another—as an additional means within a whole variety of practices—to seize on state opportunities and gain access to resources of extraversion. As for the informal 'arts of making'—those little ploys, those marginal activities, that popular economy that characterizes

the economic life of the vast majority of the population and that is grafted onto the margins of the state and the official economy—they are more like an ‘economy of survival’¹⁸ and a ‘political culture of impotence’¹⁹ than an attack on the authority of the state. Governments (regardless of their ways of governing) can put up with them and can even deploy strategies or postures to derive benefit from them. What we have here is not a ‘low’ that consciously sets itself against a ‘high,’ an ‘informal’ against a ‘formal,’ in constructed, thought-out strategies, but a set of practices as intertwined as they are vague and shifting, characterizing both the state with its official activities and the local economy.²⁰ This set of practices expresses neither a strategy explicitly defined by the state nor a counter-strategy explicitly defined by these ‘informal’ actors, but an unforeseen combination of multiple logics of action, of reactions (sometimes autonomous and often dependent on each other), of specific strategies and unavoidable constraints.²¹ The ‘black markets,’ smuggling, parallel and informal markets correspond both to a dynamic born of scarcity, coercion, repression and insecurity and to logics of accumulation and expansion of the market, to strategies of making do, improving the standard of living, of survival and redistribution at the bottom of the social scale, a search for comfort, enrichment and investment in an additional market on the part of the highest segments of the social ladder. They are home, at the same time, to strategies of concentration of power and exacerbation of rivalries between elites, policies of alliance and dynamics of fragmentation and proliferation in clientelist networks.²² Roadblockers in Chad and North Cameroon, for example, can be seen both as a resistance against a partially delegitimized state order in the name of injustice, corruption or predation, and as sharing an affinity with this state. The practices denounced are indeed reproduced: taxation is echoed by extortion, administrative corruption by private corruption, the violence of traders linked to the power that excludes and extorts by the barricades erected by the ‘road-cutters.’ Thus, the renewing of positions of intermediation promotes transactions and negotiations with the government. In other words, their implicit criticism of the modes of state action is simultaneously a way of legitimizing them through a reproduction that benefits them, a reversal of the chains of dependency and asymmetry in the face of power.²³ Informal markets, smuggling and economic crime also contribute to the rehabilitation of territories, the social affirmation of certain groups (such as women and young people) and hence their inclusion in the public space, the redefinition of the modes of international integration and thus the formation of the state.²⁴

These studies also show that we are not faced with resistance or opposition, but with games, tactics, (re-)interpretations of situations that lead to the pluralization of points of exercise that are all the more fluid, complex and negotiable in that the rhizome-state is characterized by ‘an infinitely variable multiplicity of networks whose underground branches join together the scattered points of society’²⁵ and in that practices of straddling between positions of power and positions of accumulation facilitate reconstructions, negotiations and compromises that are constantly being challenged.²⁶ The powers that be are not, however, in any danger, they are not even delegitimized; there is, at best, the devaluation of a certain political economy: the re-appropriation of its dispositifs and principles by other actors gives them access to the same channels of enrichment, social mobility and economic repositioning, in the order of material goods as well as in the order of the symbolic and the imaginary spheres.²⁷ Indeed, economic strategies unfold in many different dimensions, in a state of legal and juridical stratification, flexibility and precariousness, with margins of borders constantly being renegotiated, according to the ‘tradition of invention’ that characterizes the continent as much as does the ‘invention of tradition.’²⁸ But these ongoing processes of ‘negotiation’ do not imply equal players: not all ‘negotiators’ have the same resources and the aforesaid ‘negotiation’ is socially very hierarchical. Therefore, even if it is ongoing, its scope is limited, and its results asymmetrical; above all, negotiation marginalizes or displaces certain individuals, certain networks, and certain groups; it does not eliminate domination. The consideration of an activity as informal or illegal is a contingent, uncertain and fluctuating process, but by its performativity, this description sets out norms; borders (between systems, between networks, between types of procedures and between spaces) are strictly controlled even if they are also negotiated and constantly modified, precisely because they produce wealth; the flexibility and openness of networks of power and economic practices leave room for economic and social opportunities while enabling control, monitoring and the exercise of domination. This does not mean that the state invents and controls these economic developments, but on the contrary that it tries to deal with social forces, ideas and norms that are foreign to its initial project, but which are imposed on it, without it being overtaken by these developments; it even uses them as the means of its own recomposition. These studies have the advantage of showing that ‘informality’ and ‘illegality’ have to be construed in their semantic plurality and that their relations to the political are complex, multiple, ambiguous and depend

largely on circumstances and the state of power relations between actors and between social groups.

THE INTERDEPENDENCIES OF ACTORS WITH MULTIPLE AND AUTONOMOUS LOGICS

The political economy of domination advocated here, one which focuses on the practices of actors, is based in part on this intellectual tradition. It suggests that these economic relations, which are also power relations, can indeed allow control and normalization, but are simultaneously spaces of freedom, spaces of a relaxation of discipline, or quite simply autonomous spaces. In fact, they result precisely from the various games of interdependencies and multiple logics of actors that cannot be reduced to constructed and thought-through strategies. The Foucauldian analysis of *laissez-faire* as a self-regulating mechanism when total domination is impossible can help us to move forward in a political understanding of ‘contraband,’ the illegal and the ‘informal.’²⁹ If we adopt this perspective, these activities cannot be thought of as instruments of control *conceived* as such; but, being massively present in the national economy, and uncontrollable, they can, partially and in some circumstances, be *used* as such. In other words, they can serve, not in the sense that they could be ‘of service to’ something, but in the sense that they can be used in strategies.³⁰

In the case of Tunisia under Ben Ali’s rule, for example, illicit or even downright criminal activities were more than tolerated, as indicated by the importance of the phenomenon and its notoriety.³¹ Small and medium traders were primarily seeking income, profits, monetary resources. Their activity was not thought of as politicized or even politicizable; it was, for them, an activity like any other. These activities arose both from practices previously described as craft and traditional practices, from strategies of making do and the exploitation of economic opportunities—for example, the game with differentials of prices, economic policies, overall circumstances, organizational structurings, bureaucratic efficiencies especially with Libya. From the beginning of the 2000s, they became so significant that they constituted the main activity in the south of the country, indispensable for the functioning of the national economy, particularly in terms of the balance of trade and foreign exchange reserves.³² The political authorities could only take note of an actual situation, difficult if not impossible to change. This reality imposes itself on them, and they then play with it and try to penetrate it for their own benefit.³³

These activities are much more accepted as they can easily be invested—and thereby controlled. More precisely, it is a matter of defining the limits of the acceptable. On the one hand, the government condones the continued flows of goods—and even people—that violate geographical, normative and legal boundaries, precisely in order to fight against poverty, unemployment, underemployment, and destitution, in other words in the very logic of security mechanisms and the promotion of ‘decency’ and ‘normality’ that comprise, at least partly, the basis of their legitimacy. Regarded, then, as a practice of survival—which is not necessarily the case—informality is perceived as controllable by this *laissez-faire*, precisely because it offers the state an unexpected opportunity to relieve itself of its burden as supreme protector.³⁴ On the other hand, these activities are largely invested by different networks of power. They were so directly, before 14 January 2011, by ‘courtiers,’ starting with the ‘clans’ orbiting round the president. And they were so indirectly, through the multiple modes of clientelism and political surveillance: the involvement of the cells of the single party in granting passes at checkpoints, activities organized by the Tunisian embassy or consulates abroad, aid from associations linked to the party, and celebrations sponsored by it.³⁵ Moreover, the restrictive measures implemented by not only European countries, and in particular by France and Italy, but also certain Tunisian measures have transformed the circuits and the nature of informal trade, bringing new actors onto the stage. Since the late 1980s, the north of the country has seen a drop in the traffic of ‘shopping bags’ and the rise of ‘containers,’ in other words a decrease in small, artisanal and more or less individual traffic and the growth of the much more structured networks that require much more significant financial and political support.³⁶ Here again, this investment was not orchestrated. It simply follows the most commonplace logics of power, that mean that economic opportunities are more likely to be invested by individuals, groups or networks with the best economic and political resources.

It goes without saying that this opened up possibilities for monitoring that the ‘regime’ could not ignore. These activities, such as theft, and trafficking of all kinds (including drugs), were indeed known—at least in large part—to the police. Smugglers, fraudsters, traffickers, thieves, criminals and other offenders were, however, not arrested. Detailed records were constantly updated and files completed, and they allowed, when the time came, for punishment to be meted out. This proved extremely rare in reality because it was not actually the goal of those in power, nor in

their interest.³⁷ 'Laissez-faire' must also be understood in this sense: here, freedom is trapped in the meshes of fear, faced by the potential threat of legitimate sanction. For 'we all have something to feel guilty about.'³⁸ This extremely commonplace mechanism is found in many other situations, for example, in the former communist bloc where many authors underline the significance of feelings of collective guilt. Given the simultaneous existence of constraints and arrangements, everyone 'betrays,' everyone 'is bribed,' everyone breaks the established rules and puts himself or herself in a position where they can be legitimately prosecuted or punished.³⁹ Finally, it is difficult to talk about state strategy or policy in this area for another reason: the priorities and logics of action, the understandings of the 'illegal' phenomenon, and the interests at stake were, for example, not the same for Carthage and the presidential advisers, for the various departments concerned in the Ministries of the Economy, the Interior or International Cooperation, for the Central Bank, for the central police and customs departments, for the local representatives of these departments, for representatives of the authorities in the field, or for municipalities.⁴⁰ State officials did not all behave in the same way, and did not all pursue the same objectives, they were not integrated within the same social networks or the same economic realities and thus, they responded differently to the development of informal markets, 'Libyan souks,' cross-border and port smuggling, and illegal emigration. These tolerances also varied over time, depending on the international situation, the degree of discontent and pressure from national industrialists, the state of the balance of payments and especially the need for foreign currency, and local socio-political situations, particularly in the south.

So those in power controlled activities and flows less than they attempted to define the image and the contours of state intervention, through the conflicts that ran through them and the compromises they constructed with the actors involved. 'Laissez-faire' is not a construct, but it helps one to encompass things that the central government cannot control. It encompasses them all the better in that there exist representations or even myths which give a greater consistency to the conception of *laissez-faire* in terms of freedom. In Tunisia, they consist mainly of the beylical fantasy of a state foreign to society and the autonomy of entrepreneurs mentioned above.⁴¹ 'Laissez-faire' thus becomes a mode of government which, therefore, may also prove to be a technique of discipline and surveillance by permitting, in these very specific and limited circumstances, to punish and to designate 'enemies,' be they Islamists, criminals, fraudsters,

traffickers or swindlers. In this sense, it is certain that ‘laissez-faire’ is a technique of control because, contrary to what the liberal commonplaces state, there is ‘nothing natural’ about it⁴² and it never implies the slightest lack of action or reaction. But it is still clear that ‘laissez-faire’ was not thought of as such, was not planned, and that the extent of this trafficking is a constraint with which the authorities must live and with which they can play—often extremely effectively.

GRASPING OPPORTUNITIES LOCALLY AND TAKING ADVANTAGE OF CIRCUMSTANCES

Gilles Favarel-Garrigues’s work on the Soviet Union and today’s Russia fills out this argument by putting specific emphasis on the increasing dispersal of decision points, the importance of processes of interpretation at the local level and the uncertainty surrounding the description of the activities pursued.⁴³ The author focuses on the question of the rationality of the ‘management of economic illegalities’ to show that during the 2000s, with Putin in power, there is certainly as systematic as possible an exploitation of the legal vulnerabilities of entrepreneurs, to such a point that he calls this one mode of government among others. However, he tells us, it is impossible to establish a causal relationship between illegality and control, between the fight against illegalities and political strategy. The processes involved are largely unreadable due to the very large number of actors involved in them (or in the fight against them), and the ambiguity of situations tolerated or repressed. The effectiveness of repression depends not only on the nature of power relations in play and the modalities of corruption; it is not only the people or networks linked to those in government who are spared. The effectiveness of repression (or conversely of tolerance) depends both on the resources of ‘offenders’ and on local room for maneuver in interpreting what is criminal, the social position of the persons involved, the attitude of local political leaders, the ability—or inability—of the administration to convey hierarchical orders, the nature of clientelist ties between actors, political and economic conditions, the balance of forces in Moscow between the proponents of liberalization of the economy, the strengthening of the national economy, economic and social justice or respect for the state, and so on. The underground economy is certainly not created or even tolerated for purposes of control, submission and legitimation, but, faced with this situation, the scope of the penalties depends on a combination of political, economic and penal choices. It also

results from the way national and regional elites interpret these choices—an interpretation influenced not only by their interests and priorities but also by the ways (themselves based on various considerations, personal and professional, national and regional, circumstantial and structural) in which the law-enforcement agents in the field select business. In addition, it is extremely difficult, in a changing environment, to define what is criminal and what is not, especially when sometimes conflicting norms overlap and that the concept of crime is vested with very different meanings. Leaders also have a keen perception of this fluidity, the complexity of situations and their own vulnerability in the face of a tangle of interests that are so different that they make society difficult to control.⁴⁴

Emigration from the Salazarist Portugal also adds extra details to our analysis of the significance of the informal and the illegal. By providing us with a final argument against the intentionalist assumption—the absence of choice, the inability to arbitrate between interests and conflicting logics—it highlights the complexity of factors that may explain the significance of illegality and consequently the plurality of its political meanings. Emigration was one of the most important demographic, social and economic phenomena in Portugal during the 1950s and especially the 1960s. But, surprisingly, it was the subject of no more than what I call a harmless repression, if we may put it like that, even though the Salazarist authorities wanted to minimize these flows to Europe, for ideological and strategic reasons, with the government focusing on departures to the remnants of the empire, that is, to its African colonies.⁴⁵ Emigration to Europe was not legally prohibited, but in actual fact it was not only hampered by administrative obstacles at national level and especially at the local level but also very unpopular with the government. There certainly was border surveillance, sentences were passed and prison terms imposed, but the penalties were derisory, and the number of arrests ridiculous in relation to the flows of migration: above all, repression never lived up to the government rhetoric that claimed to be engaged in a systematic and merciless struggle against illegal departures. Therefore, official emigration was barred to many candidates who initially could simply not file their claims. This control and virtual ban could be used to punish a few political opponents and a few men reluctant to embark on military service, but this use was always marginal.

Victor Pereira's thesis, however, shows with great finesse the multiplicity of logics at work—explaining not only the tolerance that prevailed but also the explosion of illegal emigration until the eve of April 25.⁴⁶ That

emigration continued and expanded is easy to explain. It was a practical impossibility to monitor and control the flows of people because of the coincidence of a massive demand for workers in Western Europe and the persistence of extreme poverty in the Portuguese countryside. There were also real socio-political interests, in Portugal itself, related to emigration, since this relieved the pressure and dissatisfaction with economic difficulties and a military service that was rejected all the more forcefully for being held in colonies that had been at war since 1961. Gradually and, from the mid-1960s onwards, in huge numbers, the increase in financial flows sent by migrants from abroad generated powerful economic interests favorable to the continuation of emigration; these remittances were felt to have positive effects at both the family level and in the regions concerned (mainly northern Portugal) and in the national economy. This led to the improvement of the balance of payments and foreign exchange reserves, and therefore the possibility of maintaining a strong escudo—an essential article for faith for Salazarism. In addition, banks and financial institutions reaped huge profits and quickly plunged into this lucrative business.

What is more surprising in these conditions is the pursuit of this unrecognized and even illegal mode of emigration. Detailed analysis of the political discussions, bureaucratic meanderings, interests at stake and the socio-economic circumstances suggests that a decision in due form to keep emigration illegal was never made. Its criminalization is explained by tensions within the regime and the inability to find a compromise between the main actors of this policy, much more than by any objective political interest in illegality. It is also the result of divergent interests, bureaucratic inertia and partisan and contradictory logics of action. Despite its importance, emigration was ultimately not very visible in the institutional political arena: the number of public officials directly involved in managing it was extremely low, and specialized administrative units were reduced, ultimately to the *Junta da Emigração*. In particular, the significance of the ruralist ideology and an idealized vision of the simplicity of rural life and the moral benefits of poverty, as well as the maintenance of an extremely hierarchical, stratified and condescending social structure partly explain this invisibility, once again suggesting the practical importance of ideology on public policy. There were also intense conflicts within the administration between supporters of legalization and supporters of a ban on emigration, conflicts that echoed those that took place on the technocratic stage between supporters of Europeanization and supporters of the empire, between advocates of economic liberalization and advocates of

protectionism, as well as those which occurred on the economic scene between industrial and agricultural interests lacking manpower and other agricultural interests whose survival depended on underpaid labor that could be exploited at will. In the desperate search for balance, in incessant arbitration processes, the issue of emigration was never settled, especially because it was difficult to displease conservative agrarian interests, who gave the regime decisive support, and industrial, modernizing interests could partially be met by other means, including by free trade agreements with Europe. In addition, local interests were themselves divergent. In the countryside, the notables, whose power was partly based on the control of this poor population and this underpaid workforce, were reluctant to see their main resource dwindling. But paradoxically, the control of illegal emigration routes, by this same group of notables or other segments of it, offered them alluring new resources, that is, a diversification of local clientelism. Finally, the behavior of European states and especially their businesses also contributed to this development. The countries of Western Europe, starting with France, did indeed find it definitely advantageous to benefit from illegal labor (much less demanding in terms of working conditions and housing)—an extremely flexible workforce, in other words. Not that illegality did not involve various disadvantages, including a negative image of Portugal abroad and loss of revenue for the state. But this loss was not perceived as such or was deemed insignificant.

In a different but convergent way, these examples refute the intentionalist assumption. Whatever its nature, a government does not create illegality; at best, it attempts to exploit the ‘flaws’ of a national political economy that also includes such practices. Faced with an inevitable situation, ‘laissez-faire’ may appear to be a more effective technique, provided, of course, it remains confined to certain limits, that not everything is allowed and that the level below which intervention is necessary is controlled.⁴⁷ Provided also that we understand these ‘zones of laissez-faire’ not as places created by power, but as an adaptation of the political in the face of a complex and unexpected, or even uncontrollable situation, in other words, as ‘accommodations’ and ‘margins of approximation’⁴⁸ as Paul Veyne would put it which reflect the disorder of everyday life, the multiplicity of factors, the weight of contingency and impossibility of absolute control. This is how we should understand the improvisation of state action which often operates, in such circumstances, at the junction of these interstitial sites; indeed, this allows an exercise of power often more effective than one that proceeds by direct, planned interventions. In a situation where the control cannot be as absolute as the central government itself would have us believe, where discipline cannot be total or normalization

complete, 'laissez-faire' appears as a complementary mode of the mechanisms of surveillance and protection, but it is a largely unexpected mode, constantly moving and being remade. The informal arts of making 'thus merely nuance domination,'⁴⁹ although 'laissez-faire' itself is not entirely under control. The tangle of surveillance and tolerance is not fully controlled by those who govern, as illustrated by recent events in Tunisia—where smuggling seems to have helped supply weapons to terrorist groups—or the last years of the Salazar regime, which were undermined by a contradictory management of population flows. The exercise of power is also achieved tentatively, by improvisation, even if these uncertainties and the incompleteness of the practices of discipline and 'laissez-faire' do not, ultimately, prevent domination.

NOTES

1. This is what M. Péraldi says in connection with smuggling in North Africa: M. Péraldi (in collaboration with A. Betaich and V. Manry), 'L'esprit de bazar. Mobilités transnationales maghrébines et sociétés métropolitaines. Le comptoir démantelé,' in Péraldi (ed.), *Cabas et Containers. Activités marchandes informelles et réseaux migrants transfrontaliers*, p. 360.
2. For an overview of the situation in contemporary Russia, that does however enable us to make out implicitly the terms of the Soviet debate, see M. Désert, 'Le débat russe sur l'informel,' *Questions de recherche*, 17 (May 2006), CERI/SciencesPo [1].
3. G. Grossman, 'Subverted sovereignty. Historic role of Soviet underground,' Global, Area & International Archive, University of California, Berkeley, GAIA Research Series (1998), pp. 24–50 [2]; A. Katsenelngoiben, 'Colored markets in the Soviet Union,' *Soviet Studies* 29(1) (1977): 62–85 [3]; Volensky, *Nomenklatura*.
4. Liberals such as H. De Soto, *The Other Path. The Invisible Revolution in the Third World* (New York: Harper and Row Publishers, 1990) [4]; World Bank, 'World Report on Development 1987' (Washington, DC: World Bank, 1987).
5. G. Grossman, 'The second economy in the USSR,' *Problems of Communism* 26(5) (October–November 1977): 25–40 [5]; Ledeneva, *Russia's Economy of Favours*; Fehér, 'Paternalism as a mode of legitimation in Soviet-type societies'; J. P. Willerton, *Patronage and Politics in the USSR*.
6. S. Golovnin and A. Sohin, 'The shadow economy,' *Problems of Economics* 33(3) (July 1990): 31–40 [6]; Volensky, *Nomenklatura*.

7. For the former Communist countries, see Ledeneva, *Russia's Economy of Favours*; Fehér, 'Paternalism as a mode of legitimation in Soviet-type societies'; Willerton, *Patronage and Politics in the USSR*. For Tunisia, Chouikha, 'Autoritarisme étatique et débrouillardise individuelle'; A. Larif-Beatrix, *Édification étatique et environnement culturel. Le personnel politicoadministratif dans la Tunisie contemporaine* (Publisud—O.P.U, 1988) [7].
8. Grossman, 'The second economy in the USSR'; Berliner, *Factory and Manager in the USSR*; M. Los, *The Second Economy in Marxist States* (New York: St Martin's Press, 1990) [8]; Fitzpatrick, *Everyday Stalinism*; Kott, *Le Communisme au quotidien*; Kornai, *Le Système socialiste*; Verdery, *What Was Socialism, and What Comes Next?*; Berdahl, *Where the World Ended*.
9. One should here note the works of Favarel-Garrigues, *Policing Economic Crime in Russia*, and especially J. Hessler, *A Social History of Soviet Trade*, who shows that the market was not confined to the 'second economy,' that this economy was neither created by the public authorities nor instrumentalized by them, that the bazaar and small-scale trade continued, all the same, to play a lively role in the countryside and that, in the final analysis, the NEP did not constitute such a big exception in Soviet economic history.
10. C. De Miras, 'De la formation de capital privé à l'économie populaire spontanée,' *Politique africaine* 18 (June 1984): 109 [9].
11. G. Hyden, *Beyond Ujamaa in Tanzania. Underdevelopment and an Uncaptured Peasantry* (Berkeley, Calif.: University of California Press, 1980) [10] and 'La crise africaine et la paysannerie non capturée,' *Politique africaine* 18 (June 1985): 93–113 [11], and 'Party, State and Civil Society. Control versus Openness,' in J.D. Barkan (ed.), *Beyond Capitalism versus Socialism in Kenya and Tanzania* (Boulder, CO: London: Lynne Rienner Publishers, 1994), pp. 75–100 [12].
12. N. Chazan and D. Rothchild (eds), *The Precarious Balance. State and Society in Africa* (Boulder, CO: Westview Press, 1987) [13].
13. Roitman, *Fiscal Disobedience*.
14. It should be noted that the very 'inventor' of this term, Keith Hart, showed right from the start that 'formal' and 'informal' were closely interwoven, but he was largely bypassed by the use to which international bodies put it. See K. Hart, 'Informal income opportunities and urban employment in Ghana,' *Journal of Modern African Studies* 11(3) (1973): 61–89 [14], and his critical re-examination of this notion, 'On the informal economy. The

- political history of an ethnographic concept,' CEB Working Paper, 9/042, Université Libre de Bruxelles, 2009 [15].
15. For a systematic critique of the notion, see J. Roitman, 'The politics of informal markets in Sub-Saharan Africa,' *Journal of Modern African Studies* 28(4) (1990): 671–696 [16]; P. Geschiere, "Le politique par le bas." Le haut, le bas et le vertige,' *Politique africaine* 39 (September 1990): 155–160 [17]; C. De Miras, 'L'informel, mode d'emploi,' in B. Lautier, C. De Miras and A. Morice, *L'État et l'Informel* (Paris: L'Harmattan, 1991) [18]; Hibou, *L'Afrique est-elle protectionniste?*
 16. M.C. Diop, 'Les affaires mourides à Dakar,' *Politique africaine*, 4 (November 1981), pp. 90–100 [19]; E. Grégoire, *Les Alhazai de Maradi. Histoire d'un groupe de riches marchands sabéliens* (Paris: Éditions de l'ORSTOM, 1986) [20]; C. Toulabor, *Le Togo sous Eyadema* (Paris: Karthala, 1986) [21]; E. Grégoire, 'Les chemins de la contrebande. Étude des réseaux commerciaux en pays hausa,' *Cahiers d'Études africaines*, 124, XXXI (4) (1990): 509–532 [22]; C. Boone, *Merchant Capital and the Roots of State Power in Senegal, 1930–1985* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1992) [23]; E. Grégoire and P. Labazée (eds), *Grands Commerçants d'Afrique de l'Ouest. Logiques et pratiques d'un groupe d'homme d'affaires contemporains* (Paris: Karthala-ORSTOM, 1993) [24]; Hibou, *L'Afrique est-elle protectionniste?*, J. Roitman, 'The Garrison entrepôt,' *Cahiers d'Études africaines*, XXXVIII (2–4), (1998): 297–329 [25]; B. Hibou 'From Privatizing the Economy to Privatizing the State: an Analysis of the Continual Formation of the State,' (pp. 1–46) [26] and J. Roitman, 'Power is not Sovereign: the Pluralization of Economic Regulatory Authority in the Chad Basin,' (pp. 120–146) in Hibou (ed.), *Privatizing the State* (London: Hurst and Co, 2004) [27].
 17. Bayart, *The State in Africa*; J. Guyer, *Marginal Gains. Monetary Transactions in Atlantic Africa* (Chicago, IL; London: The University of Chicago Press, 2004) [28].
 18. I. Deblé and P. Hugon, *Vivre et survivre dans les villes africaines* (Paris: PUF, 1982) [29]; J. Guyer (ed.), *Feeding African Cities. Studies in Regional Social History* (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 1987) [30].
 19. Bayart, 'L'énonciation du politique,' p. 359.
 20. A. Morice notes that 'corruption, smuggling, embezzlement, protected markets, complementary activities and various traffickings: these are carried out by the state, and also by the popular

- economy,' in A. Morice, 'À propos de l'"économie populaire spontanée",' *Politique africaine* 18 (June 1985): 122 [31].
21. Hibou, *L'Afrique est-elle protectionniste?*
 22. Messiant, *L'Angola postcolonial. 2. Sociologie politique d'une oléocratie.*
 23. Roitman, *Fiscal Disobedience*, and Vallée, *La Police morale de l'anticorruption.*
 24. Hibou, 'The "social capital" of the state as an agent of deception'; K. Bennafla, *Le Commerce transfrontalier en Afrique centrale. Acteurs, espaces, pratiques* (Paris: Karthala, 2002) [32]; Roitman, *Fiscal Disobedience*; Hibou, *L'Afrique est-elle protectionniste?*; E. Grégoire and P. Labazée (eds), *Grands Commerçants d'Afrique de l'Ouest*. For countries outside Africa, this dimension is well particularly well brought out by F. Adelhah in her work on Iran: *The Thousand and One Borders of Iran. Travel and Identity* (London: Routledge, 2016) [33]; 'Le réveil du Khorassan. La recomposition d'un espace de circulation,' in F. Adelhah and J.-F. Bayart (eds), *Les Voyages du développement. Émigration, commerce, exil* (Paris: Karthala, 2007), pp. 115–182 [34].
 25. Bayart, *The State in Africa*, p. 220.
 26. On this dimension of instability and permanent negotiations, see Berry, *No Condition Is Permanent*; Guyer, *Marginal Gains*, and J. Guyer (ed.), *Money Matters. Instability, Values and Social Payments in the Modern History of West African Communities* (London: James Currey and Heydemann, 1995) [35].
 27. Vallée, *La Police morale de l'anticorruption.*
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32. Meddeb, *Young People and Smuggling*.
 33. Hibou, *The Force of Obedience*, pp. 237–241.
 34. This was recognized by the Tunisian authorities. Ben Ali stated: 'If our determination to combat clandestine emigration is evident, *we need to recognize however that our efforts in isolation will not be enough*. [...] The human relations between the coastal peoples of the Mediterranean constitute an extremely ancient phenomenon, and a source of wealth that cannot be accompanied by a closed-door policy. *For our part, we do not have the sufficient means to stem this phenomenon in a durable and effective way*,' *Le Figaro*, 3 December 2003 (my emphasis).
 35. Meddeb, 'Smugglers, Tribes and Militias.'
 36. Péraldi (ed.), *Cabas et Containers*.
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 38. Expression and analysis come from a seasoned observer of the Tunisian scene, Paris, May 2005.
 39. S. Žižek, *Did somebody say totalitarianism?*; Havel, *Essais politiques*; Zinoviev, *The Radiant Future*.
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 41. On the myth of the marginality of the Tunisian state with regard to society, see, for a historical overview, M.H. Chérif, *Pouvoir et Société dans la Tunisie de Husayn bin' Ali (1705–1740)*, vol. 2 (Tunis: Publications de l'Université de Tunis, 1986) [43], and, for the contemporary period, J. Leca, 'Democratization in the Arab World. Uncertainty, Vulnerability, and Legitimacy. A Tentative Conceptualization and Some Hypotheses,' in G. Salamé (ed.), *Democracy without democrats? The renewal of politics in the Muslim*

- world* (London : IB Tauris, 1994), pp. 48–87 [44], and M. Camau, ‘Politique dans le passé, politique aujourd’hui au Maghreb,’ in J.-F. Bayart (ed.), *La Greffe de l’État* (Paris: Karthala, 1996), pp. 63–93 [45]. The myth of the autonomy of entrepreneurs was first highlighted for the residents of Sfax (by M. Bouchrara and P.N. Denieul, mentioned above) but it has been popularized and extended to the whole Tunisian community.
42. Polanyi, *The Great Transformation*, p. 139.
 43. Favarel-Garrigues, *Policing Economic Crime in Russia* (London: Hurst & Co, 2011) [46] for the 1980s–1990s and ‘The Power Horizontal’ in *Europe-Asia Studies* for the 2000s.
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Interpreting the Relations of Domination: The Plasticity of the Authoritarian Exercise of Power

The problematic of intentionality is all-pervasive, finally, in analyses that seek to define the rational interpretation, the meaning or the cause of a situation of domination. Following Weber, I would rather emphasize the importance of taking into account the multiplicity of meanings, which requires not that we seek the reason for the rule, but try to understand how it operates, through what practices, what dispositifs, under what circumstances and by means of what *imaginaires*. The fact that the same decision, the same situation, the same behavior or the same event is never perceived, experienced or interpreted in the same way is fundamental if we are to understand the mechanisms by which power is exercised, and room for maneuver invented.

By the opportunities it offers to individuals and families, the dacha in Soviet and independent Belarus provides a concrete example that takes us to the very heart of the subject. If we follow Ronan Hervouet, the dacha is simultaneously an area of controlled freedom, a place of economic resourcefulness, the mirror of an acceptable self-image, a base for solidarity with family and friends, a place for making so-called informal exchanges, an ‘at-home,’ a performance space, and a way of improving people’s everyday lives.¹ This multiplicity of meanings is linked to the plurality of the dynamics at work and explains how difficult it is to analyze the dacha only in terms of a ‘maintenance of structures’ and ‘legitimation of the regime,’ of the ‘instrumentalization of resourcefulness by the regime’ or, conversely, of ‘resistance to the order imposed,’ of ‘withdrawal into the

private sphere as passive resistance to power,' including when these two types of assessments are simultaneous. Beyond this dualism and analyses that use unambiguous categories, and following the line of analysis propounded by *Alltagsgeschichte*, the example of the dacha rather suggests that the micro-behaviors it permits and triggers at the same time are perhaps the expression of a lack of support, though this does not imply that they are acts of resistance. These micro-behaviors certainly mark an indifference to the regime and the desire to keep one's distance from it—which is, however, a form of neither approval nor rejection. Ultimately, however, whatever the inclinations of those involved, their expectations and hopes, the meaning that the residents give to their actions and practices in the dacha, they contribute to the exercise of the power of domination by feeding into economic and social relations, and therefore the human relationships that make up daily life in Belarusian society. Plurality of meanings is not necessarily synonymous with a space of freedom; however, it does open the field of possibilities, it can broaden the scope for action and the process of empowerment and thereby, while not preventing domination, contribute to shaping and altering it.

LESSONS FROM THE ANALYSIS OF LABOR BY THE SCHOOL OF ALLTAGSGESCHICHTE

We must therefore try our best to approach this multiplicity of meanings to understand the shifting intricacies of domination. In their care for detail and their awareness of the need to make distinctions, the analyses of the world of labor proposed by *Alltagsgeschichte* constitute an important reference point for addressing domination from the point of view of political economy. In fact, they reflect this plurality of understandings and meanings without falling into the failings of culture- or class-based analyses; instead they incorporate the dynamics of social and human relations into the exercise of domination.

In East German companies, work brigades show us a relatively open and quite ambiguous situation. The actors did indeed apprehend them in different ways, which not only proved conflicting but were also able to provide workers with some room for maneuver. They thus helped to define a kind of 'support' that needs to be understood for what it is: not the passive acceptance of a new institution, but its investment. The brigades were created by the government, following the Soviet model, to accompany the policies advocating a growth of productivity gains, and

to control and educate people for 'collectivist dictatorship.' The workers, however, invested them with a completely different meaning.² Overall, work brigades were interpreted as a mechanism for gaining privileged access to social resources. For young people, they also meant a chance to overthrow the old hierarchies and free themselves from the yoke of their 'elders' in the working world, while for the more active, they gave hope of gaining access to greater responsibilities. For everyone, the introduction of brigades did not symbolize a break, but rather a new way of organizing collective work or a new name given to old structures. Moreover, these interpretations were not stable, and a subtle game was played between different conceptions. On the one hand, the brigades acted as a pressure group on behalf of workers—permitting the payment of premiums and improved working conditions—and as a solidarity group, with the members supporting each other in the face of everyday problems. On the other hand, the leaders exploited them in the process of legitimizing their power, as the brigades provided an opportunity of taking up the themes of 'dedication to the Republic' and 'productivity for the glory of the country.' However, the underlying tensions with the organs in charge of the party or the union could not, at first, be avoided, and only gradually were there mutual adaptations, actions and reactions, attempts to impose an interpretation, and so on. The ambiguity and haziness of the meanings given to the brigade led to the evolution of the arrangements in time, without the institutions of power—or workers' bodies—being able to control these processes. Thus, competitions between work brigades were established by the public authorities specifically to address these distortions of meaning and these unanticipated uses. In concrete terms, awarding the title 'Brigade of Socialist Labor' was meant to foster 'socialist consciousness' and allow the situation to be taken in hand. But here too, the workers managed to create margins of freedom by supporting the competitions in such huge numbers, and so enthusiastically, that the authorities were overwhelmed and the brigades could negotiate new benefits. In a situation like the GDR, these games necessarily turned to the advantage of the authorities, and the brigades were disbanded or disciplined. But their history can be used to highlight a more subtle process of a twofold nature. On the one hand, the active participation of workers—even if it was motivated by other concerns, for other purposes—certainly contributed to the diffusion of 'socialist' discourse, rhetoric and values and thereby to the simultaneous practices of control and satisfaction of demands; it reflects a classic phenomenon of normalization. But,

on the other, this same worker participation influenced the exercise of power by integrating workers' demands into national policies with, for example, the definition of an explicit policy of 'material interests.' This history of the brigades suggests that the plurality of meanings does not result from fixed and different cultures or social positions; it is the result of hijacked meanings, and thus of strategies actively implemented, not to cause a policy to succeed or fail, but to transform a constraint into an opportunity.

The more general question of labor in East Germany is a paradigmatic expression of this plurality of meanings that emerges from the autonomy of the actors. The term 'quality of German work' was of course part of the official rhetoric. It was intended to express belief in discipline through work and to highlight the place of economic efficiency in the mechanisms of legitimation of the regime. However, it was indeed quite concretely embodied in a real policy of encouraging production and increased productivity, particularly in the 1950s and 1960s, when it was accompanied by higher wages, the distribution of bonuses and the development of welfare.³ Yet, the 'quality of German work' was not perceived by the workers as a constraint, a discipline, or a mechanism of control and normalization. It was something very positive and very concrete. In a tradition dating back to pre-war times, it reflected the pride of the workers, with an enduring style of work and life and a recognized ethos; it also reflected particular performances and qualities specific to certain factories, to certain regions or certain cities, and thus operated as an element of distinction between members of the working class, between regions and between firms; and finally, it was linked to a moral duty, the duty to carry out one's obligations, whatever the circumstances. This is what Alf Lüdtke called the 'heroism of "and yet"'⁴ legitimizing improvisation, expedients and personal recognition. This multiplicity of meanings has been analyzed in terms of a 'hinge' between the constraints of the system and the life plans of the workers,⁵ or as a 'sullen loyalty.'⁶ It can also be understood as one of the patterns behind the construction of socialist hegemony in the GDR: the element of compulsion was real, but what strikes us most is the affinities, convergences, agreements—constantly being rebuilt and never stable, but relatively active over time—between different parties with different interests and different concerns. Coexistence between them was possible, even relatively peaceful, precisely because of these different and sometimes conflicting understandings, which made it possible to play on the ambiguities, and made misunderstandings productive.

In the context of the Nazi regime, this theme allows us to develop a fuller and deeper analysis by suggesting that governments also play on this plurality of meanings and multiplicity of levels: what we have here is not just a two-player game (government and workers) but also one with three players, that include industrialists. Alf Lüdtke has shown that the latter should not only be analyzed as ‘tricks’ of the weak and dominated, as a form of ‘resistance,’ but also that there were interpretations specific to each actor, which sometimes coincided, sometimes overlapped, sometimes came together over misunderstandings and sometimes did not meet at all.⁷ Workers, for example, interpreted Nazi rhetoric and mythmaking on the ‘honor of labor’ as a recognition of their own values, of order, dexterity and performance; they interpreted them as one of the forms of *Eigensinn* mentioned above, that is to say the ability to distance and protect one’s intimacy, essential to their dignity; they understood them as the expression of a lifestyle and as a recognition of their organizational capacity and dignity at work, allowing them to assert themselves and gain recognition for their participation in the nation’s effort. It was also, for them, a daily culture that was all the more appropriate in that the crisis had been intense and it was often a question of surviving. But simultaneously, the term referred to the hierarchy of the working class and the validation of skilled workers, their own individual achievement in relation to the undifferentiated mass of workers; it echoed the value placed on experience and competence, peer recognition and the transformation of colleagues into ‘comrades,’ in an identity-based vision of community; it made it possible to symbolize this desire for appropriation, to glimpse the possibility of improvement and improvisation that made possible self-esteem, professional recognition, time management, autonomy, balance between production and effort, the minimizing of the burden of work and the organization of time.

While all these meanings were not, strictly speaking, known and analyzed by Nazi power, the latter played with some of them, activating different registers in the process. In a fairly standard populist and anti-elitist strategy, the Nazi government criticized the traditional parties and politicians, the business elite and senior officials, and exacerbated the animosity felt toward them by suggesting that it was the first government to consider the honor of manual labor. Taking into account the obedience proper to the business world, it played with the respect for hierarchy, competition between workers, and competition for access to more valued work and with the role that the company could play in the

international recognition of the country and, once the war started, in victory. The rhetoric of the honor of German work was also mobilized in a traditional disciplinary conception of 'duty fulfilled' related to the appeal of modernity and progress. These reference points did not stop at the symbolic and were given very real applications: by ostentatious but repeated gestures, the leaders expressed their respect for manual work and responded specifically to the demand for dignity by organizing large symbolic celebrations, but in particular by improving working conditions, institutionalizing holidays, deepening the foundations of the welfare state, creating resting places in companies, promising (and sometimes actually creating) larger windows in workplaces or more spacious and brighter cloakrooms. Factory managers, engineers and contractors also exploited these power relations with the regime and with the workers. The order and performance were of course part of the rhetoric and practices that managers mobilized to increase throughput and streamline work. But the 'honor of German work' was also an element in international competition, an alternative to Taylorism and the increase in US competitiveness; it fostered worker participation, and heightened their involvement in a vision both instrumental, discursive and paternalistic, with the idea that, if they were treated better, workers would 'give' more; it accompanied not only the promotion of the company as a community with its own esprit de corps, the prioritization and subordination inherent in any business, but also the recognition of self-supervision and a degree of autonomy.

Evidently, these proliferating meanings of the 'honor of labor' or the 'quality of German work' allowed everyone to 'benefit from it.' However, exploiting these differences and ambiguities did not mean you were in control of the situation, either if you were one of those in power, or one of the workers or employers, especially since these groups were not strangers to the low effectiveness of the process of rationalization and modernization. The management of time and effort or the distancing that allowed workers to survive and feel self-esteem could be counter-productive for company executives as well as for the regime; the policy of recognition of work and the dignity of workers could conflict with other economic policies or other policy guidelines, for example, the constraints of the war economy. Therefore, misunderstandings were not always productive, professional life not necessarily harmonious, and the effects of domination were not in the least deleted: if there was no absolute control on the side of power, control of time, effort and life by the workers was even more illusory because, ultimately, they participated in the political economy of

the regime, willingly or not, knowingly or not. Finding fulfillment, rising in the social or professional hierarchy, improve your living conditions and ensuring a decent life for your family, making the most of new opportunities, taking your distance and creating your own spaces and rhythms, avoiding having to go into battle: all of this resulted ultimately in acquiescence, silence or active participation in the mobilization of the Nazi war economy. This unexpected participation, carried out most often without people even knowing it, was coupled with a less subtle concealment: German workers also benefited from the racist import policy and the use of foreign labor, which was almost always a matter of forced labor policy: the 'quality of German work' was also defined in this political context which did not suffer from any ambiguity.⁸

THE IMPOSSIBLE MONOPOLY ON THE POLITICAL MEANING OF PUBLIC ACTIONS

This plurality of meanings opens up the question of the exercise of power in an uncertain situation. When competing meanings clash, or simply when different meanings are involved, how is the government's economic action to be apprehended? What meaning is to be given to it? Should priority be given to official rhetoric or should these different and even conflicting interpretations be taken into account, and if so, how? Can a government impose the interpretation it wants to see preferred in the implementation of a particular economic policy or public action? Does the government have the means to do so? By highlighting the ambiguity of these competing understandings, the briefly outlined examples below will show that these questions, guided by an intentionalist problematics and an undeniable voluntarism, do not capture the real issues in terms of defining the political sphere and therefore the exercise of domination.

In Tunisia, for example, the '26.26,' officially supposed to collect voluntary donations to fight against poverty, proved in fact to be a mandatory funding mechanism for the charities run by the president. It could be seen as a 'liberal' pursuit of social policy, a form of Islamic charity, an expression of 'national solidarity,' a 'private' form of taxation, the expression of a racket or a draining off of finances, but equally well as a method of controlling the middle class and entrepreneurs, a mechanism for defining those who are poor but 'good' and excluding the 'bad,' a localized power dispositif, a tool of clientelism, an exchange of services, or a way of keeping up good relations with the central government and its local

representatives.⁹ People found whatever suited them in the ‘26.26’—and the many interpretations were not mutually incompatible. Many people simultaneously shared several interpretations, some belonging to the official discourse but others being downright hostile to it, some forming part of an unofficial discourse, while others were completely developed outside of it. It was precisely this multiplicity of meanings that gave strength to this mechanism and allowed it to be one of the most powerful and most symbolic technologies of the way in which power was exercised in ‘Ben Ali’s Tunisia.’ The central government had also clearly understood that, after trying to impose its version—in itself plural—by speeches, messages in newspapers, television commercials, pressure exerted throughout society through the cells of the single party, labor relations and the various hierarchical positions, finally left everyone alone to understand the ‘26.26’ however they wished, even if this was in a subversive way. For, in this case, it was not intentionality that mattered, whether it came from political leaders, governments, specialized institutions or individuals who, by offering alternative interpretations, wanted to foster the circulation of a critique or a rejection or, more cynically, to take advantage of an opportunity. What made the strength of such dispositif was the way its different interpretations were combined and interwoven so as, ultimately, to draw the contours of a domination that helped to give the regime a firm basis. We could develop the same kind of argument with, for example, the motorway construction program of the Third Reich, which was undoubtedly guided, like most other economic choices, by the logic of national reconstruction and rearmament, but was equally undoubtedly interpreted by the population as a policy of job creation and as a proof of state voluntarism.¹⁰ This disjunction or distortion of meanings was not without its consequences in building up the legitimacy of the Nazi regime, and this is why the speeches were often vague and based more on the construction of a ‘miracle’ than on any statement of rational purposes. However, it will be interesting to examine at greater length the case of Taiwan, which offers an alternative configuration of this process in a situation which, unlike the previous two cases, involves no political hegemony.

In Taiwan, the pluralism of meanings lies at the very heart of the national project. Including during the period of the party-state, the Nationalist Party of China (KMT) never managed to impose its understanding of economic development, or even of that sacrosanct concern, security. Not only did the party hold no monopoly on decisions—because of bureaucratic factionalism and the fragmentation of powers mentioned above—but the

same was true within society.¹¹ The project of industrialization and economic development, for example, represented national unity for some people, for others a war machine against communism, for yet others an opportunity for professionalism, enrichment or emancipation. Security was understood by some as prohibiting any relationship with mainland China and by others, on the contrary, as the urgent need to develop exchanges, including on the other side of the Strait; security sometimes made possible bureaucratic–commercial compromises and sometimes the sheerest puritanism; it was based on the glorification of the unity of the nation and the exclusion of the majority of the population from the machinery of power.¹² This plurality of understandings allowed for various strategies and combinations of different actions to be expressed, even if they were contradictory, never completed and never hegemonic. It is in this sense also that we need to understand the analysis of Taiwan proposed by Françoise Mengin, who describes the island as a Foucauldian heterotopia.

Alexei Yurchak uses a similar image, that of ‘heteronymous shift’ to designate these various different, changing and constantly reinvented meanings hidden behind the reproduction of ideological forms.¹³ Drawing not on an economic but a cultural example, he shows that rock music, which theoretically did not exist in the USSR during the 1970–1980s, was denounced as a representation par excellence of bourgeois culture even though Komsomol secretaries actually organized parties playing such music. Justifying their behavior, the latter claimed their parties were politically acceptable by emphasizing the modernity of rock music and its neutral character from the ideological point of view, thus to some extent sharing the point of view of young people, for whom listening to rock music had no political or ideological connotation. But, unlike the regime’s local cadres, for these young people rock music referred to modern life, a totally fantasized West, and especially to exoticism and to fantasy. Soviet leaders agreed that the meanings depended on the context and the reinterpretations that music lovers gave to it, as suggested by the almost total absence of sanctions. The strength of the aforementioned formalism also includes this plasticity and this ability to work with meaning, provided that this work is done ‘as it should be,’ that is, that the meaning is compatible with a wide but validated range of human values considered as part of the ideological framework. We find a fairly common remark made by writers and academics to discuss the reasons for their support of communism.¹⁴ This latter allowed them to answer very personal questions, such as their desire to commune with the oppressed, to rediscover core values such as justice

and emancipation, to see things on a ‘big’ scale, and to introduce rationality in human affairs even if some of them had no illusions about collectivism, while some others criticized rationing, and others suffered from lack of freedom. These analyses suggest yet again that practices of domination cannot be analyzed without taking into account the issue of belief and the will to believe: in this case, people believed in communism or—and this amounts to the same thing—wished to find certain things in it.

The case of planning and the practices to which it led is the last example we shall examine as it enables us to take the full measure of this impossibility of assigning, even in authoritarian and totalitarian countries, a specific and stable meaning to a public action, including even when it is the very expression of state voluntarism. Kornai and Gerschenkron in particular have shown that planning was not only the instrument of hypercentralized control of Soviet-type economies that it was often presented as. The plan’s role was both to symbolize the centrality of the scientific principles of Marxist–Leninist ideology, starting with historical materialism, to designate the development goals and the means of achieving them by quantifying production and distribution, and to implement the scientific project of the state as it built up socialism. But it was also designed as a bargaining process that involved the whole of society through various bodies, ministries, agencies, decentralized offices, enterprises and cooperatives. In its very functioning, planning proceeded from iterative processes made up of thousands of negotiations and calculations, new negotiations and new calculations, until everything finally fitted together.¹⁵ From the outset, therefore, and in the very spirit of the government, planning had two very different meanings that could be labeled, as Martha Lampland suggests, ‘scientific’ and ‘artistic’¹⁶: and these meanings paved the way to practices and understandings that were, so to say, diametrically opposed. On the one hand, the plan was a categorical imperative that needed to be constantly not only highlighted (in statistics, reports, speeches and presentations) but also, of course, implemented. As an expression of the scientific character of the government, it illustrated the infallible character of socialist economic calculation and thus could not suffer the least exemption in its realization. The plan had to be fulfilled at all costs. On the other hand, however, the plan was considered to be an almost continuous process of negotiations between actors, between institutions, between businesses, between regions, between local and national bodies and allowed all sorts of arrangements, accommodations and improvisations. This duality also illustrated an ongoing dual process: a statistical process and a political process.¹⁷

As an expression of scientific socialism, the statistics had to be the most serious, the most accurate and the closest to the reality, so as to establish the broad lines of the coming socialist economy; but the plan simultaneously constructed the fictitious numbers meant to give quantified expression to the great socialist political project, figures that were necessarily observed in the future. The duality I have mentioned also overlapped with the dual objective of long-term forecasting and permanent and immediate adjustments, which lay behind the countless different understandings, interpretations and games that were played with planning. In the name of its necessary realization, the plan was interpreted as the place par excellence of falsifying data and encrypted exaggerations, and therefore as a procedural distinction between the appearance and essence of the economy, between its material quantification and its actual substance.¹⁸ But its extreme formalism and the precedence of procedural rationality within it have often led to a more ambiguous perception, lying within the sphere of pure representation or even fiction, thereby allowing multiple types of behavior¹⁹: the indifference, the implicit criticism and the depreciation of the planning process itself, the expression of special interests, the ability to divert resources, competition between actors or between entities with different interests, reasoned debate on reforms to be carried out, improvements to be made, priorities to be changed, the suggestion of ways to increase production, to guide investments, modify local strategies and change production methods. The juxtaposition of different temporalities and scales (long-term forecasts and targets, short-term adjustments, quarterly, annual and five-year plans) was sometimes interpreted as a fallback to the short term, the micro-economic sphere, the company or the firm. Moreover, the fragmentation of trading venues, the decentralization and fragmentation of decision points allowed the expression of lobbyists and special interests and the calculation of immediate gains; but this juxtaposition was sometimes understood, conversely, as a desire to impose consistency, to centralize, direct and coordinate the economic sphere through the exercise of arbitration, practices of punishment and reward.²⁰ The mismatch between distant, abstract and grandiose objectives on the one hand and, on the other, the dealings, improvisations and little arrangements necessary for the continuous adaptation of the plan to reality gave latitude to the expression of personal interests, to clientelism, to arbitrary measures and to privileged access to scarce resources.²¹ Haggling was designed to satisfy the authorities, to guarantee income for business leaders (notably through bonuses for exceeding targets), but simultaneously it was meant

to guarantee them a certain stability, a status with respect to their superiors and advantageous career management. The plan was therefore first and foremost a place for the negotiation of the reality and strength of central control by the government, a place of confrontation and expression of power relations in the definition of priorities, in requests for funds for investment and for the means of production. But it was not just that: it was also a place where recommendations could be interpreted; it was simultaneously a norm on the basis of which one could play and exercise a 'de facto autonomy,'²² which was admittedly not evenly distributed, but often left open the possibility of modifying the quantities and inventories of production, to bypass regulations on prices and wages, and to substitute factors, all of these being illegal practices that were nonetheless essential to the system. In other words, the plan could be interpreted as a fetish, a ritual, a hoax, a reified object, but equally well as a major site for very concrete negotiations opening spaces for interpretation and for the subdued and intimate confrontation of points of view. It was both of these simultaneously, and there was no use in specifying the intentionality behind this technique of government: state voluntarism was, as it were, a useful fiction that left room for improvisation.

All these examples underline the way that the claim of the single party (the SED in the GDR, the RCD in Tunisia, the CCP in China, the CP in the Soviet Union, the NSDAP in the Nazi regime, the KMT in Taiwan) or more generally of those in power to ensure the monopoly of meaning is an illusion. It is an illusion because, as we have seen, norms and meanings are plural. And it is an illusion because the state, the relationship to power, is something that needs to be interpreted: we must learn to decipher the ideological statements, statements of knowledge and absolute control of the population, the relationship between publicity and secrecy, we must know how to play on norms and deviations from the norms.²³ It is an illusion, finally, because men are not 'monomaniac,' they do not always, as a majority, or systematically, think in political terms.²⁴ What this means, in this context, is that it is difficult, if not impossible, to impose a particular reading. This monopoly is an illusion, as is any absolute control of the administrative machinery over economic policies and of the police apparatus over the population, or the 'omnipotence' of the Chief.

Above all, these examples show that tensions and conflicts are not the only factors in the divergences between actors. The incompleteness of the logics of action and the multiplicity of meanings also provide other

opportunities for tensions between economic dynamics and the disciplinary exercise of power. This plasticity sometimes leads to convergences, sometimes to clashes where the final result can neither be known in advance, nor stable. The contingency of results stems precisely from the multiplicity of objectives, representations and understandings of the values or projects involved: the contours of domination are not only ‘built’ by the rulers, but as part of a continuous ‘formation’; they are also shaped by these subordinate actors, sometimes disciplined but sometimes not, who may not understand things in the way they should. In other words, because they often involve men who are ‘fools,’²⁵ and not a homogeneous people comprised of *Homo economicus*, all economic behavior must be broken down and contextualized, understood as reflecting a ‘multidimensional universe,’²⁶ what Weber called the ‘inexhaustible infinity of the sensible and phenomenal world’ which leads to ‘infinitely manifold, possible valuations.’²⁷ From the aforementioned examples, we have learnt that the heterogeneous nature of thought and modes of action, and the plurality of modes and systems of relations that overlap while being antagonistic, also characterize the economic—including the economic dynamics of political domination.

PLURALITY OF MEANINGS, APPREHENSION AND REPRESENTATIONS: THE CONTOURS OF DOMINATION

This diversity opens up the question of the ‘political.’ When competing meanings clash, or simply different meanings are involved, how are we to grasp the limits of the political? The plurality of meanings has even more of an impact since, in regimes that claim to control and know everything—even though, as I have never ceased to show, this project is always utopian—everything can be described as ‘political’ when it has been identified by governments as an object of interest. From his analysis of the political in Rome, Paul Veyne insists that insofar as the political is ‘not a thing’ and ‘has no content,’ anything can become political. Any activity, in this case economic or social, will be considered political if we ‘believe, rightly or wrongly, that (it) could give rise to ideas of indiscipline.’²⁸ This is the question of ‘politicization,’ or perhaps, less problematically, the ‘shift to the political,’ of fundamental importance for understanding how domination is exerted concretely.²⁹ The intentionalist logic raises these questions in terms of political control, as the government monopoly of the definition of the political. From the perspective developed in these pages,

the question must obviously be rephrased: how is the political—and with it, the practice of domination—formed at the junction of these different interpretations and understandings?

In the GDR, for example, labor disputes or incidents were, as elsewhere, social and professional conflicts that stemmed from industrial accidents, health or safety problems, working conditions, salary questions, attempts to impose conformity in the face of breaches of discipline or insubordination, and so on. There was nothing political about these strikes, this discontent and this bad mood, which stemmed from negotiating strategies to improve working conditions, and more generally life in society. But they have consistently been interpreted as such by a government mainly concerned with order, stability, and the ‘normal’ functioning of productive structures.³⁰ We find the same pattern and the same process of extreme politicization in all situations of a totalitarian trend. This was the case in Tunisia under Ben Ali, where conflicts—in the mining area of Gafsa, in the tourist sector or in the textile sector, affected by relocation to China or the illegal practices of rogue bosses—were managed as if they were movements of political opposition, by denial, coercion or the purchase of silence in hard cash.³¹ In Portugal, under Salazar, strikes were banned and transformed into an ‘expression of general challenge to the regime’³²: they were interpreted as political opposition because they implicitly questioned the corporatist order and its idea of harmony between capital and labor, which obscured the real conditions of the work and life of working people. In the words of Jan Vladislav, describing Czechoslovakia in the 1970s, ‘politics, uncontrollable, elusive, is everything and nothing at once. Instead of being the field of human activity, it has become the site of a permanent conflict between power and life.’³³ Analyses in terms of the enunciation of the political enable us to understand this issue by highlighting the importance of mediation and intermediaries in the exercise of power, particularly in the processes of interpretation and legitimate definition of what is political and what is not.³⁴ The multidimensionality of societies, and the ambiguity of relations, political representations and meanings make the political indefinite in nature. The exercise of domination does not require that everything be defined as political: the examples presented throughout this work suggest on the contrary, and in line with this interpretation, that the autonomy of the social and the indefinite character of spheres explain how some actors conceive economic practices as political and others as non-political. It is precisely this contrary, or at any rate different, understanding of practices that shapes domination.

Further examples are not necessary. Based on the analyses I have presented, I just want to emphasize that the plurality of meanings results from multiple processes: different social, economic, cultural and political positions, divergent interests, individual understandings and interpretations, and a reference to different political *imaginaires*. It is also the result of differentiated relations to time: not all protagonists experience chronological time in the same way, which again leads to shifts in perception and differentiated political understandings, further complicating the exercise of domination.³⁵ The revolution of 1917 was not only experienced differently by the 'Reds' and 'Whites,' by the Bolsheviks and the Mensheviks, by gangs of deserters, by former Whites or former Reds who became looters, by some farmers against other farmers, by the old and young; for some, it represented the affirmation of the proletariat, for others the destruction of the church and the rural aristocracy, for others the rights of peasants; for some it was seen as a break, a political 'event,' for others it went unnoticed in the continuity of everyday life, and for others it was not perceived politically.³⁶ Similarly, the New Economic Policy (NEP) symbolized regression for Bolshevik leaders, with beneficial reform for the Menshevik economists and for a certain proportion of the peasantry, but it represented nothing for the thousands of peasants who fought against the Red Army, nothing for the millions of farmers hit by famine or for the economists and intellectuals thrown into jail. As shown so eloquently by Fernand Braudel, this interweaving of different historical times is fundamental to understand events.³⁷ These time differences are not played out only in the short or medium term, as the previous examples have illustrated; they are played out mostly in the concatenation of long and short or medium times. In sub-Saharan Africa, for example, decolonization was not only seen as the end of Western domination, the restoration of national sovereignty, the expression of political freedom and the end of the European yoke over African society and African economy; but it was also understood by many social groups as a return to dignity, in a conception of this dignity that drew on the *longue durée*, resulting from the problematics of slavery and political formation by fission and escapism.³⁸ This different assessment of events and forms of behavior in relation to time partly explains the unexpected progress of reforms, the unexpected effects of economic policies, and the relative effectiveness of disciplinary and punitive measures. Michel de Certeau reminds us that 'the time that interrupts or connects (and which has no doubt never been thought) is not programmed time.'³⁹ In these conditions too, the exercise of domination or repression follows

unexpected paths, depending on developments and circumstances that have become 'political' in spite of themselves. This helps us to see the whole point of an approach based on political economy, an approach that does not define in advance what is economic and what is not, what is political and what is not: it allows us to understand the dispositifs and especially the practices of domination in all their diversity and in all their nuanced forms, without preconceptions or any prior definition of the places that need to be observed.

The plurality of meanings is also embodied in the distortions, specific to each individual, each generation, each group and each social formation, between facts and representations. As many of the previous examples have shown, we cannot confine the analysis of domination to the analysis of practices, however precise and detailed they may be. Understanding the transformations of power relations and modes of government requires us to take into account the representations and, more specifically, the potential existence of discrepancies between the official representations and the lived realities, between representations and realities that supported an ideology and policies and realities that were really experienced, between the various representations of a lived experience and the different *imaginaires* mobilized. Ideology does not define social functions; it does not set out one rationality but multiple rationalities that are themselves mobile and fluid. What we find is more a concatenation of rationalities than the application of one rationality uniquely and unambiguously determined by ideology; this is why there are often contradictions between ideology and the dispositifs that rely upon it.⁴⁰ The unintentional aspect of domination also appears in those practices that 'vampirize' the proclamations of ideology.⁴¹ These shifts may relate to changes in social groups and the image they have in the minds of leaders, to perceptions of the political and actual political relations.⁴² In contemporary Russia, Bulgaria and China, the language (of justice and equality, the primacy of the social, exposing corruption) is largely offset from reality (of differential reform, a certain form of liberalism with its downgradings, its 'poor' and its abandoned), but it is not disconnected from it; it refers to the past, to realities and most often ideals that are past.⁴³ For thought is not the 'perfect market of economic rationalism,' it is not 'transparency and fluidity,' it is 'a prisoner of its habits.' 'Frames of thought do not take note of the reality as quickly as stock prices change'; systems of thought have their own speed, their own autonomous history.⁴⁴ This is a fundamental question, that of the everyday: 'the relation between our values and good reasons on the one

hand and our daily mood on the other is not direct, our great ideas are not “in tune” with our daily moods⁴⁵; things are triggered or not triggered according to these random factors. An analysis of domination through an approach based on political economy should not consider these values and beliefs as external to relations of power and force, or to strategic games; it must take into account these discrepancies, these disjunctions, these contingencies and these proliferating forms of understanding in order to better understand the modes of government.

Once we have criticized intentionalist analyses, the question of responsibility arises in an acute form. The discussions above have shown that ‘the swarming of facts, the multiplicity of intentions, and the tangle of actions cannot be linked to any system of determination capable of giving a rational interpretation of them—that is, of stating their meanings and causes.’⁴⁶ They stressed that the consequences of certain facts, certain behaviors, certain decisions were neither necessary nor inevitable, that there was no determinism of life in society and that the dimension of the random and unpredictable, and therefore of improvisation, was fundamental; in the context of plurality of meanings and belongings, the permanent reformulation of power relations and the political game suggested the ‘polychromatic’⁴⁷ nature of the exercise of domination, always taking place in singular situations; and in this sense, it reflected the plurality of logics of action, and the diversity and ways in which power relations, events and the exercise of power by the same individual could be understood, as well as the complexity and ambiguity of all social practice. They therefore emphasized the absence of unambiguous and direct causal relations. They showed that accommodation and arrangements stemmed from complex logics that exceeded the interest or opportunism of the actors alone, that ‘participation’ also came about inadvertently, through laziness so to speak, and by unexpected sequences; domination was as it were accepted or sought because the practices through which it was transmitted played on other rationalities and other logics of action. In other words, domination was sometimes effected without the knowledge of the actors. Moreover, the proposed explanations have highlighted the spread of relations of domination by the proliferation of dispositifs and practices not necessarily conceived or perceived as a form of control and surveillance registry, and the importance of the uncertainties of life in society, contingency and the imperceptible ripple effects that made constraint or coercion painless and sometimes even harmless, indeed sought after. But it goes without saying that this complexity, these uncertain and unexpected paths, do not

necessarily mean that the actors are only subjected to outside forces, that they are not active and therefore not in one way or another responsible. The question of intentionality must definitely be differentiated from that of responsibility.

NOTES

1. R. Hervouet, *Datcha Blues. Existences ordinaires et dictature en Biélorussie* (Montreuil-sous-Bois: Aux lieux d'être, 2007) [1].
2. Hübner, 'Les ouvriers en RDA.'
3. Lüdtke, 'La République démocratique allemande comme histoire'; "Les héros du travail". La loyauté morose des ouvriers de l'industrie en RDA,' in Lüdtke, *Des ouvriers dans l'Allemagne du XXe siècle*; 'The world of men's work, East and West'; and *Everyday Life in Mass Dictatorship. Collusion, Evasion* (New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2016) [2].
4. Lüdtke, 'Les héros du travail'.
5. Hübner, 'Les ouvriers en RDA.'
6. Lüdtke, subtitle of the chapter "Les héros du travail."
7. The whole of the following paragraph is based on the subtle and detailed analysis provided by A. Lüdtke, especially in 'The "honor of labor."'
8. Gellately, *Backing Hitler*; Herbert, 'Labor as spoils of conquest, 1933–1945.'
9. Hibou, *The Force of Obedience*, pp. 193–4; 'Les marges de manœuvre d'un "bon élève" économique,' and 'Tunisie. Le coût d'un miracle,' *Critique internationale*, 4 (June 1999): 48–56 [3].
10. Tooze, *The Wages of Destruction*, Chap. 2.
11. T.W. Ngo, 'The political bases of episodic agency in the Taiwan state'; Mengin, *Fragments of an Unfinished War* (London: Hurst, NYC: OUP, 2015) [4].
12. F. Mengin, 'Taiwan as the Westphalian Society's Foucauldian heterotopia,' *Sociétés Politiques Comparées*, 7 (September 2008), accessible on the FASOPO website, http://www.fasopo.org/reasopo/n7/societespolitiquescomparees7_article.pdf [5].
13. Yurchak, 'Soviet hegemony of form.'
14. See, for example, S. Leys, *Orwell, ou l'horreur de la politique* (Plon: Paris, 2006) [6]; Veyne, *Le Quotidien et l'Intéressant*.

15. Kornai, *Economics of Shortage* and “‘Hard” and “Soft” Budget Constraint,’ *Acta Economica*, 25(3–4) (1980): 231–246 [7]; A. Gerschenkron, *Economic Backwardness in Historical Perspective. A Book of Essays* (Cambridge, MA: Belknap Press of Harvard University Press, 1962) [8].
16. ‘Planning as science, planning as art’—this is the title of Chap. 5 of Martha Lampland’s book *The Object of Labor. Commodification in Socialist Hungary* (Chicago, IL: Chicago University Press, 1995) [9].
17. Blum and Mespoulet, *L’Anarchie bureaucratique*.
18. M. Lewin, *Political Undercurrents in Soviet Economic Debates. From Bukharin to the Modern Reformers* (London: Pluto Press, 1975) [10].
19. Lampland, *The Object of Labor*.
20. J. Sapir, *L’Économie mobilisée. Essai sur les économies de type soviétique* (Paris: La Découverte, 1990) [11]; Rowell, *Le Totalitarisme au concret*.
21. Lampland, *The Object of Labor*; Sapir, *L’Économie mobilisée*, and the special issue of *Comparative Economic Studies*, 47, 2 (June 2005), devoted to ‘Performance and efficiency under socialism. Studies in honor of Abram Bergson,’ and especially M. Harrison, ‘The fundamental problem of command. Plan and compliance in a partially centralised economy,’ and A. Markevich, ‘Soviet planning archives. The files that Bergson could not see.’
22. The words are those of Gerschenkron, *Economic Backwardness in Historical Perspective*.
23. Berdahl, *Where the World Ended*; Le Blanc, *Vies ordinaires, vies précaires*.
24. This has been a current theme in the work of Veyne ever since *Bread and Circuses*. The expression ‘monomaniacs’ comes from *Le Quotidien et l’Intéressant*.
25. I am here of course alluding to the ‘human foolishness’ that Weber analyzes in his text “The meaning of “value freedom” in the sociological and economic sciences.’
26. Marcuse, *One-dimensional man*.
27. Weber, ‘The meaning of “value freedom” in the sociological and economic sciences’ p. 328.
28. Veyne, *Le Pain et le Cirque*, pp. 687 and 691. See also M. Foucault, in particular his eloquent formula ‘nothing is political, everything

- can be politicized, everything may become political,' taken from his manuscript on governmentality, quoted by M. Senellart in Foucault, *Security, Territory, Population*, p. 390.
29. For a more classic vision, see J. Lagroye (ed.), *La Politisation* (Paris: Belin, 2003) [12]; an approach closer to mine is found in Bayart, 'L'énonciation du politique.'
 30. Hübner, 'Les ouvriers en RDA,' and Lindenberger, 'La Police populaire de la RDA de 1952 à 1958,' who show how the close-up work of the Volkspolizei was systematically interpreted in a political way by a hierarchy that was mainly preoccupied by order, normalization and the prevention of all deviant behavior.
 31. Hibou, 'Work discipline, discipline in Tunisia. Complex and ambiguous relations,' and Allal, 'Les réformes néolibérales, clientélisme et protestations en situation autoritaire.'
 32. Pereira, *L'État portugais et les Portugais de France*.
 33. Vladislav, 'Vaclav Havel en tant que destin.'
 34. See in particular studies on 'the political from below' and the 'popular modes of political action' inspired by M. de Certeau, especially Bayart, 'L'énonciation du politique'; Bayart, Mbembe and Toulabor, *Le Politique par le bas en Afrique*.
 35. I am grateful to A. Capelle-Pogăcean for making me aware of this question. See in particular her 'Hongrie des pères, Hongrie des fils,' and 'Le théâtre et ses publics, ou la société socialiste en représentation(s) à Oradea (Roumanie),' in Ragaru and Capelle-Pogăcean (eds), *Vie quotidienne et pouvoir sous le communisme*, pp. 351–392.
 36. Stanziani, *L'Économie en revolution* and Figes, *The Whisperers*.
 37. F. Braudel, *The Mediterranean and the Mediterranean World in the Age of Philip II*. 2 vols., 2nd rev. ed., transl. 1972 and 1973 by Sian Reynolds as well as *Civilization and Capitalism, 15th–18th Centuries*, transl. by Siân Reynolds, 3 vols. (1979).
 38. J.-F. Bayart, 'Les chemins de traverse de l'hégémonie coloniale en Afrique de l'Ouest francophone,' and *Les Études postcoloniales. Un carnaval académique* (Paris: Karthala, 2010).
 39. M. de Certeau, *The Practice of Everyday Life*, p. 202. See also *La Faiblesse de croire*.
 40. Chartier, 'Stratégies et tactiques.'

41. Foucault, *Discipline and Punish*, and M. de Certeau's commentary on Foucault in *The Practice of Everyday Life*, pp. xiv–xv.
42. This is one of the strong points of Stanziani, *L'Économie en révolution*.
43. Favarel-Garrigues, 'Privatization and political change in soviet and post-soviet Russia'; N. Ragaru, 'La corruption en Bulgarie. Construction et usage d'un problème social,' in G. Favarel-Garrigues (ed.), *Criminalité, Police et Gouvernement. Trajectoires postcommunistes* (Paris: L'Harmattan, 2003) [13], pp. 41–82; Lubman, *Bird in a Cage*; Kernen, *La Chine vers l'économie de marché*; Rocca, *La Condition chinoise*.
44. Veyne, *Le Pain et le Cirque*, p. 64.
45. Veyne, *Le Quotidien et l'Intéressant*, p. 100.
46. R. Chartier, 'The chimera of the origin: Archaeology of knowledge, Cultural History, and the French Revolution,' in *On the Edge of the Cliff*, pp. 51–72.
47. Expression taken from Stein, 'The permeable boundaries of Ottoman Jewry,' p. 59.

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General Conclusion

By giving a central place to ‘insidious leniencies’ and tackling head-on the problematics of legitimacy and intentionality on the basis of economic practices and *imaginaires*, my analysis goes beyond the traditional issues of violence and fear. Its spectrum and intelligibility has been expanded as a result. Scrutinizing the economic detail, as I have done in this book, is based on my rejection of a number of current theories, those of the ‘bribery’ of the population, of an ‘exchange’ or compensation, those of the chief, the strong regime, the capacity for control and voluntarism, those of the unequivocal nature of causal relations or meanings, and that of instrumentalization.

My work challenges the totalitarian hypothesis, the idea of a regime or a state capable, through its deliberate actions, its adaptability and anticipation, its calculations and strategic games, to control, dominate and, if necessary, to suppress; it also challenges the idea that actors have clearly defined unambiguous visions and strategies they pursue with a specific intention. The reading put forward here allows for more subtle analyses of the exercise of domination, highlighting the complex ways in which hegemony is constructed, beyond general and all-inclusive considerations on support or opposition, on the use of force or persuasion, on the existence or absence of coercion.

Without claiming to summarize here the many analyses presented in this book, I would like to come back to two dimensions that seem important to me in the contemporary discussions.

FROM INTENTION TO FACT, THE COMPLEXITY
OF THE EXERCISE OF DOMINATION

The first refers to the delicate positioning I have adopted that both rejects Manichean analyses in order to show the complexity of the exercise of domination, between persuasion, state solicitude, games of mutual dependencies, distanciation, heterogeneous interests, autonomous logics, and so on, while duly acknowledging the power relations, the unequal relations, the violence of the ‘insidious leniencies’ and coercion. This is why the analyses presented here cannot be read as an exemption from any responsibility on the part of rulers. The Germany of the Third Reich, the USSR of the great Stalinist purges, the Rwanda genocide in 1994 and the Cambodia of Pol Pot had a brush with international justice. Such regimes do indeed fall within the legal problematics of intentionality, as the issue of the responsibility of their leaders is openly asked. Similarly, South Africa and the Morocco of Hassan II had to accept commissions (whether they were called ‘Truth and Reconciliation’ or ‘Equity and Reconciliation’) which again raised the question of intentionality, on the basis of a problematics of memory, reparation and the recognition of victims. Although my approach echoes those analyses that refuse to ascribe too much importance to the Chief, or more precisely a unique and fundamental importance to the role played by the latter, and although, following Peter Brown, I refuse to fall into an ‘institutionalized egotism,’¹ I am obviously not claiming that the massacres of the 1930s in the USSR were not triggered, amplified and systematized by the decisions and directions taken by Stalin and his local representatives, that violence in Rwanda did not turn into genocide or a crime against humanity because of the direct involvement of government and key executives, that 1930s anti-Semitism did not cause the Holocaust as a result of the decision made in high places to impose the Final Solution. The ‘complications’ that are the focus of this book do not exclude decisions,² for instance those made in less dramatic situations such as those of the ‘soft dictatorships,’ to borrow the title of a book that was a milestone in studies on Tunisia³: not only the repression of opponents and the repressive policing of society but also the implementation of tax, financial or economic dispositifs, the development of discriminatory legislation, and the imposing of conformity on trade union institutions, were all certainly relayed by actors who suffered from these measures. And if leaders can sometimes develop such dispositifs ex nihilo for control purposes, most often they are simply seizing the opportunity offered to them

after realizing the ‘potential’ that they concealed and ‘services’ they could provide in terms of discipline, surveillance and repression. But seizing an opportunity, and taking advantage of a chance, an occasion, is an act, a decision which undoubtedly involves responsibility.

As the reader will have noticed, however, the decision-making process as such does not interest me. Instead, I have sought to highlight the conditions of possibility of such decisions (and simultaneously the non-decisions), the arrangements, understandings and practices that make such decisions (and in particular such developments) conceivable, acceptable and tolerable. The differentiated understandings of events and situations, the multiplicity and ambiguity of the processes of legitimation, the uncertain sequences and uncontrolled tangles of logics and actions, and the interaction of different and not necessarily convergent intentionalities produce, as it were, convergent effects of diffusion and expansion of domination that share one particular feature: they are linked to the question of desire for the state that I mentioned in the first part of this book. The value of a Webero–Foucauldian approach to political economy lies primarily in its ability to suggest the magnitude of these processes of legitimation, the diversity of the surreptitious paths taken by domination and the multiplicity of practices with unintended effects.

However, my analyses could be read—and have sometimes indeed already been read—as a demonstration of the ubiquity of power and its acceptance, which, within the problematics of power, would come down to saying that everyone is responsible, and thus exempting governments of responsibility, at least partially. This reading echoes the debates in the 1990s that caused a stir among the German historians of Nazism. I do not intend to discuss that here.⁴ I would just like to clarify my conception of things in this area. In one sense, my analysis does suggest that the actors of everyday life (and I deliberately use the term ‘actors’) do not just suffer, even if they do suffer a lot. The force of obedience/domination pairing also stems from this element of accommodation, constantly negotiated arrangements, convergences of interests, recognition and participation in the political and moral economy of the regime, and the sharing of a common *imaginaire*. In this, they are active and share some responsibility. However, this observation immediately entails a second, which is inseparable from it: the force of the obedience/domination pairing results simultaneously from the ability of governments to respond to the desire for the state and for normality on the part of the population, their ability to interpret these desires, to give them utterance and put them in a

shape that will allow an exercise of domination—an exercise that can go as far as repression, killings, massacres. If we want to conduct an analysis in terms of responsibility, we obviously cannot treat all actors the same way, although it should always be remembered that even the actions with the most explicit goals are integrated into a complex society where forces are heterogeneous, intentions multiple, logics different and rationalities tangled, with unexpected effects and sequences.

Issues of responsibility and intentionality are both legitimate, but they belong to two different logics. This was shown by Carlo Ginzburg in his book *The Judge and the Historian* on the Sofri trial, in which he wrote, ‘On the interior of this complex network of actions and reactions, which involves social processes that cannot easily be manipulated, the heterogeneity of objectives with respect to the initial intentions is the rule. Anyone who fails to take this fundamental consideration into account tends to mix intentions with facts and proclamations (at times grotesquely disproportionate) with events, slipping into extreme forms of judicial historiography.’⁷⁵ While the judge looks for responsibilities, reduces any event to an action or decision and argues on the basis of ethics and political action, the social scientist—at least as I see it—is not in the business of making indictments and must not enter into legal and political problematics. The social scientist, rather, must seek to understand the event (domination) in its contexts, and these cannot be reduced to an action or be understood unequivocally and definitively. This is what I showed in focusing on the problems raised by intentionalist analyses: one cannot confuse intention and facts, because intentions are always plural, actors partly autonomous, and the political does not consistently include the whole of society. In short, it is important not to slip ‘from the plane of mere possibility to the level of asserting a fact; from the conditional to the indicative.’⁷⁶

THE BENEFITS OF A COMPARATIVE APPROACH CAPABLE OF BRINGING OUT SINGULARITIES

The second dimension that I would like to highlight in this conclusion is the benefit of a comparative approach. Indeed, choosing a comparative approach required that I rationalize and conceptualize the great many facts and explanations offered, through a number of problematics. The variety of forms they have taken in very different experiences and historical situations, the way they have been borrowed and transferred to situations for which they were not prepared, have enriched my understanding of

the practices of domination. This work of abstraction and generalization has also highlighted the mainsprings of the political economy of domination and simultaneously the infinite variations that give an always specific meaning to experiences. In a way, this approach goes against that of historians and specialists: it does not go into detail in the systematic analysis of one (or a few) specific situations—something I had previously done with Tunisia—but instead offers, to follow Paul Veyne, ‘an inventory of differences.’ Comparing and contrasting these has revealed what, in each situation, was obscured and forgotten, what was neither seen nor said, what was not visible or speakable, in other words what was unspoken and unspeakable in each society. This work has also brought out explanations that did not necessarily come to light, embedded rationalities or logics. Of course, this is not to say that the result is so conclusive, or that I have sufficiently systematized this approach. Yet I tried to say something different about domination by comparing and interweaving the many possible problematizations of this issue.

My argument has aimed to highlight the uncertainty and incompleteness of the practices of domination. The comparative approach I have tried to carry out to the best of my skills and my knowledge has shown that not only each context is obviously singular, and has its own characteristics, but also that this uniqueness, this singular appearance, does not produce necessary and inevitable consequences in terms of the exercise of power and domination. This does not mean that the context is not important, but that it is part of the indeterminacy of actions, of the subjectivity of the living (as Marx would put it), in the random and unpredictable nature of life in society. Contingency and improvisation are essential, including in totalitarian situations or situations perceived as totalitarian. Contextualizing is essential, but context is not determinism; it must also be interpreted in the light of what the actors understand and interpret, based on the problematics proposed, in accordance with separate local and micro-social trajectories, based on logics specific to a particular economic sector or a particular sectorial characteristic. This remark has a particular connotation when the development of analyses in terms of public policies and their instruments tends to favor a certain functionalist comparativism. In fact, whenever I have presented my work (which emerged from a comparative analysis of authoritarian or totalitarian situations), my colleagues responded with questions that arose from contemporary democracies. In some ways, this reaction is easy to understand: insofar as, traditionally, domination in authoritarian or totalitarian ‘regimes’ is analyzed through

the prism of coercion, violence and fear, the fact that I speak of commonplace economic and social practices confuses people; this immediately brings to mind, especially when addressing the issue of legitimacy, situations that are neither authoritarian nor totalitarian, that is to say, democratic situations.

Beyond these resemblances, some of these discussions have openly raised the question of the similarity or even convergence between authoritarian situations and contemporary democracies. The relevance of this question is also supported by a growing body of work on political 'regimes' that emphasize the current blurring of boundaries, a fuzziness in classification and the transformation of lines of demarcation, in short, a kind of convergence between 'authoritarianism' and 'democracies.' We would on this view be witnessing the end of the clear contrasts between political systems: a certain gradualism is asserting itself, and 'limited pluralism' would become a universal formula.⁷ The same applies to the writings, Marxist-inspired or derived from a certain reading of Foucault, that highlight the undemocratic or authoritarian dimension of neoliberalism and present it as the project of a social class, a hegemonic project aimed at concentrating power and wealth and exploiting the majority of the population.⁸ I do not share these visions and interpretations at all: in my view, they err by ignoring distinctions and drawing intellectually facile conclusions. Here we can draw on Michel Foucault's critique of the neoliberal theory of the state—by nature ubiquitous, bureaucrat, violent and carrying within it the seeds of fascism. This thesis, he says, is based on three characteristics: the 'interchangeability of analyses,' to begin with, which removes the specificity of each situation; the 'general disqualification by the worst,' second, which equates all forms of domination; and finally the 'elision of the current situation' that makes it impossible to take into account the real and everyday practices.⁹ The comparative approach I have chosen suggests instead that the existence of transversal mechanisms of domination does not enable us to predict forms of government or the nature of power relations. These mechanisms of domination obviously take on singular connotations depending on the specificity of each situation and differences inherent in any practical configuration, depending largely on the context in which they operate and the way they are linked with other modes of the exercise of power. The example of 'discharge'—the redeployment of state intervention through indirect methods that involve private intermediaries—is convincing evidence of this.¹⁰ If we follow this reasoning of convergence and correspondence, this process, which was first described for feudal situations and whose conceptualization comes from these,¹¹ seems

to be consubstantial with this type of government. However, a comparative political economy of ‘discharge’ suggests that, while the latter was indeed a purveyor of absolutism,¹² it was also found with authoritarian situations where the administration remained central,¹³ authoritarian situations where the administration crumbled,¹⁴ processes of authoritarian restoration,¹⁵ processes of democratization¹⁶ and consolidated democratic situations.¹⁷ Nevertheless, the development of control dispositifs, the increasingly commonplace issue of security and the economic mechanisms associated with it, and the disciplinary nature of many economic practices are indisputable facts. We must take seriously the theory of convergence and similarity so as to criticize it more effectively, especially because it is based on rather widespread intellectual underpinnings: first, a comparative approach that surveys objects, sequences and characteristics, not problematics, and second, a biased and totalizing reading of contemporary political situations.

NOTES

1. Brown, *Power and Persuasion*, Chap. 1.
2. These thoughts are also inspired by the special issue of the review *Politix* on decision: *Politix*, 21, 82 (June 2008).
3. T. Ben Brick, *Une si douce dictature. Chroniques tunisiennes, 1991–2000* (Paris: La Découverte, 2000) [1].
4. See Traverso, *Le Totalitarisme*; also, all the debates on the history of everyday life (*Alltagsgeschichte*) and Aly, *Hitler’s Beneficiaries*, C. Browning, *Ordinary men: Reserve Police Battalion 101 and the final solution in Poland* (London: Penguin, 2001) [2] and D. Goldhagen, *Hitler’s willing executioners: ordinary Germans and the Holocaust* (London: Abacus, 1997) [3]. For an overview of these debates in French, see C. Ingrao, ‘Conquérir, aménager, exterminer. Recherches récentes sur la Shoah,’ *Annales HSS* (2003/2), pp. 417–438 [4].
5. C. Ginzburg, *The judge and the historian: marginal notes on a late-twentieth-century miscarriage of justice*, transl. Antony Shugaar (London: Verso, 2002), pp. 65–66 [5].
6. *Ibid.*, p. 119.
7. M. Camau and G. Massardier (eds), *Démocraties et autoritarismes. Fragmentation et hybridation des régimes* (Paris: Karthala-IEP d’Aix, 2009) [6]; O. Dabène, V. Geisser and G. Massardier (eds), *Autoritarismes démocratiques et démocraties autoritaires au XXIe*

- siècle. Convergences Nord-Sud* (Paris: La Découverte, 2008) [7]; L. Morlino, 'Regimi ibridi o regimi in transizione?', *Rivista italiana di scienza politica*, 38(2) (2008): 169–189 [8]; special issue of *Democratization*, 'Beyond Hybrid Regimes,' 14(5) (2007): 765–945. The notion of 'limited pluralism' has been formalized by Juan Linz in 'An authoritarian regime. The case of Spain,' in E. Allardt and Y. Littunen (eds), *Cleavages, Ideologies, and Party Systems. Contributions to Comparative Political Sociology* (Helsinki: The Academic Bookstore, 1964) [9], and drawn on in the contemporary context by G. Hermet, for example in 'Un régime à pluralisme limité?'
8. D. Harvey, *A Brief History of Liberalism* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2007) [10]; W. Brown, 'American Nightmare. Neoliberalism, Neoconservatism, and De-democratization,' *Political Theory*, 34(6) (2006): pp. 690–714 [11]; 'Neoliberalism and the End of Liberal Democracy,' *Theory and Event*, 7(1) (Autumn 2003), at http://muse.jhu.edu/journals/theory_&_event; R. Robinson (ed.), *The Neo-Liberal Revolution. Forging the Market State* (New York: Palgrave, 2006) [12]; A. Saad-Filho and D. Johnston (eds), *Neoliberalism. A Critical Reader* (London: Pluto Press, 2005) [13]; D. Conway and N. Heyne (eds), *Globalization's Contradictions. Geographies of Discipline, Destruction and Transformation* (London: Routledge, 2006) [14].
 9. Foucault, *The Birth of Biopolitics*, lecture of 7 March 1979, pp. 185–214.
 10. Hibou, 'Retrait ou redéploiement de l'État?', 'La "décharge", nouvel interventionnisme?', and Hibou (ed.), *Privatizing the State*.
 11. This analysis is developed by M. Weber in *General Economic History* and *Economy and Society*.
 12. This is the case of the Ancien Régime, analysed by D. Dessert in *Argent, pouvoir et société au Grand Siècle* (Paris: Fayard, 1984) [15].
 13. This is the case of Tunisia: Hibou, *The Force of Obedience*.
 14. This is the case of Cambodia: Bayart, Bertrand, Hibou, Marchal and Mengin, *Le Royaume concessionnaire*.
 15. This is the case of Cameroon and a certain number of countries in sub-Saharan Africa: Bayart, Ellis and Hibou, *The Criminalisation of the State in Africa*.

16. This is the case of Greece and Portugal: B. Hibou and F. Bafail, 'Européanisation: quelles mutations des administrations publiques et des modes de gouvernement? Une comparaison Europe du Sud, Europe de l'Est,' *Les Études du CERI*, 102 (December 2003) [16], and B. Hibou, 'Greece and Portugal,' in S. Bulmer and C. Lequesne (eds), *The Member States of the European Union* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2005), pp. 229–253 [17].
17. This is the case of the European and American countries analyzed: L. Weiss, *The Myth of the Powerless State. Governing the Economy in a Global Era* (Cambridge: Polity Press, 1998) [18]; L. Rouban, 'Les États occidentaux d'une gouvernamentalité à l'autre,' *Critique internationale*, 1 (October 1998): 131–149 [19]; F. Faucher-King and P. Le Galès *The New Labour experiment: change and reform under Blair and Brown*; foreword by Jonah Levy (Stanford, CA: Stanford University Press, 2010) [20]. More generally, see Bayart, *Global Subjects*.

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