TWO SIDES
OF A
BARRICADE
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(Dis)order and Summit Protest in Europe

Christian Scholl
To Saskia Poldervaart
Lenin’s wager—today, in our era of postmodern relativism, more actual than ever—is that universal truth and partisanship, the gesture of taking sides, are not only not mutually exclusive, but condition each other: in a concrete situation, its universal truth can only be articulated from a thoroughly partisan position—truth is by definition one-sided.

—Slavoj Žižek, *The Universal Exception*
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Transnational networks and weak ties have again been proven to work. My work has greatly benefited from the theoretical insights and critical eyes...
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Abbreviations

ASEM summit  Asia Europe Meeting

ATTAC  Association pour la Taxation des Transactions financières pour l’Aide aux Citoyennes et citoyens (Association for the Taxation of Financial Transactions for the Aid of Citizens)

BAO Kavala  Besondere Aufbauorganisation Kavala (special police department for the 2007 G8 in Germany)

BND  Bundesnachrichtendienst (foreign intelligence agency of Germany)

CIRCA  Clandestine Insurgent Rebel Clown Army

CN gas  Phenacyl chloride. Used as a crowd control agent.

CS gas  o-Chlorobenzylidene Malononitrile. Used as a crowd control agent.

DIGOS  Divisione Investigazioni Generali e Operazioni Speciali (Italian Division of General Investigations and Special Operations)

EGF  European Gendarmerie Forces (EUROGENDFOR)

EU  European Union

EU-SEC  Coordinating National Research Programs on Security during Major Events

EZLN  Ejército Zapatista de Liberación Nacional (Zapatista Army of National Liberation)
Abbreviations

FBI  US Federal Bureau of Investigation
FTAA  The Free Trade Area of the Americas
G7  The Group of Seven (France, Germany, Italy, Japan, UK, Canada, and US)
G8  The Group of Eight (G7 plus Russia)
G20  The Group of Twenty (The world’s 20 largest national economies)
GDP  Gewerkschaft der Polizei (Trade Union of the Police in Germany)
GDR  German Democratic Republic
GPS  Global Positioning System
IMF  International Monetary Fund
Indymedia  Independent alternative media network
INPEG  Iniciativa Proti Ekonomické Globalisaci (Initiative Against Economic Globalization)
IPO  International Permanent Observatory on Security during Major Events
J18  The London Global Carnival Against Capitalism (18 June 1999) to coincide with the 25th G8 Summit in Cologne, Germany
MST  Movimento dos Trabalhadores Rurais Sem Terra (Landless Workers’ Movement)
N30  Protests around the WTO Ministerial Conference in Seattle, Washington (30 November 30 1999)
NATO  North Atlantic Treaty Organization
NGO  Nongovernmental organization
OPEC  Organization of the Petroleum Exporting Countries
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<tr>
<th>Abbreviation</th>
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<tr>
<td>PGA</td>
<td>Peoples' Global Action</td>
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<tr>
<td>RAF</td>
<td>Rote Armee Fraktion (Red Army Fraction)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>RTS</td>
<td>Reclaim The Streets</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>S26</td>
<td>Protests against the IMF/WB 55th Summit in Prague, Czech Republic (26 September 2000)</td>
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<tr>
<td>SECON</td>
<td>Security Conference</td>
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<tr>
<td>SIM card</td>
<td>Subscriber Identity Module card</td>
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<tr>
<td>UK</td>
<td>United Kingdom</td>
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<tr>
<td>UN</td>
<td>United Nations</td>
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<tr>
<td>UNICRI</td>
<td>United Nations Interregional Crime and Justice Research Institute</td>
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<tr>
<td>US</td>
<td>United States</td>
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<tr>
<td>WB</td>
<td>World Bank</td>
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<td>WSF</td>
<td>World Social Forum</td>
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<tr>
<td>WTO</td>
<td>World Trade Organization</td>
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<tr>
<td>ZDF</td>
<td>Zweites Deutsches Fernsehen (German public TV station)</td>
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Barricades Are Back

An event can be turned around, repressed, co-opted, betrayed, but there still is something there that cannot be outdated. Only renegades would say: it’s outdated. But even if the event is ancient, it can never be outdated: it is an opening to the possible. It goes as much inside individuals as in the depths of society.

—Gilles Deleuze and Félix Guattari, “May 68 did not take place”

June 19th 2001. We had finally reached Genoa. After getting the few things we brought with us to the Carlini Stadium, which had transformed into a busy and crowded sleeping and convergence space, we enter a joyful parade for open borders and freedom of movement. There is music and chants everywhere, masses of bodies, and riot police in full gear who remain at a certain distance. I briefly ponder whether it will be the same the day after. June 20th is the day scheduled for direct actions against the G8. Protest groups had announced a symbolic attack against the red zone that enclosed the G8 summit meeting. The next morning my whole body feels excited. Everywhere around me people prepare themselves for one of the marches by padding up their bodies with foam, old tires, and other creative materials. It takes a while before the march can start. We are many thousands and the hot sun heats up bodies under the protective gear. But even before reaching the yellow zone, the march stops. I hear something about police from the loudspeaker wagon; in the next moment tear gas enters my lungs: our march is attacked by police. After retreating as a first reaction, people regroup in order to try to continue the march. But the attack becomes harder. In the frontlines people are beaten up. More and more tear gas. People hurl the tear gas canisters back and start to throw stones at the police. I see crying faces and bleeding bodies around me. Many of us rush into the various side streets to our left (the right side is enclosed by a railway track). Police vans
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continue chasing us. In one of the parallel streets we are entrapped: police before and behind us. I saw us beaten up and arrested already. Then we find a door to a bar. We knock and the door opens. Safe! Everyone in the bar is talking loudly. Just after I sat down, someone from the back calls for a camera. I only possess a very bad and old one, but rush to the window. I start to take photos without fully realizing what I’m photographing. At the square below us there is a police circle around an armored vehicle. After it moved, I see the body of a protester lying on the street. The police are not allowing anyone to come close to that protester. One of the police officers notices that pictures are being taken from our window. He rushes in our direction and threatens with his gun. I quickly retreat from the window. Half an hour later, we decide to sneak another look at what is going on close to the red zone. There are no police anymore in front of the café. But the smell of tear gas still fills the air. A few corners further we meet an Italian guy who looks rather appalled. When he comes closer, we realize that his body is shaking. We ask him what has happened. Using a mix of Spanish and Italian, we learn that his friend has just been shot by the police. I quiver. What I had taken pictures of was not an injured protestor. It was his murdered friend . . .

Choosing Sides

This book is not about Genoa. Nevertheless it takes an object as starting point that was amply present during that G8 protest: the barricade. Given its confrontational character, the persistence of the barricade in the history of contentious politics is indeed stunning. First noted by social historians in Paris in 1588, the use of the barricade as an element of contentious politics in Europe coincides with peaks of antisystemic activity: 1789, 1848, 1871, and 1968 mark moments in which people dug up the streets and erected massive constructions in order to assert their sovereignty (Bos 2005; Traugott 1995). The blockades and confrontations of global summit meetings after the 1999 WTO protests in Seattle demonstrate the timeless and global character of the barricade as an instrument for insurrection and testify to the resurgence of heightened antisystemic activity. It seems as though the barricade contains the unfulfilled promises of the past that are meant to be redeemed in the present struggles. Erecting barricades in their struggle against neoliberal governance institutions at the beginning of the new millennium, summit protesters plainly asked: which side are you on?

The most obvious trait of a barricade reveals at once its exceptional potential as political instrument: a barricade demarcates two sides. Barri-
Barricades Are Back

Barricades separate social forces and help to convert politics into an antagonistic process, where people have to choose sides. To be sure, the barricades of Genoa involved more than just two actors. Next to the police and protesters, there were journalists, bystanders, NGO officials, members of parliament, researchers, and perhaps agents provocateurs. However, a barricade forces these various actors to choose sides. There is no unengaged viewpoint or “veil of ignorance” (Rawls 1971), no arbiter, and no consensus.

What I realized in Genoa is that I am not “theorizing from the margins,” as postmodern scholars like to put it. Theorizing from the margins means to escape from the antagonism and to extrapolate from a minoritarian position (Deleuze & Guattari 2004). Postmodern theories challenge dualist forms of thought as being predicated on the exclusion of difference and argue for the multiplicity of the situated experience of exclusion. In my view, however, thinking from antagonism does not mean to suppress differences, but to acknowledge the social world as conflictual. The state form of social organization transposes the conflictual character of the social world into contradictions that are resolved through mediation (Mandarini 2005).

An antagonistic relationship is predicated on two irreconcilable positions concerning the foundation of the present social order, in this case between summit protesters and global hegemonic forces. Political resolution through mediation reveals the contradictory character of capitalism. Antagonism is not the result of dialectical thinking, but the result of resistance against capitalism suppressing differences (Holloway et al. 2009; Holloway 2002: 33). Capitalism is an antagonistic social relationship. Taking this antagonism into account, negative dialectics, as “ontology of the wrong state of things” (Adorno 1990: 11), is a movement of negation rather than of synthesis. The choice for one side implies the negation of the other side. Genoa was such a situation. Summit protests create a space within and against global hegemony. Transgressive summit protests create a moment for choosing sides and for understanding ourselves as antagonistic subjects. Being aware of this contradiction obstructs the possibility of escaping into the safeguard of academic objectification.

Main Argument

This book sets out to analyze how authorities attempt to render ineffective this renewed emergence of barricades and antisystemic activity. I look at the tactical innovations of protesters and tactical adaptation of authorities’ control repertoire as an interactive process responding to the tactical innovations of protesters. How do protesters try to disrupt the smooth flows of summit meetings? And how do authorities, on the other hand, try to
control these attempts? My argument is that global antisystemic dissent is managed by voiding politics from dissent and submitting it to a supposedly technical reason of political administration. Social control tries to maintain order by reducing the probability of an undesired event producing disorder. Instead of avoiding protest, the emerging practice of social control attempts to eliminate visible dissent as part of democratic politics. This is to say, it is not protest that is repressed, but it is dissent that is made invisible by channeling and managing protest.

Authorities constantly attempt to annihilate the two-sidedness of the barricade and therefore the antagonistic character of the political. Choosing sides is thus deemed unnecessary. And the politics of social conflict are reduced to the art of administration. Rather than manifesting a political conflict, clearing away a barricade can be presented as an essentially apolitical administrative act that renews the public order by guaranteeing the normalized flows of the present order. Although being embedded in the struggle for hegemony of a political project, social control in European liberal democracies presents itself as apolitical, or to borrow a term of Žižek (2002: 11), as politics without politics.

This tendency of liberal representative democracies points to a more general and intrinsic limitation of Western democratic theory and practice. Whereas dissent is formally guaranteed in liberal-democratic constitutions, institutionalized forces constantly aim at the elimination of dissent as constituent practice. Albeit recognizing conflicting interests, liberalism is predicated on the idea and practice of reconciling them into a sociopolitical consensus. Ultimately, this means to eliminate visible dissent. Antagonism (in the sense of irreconcilable interests) is antithetical to the idea of political liberalism.4 The analysis presented in this book, then, presses for an unthinking of the liberal premises in political theories from the standpoint of disruption, conflict, dissent, and antagonism, and for a conceptualization of democracy outside of institutions. Therefore, I start with the barricade as challenging the idea of representation.

The barricade negates the elimination of dissent and antagonism. It reintroduces dissent through creating disruption in the streets. As such, barricades point to the potential of transgressive collective action in constituting a moment for political decision. Transgressive protest is a direct attack on political liberalism and its predication on representative forms of politics. Antisystemic dissent is the constitutive outside of political liberalism. Through asserting the ownership of conflict in an autonomous action, barricades transcend mediated forms of political representation. They are neither
a prolongation of institutional politics nor its premature articulation, but constitute a genuine form of political action by doing dissent in the streets. Negating the negation of dissent, summit protesters on barricades assert that the political is political, and that the current world order is contested.

Tactical Interaction

This book starts from an analysis of the tactical interactions between authorities and protesters during summit protests in Europe. I analyze the tactical adaptations of authorities in response to protesters’ tactical innovations. Tactical innovation and adaptation can be studied by looking at tactical repertoires. Tactical repertoires are sites of contestation (Taylor & van Dyke 2004: 268) in which bodies, space, communication, and the law are used by protesters and authorities to disrupt and control. The tactical interaction throughout summit protests in Europe is analyzed here as a process of tactical innovation and tactical adaptation (McAdam 1983).

Reconstructing the interactions during six summit protests of the past decade, I trace the process of tactical interaction during summit protests in Europe: the 2000 protests against the meeting of the International Monetary Fund (IMF) and the World Bank (WB) in Prague; the 2000 summit of the EU in Gothenburg; and the G8 summit protests in Genoa in 2001, in Evian in 2003, and in Gleneagles in 2005. I conducted observant participation in four of these events: Prague, Genoa, in Gleneagles in 2005, and in Heiligendamm in 2007. Gothenburg is included because it was the first summit where police shot at protesters with live ammunition. Moreover, the tactical adaptation of authorities from Prague to Genoa can be grasped better by taking into account the shifts that already took place in the context of Gothenburg. Evian is included because it was the first summit in Europe after the Genoa protests taking place in a remote venue outside of a major city. Moreover, the choice for these summits was guided by the availability of reports and evaluations in languages I can understand (German, Dutch, English, Spanish, French, and to some degree, Italian). Taken together, the six summit protests included in my research provide a sufficient base for tracing the processes of tactical interaction throughout the first decade of 2000.

The analysis of the interaction between summit protesters and authorities throughout six summit protests is organized around four contested sites of struggle: bodies, space, communication, and law. We can see protest events as an interactive process of bodies moving through space and communicating...
about *legality*. Each site of struggle provides a different entry point to understand the influence of protester and police tactics on each other. At the same time, together the four sites of struggle allow a comprehensive analysis of how the contestation of global hegemonic forces during summit protests has triggered a preemptive shift in social control through increased deployment of biopolitical forms of power.

*Summit Protests and Their Actors*

Taking summit protests as a starting point for a social analysis of the power relations between dissent and hegemonic forces, I want to understand summit protests as events that constitute possibilities. As Deleuze and Guattari (2006: 233) convincingly propose, an event can never be outdated. It is an opening to the possible. It goes as much inside individuals as in the depths of society. Summit protests are such a moment, such openings to the possible, to alternatives with promise. Zollberg (1972) calls this “moments of madness,” where new forms of contention become explosively visible. Drawing on Marcuse’s work, Katsiaficas (1987: 6–7) speaks about the “eros effect” to capture the stunning simultaneity and similarity of struggles erupting around 1968 throughout the world. Summit protests initiated a similar “eros effect” in the global circulation of struggles. As the struggles of the 1960s in the Western world followed the intense anti-colonial struggles in many parts of the Southern world, summit protests in Europe followed decades of intense opposition to neoliberal restructuring in the South (Starr 2005; Walton & Seddon 1994). I tried to extend the potential for future events by analyzing how these events are put together socially. In this book, I do not want to betray this eventfulness.

Summit protests constitute a space where a broad diversity of struggles come together and are articulated into an antagonism with hegemonic global forces. Summit protests can be seen as a process to formulate a new theory of power. As opposed to Mao Zedong’s proposal of “bombarding the headquarters,” protesters map the nodes of a global network of hegemonic forces by confronting the spatial manifestation of global governance. Summit protests constitute events with global aspirations, precisely because protesters confront global hegemonic forces in their spaces, challenging their production of “benevolent” global governance.

The hegemonic forces of neoliberal globalization are diverse and operate at various levels of governance. Taking a Gramscian approach, this book sees hegemony as produced by a network of nationally based as well as inter- and transnational, public and private actors, and as inherently comprising
both material and ideational (cultural) aspects of power (Cox & Sinclair 1996: 151). Although the US has a significant role in the production of neoliberal hegemony worldwide, it is hardly the only state pushing neoliberal ideologies and practices. Besides state institutions, many other types of forces have influence on the neoliberal project and agenda, such as universities (the “Chicago boys”), think tanks, corporations, and intergovernmental agencies (see Klein 2007). However, key for international governance are, among others, the WTO, WB, IMF, and G8 and most of their powerful member states. Therefore, summit meetings of these major institutions are crucial places for staging dissent with the neoliberal order. Zajko and Béland (2008: 724) point out that:

> [t]he practice of summit diplomacy differs significantly from more traditional forms of international meetings, which rely on networks of diplomatic staff who typically operate outside public view. Summit diplomacy, on the other hand, involves multilateral meetings between economic and political leaders in a way that is highly visible and symbolic.

The contestation of global hegemonic forces materializes as street conflicts between police and transgressive protesters. Avoiding the trap of sociological categorization proceeding through identification, I take transgressive summit protesters as being constituted through the act of resistance. As Negri points out, the moment of struggle is also the moment of the production of subjectivity: “A constituent power produces subjects, but these subjects must get together. The production of subjectivity is not an act of innovation, or a flash of genius, it is an accumulation, a sedimentation that is, however, always in movement; it is the construction of the common by constituting collectivities” (in Negri et al. 2008)

My approach is based on a material ontology that conceptualizes the social world as a product of doing (Smith 2005: 25). Instead of being a category of identitarian thinking, my use of the term “transgressive summit protesters” includes all actors engaging in transgressive summit protest (whatever ideological or organizational background they may have). Summit protesters are not conceptualized as sociological category (with all the impertinent questions about age, ethnicity, class, or ideological orientation implied in the construction of such a “population”), but as the antagonistic subject constituted through the act of confronting global hegemonic forces. The antagonistic subject is formed by power and is therefore the outcome of a constantly shifting strategic field.
Police, on the other hand, constitute themselves another form of strategic subjectivity in the attempt of fabricating order (Neocleous 2000). A tricky aspect of the constitution of global hegemonic forces thereby reveals itself. Police are not directly working for global institutions, but are the state’s personified monopoly on violence. Global hegemony unfolds through the sovereign power of the nation-state. Albeit being events with global aspirations, summit meetings are largely organized by state authorities, and are therefore controlled by state police forces. This is not to say that there are no intergovernmental agencies involved in controlling summit protests, especially on the level of the European Union (see Starr et al. 2011). Neither do I want to repeat the analytical mistake of earlier social movement scholars to reify the state as a homogeneous and static entity with a single interest (see Jasper 2012). Just as not all summit protesters prefer disruptive tactics, not all state officials or police want to repress protesters (and even if they do, not necessarily in the same way). According to Marston (2003: 230–231) the state should not be conceptualized “as an abstraction that exists outside of human agency, but as a manifestation and response to the practices of human agents.” Instead of highlighting opinions and intentions, my analysis foregrounds the actual doing of control. As such, the police doing control contradict transgressive summit protesters in doing dissent (see chapter 3).

Biopolitical Control

Unlike the more conventional terms “repression” and “policing,” social control is better suited for grasping the more subtle and pervasive forms of police action (see Starr et al. 2011). Both repression and protest policing often invoke overt and brutal police behavior. My study shows that subtle operations are at least as important and can be even more devastating for protesters’ tactics. Moreover, whereas the term “policing” is often normatively loaded in referring to “more or less democratic” forms of policing, repression, in its most accepted definition as “any action by another group which raises the contender’s cost of collective action” (Tilly 1978: 100), could equally be applied to the disruptive tactics of protesters. However, as we will see, there is a difference in the way authorities and protesters create obstacles for each other. The difference in the way authorities operate is better grasped by the term “social control.”

An important concept to grasp the subtle and pervasive character of social control is biopolitics. In “Postscript on the Societies of Control” (1992), Deleuze argues that biopolitical forms of power, instead of repressing
a population, increasingly aim at the control of a “milieu.” Elaborating on Foucault’s proposal of disciplinary societies shifting to societies of control, this theoretical lens provides an understanding of how control centers on the regulation of flows as opposed to disciplining the formation of subjectivity. Foucault captures this shift through the notion of “governmentality” (1991). Governmentality denotes the intersection between the technologies of power and those of the self. By this, he means that authorities do not only legislate and rule; they are equally involved in shaping and guiding the conduct of people. Indeed, government constitutes people in such a way that they become governable. Biopolitical control thus focuses on the creation of a population. Contrary to the techniques of sovereign power centering on territory and law, or the techniques of disciplinary power centering on the subject, those of biopolitical power concern the population as collective. Whereas disciplinary power operates through the production of subjectivity, biopolitical control operates through the production of a certain *form of life*, in the case of summit protests: predictable flows of protesters that do not disrupt the flows necessary for the summit meeting to continue. Securing the daily flows of life, biopolitical control avoids the occurrence of an undesired event (Foucault & Senellart 2007: 66). In line with Foucault, we can call this the emergence of a *security paradigm*. Ironically, the motto of the 2009 G8 in Italy was “To produce security.” This book investigates how this security paradigm translates into the material organization of the social control of dissent.

Moving the focus from the individual body to the “collective” body of populations, biopolitical forms of power regulate life itself. Foucault (2004: 249) shows how power, having the regulation of life at the center of its biopolitical interventions, has to be reconceptualized as not only a capacity for repressive intervention but as a productive force. Instead of focusing on the internalization of social norms and values (as disciplinary power does), biopolitical power interventions focus on the normalization of a certain way of life. However, this emergence of biopolitical forms of power intersects with disciplinary forms of power. The coexistence of disciplinarity and biopolitics constitutes what Foucault has coined a “normalizing society” (Foucault 2004: 253).

In their adaptation of Foucault’s concept of biopolitical power for their analysis of Empire, Hardt and Negri (2000: 23) suggest that the normalizing apparatus of disciplinarity is intensified and generalized in societies of control. Disciplinarity thereby extends well beyond social institutions through flexible and fluctuating networks of power in everyday life. Taking the normalizing apparatus of biopolitical power as a starting point means
moving away from a purely repressive account of how power works to an analysis that situates control within a broader attempt to produce society and subjectivity. This is to say, protesters have to be produced in such a way that they become a “population” that has internalized its own normalization.

Mapping Ruling Regimes

The aim is not to understand reality, but to understand (and by understanding to intensify) its contradictions as part of the struggle to change the world.


In the early morning of July 31, 2007, a dozen heavily armed policemen of an antiterrorist unit in Germany storm the flat of the sociologist Andrej Holm, where he lives with his partner and two children. They pull him out of bed, arrest him, put handcuffs on, and cover his head, while starting to search the whole house. A lot of his personal belongings are confiscated: laptop, computer, digital camera, books, magazines, archive materials, among others. Holm is brought by helicopter to the General State Prosecution in Karlsruhe and then—“preventively”—put in jail. There he spends more than three weeks imprisoned in isolation, until he is released on bail to await the trial against him.

Looking at the arguments for these unusual measures given by the state prosecutors, we appreciate how the story sounds even more like science fiction. Andrej Holm is suspected to be part of the so-called Militante Gruppe (militant group), that appeared to be behind several actions of property destruction targeting military logistics and politicians or institutions involved in the G8 preparations. This suspicion is grounded on the following evidence: (1) Holm knows two other persons who are also suspected to be part of the militant group; (2) Holm has met once with one of these two persons without taking his cell phone with him, which indicates, according to the prosecution, that it was a conspiracy meeting; (3) a general text analysis proved that Holm is using certain words in his academic publications that appear as well in the letters of the militant group; words such as “gentrification” and “imperialism”; and because (4) Holm holds a doctoral degree and works at the university, he therefore is supposed to have both
the intellectual capacities and the access to information allegedly necessary to write the letters of the militant group.5

Confrontation with ruling regimes provides a possibility to understand how they work. Holm’s encounter with high-ranking state authorities provides a reliable starting point for social analysis. It raises a set of questions: which state institutions have been involved in gathering information? What kind of information was gathered about Holm and others? How did state authorities gather the information? And how did they arrive at the alleged evidence? Based on constant observation of all aspects of his life, the dossier of Holm consists of tens of thousands of pages gathered by the Federal Criminal Police Office and the German Verfassungsschutz (Federal Office for the Protection of the Constitution). Looking at these documents, activists could gather interesting insights about the way state authorities work. The intelligence services started observing Holm not because of supposed membership in the militant group, but because he was active in the mobilizations against the G8. Through observing him (and others) the authorities have a more or less full account of many activists that have been involved in the G8 mobilizations. They were able to map their mutual interrelations, the places where they live, their email addresses, and telephone numbers. Another thing that became clear is how the intelligence services actually operate when observing suspicious persons. One could trace which methods they use: cameras, tapping of landline and cell phones, Internet surveillance, car detectors, among others. It also became clear that, despite this huge amount of data, all the evidence related to criminal or terrorist acts is based on highly speculative chains of interrelating data of persons and events. Said in different words: through observing Holm (and other persons), the intelligence services got a rather detailed picture of the anti-G8 mobilization, while they found nearly no evidence about the Militante Gruppe. One may wonder whether this was their intention at all.6

Confrontation as Pedagogy of the Oppressed

The task of mapping “social movements” is a quarrelsome endeavor. A book based on rich empirical material and insider accounts about social movements can probably best be written by the intelligence services. They are not only gathering information in all ways possible on this movement, they also exchange this information increasingly across national borders. At the same time, intelligence services would be the first to be interested in an empirical study that maps the movement, in order to mobilize the results
for further counterstrategies. In fact, the empirical interest became painfully clear when in 2010, after having finished this study, several UK undercover police infiltrating the networks of summit protesters for many years were exposed (Monroy 2011).

Being on the side of the movement that I was supposed to study, this posed a serious problem for my research methodology. It is a bit unsettling to know that a lot of significant material one might like to gather is stored in the massive archives of police and intelligence services. Rather quickly, it became clear to me that “the globalization movement” could not be “the object” of my investigation. Theorizing from the antagonism raises doubts about the very usefulness of such a category as “social movements.” Is this category not simply part of the strategy of control? Does a practice of defining such social phenomena not automatically restrict their potential and contribute to their containment? Once I had it clear that I did not want to write a book that would provide an interesting account for intelligence services and other repressive state authorities, but one that could enhance the self-reflexive capacities of antisystemic initiatives, I encrypted my hardware and reformulated my research question. Instead of gazing at a movement, I decided to investigate the power relations between protesters and the authorities with whom we are confronted.

The anecdote about Holm opens some doors for a critical approach to methodological questions related to social science scholarship. Methodology not only depends on the sort of questions that are asked and the “type of movement” one researches, but also on one’s chosen standpoint. Academic research designs often conflate approach with analysis and therefore make invisible how gathering data implies choosing a standpoint. Donatella della Porta, for example, nearly exclusively based her similar research on the policing of protest in Italy and Germany from the 1960s till the 1990s on the official accounts and records of the respective police departments. This is certainly a convenient way to get a lot of quantitative data. Her analysis, then, appears to be emerging “naturally” from the collected data. This is how “objective” and “neutral” science comes about. But does this really reveal how policing of protest works, or, simply on their sanitized representation of it? How can we develop research methodologies and knowledge that do not abide by the logic of control and containment, but rather function as a starting point for emancipatory practices? How can social analysis produce an account that does not establish an automatic nexus between sociology and policy-making?

In his quest for a “public sociology,” Michael Burawoy (2005) uncovers a division of labor between policy sociology, public sociology, professional
sociology, and critical sociology (2005). According to Burawoy, policy and professional sociology are found on instrumental knowledge, and critical and public sociology on reflexive knowledge. Professional sociology provides “true and tested” methods, the accumulated knowledge, and the conceptual frameworks. Policy sociology turns sociology in the service of a goal defined by a client. The aim is to find solutions for problems that are presented to the sociologist or to legitimate solutions that already exist. Public sociology, by contrast, is predicated on the idea of dialogue between the researcher and a public. Both policy and public sociology are sustained by professional sociology providing reliable methods and accumulated bodies of methods. The fourth type, critical sociology, serves to interrogate the explicit and implicit assumptions of the research programs of professional sociology, as well as the value premises of society. However, Burawoy fails to find a possible moment for the reconstruction of the sociological knowledge-building process. My question is: What kind of methodology brings us to a critical engagement with the social world?

This research is based on a methodological approach that takes political confrontation as a productive encounter that can be translated into an ethnographic resource. Confrontation provides access to see how ruling is organized and how an opponent works. As AK Thompson (2006) has pointed out, confrontation can function as “pedagogy of the oppressed”: one can start to map how the social world is put together, which then helps to transform it. This way, my own involvement in summit protests serves as a starting point for investigating how the interactions between police and protesters are socially coordinated. I chose the standpoint of summit protesters, “not as a given and finalized form of knowledge” but as “a ground in experience from which discoveries are to be made” (Smith 2005: 8). I understand the encounters between police and protesters as a problematic experience that raises questions about how the ruling of dissent is organized. Concrete sites of struggle are transformed into a problematic for investigation. As Dorothy Smith proposes, “(a) problematic is a territory to be discovered, not a question that is concluded in its answer” (Smith 2005: 41). This gives my research an exploratory makeup. Starting with summit protests as problematic encounters, my analysis goes beyond the immediate experience to trace the broader context of ruling and global dissent as it is articulated in the streets. John Holloway describes such a critical approach as a double movement: “Criticism acquires . . . an analytical movement and a genetic movement, a movement of going behind appearances and a movement of tracing the origin or genesis of the phenomenon criticised” (Holloway 2002: 109). In this book, I combine the analytical and genetic
movement by going beyond the immediate experiences of street interactions and tracing the origins of the tactical interactions that unfold during summit protests.

**Shifting Ontology and Epistemology**

The methodology of Dorothy Smith’s *Institutional Ethnography* is based on Marxist and feminist traditions and aims for a sociology for people instead of a sociology about people (Smith 2005: 1). Instead of treating people as objects, institutional ethnography provides an account of how the relations of ruling operate from the standpoint of the people participating in them. Mapping ruling relations enables people to see the workings of institutions and their own position within them. The institutional ethnographer works from the social in people’s experience to discover its presence and organization in their lives and to map that organization beyond the locale of the everyday. The focus for studying the social on how people’s activities are coordinated (Smith 2005: 59); coordination is not isolated from people’s activities and it is not reified as “social structure.” Research then becomes a discovery rather than the testing of a hypothesis or the explication of a theory. The aim of a critical sociology for people is, ultimately, to demonstrate how extra-local power relations influence a local site of struggle. Not the people but the organization of ruling is the object of the study: the people are informants that have reflexive knowledge because they work within the ruling regime. Once completed, an institutional ethnography, rather than a resource for supposed experts, provides a resource that can be translated into people’s everyday knowledge. This way, it becomes a starting point for reorganizing social relationships.

There are two important conceptual moves in the methodology of Dorothy Smith: the ontological and epistemological shifts. The *ontological shift* implies a move from the ideological practice of creating speculative accounts to the empirical study of how a politico-administrative regime actually works. Activists and scientists alike often attribute agency to concepts such as “homophobia” or “neoliberalism” or to institutional glosses such as the “red tape,” instead of critiquing the ideological practice of these politico-administrative regimes as methods of determining how things happen. The social as the focus for study is to be located in how people’s activities or practices are coordinated. This way, coordination is neither isolated from people’s activities nor reified as “social structure.” The conceptual basis of the research is reflexively organized within a materialist understanding of a world that is put together in people’s practices and activities.
The epistemological shift implies a rejection of objective accounts. Criticizing the ideological character of the idea of objectivity, Dorothy Smith stresses that knowledge of the everyday world is reflexively, rather than objectively, organized. Thus, the shift is not one from an objective to a subjective epistemology, but from an objective to a reflexive epistemology. It means, first of all, explicating informants’ knowledge as socially organized, and therefore as constituted reflexively. Second, it means beginning reflexively from one’s own actual location in the world rather than from the objective standpoint of standard sociology. Smith (2005: 54) points out how “Objectivity appears as the stylistics of a discourse rather than as generated by a research methodology.” “Objectivity” is just one form of the social organization of knowledge that produces a form of knowledge mobilized to rule society. The point of “a sociology for people” is to juxtapose the objective knowledge of politico-administrative regimes against the locally organized, reflexive knowledge of individuals in the everyday world. Therefore, institutional ethnography resists the dominance of theory and the constraints of a priori conceptual frameworks.

The practice of using a rigid conceptual framework freezes the activities of actual people who live in a world of emerging and changing social relationships. Looking at a frozen social world through the lenses of a rigid conceptual framework easily can make us believe that things really are like this (for example, that a social movement is a “thing” that exists). This form of doing social analysis enacts the social each time one thinks about it this way (Law & Urry 2004). By looking at contentious collective action through the conceptual lenses of “social movements,” social scientists enact social movements. Such accounts mystify the social world and, by doing so, contribute to its reproduction. Therefore, John Holloway proposes that a critical approach should dissolve the categories of thought: “To think scientifically is to dissolve the categories of thought, to understand all social phenomena as precisely that, as forms of social relations” (Holloway 2002: 92). In my view, this means to reveal the processes and mechanisms that operate behind (scientific) categories. Unthinking social sciences is itself a political process that raises questions about society as constituted by changing conflictual social relations.

The unthinking of sociological categories as object or singularity can move our understanding of the working of power forward. Unthinking the category of “social movements” makes this point fully apparent. From the moment one takes the social existence of such an abstract category for granted, a whole series of new questions arises: who participates in this movement and why? Where does it start? And where does it end? When did
it emerge? Where was its peak? Who are the leaders? among others. This set of questions has been addressed by the various methodological approaches of social movement scholarship, which treats diverse and dispersed processes of contentious articulations as “social movements.”

Here are reservations about using such a concept. First, as the ongoing struggle about its definition demonstrates, the concept of “social movements” is mostly about defining and classifying social phenomena. Neither does the concept of “social movements” seem to be an adequate description for the potential of the social phenomenon at hand, even less in the case of “the anti-globalization movement”: this is not a clearly identifiable social phenomenon with strict boundaries, but a series of conflicts where global hegemonic power relations are challenged. Therefore, I prefer to speak about contested sites of struggle instead of social movements. It means opening the category of “social movements” to see the processes and mechanisms of contention and conflict. Ultimately, it means to take the term “movement” seriously: movements move, and should not be reified in their moments of struggle. This, too, voids the political from the political struggle.

Beyond Identification?

Looking at tactical interaction, innovation, diffusion, and adaptation, the approach of this book tries to avoid two frequent traps of recent social science scholarship: methodological nationalism and individualism. The first is a product of seeing societies as (naturally) being bound to nation-states, and politics therefore a question of national governments or international cooperation. Cross-border interaction and transnational organizing cannot fully be grasped this way (see also Linebaugh & Rediker 2000). The latter places individuals—and their opinions, interests, and actions—at the center of political analysis. Nevertheless, collective action is more than the sum of the individual participants, certainly when one looks at tactical repertoires. We therefore need to look for ways to move beyond these methodological presuppositions.

Frequently, “the nation-state” serves as analytical category of social movement scholarship. As John Holloway suggests, the existence of the state implies a constant process of separating off certain aspects of social relations and defining them as “political” and hence as separate from “the economic” or “the social.” The antagonism on which society is based is thus fragmented: struggles are channeled into political, economic, social, or cultural forms, none of which leaves room for raising questions about how they feed into the coordination of social relationships.
The state is considered to be a (central) locus of the political. Agnew (1994) calls this the “territorial trap” of seeing states as containers of society; Beck (2006: 12) calls it the “national prison theory of human existence.” As Giddens (1990: 13) points out, methodological nationalism reduces “societies” to “nation-states” without theorizing the latter concept. Patel (2009: 5) adds that the notion of a nation-state reproduces a Eurocentric form of sociology. Poulantzas (1973) proposes, instead, to see the state as a social relationship. According to Holloway (2002: 94), this relationship is predicated on an ongoing process that tries to impose the statification of social conflicts (and therefore renders non-institutional action unnecessary). However, by reifying the role of the state, social scientists enact the state as the legitimate actor or arena of politics. This excludes other activities from being labeled “political.” Massimo de Angelis (2001: 112) refers to precisely this problem when he says that—when being asked about alternative visions—people expect formulated alternatives on the level of the state.

Wallerstein (1991: 77) excellently summarizes the danger of conceiving of global processes through a nation-state–centered framework: “it is futile to analyze the processes of the societal development of our multiple (national) ‘societies’ as if they were autonomous, internally evolving structures, when they are and have been in fact primarily structures created by, and taking form in response to, world-scale processes.” The ideological function of social science scholarship in reproducing the state as a social form is a form of methodological nationalism. By teleologically reorganizing contingent historical outcomes as necessary developments, the status quo is transposed into the “ought to be.” The nation-state becomes taken-for-granted. In a tautological manner, this normative transposition reproduces the necessity of the state as a social category.

Taking the individual as a central category for social analysis is another problematic tendency in social movement scholarship, especially the influence of rational choice theories. These theories reduce the problem of collective action to a comparison of individual costs and benefits. Among various objections to the presupposed idea of “individual rationality” are the emotional incentives for contentious politics (Jasper 1998; Goodwin et al. 2001). However, I want to demystify the very idea of the individual as a useful research category. Methodological individualism relies on the idea that, for example, a “social movement” is a sum of its individual participants. When analyzing how doing is socially coordinated, agency is ascribed solely to individual actors. Indeed, as John Holloway proposes, “The separation of people from the social tapestry of doing constitutes them as free individuals . . . .” (Holloway 2002: 70). Reification of social relationships, therefore,
not only implies the rule of the object but also the creation of a peculiarly
dislocated subject, denoted as “free individual,” a conception that prevents
us from seeing a socially coordinated “us.”

Through these methodologies, social science scholars contribute to the
practice of ruling by identifying people. According to Holloway, identification
implies a third-person discourse. To write scientifically means to write about
things in the third person, as “it” or “they”: “Study or theory is therefore
study of something or about something, as in: social theory is the study of
society . . .” (Holloway 2002: 61). Knowledge proceeds through definition,
meaning that something is known when it can be defined. The interconnec-
tion between identitarian thought and the constitution of a subject as “free
individual” makes clear that a critique of “methodological individualism” can
only be accomplished on the basis of the negation of identitarian thinking.

Adorno’s proposition for a “negative dialectics” takes the totality of
contradiction as the negation of total identification (Adorno 1966: 16).
Bivalent logic based on the non-identity between what a thing is and what
it is not always produces paradoxes. When the non-contradictory character
of (scientific) terminology is demystified as delusional, conceptual thinking
is directed toward non-identity (Adorno 1966: 22).

My analysis of police–protesters interaction during summit protests
goes beyond methodological nationalism and individualism in two ways.
First, by not taking a “social movement” or its participants as the research
unit but tactical repertoires, instead of focusing on identities, I can focus on
the process of tactical interaction. Second, by emphasizing tactical innova-
tion and adaptation in this transnational process, my analysis moves away
from approaches that see nation-states as natural containers of societies.

Resisting to Be Socialized as a Movement Scholar

At the beginning of this chapter, the example of Andrej Holm clarifies how
being confronted with ruling regimes offers concrete possibilities to inves-
tigate how ruling works and how the social world is constituted through
power relations. Taking a concrete site of a struggle to analyze how ruling
is socially coordinated, I investigate the contestation of global hegemony
by starting with the actual moment of confrontation. This is what led me
to the choice of summit protests as multiple sites of struggles wherefrom I
can investigate the interplay of global dissent and social control by looking
at the interactions over time between police and protesters.

I am not only siding with summit protesters on the barricades. My
standpoint also resists being socialized methodologically as a “social move-
ment scholar.” In this respect, my book aims to make a twofold intervention. On the one hand, I hope it to be useful for antisystemic initiatives in thinking about the innovation of transgressive street tactics. On the other hand, I wish to challenge academic research methodologies and epistemologies that are complicit with the practice of ruling. Linking my research strategy to the transgressive approach of summit protesters, I confront the conceptual dilemmas inherent to a scientific style predicated as it is on identitarian thought with the goal to establish an “objective” account of the social world. Such a style mimics the state form by reducing methodological questions to an administrative problem and results in the bureaucratization of social analysis. By providing “a sociology for transgressive summit protesters,” I hope to assert the possibility of a form of knowledge that can emancipate despite attempts to control.

Although ethnographic methods have been successfully employed for the study of contentious politics and globalization (Shepard 2011; Gautney 2010; Graeber 2009; Maeckelbergh 2009; Juris 2008), it has been rarely done for police–protester interaction. Using a series of previous summit protests in Europe in order to analyze how the tactical interaction between protesters and police has unfolded through a series of protest events, I conducted ethnographic fieldwork during the 2007 G8 protests in Germany, including a two-year period of preparation and a year of evaluation. I also conducted observant participation at three other summit protests (2000 Prague, 2001 Genoa, and 2005 Gleneagles), and a number of other protest events that are not included in the final research makeup (2000 Climate Conference protests in The Hague, 2001 EU protests in Brussels, 2009 NATO protests in Strasbourg, and 2009 G8 protests in Italy). In addition, I held 18 narrative interviews with protesters and protest organizers, and conducted document and film analysis. The material being analyzed ranges from field notes to photographic and audiovisual material, from activist mailings, agitprop material, and discussion papers to maps, websites, legal dossiers, policy documents, and media coverage.

Overview

This book is structured around the four sites of struggle guiding my analysis of police–protester interaction. Each of the empirical chapters covers the interaction within one site of struggle: bodies, space, communication, and the law.

Before that, chapter 2 offers a historical and chapter 3 a conceptual discussion on how to understand repertoires of contention and of control.
in a context of street interaction. Chapter 2 reconstructs tactical trajectories of global dissent in a historical perspective. In chapter 3, I first analyze how the creation of (global) conflicts is accomplished in the streets, and what the role of tactical repertoires is in circulating and transforming those conflicts. Secondly, starting with a critique of dominant and normative understandings of police interventions, I develop a framework for analyzing repertoires of social control predicated on the antagonistic relationship between “public order” and “disruption” (through transgressive tactical repertoires).

Chapter 4 presents bodies as the first contested site of struggle. How do summit protesters use their bodies during street conflicts? And how have bodies become the target of police interventions aiming at the creation of docile bodies? Starting with the analysis of the street as context for biopolitical disciplinarity, I look at how summit protesters make the body a central tool for challenging global hegemonic forces. I discuss the epistemology of four innovative street tactics and show how they feed into certain repertoires of action predicated on a logic beyond representation. The disobedient bodies of transgressive summit protesters are not only controlled through disciplining their bodies, but also through regulation in order to produce a certain (obedient) form of life.

Chapter 5 tries to understand police–protester interactions as struggles about space. How do summit protesters intervene spatially in the flows of summit meetings in order to contest them? And how do authorities attempt through spatial operations to make undesired events unlikely? Street interactions thereby reflect the necessity of hegemonic global elites to manifest themselves spatially by producing a territory for legitimate global governance. Starting with summit protesters’ challenge of spatial control via repertoires relying on “diversity of tactics” and “decentralized swarming,” I will map how police tactics aim to regain spatial control before and during summit protests by separation and containment. The initial capacity of protesters to incapacitate summit meetings by intervening in their spatial flows is countered by police by spatially incapacitating protesters’ tactics.

Chapter 6 looks at communication as a contested site of struggle. How are summit protesters’ innovative repertoires for communicating dissent organized both within and without their networks? And how is the circulation of dissent tackled by the authorities? Making disruption a way of communicating (and circulating) dissent, protesters constitute communication as a political side of conflict. Protesters achieve this through communication in decentralized networks making use of a combination of new technologies and real-life meetings. Protesters’ repertoires for the circulation
of dissent are therefore understood as an attempt to change the condition of the production of (hegemonic) truth. Authorities, on the other hand, regulate the circulation of dissent by making it a question of communication management. The tactical repertoire of authorities marks a shift from disciplinary to biopolitical forms of power focusing on the flows of communication. Communication during summit protests appears to be an important tool of global hegemonic legitimation strategies through psychological operations that preempt and manage dissent even before it occurs. Authorities did not only develop the capacity to influence mainstream media tactically, but also copy communication tactics used by protesters. Using marketing tactics, the police intimidate, demonize, criminalize, co-opt, disunite, and vilify summit protesters.

Taking law as a contested site of struggle during summit protests, chapter 7 is an attempt to understand transgressive protest behaviors in the context of sovereign power predicated on the monopoly of violence. How can law enforcement, civil legislation, and criminal prosecution be deciphered as concrete manifestation of the state monopoly on violence contested by transgressive repertoires of protesters? And how does the shifting legal practice around summit meetings institute a permanent state of exception? I argue that police–protester interaction enacts a state of emergency (the “temporary” suspension of the rule of law), which reveals the ontological status of summit protests as constituent moments for global power relations. Without abdicating reactive law enforcement tactics, police rely increasingly on preemptive law enforcement tactics in order to defend the sovereignty of global hegemonic forces. Revealing such an enactment of sovereign power, summit protests create a state of exception, which constitutes a moment to choose sides.

In the conclusion, I elaborate on the findings of the analysis of these four sites of conflicts. Coming back to the main argument of this book, I demonstrate how the transgressive summit repertoire is increasingly neutralized by the tactical adaptations of authorities. Dissent is met by more and more effective social control. The event staged as opening to the possible is commandeered, instead, as a non-disruptive moment in history. Through the preemption of the disruptive capacities of transgressive summit protesters, dissent is eliminated from view and the antagonism constitutive of global power relations is channeled into a resolvable contradiction (between “order” and “disorder”). Turning political questions into a problem of administration, authorities eliminate visible dissent. Social control “orders” dissent, by reducing the likeliness of disruption. The conclusion also details
four contributions this book offers beyond the scope of this research. The analysis developed in the next chapters hopefully will trigger an unthinking of social movement studies, of social control in times of biopolitics, of democratic theory, and of the practices of antisystemic initiatives. The reactions to recent crisis management and austerity measures demonstrate that global dissent is far from over.
By asserting a teleology of the present, the official story erases those memories of past alternatives that sought or envisioned other outcomes than the one that came to pass.

—Kristin Ross, *May ’68 and Its Afterlives*

Joschka Fischer had been minister of external affairs in the German government for two years when his radical past “caught up” with him. Once this unofficial leader of the Green Party and ex-street fighter became minister in 1998, public opinion seemed to be most worried about the question as to whether he would still wear his sneakers in such a high-ranking position. In 2000, during his role as principal witness in a trial against the Revolutionäre Zellen, however, some pictures of Fischer throwing stones during street actions in the 1970s made the news. All of a sudden, his aptness for the job as minister of foreign affairs had to be reevaluated.

What followed can be seen as the final battle of Germany’s so-called ’68 generation to take its place in the midst of mainstream society. In order to give them a respectable place in the official history books, the next task to accomplish was the nationalization of the history of political movements of the 1960s and 1970s. This task involved two operations: on the one hand, militant actions and political violence had to be ripped from their social context and demonized as the dead end of (certain fringes of) these movements. On the other hand, ’68 (as a cipher for the movements of the 1960s and 1970s) had to be integrated into the official memory of the Federal German Republic. Hence, these movements are presented as the starting
Two Sides of a Barricade

point of a successful wave of democratization and liberalization of German postwar society. This twofold operation was reinforced by two successive memorial years: in 2007 the “German autumn” of the group Rote Armee Fraktion became 30 years old, and only a year later the media was flooded with historical reevaluations of the 40th anniversary of May ’68. The militant history of movements with radical goals was buried in order to revive it in the form of an (inevitable) progress toward democratized civil society. Some ex-comrades of Fischer cynically remarked that he had managed to make a success story out of their political failure (Autonome L.U.P.U.S.-Gruppe 2001: 13). However, heroifying resistance has very problematic aspects. Movies about resistance, such as the Hollywood production Battle in Seattle, mystify the social relations unfolding behind contentious politics into an account of individual (and nearly divine) excellence.

Instead of condemning police violence after the 2001 G8 protests in Genoa, Fischer accused the protesters of championing an “insipid anticapitalism,” condemned their use of violence, and expressed his trust in the Italian constitutional state. Fischer’s statement clearly reminds us of the connection of the state-centered management of history to summit protests. The antisystemic wave of global dissent may experience a similar fate as the previous generation. The antisystemic possibilities of events are contained by an official account of history that criminalizes antisystemic initiatives and eventually incorporates the system-conforming innovation that sprang from these antisystemic initiatives into the official version of history as proof of its progression. The superiority of established power relations relies on a teleological reorganization of the history of those contesting them.

On a second glimpse, Fischer’s statement evaporates into an account of seeing history through the police perspective. Summit protest is portrayed as merely “street disturbance” and emptied of its political content. Furthermore, by transforming it into a problem of “policing” and “keeping public order,” Fischer eliminates political conflict from a historical event. As Ross notes (2002: 6), “the official story erases those memories of past alternatives that sought or envisioned other outcomes than the one that came to pass.”

Histories from Below

After the 2007 G8 protests in Germany, an interesting activist debate erupted about the historical and political significance of recent events. In “A Tale of Two Victories,” Sol and Müller (2007) argue that claiming a victory on the side of activists is rather ambiguous given the fact that the G8 in
general, and the German chancellor Angela Merkel in particular, did the same by championing a “breakthrough” in climate-related negotiations. Yet, as Trott (2007) holds, considering the role of affect for politics, feeling like winning also means winning. In Trott’s view, affect is a material force that reflects the resonance of events such as summit protests. The articulation of antagonism in the streets of Germany produced a material reality in which summit protesters could affect and be affected.

Underlying this debate, one can clearly detect the necessity of summit protesters to establish historical reference points. Summit protesters like to refer to their own history by using acronyms such as J18, N30, S26, among others; each stands for a particular summit protest day, for example J18 signifies the G8 protests on July 18th. Through constant reiteration these dates become collectively shared and meaningful memories creating a calendar of the history of dissent. At the same time, they become moments that create a before and an after. They structure a time of global dissent and become starting points for organizing history. N30, the protests against the WTO ministerial meeting in Seattle, on November 30th is often presented as a nearly mythical beginning of “the anti-globalization movement.” When the exact historic moment was remains contested among activists, but what is fascinating is the importance given to establishing such a mystical beginning.3

Marking historical waves of antisystemic activity does not exclude antisystemic movements existing in between those peaks. Those waves are just the most visible moments of an otherwise latent opposition. Arrighi et al. (1989: 29) call this “the non-continuity of rebellion,” because the oppressed are ideologically, politically, and economically too weak to articulate their opposition in a permanent way.4

The recent wave of global dissent has no shortage of written accounts. Activists themselves, as well as journalists and academics, have provided a vast number of books that try to capture the emergence and development of this movement.5 Similar efforts will likely transpose the experiences of global antisystemic dissent into an episode of (post-)neoliberal6 modernization. But will the unfulfilled promises of summit protests even make it into the history books?

The slogan “You make plans, we make history” was perhaps a little overhasty on various walls during the G8 protests in Genoa. Despite tremendous efforts on the side of protesters to reveal the truth and receive justice for police brutality, the Italian authorities managed to demonize protesters in a number of trials. Bringing suit against 25 protesters for allegedly having ransacked during the G8 protests in Genoa, the city of Genoa appeared as
joint plaintiff and accused the protesters of having damaged the “image of Genoa” (MediaG8way 2007). In 2007, six years after the protests in Genoa, a massive rally with 60,000 participants was organized in response to the rather harsh sentences handed down against these 25 protesters. The motto of the rally was: “Storia siamo noi” (“History is us”). This rally was a clear attempt to reclaim the historical significance of the events in Genoa as a revolt against global hegemonic forces and against what Rosa Luxemburg (1999) calls “the police interpretation,” when “history is us” is conceived form the standpoint of disorder.

Through their methodological choices, social scientists can also contribute to the erasure of the political context of antisystemic events. Kristin Ross captures the complicity of sociology when she states: “And sociology has always set itself up as the tribunal to which the real—the event—is brought to trial after the fact, to be measured, categorized, and contained” (Ross 2002: 4). Approaching summit protests as an opening to the possible, rather than merely as a social fact or public order problem, avoids this sociological complicity: the actual problem they pose is how to realize the promise of a system radically different from the present one.

The histories presented here should not be understood as a definite canon of the history of global dissent, but as an attempt to provide a historical context for a better understanding of street interactions between protesters and police in the past decade. In my view, these trajectories are crucial for understanding the allegedly sudden emergence of summit protest, especially confrontational and disruptive street tactics in Europe. I start with early transnationalisms in the 19th century and turn then to May ‘68, which marks the beginning of a new wave of antisystemic initiatives. Afterward, I briefly discuss a number of spin-off movements, often called “new” social movements in the social movement literature, and the resulting trap of identity politics. Then, I will discuss the autonomous movements during the 1970s and 1980s and the role of confrontation. This is followed by a brief look at the influence of struggles in the Global South on European protesters. Finally, I will describe the wave of summit protests that will be discussed in this book.

For this reason, I have entitled this section “Histories from Below.” I will try to draw a historical context that places summit protests in a broader framework of antisystemic conflicts that does not remove their radical potential. Such an analysis, at the same time, constitutes a critique of a state-centered and institutional perspective on the history of social conflicts (Thompson 1963; Hobsbawm 1960, 1962). This endeavor necessarily has to be articulated in the plural form: histories.
I have constructed these histories from below of global dissent for three reasons. First, I wanted to show that global dissent should be contextualized within a broader wave of antisystemic activity starting (at least) in the 1960s, influenced from the Global South, and drifting through various forms of articulation to the first summit protests of the past decennium. The barricades are back, but they have not been absent for a long time. These histories can also be understood as an archive of the present that helps to make sense of the tactical interactions between protesters and police during summit protests in Europe. Summit protesters have used this tactical inspiration for developing their repertoire. Secondly, through reconstructing these histories from one side of the barricade, we can start to see the unfulfilled promises of the past as they are unfolding during the event of a summit protest. The event is not only an opening to the possible, it is also a moment to break with the past in order to explode the continuum of history (Benjamin 1969: 261). The potential emerging behind these histories from below is not another memory, but another history. Finally, I constructed these histories preemptively to counter the smothering of the history of global dissent by “police interpretation.” There were possibly other outcomes of antisystemic initiatives envisioned than those that have come to pass or that will yet occur. Hopefully, these histories will contribute to resisting the “teleology of the present” (see epigraph to this chapter) and encourage us to see ruptures as moments of possibility for reorganizing history.

Early Transnationalisms

Global dissent is surely much older than just the late 20th century. Early examples for transnational struggles are the abolitionist anti-slavery and the women’s movement in the 19th century. These movements, however, operated in a different international order than more recent ones. Klotz (2002) argues that for abolitionist activists the British Commonwealth provided another kind of global order that could be confronted with moral claims. The work of Linebaugh and Rediker (2000) shows in historical detail how already in the 17th and 18th century several transatlantic revolutions of poor, landless, and expropriated people took place. Colonial expansion (and ships) also brought the circulation of anti-colonial and proletarian struggles. The enclosures of the commons in the UK as part of this process of early capitalism is often compared to the “new enclosures” of neoliberal capitalism set in motion by liberalization, deregulation, and especially privatization measures (Midnight Notes Collective 1990).
Also the labor and socialist movement of the 19th century developed an internationalist approach. Inspired by Marx and Engels' appeal to the international proletariat in their *Communist Manifesto* and the international networks of early socialists and anarchists, the interdependency of the workers' fate in industrializing capitalism became an organizational strategy of the labor movement. The worldwide general strike was one of the tactical dreams of that wave of struggles. Nevertheless, as de Angelis (2000) points out, most of these movements conceived their struggles as national ones that had to act in solidarity with each other. Thus, labor movements also adhered to a "methodological nationalism" in that they often conceived of the state sphere as the most important stage for social change and coordination. This is for sure not entirely surprising given the fact that, at the same time, the nationalist movement was arising providing an additional frame for the labor movement (see Arrighi et al. 1999). The national base of socialist movements found its expression in the first (1864–1876), but even more so in the second International (1889–1916). The latter ultimately dissolved because worker's organizations remained loyal to their national governments during the first World War (Waterman 1998).

Often based on religious bonds and reproducing racist underpinnings of the then British imperial rule, the women's movement of the 19th century also had a transnational dimension (Rowbotham 1973). This was reflected in the proclamation of March 8th as international Women's Day since 1911. The idea of global solidarity or "global sisterhood" (Morgan 1970) was further elaborated in the feminist wave of the 1960s and '70s. Waterman (1998) shows how—due to strong regional and global organizing processes and cross-border analysis and demands—the global solidarity of the women's movement persisted more successfully throughout the 1980s and 1990s than did the internationalism of the labor movement. Nevertheless, the concept of "global sisterhood" was criticized, among others, by black and Third World feminists for its white and middle-class presuppositions (Mohanty et al. 1991).

"1968"

1968 is a cipher for a complex set of developments unfolding at the end of the 1960s, nevertheless having its roots in many preceding events. Many scholars consider 1968 as the beginning of a new cycle of (antisystemic) activism (Arrighi et al. 1989; Katsiaficas 1987). Next to the significance of many events of those years, the global simultaneity of the upheavals
is striking. Although France, and maybe the US and Germany, are often heralded as the most impressive examples, the revolts in Mexico, Japan, Pakistan, China, Czechoslovakia, among others, are in no way inferior. All over the world, elites, authoritarian regimes and societies, and consumerist capitalism were under attack.

To be certain, these revolts did not come out of the blue. Opposition to the Vietnam War and the imperialist politics of the Western world were a common trigger of many of these movements. However, people from the Global South and African Americans pushed the more important antecedents. The 1950s and early 1960s witnessed fierce anti-colonial struggles and a growing civil rights movement in the US. The civil rights movement partly built on the non-violent tactics of Gandhi and introduced important new tactics such as the sit-in (McAdam 1982). The influence of these movements on the tactics of future protests in Europe may not be underestimated. And although many of the “movements” emerging in these times would later be treated separately, in the short period of 1968 to 1970 they were fused into a unified world-historical actor (Katsiaficas 1987: 21). This actor is often denominated as “the New Left.”

Through the emergence of a “new” form of non-institutional politics during the 1960s and 1970s, this wave of antisystemic initiatives marks a rupture with the past. One of the most characteristic features is the aversion against bureaucracy both within political institutions and movements themselves (Arrighi et al. 1989: 37–38). The critique of centralized, hierarchical, and mediating social structures, was articulated during the 1960s and 1970s, against both organizations trying to mediate social conflicts (such as political parties and trade unions), and the “actually existing socialist” experiences of bureaucratic state socialism (in countries such as the Soviet Union and China).

“New” Social Movements

In the European social movement literature, the movements emerging after 1968 are denominated as “new social movements,” which are distinguished analytically from previous movements by a number of characteristics (Offe 1985; Kriesi et al. 1995). Scholars wondering why such a new wave of contentious politics erupted during a historical epoch when class antagonism was being pacified in Europe through welfare state mechanisms usually link this development to a shift from material interests to post-material values (Inglehart 1977). Situated within a broader economic transformation,
denoted as a shift from “Fordism” to “post-Fordism,” production processes were increasingly decentralized, so that the factory ceased being the central place for contentious organizing. The factory has spilled over into society. Especially the politics of feminist, civil rights, and gay activism show how social relations rather than only class relations are politicized and antagonized on a broad scale.

Thomas Rochon’s (1998) analysis suggests that the movements of the 1960s and 1970s have had an impact on the cultural level by introducing new values that lastingly changed the dominant culture. Eyerman and Jamison (1991) call this the cognitive praxis of social movements. Their social-constructivist approach sees social movements as producers of knowledge. Alberto Melucci (1989: 12) contends that the struggles of movements are not expressed through “instrumental action,” but through conflicts over the “codes” that are the basis for power over the intimate “fabric of everyday life and individual experience.” This way, Melucci asserts, movements play an important role in complex societies asking questions about meaning through challenging codes and transmitting messages. With the slogan “the personal is political” (Evans 1979), identity politics focused on recognition of excluded or subordinated identities rather than redistribution of material goods (Kymlicka 2002; Young 1990). Identity became the basis for unity, but one that rendered “identities” fixed and predetermined (Eschle 2001: 128).

Another characteristic is the strong rejection of institutional politics, which Claus Offe (1985: 832) describes as challenging both the borders of institutional politics and the borders of the private. He proposes that “conflicts and contradictions of advanced industrial society can no longer be resolved in meaningful and promising ways through etatism, political regulation, and the proliferating inclusion of ever more claims and issues on the agenda of bureaucratic authorities” (Offe 1985: 819). The anti-institutionalism had important consequences for the way in which this “new” type of social movement is organized. The experiments with alternative ways of organizing have continued to the present day and have found expression in the horizontal networks of summit protesters.

The clearest and perhaps most radical manifestation of the critique of institutions and bureaucracy was the rejection of the principle of representation, criticized as a political practice that takes the ownership of conflicts away from antisysemic initiatives. It is also considered to be the starting point for political mediation, which narrows political conflicts down to technocratic procedures of establishing a compromise. Consequently, activists were experimenting with decentralized and horizontal forms of organiza-
tion by trying to avoid leadership and sometimes even structures in general. The argument between Jo Freeman (2002) and Cathy Levine (2002) about the “tyranny of structurelessness” in feminist networks offers interesting insights into the organizational debates of those days. Freeman criticizes horizontal organizational modes as being ill-designed for achieving their actual goals, such as inclusion and equal participation, and as producing informal leadership structures through the fetishization of structurelessness. On the other hand, given the context of male-dominated left initiatives, Levine contends that a decentralized organizational structure of small groups is a way for feminists to regain control. Since then, although some of these organizational dilemmas are solved through ongoing experimentation, others are still encountered in the organizational debates of summit protesters (Maeckelbergh 2009; Scholl 2005).

On the level of action repertoires, the anti-institutional critique together with the decentralized way of organizing found expression in a revalidation of direct action tactics. Larger direct action campaigns, such as mobilizations against nuclear power plants or military infrastructure, also provided the opportunity for developing decentralized organization models based on largely autonomous affinity groups (Epstein 1991). Unmediated engagement with authorities on the streets can be seen as a logical consequence of the critique of institutions and of bureaucracy. Anti-nuclear protesters occupying construction sites of nuclear power plants are an exemplary case of this type of direct action (Barkan 1979). Katsiaficas (2006: 6) makes clear how direct and autonomous forms of action reappropriating collective control over the direct surrounding contest the “colonization of the life-sphere” through the logic of capitalism. They also play an important role in the action repertoires of transgressive summit protesters. Moreover, transgressive protesters often work with decentralized forms of affinity groups coordinated through larger spokescouncils with delegates of each affinity group (see Maeckelbergh 2009: 146–151; Graeber 2009: 11–13).

The protest politics of the 1960s and 1970s mark an “expressivist turn” connected to various manifestations of expressive politics that already occurred before 1968 (Sanbonmatsu 2004: 26–27). One example is the Situationist International, an (anti-)artistic movement founded in 1957, and mainly active in France. Their sharp critique of capitalist consumerist culture and their exhilarating slogans, for example, “All power to the imagination,” and interventions have been influential for the movements around May ‘68, but also for many subsequent activist practices.9

Another important feature ascribed to “new” social movements is their politics of prefiguration (Epstein 1991), a political practice directed to the
here and now in order to show another way of living together. This premise enjoins its adherents to live in the present, to create a future not yet realized, and to collapse the interval between means and ends. Wini Breines (1982: 6) describes prefigurative politics as the attempt “to create and sustain within the lived practice of the movement, relationships and political forms that ‘prefigured’ and embodied the desired society.” Thus, prefigurative politics is a way in which movements materialize their alternative values and identities. Collapsing means and ends, internal organizational processes take center stage (Maeckelbergh 2009: 13). The practice of prefigurative politics comes close to what Poldervaart (2006) calls the “utopian strategy” (as opposed to the “revolutionary strategy” and “the strategy of negotiation”). In her view, the utopian strategy is mainly about realizing another way of life in communal form in the here and now. Although prefiguration is in the first place directed to the immediate here and now, there is an underlying premise of becoming an exemplary practice that could be diffused in the future.

The stress on identity construction resulted in a politics of identity with very narrow borders, which ultimately transformed a broad antisystemic initiative into many dispersed and separated single-issue movements each according to a restricted identity instead of (strategic) commonalities across such lines. What was first seen as the liberation of difference as a political practice, became quickly reified as yet another confining social category. This background partly explains why global antisystemic initiatives were so welcomed as a way of transgressing single-issue movements, by bringing them together under a broader antisystemic umbrella.

This reduction of some antisystemic initiatives to single-issue movements resulted in the establishment of larger organizations. Having started as part of grassroots movements, these organizations ended up administrating a “social problem.” For several countries, the transposition of “new” social movements into pacified organizations is well documented (Kriesi et al. 1995; van der Heijden 2000; Duyvendak et al. 1992). Three interrelated developments are at the center of the integration of such antisystemic initiatives into the establishment. One development concerns professionalization that can be the result of perceived internal needs or external pressure related to state funding, which however often leads to bureaucratization. Considering the initial critique of bureaucracy at the beginning of the 1960s wave of antisystemic initiatives, this is somewhat ironic. Another development is the process of institutionalization, resulting in the statification of conflicts, which ends up in pacification of social conflicts, because they are partly being managed by bureaucratic structures. Finally, there is co-optation. This occurs when conflicts are used for the legitimation of existing political
systems by projecting the alleged capacity of existing institutional arrangements to finding “a” solution for “the” problem at stake. By thus responding only partially to the articulated critique, certain “demands” are dealt with in the existing representative structures without addressing the broader antisystemic agenda attacking those structures.

Autonomous Movements

The emergence of autonomous movements during the 1970s, above all in Italy, Germany, and France, has to be seen against this background of pacification of the “new” social movements. The principle idea of what the Italian operaists (Workerists) started to call autonomia is that workers can act independently of both the circulation of capital and the traditional organizations of the left (such as political parties and trade unions). Autonomy does not refer to the enlightenment account of the “free individual,” but to an organizational practice that aims at the constitution of a political actor outside of political institutions and institutionalized actors. The ability to create conflict autonomously by keeping ownership of it was at the center of each type of autonomous practice. When Tronti (1966) calls this the “strategy of refusal,” he refers to the practice of non-cooperation with existing institutional powers. This is not to say that autonomous movements never have negotiated. They mostly strive, however, toward a strong autonomous position from whence they can start bargaining with opponents.

Although the autonomous movements in these countries differ significantly, they can all be seen as reactions to the aforementioned processes of professionalization, co-optation, and institutionalization of conflicts. Whereas the Italian autonomia emerged around labor struggles in the factories in the North of the country (Wright 2002), the German Autonomen became visible for the first time during a wave of house occupations, though the latter participated in diverse social conflicts around gentrification, nuclear energy, migration, among others (Grauwacke 2004). But the French autonomous tradition was initially formed conceptually by the group Socialisme ou Barbarie that criticized the bureaucratic tendencies of state socialism and the reified categories of orthodox Marxism (Cleaver 2000: 63), for the historical 1968 uprisings provided a networked form of resistance that bypassed the party form (Mueller 2006: 61).

Theoretically the autonomous practice was underpinned by a shift in (neo-)Marxist interpretations of the relation between capital and class struggle. Whereas “scientific” Marxism had developed into a deterministic
view on economy that viewed class struggles as a response to capitalist strategies, Tronti reversed this relation in what he calls the “Copernican revolution of Marxist theory” (1973). He proposed to view capital’s strategy as constantly adapting to the autonomous and self-constituent resistance of the working class against being subsumed in capitalist relations. By placing workers at the center of agency, this approach offers a different reading of the restructuring of capitalism, namely, as responses to the successes of workers’ struggles.

Confrontation and political militancy unfold as inherent parts of this autonomous practice. Applying a “strategy of tension,” the Italian state, however, together with informal networks between militaries, police, intelligence services, and right-wing politicians, escalated the politics of street confrontations by the autonomous movements. Although the repression in Germany followed a less escalating logic, street clashes with the police were a recognizable feature of the Autonomen. In the next chapters, I will show how some tactical discussions around action repertoires and action forms explicitly refer to the experiences of autonomous movements. This makes clear that the practice of engaging in unmediated forms of conflicts continues to exist, thanks in part to these autonomous movements that pushed this political practice when most “new” social movements in Europe already were on their way to the deadlock of professionalization, institutionalization, and co-option.

At the same time, the idea of autonomy implies practices of creating self-governing spaces of dual power. The strategy of dual power aims at the creation of autonomous and self-governing spaces as social bases from whence to attack state power (Katsiaficas 2006: 175). Squatted social centers are a good example. The practice of squatting interweaves the moment of confrontation and the moment of creating autonomous spaces, for many of the social centers created throughout the 1980s and 1990s served as meeting and coordination spaces for summit protests. However, as Katsiaficas (2006: 110) points out, combining confrontation and self-governance spaces has not always been a non-contradictory endeavor for the Autonomen.

Struggles in the Global South

Another trajectory of global dissent is the antisystemic struggles in the Global South, which occurred much earlier than they did in the Western world. As one activist put it during an informal conversation, summit protests in the North can be seen as a very late response to and support of the struggles against capitalism and imperialism in the Global South fought for
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more than 500 years. Movements in Latin America already confronted the meetings of the WB and the IMF during the 1970s (Walton & Seddon 1994). Because antisystemic initiatives from the Global South inspired European ones to focus on global hegemonic power relations and are frequently referred to, I shall frame their contribution to European protests.

In the 1970s and 1980s struggles in the Global South, especially a number of national liberation guerrillas in Latin America, attracted support and solidarity from Northern activists. A number of groups, such as the German RAF, even tried to import guerrilla tactics into the urban contexts of Europe. Another source of inspiration was the anti-apartheid movement in South Africa (Lodge 2011). Solidarity was transnationally coordinated and included boycotts, shame campaigns, and direct action against companies operating in South Africa (Klotz 2002).

In the early 1980s, the Movement of the Landless Workers in Brazil (MST) started to develop a new praxis of occupying unused land for the establishment of farmer cooperatives (Stedile 2004). Then they extended this praxis and established a powerful movement that not only creates and defends self-organized cooperatives, but also participates in confronting global power structures in relation to free access to land, food sovereignty, and the organization of agriculture. Probably the most unusual element of the MST’s praxis is that they do not understand themselves as a vanguard that organizes for others, but rather encourages people to organize themselves and then supports them logistically.

But not only peasants from Latin America inspire European activists. Already in December 1990, farmers from Europe, North America, Korea, Africa, and Latin America protested in Brussels against negotiations for the upcoming WTO (Brecher et al. 2000: 12). On October 2, 1993, half a million Indian farmers marched against the General Agreement on Tariffs and Trade (the precursor of the WTO). A few months later, Via Campesina, an important global network of small and medium-sized farmers also participating in many summit protests, is founded. An important part of peasant mobilizations in Latin America are indigenous movements struggling for local autonomy and the perpetuation of the communal organization culture (Yashar 1999).

Another Global South struggle that inspired antisystemic initiatives in Europe is the resistance against large-scale dam projects by Indian farmers. The large wave of resistance against the Narmada Dam project, in particular, provided an excellent case for understanding the devastating effects of the WB’s investment strategy (Palit 2004). It also offered an inspiring example for building a mass movement based on direct action strategies. By showing practical solidarity with these struggles taking place in the Global South,
European activists extended their networks on a global scale (Maeckelbergh 2009: 61–65).

A further source of inspiration is the struggle of the Zapatistas in Chiapas, a southern province of Mexico, an uprising that coincided with the start of the North American Free Trade Agreement on January 1, 1994. The Zapatistas used the Internet for spreading the message about their uprising invoking the idea of a “global civil society” in struggle against the “neoliberal project on a global scale” (Cleaver 1998; Holloway & Pelaez 1998). On the initiative of the Zapatistas, an encuentro (gathering) took place in Chiapas with thousands of activists from all over the world coming together to discuss neoliberalism, making plans for effective resistance, and networking their initiatives. The second encuentro took place in Spain and resulted in the foundation of the Peoples’ Global Action network that served as an important coordination tool during the successive wave of summit protests (Moore 2007; Wood 2005). A whole network of solidarity groups supporting the struggle of the Zapatistas emerged in various countries of Europe, above all in Spain, Italy, Germany, and the UK (often called Ya Basta), groups that also contributed to the diffusion of the Zapatistas’ way of thinking about solidarity and social struggle (de Angelis 2000). Articulating their ideas in numerous poetic texts and communiqués, as John Holloway and Eloina Pelaez (1998) point out, the Zapatistas imagine revolution as a long march that people make by raising questions, and not as a goal we know with certainty. Revolution is conceptualized as a process and not as a faraway goal in the future. This idea has influenced the way antisystemic initiatives conceive of horizontal organizing and tactical street interventions in the European context.

The influence of the Global South, certainly Latin America, did not stop after the 1990s. When summit protests in Europe were in full swing already, both the water (and later gas) wars in Bolivia were an influential example of mass resistance against the privatization of public goods (Hylton & Thomson 2007; Shultz 2000). And during the economic and debt crisis in Argentina from 2001 onward, the Piqueteros manifested themselves and provided further tactical input: they paralyzed entire cities and regions transforming the blockading repertoire with picket lines (piquetes) on national highways and city roads (Giorgi & Pinkus 2006; Massetti 2006).

Composition of Global Dissent

These herstories of global dissent make clear that the 1999 “Battle of Seattle” did not come out of a clear blue sky. It was not a spontaneous event, but a moment built of organized struggles (Whitney 2004: 22; Rucht 2003:...
In this section, I focus on the historical epoch actually covered in this book: summit protests in the decade from 1999 to 2009. This period can best be described in terms of three processes: composition, decomposition, and recomposition. This terminology is borrowed from Workerist and post-Workerist traditions that used it for the shifting political composition of the working-class in terms of the perceived collective interest (Wright 2005: 13–14; Kolinko 2001). I adopt this terminology in order to trace the composition of global dissent as antisystemic initiative as it unfolded through a series of summit protests.

I already pointed out that Seattle was far from being the first summit protest. In Europe, the first mass protest against a G8 summit meeting took place in Bonn in 1985. The involvement of a wide array of social actors and disruptive street tactics marks the 1988 protests against the IMF/WB meeting in Berlin as a “sequential anomaly” (Iglesias Turrión 2006). For this embryonic form of the transgressive summit protest repertoire needed another ten years to come to fruition in Europe. At the end of the 1990s, regular protests at the biannual EU summits proliferated important networks between European activists (Rucht 2003). In the UK, the Reclaim the Streets movement had grown throughout the 1990s into a mass movement keen to apply their mixture of joy and direct action. To protest the 1999 G8 meeting in Cologne, they initiated a “Carnival against Capitalism” occupying the financial center of London (Days of Dissent 2004).

The reasons for the WTO protests a few months later in Seattle becoming such an outstanding reference point are twofold. For the first time, activists decided not only to rally, but actually to blockade the summit and prevent delegations from accessing the conference center. This strategy turned out to be incredibly successful. By noon only a third of the delegates had made it to the center, and the next day the talks were cancelled. Instead of presidents shaking hands after successful negotiations, the world media was swamped with pictures of heavily armed police fighting protesters.

Secondly, the street actions in Seattle were the result of a broad coalition of various activist groups, organizations, and networks. Never before, many observers stated, had so many different actors converged in recent US history for fighting a common opponent. Although the process of composition started long before, Seattle was the media’s coming-out party of global dissent (Klein 2004). In terms of articulating a general critique of neoliberal capitalism and intensifying the conflict on a global scale, this process of composition lasted until the G8 protests in G8oa in the summer of 2001. In this short period, nearly every month a major summit protest occurred normally followed by worldwide solidarity actions. Antisystemic initiatives
became increasingly networked and more articulate in their critique. Genoa marked the high point of this process of composition with up to 300,000 people participating in the final rally and several tens of thousands of people attempting to penetrate the red zone that was established widely around the conference center.

Just two months after the events of Genoa, when the momentum of global antisystemic initiatives was reaching its peak, two airplanes crashed into the Twin Towers of New York. September 11 significantly changed the dynamics of global antisystemic initiatives. Not only was the annual conference of the WB and the IMF, to be held in New York at the end of September, cancelled—which provoked some confusion in the plans of a broad mobilization in the US for a “second Seattle”—also a whole new agenda of imperialist wars and neoconservative projects emerged, which shifted the focus to opposing the war and therefore altered the composition of antisystemic initiatives. Many of the previously established networks fell apart. The antisystemic initiative of global dissent became separated into several currents emphasizing various projects, strategies, and values (Hardt & Negri 2009). Therefore, I denote this period as one of decomposition.

The process of decomposition actually became visible even before September 11. In January 2001, various NGOs, think tanks, and social movements decided to hold a first World Social Forum (WSF) simultaneously with the World Economic Forum in Davos (Cassen 2004). In the preceding years, the World Economic Forum had been a target for confrontational actions. The organizations behind the WSF, however, decided that it was time to work on concrete alternatives in order to show that “another world is possible.” Whereas the WSF was intended as a step forward, it was also a step away from the logic of confrontation and away from the streets, a shift from conflict to dialogue. Spatially, it was also a step away from the powerful; instead of confronting hegemonic global elites in Davos, many initiatives focused on the WSF in Porto Alegre, Brazil. This involved a step away from the critique of representation: the WSF had to represent movements around the world, to represent humanity better than Davos. This threefold shift clearly indicates how opting for inclusion—which was doubtless the attempt of the WSF organizers—means excluding other options through delimitation.

Another factor for the process of decomposition was the antiwar agenda that developed in response to new wars in Afghanistan and Iraq. In several European countries, Trotskyite groups used the antiwar protests to claim a leadership role in global antisystemic struggles (Hudig & Dowling 2010). Although I have seen European Trotskyite groups engaging in transgressive
street protest, their antisystemic rhetoric often reduces the perspective on taking power and mobilizing “the masses.” The most surprising aspect of the massive antiwar protests is perhaps not that they took place before the war actually started, but that they did not result in a heightened period of contentious actions. Although the preceding wave of summit protest had proliferated a vast array of direct action tactics, there were few occasions in Europe where these direct action tactics have been applied to oppose the war (for example, by Christian Plowshares groups). While Trotskyite groups claimed that the antiwar protests are the legitimate successor to the wave of summit protests, horizontal and autonomous groups increasingly left this field of intervention to them (Graeber 2007a).

At the same time, and perhaps due to the proliferation of social forums on various geographical scales, NGOs and more formal organizations were less inclined to participate in street actions that would confront global power structures.13 Instead, many formal organizations returned to the strategy of negotiation and lobbying, which contributed to a relegitimation of the institutions and agencies previously under attack. The most visible moment of this development has been the mobilization against the 2005 G8 in Scotland. A broad coalition of mainstream NGOs supported by pop stars such as Bono and Bob Geldof mobilized under the banner “Make Poverty History” for a rally in Edinburgh that welcomed the G8 leaders and asked them to listen to Blair’s plans for poverty alleviation. In this way, an unbridgeable cleavage occurred between them and the networks that planned to blockade the G8 summit in order to contest global hegemonic forces (Hudig & Dowling 2010; Dowling & Trott 2008).

Marking this period is the incredible and immediate success of antisystemic initiatives in contributing to the end of the Multilateral Agreement on Investment, the FTAA negotiations, and the WTO negotiations in the Doha round (Graeber 2007a). A lot of the initial enemies had thus disappeared. Mainly the 2003 and 2005 G8 protests formed a possibility for continuity. Here, the previous experiences with No-border camps in Europe fed into the organization of protest camps close to the rural venues of these summit meetings. But this goes without comparison to the period of 1999–2001. For a few years, major institutions like the WTO or the IMF do not hold their meetings in Europe anymore.

Nevertheless, there are a few indications that the phase of decomposition is being overcome and that global dissent as an antisystemic initiative has entered a period of recomposition. Protesters focus on mass mobilizations in order to confront global power structures, above all against the G8 (and more recently also against NATO, G20, and the UN). Moreover,
Two Sides of a Barricade

summit protesters have made clear that moving summit meetings to remote rural areas does not prevent authorities from being confronted with transgressive street actions. The 2007 protests in Germany showed that global antisystemic initiatives still can mobilize on a massive scale and maintain their tactical capacity for intervention. Summit protesters started to talk about the “Seattle—Genoa—Heiligendamm movement” (Foti 2007), which confirms the narrative as situating the protests in Germany on a continuum that starts with Seattle.

However, this process hinges on a fragile resurgence. As Michael Hardt pointed out (during a talk at the 2008 European Social Forum in Malmö), the strength of this third wave relies on the same multiplicity of tactics and groups as did the one of the original composition. Herein lies the problem. As I argue in this book, it is exactly this tactical summit repertoire that has been increasingly neutralized by authorities. The future of global dissent hinges, one could say, on the hope for (tactical) innovation.

Ultimately since the outbreak of the financial (and then economic and debt) crisis in 2008, this hope has become even more pressing. After many of the warnings of summit protesters have become undeniable reality, it is stunning that antisystemic movements have not been more present in the past years (Scholl & Freyberg-Inan 2011). The following chapters may help to explain this failure in the light of previous tactical interaction and the containment of antisystemic initiatives on the global level. Nevertheless, the crises have shifted the social, political, and above all, economic context for antisystemic dissent in Europe. Recent anti-austerity protests, Occupy camps, the Indignados in Spain, a general strike in London, and upheavals in Greece testify to the fact that dissenters in Europe are looking for answers on the streets . . .
Understanding Interaction Tactically

Whereas Marx’s exposition begins with capital, then, his research must begin with labor and constantly recognize that in reality labor is primary. The same is true of resistance. Even though common use of the term might suggest the opposite—that resistance is a response or reaction—resistance is primary with respect to power.

—Michael Hardt and Antonio Negri, *Multitude: War and Democracy in the Age of Empire*

The most frequent urban manifestations of barricades during summit protests are burning dumpsters or cars. Since many major European cities have organized their trash system underground, however, dumpsters are vanishing from the imagery of street confrontations. Like Haussmann reacting to the frequent barricading of Paris’s streets in the 19th century by planning broader avenues (Douglas 2008), contemporary city planners diminish the likelihood of disruption of urban flows by emptying the streets of objects useful for such a purpose. In this respect, the burning car as a remaining emblem of street clashes comes as no surprise, for it is often the only object left in the streets to be appropriated for such purposes. In response, municipal authorities and police ask inhabitants to remove their cars from the city centers during summit meetings.

This historical sequence reveals an important aspect of the interaction between repertoires of control and contention: resistance is primary with respect to social control. Authorities are forced to adapt to the innovation of dissenters in order to maintain and strengthen the present power relations. Resistance is the innovator. Understanding street interactions tactically thus means to understand the tactical innovations of protesters first, and then to map the tactical adaptations of police and authorities (which, in turn, may trigger new innovations by protesters). In order to understand
tactical innovation, I first examine how the doing of dissent is socially coordinated. The doing of dissent proceeds through the creation, circulation, and transformation of conflicts. This chapter argues that disruption through transgressive street tactics is crucial for this process. Second, I situate tactical adaptation of police within a broader understanding of the social coordination of control. Social control is increasingly organized along the logic of securitarization, a logic that centers on making the occurrence of an undesired event improbable. Authorities and police want to preempt the possibility of disruption.

Therefore, I suggest analyzing police–protester interaction as an antagonistic process that encapsulates the tactical dynamics of the two sides of a barricade trying to disrupt each other. The main purpose of this chapter is to substantiate the claim that dissent—because of its reliance on disruption—contradicts social control. Tactical interaction can be traced by focusing on tactical innovation and tactical adaptation as an antagonistic process. In trying to break the dualism of the debate as to whether policing at the beginning of the 21st century has broken with “negotiated management” by recurring to “escalated force” or by inventing a new repertoire (della Porta & Reiter 2006), I show how the development of social control in recent years constitutes a continuation of the biopolitical logic of social control.

Doing Dissent

The street is an extremely important symbol because your whole enculturation experience is geared around keeping you out of the street. . . . The idea is to keep everyone indoors. So, when you come to challenge the powers that be, inevitably you find yourself on the curbstone of indifference, wondering “should I play it safe and stay on the sidewalks, or should I go into the street?” And it is the ones who are taking the most risks that will ultimately effect the change in society.

—Reclaim the Streets¹

One thing to be learned from previous waves of antisystemic initiatives is that it is healthy to have a certain distance to the state by not cooperating with governments. As we have seen with the “new” social movements, diminishing the distance to the state means to lose ownership over a social conflict. With Bruno Latour (1988), one could say that these processes displace a social conflict into the laboratory of governmental institutions.²
The problem becomes demarcated, defined, and therefore, manageable. Each time a social conflict is displaced to the governmental laboratory, the equation between politics and ruling is reaffirmed. Ruling means to control conflicts. By getting mediated, this deprives non-institutional actors of their ownership of conflict. The problem is not that so many people really believe in cooperation with institutionalized power, but nowadays, may not see any alternative to it. The alternatives are constantly suppressed through the processes of professionalization, institutionalization, and co-optation (see chapter 2). I will describe the alternatives here in terms of creating, circulating, and transforming conflicts.

The street constitutes an important context for understanding how dissent operates through the creation of conflicts. As opposed to policy research where problems only exist when they can be defined and demarcated, antisystemic initiatives make social problems visible through conflicts that question the legitimacy of hegemonic social relations. The street matters because it provides a context in which hegemonic power relations can be contested in a non-representational way. The word “non-representational,” however, does not mean that the street is a place for unmediated confrontation, that is, without the intervention of third parties (such as the media). Rather, it indicates that democratic processes do not necessarily proceed through institutional channels or the articulation of demands through representative forms of politics. This is why it is so important that we acknowledge the street as a space for creating, circulating, and transforming conflicts. For it is precisely in the street where the potentiality of antisystemic conflicts unfolds: unprecedented and unrepeatable moments that “sought or envisioned other outcomes than the one that came to pass” (Ross 2002: 6).

Creating Dissent in the Streets

But how does this creation of conflict in street actions work? Challenging the legitimacy of institutions and their policies in the context of liberal democracies means questioning hegemonic power relations, which is to say, articulating and communicating dissent in a shared temporary space. Not only is the street such a shared space where dissent can be articulated outside of the institutionalized channels, “the street” points to a more general social relationship between constituent and constituted power. That is, drawing on Spinoza’s distinction between “potentia” and “potesta,” Negri distinguishes between constituent and constituted power (Negri 1999). “Potentia” echoes the potentiality and capacity of constituent power, an alternative form of social organization that breaks with the representational
paradigm. *Constituted* power mirrors the idea of a constitution as abstract universal and legal foundation for the state, the formalization of sovereign power. Whereas constituted power is based on representation as political practice, constituent power is based on action and participation. In one case we have to deal with a state, a *mode of being*, in the other case, we encounter a *mode of becoming* that resists—at least temporarily—the processes of reterritorialization and structuralization (Raunig 2007: 31). In a similar way, John Holloway speaks about “power to”—our power to do something—versus “power over”—the objectification of social relationships (Holloway 2002: 28). “Power over” continuously tries to impose itself by disrupting the flow of social doing of “power to.” The creation of conflict starts with constituent power opposing constituted power.

Based on the principle of representation, liberal democratic systems offer channels that institutionalize grievance processes, thus turning constituent into constituted power. Political articulations take the form of demands that can be taken up by representatives and translated into parliamentary debates, governmental policies, and legal reforms. Such a system will work so long as its legitimation is reproduced through consensus. Ruling and stability in a context of liberal democracies not only depends on direct enforcement but on indirectly manufacturing consent (Herman & Chomsky 1988; Gramsci 1971). The (re-)production of consensus via the rule and stability is an important aspect of any social system. When people perceive a ruling regime as illegitimate, they may transgress the laws of a regime, and crumble away this consensus. They need to intervene in the space where this “dialectics of public space” (Mitchell 2003) is produced: the street. The street is an opportune space for non-institutional politics where the hegemonic consensus can be challenged through dissent.

Piven and Cloward (1977) argue that the success of social protest depends not so much on organizational resources, but on its ability to disrupt established routines. Gamson’s (1990) quantitative study of the strategies of social protest covering a period from 1800 to 1945 corroborates the relation between the use of violence and the success of contentious collective action. In his research violence turns out not to be a last resort by those who see no other means; but instead, it is associated with confidence and rising efficacy. Gamson (1990: 87) concludes: “unruly groups, those that use violence, strikes, and other constraints, have better than average success.” Similarly, Tarrow (1998: 96–98) suggests that contentious politics relies on disruption in order to become visible. Collective defiance is key to contentious politics. Therefore, innovation of tactical repertoires deflects the dangers of routinization or ritualization. Ritualization of repertoires enables
authorities to learn how to respond (Tarrow 1995: 107). Whereas imitation is an important aspect of circulation, the ritualization of tactical repertoires may also facilitates social control.

The summit protest repertoire is influenced by two traditions of creating and communicating conflict through street actions. In the first case, creating dissent is a question of communicating an adequate political message. In thinking about the choice of street tactics, questions are raised about the content of the message. The tactic, then, has to be an adequate vehicle for transporting this message. The underlying premise is that, if a valid and truthful statement is made that challenges the dominant view, people will be convinced through a street action. The articulation of dissent seems in this case to be predicated on the force of arguments. This conception of communicating dissent goes back to Jürgen Habermas’s theory of communicative action. According to Habermas (1981), we need a form of reason that is not directed at a strategic aim but at reaching consensus. Strategic action is predicated on the aim of influencing other persons but is problematic because the others are mostly seen as opponents. Communicative action, by contrast, means trying to understand each other to come to a consensus on the basis of rational communication. Communicative action has an integrative function because the actors strive toward a shared goal, which is consensus. Intersubjective communication, as Habermas puts it, creates possibilities for shared rationality.

Carl Schmitt (1963: 30) challenges this liberal idea of conflict settling by pointing out that—being a decision—every consensus is based on acts of exclusion and therefore a fully inclusive “rational” consensus is impossible. In The Concept of the Political, Schmitt argues that the antagonistic character of the political is based on a distinction between “us” and “them.” In his view, a world without adversarial relationships would be a world without politics (Schmitt 1963: 35). In order to understand the conflictual social world as itself political, the development of a relationship of antagonism is necessary. According to Laclau and Mouffe (2001: 153), an antagonistic relationship helps us to understand situations of subordination and domination as situations of oppression.

Accordingly, the second way of creating conflict during summit protest is not so much about communicating valid arguments, but about creating conflict by staging a physical confrontation in the streets. The German Federal Office for the Protection of the Constitution (Abteilung Verfassungsschutz Berlin 2007: 2) grasps this distinction very well, when stating that—as opposed to church groups or trade unions who might articulate critique about neoliberal globalization—“left-extremists” do not
articulate critique, but instead purposefully try to disrupt the summit by aiming at a “revolutionary” change of the current social system. In pointing out the difference between these two ways of contentious action, Tilly (2000) distinguishes between “contained contention” and “transgressive contention.” Transgressive contention is, for my purposes, central because, first, it provides visibility and consciousness about antagonistic power relations, and, second, because it challenges and threatens the stability of existing power relations. This is not to say that no communication takes place, only that it starts with the production of conflict.

Street interventions can materialize dissent and convey an image of intransigence vis-à-vis the established order. Through street conflicts, summit protesters attempt to intervene in what is commonly taken as ordinary and normal: they stage a material intervention in the symbolic production of hegemonic ruling relations. In this respect, a disruptive street intervention reveals the ontological status of history as producing normality for the present and as being a product of and open to concrete struggle. This book examines the creation of dissent through the transgressive summit protest repertoire.

**Circulating and Transforming Dissent through Tactical Repertoires**

Circulation of conflicts, a notion developed within the (Italian) autonomist Marxist tradition, points out that the circulation of capital is also a circulation of struggles. Each node in the circuit of capital is a potential site of conflict where subjectivities resist capitalist subsumption. Each conflict can thereby ignite other struggles. Whereas the analysis of the circulation of struggles was initially a critique of orthodox objectivist Marxism, which projected capital proceeding to crisis according to teleological laws, it also displaced the focus on the factory as the primary site of struggle. Instead, the circulation of struggles interconnects multiple sites of the social factory, as Harry Cleaver (2000: 58) points out, enabling us to think about the organization of struggle not in terms of particular organizations, which become professionalized, co-opted, and institutionalized, but in terms of the elaboration of cooperation among people in struggle.

Tactical repertoires are an important aspect in the circulation of struggles. In the literature on the diffusion of contention, ideas or frames have received much more attention than tactics or repertoires (see Tarrow 2005; Snow & Benford 1999; McAdam & Rucht 1993). However, if we are to understand how people cooperate in struggle, the circulation of tactical repertoires, including the transformations in their adaptation in different contexts is key. As constituent moments of the circulation of struggles, sum-
mit protests in Europe mark a “moment of madness” (Zollberg 1972) where tactical innovation becomes explosively visible. Tarrow (1995: 110–111) points out how important these moments of madness historically are in shaping the opportunities for new repertoires of action:

Few people dare to break the trust of convention. When they do so during moments of madness, they create the opportunities and provide the models for others. Moments of madness—seldom widely shared—appear as sharp peaks on the long curve of history. New forms of contention flare up briefly within them and disappear, and their rate of absorption into the ongoing repertoire is slow and partial. But the cycles they trigger last much longer and have broader influence than the moments of madness themselves; they are in Zollberg’s words, “like a flood tide which loosens up much of the soil but leaves alluvial deposits in its wake.”

Since the street plays a central role in the creation of conflict, this circulation can be traced by looking at the diffusion of tactical street repertoires and the “deposits” they leave. According to Charles Tilly (1986: 4), a repertoire of action comprises the whole set of means a group has for making claims of different types on different individuals. For my purpose, however, this definition is not broad enough. Not all tactical repertoires can be subsumed accurately under the idea of “claim-making.” What all the street tactics of summit protesters have in common, however, is that they are visible manifestations of the contentious ideas of social movements. Therefore, I suggest broadening Tilly’s concept and to understand repertoires of action as the whole set of means a group has available in order to be(come) visible.

The transgressive summit protest repertoire is influenced by the traditions of civil disobedience and direct action, neither of which is an invention of summit protesters. They have found, however, innovative ways of employing these action traditions by combining them with a distinct set of repertoires and street tactics. Civil disobedience has both a radical-democratic and a contract-theoretical tradition. Conceiving of obedience as the normal state of affairs, the latter sees disobedience as the exception, used by a minority to appeal to the sense of justice of the majority and of the government (Locke 1946; Rawls 1971). The radical-democratic tradition refers to a division between legality and legitimacy, aiming at further democratization (not restricted to parliamentary democracy). In both traditions, however, the legitimacy of the state is generally accepted. As early as 1552,
in his *Discourse of Voluntary Servitude*, Étienne de la Boétie (in de la Boétie & Bonnefon 2007) elaborates the importance of disobedience by demonstrating how ruling is based on consent, when consenting ultimately means being obedient. The tradition of civil disobedience was further influenced by Henry Thoreau (Thoreau & Owen 1966), who refused to pay taxes because that would mean to support slavery and the war of the US against Mexico. Other influential antecedents are Gandhi’s tactics during anti-colonial struggles in India (Brown 2011) and the tactics used in the civil rights struggles in the US (McAdam 1982). Civil disobedience is based on the refusal to obey a law, which is experienced as illegitimate. It amounts to a conscious trespassing of the law, without questioning the general legitimacy of sovereign politics. In fact, being arrested or prosecuted is often an integral part of the functioning of civil disobedience. This way, activists can show that they were consciously violating a law because of a particular injustice and not because they challenge the system as such. The appeal to a moral high ground creates a dilemma for authorities in punishing the violation of a certain law. The ultimate goal of trespassing laws is to reveal this moral high ground, often during court cases.

On the other hand, stemming from radical syndicalist struggles at the end of the 19th century (especially in France and the US), direct actions aim at preventing the implementation of undesired policies and creating autonomous social structures. Voltairine de Cleyre’s (2004) account, written at the beginning of the 20th century, makes clear that direct action is an autonomous form of political action employed by actors who want to act on their own terms that rejects representation and political mediation. In this respect, direct action forms are interconnected with “Do-it-yourself” autonomous decentralized organizational practice. Coined by the independent approach of punk bands in the 1970s, “Do-it-yourself” became a strategy for political organizing that centers on the idea that social movements can build up self-organized structures within the system that is actually refuted (Graeber 2009; Poldervaart 2006; Holtzman 2007). Do-it-yourself is, thus, a reappropriation of self-determination, proposing to find solutions ourselves rather than asking for solutions from the political elite (in a representational system).

As many protesters pointed out during preparatory action meetings I attended, like civil disobedience, direct action tactics have become increasingly represented via the media. As a result, protesters anticipate the role of mass media coverage so that direct action tactics envision their (media) representation, often part of a legitimation strategy. A good example is the train-stopping actions of Disobbedienti groups against the US Iraq War preparations in Italy. Whereas stopping trains with war-related material can
Understanding Interaction Tactically

be seen as belonging to a typical direct action repertoire, the involvement of nuns and clergy provided a moral high ground to the actions useful for communicating the message to the media.

However, despite the increasing influence of the logic of (media) representation, direct action tactics are still used with practical ends. Frequently, they are applied to damage the image of corporate companies and political authorities. Because, as Zald (1985: 17) puts it, disruptive tactics can directly raise the costs to authorities and publics, they are also used to raise the costs involved in summit meetings, with the aim of making them untenable. The repertoire of blockading clearly manifests the logic of direct actions as practical intervention through which protesters try to hinder without mediation summit meetings. Unlike civil disobedience tactics, direct action tactics do not necessarily appeal to a strategy of exposing a moral high ground but practically intervene in historical processes in order to stop or redirect them. The political statement is made during the street conflict itself not during a court case. Direct action tactics aim at a political resolution through confrontation and not at institutionalized forms of negotiation.

The traditions of civil disobedience and direct action are revived in the transgressive summit protest repertoire of blockading, besieging, and intruding. Thereby, partly due to the cultural and historical peculiarities of each specific context, summit protesters often do not make a strict distinction between direct action and civil disobedience. Through the circulation of these repertoires from one to another summit protest, global conflicts are transformed as a result of tactical interaction. The reference points for the repertoire of blockading are the successful blockades during the WTO protests in Seattle in 1999. In Seattle, protesters did not restrict themselves to the repertoire of marching but, with a decentralized concept, blocked all the intersections around the conference center and various hotel entrances where WTO delegations were hosted. The result was that hours after the official start of the summit, only a minor part of the delegates had reached their respective venues. Employing various street tactics, protesters had used their bodies to prevent the bodies of the official delegations from accessing the summit conference (Solnit & Solnit 2009). Blockading is thus a repertoire that tactically incapacitates summit meetings. Above all, this repertoire was applied in Europe during summit protests in rural areas, such as at the respective G8 summits in Evian 2003, Gleneagles 2005, and Heiligendamm 2007.

The repertoire of the siege was developed from the experience of the repertoire of blockading. Already in Seattle in 1999 one could easily get the impression of the conference being besieged. In Prague 2000,
this repertoire was applied more consistently by enclosing the IMF/World Bank conference from all sides with the aim of preventing the delegations from leaving without having adapted their trade-political agenda. Especially since summit venues are heavily fortified and secured by fences and red zones, the siege creates a powerful image of contestation. In Genoa 2001, the repertoire of the siege was applied again, with elements of the repertoire of intrusion.

In the repertoire of control, Genoa marked the entry of red zones fortified by high fences. In reaction, protesters decided to expand the repertoire of the siege to symbolic intrusions of the red zone. This repertoire aims at violating the heavily contested red zones separating hegemonic elites from dissenting contenders. As one could witness during the 2005 G8 protests in Gleneagles, where protesters tore down the fence and entered the forbidden zone, the practice of defencing is often part of this repertoire. Compared to the repertoire of blockading, the repertoire of intrusion hinges on a more symbolic function of doing dissent.

The transformation of these conflicts is the result of the interaction between state authorities and protesters. Through the circulation of street conflicts, protesters have encountered certain dilemmas and challenges that triggered the development of new street tactics. Street tactics are just one part of the entire repertoire of contentious action. It is, however, an important part if we want to analyze the street interaction between police and protesters during summit protest. As we will see in chapter 4, protesters have staged an innovative array of new street tactics. Many of these street tactics explicitly overcome the shortcomings of previous street tactics and are through circulation rapidly diffused and applied in local contexts during and following summit protests.

In this book, I analyze the tactical repertoires of summit protesters according to the four sites of conflict (bodies, space, communication, law). Chapter 4 traces the tactical repertoires of bodily contention. Presenting the innovation of protesters along an epistemology of three colors—white, pink, and black—I analyze how summit protesters challenge the control of bodies by reinventing the traditions of civil disobedience and direct action. Chapter 5 looks at repertoires of spatial contention starting with the tactical innovation of “decentralized swarming” and “diversity of tactics.” These innovations have enhanced protesters’ capacity to disrupt summit meetings spatially. In chapter 6, I present the tactical repertoires of contentious communication. Summit protesters communicate through decentralized networks and clandestine forms of communication in order to circulate dissent and to change the conditions of the production of truth. Finally, chapter 7
looks at the repertoires of legal contention. Through the innovative deployment of transgressive tactics, I argue, summit protesters have effectively challenged the boundaries of the constitutional state and sovereign power.

Controlling Dissent

The whole police system is geared towards “consensus”—the ideological precondition of bourgeois society—while denying the fact that by definition such consensus cannot exist . . . the preoccupation with “disorder” serves a specific ideological function which masks over the hierarchical nature of order.


To be certain, the innovations, on this side of the barricade did not go unchallenged. Authorities developed tactical adaptations to render the transgressive summit protest repertoire ineffective. For developing a mode of analysis about the tactical adaptations by authorities, I develop a broader understanding of the control of dissent. In dialogue with the protest policing literature, I point to some major dilemmas of social science scholarship in studying control without enacting it.

*Repression, Policing, or Social Control?*

The tactics used to incapacitate dissent—whether used by state or non-state actors—are traditionally summarized as repression. Tilly (1978: 100) defines repression as “any action by another group which raises the contender’s cost of collective action.” Although Tilly’s narrow conception of social movements as claim makers toward the state results in neglecting repressive acts through non-state actors, his broad conception of repression including all kind of obstacles is very useful. He opposes repression to facilitation and classifies political regimes according to the degree of repression and facilitation they manifest toward different collective actors and actions (Tilly 1978: 106–115). However, given that the doing of dissent equally relies on disruption (incapacitating the opponent), the term “repression” does not capture the peculiar logic of repression by authorities. We need a different term that captures the difference in the logic of “repressing” dissent.
In the last decades, another term became increasingly fashionable in the context of street interactions to refer to what Tilly calls repression: “protest policing.” Della Porta and Diani (2006: 197) hold that “repression” is actually an activist description, as opposed to the state’s own definition of keeping law and order. They propose to use the term “protest policing” as a much more neutral term that evades being caught up in either activists’ or state’s interests. Yet, the burgeoning literature on protest policing clearly reduces Tilly’s broad conception of repressive acts: repression is mainly conceived of as overtly enforced acts (Earl et al. 2003: 582). Moreover, the state’s interest is reproduced in this perspective. The analysis of protest policing is predicated on the normative assumption that disruption is undesirable and at least some kind of policing is necessary, distinguishing only more and less democratic ways. This leaves no space for analyzing the obstacles effectuated by subtler and less visible forms of control.

In the past decades, a wide range of proposals have been made about how to study repression or protest policing. Gary T. Marx (1979) distinguishes between acts of repression according to their purpose. He differentiates the creation of an unfavorable image of opponents, the gathering of information, the restriction of the flows of resources for movements, the discouragement of activists, the fueling of internal conflicts within the leadership and between groups; and sabotage of specific actions. Here, we can still encounter a rather broad view on all kind of obstacles supposed to frustrate contenders. But della Porta and Reiter’s proposal for studying protest policing focuses on a more narrow set of factors that supposedly influence the policing style listing (a) the organizational features of the police; (b) the configuration of political power; (c) public opinion; (d) the police occupational culture; (e) the interaction with protesters; and (f) police knowledge (della Porta & Reiter 1998: 2). Thereby, they emphasize the role of police knowledge as the factor that mediates all the other ones. However, as Fillieule and Jobard (1998: 89) point out, police attitudes during a demonstration are in constant flux.

The tendency to work with an abundance of categories guiding the analysis of protest policing is extensively present in the work of della Porta and Reiter (1998: 3–4), but also in the work of McPhail et al. (1998: 51). The presented dichotomies, for example, repressive versus tolerant or rigid versus flexible, seem to rely on a normative framework and a reduction of repression to overtly repressive acts. Moreover, it is unclear how we are supposed to fit the complex reality of street interactions during summit protests in such slick categories such as “minimum force.”
For repression during interactions in the streets, the protest policing literature offers a delicate view of how this works. Confrontation is generally presented as something that starts after activists have behaved in a certain way. Policing of protest becomes a question of either good or inadequate police responses to confrontational behavior of protesters. It is rarely considered that the confrontation might start much earlier, for example, with the sheer presence of masses of police in riot gear, with the erection of a red zone, or with the organization of contested meetings such as a G8 summit.4

Let us have a look at the following description by della Porta and Diani of the events during the G8 protests in Genoa: “After the police charge, some groups of demonstrators reacted by throwing stones, provoking the police to use armoured cars” (della Porta & Diani 2006: 194). Although the throwing of stones is recognized as a reaction to a police charge, it is still the behavior of the protesters that “provoked” the police to use armored cars. In della Porta and Diani’s view it was obviously the protesters who—after being attacked—provoked an escalation of the situation. One at least may ask why the police were waiting at the spot with armored cars when they had no intention of escalating. This way of analyzing “protest policing” relies on several assumptions, which result in misleading causal chains.

Della Porta’s (and Reiter’s) work is exemplary for my critique of the conception of “protest policing.” I found three main reasons why her analytical instrumentarium might actually obscure rather than clarify. The first critique derives from Dorothy Smith’s ontological shift presented in the first chapter. If the social is a result of people’s doing, then social scientists should study what people do rather than what they are. What della Porta attempts to do is to pack a fairly huge amount of data about protest events—extracted from either mainstream media or police reports—into abstract categories organized tentatively around “more” or “less” repression. Thereby, she largely restricts herself to political demonstrations, which is only one repertoire of action applied by protesters. What she does not do is pay attention to what is happening during street interactions and analyze what police and protesters are doing during such events. Although the interaction is in her view an important factor influencing the “protest policing style,” she hardly provides detailed accounts of concrete situations.

The second critique relates to della Porta’s lack of grasping the broader context that shapes the way in which such interactions take place. Because she does not unpack such categories as law, private property, government, or violence (or the state’s monopoly on violence), she uncritically reproduces the police perspective: the standpoint of a ruling regime. The
literature on policing protest in general, and the work of della Porta in particular, is predicated on the state form. By objectifying the state instead of seeing it as a social relationship, she reifies the necessity of regulating dissent and precluding certain forms of protest. “Objective” accounts of protest policing contribute to the mystification of social reality by producing abstract and decontextualized categories. In my view, it makes little sense to study “protest policing” without providing a notion of what protest is about, what the police is about, and how this relates to the state, law, and (sovereign) power.

Finally, della Porta’s way of categorizing “protest policing” is highly normative. This problem has several layers. Her way of categorizing policing styles implies that less overt or subtler forms of policing are less repressive. As I demonstrate further on, when discussing the concept of “confrontation management,” this categorization is predicated on a doubtful assumption. Della Porta seems to accept that protesters need to be controlled and contained. Political violence is for her a problem to be solved (della Porta 1995: 216). What she is looking for, then, is a more “democratic” style of policing. This way, she takes a standpoint, namely, the one of liberal democracies aiming for pacified protest. And it obscures the doing of dissent.

The literature on protest policing is a clear example of how social science scholarship contributes to the management of contentious politics by reproducing the assumption of necessary control in its analytical categories. Reifying the social processes that unfold behind concrete repressive acts, social scholarship makes itself complicit in the ruling regime of social control.

Having clarified these dilemmas it should be evident that the term “policing” does not adequately capture how the social control of dissent is coordinated. In the literature on protest policing, “repression” is bound to mean extreme and overt acts. As Starr et al. (2011) and Luis Fernandez (2005) argue, a broader analysis of the “social control of dissent” is necessary to understand the shifting ways summit protest is policed. Vitale (2005) observes a similar shift in the US and calls it “hierarchical micro-management of demonstrations.” This means, first, that overt repression always implies a ruling regime of covert control that is only revealed via a contextualized analysis of concrete interactions in the streets; and secondly, that the ruling regime of social control aims not only at reacting to confrontational or disruptive behavior in the streets, but also at preempting dissent before it comes to this point.

I therefore propose to analyze the ruling regime of social control through tactical repertoires of social control that include more subtle forms of
control than the lens of either “repression” or “protest policing.” Moreover, it enables me to trace the ruling regime of social control well beyond the actual situation of street interactions and to map the power relations that frame these specific interactions. Social control constitutes the Foucauldian flipside of the “policing protest” literature: it centers analytical attention on the subtle and pervasive police operations of power instead of on styles of policing.

Crowd Control and the Role of Identity

The complicity of social scientists with ruling regimes is much older than the work of della Porta. Sincerely shocked about the outbursts of violence during the troubling urban unrest and race riots in US-American cities, Raymond Momboisse (1967, 1968) responded by writing an extensive analysis called _Riots, Revolts, and Insurrections_ and a manual for police authorities and city officials detailing plans against the rampageous crowd. However, Momboisse only continued a long tradition of mob sociology and crowd psychology that was already vividly expressed by Gustave LeBon (1960) at the end of the 19th century in response to the events of the Paris Commune.

Four main arguments are encountered in this literature. The first one is that riotous behavior is dangerous not only for public order but for democracy. However, Eric Hobsbawm (1964) points out that riots constituted an important form of collective bargaining during previous social conflicts, and even during the 20th century, political violence can be considered a “weapon of the poor” (Piven & Cloward 1977). Whereas the work of the social historian Hobsbawm (1959) demonstrates the pivotal role of food riots in the moral economy of English rebels in the 18th century as a form of collective bargaining, with the spread of industrial capitalism but especially national representative democracy, riots came to be regarded not as a form of protodemocracy but as a fundamental threat to the social and political order. Although most constitutions guarantee a right to dissent, in liberal democracies violence is not considered to be a legitimate way of its articulation (Tarrow 1998: 94–95).

The second argument is that crowds are inherently dangerous. LeBon (1960), for example, argues that when people become anonymous within the mass, they lose their individual identity. Crowd members become mindless; ideas, and more particularly, emotions, become contagious. Momboisse makes a further distinction that explains exactly when crowds become dangerous: “A crowd is not a mob, but it can become one! Each crowd constitutes a police problem, and each, even the most casual, has latent
potential for widespread civil disobedience” (Momboisse 1967: 5). Reicher et al. (2004: 560) make a further distinction between a physical mass of people and psychological crowds (usually in plural). This line of argumentation about crowds perfectly illustrates Laclau’s observation that democratic elites are fundamentally suspicious about the masses (Laclau 2005). Elites therefore strive to defend democracy against itself. Or to put it in Rancière’s words: “The thesis of the new hatred of democracy can be succinctly put: there is only one good democracy, the one that represses the catastrophe of democratic civilization” (Rancière 2006: 4). Wilson (1977: 470, 475) points out that labeling and treating dissenters as deviant constitutes a process of criminalization, which denies the political status of contentious politics.

This relates directly to the third argument so pervasive in mob sociology and crowd psychology: understanding identity is key for managing a crowd. Two assumptions accompany this argument. On the one hand, the psychology of crowds is supposed to work in such a way that it absorbs the individual into the crowd and controls it by the “crowd mind.” Reicher et al. (2004: 560) give nuance to this classical mass-psychological argument by stating that crowd participants do not lose their identity but a shift occurs from personal to social identity. On the other hand, there is an increasing awareness about the interrelation between police perceptions of crowds and the tactics employed to control them. This implies that effective control relies on adequate perceptions of crowd members’ identities. Momboisse (1967) provides a detailed attempt to categorize not only the characteristics of different kinds of mobs, but also eleven distinct identities of mob members. Identifying these various kinds of mob participants is a first attempt to control them. Elaborating on these attempts, Reicher et al. (2004: 566) suggest that the same effort that is put into identifying violent individuals should be put into obtaining an understanding of group identity. Crowd control becomes a scientific activity. And the findings of mob sociology itself become common knowledge (Schweingruber 2000: 376), informing the practice of social control. Identification as a control practice, then, is about disrupting the process of “becoming,” that is, of protesters becoming transgressive protesters, or protest events becoming disruptive.

The fourth argument concerns how to deal with a mob or a psychological crowd. Mob sociology recognizes that inadequate crowd control tactics can have counterproductive effects. Therefore, mismanagement of crowds can be a self-fulfilling prophecy: responding emotionally to police measures perceived as unjust and unjustified, crowds become a mob, which police should try to avoid.5 Momboisse proposes therefore to perceive demonstrations as neither crowds nor mobs. He advises police not to try to
prevent them. Rather, the goal should be to prevent them from becoming a mob.\(^6\) Having evaluated the urban unrests of the 1960s, he in fact initiates a shift from escalated force to *confrontation management*.

**Confrontation Management**

But Momboisse’s considerations concerning crowd management unleashed a development of police tactics for channeling protest into predictable and undisruptive events. Confrontation management evolved as a set of techniques for police in liberal democracies to facilitate “peaceful” demonstrations: “Confrontation management is a strategy concept . . . which seeks to counter the attempts of dissident organizations to radicalize their ranks by provoking police to overreact” (US Army cited in Schweingruber 2000: 380). Della Porta and Reiter (1998: 6) summarize the three most significant tactical tendencies characterizing confrontation management in the 1990s: (a) underenforcement of the law; (b) the search to negotiate; (c) large-scale collection of information.

The development of this strategy concept was widely supported by social scientists who dubbed this policing approach “negotiated management,” as opposed to the “escalated force” approach (McPhail et al. 1998). However, I will not use the term “negotiated management” here, since it suggests some level of talks around a table on equal footing. Fillieule and Jobard (1998: 76), for example, suggest that these talks take should place in “a spirit of mutual recognition and respect.” For anyone who has registered a major demonstration in Western Europe and attended a subsequent talk with the responsible police officer, the euphemism of the term “negotiation” becomes apparent. Nevertheless, social scientists still stick to the term, when even interviewed police officers leave no doubts about their real intentions: “the goal of the negotiation is to make the demonstrators think that the restrictions are in their own interest, that it is simply friendly advice” (police officer quoted in Fillieule & Jobard 1998: 78). Waddington clearly reveals the double agendas hiding behind such preparatory talks: “Once the negotiation begins, the aim of the police is to “win over” the negotiator so that the demonstration is conducted as far as possible in accordance with police wishes. . . . It is a studied performance designed to dispel any tension, hostility, or antagonism that the organizer might harbor” (Waddington 1998: 120–121). Still, it is widely believed that these so-called negotiations lead to a compromise between both parties so that unexpected risks are minimized (Fillieule & Jobard 1998: 78). Again, the police perspective is uncritically reproduced here. “Unexpected
risks” refers above all to unexpected events causing disruption of the normal state of affairs, and this mirrors above all the police’s interest. Moreover, the word consensus suggests an equal-footed negotiation process. If no “consensus” is established, however, the police most likely will not allow the demonstration. In most cases, therefore, reaching a “consensus” means accepting police restrictions for a demonstration.

The reluctance of many social scientists to grasp the restrictive consequences of confrontation management for protesters is underlined by a normative appraisal of this policing approach. This becomes clearly evident, for example, in Andretta et al.’s (2003: 114, 135) account of the events during the protests against the EU meetings in Gothenburg and against the G8 summit in Genoa in 2001. They leave no doubt that in their eyes a policing approach relying on negotiated management would have been preferable. In his summary of the edited volume Policing Protest: The Control of Mass Demonstrations in Western Democracies, Marx (1998: 253) points out where this normative preference comes from. In his view, confrontation management has resulted in the “institutionalization of a more tolerant and human response to those forms of organized protest that stay broadly within the realm of nonviolence.”

There are a number of objections that can be made against such an assessment. First of all, not all forms of disruption rely on violence. And it is precisely unpredictable disruptions that are made impossible by the confrontation management approach. Second, it has proven to be empirically wrong that civil liberties are not being damaged if protesters do not use violence (Gamson 1990). Third, the beforehand rejection of violence by many scholars comes from a normative standpoint resulting in a tautological and not in a political argument. If violence is considered bad in itself, it needs to be avoided. Fourth, what emerges behind the discussion about violence and disruption is the question of legality. Many protesters do not accept the legal boundaries of the status quo and consciously challenge it by staging transgressive actions. Finally, when social science scholars propose that public order policing in Western Europe and North America focuses increasingly on toleration rather than repression (della Porta & Reiter 1998; Marx 1998; Reicher et al. 2004), they clearly do not take into account the more subtle forms of social control that confrontation management entails. I will briefly flesh out some of the consequences of confrontation management for protesters.

The first problem that emerges from confrontation management is that protest is made invisible: “Demonstrations in which police used negoti-
ated management tactics are generally not as memorable as those previously mentioned because they are relatively uneventful” (McPhail et al. 1998: 51). The reason for this is that confrontation management tries to make protest events predictable by reducing unexpected behavior and actions. However, this deprives non-institutional actors of one of their most important resources, namely, their capacity to disrupt the normal flow of social life. Thus, while confrontation management might serve the police’s interest of reducing disruption—without using excessive and overt force—it prevents protesters from having an impact (Reiner 1998: 47).

The second problem for protesters is that confrontation management necessarily results in self-policing. If the official organizer of a permitted demonstration has established a “consensus” with the police, she is in charge of implementing the restrictions during the protest event. As Reicher et al. (2004: 566) point out, “rather than thinking primarily about the best form of police action to control the crowd, it is important also to concentrate on how to act in order to get the crowd to control itself.” Negotiated management thus constitutes a form of passive coercion; organizers become complicit in producing less contentious protest action, which results in internalized self-control (Starr & Fernandez 2006). The result has been the employment of order-keeping services within the demonstration helping to police the demonstration and stay in contact with the police forces. On the other hand, confrontation management means to be supportive toward those protesters pursuing legal goals and activities. As a result, it is easier to repress those protesters willing to engage in transgressive and disorderly acts. Under such circumstances, feelings of solidarity between protesters with different tactical preferences are difficult to nurture.

The third problem with confrontation management is that it equates “professionalism” with obedience. Since the police have to engage and communicate with protest organizers, they strategically show appreciation when the organizers know what they are doing and preparing: “Here may be seen one of the considerations that is most important for senior police officers: professionalism of the adversary. The more the organisers are used to the police protocols surrounding a demonstration, the more senior police officers find it a ‘pleasure to work with them’ ” (Fillieule & Jobard 1998: 80). However, being professional here means doing what police want protesters to do. Transgressive protesters will never be called “professional” by police, although they might execute transgressive tactics “professionally,” which implies not cooperating too much with the police. Being “professional,” for the police, thus means to anticipate and imitate their logic of control.
It comes as no surprise that, as Noakes et al. (2005: 240) observe, “The rise of the negotiated management style of policing protest coincided with the professionalization of many of the leading movement organizations that survived the 1960s protest wave.” Confrontation management aims at the institutionalization of non-institutional politics. This seeming paradox is accomplished by “including” protesters not only in governance structures by inviting selected organizations for consultative talks, but also by involving them in their own control management. The result is protest according to protocols that does not cause any disruption and therefore becomes a normalized routine. Waddington (1998: 140) makes the dilemma for protesters fully apparent: “Inclusion is not a panacea, however. First, since most social movements arise from beyond institutional politics, it is likely that they will not benefit from institutionalization in their initial stages, nor might they wish to.” This observation of Waddington clearly shows the delimitation established by the supposed “inclusion,” based as it is on the demand for obedience. Protesters who refuse to abide by the “rules of the game” are likely to be confronted by police (Waddington 1998: 131).

Finally, confrontation management makes social control invisible. As della Porta notes (1998: 238), negotiated management tactics go along with an increasing focus on intelligence gathering and surveillance that generally has two goals: investigation and precautionary monitoring. These tactics are less overt forms of control, but equally create obstacles for (transgressive) protesters. This exemplifies Foucault’s (1977a) proposal that power works best when it is normalized and, therefore, invisible. The ultimate aim of disciplinary and biopolitical forms of power is to normalize the status quo as beyond questioning. But if protesters have to accept the normalization of protest, and therefore remain ineffective, why should they protest at all?

**Summit Protest as a Challenge to Confrontation Management**

Since della Porta and Reiter’s book looking at the policing of mass demonstrations in Western democracies, the most crucial development is the (re-)introduction of transgressive tactics in the context of mass demonstrations. Della Porta herself admits, together with Diani, that “The Genoa demonstrations represented a major break (albeit a predictable one) with the image of social movements in the 1980s and 1990s, which had portrayed them as integrated and “civilized,” more at ease at the bargaining table than in the streets” (della Porta & Diani 2006: 195). Whereas social movement scholars often hold that repertoires of action are based either on numbers or on violence, summit protesters have successfully combined these charac-
Summit protesters use mass demonstrations as a context to apply a variety of tactics. Mixed tactics protesters, however, constitute a challenge for confrontation management (King & Waddington 2005: 263). The tactical heterogeneity and horizontal organization of summit protesters poses risks for the police who are looking for law and order by trying to avoid disruption. Scholars observe this protest flexibility through an increase in “more disintegrative tactics among political activists” (Björk 2005: 306). After the successful routinization of protest in many Western countries, the reemergence of transgressive tactics challenges the tactical repertoire of confrontation management:

Finally, it can be argued that the routinization of protest has yielded protest events which are boring if not ineffectual in achieving anything more than a short-term “feel good solidarity” on the part of the protesters who have rallied, marched, chanted and sung together. . . . This perceived ineffectuality of protest may have something to do with the recent appearance of some challengers who will have no part of applying for permits let alone negotiating or even talking with the police. (McPhail & McCarthy 2005: 6)

This book examines how summit protesters have challenged the confrontation management tactics of authorities and how authorities have responded to this. Comparing the police tactics during the 2001 Gothenburg EU summit and the 2002 Copenhagen EU summit, Peterson (2006) argues that Danish and Swedish police attempted to “undermine the series of non-violent civil disobedience actions.” The latest edited volume by della Porta and Reiter (2006) on protest policing raises questions as to whether we are witnessing a retreat to the “escalated force model” preceding confrontation management or whether we are dealing with an entirely new style of policing in the Western world. However, already in the 1970s Piven and Cloward (1977) argued that authorities “structure” protest. They do this not only by repression, but also by channeling, co-optation, and direct and indirect pressure on movements to assert institutional legitimacy and pressure them to conform to expected protest behavior. This points to an interesting consideration. Perhaps the “break” with the confrontation management model della Porta and Reiter say they detect is unclear because there never has been a real break. Perhaps summit protests alerted these scholars to the forming and structuring capacity of social control that could not be captured within the narrow conception of “protest policing.” This is not to say, however, that the tactical police repertoires for structuring
protest have not shifted through adapting to the new transgressive challenges posed by summit protesters.

Being challenged in their attempt to manage confrontation, police have shifted the organization of social control along four lines, which are discussed in the next four chapters. The first shift marks the failures of confrontation management in ruling out unruly protest. In focusing on the production of “docile bodies,” authorities try to identify “disobedient bodies.” Through developing protocols for how to deal with new tactical street repertoires relying on an innovative use of bodies, police try to neutralize the unruly effects of summit protests. Police try to make protest actions predictable through biopolitical disciplinarity. The second shift occurs around the spatial effects of transgression. In their attempt to regain spatial control over the flows of summit protests, authorities increasingly focus on the preparatory phase of summit meetings. This points to the preemptive character of social control. Protest is channeled into contained spaces well separated from the isolated spaces for global hegemonic forces. The third shift marks a transition in the repertoire of communication from psychological scare tactics to spin-doctor operations. Authorities try to co-opt antisystemic dissent and prevent its circulation by maintaining the existing conditions of the production of hegemonic truth through communication management. The fourth shift concerns the legal foundation of social control. As I will demonstrate in chapter 7, emergency legislation, civil-military cooperation, and cross-border cooperation with legal prosecution and litigation are pushing a state of emergency that preempts the constitutional protection of dissent.

These shifts point to a new risk mentality, which makes risk assessment and risk management an integral part of any security operation (de Goede 2008). Risk management shifts the focus of control from avoidance of protest to the reduction of the probability of disruption to occur. Thereby, risk analysis repeatedly has to invoke “threats” to justify further measures. As Stuart Hall (1978) points out in the case of crime statistics, risk reports are often manipulated in order to create public support for the need to “police the crisis.” Unlike confrontation management, risk management exceeds the moment of a contentious event by including the preparatory phase for preemptive measures. Dupont (2004: 78) points out how the risk mentality triggers networked forms of control by creating partnerships and networks to ensure a pooling of resources and a dilution of liability, making risk both easier and more acceptable to handle. Police and other social control agencies increasingly cooperate across national borders, and new transnational agencies are founded in order to coordinate security measures and advise
national police units (Starr et al. 2011). Moreover, new nodes are created between existing agents in order to facilitate the circulation and sharing of resources (Dupont 2004: 80). The next section of this chapter presents a framework for studying the tactical interaction between “doing dissent” and “doing control.”

Tracing the Tactical

If you know the enemy and know yourself, you need not fear the result of a hundred battles. If you know yourself but not the enemy, for every victory gained you will also suffer a defeat. If you know neither the enemy nor yourself, you will succumb in every battle.

—Sun Tzu, *The Art of War*

The tactical element of interactions is not always directly accessible. In the evening before the start of the 2005 G8 summit in Scotland, I was part of an action group in a bus trying to come close to one of the blockading points of the next day. The plan was to sleep for a few hours in a forest before starting to block the access of delegations in the early morning. Just before reaching the spot that was to serve as our sleeping place, the bus was stopped by a police patrol. The nervousness in the bus accumulated into total silence. Being convinced that this meant the precocious end of our action, I listened carefully to the conversation between the police officer and the bus drivers in the front, a couple with lots of activist experience. Their experience turned into a decisive maneuver. In front of the policemen they started arguing. When the police officer asked where the bus was going the man answered “to Loch Ness.” “But that’s the other direction,” the police officers answered grinning. The male driver turned to his female companion and said, “You see, I told you before that this is the wrong direction.” Then he turned to the police officer again and said, “Excuse me sir, but you will understand me, this always happens when I listen to my wife.” We may call this tactical sexism. The police officers laughed indulgently to show their agreement, and let our bus pass.

The instrumental use of sexism in this conversation with police is perhaps a surprising move. Frequently, strategic thinking is underpinned by normative considerations. As Kaplowitz (1977) points out: “If strategic rationality does not clearly specify a course of action as desirable but normative
criteria do, people will tend to believe that the normatively desirable course of action is strategically rational." However, normative principles are often contradicted by tactical considerations. Tactical considerations require an instrumental relation between means and ends, whereas ethically motivated acting strives to integrate both. With Žižek (2005), we can say that tactical considerations point to a "political suspension of the ethical." Resisting global hegemonic forces is not something summit protesters ought to do, but what they cannot but do. Resistance is not an ethical choice, but a political one. This means that tactical considerations can exceed the ethical horizon attributed to individual motivations.

This book examines a series of interactions between police and protesters by looking at the tactical repertoires of police and summit protesters. Waddington et al. (1989) propose an integrated and relational analysis of social movements and social control by looking at the dynamics of what they call "public disorder." Fillieule and Jobard (1998: 71) propose to view street demonstrations as part of a triangular game in which the rules are prone to change during the course of the event, having three major actors: the forces of law and order, the government, and the protesters themselves. However, their triangular perspective still overlooks the fact that there are more actors playing a role in contentious street interactions: the media, corporations, NGO representatives, bystanders, the local population, and other law enforcement and security agencies. Starting with police–protester interactions, my analysis also addresses these actors where necessary in order to map the complexity of tactical considerations behind repertories of contention and control.

Della Porta and Reiter (1998: 20) recognize that the history of previous interactions with protesters is an important element shaping today's "protest policing." Other scholars point out that the development of the police reaction to disorder has been largely reactive, responding to certain experiences of street conflicts (Reiner 1998: 45; Winter 1998: 193; Tilly 1995: 39). Waves of protest therefore have important effects on the police (Reiner 1998). It comes as no surprise that police officials have come to talk about the Seattle protest in reverential terms—as a "watershed" event (Noakes et al. 2005: 241). The 1999 WTO protests in Seattle manifested protesters' capacity to disrupt global summit meetings and in this way constituted a challenge for the future organization of social control. However, not only the police learn from experience. As Reicher et al. point out (2004: 561), groups have collective memories shaping the perceived opportunities for future interactions. Protesters also evaluate the tactical effects of their interventions and try to learn from previous interventions (Opp and Roehl
1990). Therefore, this book proposes to understand tactical learning as an interactive process of tactical innovation and tactical adaptation.

This approach is inspired by the work of McAdam. In his analysis of the pace of black insurgency between 1955 and 1970 in the US, he stresses the role of tactical innovation: “The key challenge confronting insurgents, then, is to devise some way to overcome the basic powerlessness that has confined them to a position of institutionalized political impotence. The solution to this problem is preeminently tactical” (McAdam 1983: 735). He also points out what a tactical consideration has to accomplish in such a situation. Picking up the idea of Wilson (1961) about “negative inducements to bargaining,” McAdam (1983: 735) suggests that the tactical challenge is to create a situation that disrupts the normal functioning of society and is antithetical to the interests of the group’s opponents. He also points out how to prevent initial successes from being absorbed into a position of institutionalized power: continue to experiment with non-institutional forms of protest. In the case of black insurgents, however, this involved several transformations of the conflict; otherwise they would have easily been be managed and neutralized by the tactical adaptations of police and authorities. The ongoing tactical interaction in the streets is thus constituted by the processes of tactical innovation and tactical adaptation (McAdam 1983: 736). As challengers, it is protesters who have to be innovative, forcing the police to adapt. Whereas protesters have to create new dilemma situations through innovative tactical repertoires, police try to render protesters tactically impotent (McAdam 1983: 752).

Drawing on past experiences means to see both police and protesters as purposeful actors. This is to say that street interactions are predicated on tactical considerations rationalizing the way of acting. Thinking purposefully means to approach a problem tactically rather than merely in a principled way. The effectiveness of street tactics becomes a question of methodology. McPhail and McCarthy (2005: 17) contend that “both challengers and the state (or its agents) are purposive actors operating in dynamic environments which present their actions (and plans) with both opportunities and constraints, both random and deliberate.” Marshall Ganz (2004: 186) makes this clear by using the biblical story of David and Goliath. He proposes to see David’s victory as predicated on a purposeful tactical consideration involving the recontextualization of the battlefield. David transformed the battlefield into a place where he, as a shepherd, knew how to protect his flock from wolves and bears. This way, he forced the much stronger Goliath to fight the battle on his field and on his terms. David wins because he thinks about the battle differently than expected.
Antagonistic Interaction

Looking at summit protests as interaction between police and protesters, a fundamental contradiction emerges between the social movement and the protest policing literature. On the one hand, the literature on protest policing seems to suggest that the confrontation management approach has contributed to a more democratic way of controlling demonstrations and other political actions, by routinizing extra-parliamentary activity and minimizing the likelihood of disruption. On the other hand, social movement scholars have noted that action repertoires of contenders in democratic contexts need to balance between the extreme poles of political violence and conventional action. So in order to create visibility of a social conflict, they rely on disruption. This necessity of disruption contradicts the necessity of the police to minimize disruption in order to normalize protest with a negotiated management approach. Disruption means to be unpredictable, whereas the aim of negotiated management is precisely to make protest predictable. Given this, police and protesters remain antagonists, even within contexts marked by “more democratic” policing styles.

Mayne, one of the first two metropolitan police commissioners of London, admitted frankly in 1829 that the prime police function is “the preservation of public tranquillity.” Protecting the “public order” is indeed still one of the most frequently mentioned police functions. “Public order,” however, is conflated with “the established order,” which is precisely what antisystemic initiatives desire to challenge. Hence, transgressive protesters acting in the street are by definition a threat for the police trying to keep “public order.” Some theorists try to resolve this contradiction by attesting to how the police in liberal democracies must balance the need for preserving law and order with civil liberties. In this view, police should also try to guarantee that the right to dissent can be exerted. Again, however, police have proven to protect civil liberties only as long as those exerting them do not threaten what to them looks like the “public order.” So non-institutional political actions are channeled into predictable (and legalist) routines. This provokes Reicher et al. (2004: 562) to ask the following question: How do you control members of those crowds who intend to act illegally without alienating those that have legitimate aims? The way in which these authors pose this question reveals an interesting assumption that can frequently be encountered in police discourses: protesters who act illegally, or even against prior “consensus” (and therefore cause disruption) cannot have legitimate aims.
Waddington’s statement—that protest policing is intrinsically morally ambiguous—is, therefore, quite problematic. He contends that any conflict between protesters and the police tends to be a battle of moral equals in which both sides are seeking the approval of bystanders (Waddington 1998: 129). While theorists inspired by performative theories might be happy with such a view of protest as moral interaction rituals, one has to be seriously concerned about the differential access to moral capital and influence on hegemonic values. As Lipsky (1970: 1) has noted: “The influence of police on political attitudes and developments is fundamental because of the unique role of law enforcement agencies in enforcing and reinforcing the norms of the system.” This means that police are defending the hegemonic norms that dissenters try to challenge. Police and protesters, then, can hardly be called “moral equals.”

The antagonism between police and protesters on the streets is amplified through the interrelation of the police with other state authorities, such as the government, intelligence services and the judicial apparatus. Waddington (1999: 64) puts it succinctly:

Patrolling the boundaries of respectability—and thus reproducing patterns of domination and subordination, and inclusion and exclusion—is the exercise of largely invisible state power. Individual officers selectively exercise their discretion on the street under the guise of neutrally enforcing the law and keeping the peace. But the police “keep people in their place” in quite another, and much more visible, manner when they suppress overt dissent against prevailing social, political and economic conditions. Here the notion of the police as neutral and impartial enforcers of the law is exposed for the myth that it is; since their first duty becomes transparent—to protect the state, whose coercive arm they are. This exposure of the fundamental role of the police as custodians of the state’s monopoly of legitimate coercion can be revelatory . . . policing of public order exposes the tensions between state power on the one hand, and citizenship on the other.

This is important because antisystemic initiatives attempt to “contest the colonization of the ‘political’ by the state” (Routledge 1996: 1) and are thus in fundamental opposition to the state and its agencies. Della Porta and Fillieule (2004) refuse to clarify this point when they propose that police should not simply be read as an extension of the state, but must be
comprehended as actors in their own right. Clearly, police actions retain a measure of interpretative autonomy through their discretionary powers (Waddington 1998: 128). From a judicial point of view, however, deriving from Max Weber, the police appear as an armed instrument of political power. Or, as Lipsky (1970: 1) puts it: “Police may be conceived as ‘street-level bureaucrats’ who ‘represent’ government to people.”
Bodies That Matter*

The Epistemology of Street Interactions

Everything is decided on the streets! All available resources must be mobilised. We need living strength, you understand, everything depends on living strength! We need bodies.

—Walden Bello cited in Boris Kagarlitsky, “Prague 2000: The People’s Battle”

In the Dutch weekly HP De Tijd of February 1, 2008, one can find a strange picture on the third page: a bunch of clowns seem to be stuck between the legs of police officers who are forming a line to protect an anti-Islam demonstration of about 30 people on the Dam square in Amsterdam. One of the clowns happily waves his pink feather boa. The police officers seem a bit puzzled, not daring to touch the clowns crawling on the ground. How did the clowns get in this seemingly uncomfortable position? What were they trying to achieve? And why didn’t the police avoid being caught photographed in such a ridiculous position? Are the legs of police officers the new substitute for the baton charge?

I was the clown with the feather boa. What I was trying to achieve in this moment, together with a few other activists from Rebelact (an Amsterdam-based street intervention group), was to break through the police

*Bodies That Matter is the title of a book by Judith Butler (1993). Whereas Butler sees performativity as the daily enactment of sex/gender creating normal and abject bodies, this chapter looks at how bodies matter as a contested site of struggle in the contestation of global hegemonic forces. Playing with heteronormative assumptions may also be important here, but mainly from a tactical viewpoint.
cordon around the anti-Islam demonstration in order to hug and congratulate the demonstrators. Never before have I been so close to police officers without being beaten up. Still, it was a bit strange to be stuck between their legs, especially since I had no intention of leaving, but rather of moving forward if possible. They also did not really push us away; neither did they hit any of us in a significant way, not even when three of us finally broke through. Assuming the body of a clown, we had somehow transformed into untouchables.

Interaction of protesters with police creates a moment for bodily experience and learning. During street interactions the body becomes a pedagogical instrument for reflecting the power relations implied by and established via these interactions. The bodily experiences I want to consider here constitute a “pedagogy of the oppressed” (Thompson 2006) unleashed through the moment of confrontation and provide a starting point for mapping the functioning of control and contestation in the streets. As one of the founders of the Clandestine Insurgent Rebel Clown Army in the UK remarked to me, “spontaneous upheavals are pedagogic moments for the long-term.” This chapter examines bodies as tactical instruments for street interactions and as methodological devices for understanding the workings of power in such a context.

By following the bodies of protesters and police through such a series of confrontations, I unveil the epistemological premises upon which the tactical applications of bodies are predicated. Using the body for confrontation provides a moment of clarification as to how global hegemonic forces can be effectively challenged by a non-representational engagement of bodies in the streets. I call this engagement non-representational here because it is not captured by an institutionalized political actor; it is unpredictable, it is about doing itself, and not about the “being” of a stable identity. The antagonism of global power relations becomes visible via the epistemological practices of the bodies of police and protesters. Therefore, the often colored bodies of protesters matter.

Docile Bodies

Although cognitive practices are a crucial aspect of social protest (Eyerman & Jamison 1991), approaches focused on ideas, framing, and discourses easily reproduce the Cartesian mind-body division. In focusing on the body as a contested site of struggle, this chapter offers an analysis of the embodiment of protest (and control). Bodies are tools for tactical learning in two senses: first, through bodies protesters make concrete experiences of the
tensions between disruption and control during protest events. Secondly, lessons taken from these experiences may translate in new tactics for using bodies in a way better equipped to evade police control. This embodiment of protest (and control) exemplifies how confrontational moments can serve as a “pedagogy of the oppressed” (Thompson 2006). Any embodiment of protest lays bare a certain epistemology of street tactics.

In order to prepare international activists for the G8 protests in Germany, the Gipfelsoli Infogruppe made an English-language PowerPoint presentation available on the Internet with information about German police tactics, laws, and the rights of protesters. One slide sums up what is normally forbidden during demonstrations:

It is forbidden: to disguise or to take objects with you that might be used for impeding identification; to protect oneself passively against police measures or to carry body protection, shields or gas masks with you; to carry normal sandwich knives with you; to carry penknives, sticks, and in Berlin even to wear boots with steel toecaps.

The slide concludes with the following warning:

What is considered an insulting or criminal badge often depends on the individual police officer. If one of the forbidden objects is found during preventive controls, this can result in immediate detention. For every demonstration there are conditions determined by the police that even may arrange the length of banners and banner sticks.

This type of “protocols” used for the regulation of demonstrations aim at the creation of a certain “protest life.” They testify as to the protest behavior the police desire. Nevertheless, Gipfelsoli deemed it important to inform about these police practices in order to stimulate more control-critical actions in the streets.

The conditions that were finally imposed by police on the international demonstration against the 2007 ASEM summit in Hamburg even exceeded these mentioned conditions. In addition to imposing a maximum length of banners, a total ban of side banners, and a maximum amount of people being allowed to walk in one row, the police announced that it would be forbidden to jump. These police interventions for controlling a protest event clearly demonstrate how police wish to regulate bodies of protesters into “docile bodies.”
The experiences of the anti-ASEM demonstration in Hamburg led to a new demonstration concept for a march against control and security in December 2007. The concept was called “Out of control,” which, by staying mobile in small groups, called for serious attempts not to be caught up within the police lines. The police answer to this concept was to forbid walking on the sidewalks, reserving this space for police to be able to surround the demonstration.

Police regulation of protesters’ bodies relies very much on protocols. As do many hierarchical organizations, police try to establish standardized procedures for dealing with identifiable problems. During disruptive summit protests, it is the absence of protocols regulating the treatment of protesters’ bodies in such instances that is critical. For protocols rely on the identification of these specific uses of bodies in order to channel interaction with them into predictability. So identification emerges as a crucial part of the social and regulatory control of unpredictable bodies.

In *Discipline and Punish*, Foucault (1977a) calls this the creation of “docile bodies.” In contrast to classical theories of sovereign power predicated on the right to rule concerning life and death, that is, the right to kill (Foucault 2004: 240–241), disciplinary forms of power drill and manipulate bodies in order to internalize through constant regulation the expected behavior. Having its roots in monasteries and the army, discipline orders the functioning of bodies. Functional redistribution of time and space makes bodies productive for certain activities. “Docile bodies” have internalized this discipline and conform to the constraints that are imposed through these regulatory interventions. Foucault (2007: 57) calls this process “normalization.” Surprisingly, his analysis of the creation of “docile bodies” is widely used for analyzing disciplinary power in institutional settings, but rarely for the working of power in non-institutional settings, such as protest events. Despite its apparent relevance, the literature on disciplinary forms of control has not been applied to the study of street interactions between police and protesters. The street as a contested site of struggle, however, has increasingly been transformed into a context for disciplinary forms of normalization. The normalization of protest relies on the creation of “docile bodies.”

**Disobedient Bodies**

The anecdote I opened this chapter with illustrates how protesters attempt to use their bodies in innovative ways in order to surprise and disrupt
their opponents. During the mobilization process in preparation for the G8 summit in Heiligendamm, an experienced activist instigated a discussion by claiming that the street tactics of protesters have not changed during the past decennia. Looking at the innovative street tactics being introduced during summit protests, however, one may wonder how the activist came to such a conclusion. Throughout all the summit protests, protesters have found many creative ways for remaining unpredictable for authorities. Summit protesters now use their bodies in new, challenging ways in order to accomplish blockades, sieges, and intrusions during summit meetings. Like Rebelact, they create dilemmas for the police, in which any response might have consequences contradicting the purpose of control. This is what I call “disobedient bodies.”

Whereas Foucault focuses on the body as a target of social control and discipline, more recent (feminist) theories suggest that the body is a subject that creates meaning, performs social action (Butler 1993; 1990), and, therefore, can be used for subversion and self-empowerment (Davis 1997). Butler shows how bodies that are non-intelligible from the traditional gender-sex matrix can powerfully challenge that matrix through mimesis: imitation that nevertheless changes what it repeats. Protesters have used similar tactics to challenge the control matrix during summit meetings and to remain non-intelligible from a police perspective. However, whereas feminist scholarship often focuses on the subversive power of individual bodies, the effects of “collective bodies,” such as protesters acting together, has received little attention.

The use of bodies is crucial to many street tactics, more so for civil disobedience and direct action. Nevertheless there are few studies looking at how these disobedient bodies actually function in the street. Whereas attention is given to the body as subject matter of the protest, little is known about the body as carrier for protest, such as the Mother of Plaza de Mayo in Argentina, the anti-apartheid Black Sash in South Africa, and the Greenham Common Women in England (Sasson-Levy and Rapoport 2003: 398). A number of studies consider bodies as part of an oppositional performance that creates representation in dramatic (and ritualized) form (Eyerman 2006; McAdam 1996; Johnston & Klandermans 1995; Benford & Hunt 1992). Performances create a collective self-presentation addressed to various audiences (see Goffman 1956). However, the functioning of bodies in these performances is a frequently neglected aspect. The embodiment of social protest differs significantly depending on the presentation of the body involved in the action (Sasson-Levy and Rapoport 2003). Peterson (2001) analyzes how “the militant body” is constructed through political
communication in radical social movements in Sweden, and Chesters and Welsh (2004) consider how the different tactical approaches at the 2000 IMF/WB protests contributed to the framing of global movements.

What the focus on expressivity in street interactions often fails to take into account is the tactical considerations behind specific uses of the bodies for contestation, thereby negating the desire to achieve something more than mere ritualized performance. Although the expressive dimension plays a crucial role in the action forms of summit protesters (and police), the tactical considerations behind expressive forms are my focus. In so doing, I offer not only an understanding of how bodies constitute a contested site of struggle during summit protests, but also how these tactical repertoires of police and protesters have influenced each other during a series of summit protests. The bodies of protesters can be understood as an entry into the study of the contestation of disciplinary control.

Bodies are not only disciplined as a locus of social control. They are also a means for challenging social control and disciplinary power. Protesters imprisoned during the 2009 protests against the UN climate summit in Copenhagen highlight the use of bodies for contestation:

We prefer to enter the space where the power is locked dancing and singing. We would have liked to do this at the Bella center [the conference site of the UN climate conference], to disrupt the session in accord with hundreds of delegates. But we were, as always, violently hampered by the police. They arrested our bodies in an attempt to arrest our ideas. We risked our bodies, trying to protect them just by staying close to each other. We value our bodies: We need them to make love, to stay together and to enjoy life. They hold our brains, with beautiful bright ideas and views. They hold our hearts filled with passion and joy. Nevertheless, we risked them. We risked our bodies getting locked in prisons. In fact, what would be the worth of thinking and feeling if the bodies did not move? Doing nothing, letting-it-happen, would be the worst form of complicity with the business that wanted to hack the UN meeting. At the COP15 we moved, and we will keep moving. (From an email sent to the “climate09-international” E-list on December 31, 2009)

As we will see in the following account of action repertoires and street tactics that have emerged around summit protests, the body has become a crucial site not only for control, but also for staging contentious interventions. Summit protests provide a moment for de-normalizing bodies. To be sure,
summit protests are not the only moments by which bodies resist the normalization of protest and dissent. However, they constitute an excellent case for studying how these disobedient bodies contest global hegemonic forces.

A Color Guide through the Epistemology of Street Tactics

In the following sections, I focus on four street tactics that have emerged recursively during summit protests: the tactics of the Tute Bianche, Pink & Silver, the Clandestine Insurgent Rebel Clown Armies (CIRCA), and black blocs. The “blue” bodies of the police are then opposed to the “white” (Tute Bianche), “pink” (Pink & Silver and CIRCA), and “black” (black blocs) bodies of protesters. Each group follows a different logic of using bodies for either control or contestation. Far from providing an exhaustive account of all street tactics used during summit protests, I chose instead the use of bodies in these four tactics because each contributed to an innovation in the tactical repertoire of summit protesters. This color guide through the epistemology of street interactions is, at the same time, a critical investigation of my own wardrobe, my own bodily functioning during street interactions. In the past years, I have participated in each of the action forms of summit protesters presented here. Looking in my wardrobe, I started to wonder what causes protesters to “arm” their bodies with white overalls, medieval shields, pink feather dusters, silver gloves, red noses, or black hoodies? Each color reveals a distinct epistemological practice predicated on the body as a contested site of struggle during summit protests.

The Epistemology of White: A Rebellion of Bodies by an “Army of Dreamers”

We are an army of dreamers, this is why we are invincible.

—Associazione Ya Basta, “The Age of Clandestinity”

On the 26th of September 2000 one could witness a bizarre scene on the Nuselski Bridge in Prague. Several hundred people padded up and dressed in white overalls carrying a huge shield of balloons face several lines of heavily geared riot police blocking the bridge. Behind the police line are two armored vehicles, followed by a row of police cars, trucks, and minibuses along the whole width of the bridge. Between the police and this Michelin-man-like phalanx of white bodies stands one of the persons dressed in white overalls, announcing the following:
We are not armed, we are acting as citizens, putting our persons at risk, in order to demonstrate that the democracy of the IMF and the WB is tanks and armed police. We are not criminals, they are suppressing citizens exercising their rights. We want to show that it is possible to rebel against the order using our bodies as weapons. (Quoted in Ramirez Cuevas 2000)

Then the same person starts a countdown after which the white bodies start to storm toward the police line with the balloon shield in order to push through. The police line, however, resists the attack. Several more “attacks,” carried out in the same disciplined manner, follow, but the police line seems invincible.

**Emergence of White Bodies**

The protests against the annual 2000 IMF and WB meeting in Prague marked the first appearance of the Tute Bianche (Italian for “white overalls”) at an international protest event. They had already gained widespread attention with their tactical interventions throughout Italy. But why white overalls? It all seems to have started as a coincidence when squatters in Milan decided in 1994 to make a parody of the mayor’s statement during the announcement of the eviction of an important social center, the Leoncavallo. The mayor had threatened that within a short time the squatter movement would be no more than the shim of a ghost. Mimetically picking this up, squatters dressed up in white overalls and a night of turmoil followed (Notes from Nowhere 2003: 112). After this, though the white overalls did not reappear for quite some time, other important processes of networking took place: a strong Ya Basta network in solidarity with the Zapatista uprising in Mexico emerged in Italy, which is closely related to the network of well-organized squatted social centers that exist throughout Italy, especially in the northern part. This also resulted in the “Carta of Milano,” a proposal for a network between all Italian social centers, again very much influenced by the ideas and the rhetoric of the Mexican Zapatistas.3

Slogans found in many publications and statements of this Italian network emblematically encapsulate the Zapatistas’ redefinition of a revolutionary process: “Our weapons are words,” “walking we ask questions,” and “we want a world containing many worlds.” Each emphasizes open-endedness, diversity, and symbolic militancy. One was “who wants to talk, has to rebel,” which inspired the Tute Bianche’s strategy of creating conflict in order to start a discussion in society about what they considered fun-
damental problems in neoliberal capitalism. One participant of the Tute Bianche remarks: “‘Words are weapons’ does not mean that we are to speak only words, rather, it means that we have to rise up in order to speak.”

Crucial for understanding the eventual reemergence of white overalls as an explicit tactical resource for using bodies during street interventions, is this slogan: “We wear masks in order to become visible,” which was the Zapatistas’ explanation for the use of the archetypical balaclava.

Very much aware of the specific political context in which they were working, the Tute Bianche did more than just reproduce the tools and symbols of the Zapatistas:

This essential aspect of the political scene—communication and strategies for access to communication—make it necessary to examine the forms of attack that are best suited to this objective. If the balaclava in the south east [sic] of Mexico corresponds to the strategy of the people of Chiapas for becoming visible in the eyes of the world, the white overalls are an adaptation of the lesson learnt, and more appropriate to Europe: we cover our faces to make ourselves visible and so that we can uncover them when we have ensured our survival; we cover our bodies in order to emerge from the limbo of outdated categories in the organisation of production and to defend the rights of people who no longer accept their position as central to the production system but marginal in terms of general visibility.

Two central demands in the first Tute Bianche interventions were “citizen rights” (such as a basic income) and “freedom of movement for all” (Montagna 2010). The latter led to the first intervention in 1998, when the Tute Bianche collectively entered a migrant detention center in Trieste accompanied by a mob of journalists. The reports about the conditions inside this detention center led to its immediate closure. In April 1999, the Tute Bianche attempted to storm a NATO airport in Aviano that was used for the bombings during the Kosovo war. In January 2000, another demonstration took place against a detention center, this time in Via Corelli in Milan, which was also temporarily closed down after the intervention. In May 2000, the Tute Bianche staged a siege of a neo-Nazi congress in Bologna that was then canceled. After these major interventions, the Tute Bianche went to the 2001 Prague summit in order to join global protest by occupying an entire train, and conveying their demand for free transport and free movement of people as citizen rights.
The Tute Bianche consistently provide three reasons for their practice of wearing white overalls. First, clearly inspired by the Zapatista statement just mentioned, the color white as the color of ghosts signifies invisibility, which, according to the Tute Bianche, relates to the invisibility of many subjects excluded by neoliberal policies, such as undocumented migrants, unprotected workers, among others. By wearing white overalls collectively, they want to expose the invisibility of these subjects. Overalls were chosen to invoke an association with the blue-collar workers (tute blu in Italian), the supposed revolutionary subject in Fordist capitalism. Second, clearly influenced by the recent work of Hardt and Negri, the Tute Bianche also argued that post-Fordism has delivered a new revolutionary subject, resulting from the decentralization of the production process and the increase of the cognitive labor sector, which is largely unprotected in European countries. The revolutionary subject of the non-factory-based worker was at the core of what Hardt and Negri call “the Multitude,” symbolized by the Tute Bianche with their mass appearances of white bodies. Chiara, one participant of the Tute Bianche, explains that, as the traditional labor movement has taken to the streets with their labor tools as symbols—the hammer and the sickle—the Tute Bianche would use their tools for street conflict: they expose their bodies and brains, but in a protected way. Third, the color white was chosen for the fact that it is a collection of all possible colors, and therefore symbolizes the diversity of subjectivities included in the Multitude, as well as the diversity of possible worlds (as opposed to the unitarian epistemology of neoliberal capitalism). Embracing diversity, the Tute Bianche deny that their overalls are an expression of identity: “Actually some people who wear the white overall may mistake it for a ‘uniform,’ but they’re utterly wrong. The white overall is not an identity, it is a tool. One shouldn’t even say ‘I’m a white overall,’ the correct phrase should be: ‘I wear a white overall.’” How then does the white overall function as a tool for street interventions?

Active Civil Disobedience

The tactic of the Tute Bianche aims to reintroduce conflict into the street and the public discussion. As Luca Casarini, one of their spokespersons, suggests, “without conflict there is no hope of a different world.” With this goal, the Tute Bianche always tie the idea of conflict to initiating communication with the wider networks of civil society:

The main objective for us was to bring into civil society the idea that there was conflict and there will always be conflict. It wasn't
just raising the issue of conflict—it was also raising the issue of creating greater consensus amongst people. We have learnt a lot from the Zapatistas, the idea of spreading yourself out and increasing the range of consensus you obtain. So one of the things that we developed is the concept of civil disobedience—bringing together and raising the idea of conflict, but also trying to get a degree of consensus at the same time.10

The Tute Bianche emerged in a context within which many activists in Italy were realizing the limitations of confrontational clashes with the police. The escalation of social conflicts during the 1970s had resulted in a harsh wave of repression against progressive forces in Italy. Several thousand people were imprisoned during the 1980s. During the early 1990s, many activists in Italy wanted to avoid getting caught in the vicious circle of violence and counter-violence. Therefore, they thought about a form of visualizing social conflicts that would leave no doubt about their intentions and would clearly show which side perpetrates violence. Padded activists equipped with inner tubes, Plexiglas shields, and balloons manifested their will to enter migrants’ detention centers or G8 summits, but at the same time made clear that their protection was theatrically self-defensive. The Tute Bianche confronted global capitalism and state power by establishing an image of an antagonistic relationship with their adversaries. The main purpose was to avoid the logic of confrontation employed by the police by refusing active armament and using shielded bodies as protection from police violence. In this way, it became possible to use bodies to push through police lines. The shielded bodies unraveled the logic of power embodied in the blue bodies of the police that precipitate a conflict into a war (Luca Casarini in Notes from Nowhere 2003: 112).

On the one hand, the protection underlines the protesters’ determination to disrupt; on the other hand, it marks their bodies as fragile tools when exposed to police, but also Nazi violence. Inspired by the Tute Bianche, the author of the booklet “Bodyhammer” Sarin (2006: 1) explains: “Our method is self-defence. We march with a mission and should those in power order others to stop us, we have a right to defend our bodies as much as our message.” The Tute Bianche relate their tactic to the tradition of civil disobedience, stressing that they implement a novel form of it, because, until now, self-protection has not been considered legitimate within this tradition. Their active civil disobedience is combined with transparency in order to enable mass participation. The Tute Bianche announced their actions beforehand, clarifying their goals, intentions, methods, and even materials to be used. This meant that both fellow protesters and police could know exactly
what to expect. This transparency enabled the Tute Bianche to radicalize the traditional form of a demonstration without losing mass participation. That is, the aim was clearly to establish social conflict without, however, giving the police the chance to push the conflict along a military logic of war.11

Humor plays a central role in the transformation of street conflict by the Tute Bianche. Together with Jan Willem Duyvendak (2009), I introduce the notion of “having/making fun” for pointing out the overlapping functions in repertoires of action of having fun while making fun of authorities. The having/making fun by the Tute Bianche combines expressive with instrumental aspects of humor. The appearance of a shielded and protected mass body is an ironic play on the image of a military formation. While it may initially appear as a militarily organized clash, the Tute Bianche betray this expectation: hundreds of people dressed as the Michelin tire man run toward police lines to get clubbed. Because the Tute Bianche do not wish to follow the anticipated lines of a clash with the police, they create grotesque moments of confrontation that lay bare the asymmetrical power of police and protestors and reveal the violent character of controlling dissent. While sticking to the tactical goal of intruding into or occupying a certain space, they ridicule the military style of traditional confrontations. The protestors thereby ridicule their own militancy as well. This becomes visible from looking at the individual bodies of the Tute Bianche: the impression of an army of white bodies vanishes when one notices attributes such as tiny guitars worn above the far-too-big and padded-up overalls. In 2001, the Tute Bianche declared: “The people who wear the white overalls are consciously ridiculous, and that’s the point. When they cease to be funny, the movement will need another tool.”12 This attitude has crystallized in a salute I observed frequently with the Tute Bianche before they clashed with police lines: a provocatively raised little finger, inviting them to “come on and break it.”

The Political Grammar of a Protected Mass Body

Although confrontation is transformed into a grotesque clash with the police, the tools used by the Tute Bianche are tactically sensible. Sarin (2006) gives a comprehensive account of the passive armament used for active civil disobedience and makes clear how its application is inspired by medieval and ancient fighting tactics. The first thing mentioned is different shield types. Sarin points out how the choice for one type or another depends on construction (and the difficulties involved), concealment (for getting the shields to the site of action), the type of action, and the materials at hand. The booklet also points out the variety of materials that can
be used for constructing shields: garbage cans, barrels, inflatable materials, cardboard, soft foam, Plexiglas, or hard foam. Whereas in the beginning the Tute Bianche often used larger constructions of either balloons or inner tubes next to individual shields, shortly before Genoa they started to use stable Plexiglas shields on wheels that covered the entire front row of a march.

Sarin’s booklet suggests that effective self-protection is predicated on a whole series of considerations about the moves of the opponent, the various parts of one’s body (and their vulnerability) involved, and the possible interaction needed with the rest of the protesters. Similar to the police, the white body relies on good coordination and, therefore, on prior training. Maybe, paradoxically, the Tute Bianche needed discipline to create a “disobedient” mass body. Shield wall formations, for example, trained to walk in unison, required clear and simple commands known by everyone. The goal of a tight “mass body” involves not only an effectively organized moment of confrontation, but also the avoidance of intrusion by police.

The Tute Bianche’s street tactics use the body as the central tool for protesters. This is why self-protection is emphasized. The mass organization of protected bodies was crucial for the repertoires both of the blockade and the siege that were employed during summit protests. In the first moment of confrontation, it deprived police of powerful tactical weapons in response to transgressive actions, namely, to attack the bodies of protesters, or to neutralize them by arrest. As the Tute Bianche argue in one of their “consultas” (consultation) issued before the protests in Genoa against the G8 summit:

The body is back as a concrete symbol of civil disobedience and a paradigm of the “biopolitical” era, which is based upon corporate control on life itself. During the siege, the body can be protected by a communication process and other bodies sheltering it from the storming platoons of cops. There lies the new logic: since the cops aim at butchering the bodies, throwing them into a jail, beheading direct action so it becomes both unpopular and useless, we aim at keeping them off so that the siege can go on till a breach is opened and the bodies can pass through.13

Although the Tute Bianche invoke the image of a militarized army, they immediately turn this image upside down by appearing as a protected mass body. Judith Revel (in Ramirez Cuevas 2000) refers to a new political grammar introducing conflict while transforming the very idea of militarized confrontation through its altered imitation. Using their bodies, the Tute Bianche
created conflict in order to become visible. Through the coordinated efforts to overcome police lines, it was the “mass body” that appeared invincible. The tactics of the Tute Bianche started from the reappropriation of the body in order to make different forms of social life possible and tangible. The rebellious bodies of an “army of dreamers” (see epigraph to this section) surpassed the “docile” bodies of the disciplinary paradigm.

From Prague to Genoa: The Dead End of Civil Disobedience

If Prague showed the practical limitations of active civil disobedience as practiced by the Tute Bianche, Genoa proved that this army was not at all invincible. Already during the 2001 EU protests in Gothenburg, authorities resorted to preemptive tactics for controlling these disobedient bodies. In response to the police raid of the Hvitfeldtska School (which was granted by the municipality for a convergence center for activists connected to European Ya Basta networks that announced a padded intrusion of the conference site of the EU summit), the Ya Basta network abstained from the practice of padding for the next day’s march. Protesters dressed in white overalls without further protection and a white cross taped on their mouths, symbolizing the authorities’ attempt to silence dissent. The image of this march exposed the vulnerability of bodies in white overalls.

Only one month later on the 19th of July 2001, the Tute Bianche attracted several thousand protesters to the Carlini Stadium in Genoa as active civil disobedience was prepared to intrude into the red zone around the G8 conference site. In order to avoid a vanguard function or a specific identitarian position during the much broader protests, the decision was made to renounce the white overalls. The disobedient bodies of the Tute Bianche did not want to be differentiated from other protesters using other forms of civil disobedience and direct action:

One of the reasons for the emergence of the Tute Bianche was to give a voice to those who were invisible in a moment when there was no movement from below in Italy that was demanding social rights. However, in Genoa this multitude was visible, i.e., at this point, the Tute Bianche were no longer a mechanism with which to give a voice to those who are invisible, but it was more identitarian, which was different to the other protesters. That’s why in Genoa, the Tute Bianche took off their white overalls in order to dissolve into the multitude.14
As with all their actions, the Tute Bianche announced their intentions of a siege of the G8 summit, of a symbolic intrusion into the red zone. During a public press conference ahead of the protests, they presented all the “weapons” they were going to use—equipment not illegal in Italy for protest—in order to cut the fence around the red zone. In the months preceding the protests, they issued several communiqués. While declaring their firm opposition to the G8, the Tute Bianche offered a pact of collective self-defense to the inhabitants of Genoa in order to gain their support for the violation of the red zone. Italian police were, however, evidently determined to escalate the confrontation with disobedient bodies into a strategy of war with face-to-face street fighting.

The practice of active civil disobedience, intended to prevent being trapped in the militarized strategy of war and to force the opponent to accept the presence of protesters’ (protected) bodies, was hijacked by a militarized police force that used its power over life and death, not in order to create “docile” bodies,” but in order to punish those that were not. Federico Martelloni reflects on the limitations of the civil disobedience approach:

Civil disobedience was political and not military . . . the political mechanism consisted of making public in advance what was going to happen. This determined the terrain of conflict. You knew it was body against body, and that you could be stopped and beaten up. But what happened in Genoa, that comrades feared for their lives, that the Carabinieri shot at demonstrators and that there was so much tear gas . . . that wasn't something that people reckoned with. The state decided not to respond politically, but purely in military terms. The state terminated the first global cycle of struggles with a global declaration of war. It prefigured what happened after 9/11, which was to close off the political level and to descend to the level of war as an instrument for order, as the only form of legitimation for the brutality of imperial force.15

Genoa marks the precocious end of the Tute Bianche. Partly because of concerns raised in the Carlini Stadium related to the identitarian role the white overalls could achieve, and partly because of the experience with the police clashes, the Tute Bianche decided to leave the white overalls for good, and to transform their networks into “il disobbedienti” (Italian for “the disobedients”). At the same time, by extending disobedience from street protest to the daily life of society, they started to articulate the idea of “social disobedience”
as a broader practice than “civil disobedience” (Montagna 2010). In this context, disobedience becomes non-confrontational direct action. Although not during subsequent summit protests analyzed for this research, padded (but not white) bodies have reappeared in various European countries and for various purposes: defending and seizing a squat, protecting migrants and anti-Nazi rallies, radicalizing May Day rallies, or for attempting to enter important meetings. Active civil disobedience circulated via the 2000 IMF/WB protests in Prague to the 2004 protests against the lies of the Aznar government about the terrorist attacks in Spain (Iglesias Turrión 2008) and reappeared during the 2009 UN climate summit protests in Copenhagen.

The Epistemology of Pink: A Carnival of “Barmy Armies”

But carnival brings the body back to public space.

–Notes from Nowhere, We Are Everywhere: The Irresistible Rise of Global Anti-Capitalism

Like white bodies, pink bodies appeared for the first time at an international protest event, namely, at the 2000 IMF/WB protests in Prague. However, unlike white bodies, pink bodies have remained present until the 2007 G8 summit protests in Heiligendamm. During the second day of blockades, at this action one could observe a small group of unconventional samba players in pink dresses blocking an intersection in Bad Doberan, close to the red zone. Playing samba rhythms with their instruments, they did not stay on the road, but moved around constantly, staying between cars for a while, only in order to retreat again to the side of the road. In order to perform this act, the group did not stay together all the time, but remained dispersed. This operation did not stop traffic on this busy intersection, but slowed it down significantly. It became all the more hilarious when a long row of police busses attempted to pass. Though police officers tried to move the samba players from the road, they did not really dare to treat these protesters in pink skirts in hard-handed ways. The police seemed to be overtaxed with the samba band entering the road again and again after being pushed away. Still, the police cars could continue on their way after a few minutes—probably to clear a blockade somewhere nearby.

Compared to Prague, this is quite a different picture. One of the four marches that made its way from Namesti Miru Square in order to encircle the IMF/WB summit was called “Pink & Silver.” This is because many of the several thousand protesters who participated in this march had dressed
up in pink and silver costumes. Accompanied by a cheerful samba band, the front banner of this march contained just one word: “Samba.” The group taking the lead had prepared some cheerleading steps and chanted feminist and anticapitalist slogans while performing their steps. When coming across the first police line blocking their way, the cheerleaders moved right in front of them while going on with their performance. Meanwhile, other protesters tried to remove the small barriers in front of the police line. After some pushing and shoving and the police being subsequently replaced by riot police, the march decided to try another route. In the end, the Pink & Silver march was the only one to arrive at the conference center.

Introduced by a group of British activists during the protests in Prague, Pink & Silver is a street tactic that usually involves a bloc dressed in glamorous pink and silver clothes, chanting and performing cheerleading steps accompanied by a samba band. It has been used in every summit protest since Prague, with participants ranging from dozens to thousands. However, the epistemology of the color pink is related to another street tactic: the Clandestine Insurgent Rebel Clown Army (CIRCA). CIRCA was especially active during the protests against the G8 in Scotland in 2005 and in Germany in 2007. In both cases, between 200 and 300 activists were trained in basic clowning techniques, dressed in army clothes and clown wigs with made-up faces. The clown army is composed of small groups (called gaggles) that can operate autonomously during actions. Both street tactics have in common that they are not predicated on one single concept but, rather, employ a pool of elements and traditions. I analyze the epistemology of pink bodies here by touching upon the various elements that appear in both street tactics.

**Emergence of Pink Bodies**

In order to understand pink bodies, we must start with the street tactics of Reclaim the Streets (RTS), influenced by the experiences of the anti-road movements in Great Britain during the 1990s (McKay 1998; Notes from Nowhere 2003). These tactics were as simple as they were effective and merged political activism with the rave party (sub)culture of that time. Instead of calling for road blockades, activists organized street raves. Immense parties of up to 40,000 people would descend onto development sites to interrupt the construction of roads. In so doing, RTS made joy and pleasure the center of an embodied way of doing politics. RTS can be seen as a clear example of creating moments where streets are liberated from their conventional purposes and turned into places for coming together for
festivity and joy: “The ‘road’ had been turned into a ‘street,’ a street like none other, a street which provided a rare glimpse of utopia, a kind of temporary microcosm of a truly liberated, ecological culture” (Jordan 2002: 350).

Summit protests between 1999 and 2001 have often been called “carnivals against capitalism” (see for example Notes from Nowhere 2003: 175). This was a—sometimes conscious—reference to Bakhtin’s interpretation of the medieval carnival as a moment where all social protocols and hierarchies are put upside down (Bakhtin 1984). This is also captured quite well by Tony Blair’s metonymical reference to the summit protestors as the “Travelling Anarchist Circus” (in Graeber 2007b: 388). The carnival atmosphere is itself a tactical idea that, through a joyful intervention, aims to create a temporary break with the accepted social order:

The unpredictability of carnival with its total subservience to spontaneity, where any individual can shape her environment and transform herself into another being for an hour or a day, ruptures what we perceive to be reality. It creates a new world by subverting all stereotypes, daring imaginations to expand their limits, turning the present world upside down, if only for a moment. (Notes from Nowhere 2003: 175)

“Participate, don’t spectate” was a slogan that emblematically encapsulates one of the main ideas of street parties and tactical carnivals: carnival contradicts the idea of experts and opens a space for horizontal participation. Protesters are encouraged to participate on their own terms:

The road became a stage for a participatory ritual theater: ritual because it is efficacious, it produces real effects by means of symbolic causes; participatory because the street party has no division between performer and audience, it is created by and for everyone . . . it is experienced in the immediate moment by all, in the spirit of face-to-face subversive comradeship. (Jordan 2002: 347)

Reclaim the Streets, Pink & Silver, and the Clandestine Insurgent Rebel Clown Army stress that they want to provide a context in which people enjoy participating in radical resistance. Accounts of their interventions often highlight the fact that boundaries between actor and spectator, thus between producer and consumer, collapse during these interventions. This way, protesters also attempt to prefigure a different world in a nutshell (see Scholl 2011a). However, whereas CIRCA clearly invokes an “audience” dur-
ing their actions (whether this be police, politicians, bystanders, journalists, or fellow protesters), Pink & Silver actions can also function without.

Another compelling feature of tactical carnival is the focus on the here and now, the acceptance of temporariness, both of which are encapsulated in the orientation toward “moments.” George McKay (1996: 5–6) claims this orientation toward temporary disruption as the central feature of contemporary UK activist street interventions, and detects an aversion against strategic coherence. The act itself is championed as a revolutionary moment so that temporariness becomes an intrinsic value of street interventions: “Note that what might normally be ascribed as a sign of failure—impermanence—is in this anarchist philosophy celebrated as a symptom of ubiquity” (McKay 1996: 8). The promise of ubiquity points to the anticipation of many cracks in the system adding up to revolutionary change (Holloway 2005: 39). This promise is most clearly articulated in Hakim Bey’s T.A.Z: The Temporary Autonomous Zone, Ontological Anarchy, Poetic Terrorism (2004), which portrays 18th-century pirate archipelagos as exemplary temporary utopian communities. In short, ubiquity is redefined here as the potential to mushroom anywhere in any moment.

**Pink Feathers and Red Noses**

At first glance, the dresses of Pink & Silver give a rather vulnerable impression. Picking up the practice of cross-dressing, Pink & Silver protesters dress in a style that makes them look queer or at least rather female. As stated in an evaluation of this tactic, “Pink & Silver activists have so far mainly relied on costumes which are usually at home in the pink-plush glitter world of the queer spectacle.” Pink and silver skirts and bras are often supplemented with boas, fancy gloves, and feather dusters. The Pink & Silver tactic of cross-dressing is a concrete expression of denying and subverting conventional gender roles and expectations, but relates to a broader critique of gender relations, as expressed in the Genoa slogan “no machos, no heroes, no martyrs”:

If cross-dressing wants to be political, it asks for something bigger: only when gender, body and desire (including patriarchal relations of power) are deconstructed and attacked as social constructs of power (that is when cross-dressing only plays the role of making political criticism perceptible on a personal level) Pink & Silver is queer. Because to be queer is more than the criticism of patriarchal circumstances. Rather to be queer means to radically question
everything that the every-day-knowledge passes off as normal or natural: genders, capital, ethnicity/race, nations, Germany etc. 21

The subversion of bodily stereotypes is pushed further by using the practice of cheerleading, ordinarily connected to an affirmation of bodily gender roles, for confrontational street actions by overtly exposing bodies. Ultimately, the pink (and silver) dresses constitute a disarming tactical instrument that exploits the gender stereotypes of the police as well, and therefore, indirectly, serves as protection. A Pink & Silver group from the UK makes the police dilemma clear: “To try to arrest or assault a frivolously attired musical group when it is such a positive, popular and inclusive force, becomes difficult in the extreme.” 22

The connotation of pink being a “fluffy” color in order to disguise more “spiky” intentions upsets police expectations about protesters’ behavior based on protesters’ clothing (Farrer 2002) and thus creates a dilemma for authorities. Also protective about these costumes is the security offered by a “uniform” (as we will see with black bodies as well). Wearing the same colors, Pink & Silver protesters are fairly well disguised and so not easily singled out of a crowd.

Pink & Silver actions are mostly accompanied by samba bands with tunes influenced by Afro Bloc parading drum bands that emerged in the mid-70s in Brazil. The instruments are often self-built and protesters take into consideration that the instruments cannot be too heavy to carry around for hours in the streets. To be able to play together, samba groups have to train and coordinate their bodies. Hand signals play an important role in the communication process of both samba bands and cheerleaders that often needs to be quick in response to changing circumstances on the street. If well trained in playing and marching together, a Pink & Silver samba band adopts certain military connotations, which contradicts their outer appearance: “We become a subversive version, a circus parody of the uniformed military marching bands that accompany regiments into battle.” 23

The two elements of dancing and drumming, however, can also have a detrimental effect on the tactical operation of pink bodies. A dancing crowd is not easy to coordinate and does not always move and react quickly enough. This becomes clear in this critical evaluation of the Prague summit protests: “Likewise we were not as effective a fighting column as we might have been because all the dancing people in their carnival costumes and the drum-laden samba band couldn’t move fast enough for us to really skirt around the police and swiftly seize tactical opportunities when they presented themselves.” 24

Another risk is that pink bodies become reduced to their expressive function in the public image. Many Pink & Silver activists have stressed,
however, that it is not about “being just another new and colourful element
in the action culture, but [to] change incrusted structures of the left.”
Still, the carnival approach to street politics is criticized as dispensing with
tactical considerations in favor of the expressive dimension. Some protesters
even evaluate Prague as an example of a party replacing protest:

There are plenty of ways in which a revolution is a carnival and
vice-versa, but there are also plenty of ways in which it ain’t, and
to absolutely equate one with the other can lead to all sorts of
problems. So often this synthesis of party and protest results in a
conflict and it becomes a choice between party or protest, which
seems to have been the case in Prague.

At first sight, the pink bodies of CIRCA are actually not quite pink. What
is most evident is their military camouflage clothes and their red noses.
The camouflage clothes, however, are usually equipped with many colorful
and useless attributes, frequently in pink, which makes for a sharp contrast
with the military character of a uniform. While upholding the look of a
real army, the entire effect of camouflage is turned upside down: for a rebel
clown is already visible from far away. This effect is enhanced by CIRCA’s
rouged faces. This gives protesters the chance to hide their faces, but at the
same time, they become more visible and exposed. Another feature of the
pink bodies of CIRCA is the use of all kinds of objects rather unusual for
the context of street protest: feather dusters (frequently used for cleaning
the shields or helmets of riot police); water pistols (used to imitate riot
police and to attack fellow demonstrators); confetti, music instruments,
among others. As extensions of a playful body that tries to confuse and
to recuperate joy during confrontational situations, a rebel clown can use
pretty much anything during street actions.

Besides individual costumes, CIRCA has developed many maneuvers in
order to appear as a mass body. One of them is marching in unison, like a
real army; but then this military character is interrupted by occasional signals
in response to which all rebel clowns perform certain stupid-looking gestures.
Marching techniques are always coordinated through collective chants, such
as “Left, right, left,” but they are normally shouted in high-pitched voices,
and immediately transformed (e.g., into “We want war”). Performing this
maneuver requires training, and protesters are usually only invited to par-
ticipate in a CIRCA group after they have attended a training workshop.
CIRCA can, however, also separate into smaller groups, called “gaggles,” or
even individual bodies. As with Pink & Silver, hand signals and short code
words are important here. Individual bodies often seize the opportunity to
imitate individual police officers by “helping” them to execute their duties. These performances require training. The face is one of the most important resources a clown has, and many CIRCA groups work with traditional clowning and theater techniques. Because the movements of individual clowns look utterly clumsy, the trained character of a CIRCA performance is often not visible. Training a body as clown means to untrain it from making logical and expected movements. As one CIRCA trainer pointed out to me: “Being a clown, you learn how to fail. So if you do something and you fail, it’s your profession as a clown.” One capitalizes on quirks.

After the G8 protests in 2007, the tactical use of makeup by CIRCA was contested by the German authorities during a series of trials. Since it is forbidden to disguise one’s face during political assemblies in Germany, the prosecution argued that the CIRCA clowns had violated the right of assembly by using makeup. Following this argumentation would imply a ban on CIRCA. The judge, however, did not concede to the prosecutor’s point and instead interpreted CIRCA’s makeup as part of an artistic performance. In the police handbook for the 2009 NATO summit, the police attempted to learn from their previous experience, this time warning police officers of the clowns’ tactic of disrespecting the “socially required minimum distance to the police forces.” This demonstrates how police adapt to protesters’ innovative use of bodies by identifying the tactical functioning of these protest forms and developing protocols for the individual on-the-street officers to neutralize their effectiveness.

_Tactical Frivolity and Dangerous Stupidity_

Joy, humor, and mockery are an essential aspect of the epistemology of pink bodies. As with white bodies, they deploy a “having/making fun” repertoire. Tying together expressive and instrumental functions of fun, pink bodies are an instrument for experiencing joy and for deriding the opponent: “We are clowns because inside everyone is a lawless clown trying to escape, and because nothing undermines authority like holding it up to ridicule.”

Though the tools for mocking the police are many, it is the ancient figure of the clown itself that is exploited tactically: a clown, by definition, is somehow stupid. Applied tactically, as the following case of a CIRCA road blockade demonstrates, stupidity can be a powerful tool for direct action and disruption. On the first day of the 2005 Gleneagles G8 summit, the plan was to blockade the delegations from reaching the conference hotel. CIRCA took to the only highway leading to Gleneagles. Within a few minutes riot police arrived and began pushing the clowns from the road. However,
the clowns kept jumping around, playing with each other and with the officers, asking stupid questions, lying on the road, and so on. One of the clowns explained in a high-pitched voice: “We are a movement, that’s why we keep on moving.” Meanwhile, some clowns followed individual police officers, mimicking their gestures. Trying to keep them off the road, the approximately 150 riot cops were clearly overrun by some dozens of clowns. Some police, however, had to smile.

For having/making fun CIRCA often uses the technique of imitating the authorities. Clown gaggles frequently imitate police formations, as well as the gestures of individual officers. Whether the police find this funny or annoying, there is little they can do about it; surrounded by bystanders sympathetic to the clowns, it would look bad to arrest them or to beat them up. This way, CIRCA creates dilemmas for the police. Moreover, they extensively exploit the fact that there were no police protocols for dealing with clowns. As I observed through my own bodily experience, the absence of protocols creates a moment of hesitation. This grants a lot of space to the pink bodies of CIRCA. Since the clown army is funny, the police, in the end, appear ridiculous. The having/making fun repertoire consists of a combination of the ancient art of clowning with the modern practice of disobedience and results in a tactical “dangerous stupidity”:

CIRCA aims to make clowning dangerous again, to bring it back to the street, restore its disobedience and give it back the social function it once had: its ability to disrupt, critique and heal society. Since the beginning of time tricksters (the mythological origin of all clowns) have embraced life’s paradoxes, creating coherence through confusion—adding disorder to the world in order to expose its lies and speak the truth.29

CIRCA consciously continues the experience of the tradition of Reclaim the Streets by making confrontational politics ridiculous. Using the entire body for street interventions makes CIRCA not only unpredictable for the police, but also constitutes a joyful reappropriation of “docile bodies.” This is exemplified by the motto chosen by CIRCA for the 2007 G8 protests in Germany: “Make them work for their money.” Instead of being frustrated about the massive police presence, CIRCA decided to be happy about the rather unlimited possibilities to play and deride police officers. They were going to use their bodies in order to exhaust the bodies of the police by forcing them into playful interactions and by keeping them busy. One participant recounts:
It worked wonderfully! Every night we had a meeting joined by deputies of the different gaggles (clown groups). There we decided about the plan for next day. It was a week I'll never forget! One day we left the camp in the very early morning with around 250 clowns, walked secretly a unique route through the forest and could pass by the massive police forces at several locations, reach the fences of the forbidden zone and join the blockades. Another day we all split up in small units, every group doing his own crazy thing and get the police completely mad. The whole day police vans with flashing lights were running around in the area to find and limit the chaos created by dozens of groups wearing red noses.

Pink & Silver groups refer to their way of having/making fun as “tactical frivolity.” Having/making fun becomes the explicit measure of effective politics. As one Pink & Silver website states: “Essentially, if you’re not happy, you’re doing the wrong thing.” Pink & Silver also connects to the Reclaim the Streets experience of bringing the pleasures of the body back into street tactics. One participant of the 2001 protests in Prague states that “tactical frivolity means making the police laugh,” thereby confounding their expectations. This tactic of “confrontation without macho militancy” is a clear counterpoint to the heteronormative image of and assumptions by (militarized) police forces. That the police are unlikely to be prepared for such a “fun guerrilla” became clear during a 2001 international protest against migration policies in Germany in 2001, when the police reprimanded the Pink & Silver bloc, telling them to “demonstrate in an orderly manner” (Pink & Silver 2010). Again, the absence of protocols of the police for dealing with pink bodies is exploited.

Confusion and the Art of the Unexpected

Confusion is a central part of the having/making fun repertoire of CIRCA and Pink & Silver, and—hence—of the epistemology of pink bodies. “The power of the unexpected” (Days of Dissent 2004: 16) stands in stark contrast to the epistemology of white bodies, in which confrontation is staged by announcing it. Whereas white bodies rely on transparency for their highly orchestrated clashes with police, pink bodies, as one rebel clown explained to me, rely on surprise and confusion in order to “create moments where they cannot control us.” Pink bodies accomplish this by breaking dualistic thinking; by refusing to perform as the expected transgressive summit protestor, pink bodies confuse the anticipated logic of confrontation and create tactical dilemma situations for authorities.
In the case of Pink & Silver, confusion is mainly directed at gender roles and binaries. The masculine representation of militant protesters engaging in confrontational actions is subverted by protesters in pink skirts, dancing sexily with smiling faces, but still being ready for confrontation. Placing supposedly female attributes in the foreground, Pink & Silver protesters lay bare the genderedness of an allegedly “neutral” public space. Rather than complaining about this genderedness, they use it to their advantage:

Radical cheerleading is the performance of choreographies in a context, in which this kind of action and performance is not obviously suitable. In addition to the fun of pleasurable movements, the point is to counter predominant representations with something that is unexpected in the context of political demonstrations. (Foltin 2002: 1)

Pink & Silver and CIRCA confound the boundaries between art and politics. The aesthetic aspect of their dresses, the artful character of pink bodies, confuses the police about the intentions of a street intervention that, in turn, gives the protesters space and time, since they will not usually be stopped by police so long as the event is considered an artistic performance. During a 1998 Global Street Party in Toronto, the now famous message circulated on the police radio: “This is not a protest. Repeat. This is not a protest. This is some kind of artistic impression. Over.” (Starr 2005: 245).

The confusion CIRCA brings about has a lot to do with the “clown logic” that is employed. As the manual “Exercise & Methods for Workshops on Rebel Clowning” suggests, a clown always says “yes.” A clown always accepts a situation and, if possible, appropriates it by exaggeration or by pushing it into another unexpected direction. CIRCA gaggles are never disappointed when the police show up during a street action, nor do they get angry when arrested. For a clown every situation is a possibility to play. This changes the grammar of civil disobedience and direct action, since they normally center on the “no.” The motto for the blockades of the G8 summit in Scotland exemplified this tactic of embracing the opponent: Operation HA.HA.HAA (Helping Authorities House Arrest Half-witted Authoritarian Androids). The idea was to help the police with keeping the G8 delegations within the perimeter fence. Saying “yes” to nearly any situation makes CIRCA unpredictable for the police.

In CIRCA’s case, the moment of confrontation is completely dissolved. One aspect of clowns who always say “yes” to situations is that they do not try to push through police lines. Through the absence of protocols, the surprising effect of a marching clown army has, at times, hampered the
police’s ability to block CIRCA activists from crossing a line. In most cases, however, CIRCA removes the possibility of confrontation by affirming the situation and reversing the roles. CIRCA confronts power by playing with it. One CIRCA participant told me the following story about the 2005 G8 protests in Scotland. When a CIRCA group came across a group of police officers on a bridge, the clowns convinced the police to play Giants, Wizards, and Goblins. In this game, each side has to agree to be one of these characters, each of them able only to defeat one other. After a countdown, each side presents its choice at the same moment. Often, the losing side has to run toward a certain goal before being caught. After police and clowns had secretly chosen, the grinning clowns and police lined up facing one another. After the countdown, it appeared that both sides had made the same choice. According to the prior agreement, the clowns ran toward the police officers to hug them. The police, for sure, appeared rather astonished about this unexpected way of being confronted by protesters.

The Epistemology of Black: Tactical Violence as “Non-Violent Warfare”

Like it or not, a large part of the effectiveness of our mass street mobilisations rests on this threat of implied violence from us.

—“Here Comes the Barmy Army,” Do or Die

It is September the 26th of 2000, and several thousand people from all over the world take part in one of the four marches that are heading toward the annual meeting of the WB and the IMF. Accompanying this black bloc is a huge blue ball, with bright orange letters saying “Balls to the IMF.” The plan is to stage a symbolic siege of the conference and physically block all delegates from exiting. Unlike thousands of activists, however, the ball will never arrive at the location of the meeting. Despite being confronted with several lines of heavily geared riot police and a water cannon, the black bloc insists on continuing on its way. A riot breaks out, the water cannon starts spewing: some activists try to get the ball toward the police line, until it is demolished by the strong water jet.

Since the early phase of summit protests, the color black is associated with “The Black Bloc.” For outsiders it might look as though there was an internationally coordinated organization of anarchists operating under this name. This, however, misses the point, and mystifies black bodies. “The Black Bloc” is not an organization, but a tactic, which is applied during mass protests by small affinity groups that come together for these occasions.
Bodies That Matter

(Starr 2005: 227; K 2001: 31). Nor is every protester who smashes a window part of a black bloc. It makes more sense, therefore, to speak about “black blocs,” for the use of the color black is precisely that: tactical. The actions carried out can be offensive or defensive, directed against private property or police, to raise costs or to threaten, to create visibility, or to establish a sign of intransigence vis-à-vis the hegemonic social order. As the blue ball in Prague suggests, however, black blocs have a fair sense of humor as well.38

Emergence of Black Bodies

When observers compare black blocs to urban guerrilla warfare, they make a good guess as to the emergence of these tactics. During a phase of intensified street conflicts around the extension of the Frankfurt airport in the early 1980s in Germany, the Autonomen started to prepare better for clashes with the police by wearing motor helmets, other body protection, and, in order to be less easily identifiable, black clothes. The Autonomen were influenced by the urban guerrilla tactics of other militant groups, such as the RAF or Revolutionäre Zellen, but tried to channel their militancy into confrontational street actions and guerrilla sabotage acts, rather than warfare. The term “black bloc” was invented by the judicial apparatus in order to criminalize these protesters as a “criminal association” (AG Grauwacke 2004: 18). Afterward, this term was self-ironically appropriated by activists. “The Black Bloc” only entered the international media, however, during the WTO protests in Seattle in 1999, after US activists adopted this European tradition by staging a series of targeted corporate property destructions (ACME collective 2001). After this, media reports about upcoming summit protests became equivalent to warnings about the “ransacking anarchists” of “the Black Bloc.”

Indeed, black blocs have appeared during all summit protests in Europe analyzed here. There is, however, a significant difference between black blocs in the US and in Europe. Amory Starr (2006) provides a detailed account of the supposed weapons used during summit protests in the US, most of which are intended for property destruction. If used for other purposes, they are purely defensive in character, such as hockey sticks for hurling back tear gas canisters (as used during the FTAA protests in Quebec). Offensive projectiles, such as bricks and bottles, are hardly ever used in the US.39 In Europe, however, black blocs often attack corporate private property as well as confront the police. However, there are many discussions involved in deciding what constitutes a legitimate target and what does not. Black bloc actions projected during summit protests are usually evaluated
with anonymous discussion papers. The criteria for “tactical violence” are nevertheless contested, as this evaluation of Genoa illustrates:

The idea that certain targets are legitimate whereas others aren’t betrays a problematic part of the ideology of anti-globalisation. Capitalism is not just the big corporations, but a social relation which manifests itself as much in the big corporate stores and symbols (e.g., McDonalds) as in the small corner shops. (K 2001: 32–33)

_Invisible Visibility or Visible Invisibility?_

Looking at this trajectory of black bodies during summit protests, the first thing to be noted is their anonymity. Do the black hoodies and disguised faces mean that protesters do not wish to be visible? The uniform character of black blocs is a measure to protect protesters against police repression, and, increasingly, against legal prosecution after protests. The clothing is aimed at rendering individuals unidentifiable in an anonymous mass. At the same time, when marching in a bloc, the mass of black bodies becomes highly visible. Just as for white bodies, the Zapatistas’ strategy of “masking faces in order to become visible” applies to these black bodies.

What is specifically made invisible with black bodies is gender, not only because the type of clothes—in shrill contrast to Pink & Silver—appear rather masculine, but also because the imagery surrounding black bodies evokes (masculine) fighters who are attacking and destroying. The US-based ACME collective (2001: 117), however, wonders whether this imagery of a black bloc is sexist. After all, the masculine imagery behind black bodies frequently leads to the assumption that these bodies are masculine, whereas women are often framed as non-violent. Many evaluations of black bloc interventions during summit protests, however, stress that there were an equal amount of men and women participating as black bodies. More importantly, AK Thompson (2010) points out that it is practically impossible to perform gender in a riot. He shows that riots, a typical outcome of the interaction between police and black bodies, break with the logic of representation and identity. During riots, it is more important what bodies do than what they are. The ontology of black bodies thus breaks with the false necessity of identity. Thompson (2010: 125) proposes that the practice of black blocs could move us from a project of gender inclusion to gender abolition. This is to say, instead of trying to include women in the existing order of representation, the ontological status of gender divisions is being questioned. From the viewpoint of doing dissent in black blocs, gender becomes an irrelevant category.
The contradiction between visibility and invisibility finds yet another expression in the instrumental relationship between black bodies and the mass media. During the opening demonstration in Rostock for the G8 protests in Germany, I heard one slogan shouted frequently, especially when passing under bridges full of camera teams of television stations: “Kameramann, Arschloch!” (meaning: Cameraman, asshole!). Perhaps it comes as no surprise that black bodies hate the media. Mainstream media hardly ever produce friendly accounts of black bloc activities. Moreover, they frequently help to criminalize black bodies, not only by negative or exaggerated reports, but also with film and photo material that might help to identify individual black bodies. The urge to become invisible for the media marks a decisive difference between pink and black bodies, as highlighted in a report about the 2000 IMF/WB protests in Prague:

The carnivalesque people in their costumes loved all the media, and were dancing around and parading themselves in front of the TV cameras, who, in turn, equally loved the spectacle. The black bloc people at the head of the march were, however, far more concerned with security and actively tried to avoid being filmed and photographed, using the reinforced banner to shield the march from photographers. The poor old press must have been very perplexed. What to make of a load of exhibitionists in huge pink carnival costumes marching through the centre of town to a samba band, then when you tried to get close to take any photos some blacked-up lunatic in a gas mask jumped up in front of you screaming “no photos!”?

Yet, this hostile stance toward media is predicated on a paradox worth investigating. Black bodies are frequently criticized for their violent behavior that distracts from the substantive message of summit protesters. In his reflections on Genoa, Moore counters that “the Black Block do not ‘detract from the message’—they have a different message” (Moore 2001: 137). Both comments imply that black bodies trigger considerable media attention, and this has proven to be true. Indeed, black blocs have provoked a lot of the conflictive images surrounding summit meetings. Whereas the observation of one black body in the film Berlusconi’s Mousetrap about the protests in Genoa—”we have been instrumentalized for a media spectacle”—might be true, the reverse is equally valid: black bodies instrumentalize the media (and its sensational tendencies) for creating images of dissent vis-à-vis the hegemonic world order. Hence, during summit protests, media and black blocs have often proven to be codependent. Riots during summit protests
can be seen as a means to become visible, to make conflict—specifically an antagonistic force on a global scale—tangible.\textsuperscript{45} The burning car and the smashed window are public relation resources for black bodies.\textsuperscript{46}

The visibility of the color black has come to signify a confrontational attitude, which gives the police a chance to criminalize protesters ahead of summit protests. Numerous protesters traveling to the G8 protests in Germany were sent back at the border because of the black clothes found in their luggage. Because of its color, a piece of clothing becomes something like a passport, determining who may cross borders in order to attend international protest events. This demonstrates how police use identification for the creation of “docile bodies.” In order to criminalize (potentially) “disobedient bodies,” authorities transpose a color chosen for tactical purposes into an identity associated with an anticipated riot.

Becoming visible as an anonymous social force has introduced yet another problem for black bodies. Black blocs can easily be appropriated for the operations of agents provocateurs; this has frequently happened during summit protests.\textsuperscript{47} Whereas provocation is an old problem for protesters, black blocs have made it easy for agents provocateurs to remain invisible and to provoke violence in order to justify escalating police responses. Starhawk (2001: 129), a US non-violent direct action campaigner, makes this clear in her evaluation of the protests in Genoa:

\begin{quote}
The police used the Black Block, or more accurately, the myth and image of the Black Block, very efficiently in Genoa, for their ends, not ours. Some aspects of Black Block tactics made this easy: the anonymity, the mass and easily identifiable dress code, the willingness to engage in more confrontational tactics and in property damage, and perhaps most significant, the lack of connection with the rest of the action and the organizers.
\end{quote}

**Unmediated Engagement with History**

Perhaps the most significant feature of black bodies is that they are, and want to be, beyond any kind of control. This desire has several layers. On the one hand, black bodies refuse mediated forms of action and assert their freedom to choose their own means and moments for confrontation. Negotiations beforehand with authorities on the course of an action are refuted. Transparency, as in the case of white bodies, is opposed. In their reliance on surprise, black bodies have more in common with pink bodies.
Unlike pink bodies, however, the desired effect of black body surprise is not to play, but to stage a confrontation, thus making visible an antagonism in the streets. Nor is it confusion, though confusion might be the perceived outcome in a situation of mayhem. Because pre-action guidelines about desired tactics are widely refuted, a greater variety of means are accepted so long as it makes sense tactically. This means that black bodies rarely control other black bodies. This very unpredictability of black bodies places them outside of any anticipatory regime of police control. This refusal of regulation makes black bodies distinctively ungovernable during street interactions:

Some accuse the black block or those who engage in more militant activity in general of being “elitist.” This is an absurd distortion. The point of being an elite is that you try and exercise power over other people. The point about the black block is that people simply want the autonomy to be able to express their anger as they see fit. (Anonymous 2001: 46)

The decidedly unmediated engagement with history by black bodies usually is also expressed by their refusal to advance specific demands during protests. Black blocs rarely issue press releases ahead of actions with a set of demands, but instead attempt to make their point through the actions they carry out. This reveals the ontological position of black bodies as “we are what we do,” a position that relegates black bodies beyond the realm of what can be easily represented. By mostly not advancing demands, black blocs communicate the conflict at stake through their acts, reappropriating the freedom to act beyond the constraints of the present. Black bodies attempt to break with the existing system by advancing a social force that cannot be integrated into current political structures.

The intransigence of black bodies finds its expression in the fact that they hardly ever carry banners. When they do, these have antisystemic demands, and even then these are usually more for tactical reasons—to protect the bloc—than for communicating a message. This makes black blocs difficult to co-opt. During the 2007 black bloc demonstration against the ASEM conference in Hamburg before the G8 summit, the biggest and most visible of their rare banners said “Total Freedom.” “Total freedom” is not something black bodies expect to be granted by the state, but a reality to be created by themselves, in opposition to the authorities’ attempt at “total control.” The function of black bodies is the production of an unexpected and uncontrollable situation within which it becomes possible to act beyond everyday constraints.
Though Katsiaficas (2006: 100–105) argues that militancy and spontaneity are the central practices of autonomous movements, such a characterization overlooks the fact that in the context of street actions, black bodies demonstrate a considerable degree of organization. For the most part, black blocs are comprised of pre-organized affinity groups, and their targeted property destruction is often pre-planned. One should not conflate the unmediated with the merely immediate, for this stance favors the spontaneity of popular uprisings over the prior calculation behind efforts to grasp episodic moments of total freedom.48 Black bodies are well coordinated and often compensate for their relative lack of numbers with their aptness for confrontation.

Black Blocs as Dialectical Image

The published email discussion between John Holloway and Vittorio Sergi (2007) about the 2007 riots in Rostock raises an interesting question about black bodies. In his critique of the “outbreak of prolonged and violent fighting,” Holloway suggests that the black bloc resorted to a symmetrical form of confrontation, mirroring the tactics and appearance of the police. He argues that this predictable ritual created by the macho tone of the black block had divisive effects. This might look like an obvious point. For many observers, a black bloc, due to the uniform dress code, the compact organization of a marching bloc, and the determination expressed, looks frightening, a mirror of the riot police. In actual fact, however, black blocs engage in aesthetically subversive acts that should not be interpreted as the projection of a symmetrical force but rather as a dialectical image that unveils the asymmetrical power relations between police and protesters.49

To start with a phenomenological account, black hoodies and balaclavas can hardly be compared with the gear of the riot police that comprises combat boots, bullet-proof vests, and safety helmets. Neither do stones (and occasionally Molotov cocktails) constitute symmetry with batons, pepper spray, tear and CN gas, water cannons, rubber bullets, concussion grenades, and live ammunition. Similarly, I have never witnessed a moment in which a black body arrests a police officer. Still, at first glance, it often looks as if two symmetrical armies, both ready to fight, are opposing each other. However, as a participant observer I want to suggest another reading: black blocs as an effective simulation of the politics of the police “maneuver,” a frontal confrontation with the opponent. Black blocs constitute the antithesis of the police, a dialectical image that lays bare the violent character of “protest policing” and the unwillingness of hegemonic forces to change power structures so long as they can continue to control.
By simulating a social force symmetrical to the police, black blocs overstretch the imitation and constitute a negation of the police. Lucy Irigaray (1985) suggests that binaries are part of a phallocentric economy that produces the “feminine” as its constitutive outside. In her view, the exclusion of the feminine from the economy of representation leads to mimesis, an overstretched imitation of the dominant symbolic order. I propose seeing black blocs as the mimesis of the phallocentric order of the police predicated on control, which time after time produces (antisystemic) dissent as its constitutive outside. The control over the “public order,” which is about maintaining the status quo, is predicated on a preclusion of antisystemic dissent. As dialectical image, black blocs constitute the negation of the negation of dissent.

While the act of simulation introduces an implicit element of the threat of violence, many actions of black blocs do not resort to this means. Rather, as David Graeber (2002) suggests, black blocs can be seen as a “non-violent warfare.” Most of their acts that are characterized as “violence” by authorities and mainstream media should instead be classified as targeted property destruction. Whereas corporate and state property is frequently attacked offensively by smashing windows or throwing Molotov cocktails, private property is usually destroyed only defensively during a police attack. Destruction of private property mostly serves to protect bodies (such as private cars being burned in defense of police attacks), whereas attacks on corporate property are primarily symbolic. They create an image of irreconcilability between the oppressed and corporate capitalism by identifying some of the latter’s most important actors. The physical integrity of private persons has a high priority: acts of destruction that endanger private persons are severely criticized (e.g., AK Vermittlung 2007). An exception are the blue bodies of the police who are generally considered to represent (and to protect) the established order:

Let’s be candid. Riot police are riot police, whatever their national allegiance. And in these circumstances, they are hired bodyguards to capitalism’s elite. They are a physical obstacle between us and those we seek to stop, they will not step aside in the face of flowers or chants of “the whole world is watching,” but they will beat and break those who try to overstep the boundaries of permitted dissent.50

Balkan Anarchists of Northern Europe point out that “A common point of all counter-summits (Rostock included) was that the black block acted largely as a people’s defence against the police.”51 This gives black bodies a special function in relation to the bodies of other protesters. The decisiveness of
black bodies can render other disobedient bodies less vulnerable, less exposed to police interventions. Black bodies, however, are not restricted to purely defensive acts. Whether defensive or offensive, the clashes of black bodies with the police are not directed at harming individual police officers, but at regaining spatial mobility (see chapter 5), by pushing through their ranks as a physical obstacle. While such acts simulate an image of warfare, the image is established through relatively non-violent means, which gives black bodies a absurd character similar to that of white and pink bodies. As opposed to the confusion pink bodies insert into the context of street interactions, however, black bodies aim to establish concrete forms of counter-power by simulating the image of warfare. This is the dialectical image that reveals how global elites can only meet by creating highly protected war zones. This image of warfare constitutes a starting point for a dialectical critique of hegemonic global power relations and of the ruling regime of social control.

Remaining Unidentified

The epistemologies of the colored bodies of summit protesters offer interesting insights into the interaction between police and protesters. My analysis of bodies as a contested site of struggle focused on four innovative street tactics of summit protesters within the traditions of civil disobedience and direct action: the White Overalls, Pink & Silver, the Clandestine Insurgent Rebel Clown Army, and black blocs. Situating these tactics in the street as a context for the contestation of disciplinary control, I showed how summit protesters assert a “disobedient body” versus the “docile body” envisioned by authorities. This means to avoid being identified by the protocols of police forces. My epistemological analysis of these tactics (organized along the three colors white, pink, and black) traces the tactical learning process behind them and uncovers the various considerations for remaining unpredictable in the streets. Whereas police protocols try to channel potentially disobedient bodies into predictability, the latter try to remain surprising.

The protected mass body of the White Overalls is predicated on an active conception of civil disobedience reintroducing a clear image of conflict as a broad consensual practice in the context of the streets. The pink bodies of Pink & Silver and CIRCA hinge on the creation of confusion through the unpredictable use of costumes, marching tactics, and humor. Black blocs, on the other hand, receive their unpredictable character from their highly unmediated engagement with street tactics. I argued that their use of tactical violence can better be understood as a dialectical image that
Bodies That Matter

exposes the violent character beneath the surface of the established order. All of these tactics, hence, constitute an attempt to reinsert dissent by making the use of bodies unpredictable.

White, pink, and black bodies all rely on tactical considerations that feed into the action repertoires of blockading, besieging, and intruding. Whereas white bodies clearly connect to the tradition of civil disobedience—while transforming it into an active practice of self-defense—pink and black bodies can be situated in the tradition of direct action. All of them share the desire to do dissent in the streets without appealing to representation. Instead, white, pink, and black bodies act on their own behalf and create dissent by disobeying the regulatory regime of social control. By using “disobedient bodies” to challenge a system that relies on “docile bodies,” protesters counterpose dissent against the working of control.

Whereas the tactical considerations behind the colors white and pink remain a useful starting point, the course of interaction throughout several summit protests suggests that these tactics need constant adaptation. In the case of black bodies, this is a bit different. Through the constant avoidance of identification, black bodies remain even more unpredictable and therefore difficult to control. For this reason, it comes as no surprise that riots recur during summit protests. However, the predictability of a riot as an outcome of the interaction between black blocs and police contributes to the problem of ritualized violence, thereby forfeiting the promise of tactical violence.

Following bodies as a contested site of struggle, I have reconstructed the tactical interaction between summit protesters and authorities and shown how the tactical use of bodies matters during street protests. Disobedient bodies are not an easy thing to create. Continuous experimentation and innovation have worked in the advantage of summit protesters. This seems the key to success in avoiding identification. The “art of the unexpected” is not only a challenge to pink bodies, but to all protesters desiring disruption.
“Leave them no space!”

The Dialectics of Spatial Interactions

Any revolutionary “project” today, whether utopian or realistic, must, if it is to avoid hopeless banality, make the reappropriation of the body, in association with the reappropriation of space, into a non-negotiable part of its agenda.

—Henri Lefebvre, *The Production of Space*

To some it might have looked more like an ants’ nest than a well-organized action camp. Among the 5,000-people-strong tent camp in the northern German village of Reddelich, small groups are huddling. On the opposite side of the road delimiting the camp, a big crowd engages in a sit-in blockade, surrounded by journalists who are eager to find out how protesters are planning to disrupt this year’s G8 meeting. At the entrance of the camp, next to a reception tent, a painted map marking the site of the G8 meeting and the three action camps surrounding it, claims the following: “G8, give up, you are encircled!” Looking at the position of the three camps, one has to admit a certain truthfulness to this statement (see appendix, map 2). But protesters were determined to make this point in yet another way.

In June 2007, the G8 met in a small coastal town called Heiligendamm, in the north of Germany. Only a few hours after the meeting had officially started, rather unexpected news made the rounds: the G8 meeting was cut off from the outer world by protesters blockading all access to the large fenced-off security zone, which had been erected for protecting the talks of the G8 leaders. The journalists could not make it on time for a photo shoot of the minister presidents, because the alternative sea route
was inaccessible due to unruly water. How was such a thing possible, while nearly 20,000 policemen had been mobilized into this region in order to prevent a similar number of protesters from disrupting the meetings. Within a few days the tactic developed by a coalition called BlockG8 was widely known among the average German news consumer: the five-finger tactic.

The five-finger tactic is an adaptation of a tactic employed before by anti-nuclear activists in Germany during the annual protests against nuclear waste transports. While the blockading tactic consisted of a sit-in, the crucial move of this approach was the way to reach the point to be blockaded, especially in rural areas. The 5,000-people-strong march that left the camp in Reddelich to mount one of the two mass blockades in the morning of the 6th of June soon encountered a police line blocking the way. In this moment, people did what had been practiced during the previous days: they split according to pre-established “fingers” and this way trickled the police line. This was the advice given by the BlockG8 alliance in a pamphlet: “Don’t run straight at the cops; aim for the gaps!” This move was repeated several times in the course of the walk through forests, fields, and on countryside roads, until all the fingers could rejoin on the spot that had been chosen for the sit-in blockade. Time and time again, police were forced to stretch their lines, trying to prevent protesters from circumventing them, which automatically created space for others to pass in between them. It was this element of the five-finger tactic that provided the most memorable pictures widely circulated by mainstream media: colorful lines of protesters, making their way through the fields around Heiligendamm, with a policemen once in a while looking on rather helplessly.

The five-finger tactic visualizes one of the major strengths of summit protest tactics: “decentralized swarming” in order to disrupt major meetings of the global elite. Swarming means to converge on a target from multiple directions. As Nunes (2005: 305) points out, “swarm networks must be able to coalesce rapidly and stealthily on a target, then disperse and recombine, immediately ready to recombine for a new pulse.” Hardt and Negri (2004: 91) consider the swarming logic of decentralized networks the defining feature of the organizational logic of the Multitude, the revolutionary subject after the mass worker. Arquilla and Ronfeldt (2001) also stress the swarming logic of networks as an organizational practice of oppositional movements that should be copied by counterinsurgency initiatives. Certainly, the application of the logic of swarming posed a concrete challenge to police trying to prevent disruption. Taking the five-finger tactic as a starting point for a genealogy of these tactical interactions reveals some
important insights about spatial interactions on the streets and the contestation of global hegemonic forces.

The (symbolic) occupation of space and the disruption of spatial routines are characteristic for many tactical repertoires of protesters (Noakes et al. 2005: 38; Zajko & Béland 2008: 719; Crosby 2008: 3–4). Whether the sit-ins of the US civil rights movement, the site occupations of the anti-nuclear movement, or the land occupations of landless peasants movements, protesters often try to intervene spatially and this way create a tactical dilemma for their opponents. Nevertheless, summit protest has exalted this tactic in a significant way. At the 1999 WTO summit in Seattle, protesters managed to shut down the meetings by blockading all intersections around the conference center during the first day. This repertoire rapidly spread and was successfully applied, again, in Prague in September of 2000, where the delegates of the annual meeting of the WB and the IMF were prevented by blockades from exiting the conference center. After waiting for hours, because there was no possible way to exit with cars, the delegates had to be brought out of the district by the metro (which according to some plans, should have been blockaded as well). During the 2001 EU summit protests in Gothenburg, quite a few delegates had to change their hotels after street clashes between police and protesters. Also the dinner of the EU presidents was cancelled. The effectiveness of protesters in penetrating the space of summit meetings, in turn, provoked spatial responses by the authorities and the police that would influence future summit interactions.

The aim of this chapter is to understand the interactions between protesters and police during summit protests as a struggle about space related to the visibility of global hegemonic power relations and their contestation. I argue that global hegemonic and dissenting forces co-constitute each other through a dialectical process based on the joint necessity for spatial manifestation. For understanding these spatial interactions, I invoke an analogy with Foucault's (1977a) idea of disease control: the flows of summit protesters are channeled into predictability through the processes designed to avoid further contamination. The tactical adaptation process of authorities indicates a shift to biopolitical forms of control focusing on the regulation of flows and the avoidance of an "undesired event" (read: disruption). By extensively focusing on the preparatory phase, space control becomes more and more preemptive. Whereas protesters try to disrupt the flows involved in a summit meeting through decentralized and diverse tactics, authorities, using, among other things, fences and remote rural venues for their meetings, trying to incapacitate these flows and channel them into predictable
spaces. As we will see, protesters had only partial success in challenging these incapacitation attempts.

**Mind the Gap: The Co-constitution of Global Hegemony**

Territory is traditionally seen to be subject to the nation-state’s sovereign power. Summit protests, however, offer an opportunity to understand the spatiality of global hegemony—and its contestation. By looking at the spatial interactions during summit protests, the function of territoriality for the legitimate constitution of global hegemony can be unraveled, even as protesters constitute a space for contesting and (re-)constituting the legitimacy of global power relations. In order to avoid an undesired event, authorities deploy biopolitical tactics by incapacitating protesters and channeling their actions into unmeaningful space. They try to close the gap protesters have found to penetrate global hegemonic forces.

Summit meetings constitute a visible consolidation of global power relations. As Lefebvre argues (1976: 86), “the consolidation needs centers; it needs to fix them, to monumentalise them (socially).” Whereas summit meetings are only a momentary consolidation, they nevertheless are an important material manifestation of global hegemonic forces. The reason for their visibility, however, has a lot to do with protesters physically intervening in such spaces. But this is how “Power suffers, as in Shakespearian tragedy: the more it consolidates, the more afraid it is. . . . The places where power makes itself accessible and visible—police stations, barracks, administrative buildings—ooze with anxiety” (Lefebvre 1976: 85–86). Since the 1999 WTO protests in Seattle, global summit meetings ooze with such anxiety.

Selecting these locations as spaces of contention, then, are strategic decisions by protesters to make grievances over corporate globalization visible, to spatially materialize a conflict about global hegemonic power relations. In his analysis of the 2001 May Day protests in London, Justus Uitermark (2004) shows how protesters symbolically linked concrete places of the city to a global critique of neoliberal capitalism. Neil Smith’s (1992) conception of “scaling” is helpful for understanding how this works. Smith defines scale as the geographical resolution of contradictory social processes of competition and cooperation by connecting material with metaphorical conceptions of space. He proposes to view the construction of scale as a social process, produced by geographical structures of social interaction and as the site of potentially intense political struggle. The effects of summit
mobilizations are always multi-scale, affecting the local, national, regional, and global organization of social relations.

Activists have the difficult task of redefining summit venues and the surrounding region as a legitimate battleground for contesting the legitimacy of the institutions of global hegemonic forces. And they have to link other places to this manifestation of global power relations. Whereas summits are temporal localizations of global networks, summit protests have the effect of localizing and visualizing the interconnection of apparently separated struggles. This thereby visualizes a conflict that questions the hegemonic form of global economic organization, as John Agnew (1998: 15) puts it, the “global visualization of space.” Martin and Miller (2003) make a related observation about an important mechanism of contentious politics: brokerage. Brokers are people or organizations who can break down a variety of everyday spatial barriers and build new connections across space. According to such a definition, summit protesters could easily be described as brokers that connect seemingly local places and issues to a global scale, and we will see how they attempt do so, especially in the preparatory phase.

After that previous period of smooth decision-making of the global elite, far removed from public attention, intergovernmental organizations such as the G8 were confronted with the visibility created through the contestation of their meetings in the streets. It was as if, suddenly, a spotlight was turned on them. Global hegemonic forces started to use this visibility to shed a benevolent light on their policies and the necessity of their meetings. Instead of simply rejecting critique, they attempted to co-opt it (see also chapter 6) by forcibly integrating it in “their” space of global hegemony, that is, by separating this space clearly from non-institutional contestation taking place on the streets.

This corroborates my point about the primacy of resistance for the co-constitution of global power relations: the interdependence of protestors and global elites in becoming visible and legitimate social forces means that the protesters and hegemonic forces co-constitute one another in a dialectical process. Visibility of social conflicts has something to do with the capacity of protesters to disrupt spaces of hegemonic forces. Global hegemony is contested by definition and the contestation is one of its very constituting elements. This contestation is organized spatially: “The ‘dialectics of public space’ materializes around counter summits where it is arguable that public space is not something that is altruistically granted by the state to those who wish to voice dissent, but rather it is a phenomenon that must always be ‘produced’ ” (Crosby 2008: 3). In this way, protesters temporarily
appropriate spaces in counter-hegemonic ways, thereby infusing them with the potentiality of doing.

Looking back from Heiligendamm at a sequence of summit protests, we see the crucial role of contested space for both global hegemonic forces and the repertoire of collective action in the streets of Prague, Genoa, or Heiligendamm. Instead of looking at one single summit protest, by analyzing a series of summit protests as a chain of interaction we can see space as a contested site of struggle triggering tactical innovations and adaptations. Throughout the years, the geographical removal of summit meetings from metropolis to remote and fortified rural areas reflects how the struggle about global hegemony manifests itself spatially (see also Scholl 2011b). This weakness of global governance institutions is rarely mentioned in the literature on globalization, even in the debates about a possible decline of the nation-state.

Global hegemonic forces attempt to close the gap, leaving the protesters little space and creating a separate “secure” space for their gatherings. Authorities try to control space in such a way that it restricts spatial mobility, and therefore the visibility of antisystemic dissent. This also explains the authorities’ efforts for more effective tactics for governing space. Global hegemonic forces started to look for a space that is effectively void of antisystemic dissent. The street interactions between protesters and police reflect this contestation of global power relations. Police appear here not only as agents of global hegemonic forces, but also as “agents of territorality” (Crosby 2008: 4). Social science scholars have recently paid some attention to the role of space in the “policing of protest” (Starr et al. 2011; Fernandez 2008, 2005; Noakes et al. 2005). However, there is still need for an analysis of how the spatial dynamics of street conflicts are constituted:

A spatial analysis of the policing of protest must examine not merely the geography of policing or simply the nexus of space and social movements, but spatial contention between police and social movements. In other words, it must seek to explain how spatial dynamics affect the interaction between police and protesters, and their simultaneous struggle to occupy and bestow meaning on contested spaces during demonstrations. (Noakes et al. 2005: 247)

To this proposal by Noakes et al., I would add two additional points. First, demonstrations cannot be the only setting to look at, since, especially during summit protests, other (direct) action tactics have also proven to be vital to the interaction process. This chapter will take into consideration a
variety of protest spaces emerging during summit protest, including action camps, blockades, as well as demonstrations. Second, space emerges as a site of struggle not only during, but already before (and also after) a protest event. The abundance of spatial considerations during the preparatory phase testifies to the preemptive character of social control. Protesters, in turn, intervene in authorities’ spatial preparations.

This chapter develops an analytical understanding of the tactical repertoires of the spatial interactions between police and protestors before and during summit protests in Europe. I take on Luis Fernandez’s (2005: 130) proposal to employ Foucault’s analogy of disease control in order to understand the spatial control of global dissent. In analyzing the attempts to get a grip on the black plague, Foucault (1977a) highlights the processes of separation and containment. Whereas the partitioning of space leads to separation, the isolation of this separated space results in containment. Whereas the processes of separation and containment suggest a certain time sequence, this sequence is dynamic and shifting. So, the set of practices behind the tactics of partitioning and isolating can also overlap and interact with each other, or produce simultaneous effects. In order to foreclose widespread contamination, spatial control tries to preempt the spatial repertoires of summit protesters: spatial disruption is the disease targeted by authorities. In the following analysis of spatial interactions, the tactics of partitioning (leading to separation) and isolating (leading to containment) will reappear several times.

There is a clear parallel with Lefebvre’s work here. Lefebvre (1991) proposes that capitalism’s reproduction relies on its ability to continuously restructure and refragment space into functional territorial units to ensure that the territory remains subject to state power. First, perceived space (or spatial practice) relates to the social (re)production of space in daily life. Second, conceived space concerns the (dominant) representations of space, for example, a map, related to the production of discourses and meaning. Third, lived space, or representational space, is the product of the interaction of the first two categories (Lefebvre 1991: 38–39). It is here where “counter spaces” or “spaces of resistance” evolve that contradict the “spatial practice” but also challenge the dominant representations of space.

For summit meetings, police attempt to control space in order to enable undisturbed circulation of delegations, their provisions, journalists, local traffic, and their own police forces. To give an idea, for the 2007 G8 in Germany the police anticipated, besides tens of thousands of protesters and 18,000 police, a total of 12,000 conference delegates and several thousand journalists (BAO Kavala 2007a: 3). By presenting a number of
maps that resulted from the preparations on both sides, I will show both the authorities’ attempt to contain the disease of disruption by restructuring space and protesters’ contestation through scaling efforts. These maps reveal how perceived and conceived spaces interact in order to create the lived space of summit protests. In tracing how global hegemony is contested, I look at spatial interactions as a dialectical process where both sides attempt to leave the other one no space.

Preparing the Battleground

Journalists, protesters, and inhabitants alike are stunned about the transformations a city undergoes in order to host a summit meeting. Shortly before the 2001 G8 protests in Genoa, Elliot (2000) noted in the Guardian: “there is a shortage of cities queuing up to be turned into a war zone.” Empty streets, barricaded shop windows, huge fences, containers, and armored vehicles are habitual elements of spatial control that unfold during the preparations for a summit, as well as—for the protesters—lively convergence centers, action camps, and independent media centers. In this section I will examine how the tactical repertories of police and protesters are organized for preparing the battleground. What happens in the street during a summit protest is the product of complex preparations on both sides. Whereas protesters try to organize alternative spaces and intervene in the spatial preparations of authorities, police preemptively reorganize space so that global hegemonic forces can consolidate themselves free of antisystemic dissent.

Separating Hegemony from Antisystemic Dissent

It is interesting how an object, namely, a fence has become the presumptive answer to a tactical innovation by protesters. Since the successful blockades of the WTO ministerial meeting in Seattle in 1999, the use of perimeter fences has been increasingly extended. For the 2000 IMF/WB protests in Prague, the authorities deployed barriers in order to prevent protesters from reaching the conference center, but were unsuccessful. The 2001 FTAA protests in Quebec were marked by the erection of an impressive 6.1-km-long fence throughout the city center, dubbed “the wall of shame” by cynical inhabitants and protesters. A few months later, at the 2001 G8, protesters were confronted with a similar construction in the city center of Genoa. This 5-m-high construction became well known for marking the “red zone,”
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where no one was allowed to enter. These major barriers transformed the interaction between police and protesters significantly and spurred the development of another action repertoire: dissembling the fence and entering the red zone became major goals of protesters. This way, fences and red zones exemplified the isolation and exclusiveness of summit meetings among global hegemonic forces. As Monty Schädel, one of the protest organizers in Rostock, remarked: “For sure it is just a fence, but it is symbolic for the isolation of those having a meeting in there. They lock themselves up and create a zone in which they can do what they want” (in Biermann 2007; my translation).

In 2003, summit meetings in Europe shifted to rural locations. Fences do not disappear from the repertoire of authorities. For the 2007 G8 in Heiligendamm a 12.5-km-long, razor-wire–topped fence was erected, consisting of 500 tons of steel divided into 4,600 elements, each was 2.50 meters high and 2.45 meters wide and anchored to concrete footings in the ground (see appendix, map 1). The local company that erected this massive construction started in January 2007 and worked on it about five months at an estimated cost of 12.5 million. Including three entrances with control spots, the fence was equipped with surveillance cameras, movement detectors, and microphones.

In the official police jargon, it was a “technical barrier” and not a “fence” or a “red zone.” This semantic shift demonstrates how spatial struggles around summit protests manifest themselves in spatial metaphors. As Neil Smith (1992: 62) points out: “Not only is the production of space an inherently political process, then, but the use of spatial metaphors, far from providing an innocent if evocative imagery, actually taps directly into questions of social power.” Protesters countered the “technical barrier” with “Behind the fence lies the beach” (a playful variation of an infamous French 1968 slogan, “Beneath the cobble-stones, the beach”). This began a long interaction around the fence, which, in the period preceding the actual summit, greatly influenced spatial tactics.

So, the fence provides an excellent starting point for investigating the spatial preparations of the police and then protesters’ attempts to challenge the spatial control of a summit. As Lefebvre (1991: 38–39) would put it, the spatial preparations constitute a clash of conceived space versus perceived space, that is, between spatial representations and spatial practices. The spatial struggles around summits clearly show how representations of space as symbols for global hegemony become contested through “spaces of resistance” by summit protesters. Social control aims to isolate spaces for global hegemonic forces from spaces of resistance so as to avoid a confrontation
between the two. Such spatial operations, as noted by Foucault, are useful for containing the “disease” of disruption.

As the media became interested in the construction of the fence, a number of explanations of its function emerged. At one point, the minister for nutrition, agriculture, and forest of Mecklenburg-Western Pomerania, Till Backhaus, suggested that the main function of the fence was to channel visitors. The intention would not be to block the way to the summit but to make access to the forest more difficult (Aktionsgruppe Zauninspektion 2007). However, Knut Abramowski, the chief of police (Polizeiführer) of the special police department Kavala, stated that the “technical barrier” would function as protection against both “militant anti-summit protesters and a terrorist threat.”

The authorities later admitted that they never had any reason to assume a concrete terrorist threat (Bundesregierung 2007b); they only anticipated blockading tactics at the summit. This becomes clear in the following statement of Abramowski, given a few days before the summit was to start: “the road net is rather scarce, there are only two access roads to Heiligendamm. The danger is simply too big to let police, demonstrators, delegates, and journalists walk on these narrow streets. We have to keep the road free for fire brigade and emergency vehicles. If we look then at the increasingly numerous calls to blockade and storm the barrier, I say: we cannot tolerate demonstrators in certain areas.”

The police spokesperson Peter Hoppe provides another hint about the fence’s purpose for police operations. He stressed that the fence was mainly about winning time for the police: time to react (in Biermann 2007). And Abramowski made clear why there is no alternative to the tactical instrument of a fence: “If we did not have the technical barrier, we would have to put at every meter one police officer. This would mean employing 36,000 officers in shift service. We do not preside over that many units in the whole of Europe, let alone in Germany. Our police officers cannot be procreated randomly, that’s why we rely on such a force-economical adjustment element.” One may wonder whether Abramowski’s mathematical equation was fully working.

It seems that the authorities disagree among themselves as to why they built this “technical barrier.” I argue that by organizing and protecting the construction of such a fence, the police helped to constitute a space where global hegemony can manifest itself free of antisystemic dissent. Rulers and contenders, hegemony and counter-hegemony are spatially separated (Scholl & Freyberg-Inan 2011).

The construction of the fence, especially such a long time in advance, however, provided a new field for interactions between police and protest-
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ers. This way, the police had yet another “security concern”: the fence itself. Protestors thankfully accepted this object to stage interventions against this separation of power from dissent during the months before the actual summit. I also argue that the police rationales for the fence (not enough time, not enough space, and not enough people) mask the underlying function, which is political, namely, in order to incapacitate blockading tactics of protesters, the roads around Heiligendamm had to be inaccessible for dissenters. It suddenly sounds as if the “technical barrier” has not so much a security-related but a political function.

The first intervention at the fence took place during the press conference the police and the construction company held at the beginning of the construction on January 2007. A group called “action group fence inspection” appeared during this press conference with a banner saying: “Fence in capitalism,” and offered a red tape as being a more effective and cheaper method of fencing in not only Heiligendamm but all the G8 member states, so that they could not harm the rest of the world any more. This way, protesters turned around the logic of separation. Separation is necessary, not to protect the G8 meeting, but to protect the population of the policies of the G8 member states.

Only a month later, protesters took advantage of the carnival period to hold carnivalesque Olympic games next to the fence—”Heiligenlympics”—organized by the “Special De-construction Organization” (an ironic reference to the police department Kavala, officially called “Special Construction Organization”). After an ironic speech, several Olympic disciplines took place: throwing over the fence, tug of war with the fence, and volleyball. The last event, however, was interrupted by the police who wanted to check the identity cards of all participants, which was avoided by most participants by simply walking away.

By April, the Kavala department had prepared standardized ban order forms for the area of Heiligendamm. During a control visit at the Kavala department, the local data protection commissioner was reassured that bans would only be imposed on persons suspected of committing property damage at the fence (Datenschutzbeauftragter 2007). Notwithstanding, in the following weeks, there were many reports about ban orders applied to any “suspicious” visitor of this region.

One of the effects of the various interventions by protesters was growing media interest in the fence and the security operations. The Kavala department was stormed with questions about the function of the fence and their security concept. Public debate was incited by the obvious analogy of “the wall” being built in the former East Germany. Regional politicians felt this as a touchy point. Caffier, minister of internal affairs of this province,
comments: “The fence has for sure a certain symbolic force, which cannot be negated. I am an East German myself and can understand this very well. The only thing is: in the GDR you would have never been allowed to demonstrate in front of the wall.”

History turns out to be ironic, at times. A few weeks before the G8 summit, actually before Caffier gave this interview, the Kavala department had decreed a general directive concerning the territory surrounding the fence (see chapter 7). Essentially, this directive declared a strip of two to three kilometers around the fence as a no-protest zone (see appendix, map 1). This meant that demonstrating in front of this “wall” was legally impossible as well.

Isolating Spaces

One major task for authorities preparing a summit is the selection of the location. The most visible shift in the spatial control of summit protest in Europe was that from urban to rural locations. The comment of Reimann Maximilian, member of the Swiss Ständerat about the choice of Evian (being close to Geneva) for the 2003 G8 summit, demonstrates the dilemma for authorities: “The moment will come in which the normal citizen will start to rebel—because of the restricted freedom of movement, because of the high costs, because of the ‘neoimperialist’ implications, etc.”

The move to rural and remote areas significantly changed the spatial conditions within which protesters and police had to operate. Subsequent G8 summits in Evian in 2003 and Gleneagles in 2005 made clear that police forces profited from this spatial shift and were largely able to neutralize the impact of the attempted blockades. In this sense, the protests in Germany in 2007 marked the result of a learning process for protesters about how to use rural space effectively through a renewed application of the swarming logic.

Generally, the selection of the summit location is guided by protest avoidance, so as to reduce and diffuse mobilization. The chosen locations are often difficult for potential protesters to access, and have no clearly articulated activist culture in the region. Both were the case in Heiligendamm. Because Heiligendamm is a coastal place in the far northeastern part of Germany, this made it difficult for protesters to reach; it also left an extra option for planning alternative boat transport of delegates and journalists to the summit’s venue and reduced the potential size of the fence. The nearest city, Rostock, is better known for its right-wing football supporters than for its activist scene, and the two major cities of Germany, Hamburg and Berlin, are both about 300 kilometers away. Besides, Heiligendamm is situated in the province of Mecklenburg-Western Pomerania, part of the former East
Germany, and its poorest region, with high unemployment rates and a high emigration rate, especially among young people. However, inviting the heads of the other G8 countries to a region depicted as picturesque and idyllic was also meant to redefine Mecklenburg-Western Pomerania from an economically retarded region into a prosperous and beautiful tourist attraction.  

Designating key danger areas and potential targets was the first task of the operation section “space control” of Kavala. Through interactions around the fence, protesters found out about this. The reasoning behind many of the ban orders given to protesters in the region of Heiligendamm was alleged proximity to “endangered objects.” According to the data protection commissioner of Mecklenburg-Western Pomerania (2007b), there existed a list with 187 such objects, the only disadvantage being that this list was never made public, nor were the objects marked with a warning, which made it difficult to move in the region without being, at least once in a while, in proximity to such an object. The police reasoning behind this was that no institutions symbolizing globalization could be excluded. In cooperation with the intelligence services, the selection of the objects and the precise security measures were subjected to a constant risk reevaluation. 

So-called red or no-go zones are nowadays not only erected on the land, but also in the air and on the sea. As early as in the spring of 2006, the state government of Mecklenburg-Western Pomerania asked for the support of the German army in providing accommodation, as well as for intelligence operations in airspace and on the sea (Komitee für Grundrechte und Demokratie 2007: 127). Looking at various maps produced by the police makes clear how they try to maintain control by the partition of space. After being divided into functional units, space is then allocated to different police units. The territory within the fence, for example, is again subdivided into an inner circle and an outer circle. The Federal Criminal Police Office police had to control the inner circle. The outer circle was in the hands of the state police. The territory outside of the fence was subdivided into different operation units that were allocated among different provincial police units. 

Another preparations measure concerned barracks for the police units, jails for the potentially “violent” protesters, courts for rapidly convicting them, and hospitals. Especially created for the G8 summit was the press center in the harbor of Kühlungsborn, four kilometers to the west of Heiligendamm. This press center was constructed under the supervision of Kavala by a Dutch company that had realized similar projects before. The press center was intended to provide space for 4,000–5,000 journalists, who had to ask for an official accreditation to obtain access (20 journalists were
refused on the basis of recommendations by the Federal Criminal Police Office). This way, even journalists were isolated from both protesters and the summit. Police even channeled journalists’ route to the summit: they were supposed to be brought to a briefing center within the fence on a train. As the briefing center was still far away from the Kempinski Hotel, and only journalists having received a blue badge were allowed to join a guided tour close to the hotel, journalists with a yellow badge had to be content with the four daily briefings in the center.

In the weeks preceding the summit, Kavala stimulated the barricading of shops and houses both in Rostock and in Bad Doberan, a town just outside of the fence. This tactic had been used during every summit since the 2000 IMF/WB summit in Prague. When summits still took place in cities, local inhabitants were also actively encouraged to actually leave the city during the days of the summits. This tactic was part of broader psychological operations in order to criminalize dissent in advance (see chapter 6), as well as having spatial consequences: the field is cleared for a confrontation between only police and protesters. Also, from the perspective of the police, an empty city minimizes the danger of contagion through unexpected solidarity from locals. Protesters are preemptively isolated from the local population. As locals told me, Kavala even went so far as to demand that inhabitants not put critical banners on their houses expressing their solidarity with the protestors.

Beyond the region of Heiligendamm itself, another isolation tactic targeted the whole territory of the Federal Republic of Germany. Even before the week of protests, 3,000 federal police officers were patrolling the borders of Germany, as well as train stations, airports, and harbors. As in the case of the 2001 summit meetings in Gothenburg and Genoa, the European Schengen Agreement was suspended in order to be able to reintroduce strict border controls. In Genoa this resulted in massive border controls. The year before in Prague, the Italian Tute Bianche, arriving in an occupied train, were kept for nearly two days at the Czech border, because the police had declared some of them persona non grata. The tactic of border entry controls was supplemented by departure bans being applied to more than 80 persons in Germany. These persons had to register daily at a local police office during the entire time of the Genoa protests. Besides these extensive border controls, the two major train stations in Genoa were closed for the time of the summit, as well as the airport and the toll stations on highways to Genoa.

Whereas authorities attempt to isolate the spaces of their summit meetings, protesters consciously choose to confront the G8 on these loca-
tions. During the mobilization phase of more than two years, several debates questioned whether going to Heiligendamm and trying to blockade the actual summit was the right thing to do. While this debate went on until the end, and also resulted in some attempts to stage decentralized actions against the G8 in other places, it became clear that Heiligendamm would become a major focus of the protests. Already in 2005, during the protests against the G8 summit in Gleneagles, a few protesters stood with a banner in front of the Kempinski Hotel in Heiligendamm in order to announce the upcoming wave of resistance. A year later, in the summer of 2006, an international preparatory camp (called “Camp-inski,” a playful variation on the name of the hotel) was organized in the region of Heiligendamm, with the purpose of getting to know the region and making contact with the local population. One activist reflects on this preparatory camp:

Camp-inski was very useful for different reasons. First it was showing in a nutshell what the idea was for the next year: a camp including actions and workshops, etc., as an example for all the camps that were to come. Besides, it created the opportunity for debates about content and strategy. But at least as important was that activists from abroad had the opportunity to see and experience the region and—something impossible during the summit—to watch the summit’s venue. And vice versa, the local inhabitants had a chance to get to know the activists, about whom they would otherwise hear crazy stories.

A first attempt of protesters to link the global struggle to the local scale can be found in their attempts to mirror their critique of global power struggles in local community conflicts. Probably the best example is the attempts of the Fundus group—of which the Kempinski Hotel is part—to privatize the beach and large parts of the town of Heiligendamm and the surrounding area. A local citizen initiative has contested these privatization attempts for several years. Summit protesters took up these concerns and had an excellent case to show what effects the economic policies of the global elite, as represented by the G8, can have in a concrete local context.

The clearest intervention against the privatization attempts of the Kempinski Hotel was a giant “No G8” painting on one of the empty buildings that were bought by Kempinski, in sight of the buildings where the G8 leaders were going to meet and sleep. Only a few weeks before the summit, some activists managed to paint several hours during one night without being noticed by the police. In a declaration on the Internet, the
painters made clear that they wanted to force the authorities to take a decision: either they had to repaint a house (that anyway would be demolished only a few weeks after the summit), or they had to arrange a demolition before the summit. Neither happened, and so, in June, the G8 leaders had to enjoy their great view of an oppositional message.

Another step in the activists’ efforts was to identify concrete targets where interventions against global capitalism could be staged. These maps can be seen as counter-representations of “conceived space,” the dominant representation of space as conceived of by authorities. The first result of the contestation of these dominant representations was an “action map” that introduced several dozen places that could potentially be targeted in the region, ranging from test fields for genetically modified crops to detention centers for immigrants, as well as military infrastructures. Interestingly, the maps that were distributed in the action camps during the week of protest one year later were geographically detailed, providing information about the fence and the road net, without mentioning further action targets.

Activists’ attempts to connect various scales were not, however, restricted to the region of Mecklenburg-Western Pomerania. Meetings of the G8 ministers in other German cities in the months before the actual summit were met by organized protest events to make a concrete connection with the mobilization to Heiligendamm. This way, protesters demonstrated that global power relations can potentially be attacked in many places. Another scaling effort was to tie the protest against the G8 into other ongoing mobilizations, such as the protests against the annual security conference in Munich. This way, protesters made clear that the G8 summit is not an isolated phenomenon but interconnected with social problems on different scales.

Finally, protesters created an alternative infrastructure foreclosing isolation. In March 2007, a convergence center was started in an old school building in Rostock that was going to function as a welcoming and networking space for activists arriving in the weeks and days preceding the summit protests. Convergence spaces were also established in Berlin and Hamburg for facilitating foreign activists on their way to Rostock. For many years now, such convergence centers belong to the vast repertoire of summit protesters in Europe. More important was the organization of action camps where protesters could stay for the whole week of protests. While authorities first tried to channel protesters into a remote site in Bützow, which is approximately 20 kilometers away from Heiligendamm, it became clear that a substantial number of protesters would not be satisfied with this offer. They insisted on proximity to the fence in order to make successful interventions possible. In the course of difficult negotiations, the police tried to forbid landowners from negotiating with activists without informing the authorities. Still,
the camp organizers managed to get a hold of three spaces with room for a total of 20,000 protesters (see appendix, map 2). The insistence on camp sites close to the summit resulted from the experiences of the 2005 G8 in Gleneagles and the 2003 G8 in Evian where camp sites had been too far removed from the summit venue to facilitate effective blockades of the access roads. Building on the accumulative experience of organizing protest in rural areas, protesters also organized an alternative media center and various action information points in Rostock, Bad Doberan, and other places in the region (see appendix, map 3).

Reducing Safe Space

In June 2008, Western-Swiss television (TSR) broadcasted a program that revealed that a local chapter of ATTAC, part of an international network campaigning against neoliberal globalization, had been infiltrated from 2003 to 2004 by the private security company “Securitas” under contract by the multinational corporation Nestlé. A few weeks later another such case is revealed: the antirepression group of Lausanne had also been infiltrated for about the same period. It is certainly no coincidence that, because of the company’s involvement in the promotion and diffusion of genetically modified crops, several of the groups mobilizing against the 2003 G8 in Evian were engaged in a campaign against Nestlé. ATTAC, a network focusing on awareness-raising rather than direct action, was accused by the lawyers of Nestlé after the G8 summit of preparing violent demonstrations.

In 2010 another case of infiltration, this time by UK state authorities, was revealed: Mark Kennedy spent more than seven years undercover and monitored and participated in protest groups, actions, summit protests and preparation in at least 22 countries (Monroy 2011). He was not the only one. Another two undercover officer were revealed, but Kennedy himself talks about 20 officers having been active with him. He was, among others, deeply involved in the G8 protests in Germany, and parliamentary questions about his involvement have revealed that German authorities knew about the UK undercover officers because five German undercover cops had been to the 2005 G8 protests in Gleneagles. Taking the current evidence into account (which may well be only the tip of the iceberg), we are talking about dozens of (wo)man years of research.

Infiltration is one important tactic of the broader arsenal of surveillance (Marx 1970, 1988). As this example of the G8 summit in Evian reveals, it is not necessarily only state authorities who employ surveillance tactics. Because uncovering corporate involvement in surveillance is even more difficult to trace through documents, the bulk of empirical evidence
about surveillance and infiltration is therefore still predominantly about state authorities (Earl 2003). Unfortunately, this gap could not be filled by this research. What I can contribute to the discussion of surveillance, however, is the way it influences the spatial interaction between police and protesters in the preparatory phase.

In Discipline and Punish, Foucault (1977a) describes a shift of power mechanisms from working through direct enforcement (punishment) to working indirectly by having people internalize the disciplinary gaze (surveillance). Foucault describes certain mechanisms of spatial division as ingredient to this new form of social control. To this end, he shows how modern institutions, such as the jail, the school, or the hospital, rely on refining techniques of enclosure, segmentation, subdivision of function-related units, and ranking. These techniques deploy an operational type of power that produces individuals and subjects rather than repressing them. Exemplary for the spatial organization of this type of control is the Panopticon. Whereas the Panopticon opens the possibility to monitor everyone at any time, the crucial point about this technique is that subjects reckon with this surveillance. The ultimate effect of surveillance is the internalization of expected behavior and thus self-surveillance. Disciplinary power results in self-discipline. What I want to show here is how the disciplinary tactic of surveillance fits into the emerging biopolitical form of control by focusing surveillance not only on individuals but flows of people and their spatial containment.

Looking at the known instances of surveillance preceding the G8 summit in Germany, one can discern a spatial logic of the authorities that attempts to reduce safe spaces. By safe spaces I mean spaces where protesters feel (relatively) free from control. The encroachment on safe spaces has three important effects: the police can gather intelligence about (potential) protesters; authorities are concretely disturbing the preparations and the infrastructure of protesters (independently from surveillance being anticipated or really taking place); finally, surveillance scares people and therefore results in a withdrawal of potential protesters and the internalization of social control. All three effects of the encroachment of safe spaces include a logic of spatial control. It is, to put it in Foucault’s terminology, as if a disease would be monitored in order to avoid further contamination.

Introduced in 2006, the new public order legislation of Mecklenburg-Western Pomerania has significantly enhanced the possibilities for preemptive surveillance measures. In the months preceding the actual summit, the space chosen for the manifestation of global hegemonic forces was subjected to careful monitoring. The police installed cameras at the bridges of nearby highways leading to Heiligendamm and Rostock in order to register all license plates of cars moving in this region not possessing a local code.
Protest information events and preparatory meetings held in the region were exposed to police surveillance. As early as January 2006 the police took photos of people leaving an information event in Schwerin. Here is the account of one of the Info-tour organizers:

In early 2006, I made a presentation in Schwerin, hosted by ATTAC. After the presentation was over, someone told me that four men in an auto across the street were photographing everyone who left the event. They did this with open windows in the car, even though the temperature at that time was –5°C. I immediately went across the street and confronted them. A colleague of mine told them he suspected them of being police. They then showed us identification saying they were with the criminal investigation police of Mecklenburg-Western Pomerania.

During the weeks preceding the G8 summit, police subjected the convergence center in Rostock to permanent observation. Random identity controls were required of protesters using this space. The police report about the observations of the convergence center during the March international preparatory meeting provide a vital picture of what the police were interested in: the focus of this report clearly lies on identifying “violent” protesters (BAO Kavala 2007a: 5–6). The police also issued an order that hotel owners had to supply the names of guests that had reserved rooms for the period of the G8 summit. And in April it became public that a US frigate was stationed in the harbor of Rostock with the necessary technical equipment to tap phone calls made in the entire region.

Extensive observation was also applied during all the G8-related interventions in the public space preceding the actual summit. For example, the German intelligence services claimed the logs of all the cell phones that were switched on during two preparatory meetings of the autonomous Dissent! network in October 2005 and January 2006. Yet another tactic of preemptive surveillance with clear spatial dimension are house raids. The G8-related house raids started in January 2007 with 11 house searches in Munich and intensified afterward until the 9th of May, when about 9,000 police officers searched 40 private houses and activist projects in Germany. The general federal prosecution gave the green light for this massive house search project because of the alleged danger of all the concerned individuals and organizations being involved in the “formation of a terrorist association with the goal to prevent the G8 summit.” On that same day, on the public television channel ZDF evening news, a spokesperson of the federal general prosecution declared, “the current investigations are intended to provide evidence
about the structures and personal composition of these groups and were not initiated to prevent concrete attacks. For this threat we have no evidence” (my translation). Even more illustrative is the answer given by an investigator to the German magazine Spiegel Online: “We shot into the bush to see what is moving there.” The searches triggered serious indignation among protesters, who responded with spontaneous demonstrations that same day in at least 10 German and several foreign cities. The house raids created a wave of sympathy and solidarity statements. Many protesters welcomed this police tactic as productive for their own mobilization efforts. After this wave of house raids, more savory details about police surveillance came to the fore. One of the most controversial ones—reminding Germans about spying activities in the GDR—were odor samples the police took during the raids from persons under investigation at that moment. Another tactic revealed shortly after the house raids was GPS tracking devices mounted on the car of at least one person under investigation. Again, this tactic served to reconstruct a “movement profile” of individual protesters, tracing the places they frequent. Finally, a week before the summit, it was revealed that the police—directly present in a post office—were checking suspicious letters within several districts of Hamburg, namely, districts with important activist projects. Though executed by the state police department, the most surveillance was organized by the Federal Criminal Police Office. It was hardly surprising to hear that the Federal Criminal Police Office police indeed had a separate database called “G8” that served to gather information about individuals, groups, and objects and to trace relations between them.

Next to intimidation (dealt with in chapter 6), one of the effects of surveillance on (potential) protesters is the internalization of social control. This means that protesters actually start to control themselves, or cooperate with the authorities in being controlled. A clear example of this is ATTAC that had organized various trains full of protesters going to Heiligendamm. Beforehand, however, ATTAC agreed with police that plainclothes police officers would control and observe the trains. Social control is internalized as self-control, and in result it becomes easier for the police to contain those protesters not willing to cooperate in their own control.

Rendering Disruption Unlikely

For understanding the spatial interactions evolving during summit protests another tactical innovation of summit protesters is crucial: the accommodation of a diversity of tactics through the establishment of clearly separated
spaces. As Chris Hurl points out, diversity of tactics was in a way an unavoidable innovation in a context where many different protest traditions come together for one protest event. Hurl also argues that the coexistence of multiple tactical preferences was enabled through “the segmentation of the space-time of the event” (Hurl 2005: 52). Looking at the map drawn by activists for the protests in Prague in 2000, one can note that protesters were swarming toward the convention center from various directions. Different colors were marking the various routes. During the early phase of summit protests, colors were used by protesters to designate routes, areas, or specific days for certain tactics, in order to accommodate the application of various tactical preferences. Usually tactics were separated according to the level of militancy, and therefore to the anticipated level of risk concerning police violence and possible detention.

In Prague, for example, four colors structured the day of action against the IMF and World Bank meeting: red signified the demonstration route of socialist and Trotskyite groups that did not participate in the blockades; pink was the color of the Pink & Silver route where protesters, accompanied by samba bands, tried to approach the conference center with “tactical frivolity”; yellow designated the march of the Tute Bianche bloc who staged a symbolic confrontation with their padded bodies on the Nuselski Bridge leading to the conference center; the color blue was used for the black bloc.

In Prague the tactical diversity of these spatial logics was exploited by activists to their full advantage. While Tute Bianche tied a substantial amount of the available riot police on the bridge, the black bloc entertained the remaining part in what can be considered a full-fledged riot on one side of the conference center. When it was clear that there was no way to break through the police lines with stones and Molotov cocktails in order to reach the conference center, the black bloc was led away by the Infernal Noise Brigade, a street protest brass band from Seattle, and redirected to the side from where the Pink & Silver march nearly had reached the site of the summit. The Czech police effectively had lost the control of the summit’s space.

**Cracking Diversity of Tactics**

The tactical defeat of the police in Prague could not remain unanswered. The spatial interactions at the 2001 EU summit in Gothenburg and at the 2001 G8 in Genoa reveal how this was accomplished tactically. The coordinated spatial division of various tactics was torpedoed by the police. Police clearly aimed at the annihilation of the spatial separation of tactics in order to be able to charge indiscriminately and randomly.
The EU summit in Gothenburg is an excellent example of how this worked. On the first day of the summit, when US president George W. Bush arrived, police surrounded the Hvitfeldtska School building, which was granted to the protesters by the municipality. Being fairly close to the EU summit venue, the school served as a convergence center, food kitchen, and sleeping place for about 650 protesters, and was coordinated by the Ya Basta network (inspired by the Zapatistas and the Italian Tute Bianche). Without ever presenting any evidence, police claimed that protesters used the school to prepare criminal activities and to store offensive weapons and arrested several hundred people. When police arrived, the first reaction of protesters was to protect themselves by putting vans and cars in front of the entrance in order to avoid masses of police storming in at the same moment. Later, the police started to surround the school and the surrounding neighborhood with huge containers so that the activists could not break out. Yet, the trapped protesters attempted to break out collectively, applying the white overall tactic of self-protection. The police responded to the attempted breakout with escalated force. Starting to beat up people randomly, police stormed into the schoolyard with horses. Some protesters responded by fighting back.

The second step of annihilating the separation between various tactics was relatively easy to accomplish in the wake of the anger that arose among protestors after the raid on the Hvitfeldtska School. The same day clashes occurred between police and roughly 2,000 protestors nearby Vasa Park. The following day the police attacked a 2,000-person-strong anti-capitalist rally with dogs, and soon after a riot unleashed. The second day of the EU summit ended with the police chasing and attacking any assembly and all the activists close to the summit venue. The two most outstanding examples are the incidents at the Viktoria Bridge and at a “Reclaim the Streets” party in the evening. In the first case, police aggressively pushed a group of protesters from the bridge into the space of the Free Forum, a space for debates and discussion that was co-organized by the city of Gothenburg. There, police started to beat up people randomly, pretending to chase people who had been involved in the clashes earlier that day. In the evening, a peacefully dancing crowd of people attending a Reclaim the Streets party at Vasaplatsen was attacked by police without any warning. Heavy riots broke out, during which one protester was injured critically by live ammunition fired by two policemen. Two other protesters suffered injuries resulting from ricochets. In such a context, diversity of tactics was effectively inhibited.

One month later, about 200,000 protesters converged in Genoa in Italy to protest against the G8 summit. The first day of the summit meet-
ing marks a preliminary climax of police protester interactions in Europe, painfully corroborated by the dead body of the 21-year-old protester Carlo Giuliani. The Italian police continued the lines that were set out in Gothenburg in order to counter the protesters’ diversity of tactics, dissolving the spatial separation of protest tactics and escalating less militant tactics in order to criminalize and charge protesters indifferently. The protesters’ explicit aim was to attack the fence and intrude the red zone around the harbor of Genoa. By subdividing the space around the red zone into different thematic areas, diversity of tactics was accommodated. It is interesting to note that in Genoa the authorities themselves adapted color codes for designating spaces. Besides the “red zone” encircled by a huge fence construction, there was a “yellow zone” marking an area around the red zone where protest was officially banned. On the side of the protesters, however, no specific starting point or zone was established for militant black bloc tactics (Becky 2001: 72). Looking at the spatial distribution of the other tactics around the red zone, it becomes clear that there was little chance for a black bloc not to interfere with any other protest group. Still, black bloc protesters attempted to avoid such a scenario and started to attack corporate property in the hours before the other groups were gathering and far away from their gathering points. The police did not intervene against these direct actions and neither attempted to keep the black bloc out of the city center (Andretta et al. 2003: 148). Only when groups of black-clad protesters moved toward the red zone in order to join or support other groups did police start to chase them, however, right away into other groups.

The roughly a thousand-person-strong Pink & Silver march was one of the few groups that actually did arrive at the fence in the north, next to where peaceful protesters had staged a symbolic sit-in blockade. When a few people attacked the fence with dumpsters and started to climb it, the police responded immediately with water cannons from behind the fence. Afterward, police started shooting tear gas canisters. Then, police charged the whole Pink & Silver march and some groups were beaten up brutally while running away. Others, staying behind and defending themselves against the police’s attack with defensive barricades and by hurling back tear gas canisters, were attacked and chased away by the peaceful groups who considered these forms of self-defense a breach of their consensus on non-violence (Farrer 2002).29

In the Via Tolemaide, a street that is enclosed by railway tracks from one side, the 10,000-person-strong march of the Tute Bianche was attacked by a police squad, even before reaching the official endpoint outside of the red zone. This police squad had actually been ordered to move to the north
in order to prevent corporate property being trashed by a black bloc.\textsuperscript{30} The attack of the police provoked the front lines of the Tute Bianche to defend themselves by throwing stones and barricading the street with dumpsters and cars. As a result, the whole march got dispersed throughout the surrounding small streets of Genoa’s city center, where battles between police and protesters continued. Police even used armored vehicles to push protesters, in some cases, to the outskirts of the city, using a tactic called “carousel” in Italy: turning around in a circle with vehicles in order to disperse protesters without having any control over whom they might possibly hit. In one of these side-street confrontations Carlo Giuliani was killed. By this moment, the spatial separation of protest tactics had been dissolved effectively and the situation around the red zone reminded an urban warfare situation with small battles between police and protesters ensuing at many places.

There are several conclusions that can be taken from this analysis of the interaction between police and protesters during this early phase of summit protests. In all cases, Prague, Gothenburg, and Genoa, the police did not choose to protect the city itself. This became especially visible in Genoa where police forces did not intervene against the black bloc, although it appeared long before the other marches were about to start. Instead of protecting the city, police chose to focus their spatial agency on the protection of either the conference center or the fence surrounding it. When this tactic appeared to be unsuccessful in Prague, it was accomplished by annihilating the spatial separation of tactics in order to be able to charge and disperse protesters indiscriminately. The culmination of these tactics could be witnessed on the last day of the G8 protests in Genoa, when a 300,000-person-strong march against the G8 and police violence was attacked with brutal force and tons of tear gas.

\textit{Spatial Incapacitation}

The 2000 summit protests in Gothenburg and Genoa have been clear examples of sovereign power punishing delinquent behavior by applying coercion. The subsequent 2003, 2005, and 2007 G8 protests in Evian, Gleneagles, and Heiligendamm became symptomatic for a more biopolitical type of spatial control. Instead of social control mechanisms being directed toward the protection and control of a territory, they are now focused on a possible event that needs to be avoided by channeling the flows of protesters: the spatial disruption of summit meetings. A tactical approach that has been crucial in achieving this goal can be called spatial incapacitation.\textsuperscript{31} Incapacitation tactics deprive protesters of their most powerful spatial repertoire: to move,
“Leave them no space!”

and therefore, to be unpredictable as to where their movements can inhibit the flows necessary for a summit protest.

The weapons used by the police reflect this shift. In Prague, Gothenburg, and Genoa offensive weapons prevailed: batons, tonfas, dogs, horses, vehicles, pepper spray, CS and CN gas, concussion grenades, water cannons, rubber bullets, and guns. All of them are crowd-dispersal weapons that perfectly serve to dissolve protestors’ spatial separation tactics. In Evian, Gleneagles, and Heiligendamm, however, a different set of police weapons prevailed: mass and preventive arrests, ban orders, snatch squads, police lines and barriers, corralling, surveillance, and raids on activist infrastructure.

Spatial incapacitation implies an increasing focus of authorities on the preparatory phase. The measures taken during the preparations, however, have important effects on the interactions during summit protests. As Crosby points out, spatial regulations also have the effect of legitimizing a violent police response when such regulations are not adhered to (Crosby 2008: 8). Biopolitical forms of power thus help to shift the borders of sovereign power: more and more movements of protesters constitute a transgressive act and therefore may be penalized. The way in which police respond to protesters that are actually trying to breach the erected fences around summit meetings demonstrates how the anticipated “disruption” can become a self-fulfilling prophecy. Noakes et al. (2005: 251) convincingly make the point that incapacitation tactics may achieve undesired results for the police:

This suggests that spatial dynamics are shaped by factors related to the relationship between police and protesters, particularly police expectations of disorder. The irony is that strategic incapacitation tactics may create tension between police and protesters, and police expectations of transgressiveness may become a self-fulfilling prophecy.

However, by a shift from sovereign to biopolitical control mechanisms, I mean that the latter have become more prevalent, which is not to say that the former have disappeared entirely. Nevertheless, after the 2001 G8 in Genoa, strategic incapacitation tactics have been used much more systematically. The most recurring tactic employed by the police on the streets is dividing crowds in order to separate allegedly “passive” from “active” protesters and “bystanders” by using protest pens and corralling. The 300,000-person-strong “Make Poverty History” march in Edinburgh on the Saturday before the G8 summit started was a vivid example. Barriers marking the boundaries in which the march had to move demarcated
the entire route of the demonstration through the city center. Here and there, the barriers narrowed the space to pass in order to slow down the crowd. Some openings provided the possibility to leave the march, but police officers carefully watched that people would not enter again at these points. Any act not confining itself to these prescribed protest spaces was considered “transgressive” and therefore had to be stopped.

During the blockades at the opening of the 2005 G8 summit a conflict ensued between the decentralized blockades and a registered march from Auchterarder to the fence, exploited tactically by the police. The Scottish police had changed in the last moment the conditions of the march and only allowed for 5,000 participants and demanded an order service to be put in place by protesters. On the roads to Auchterarder (a village very close to the G8 venue in Gleneagles), police withheld buses of protesters going to the march saying that blockades were in their way. This turned out not be true, but still resulted in the G8 Alternatives alliance, who had organized the march, being furious about the blockaders.

Invoking the advice of Sun Tzu (2008), I call the tactical approach of the Scottish and British police in Scotland one of “supreme excellence”: the police won without actually engaging in fighting. Moreover, a disruption of the flows of the summit meeting had been successfully inhibited. This result was achieved through an administration of space that focused on the reduction of activists’ mobility. For this reason, Gorringe and Rosie (2007) are mistaken when they describe the policing of the G8 summit in Scotland as a success of facilitation and cooperation. They seem to have incorporated the police’s goal in their analysis, and quite to the contrary, the spatial management of police incapacitated the goals of transgressive summit protesters by channeling them into predictable spaces.

Whereas the disruptive tactics of summit protesters had been spatially incapacitated, there still was an image of transgression that circulated through the world’s media. When the march organized by G8 Resistance (a coalition of Trotskyite and socialist groups) could finally start with about 5,000 participants from Auchterarder, an unexpected scenario unfolded. Walking next to the fence that was erected widely around the conference venue, a small group broke away from the march, started to jiggle the fence, and within a few moments the triangular steel construction collapsed. The march halted and more people approached the unexpected entry. For a moment, it looked as if everyone was too surprised about the sudden opportunity. Hesitantly, protesters started to walk in a rather uncoordinated way into the forbidden territory and the few police officers present retreated slowly,
until riot police were brought in by helicopters. Within seconds, the flow was reversed and police started aggressively to push protesters out. The pictures of this symbolic breach of the spatial control were not typical for the interaction between protesters and police during that week. Further on, I will show how the German police organized spatially for avoiding such a form of symbolic disruption.

Reducing Safe Space

The most obvious tactic for reducing safe spaces applied during summit protests is raiding the infrastructure of protesters. Having been applied since the 2000 IMF/WB protests in Prague, the shift to preemptive control mechanisms can be seen, however, in the way these raids are executed. The raid and eviction of the convergence center in Prague, for example, happened the day after protesters successfully had surrounded the summit meetings. Whereas this raid undoubtedly complicated the protesters’ organizing efforts for the next few days, it can also be seen as a punishment for the transgressive and successful protests that had been taking place the previous day. A similar logic of control could be observed during the protests in Genoa, albeit much more aggressively. In the evening of the last day of protests, approximately several hundred police officers stormed the Diaz-Pascoli and the Diaz-Pertini school buildings, which were granted to the protesters by the municipality. Police reasoned that “violent” protesters were using the schools as hiding places and that they expected to find evidence for the planning of the riots that occurred during the two previous days. Everyone in these two buildings were arrested, several dozens of people were beaten and sent to hospitals, all the computers, cameras, and video recorders were confiscated and the (audio)visual material destroyed (which meant loosing evidence for the police brutality during the protests).

After Genoa, raids on activist infrastructure as a tactic for reducing safe spaces were widely predicated on a preemptive logic of control. This was clearly the case when police raided the l’Usine during the summit protests in Evian, a self-organized social center in Geneva that served as independent media center, on the day of blockades, and one of the two camps, La Bourdonette in Lausanne, which had been granted by the local authorities. These two raids point to a new logic of social control. Although disruptive actions were used as a pretext for justifying the raids, it is clear that the raids of the camp and the independent media center incapacitated the protesters tactically in their attempts to disrupt the summit. Rather
than punishing or penalizing protesters, the raids had preemptive effects on the actions of the coming days. Reducing safe spaces minimized the possibilities for disruption.

The Scottish police implemented this tactical goal even more effectively. In the night preceding the first day of the G8 summit in Gleneagles, which was to be met with decentralized blockades of the access roads, police started to enclose the camp from the only side it could be freely accessed. Most protesters, however, had planned for this eventuality and had left the camp already in order to sleep in the woods. Many of the protesters that had stayed behind still could get out of the camp by breaching the police lines with a “suicidal march” (Tina 2005). Thus, while police were not able to prevent protesters from leaving the camp, they created an extra obstacle to be reckoned with. In effect, the blockading actions had to start on the afternoon before the summit, when groups tried to find ways to leave the camp unsuspicious and come somehow close to the roads leading to the summit venue 20 miles away (see appendix, map 4). The second day of the summit the camp was still surrounded by police. Anyone could come in and small groups were allowed to leave, but normally only if identifying themselves. This made it very difficult to stage blockades on the second day.35

In Germany, the raids on activist infrastructure began even before all camps had been set up. When a convoy of buses and cars arrived on the May 31, 2007, in order to set up the smallest of the three camps in Wichmannsdorf, they were stopped shortly before getting there by large numbers of police who claimed that the bikes brought by the convoy could be stolen. The subsequent searches took several hours and the caravan had to set up the camp in the middle of the night. Besides delaying the camp preparations, this raid also had the effect that the police could register all the personal details of the persons being part of the camp preparation. Stolen bikes, however, never were found.36 The night before the first day of the summit, the German police executed a similar operation as the British police in 2005. They surrounded the major camp in Rostock and started to make extensive identity controls. Many protesters were searched, two were arrested, and many objects confiscated, often without providing any reason.

The reduction of safe spaces is also characterized by a heavy increase in surveillance techniques during protests. During the summit protests in Scotland and Germany, video cameras were virtually everywhere. Protesters were filmed when arriving at the station, when entering or leaving the camp, and when participating in a demonstration. Not only cameras are used, however, to trace the movements of protesters. Also helicopters are used for
constantly following the flows of protesters and observing gathering places and camps. For the 2007 G8 in Heiligendamm, the German police even requested the help of the German army for taking photos with a Tornado fighter jet (see chapter 7).

**The End of Symbolic Disruption?**

German authorities were quite aware that any disruption of the planned flow of the G8 summit might provide the protesters an “ideological success.” The Mecklenburg-Western Pomerania Ministry of Internal Affairs secretary Frank Niehörster (2007) stated: “We are quite aware that already the most minimal disruption of protocol could make not only our province, but the entire Federal Republic, the focus of international critique and bestow an at least partial ideological success on the disrupters” (my translation). A similar image as the breaching of the fence in Scotland had to be avoided. Time to return to the latest tactical innovation by protesters that I have introduced at the beginning of this chapter: the “five-finger tactic.”

I have argued that the five-finger tactic has been an effective innovation for reaching a blockading point, which left the police unprepared and collapsed their ability to control the flow of protesters. Referring back to success of the police in Scotland, we can say now that the approach of the BlockG8 alliance resulted in “supreme excellence” for protesters: this time, they won without fighting. Two of the three entrances into the red zone were entirely blocked by the BlockG8 mass blockades until the summit ended. Also the third entrance was blocked for most of the daytime due to protesters organizing autonomous blockades. Moreover, there were many groups staging decentralized and often small blockades, including barricades, on the nearby roads. However, there remain two questions: why did the G8 summit continue as if nothing had happened? And, why was there not any picture of symbolic disruption at the huge fence, especially since the fence triggered so much attention before the summit protests?

In order to answer these questions we have to turn to the next step in the interactions during summit protests. This step is precisely intended to incapacitate symbolic disruption by containing the effects of the spatial tactics of summit protesters. Containment fits well within the framework of biopolitical control by making an event (read: disruption), even if it may be purely symbolic in its effects, unlikely to happen. In stark contrast to sovereign forms of control, containment relies on a combination of restricted acceptance of illegal actions or unregistered assemblies and, through this, incapacitating disruptive effects of those events, often by forcing protesters...
to internalize self-discipline and upholding the restrictions placed on their illegal actions or channeling and incapacitating them.

To be certain, the German police did attempt to withhold the two marches from reaching their blockading points. Especially the groups starting from the camp in Rostock in order to reach Börgerende were confronted with brutal police reactions, but the collective intelligence as manifested in the five-finger tactic indeed proved to be supreme. Interestingly, however, police did not stage a serious attempt to dissolve any of the two mass blockades despite the fact that both of them lasted for two days and had been significantly less populated during the nights and the second day of the summit. Was it tactically more intelligent to keep thousands of protesters within a rather confined and easy to control space? As observed elsewhere, this raises the question of how far protesters had confined themselves to a space that had been abandoned by the state instead of further pushing the boundaries (Müller & Sol 2007). Therefore, I want to turn to what happened at the mass blockades and why activists chose this self-discipline.

The BlockG8 alliance has been the result of a long and complicated process for the establishment of an action consensus that would allow for both broad participation through transparency and acceptance of different forms of blockading. One important action consensus was not to behave in an offensive way, thus not to attack the police. In order to coordinate the action and to ensure that—after a series of trainings—participants would comply with the guidelines, a general action committee was formed. After the riot on the preceding Saturday, BlockG8 insisted emphatically on the appointment about the non-offensive approach. When the two chosen blockading points had been reached the BlockG8 alliance was seemingly relieved that their approach had functioned. Shifting to an increasingly defensive and precautionary stance, the BlockG8 action committee insisted resolutely on blockaders’ compliance with the action guidelines. Many protesters criticized this attitude and started to feel like cannon fodder for a staged and pre-negotiated protest game. One participant in the east gate blockade summarized the situation like this:

But, getting thousands of people from camp to road is one thing. Maintaining a successful blockade once there is something else. The Block G8 secret ‘action committees’ did a great job getting us all onto the road and I was happy to follow them there. But sustaining the blockades required participation by all the blockaders and consensus decision-making, and Block G8 were reluctant to give up their power. So at the East gate we suffered a number of
highly frustrating meetings on Wednesday evening, as the Block G8 action committee dominated discussions—taking full advantage of their ‘ownership’ of megaphones and the sound system and of the authority they’d won through their successful leadership in getting us onto the road. In short, they behaved like arseholes, accusing anyone who disagreed with them of attempting to destroy the ‘action consensus’ and of being intent only on ‘escalation.’ At one point, they suggested that if they didn’t get their way, the blockade would no longer be under the auspices of Block G8—this was a despicable attempt on their part to delegitimise our action, which would have made it easier for the state to repress and criminalise. In fact, the blockade was in danger of falling apart altogether as Block G8 claimed that we’d achieved our objective and ordered a retreat. This retreat was halted only when two people sat down in the road in front of the sound system to prevent it leaving: blockading the blockaders!

Beside of the critique of the hierarchical decision-making process during the blockades, this comment makes clear that the tactical repertoire of Block G8 was exhausted after the sit-in blockades were in place. From that moment on, the action committee actually complied with the police’s desire not to let anything unexpected happen. This inflexibility also had to do with previous tactical choices. Block G8 had engaged in a broad international campaign to gain legitimacy for their planned blockades. On the one hand, this campaign projected the possibility of disrupting the business of global hegemonic forces, and, on the other hand, an image of such disobedience being legitimate. Therefore, the focus was set on maintaining the sit-in blockades. The fence as a target for symbolic disruption had withered away.

The two mass blockades were complemented by decentralized blockades, an approach that had been launched by the PAULA initiative. Their first call explains how to reach the overall aim of “zero traffic to and from Heiligendamm and for an entirely different entirety”:

To get started and to disturb the course of the meeting as comprehensively as possible, we place our bet on a circle of bigger and smaller blockades, massive and massing, multiple and decentral [sic], that in time advance closer and closer to the G8. Besides sitting, standing and walking mass blockades this will include the construction of barricades and eventually the defence of barricades.
Direct actions of small affinity groups, the appearance of the Rebel Clown Army, creative actions of incalculable activists or the tying down of police units in black bloc actions will complement the scenario. (PAULA 2006)

This call indeed resulted in several groups making their way independent of the two BlockG8 mass blockades in order to erect mobile or immobile barricades, and demolish the road and police cars. However, the explicit focus is again to achieve disruption by blockades. The fence has not been in the picture of the tactical considerations of the PAULA initiative. Breaching the material separation between global elites and challengers has not been part of the tactical repertoire of protesters in Germany.

The authorities seemed to have prepared for such a scenario. Instead of fighting for free roads, the flow of the summit meeting was guaranteed by air and sea traffic. This is not to say that police did not intervene. Especially at the west gate several harsh police interventions took place to clear the autonomously organized mass blockades. Looking at what happened during the three days of the summit, one can say that the police had contained the space surrounding the summit, since a meaningful disruption of the flows of the summit was not possible. Instead, they focused on the avoidance of a picture that could constitute a symbolic disruption and a clear sign of dissent. Nothing accomplished by the protesters should look like a potential victory against the G8 and the security forces. While at first glance protesters seem to have achieved this anyway with the pictures of the five fingers circumventing police lines, police effectively prevented that afterward any picture of dissent was produced.

This sheds also a light on the tactical adaptation capacity of police. Whereas fences have originally been introduced as a standardized element in the preparatory phase in order to prevent the disruption of the flows of a summit, they created a new opportunity for protesters for a symbolic disruption. In Genoa and Gleneagles we have witnessed organized attempts to breach the fence, which resulted in strong pictures circulating in the media. This prompted the police to attempt to inhibit such symbolic forms of disruption. Suddenly, the fence, intended to support the police’s control of flows, posed a new security problem. This might help to explain the aforementioned cacophony of official explanations for the fence. Some of the cited persons might have sensed that the fence was a little contradictory in terms of security considerations and therefore expanded its repertoire of potential functions.
As an occasional but passionate chess player, I learned an important lesson a few years ago. “Don’t focus on your or my chess pieces, focus on the space,” someone told me. Seemingly banal advice opened an entirely different way for me to look at a chess game. After a while, I was indeed not focusing on individual figures any more but on horizontal, vertical, and diagonal lines. My chess playing improved significantly. Instead of “repressing” my opponent, I incapacitated his flows, leaving more space for the flow of my figures. In a similar way, one can look at the development of the social control of space during summit protests. Focusing on the elimination of a disease (read: disruption), police try to channel and to contain the spatial flows of summit protesters.

In response to protesters’ tactical innovation of decentralized swarming and tactical diversity, authorities have found tactical adaptations to regain spatial control. My analysis of the role of space during preparations has unraveled how space is produced socially through the interactions of police and protesters before summits even start. After years of preparation, the battleground is prepared, or as people tend to say: “everything is in its place.” Starting with the construction of a gigantic fence around the hotel in Heiligendamm, I have shown how this process of interaction is materially organized. Experiences of past summit protests have a significant influence on the tactical choices of police and protesters. Authorities are relying increasingly on preemptive forms of control by pre-structuring separate (and isolated) spaces in such a way that disruption through decentralized swarming tactics become impossible. Summit protesters are channeled into spaces without gaps where only predictable interactions can take place. Finally, authorities contain the protest preparation process and the nature of the planned actions, which is widely accomplished through extensive surveillance techniques.

Protesters, on the one hand, have proven their capability to intervene in the preemptive establishment of a secure space for global hegemonic forces. Realizing that the spatial production of global hegemonic forces starts long before an actual summit, they counter the security preparations and, through this, lay bare its intrinsically political character. Moreover, the material separation and the isolation tactics of authorities offered new opportunities for disruption like the fence. On the other hand, protesters counter the spatial arrangements of police by creating their own spaces of resistance in order to overcome their own isolation. Involving different scales
of struggles and locations in the mobilization, they circulate antisystemic dissent and construct a contested space of global hegemonic forces.

The tactical interaction of police and protesters during summit protests has unfolded as a shifting interplay of spatial innovation and adaptation. As I have pointed out, “diversity of tactics” organized through a spatial separation of tactical preferences was an important innovation to be targeted by police. Police tactics aimed at annihilating the boundaries between protester’s tactics in order to criminalize and charge protesters indiscriminately. The summits in Gothenburg and Genoa, therefore, were dominated by coercive power in order to punish global dissent in general. After Genoa, spatial control is increasingly organized biopolitically. The biopolitical form of control aims at the incapacitation of protesters’ mobility and by diminishing the likeliness of disruption of the flows of a summit meeting, by channeling them into predictable spaces. Throughout the years, authorities shifted from dispersion to containment tactics. Relying on a manipulation and management of space, this form of social control of dissent does not necessarily involve direct confrontation. These processes, however, reflect a different dynamic in the tactical interactions during summit protests than in the preparation phase. Along with the increasing importance of spatial preparations, incapacitation tactics, reduction of safe spaces, and extensive surveillance techniques have sparked a preemptive way of controlling dissent.

Finally, the interactions during the G8 summit in Germany have shown how police completed this approach by containing protesters and protest events in such a way that even symbolic disruption is unlikely to happen. While protesters responded to the isolation of their decentralized blocking approaches in Evian and Gleneagles by applying the five-finger tactic circumventing police lines through a tactical use of space, police were able to contain dissent in the space they previously had to abandon. The fence, as the most outstanding symbol of police preparation and the isolation of the G8 summit, survived without being challenged as the physical boundary between global hegemony and global dissent. This is precisely what Foucault hints at when he speaks about power mechanisms predicated on a the idea of security: “These mechanisms do not tend to a nullification of phenomena in the form of the prohibition, ‘you will not do this,’ nor even, ‘this will not happen,’ but in the form of a progressive self-cancellation of phenomena by the phenomena themselves” (Foucault & Sellenart 2007: 66). The focus of biopolitical power mechanisms lies on a possible event and they try to prevent it before it becomes reality. Losing the ability of spatial disruption even in symbolic terms, the repertoire of summit protesters is rendered ineffective in challenging the spatial manifestation of global hegemonic forces.
Nevertheless, more recently summit meetings are taking place in major cities again and authorities demonstrated how now they were able to apply a number of important adaptations in space management to major cities (Scholl 2011b). The experiences of summits following the 2007 G8 summit, especially at the 2009 UN Climate conference, pointed to checkmate of the spatial repertoire of summit protesters in Europe.
Psy(c)ops, Spin-Doctors, and the Communication of Dissent

The problem is not changing peoples’ consciousness—or what’s in their heads—but the political, economic, institutional regime of the production of truth.

—Michel Foucault, “The Political Function of the Intellectual”

Receiving the news about Andrej Holm’s arrest based on alleged participation in a terrorist group (see chapter 1) was unsettling for many activists involved in the G8 mobilization for Heiligendamm. While the abstract danger had always been present, I suddenly realized that the prospect of the police entering my house to take me out of my bed was becoming strangely concrete. Growing nervous, I tried to temper my concerns by taking various precautionary measures: I got rid of all kind of pamphlets and magazines in my room that might potentially heighten suspicions for involvement or interest in militant activities; every evening, I locked my door in order to gain a minute or two so that if police arrived in the early morning hours, this time would enable me to phone my lawyer. My lawyer’s number was the first one on the list of my cell phone, placed every night right next to my pillow. Starting to think what investigation teams might be interested in and note as suspicious, a little cop was born in my mind and served as an interrogative checkpoint for my precautionary measures. In order to evaluate the effectiveness of these measures, I had to start to think like this cop. Suddenly, every sentence spoken on the phone was evaluated twice before saying it.

It did not stop here. For a few days, I considered burning all my field notes. Insane to admit, but I would have nearly destroyed part of my research work of two years! Instead, I decided to make copies of all of them.
and store the original and the copy in different places. This is not so different from what happens to many protesters or other academics—for different reasons. The internalization of social control has repeatedly resulted in the erasure of the collective memories of social struggles. Amory Starr vividly describes how the Greenscare, a wave of arrests and trials in the US from 2002 onward with harsh sentences under anti-terrorist legislation against animal rights and radical environmental activists, created an atmosphere in which activists destroyed their personal archives of flyers, emails, meeting minutes, photos, among other things (Starr 2006). Activists also ceased taking notes during meetings. For many, it felt like erasing their own past.

One of the effects of these little (psy)cops in our minds, then, is the erasure of memory due to this obstruction against collectively sharing the stories of past struggles. A prosecuted Swedish protester comments on the trials taking place after the 2001 EU summit protests in Gothenburg: “you remember their version of the story.” The backstory as well as the protest time, as events with mythical proportions, are annihilated. What remains is merely a history of public disorder, but not of dissent. When nobody anymore wants to say “I have been there,” then the official account is left as the only surviving story. How else would protesters otherwise prove that they are not dangerous criminals?

Refusing to Marry

In his introduction to Welcome to the Desert of the Real!, Slavoj Žižek (2002: 3) invokes a classic line from a Hollywood screwball comedy to unmask an ambiguous relation between communication and the production of truth: a woman asks her lover “do you want to marry me?” When he answers “no,” she immediately responds: “Stop dodging the issue! Give me a straight answer!” Žižek points out that the woman, desiring a very different response, does not count the answer as a valid response. For the man, in turn, this implies that, while he is free to give any answer, only the desired one will count as such. This anecdote exemplifies the problem of communicating dissent in liberal representative democracies. Formally, the articulation of dissent is protected as a constitutional right in liberal democratic states. At the same time, antisystemic dissent is like saying “no” when asked about marriage: it is not the answer that counts.

Analyzing the US mainstream media, Edward Herman and Noam Chomsky (1988) have conceptualized the internalization of hegemonic viewpoints as “the manufacturing of consent.” Instead of censuring dissent, news
Psy(c)ops, Spin-Doctors, and the Communication of Dissent

is filtered in such a way that it constantly contributes to reproduction of the existing consensus:

The US media do not function in the manner of the propaganda system of a totalitarian state. Rather, they permit—indeed, encourage—spirited debate, criticism, and dissent, as long as they remain faithfully within the system of presuppositions and principles that constitutes and elite consensus, a system so powerful as to be internalized largely without awareness. (Herman & Chomsky 1988: 302)

Because the institutionalized apparatuses for the production of truth have to deliver the desired answer, they transpose dissent, integrating it as a functional part of the reproduction of hegemonic epistemologies. Protesters are confronted with the problem that they cannot simply “spread their message.” Instead, they have to challenge the very parameters in which the communication of political dissent is organized. Foucault emphasizes that “The problem is not changing peoples’ consciousness—or what’s in their heads—but the political, economic, institutional regime of the production of truth” (see epigraph to this chapter). This hints at the etymological roots of the term “communication”: to make common. Through the circulation of their struggles, summit protesters attempt to make antisystemic dissent common. During summit protests, communication constitutes a site of struggle that opens a way to challenge the hegemonic production of truth. Antisystemic dissent, a clear and antagonistic “no” to global hegemonic power forces, simply cannot be accepted as an answer.

Communication as contested site of struggle can be analyzed in Gramscian terms as a struggle between hegemony and counter-hegemony. Antonio Gramsci (1971) used the term “hegemony” to refer to this form of power and its embodiment in many political, social, and cultural practices. Cultural hegemony in particular is defined as a strategy of the ruling class to perpetuate domination through consensus instead of force. This perspective underlines the unequal relation between antisystemic dissent and the hegemonic production of truth. However, there are some limitations to such an approach.

Gramsci’s approach is often used for exercising ideology critique. In focusing on the legitimation of ruling, he puts the reproduction of consensus at the center of his critique of capitalism. Nevertheless, if the concept of hegemony can be understood as the means by which the state or “ruling class” reproduces itself through some combination of consent and coercion, then counter-hegemony designates the strategies for working for change
within the present hegemonic system. Gramsci argues that counter-hegemonic forces should call into question the forms of power (both ideational and material) that perpetuate marginalization by slowly building foundations for an alternative system of state-society relations, a process he described as a “war of position” (Gramsci 1971: 229–239, 242–243). In this chapter, I want to understand the struggle between the contestation and reproduction of global hegemony as an ongoing process that is coordinated materially through doing dissent and controlling dissent.

In his attempt to capture the psychological foundations of capitalism in *Eros and Civilization* Herbert Marcuse (1998: 16) proposes that “the unfree individual introjects his masters and their commands into his own mental apparatus. The struggle against freedom reproduces itself in the psyche of man, as the self-repression of the repressed individual, and his self-repression in turn sustains his masters and their institutions.” Frantz Fanon (1991) makes a similar point in *Black Skin, White Masks*. He argues that due to the history of oppression, black people have a divided self-perception and appropriate and imitate the cultural codes of the colonizer. Another critical race theorist, W. E. B. Du Bois (1961: 4), calls this the “double consciousness” of black people who constantly see and define themselves through the eyes of the other. What these critical race scholars make clear is that the mind of the oppressed is a powerful weapon of the oppressor. The internalization of oppression leads to the annihilation of dissent. Antisystemic dissent is the undesired event in the contested site of communication. Social control works most effectively when protesters actually internalize it and do not refuse to “marry” hegemonic social forces. In order to avoid dissent, minds have to be controlled psychologically. It is for this reason that I speak about psychological operations (psyops) when analyzing the ways in which minds are controlled.

The term “psyops” is actually a euphemism for mind control used by military, police, religious groups, and governments to target specific publics in order to induce in them certain values and beliefs. Due to its subtler connotations, the term is often preferred over “propaganda.” Psychological operations have themselves become a scientific field for military operations. Often executed by special (military) intelligence agencies, the practice of psychological operations is becoming increasingly professionalized. Police forces, for example, in the US and Germany, also work with special communication teams, often referred to as “anti-conflict teams.” Officially, these anti-conflict teams are said to take on the role of mediators. However, most protesters experience the “mediation” attempts as a frustrating process given that the “mediators” are on one side of the conflict. “Mediation” is normally not what transgressive protesters are after.
Regulating Communication

Whereas mind control is a site of struggle constituted through disciplinary forms of power, in this chapter I argue that the regulation of the communication of dissent is made possible through biopolitical interventions. By focusing on “populations” and “flows” (of dissent), power not only forms subjects, but sets the conditions for the production of truth. Thus next to the disciplinary scare tactics aiming at the internalization of control (through psy(c)ops), incapacitation tactics, and co-optation tactics more broadly regulate communication by targeting a number of publics through spin-doctor operations.

A concrete example of authorities incapacitating the communication of protesters through prior—and negotiated—action is the established practice of regulating the lengths and numbers of banners used in rallies. In many European countries, this is complemented with police cordonning off an entire demonstration by virtue of which demonstrators become separated from the public and their banners and placards invisible.

The regulation of the circulation of dissent is increasingly organized in a preemptive way, for example, through legal procedures negotiating the parameters of public actions beforehand with the police. Even protesters that do not want to communicate with the police are pushed to engage with them and to give away at least a bit of information. This makes it difficult for protesters to organize clandestinely for transgressive street actions. In the context of the 2001 protests in Genoa, advance negotiations made clear that authorities wanted to convince protesters not to protest during the week of the G8 summit meeting (Andretta et al. 2003: 136). The head of the Genoa police had the technical mandate to implement this so-called line of dialogue in order to sort out the manageability of the various initiatives that were part of a broad protest coalition: Genoa Social Forum. For the 2007 G8 protests in Germany, Kavala received discretionary power for granting the right of assembly. This temporary conflation of executive and legislative powers resulted in major restrictions on protesters’ right to assembly.

Co-optation has turned out to be a powerful tactic for containing and controlling antisystemic dissent. Hardt and Negri (2000: 35) stress the role of so-called nongovernmental organizations in contributing to the conduct of “just wars” without arms. They constitute an important part of the systemic reproduction of the imperial machine by non-lethal means. This way, the production of (hegemonic) truth is morally facilitated by organizations that could otherwise balance it with a critical perspective. Nongovernmental organizations contribute to the regulation of antisystemic dissent on the transnational level by making dissent a question of proper moral interven-
tions: “In effect, this intervention prefigures the state of exception from below, and does so without borders, armed with some of the most effective means of communication and oriented toward the symbolic production of the Enemy” (Negri & Hardt 2000: 36).

Although co-optation can be seen as an (unintended) outcome of contention (Gamson 1990) or as general feature of a specific political establishment (Kriesi 1996), in this chapter I show how it also functions as a legitimation tactic to contain the communication of antisystemic dissent. Co-optation has various effects: on the one hand, it results in dividing protesters into “good” ones (willing to cooperate with the criticized institutions, adapting their policies) and “bad” ones (impossible to incorporate into existing consulting mechanisms). On the other hand, co-optation relegitimizes the existing institutions by projecting the idea that critique articulated from outside these institutions is not to be taken seriously. If protesters, however, oppose not only the status quo, but also reformations of the status quo that integrate or absorb parts of the critique, it severely restricts their space for communicating antisystemic dissent through transgressive street actions. A partially responsive government, for example, is more difficult to challenge.

Unregulating Communication

Confronting this, the circulation of antisystemic dissent is a crucial aspect of the tactical repertoire of summit protesters. Their use of communication technologies and decentralized networks poses a serious challenge to official control of the production of truth. Summit protesters have understood that the reappropriation and re-creation of the tools for communication is a crucial aspect of the biopolitical challenge of the global hegemonic order. As Hardt and Negri (2000: 33) point out, “If communication is one of the hegemonic sectors of production and acts over the entire biopolitical field, then we must consider communication and the biopolitical context coexistent.” However, appropriating communication in this biopolitical context does not mean to convince others of another truth within the established production of truth. Summit protesters seem to appreciate Foucault’s proposal in the epigraph to this chapter that, not just the content, but the very conditions of the production of truth need to be changed. Summit protesters do both: enabling other practices for producing and circulating dissent, while disrupting the production of the established truth.

During the first phase of summit protests from Prague to Genoa, skeptical attitudes toward the mainstream press prompted the elaboration
of extensive alternative media networks facilitated by Internet technologies. Indymedia, for example, started up during the 1999 WTO protests in Seattle and became quickly diffused throughout the world as a network of national and local websites for independent activist news, based on an open publishing system (Cleaver 1998). The slogan of the Indymedia network says “Don’t hate the media, be the media.” Resorting to a “Do-it-yourself” tactic, Indymedia has become a complex web of decentralized reports, which blurs the borderline between newsreader and producer (Kidd 2003). One can see Indymedia as an attempt to change the political, economic, and institutional regime of the production of truth. While providing news on a daily basis, the frequency of reports and footage increases dramatically during a summit protest. The creation of independent media resources is an important aspect of transgressive protesters refuting to depend on the sympathy of the mainstream press. As a UK-based activist media group puts it:

Seeking to directly challenge the idea that we should have to appeal to higher authorities for acceptance, legitimacy or mediation, this enormously important movement to reclaim forms of media (and create new ones) continues, offering a growing radical alternative to corporate news sources. (CounterSpin Collective 2005: 321)

Similar (often temporary) networks emerged between independent radio producers and filmmakers who document the summit events from the perspective of protesters and make the material available on the Internet. These networks denote a shift from the monopolizing propaganda-based model of counter-information to a networked-based model of news circulation that nearly collapses the moment of production and consumption. Not so much a tactic for influencing mainstream media, independent media is a practice for circulating antisystemic dissent to broaden and deepen internal communication as an alternative production of truth.

On the other hand, through transgressive street interventions, summit protesters oppose the force of disruption to the force of persuasion. As the epistemologies of white, pink, and black bodies in chapter 4 make clear, transgressive summit protesters communicate dissent with disruption. Through transgressive street actions, antisystemic dissent is materialized in an antagonistic position that cannot be subsumed into the existing production of truth. Changing the world is seen here as the result of action and not as a result of spreading messages. If one accepts the individualist and voluntary account underlying liberal political theory, communication is merely a process of representing “things.” However, Georg Lukács (1972) discloses
the ideological character of such a conception. Starting with Marx’s assertion that it is the social existence that constitutes consciousness, he makes the social world the focus of change as the outcome of human activity. This can help us to understand how transgressive summit protesters try to transpose communication into a non-representational project: instead of struggling for a different representation of “things,” they try to change social relations.

One concrete example of how protesters disrupted the communication of global hegemonic forces in Heiligendamm was the blockading of the Molli-train that was supposed to bring journalists from the media center in Kühlungsborn to the photo shoot of all the G8 presidents in front of the Kempinski Hotel within the red zone. Since the alternative sea route was also unavailable due to unfavorable weather circumstances, journalists arrived far too late for the group picture that was supposed to appear on the front pages of newspapers the next day. In the contested site of communication, police and protesters clearly disrupt each other.

Clandestine Decentralized Networks

While attending one of the many Dutch preparatory meetings for the 2007 G8 protests in Germany, I became fascinated by a habitual procedure that I had experienced many times before. A few minutes after a meeting has officially started and some trivial bits of information have crossed the table, there is normally one person asking whether cell phones should be switched off. This largely rhetorical question has the effect that those who have not yet done so switch off their cell phones. At times, this ritualized moment is prolonged by a short discussion about whether it would be necessary as well to take out the battery of one’s cell phone. Being aware of the danger of interception, activists have developed a security culture for their internal communication. The ritual of collectively switching off cell phones seems to constitute something like a “rite of passage” into clandestinity. Planning transgressive protests requires a repertoire of clandestine communication.

Another tension arising from the increased use of technology for communication in the preparatory phase concerns the Internet, above all emails and mailing lists. For the G8 protests in Germany, I was subscribed to ten email lists, ranging from very general (and public) lists for regular updates to coordination lists for working groups assigned to specific aspects of the mobilization. This resulted in many thousands of emails that I received during a period of two years. There is a lot of coordination taking place between individuals or small groups via email. In addition, I assembled some hundred
websites that emerged during the two-year mobilization phase, spreading information, background, and discussion pieces in several languages. The website of the Dissent! network, for example, was updated on a daily basis in several languages.

At the same time, however, there is increasing awareness that nothing communicated via email is private (and therefore “secure”), especially since the mobilization phase for Heiligendamm coincided with the attempts of the German minister for internal affairs to extend the authorities’ possibilities for Internet surveillance. Due to increasing police actions, such as house raids resulting in the confiscation of laptops and computers, more and more activists use encryption software for both email communication and Internet browsing. Though it is also possible to communicate via encrypted mailing lists, this rarely happens, however, since it requires every subscriber to use encryption software. For protesters relying on email technology for transnational coordination, however, the upshot is that they avoid many discussions and sharing of certain information via mailing lists. Therefore, online communication is combined with formal and informal offline meetings and more traditional forms of communication: in the year preceding the G8 summit, many local and international meetings took place, and various newsletters were regularly distributed throughout decentralized networks in Europe.

The problem of “secure” communication becomes even more apparent during summit protests. For street actions, protesters frequently leave their cell phones at home, not only to avoid being localized or intercepted, but also to prevent police retrieval of all the data on the SIM card in case of arrest. This limits the possibilities of coordinating real-time actions through the use of cell phone technology. The activist news site Indymedia, for example, always offers a news-service per text message, which enables protesters to react quickly to developments on the streets.

That police attempts to understand protesters’ internal communication remain futile has a lot to do with the decentralized and clandestine character of this communication. After the 2000 IMF/WB protests in Prague, protesters revealed quite openly how they had established a coordination center called Centrum in order to enable a flow of communication between the various marches trying to get close to the summit’s venue. The physical space of the Centrum was a hotel room. From there, communication was handled with mobile phones. Certain persons in the various marches functioned as “communicators” in order to pass information to and from the Centrum. The eight persons working in the Centrum could handle communication in various languages and worked with a city map in order
to receive a full picture of the events happening outdoors and for providing possible alternative routes for the marches in case of police blockades.

This communication hub was complemented by a physical structure of cycle couriers who also stayed in touch with the Centrum. Placards were used to diffuse incoming messages about the situation at the different marches. In the early afternoon, for example, protesters of the white march, stuck on the Nuselski Bridge, were this way informed that the Pink & Silver march, having come close to the conference center, needed reinforcement. The only reason, then, for gathering information at the Centrum was to guarantee a decentralized flow of information assisting well-informed protesters in their choice of how to act. Not a “command center,” the Centrum was but a node in a decentralized network that tried to enable a well-functioning flow of adequate and up-to-date information about the developments on the streets.

After the shift of summit venues to rural locations, these forms of internal communication during protests needed to be adapted. At the 2007 G8 protests in Heiligendamm a refined information point structure was again put in place (see appendix, map 3). These points functioned as knots receiving and distributing information both physically on a bulletin board and by phone. This communication structure was meant to support autonomous actions and blockades but differed significantly from the communication structure of BlockG8 (see footnote 1 in chapter 5). Although BlockG8 operated with a decentralized affinity group structure, there was still a strong centralized element in the form of an action council consisting of previously appointed persons that maintained the police contact, prepared the action meetings, and also gave advice about the further course of the action.

Looking at the organizational composition of the preparatory process, the decentralized character of protesters’ communication tactics becomes even more apparent. Various networks and alliances were involved in the protest preparations, the most visible of which were: the Dissent! network; the Interventionistische Linke (Interventionist Left); BlockG8; the Revolutionäre Bündniss (Revolutionary Alliance); the German chapter of ATTAC; and an alliance of various NGOs called Gerechtigkeit Jetzt (Justice Now) involved in Deine Stimme gegen Armut (Your Voice against Poverty) in collaboration with the German pop star Grönemeyer. In addition, a few more platforms emerged during the mobilization process that remained less visible or closely attached to one of the previously mentioned alliances, for example Ums Ganze (All or Nothing), the Hedonist International, and a platform of students.
The tendency of decentralization was most clearly visible in the case of the Dissent! network, which made considerable efforts to establish cross-border collaboration between grassroots groups. Since the very first German-wide meeting the process of finding a minimum base of collective agreement was frustrated (in the first place, because no decision could be made on how to make decisions); notwithstanding this, the working groups emerging from within this network generally functioned well, and contributed a great deal to the general logistical preparations of the protests (such as the organization of the camps, the convergence centers, the info-points, the kitchens, etc.). Interestingly, these working groups went on functioning without being able to really decide on a name for the network. During the third German-wide meeting in Leipzig, it was agreed that the name of the network should be “Dissent! + x,” “x” needing further specification during the next meeting. Retrospectively, many people involved told me they were happy that the proposed follow-up discussion about the name never took place. After a short period of referring formally to the “Dissent! + x” network, virtually everyone shifted to the shorter version, Dissent! That this network never formally decided about a full name is a good illustration of non-representational politics where it becomes nearly impossible to make any collective agreement concerning representation.

The problem associated with decentralized structures avoiding representational forms of politics is that large meetings become rather symbolic (or affective) and practically redundant. Since the working groups within the Dissent! network functioned well autonomously, and since few collective agreements could be established during the German-wide (and later transnational) meetings, many participants either gave up in frustration or refrained from attending those meetings. Whereas several hundred persons attended the first Dissent! meetings two years before the G8 summit, at the last one, a few weeks before the start of the protests, only about 50 persons showed up. These numbers, however, say little about the number of people that saw their daily work as taking place in the context of Dissent! One participant of the 2006 European conference of the decentralized Peoples’ Global Action network pointed to this tension within networks, noting that they work best when they have a concrete goal, but then they fall apart afterward. This means that normally they constantly have to be re-created when a new occasion occurs. The previously active Peoples’ Global Action network was no organization but a “tool for communication.” This enabled a considerable flow of information and practical considerations, but made collective decisions on a political level very difficult.
This problem became exacerbated during the protests itself. Decentralized networks emerging around summit protests have rediscovered and refined the practice of spokes councils to coordinate affinity groups participating in protests via spokespersons who attempt to establish consensus through a transparent and horizontal process of decision-making (Maekelbergh 2009: 146–151). This method of decision-making, however, does not go uncontested. After the 2000 Prague protests, many critiqued the perceived domination of the process by native English speakers. The problem was not necessarily perceived as being one of language, but as one of forced inclusion that often excludes explicitly illegal action plans and therefore reduces the autonomy of affinity groups in deciding how to protest.

On the one hand, there are tactical goals to be accomplished; on the other hand, there is a strong commitment to horizontal consensus decision-making and the inclusion of diversity. As this statement about the 2000 IMF/WB protests in Prague shows, this contradiction cannot always be resolved: “Running an army by consensus is a stupid idea—let’s not do it again.” At the 2005 G8 protests in Scotland, this problem became even more apparent. Many protesters I spoke with got the impression that the practice of consensus decision-making in large meetings imposed non-violent tactics because it is impossible to discuss or announce other tactics openly. Clearly, the commitment to transparency and horizontal decision-making contradicts here the practical necessity of clandestine forms of communication for planning transgressive actions.

In his reflections on the 2005 G8 Scotland protests, activist Rodrigo Nunes points out the ambiguous character of the organizational form of horizontal networks: “In this way, horizontality always posits its own limit: while it can produce decisions in small groups, the possibility of doing so in larger groups is very limited, and even—since having overarching goals, positions, etc. is a potential danger to diversity—something to be avoided” (Nunes 2005: 305). While predicated on the idea of openness, horizontal networks thus quickly produce exclusive effects. A consensus always excludes other decisions. Hurl (2005) also stresses how the fetishization of diversity as a goal in itself rendered instrumental considerations about the best functioning tactics obsolete. This consensus-based decision-making during the spokes councils at the action camps meant that many transgressive actions could not be coordinated here.

The Hannover Preparation Circle was an important attempt by numbers of people involved to bring spokespersons from the various networks and alliances together to coordinate the broader protest agenda. But the decidedly decentralized Dissent! network could not possibly be represented
by spokespersons. More importantly, groups like Projektwerkstatt argued that Dissent! would not benefit from participating in such an elitist decision-making process together with groups opposing transgressive actions:

Proposing that everyone should work together is most of the times an excuse to represent everyone. It's typical for the elites of social movements to formulate, at once, the desire to work together and the rules according to which this cooperation has to happen.11

In the end, few individuals involved in Dissent! attended these meetings aimed at a broad collaboration. However, as spokespersons of their local groups they participated but not in the name of Dissent!

A few months before the protests, some participants of the Hannover Preparation Circle shared their impression that many decisions still to be made could not always wait until the next general meeting. Therefore, they proposed the establishment of a smaller coordination group within the coordination group, called Rokoko (a short form for Rostock Coordination Committee). This additional form of centralizing decision-making clearly clashed with the Dissent! network's attempts to make autonomous actions possible through decentralized communication structures. How this worked out in practice can be seen in the process of establishing the convergence center in a former school building granted by the municipality of Rostock. Whereas the school was inhabited and renovated by activists largely connected to the Dissent! network, it was ATTAC, an important player in the coordination circle, that claimed authority over the space after having signed the contract as the official organization. The activists living in the convergence center (Convergence Center Rostock 2007) sharply criticized the monopolized position of ATTAC and the Hannover Preparation Circle in general:

One of the largest NGOs was able to secure privileged usage of spaces that we thought should be open to all of the groups and activists participating in the resistance against the G8. The so-called coordinating group in Hannover currently feels responsible for these spaces. This coordinating group (not only in this context) is trying once again to portray itself as representative of the whole protest movement, although it's not transparent how the group functions. Moreover, not all of the strands of the movement have a presence in the group. We doubt the legitimacy of such a coordinating group and reject this kind of management from a distance as a principle.

(My translation)
These tensions also unfolded during the three preparatory “action conferences” held in Rostock every half year, initiated by the Interventionistische Linke as an attempt to provide a broad discussion platform for several organizations, groups and networks involved in the mobilization. Especially the second conference in November 2006 laid bare the internal schisms about preferred tactics and the way to communicate about them. Many activists involved in Dissent! criticized the conference for being an exclusive and hierarchical spectacle of NGO representatives uninterested in antagonistically opposing the powers that be:

It’s typical that small and medium-sized NGOs get involved in the preparatory process. They have developed a concept of de-escalation that is supposed to prevent a strong radicalization of the G8 protests. For example, the counter-summit is going to take place at the same time as the blockades. Many people who were at the Kempinski Camp didn’t want this. In Rostock efforts to make this change through persuasion and voting were successful in swallowing the voices of those forces that were critical of this. There were attempts to make it look like this was a decision that was actually taken at the action conference itself, while in actual fact, it was a decision that had already been taken beforehand. (Critical Mass 2007; my translation)

The critical division between groups coordinating in a decentralized way and groups organized centrally and hierarchically was not new to the 2007 G8 protests. Similar problems had occurred during previous protests. At the 2005 G8 protests in Gleneagles, in particular, these divisions produced unbridgeable chasms, resulting in a tripartite mobilization of the autonomous Dissent! network, the largely Trotskyite G8Alternatives, and the NGO platform Make Poverty History. Coordination of actions between those currents seemed impossible and destructive (Hudig & Dowling 2010), which explains why in Germany a few, sometimes convulsive, attempts were made to bring all currents together.

Centralized Networks and Cross-Border Cooperation

During the mobilization for the 2007 G8 in Germany, a group of protesters (loosely connected to the Dissent! network) started an international information tour. After having hosted an info-event, the concept was often
picked up by local groups and diffused throughout their own countries. At the end, about 300 info-events had been organized in at least 30 countries. Visiting Italy during the anti-G8 information tour in 2006, one activist was apparently followed. When asking the German Federal Criminal Police Office via a lawyer at a later point what kind of intelligence was gathered about him, the activist coincidentally learned that the Italian police had informed the German police that this activist had called for “criminal acts,” which they related to the activist’s public disclosure that crossing fences is generally not a felony in Germany. In response to summit protests, police and other security agencies increasingly work together in order to pool and exchange intelligence on protesters. However, cross-border cooperation is just one aspect of the tactical repertoire of internal police communication.

For purposes of internal communication during the preparatory phase, Kavala not only used existing police magazines and other information channels, but also created its own magazine, *Kavala Report*, that appeared three times in the year preceding the summit. This magazine covered their security preparations, introduced the main personages of the special police department Kavala’s 14 operation sectors, explained the role of the G8 in international relations, and gave glimpses of the arguments and tactics of summit protesters. In addition, Kavala created a closed-user group on the national German police Intranet “Extrapol” for the G8 summit (Anders 2006). A handbook with operation-relevant basic knowledge was distributed to all police officers joining the operations, and also put on Extrapol.

During the protests, internal police communication was technologically facilitated by a digital and analogue police radio frequency. In addition, a regional police radio channel (coordinated by six police officers) and a daily police newspaper informed and entertained police officers who were part of the operation. The diary of an individual police officer, however, reveals that still little information about the actual situation reached the rank-and-file police officers, and that private radios provided more accurate information than did the police radio (Neu 2007: 24). The digital radio communication was based on a redundant digital radio cell with a pylon at the new Rügen Bridge, specially protected on this occasion by marine boats. Digital police radio was originally considered an innovation to the analogue communication. Installing a digital police radio, however, amounted to a cost of one million Euros (Landtag Mecklenburg-Vorpommern 2009). Interestingly, various police evaluations stressed that internal communication was severely frustrated by the fact that only the digital radio worked after the analogue radio had collapsed, which required police units to work overtime shifts of up to 20 hours (Gewerkschaft der Polizei 2007). In April 2007,
the digital radio system was tested as part of a broader exercise to test the technical equipment in the case of the breakdown of security, emergency power, or cooperation between the various sub-groups. As the report of the German police trade union GDP makes clear, however, this practice run did not prevent major technical complications in the internal police communication during the summit (Gewerkschaft der Polizei 2007: 12). Nevertheless, the head of Kavala, Knut Abramowski, questioned whether internal communication was not also failing for entirely different reasons than the technological complexity:

There is one fact that still impacts on us today. We didn’t manage to communicate the complexity of the operation toward the inside and the outside. There were police units that just did their thing, without us having to communicate the complexity of the whole operation to them. I don’t know, however, whether that later would actually be possible in such a large operation with more than 17,000 officers.12

Abramowski hints to an interesting dilemma: whereas Kavala attempted to improve the technological facilities for the circulation of communication, the hierarchical organization of the police apparatus inhibited a widely shared understanding of the complexity of the operation. Without such a shared understanding, communication necessarily became a confusing process given such a centralized organization.

Over the course of summit protests, internal police communication increasingly involves a transnational dimension. This makes the flow of information through networks of security agencies even more complex. At the same time, transnational police cooperation emerges as an attempt to standardize security operations for “major events.” Before the 2000 IMF/WB protests, for example, the FBI opened an office in Prague in order to train the Czech police in “crowd control techniques.” At the 2001 summit protests in Gothenburg, Swedish police applied the experience of US police by employing a psycho-tactical unit with the intention to establish dialogue with protesters. This practice reemerged at the 2007 G8 protests in Germany where special “anti-conflict” teams, just established by the Berlin police, intended to introduce dialogue into street interactions. For the 2001 G8 protests in Genoa, L.A. County sheriffs helped to train special forces in Italy (Starhawk 2001: 129).

The international exchange of intelligence related to summit protest received more and more attention. After Gothenburg, politicians from vari-
ous EU member countries articulated the idea to establish a EU database of “political hooligans” (Statewatch 2001). Prior to summit meetings, police and intelligence services increasingly exchanged intelligence about individual protesters, political groups, and organizations. German police collaborated in the border controls for the 2001 EU summit in Gothenburg. For the 2007 G8 protests in Germany, the Dutch and German police cooperated on preventing border-crossings of undesired protesters. To this end, the Dutch police passed information about individual protesters to the German border police upon request.

After Genoa, a few working groups for securing future summit meetings were established: the research program Coordinating National Research Programs on Security during Major Events (EU-SEC), the United Nations Interregional Crime and Justice Research Institute (UNICRI), and the International Permanent Observatory on Security during Major Events (IPO). EU-SEC was initiated in 2004 as a response to the summit protests in Gothenburg and Genoa in 2001. The main object of this research program is to coordinate police efforts within the EU member states and Europol. They published a handbook for summit protests, which is an attempt by providing standard criteria and methods for risk analysis to set and disseminate standard security procedures to be followed by authorities when preparing summit meetings. EU-SEC itself was coordinated by UNICRI, a United Nations institute consisting of several working groups concerned with security. UNICRI publishes the “Counter-Terrorism Online Handbook.” IPO is also part of UNICRI and supports governments during security preparations for major events, offering its services free to national governments. Founded in 2006, IPO was involved in the preparations for the G8 summit in Heiligendamm, made available to authorities a manual for “policing major events,” and plans to publish a handbook for G8 member states.

The creation of these agencies is accompanied by increased cooperation between national police forces and secret services of various countries. The formalization of international cooperation and exchange is the result of an existing informal networking practice in place for quite a while. One of the first visitors to the freshly created Kavala department was the head of the police operations for the 2005 G8 summit in Gleneagles, who later became head of IPO. As Brian Powrie stated in an interview conducted during this visit: “Nobody can plan for such a major event without international support” (Powrie in BAO Kavala 2007a: 9). Early on, the “G8 project group” of the German police visited the police operations at the G8 summit in Gleneagles. John Vine, another operation police chief in Gleneagles, suggests
that the Scottish police engaged in a similar intelligence-gathering tactic: “We do talk to one another and I think it is very important that there is learning particularly for events such as the G8. Before the Gleneagles meeting, we did a lot of research into the G8 event itself to see what kind of tactics have been used before by anarchist groups. We also visited a number of places in Europe.”

For the security preparations in Germany, the cross-border cooperation found yet another expression: the November 2006 security conference SECON in Rostock, with the participation of security institutions of the G8 states and Europol. In March 2007, another meeting took place, attended by the US deputy ambassador, German politicians, and 35 police and security experts from Mecklenburg-Western Pomerania. One of the results of this meeting was the appointment establishing a temporary “international center for liaison officers” designed to speed up the information exchange for the period of June 1 to June 9 (Komitee Grundrechte 2007: 113). Liaison officers are delegates of national police and are authorized to access national databases in support of security operations in another country. They stand behind cross-border police cooperation during summit operations. In place of having to establish the necessary legal frameworks at the EU level and implementing them in the various member states, cooperation between liaison officers is much easier. For the 2003 G8 in Evian, for example, police units from different countries were organized autonomously then but communicated via liaison officers.

In responding to summit protest, internal police communication thus follows three patterns. First, summits are often used for introducing modern communication technologies. As the example of Heiligendamm demonstrates, however, due to the centralized command and control structure of the police, internal police communication can be very vulnerable when this communication technology fails. Second, police work is becoming increasingly networked, both on the national and on the transnational level. Albeit often informal in character, these networks integrate more and more security-related agencies that support the police in mobilizing and pooling experiences and intelligence. Finally, security measures responding to the challenges of summit protesters are increasingly standardized and in this way form a repertoire of standardized internal police communication.

From Propaganda to Media Management

On the final day of the G8 summit in Germany, the Clandestine Insurgent Clown Army (CIRCA) spontaneously decided to march to the official press
center, located in Kühlungsborn, a town four kilometers to the west of Heiligendamm, in order to disrupt the final press conference. Accompanied by many other protesters, it took a while to get there, because police repeatedly tried to stop the unregistered march. Once they reached the place, rebel clowns and other protesters managed to mount the stage of the official press conference, disrupting the live broadcast. Between disoriented press officials, I was astonished to hear the clowns chanting, “We want an objective press.” Rebel clowns demanding an objective press? The live broadcasting was aborted immediately, and a curtain was closed to prevent the view of a chaotic stage. Wasn’t it precisely this that the clowns wanted to achieve?

The increasing mediatization of protest events in the past decennia has given the mainstream media a crucial role in the development of the tactical repertoires of police and protesters. What is critical is not to identify the media representation of summit protests, but rather to analyze how protesters and police have innovated and adapted their tactical communication repertoires in order to influence the media. In the repertoire of both police and protesters an important shift took place from propaganda to media management. This is to say, the tactical repertoire preemptively to influence the media has become professionalized and standardized. Increasingly, protesters and police focus on the establishment and maintenance of good press contact in order to control and regulate the “production of truth.” Being accessible for journalists has instilled into police and protesters a service-desk mentality concerning press contact.

The reason for meeting the press’s necessities is the automatic link made between “the media” and “the public opinion,” both aiming to “manufacture” consent. After the summit, protesters often discuss the question of whether the media representation of the protests were good or bad for the protesters’ goals. But by focusing so much on the influence of the media, protesters buy into the way consumers of media reports are treated as a homogeneous and decontextualized entity. This way, the social relations behind “the media” are dismissed while the “news” is fetishized as an independent agent that accounts for “the public opinion” about the protest, without considering the social context in which news are produced, consumed, and interpreted. To give a simple example: the friends, spouses, and family members of many protesters certainly read the news reports about Heiligendamm differently than those who did not know anyone who was there. Through such networks, some consumers had access to additional (counter)information channels not mentioned in the mainstream media, which provided an opportunity for a different reading of news items.

In his book *Encoding and Decoding in the Television Discourse*, Stuart Hall (1973) demonstrates how people are at once consumers and producers
of media. In his view, publics actively engage in negotiating and opposing
texts and media discourses, depending on their cultural background. Hall
calls this the “margins of understanding.” Instead of looking at how “pub-
lic opinion” is constituted through mainstream media, I also examine the
media as a contested site of tactical legitimation repertoires employed by
both police and protesters in order to influence these “margins of under-
standing.” Legitimacy, then, is not conceptualized as an organizing principle
of global hegemony, but as a weapon for contestation and co-optation.
Mainstream media constitutes a site of struggle for legitimation directed
toward an assumed public behind the fetishized relations of mainstream
media communication. Whereas protesters’ tactical legitimation repertoires
proactively aim to counter repression of protest, police try to preempt cri-
tique about exaggerated or inadequate police conduct. Although police are
still using content-based propaganda tactics to this end, their tactical rep-
ertoire has shifted more and more to a media management approach. For
their part, too, summit protesters resort to a legitimation strategy in their
interaction with the mainstream media that may privilege professionalized
communication management over the creation of alternative forms of the
production of truth. This becomes visible in the clown’s demand for an
“objective press.” Overlooking the broader power relations that are involved
in media as contested site of struggle, rebel clowns framed communication
with the media as only a question of either “good” (objective) or “bad”
(biased) press coverage.

Many protesters, and especially established organizations, such as
ATTAC, explicitly aim for good and sympathetic press coverage. The spec-
cific strategies for influencing media reports depend a lot on the historical
and sometimes structural relations between media and protesters in various
countries. In the UK, for example, environmental groups have built up good
relations with the Guardian throughout the years, and can generally count
on sympathy from this daily newspaper. In Italy and Germany, alternative
left-wing daily newspapers such as Tageszeitung en Il Manifesto exist, having
ties to some currents of summit protesters. Nevertheless, one can generally
observe that protest groups and organizations try to professionalize their
media work. Appointed (and often even paid) spokespersons, regular press
releases, and press contact cell phone numbers are as much an expression
of this tendency as is the exposure of certain movement celebrities. The
presence of the French farmer protest leader José Bové, the Canadian writer
Naomi Klein, or the Italian Tute Bianche spokesperson Luca Casarini at
summit protests has often been instrumental to the legitimation attempts
of protesters and for attracting the media to their spaces.
Another icon was also created through a clever media and Internet strategy: Subcommandante Marcos, spokesperson of the Zapatistas. In the first years after the 1994 uprising (see chapter 2), EZLN materials and communiqués were handed to friendly journalists and later uploaded and diffused on the Internet (often by sympathizers themselves). Cross-border communication became an effective weapon against state control of information and to start a global dialogue bypassing the state (Keck & Sikkink 1998: 115). This strategy amplified the struggle of the Zapatistas throughout the world and influenced many struggles in Europe in that time. The iconic image of Marcos with his balaclava and pipe was an important factor in creating this resonation, and the EZLN communiqués helped to create a new language against neoliberalism around the globe. Their combined use of conventional and alternative media outlets inspired the rise of an “alternative political fabric” (Cleaver 1998), a growing number of increasingly interconnected circuits of cyberspace communication sparking complementary action at the international level.

Through the course of summit protests, even transgressive protesters developed increasingly professionalized approaches to press management. At the 2005 G8 protests in Scotland, a press group was set up as part of the autonomous Dissent! network in order to function as a broker between interested journalists and protesters willing to engage with mainstream media. This meant that instead of acting as spokespersons of the Dissent! network, the CounterSpin Collective would facilitate contacts to certain protest groups by collecting contact details of protesters willing to speak with the press. They also established a multi-language network for translating press releases and distributing them among press contacts in several countries. The collective maintained a list of journalists that had published on the mobilization, keeping track as to whether their reports had been “supportive” or “unsupportive.” The function of the CounterSpin Collective became clearly visible at Horizone, the action camp in Stirling. During the days of protest, journalists frequented the camp. The CounterSpin Collective had established a press welcome point at the entrance of the camp, handed out available information, established contacts with protesters, and most importantly, prevented the journalists from entering the camp unaccompanied and from making photos or films without asking permission. In a reflective report, the CounterSpin Collective points out how this press regulation at the camp was challenged by angry journalists demanding access to a “public space” or else threatening activists with “bad coverage” (CounterSpin 2005: 325–326).

German groups learned from these experiences in time for the 2007 mobilization. In addition to a few organizations doing their own presswork,
there were three crosscutting media groups loosely cooperating with each other. The Campinski press group started at the 2006 preparatory camp. It emerged from the Dissent! network and, in a way similar to the CounterSpin Collective, attempted to be a broker between journalists and protesters. As opposed to CounterSpin, however, Campinski started to issue self-written press releases long before the actual protests, mainly because of the various security measures and police raids on which they wanted to comment. Given the increasing pace of the mobilization, more and more groups used Campinski for the dissemination of their own press releases. Besides having a pool of contacts willing to give interviews, the group itself also gave interviews. This was done with two pseudonyms, used by all members of the group. Journalists often responded to this practice with incomprehension. But the use of a collective pseudonym was not only for privacy reasons. Campinski repeatedly stressed that they did not want to “represent” the movement, and therefore avoided the use of individual names (and faces).

During the protests, Campinski attempted to be present not only at the media center in the Rostock convergence center (where computers, Internet connection, and phones were available), but also at the protest camp in Reddelich (Campinski Pressegruppe 2007). Especially during the first days of the camps and the protests, journalists were literally crowding into the camp. Having adopted a policy on the press presence at the camp similar to the one in Scotland, the few people working at the press welcome point had a hard time actually implementing it. Occasionally, this prompted groups of black-clad and disguised camp inhabitants chasing journalists who had bypassed the press reception point from the campsite.

Gipfelsoli, an information group on summit-related repression and police operations, started several months before the summit to issue press releases on security issues. Their tactic clearly was to scandalize the security measures, situating the upcoming protests in Germany in a broader context of previous summit protests and global conflicts. Several groups made use of the offer by Gipfelsoli to use their press distribution list for spreading their own press releases about specific actions, especially in the run-up to summit protests.

Media G8way was an ad hoc pool of mainly internationals with press-work skills cooperating with both Campinski and Gipfelsoli. Their main work consisted in collecting international press contacts and making lists for each country/language. Having set up a network of translators, Media G8way was present at the media center in Rostock and at the press welcome point at the camp in Reddelich to handle international press in several
languages. Despite having attempted to fulfill a facilitating role between protesters and press for international protesters as were Campinski and Gipfelsoli for the German ones, MediaG8way critically evaluated their own role:

Our vision of being a bridge between journalists and radical activists and establishing trustworthy contacts worked out rather well. However, in being mainly “facilitators” we might not have had the space to work to make more strategic interventions into the press discourse. Often, our efforts remained merely at the level of getting a good quote in. Therefore, a more established network based perhaps on some political principles for press work might be just as, if not more useful.18

In addition to enabling a constant flow of contact between protesters and the mainstream press, the BlockG8 alliance picked up a tactic applied by the Italian Tute Bianche for the 2001 G8 protests in Genoa. They held public trainings where the method for blockading the G8 summit was openly demonstrated, then followed by a press conference. During one such occasion a few weeks before the summit, several hundred people gathered in a park in Berlin for sit-in blockade training, attended by a huge number of journalists. The explicit goal of this kind of public training is to enhance the legitimacy for civil disobedience tactics by announcing them openly. Another way of involving journalists is imitating the tactic of “embedded journalism” by inviting selected journalists (often with camera teams) to join a transgressive action. This, however, rarely happens, since it involves many difficulties. Even if collaboration is not objected to on principle, it often turns out to be too difficult to add this extra factor into the preparation process amid a chaotic protest camp situation.

The question of “good” and “bad” coverage of transgressive actions in the mainstream media reveals a central tension occurring behind protesters’ attempts to manage press relations. As I point out in chapter 4, black bodies dislike engaging with the media. However, they are not so different from white, pink, and other bodies in actually trying to make their statement through action, rather than through an interview. Pink and white bodies differ from black ones in that they would rather try to communicate friendly, or even funny images of transgressive protesters, whereas black bodies aim at simulating a threat. However, suspicious about the role of mainstream media in circulating images in real-life-time globally, many transgressive protesters opt for circulating images of political dissent rather than normative statements about the ills of the global hegemonic order. Though this
Two Sides of a Barricade

... attempts to manage and facilitate presswork, many protesters do not want to rely on good press contacts at all. Evaluating the 2000 IMF/WB protests in Prague, Boris Kagarlitsky comments on this dilemma: “It is at least strange that the moderates denounce the bourgeois order, and at the same time want the love of the bourgeois press.” The attempt itself to communicate with the press in order to achieve positive and sympathetic portrayals in the press is hotly contested. The activist press group CounterSpin Collective vividly describes how their presswork was met with outright hostility:

We experienced repeated hostility and encountered inaccurate gossip about what we were doing. In one instance at the Hori-Zone, activists speaking to journalists were screamed at and threatened with physical violence and then had bottles thrown at them from inside the site. This hostility was cumulatively very demoralising and some were concerned that they would face the sort of political crucifixion experienced by those who had engaged with The Media during previous mobilisations of this sort. (CounterSpin 2005: 328)

During the January 2008 G8 summit protest evaluations at the Perspektiventage conference in Berlin, participants of the various described press groups and spokespersons of a few organizations, such as ATTAC, came together to share their experiences. The discussion revealed some crucial and recurrent tensions of activist press work. One thing that Campinski addressed, for example, by using collective pseudonyms, was the question of representation. This problem arises, first, from the press’s necessity to find people who “represent the movement,” or at least, can speak on behalf of a protest group. The quantitative news analysis by Rucht and Teune (2008) reveals that, in most articles, a small amount of twelve “spokespersons” of the protesters were repeatedly cited. Considering the negation of representative politics inherent to transgressive street politics, such gate-keeping contradicts the way these protesters organize. Gitlin (in della Porta & Diani 2006: 220) makes this point by warning that “The media demands of visible leaders may distort movement democracy.” The attempt of mainstream media to identify credible leaders was also manifest in the way they portrayed the camp. As one participant during the 2008 Berlin evaluation meeting pointed out, the press seemed to distinguish between information about the political discourse gained at the daily protest press conferences and the ordinary or emotional voices from the rank-and-file protesters at the camp. This unspoken division resulted in a hierarchy of voices that made it difficult for antisystemic critiques to be communicated through the media.
Another tension articulated during the Berlin evaluation meeting concerned questions about commenting on militant actions. In trying to support autonomous groups, Campinski, Gipfelsoli, and Media G8way encountered difficulties in commenting on militant protest tactics in a way that would not force them into a defensive position that justified the protesters’ violence as in response to police repression. Especially after the riots in Rostock, participants of the Campinski group felt impotent to make claims about the necessity of militant tactics. As one of them pointed out during the evaluation in Berlin: “from our weak position, we cannot start a debate about militant actions.” Being part of the Interventionistische Linke (IL) and their independent press group, the antifascist group Antifaschistische Linke Berlin encountered similar problems:

The media published every lie propaganda had to offer, the last word in all news-reports was given to the spokesperson of the police. . . . But even from the spokesperson of the IL, who is a member of our group, there were dissociating statements given in more than one interview. We were overpowered at that time by the effective power of the discourse of violence, we couldn’t cope with the onslaught of the media an [sic] the force of the smear campaign, and in some of our statements we fell into the jargon of media and police. (Antifascist Left Berlin 2007)

Police and authorities have come to realize that being at the center of the production of truth relies on controlling media representation. During the first cycle of summit protests, scare tactics were prevalent. Scare tactics work in two directions: on the one hand, through psyops, the diffusion of dissent is psychologically restrained. On the other hand, through internalizing and anticipating their own criminalization, protesters start to control their own communication of dissent. For the first operation, authorities and police make extensive use of the media. News reports before summit protests, above all in the yellow press, frequently paint horror scenarios of thousands of mindless and violent protesters descending upon a city or region in order to ravage it. These horror scenarios are fed by authorities in order to enforce emergency measures: before the 2000 protests in Prague, the Czech ministry of internal affairs recommended that the local population stockpile food and medicines; all state schools were closed for one week; inhabitants staying were advised not to speak to any protester. The major of Prague, Jan Kasl, declared that some protesters might “kill if possible, if allowed” (in German 2000). In the months before the 2001 G8 in Genoa, bomb attacks often initiated by right-wing forces are blamed on left-wing groups (Azzelini 2002:
Before the G8 summit protest in Genoa, the Italian authorities reported 60 bomb scares (Caffentzis & Federici 2001). Interestingly, after the protests, the authorities and investigators seem to entirely forget about these “threats,” focusing entirely on criminalization of the “black bloc” in order to divide the protesters (Jazz 2001: 87).

During the security preparations for the 2007 G8 in Heiligendamm, Kavala promoted the security measures through the media as professional and necessary tasks, thereby attempting to justify their legitimacy. Kavala’s presswork was organized by its own operation section called “Einsatzbegleitende Presse- und Öffentlichkeitsarbeit” (operation-related presswork and public relations). The precocious integration of presswork into the police preparation is the result of earlier summit protests where the legitimacy of the police operation clearly depended on the way it was portrayed in the mainstream media: “Today, it is not only the police who are the judges of the success or failure of an operation. Just as decisive is how the media and thus also the public register it” (BAO Kavala 2007a: 11; my translation). Here one can see how marketing strategies enter the security preparations for a summit meeting. The attempt to manage public relations in a centralized way through this operation section becomes apparent in the creation of a special logo for Kavala, which was used for all official communication.

The Kavala operation section concerned with press and public relations work had several spokespersons speaking to the press in order to explain police measures from an early stage on. For the time of the protests, Kavala organized five mobile police press points in the region (BAO Kavala 2007a: 11). Individual police officers were advised to direct journalists with questions about the police operation and the protests either to the official spokesperson or to one of the mobile police press points. Moreover, spokespersons for Kavala were present at the official G8 media center in Kühlungsborn answering questions of journalists. On a daily basis, several press releases by Kavala commented on the day’s events. In these press releases, a number of significant false reports were published, which afterward circulated widely through the German and international press (see Stad 2007). The first one concerned the confrontations that ensued in the city harbor of Rostock on the 2nd of June. In their press release, Kavala claimed that there had been more than 400 seriously injured police officers. When specifically asked the day after, Kavala admitted that only two police officers had to be transported for treatment of serious injury. The bulk of police officers treated on the spot were victims of “friendly fire,” for example, by getting their own pepper spray in their eyes (Backmund et al. 2008: 115). However, the media had already published the much higher figure, and only in a few cases did they correct it afterward. These inflated
numbers nevertheless influenced the German Federal Constitutional Court in rejecting permission for the Star March on the following Wednesday (see chapter 7).

Being a state institution, the police presswork is supposed to confine itself to principles of sovereign democratic acting. In a constitutional democratic state, this means that—being a state institution—the police have to provide reliable information that dependably honors a level of certainty, and does not engage in its own “spin-doctor” operations (Backmund et al. 2008). That Kavala violated the public trust reveals how the communication tactics of sovereign state institutions deploy biopolitical power in order to channel the communication of dissent into the desired direction. In the case of false reports, the circulation of dissent is preempted by demonizing and criminalizing protesters. One person involved in the Campinski press group revealed how this police tactic impacted the protesters’ presswork. Being present at the media center in the convergence center in Rostock, Campinski saw its ability to work on press releases with the protesters’ perspective constrained—even thwarted—by the constant urge to react to the false reports of Kavala to disapprove them. The communication tactics of the police thus directly restrict protesters’ ability to communicate their dissent by forcing them into a defensive position, a false one at that.

Already before the actual protests started, the channeling of communication began by granting selective access to the media center in Kühlungsborn. In order to gain access, journalists had to undergo an accreditation procedure. In the course of this procedure, several journalists were denied access by Kavala that indicated that the Federal Criminal Police Office might provide more background on the reasons for the denial. Besides gaining control on who could report about the summit and the protests, the authorities made the press center unreachable for protesters, thereby corroborating the incapacitation tactics used to squelch protesters’ attempts to communicate dissent. At the 2001 G8 protests in Genoa, journalists were accommodated within the red zone, also far removed from the protesters but close to the delegation meetings at the G8. Similarly, at the 2005 G8 summit in Scotland, the international media center was inside the perimeter, housed mainly in tents close to the hotel. This brought the press closer to the summit and enabled all the G8 leaders to hold press conferences. Non-governmental organizations also had ready access to the media center. The formation of media centers, as much as the practice of keeping journalists behind the police lines during street interactions, effectively results in a form of “embedded” journalism captive to state power and control. This tactic channels media into only having access to the perspective of authorities, effectively precluding a view from the other side of the barricade.
Channeling thus means to attract media to certain places while withholding them from others. During street interventions, police frequently attempt to incapacitate journalists from covering the perspective of protesters. In Genoa, journalists filming or photographing the brutal attacks of the Italian police were ruthlessly attacked. In most cases their equipment was destroyed so it could not be used against the police (see Amnesty International 2001). Such brutalities have been repeated in Europe. Without using direct force, police can hinder the press from coming close to protesters and reporting about their causes. When, together with a group of protesters, I was encircled by several hundred police officers, I arranged for an interview with one of our press contacts. When the camera team arrived and started to ask me questions, police ordered them to either leave the encirclement or be arrested as well. The view from within the police encirclement was not allowed.

Another way of using the media preemptively was a radio spot against “violence” developed by Kavala. In this spot entitled “Protest yes—violence no,” the famous German film actor Sascha Gluth says, “G8 2007—say your opinion—but without violence! We are committed! A combined action of the media in Mecklenburg-Western Pomerania and the police” (BAO Kavala 2007a: 13; my translation). Besides using a radio spot for dividing protesters into “good protesters coming for protest” and “bad protesters coming for the violence,” it contributed to a stigmatization of transgressive protesters and their tactics. Using the media, police thus produce the desired protester. Transgressive street actions, on the other hand, are presented as void of content and reduced to a radical but apolitical gesture.

The tactic of dividing is an important one within a preemptive repertoire of control. It decomposes the solidarity of protesters by creating categories within which many protesters strongly feel the urge to relate, especially those that want “good media.” This way, the media expectations receive agency. The categories of “good” and “bad” dissent as established by police through media communication interpolate protesters and invite us to think of them as so defined. I even encountered transgressive protesters who wanted to be considered “good” protesters.

Preemptive Community Management

When it became public that the local butcher of Reddelich, neighboring the site of one of the three camps for the G8 protests in Germany, had ordered an extra fence for his private land (from the same local company that had
made the fence for the G8 summit), he became the public icon for the distrust of the local population toward the protesters that were to descend massively on this small village. Many television channels and newspapers mentioned this case or even published an interview with him. This butcher of Reddelich was held up as indicative of the local population’s fear about being invaded by thousands of dangerous protesters wrecking their village.

When I arrived at the build-up of the campsite, little of the hysteric news reports about him seemed to be true. The butcher even allowed the people working on the camp to use his water connection until they had their own one. When the first protesters started to populate the camp, he put a banner on the fence surrounding his lot announcing: “Revolution am Ostseestrand! Wir grillen für den Widerstand” (“Revolution at the beach of the Baltic Sea! We barbecue for the resistance”) and sold grilled sausages and drinks next to the entrance. Although a butcher might have been considered a target by the numerous vegan protesters in the camp, in order to maintain the good relationship, they spared him from any confrontation.

The anecdote of Reddelich’s butcher provides some crucial insights about the dynamics of contact with the local population as a contested site of communication. In order to establish good contacts with the local population, communication is considered more and more important by both protesters and police. So, contacts with the neighborhood are established in advance. In anticipation of upcoming confrontations, police and protesters try to cultivate the general sympathy of the local population before the interaction in the street unfolds. Protesters are often more successful with community contacts when a situation for practical cooperation with locals emerges. When police seemed to invade the protest camp at the 2009 NATO protests in Strasbourg, neighbors even brought out old furniture for reinforcing protester barricades. Police, on the other hand, mainly target the local population to raise understanding for their operative measures through using their hegemonic access to information circulation channels. They demonize summit protesters, while at the same time trying to enhance locals’ understanding of their preparatory and operational security measures. But, in many ways, police clearly imitate the tactical repertoire of protesters.

Inspired by British protesters who already picked this tactic up from the Black Panthers for the G8 summit protests in Scotland in 2005, the practice of “door-knocking” is a telling example. In Germany, this was used to supplement the tactic of info-evenings that were organized for a whole year in the entire region. Instead of inviting people to come to a certain place, door-knocking means to visit people at their homes, offer them some basic information, and give them the chance to have a small chat with those
people planning to protest. During the preparation camp in August 2006, a year before the actual G8 summit, protesters did this for the first time and repeated it several times in various villages surrounding Heiligendamm. Not even a month later, the police started distributing leaflets from house to house in Bad Doberan, inviting the local population to a police information evening about the security operations concerning the G8 summit: “We want to involve all citizens so that they know what they are going to be confronted with,” said police commander Ingolf Dinse, responsible for “citizen coaching.” This was, however, just a first step. In the following months, Kavala organized a whole series of “citizens’ evenings” in the entire region. In February 2007, Kavala finished the first series of 13 information events in the region about the security measures for the G8 summit. The aim clearly was to scare and calm local inhabitants. Moreover, a telephone number was made available for local inhabitants with questions about the security operations, and a special website of Kavala answers to frequently asked questions. In May 2007, the police used a special vehicle, called an “info-mobile,” which could be visited during a few days in the city center of Rostock.

Looking at the similarity of tactical communication repertoires of police and protesters, it is hard to resist the conclusion that communication with the local population is predicated on a marketing logic of neoliberal management practices. Police and protesters attempt to get their message across by managing target publics that are supposed to “buy” their content. However, one should not overlook the asymmetry in the application of such a managerial communication practice. First, being an institutional actor, the police have many more resources in order to apply these tactics professionally, including high-gloss brochures, among other tools. Second, as an institutional actor representing government on the streets, to many the police appear trustworthy in providing accurate information. Representing the government, the police clearly have the hegemony of credibility. As a result, summit protesters must use other resources to involve the local community. Practical cooperation, such as in the case of the butcher, has often fostered the most reliable relationships. Many activist groups are engaged in making links with individuals in the region during their many visits to the region in the years preceding the summit: environmental activists with local biological farmers, antifascist groups with local antiracist initiatives, antimilitarist groups with the inhabitants of the villages surrounding the Bombodrom who resist the planned use of the area for bomb release practices. In many cases, these contacts resulted in practical cooperation for specific protest actions. Two groups of protesters even moved to Rostock in order
to have a local base for organizing and to intensify contacts with the local community. One of the participants explains the motivation:

Especially since summits don’t take place anymore in the metropolis, big protests can mean a lot of stress for local activists: the organizational efforts beforehand and the repression afterward. In order to organize the protests in a good way for both locals and internationals, exchange in both directions is important: from locals to internationals and from internationals to locals. (My translation)

When the protest camp in Reddelich was nearly finished being built, the local population was invited for an open day to stroll around the camp and to chat with the protesters. The well-organized character of the camp astonished most of the visitors and some of them stayed for the evening to attend the general campsite meeting.

The contested communication with the local population clearly is the result of tactical innovation and adaptation through the experiences of previous summits. As for police and authorities, one could say that until the G8 protests in Evian in 2003, the main approach was psychological warfare through the application of scare tactics. Authorities and police did not seek the understanding of—or cooperation with—the local population, but rather attempted to scare them from getting involved in the protests (or support them otherwise), to instigate an atmosphere in which any (transgressive) action of protesters would only confirm the heated expectations.

With the spatial shift from urban to rural sites the tactical repertoire for communication changed. Removed from the more anonymous space of big cities and confronted with village inhabitants who are certainly less familiar with protest events, protesters and police started to engage more in face-to-face communication. In the case of protesters, this meant visiting the region in advance and organizing info events, but also looking for chances of linking summit protest to local struggles. In the case of police and authorities, this meant a shift to communication management rather than only applying scare tactics. At the 2005 G8 in Gleneagles, the Scottish Tayside police worked with a G8 community spokesman in Auchterarder, the closest village to the summit’s venue, to establish connection with the local population and to alleviate their fears. This approach was clearly extended by the German police. An excellent moment for charming the local population was the dinner of the official G8 delegations at Hohen Luckow (south of Heiligendamm). Local children welcoming the delegations received free police t-shirts: a police publicity moment broadcast live (Streife 2007: 17).
Protesters, on the other hand, started to work more intensively on contacts with the local population through practical cooperation. A good example is the community garden, “Cre8 Summat” (Scottish for “create something”), which was constructed in collaboration with the inhabitants of one of the poorest districts in Glasgow on a spot where a new road project was supposed to be realized (Roman 2005).

Once the summit is over, contested communication with the local population does not stop. Protesters frequently try to stay in contact with the region, helping to support local struggles by connecting them to the protests that just had happened. In most cases, protesters have organized a number of anti-repression demonstrations after a summit. In June 2008, a conference was organized in Rostock, called “Heiligendamm + 1,” in order to speak about further perspectives related to the G8 resistance. Protesters from other cities also continued to support local struggles, like the protests against the opening of a neo-Nazi fashion store in Rostock or the ongoing privatization of the land in Heiligendamm itself. After the protests, a meeting was held in which the inhabitants of Reddelich evaluated their experience with the protests and the camp they had hosted next to their village. According to the local representative of the socialist party Die Linke, Adriane van Loh, most locals seemed to agree that the protesters had behaved very well and that none of the expected vandalism had happened. Some even stated that it was a pity that all the protesters had gone and would not come back anymore. When the talks shifted to property damage that protesters had left behind, one person complained about a spray-painted slogan at the local bus stop. An elderly woman immediately countered that she was not worrying about this, since the slogan said: “We will come back.”

Repeatedly, one of the biggest fears of the local population concerns the potential loss of turnover and property damage at their shops. Ever since Prague, the police try to convince local shop owners to barricade their windows in order to prevent being an easy target for transgressive acts. The German police advised local shop owners not to display very expensive products in their shop windows, as well as to check the functioning of their alarm systems. In order to move from the repertoire of scare tactics to preemptive communication management, authorities nowadays stress the expected gains for the tourist industry in the region. For the 2007 G8 in Germany, two glossy brochures were published in English to advertise Mecklenburg-Western Pomerania as an attractive region for tourism (see chapter 5). Predictions are made about the additional return the tourist industry of that region can expect from being at the center of world media attention for nearly a week. However, at the 2007 G8 in Germany, local
business lost profit; and local communities were left with quite substantial
costs from both the summit itself and the damages.  

Producing Truth, Erasing History

Unraveling communication as a contested site of struggle during summit
protests delivers a complex picture of the interaction between authorities and
protesters. The analysis of the tactical communication with different publics
shows how the management of dissent through regulating communication
responds to the circulation of antisystemic dissent through decentralized and
clandestine networks involving new communication technologies. Tactical
communication repertoires uncover how legitimation processes are tactically
organized. Social control tries nonetheless preemptively to domesticate this
refusal into a functional part of the systemic production of truth when
protesters say “no” to a marriage with global hegemonic forces.  

Antisystemic dissent with the global hegemonic order is articulated
in contradiction to the existing production of truth. On the one hand,
protesters have created powerful tools in order to circulate the stories of
their struggles conflating the boundary between media consumer and pro-
ducer. The circulation is organized through decentralized and cross-border
networks that enable quick flows of information and horizontal coordina-
tion of tasks. For the purpose of planning transgressive actions, protesters
use care to organize much of their communication clandestinely. However,
this creates tensions with the presumed open character of networks and
produces vulnerability vis-à-vis social control that can portray clandestine
communication as evidence for criminal (or even terrorist) behavior. What
is worse is that in securing their own communication, protesters can end
up internalizing control by anticipating their own criminalization.

On the other hand, authorities and police precisely strive to inhibit
the (rapid) circulation of antisystemic dissent. The three approaches of scare
tactics, incapacitation tactics, and co-optation tactics have played an impor-
tant role in contested communication with the mainstream media and the
local population. The preemptive character of the social control of dissent
is articulated through biopolitical forms of power, which focuses on the
preclusion of an undesired event by regulating the flows of circulation. This
approach is exemplified in the press and community work as organized by
the German police department Kavala. Moving from propaganda-style tact-
cics to the preemptive manipulation of the flows of communication, Kavala
exerted sovereign power in a biopolitical way. In this context, the (recon-
stitution) of the legitimacy of global hegemonic forces occurs through the contested site of communication as a psychological operation that preempts and incorporates dissent even before it occurs by inhibiting and channeling its circulation. Co-optation tactics make dissent a functional part of the system (supported by the moral interventions of NGOs). Controlling the communication of dissent becomes a problem for spin-doctor management.

Innovating their tactical communication repertoire, summit protesters engaged in a process of professionalization, marked by more and more refined press work and community targeting. Since they generally abide by the liberal logic of appealing to “public opinion,” these attempts show the limits of trying to change the truth without changing the conditions for the production of truth. Authorities and police have copied many of these tactics. But, due to their hegemonic access to the production of truth, authorities are often more successful in “managing publics.” Still, the centralized nature of police organization makes adaptation to the decentralized approaches of summit protesters difficult, and makes authorities especially vulnerable to mistakes in the internal communication system.

Ultimately, what the control of communication attempts to erase is the history of dissent as an antisystemic initiative. The truth of the police is converted into the truth of today. The possibility for constructing a history of dissent is effectively eliminated. Through scare tactics, incapacitation, and co-optation, antisystemic dissent becomes unimaginable and the collective memory of antisystemic initiatives erased. Maybe transgressive summit protesters can be inspired by the following proposal by Deleuze and Guattari (1994: 108): “We do not lack communication. On the contrary, we have too much of it. We lack creation. We lack resistance to the present.”
The tradition of the oppressed teaches us that the “state of emergency” in which we live is not the exception but the rule. We must attain to a conception of history that is in keeping with this insight. Then we shall clearly realize that it is our task to bring about a real state of emergency.

—Walter Benjamin, *Illuminations: Essays and Reflections*

A participant in the 2003 protests in Evian told me the following anecdote. As usual, the local press had anticipated riots, mayhem, and destruction. Geneva and Lausanne, the two cities where summit protesters concentrated, prefigured a “state of exception” and triggered fantasies of an entire city being smashed. When passing by a café terrace in Lausanne a few days before the protests were to kick off, the protester caught some words of a conversation between three elderly women. One of them wondered outright why the G8 would want to smash windows. Sounding out of place at first glance, this woman posed the question in the right way.

The evening of the 2007 anti-G8 rally in Rostock, Christian Ströbele of the German Green Party was at a talk show that evening on the German public television channel ZDF, supposedly taking sides with the summit protesters. The table in the studio was decorated with a cobblestone covered with red stains, insinuating the riots in Rostock. (However, the pavement

*This title is borrowed from a German pamphlet published by Supportolegale (2005) about the 2001 Genoa protests.
around the Rostock city harbor is not cobblestones but asphalt.) When Ströbele started to give his version of the events, the agitated moderator interrupted by wondering: how long are politicians willing to look on helplessly while violent anarchists are crushing “our” police officers? This outcry also aptly captures those opinions articulated by the mainstream media during the following days. Whereas many of the security and surveillance measures had been met with outright indignation by the general public in Germany in the weeks preceding the G8 summit, it was suddenly accepted as commonplace that the state had actually not prepared well enough in order to protect itself, its citizens, and its police. Seen in the light of these events, the question of the old lady in Lausanne seems less out of place. Perhaps, authorities sometimes have good reasons for “smashing windows”?

Reading Riots Politically

There are no words to adequately define it, for mere words can never convey the terror and horror of such an event. Unless you have seen a city torn, bleeding and in flames, unless you have faced a wild mob on a rampage, unless you have seen the injured and the dead, you cannot understand what a riot is. When you have lived through one, you can never forget it.

—Ray Momboisse, *Riot and Civil Emergency Guide for City and County Officials*

The justification of political violence is often approached via two ethical dimensions: “who started?” and “who is the real perpetrator?” These questions reduce political violence to a moral argument that identifies (individual) culprits. However, as Žižek (2008: 1) proposes, violence often only becomes palpable as subjective act precisely where such an (individual) culprit can be identified. When normalized as the usual state of affairs, systemic violence, as the outcome and perpetuation of the organization of power relations, is overlooked. Our propensity to focus on spectacular, single, and overtly violent acts seduces us into negating the symbolic and the systemic violence sustaining our world. Žižek (2008: 2) therefore distinguishes subjective violence from objective violence:

The catch is that subjective and objective violence cannot be perceived from the same standpoint: subjective violence is experienced as such against the background of a non-violent zero-level. It is
The violence inherent in this “normal” state of things, the normalized oppressive organization of the social world, only becomes visible through subjective violent acts that seemingly make no point in a supposedly “peaceful” world. I propose to conceptualize violence as fundamentally a social relationship that then manifests itself in concrete interactions (see also Collins 2008). This implies different involved actors have different stakes in avoiding or producing violence. As the preceding anecdotes exemplify, violence as social relation is produced in the interaction of state (and its judicial apparatus), police, corporations, protesters, media, and bystanders. However, if violence is the outcome of large-scale interactive social processes, then the category of “violent activists” is an obsolete one. For violence is a constituent element of social relations unfolding through the ordinary process of existing power relations, reinforced via police power. Reading protests, even riots, politically, thus means to unpack law and its enforcement as a contested site of struggle.

In its capacity to make and enforce the law, the state fully constitutes its power. In his “Critique of Violence,” Walter Benjamin (1986) argues that there is an intrinsic interconnection between violence and the constitution and perpetuation of a legal order. Legality presupposes violence. In Benjamin’s words, violence is always either law-making or law-perpetuating (rechtsetzend or rechtserhaltend). Law is a specific social form of conflict resolution and the state as constituted form of sovereign power relies on violence in order to assert its authority over social conflicts. Applying violence is just the ultimate exertion of legality.

However, Benjamin distinguishes between power as the principle of a mystical law-constitution, and justice as the principle of divine end making (Zwecksetzung). He relates his conception of divine violence to the messianic expectation of a coming historical rupture resulting in the salvation of a world otherwise imbued only with mystical violence. Divine violence is the violence aimed at the abolishment of law-constituting power. In its attempt to preserve the law, the mystical form of power is constantly under threat. Benjamin calls this the dialectics of the philosophy about the history of violence. 2 Revolutionary (divine) violence has to assert itself from outside the legal encapsulation of mystical violence. This approach powers the negation of the negation as the engine of the new.

Frantz Fanon (2001) painstakingly points out the emancipatory effects of violence in the struggle of The Wretched of the Earth against colonial
oppression. In the process of decolonization, the liberation struggle of the colonized implies killing the oppressor in order to assert its own humanity. Violence thus also has an ontological dimension and can help to constitute the subjectivity of the oppressed. Far from being simply irrational, the violence of the colonized is a process of recreating themselves. As Sartre points out in his introduction to this work by Fanon: “The rebel’s weapon is the proof of his humanity” (in Fanon 2001: 19). Fanon’s book is a convincing argument for understanding violence as a constituent process that—in order to assert the liberated subjectivity of the oppressed—turns the oppressors’ own violence against them. Nevertheless, his account does not grapple with the problem how violence perpetuates itself.

In her reflections on the escalating spiral of radical movements in the 1960s in the US, Hannah Arendt (1970) fiercely opposes such a view of (necessary) violence. Based on her distinction between behaving and acting, Arendt argues that any action already aims to be a disruption of the normal and anticipated course of history. The possibility of breaking with the current state of affairs is no exclusive privilege of revolutionary violence. By opposing power to violence, she seems to reject Benjamin’s analysis of law as based on a violent relationship. Whereas Arendt conceptualizes violence as instrumental, in her view, power is an aim in itself. In this sense, though violence can destroy power, it can never constitute it. Opposing Mao, Arendt (1970: 11) argues that violence can destroy power, but can never constitute it. Arendt argues against the fetishization of violence based on a reading of Karl Marx different from that of many of her contemporaries. She thought that not violence, but the contradictions present in the old society would bring it to an end. Violence would merely be a symptom of the old society being torn apart: “The emergence of a new society was preceded, but not caused, by violent outbreaks, which he [Marx] linked to the labor pangs that precede, but of course do not cause, the event of organic birth” (Arendt 1970: 11).

At first glance convincing, Arendt’s argument reveals a semantic shift that does not seriously engage with the points made by Marx, Benjamin, Fanon, and Sartre (or later on Žižek) about violence, who all claim that violence is itself one of the contradictions present in the “old” society. It is one of the central relationships that produce a resilience in the face of contradictions so as to prevent a radical break with the existing order. It is unclear how, in Arendt’s view, this relationship of violence can be made visible or challenged without violence. By conceptualizing violence as merely an instrument, Arendt overlooks violence as social relationship that constitutes a site of struggle. This means that the violence inherent in the present social order never surfaces as questionable.
Reading riots politically, however, conceptualizes violence as an outcome of interactions predicated on a social relationship between constituent and constituted power, between the potentiality of an alternative and the existing form of social organization based on formalized and institutionalized sovereign power. To present what protesters—even the black bloc—do as violence, resists acknowledging how transgression is necessary for dissent as constituent practice in order to contest the legality of the present order.

Transgression as Non/Violent Reappropriation of the Law

Taking into account the intrinsic interconnection between law, legality, and violence (and the state’s role in this), this chapter argues that for the reappropriation of the law as constituent legality from below, transgression is key. Transgressive street tactics constitute a moment of reappropriating the law as constituent power by negating the constituted form of legality. The innovative repertoire of transgressive tactics during summit protests constituted a challenge for authorities. Transgression means to employ tactics that willingly move beyond what is legally accepted. How do authorities react to thousands of protesters violating the law in order to implement their will to shut down summit meetings? Reappropriating the conditions for the production of politics relies on transgressing the present legal order without reproducing the state form that leads to the statification of conflicts so as not to mimic the politics of control. This forms a direct challenge of sovereign power trying to enforce the legal order. Transgression of the law calls sovereign power into question, and therefore violating the law is often portrayed as “violence.” In order to mark this terminological ambiguity, I refer to transgression as non/violent tactics here.

Although transgression is an important part of the tactical street repertoire of summit protesters, non/violent tactics are severely contested in internal debates, above all in retrospect. After each summit protest, a major debate erupts about what is generally framed as “the violence question.” After the 2000 protests in Prague, the INPEG network condemned the “violence” of protesters and stressed that “we do not support any initiation of violence against people, property and animals.” Even before the 2001 protests in Genoa, the Genoa Social Forum distributed leaflets warning protesters to keep away from violent groups. Peter Wahl, spokesperson of the German ATTAC chapter, pushed this condemnatory practice to its limits after the 2007 riots in Rostock by declaring “violent” protesters are
not welcome anymore at a demonstration organized by ATTAC, and he promised that he would help the police to find the perpetrators (which to my knowledge he never did).4

This attempt to criminalize one part of the protesters by reproducing the police categories of “good” and “bad” protesters amounts to a claim on the ownership of political dissent. Apparently, Peter Wahl and others only accept the articulation of dissent within the boundaries established by ATTAC. Besides this claim of ownership, Wahl introduces a moment of sovereign power into antisystemic dissent. Susan George (2001) exposed a similar attitude after the 2001 G8 protests in Genoa:

I cannot now encourage our members to put life and limb on the line, to participate in demos where we have police trapping people and shooting live ammunition on the one hand, and on the other the black bloc, completely infiltrated by police and fascists, running wild and apparently unable or unwilling to police its own ranks.

By delimiting and channeling otherwise autonomous forms of action (in a way similar to that of action guidelines by excluding certain tactical choices), the sovereign moment transforms constituent power into constituted power, which was palpable during the 2001 G8 protests in Genoa: In order to impose their “non-violent” guidelines, “non-violent” protesters physically attacked black bloc protesters (Kamura 2001: 59). Deeming physical violence necessary in order to stop the violence of the (supposed) opponent, that is, the black bloc, they used disapproved tactical considerations. Black blocs would not argue very differently. In this case, the internal dissension was such that the “non-violent” protesters mistook the black bloc for the G8.

Not all advocates of “non-violence” foreclose alternate tactics when they are supported by specific principled arguments. There are also strong advocates of “strategic non-violence.” Whereas violence may be ethically accepted as a means for protest and resistance, it is avoided as a tactical choice in order to increase participation, reduce the risk of repression, and keep the focus on a certain “message” (Mueller 2004). US-based organizer Starhawk has repeatedly plead for strategic non-violence in the context of summit protests:

Strategic nonviolence lets us mobilize broadly around actions that are more than symbolic, that actually interfere with the operations of an institution of power. Unions and NGOs, and at-risk groups
can support and participate in such actions, which contain many necessary roles at varied levels of risk.\footnote{5}

Although justifying it for tactical reasons, I have never encountered a protestor who argued that “violence” is morally desirable. However, there are tendencies within mostly insurrectionalist groups to glorify violence beyond tactical considerations resulting occasionally in misguided property destruction during summit protests. Generally, there are four clusters of arguments in favor of non/violent street tactics. First, many protesters argue that property damage does not constitute violence. Reflecting Proudhon’s idea of property being theft (Proudhon & McKay 2010), this argument points out that property is based on a relationship of violence. Property destruction (often symbolically) challenges above all the idea of corporate property. The public destruction of McDonalds restaurants by Jose Bové (2004) and other French farmers struggling against the import reductions for foreign cheese is a good example. At the 2000 IMF/WB protests in Prague, the Tute Bianche openly destroyed the windows of a McDonalds restaurant, symbolically claiming “a new legality” established from below.\footnote{6} The symbolic character of non/violent acts functions as a sign of intransigence vis-à-vis global hegemonic forces. Although the Peoples’ Global Action network initially adopted a commitment to “non-violent direct action” after fierce discussions during the second global meeting in Cochabamba in 2001, the term “non-violent” was cut out. This acknowledged that, unlike in Western countries, property destruction is not in many other contexts considered “violence” (see Hurl 2005).

The second argument invokes the distinction made by Žižek between objective and subjective violence. Many protesters deny the violent character of their street tactics by pointing to the inherently violent systemic context they try to challenge. Protestors argue that, in facing the objective violence of capitalism and global hegemonic forces, their own transgressive street tactics can never be called violent: “But come on—a stone against a helicopter, a stick against an armoured car—and they call us violent?” (Jazz 2001: 88). This is what I call the “negative dialectics” of transgressive street tactics. Adorno (1990: 11) points out how negative dialectics can be an “ontology of the wrong state of things.” This is to say, it is not transgressive street tactics that are wrong, but the systemic violence negating humanity, which is contradicted with transgression negating this systemic violence. As the negation of life, systemic violence only becomes visible through this negation of the negation. Non/violence is seen as a precondition for unmasking
the systemic violent character of global power relations. Transgressive tactics challenge the state’s monopoly of violence and push authorities, as many protesters argue, “to show their real face”:

The system we fight against is deeply rooted in each shot of a gun, in each price increase or tax reduction, in every full tank or each empty bowl, in each white paper and every red river. It is supported by governments and money and will do everything in its power to defend itself. Yes, the system is violent, the state is violent, the police, the military, the industry, agriculture, the distribution of land, privatization, profit, and the shame they call democracy and the trash they call information—all are brutally violent.7

A third argument that refuses the label “violent” for transgressive repertoires, defending it as a tactical choice, is that protesters’ violence is purely reactive, an act of self-defense against police violence. For example, by pointing out that the march was attacked violently by the police before any transgressive act on behalf of the protesters occurred, the non/violence of the Tute Bianche march at the 2001 G8 protests in Genoa is framed this way.8 Since the use even of violence for self-defense is more accepted, this argumentation is often used for publicly justifying non/violent tactics. When being threatened with a police invasion, the inhabitants of the 2007 protest camp in Reddelich in Germany issued the following declaration:

Camp Reddelich will not initiate any one-sided aggression against the police. In the case of a police attack the camp will collectively and resolutely defend itself with the options available to it in order to protect its participants and its structures. (Camp Reddelich 2007)

However, neither can all violence as outcome of street interactions be understood this way, nor do all protesters agree with the limitation to self-defensive contexts. The fourth argument, then, is that non/violence is part of an offensive approach and tactical necessity. In his reflections on the 2000 IMF/WB protests in Prague, Boris Kagarlitsky (2000) observes that “the tactics of the police, and the whole system of police training, were organized in such a way as to preclude any chance of success through non-violent actions. You cannot march through police barriers without entering into confrontation with the police.” Subordinating the ethical to the tactical requirements of resistance, effectiveness becomes the primary criterion. This
is to say the relation between means and ends is seen in an instrumental way. Whereas ethics may concern the choice of the ends, choosing the right means is a political question involving consequences and, therefore, questions of effectiveness. A German pamphlet evaluates the 2001 G8 protests in Genoa and the ensuing repression with the title (borrowed for this chapter) “A revolt is a revolt is a revolt” (Supportolegale 2005). Antisystemic dissent is conceptualized as something that has practical consequences for the way protesters act collectively in the streets. This is not to say that “violent” tactics are less ethical than “non-violent” ones. Taking the global context into account, Churchill (1998) convincingly argues that pacifist positions, by leaving the burden of effective resistance to poor and non-white people, can also be unethical and racist.

Many protesters, however, stress the benefits of combining several (transgressive) tactics. Peter Gelderloos (2005: 4) points out that non/violence is not about tactical preferences but about tactical diversity (see also chapter 5):

I am not an advocate of violence, and neither is anyone else I know within the anarchist and anti-authoritarian movement. We are advocates of a diversity of tactics, of the full range of tactics that will effectively lead to a revolution against all the components of the state: white supremacy, patriarchy, capitalism, and imperialism.

Then, too, there are protesters who disavow revolution, but who affirm the use of a diversity of tactics, strategic ones included.

**Conflating Internal and External Security**

One of the effects of my research experience is that, whenever hearing ongoing police horns around me, I want to be in the right place. Though seldom making sense in a daily context, such a desire demonstrates how the state of exception enacted during summit protests can be engraved in the psychological constitution of summit protesters. To my mind, police horns signal the presence of antisystemic dissent.

The authorities’ tactical answer to non/violent transgression by summit protesters was to invoke a state of exception. Authorities thereby exempt the rule of law from the rule of law. The state of exception is marked by a transposition of legislative into executive power. Exceptional interventions are nowadays often predicated on anti-terrorist legislation that emerged in response to September 11. This legislation has not only significantly shifted
the reach of the definition of terrorism, but also affects the conception of what “security” is and what constitutes a “risk.”

The risk of “international terrorism” is the pretext for the constitution of a state of exception during summit protests, a discursive regime much enhanced since September 11. Anti-terrorist legislation suspending civil liberties is justified with the urgency of defending the liberal-democratic order itself (Ignatieff 2004). When the democratic order is at stake or can be presented as threatened—despite later police admissions that they did not suspect as much—exceptional interventions are justified.

Two tendencies are novel in the recent practice of creating a state of exception. First, since terrorism is held to be an international network of home-grown terrorists, internal and external security are conflated into a single global security space. The “war against terrorism” is not only waged against other countries, but equally includes “homeland security.” States of exception exempting the rule of law are thus an integral part of the “war on terrorism” (Hardt & Negri 2000; Agamben 2004). The conception of an international risk space has effected a conflation of external and internal security. When the enemy can be anywhere and is defined as global (or, at least, as international), then there is produced one single risk space for security: a global one (see Frank Niehörster 2007: 8 and Naumann et al.’s 2007 NATO strategy proposal).

Being at war (with no end in sight) makes it easy to justify exceptional interventions. War has become a social practice that extends to the management of what previously has been considered “internal affairs” or “public order”:

Interventions are always exceptional even though they arise continually; they take the form of police actions because they are aimed at maintaining an internal order. In this way intervention is an effective mechanism that through police deployments contributes directly to the construction of the moral, normative, and institutional order of Empire. (Hardt & Negri 2000: 38)

This conduct of internal affairs as becoming-war clearly reflects Benjamin’s account of the intrinsic connection between violence and the constitution and perpetuation of the legal order. Constituting and perpetuating the current global order means that violent interventions aim to counteract risks to the global internal order. The danger of terrorism is repeatedly invoked in the (regular) risk analyses provided by intelligence services, police, and other monitoring agencies before summit meetings. The management of dissent
is predicated on the constant invocation of a risk from within threatening the (internal) world order.

Second, being utterly vague, the EU definition of terrorism potentially includes summit protesters opposing the present socioeconomic order who use disruptive tactics to this end. The 2002 European Council Framework Decision defines terrorist acts as acts that

given their nature or context, may seriously damage a country or an international organisation where committed to the aim of: seriously intimidating a population; or unduly compelling a Government or international organisation to perform or abstain from performing any act; or seriously destabilising or destroying the fundamental political, constitutional, economic or social structures of a country or an international organisation.11

The problem should be clear: since antisystemic dissent relies on disruption in order to push for change, antisystemic protesters (potentially) are terrorists. The EU definition also demonstrates how summit protesters can be framed as a “global risk.” As Gene Ray (2008) makes clear, “[i]n fact any disruptive protest tactic—and what good protest is not disruptive?—could be represented as coercive and intimidating, and this indicates that the definition of terrorism is recklessly broad.”

Where dissent tries to enforce change during summit protests, establishing a state of exception becomes a matter of defending democracy by enforcing order. The “transgression” of the law is thereby co-constituted from both sides of the barricade, both emphasizing how it is indeed the current order that is at stake. In order to understand the law as a contested site of struggle (and the violence beneath it), the following three sections look at criminal prosecution after summit protests, the emergency laws under the pretext of terrorism, and the militarization of law enforcement during the protests. I thereby show how the state of exception is increasingly preemptive, normalized, and permanent in character. At the same time, in each area protesters have found innovative ways to respond to the legal repertoire of authorities.

Criminal Prosecution and Cross-Border Cooperation

Criminal prosecution and political litigation are an important and long-standing part of the legal repertoire of authorities. Exceptionally harsh
sentences for protesters, group and speed trials, as well as the impunity of the police, are familiar results of large summit protests. Nevertheless, given the relative high amount of (mass) arrests at most of the summits, one may doubt whether the major goal has shifted from prosecution to information gathering and temporary incapacitation. Moreover, both authorities and protesters attempt to better prepare and coordinate their legal tactics on a transnational level. Related to their transgressive tactics on the streets, the tactical legal repertoire of summit protesters, however, suffers from a number of contradictions.

The encirclement of the Hvitfeldtska School at the 2001 EU protests in Gothenburg resulted in the arrests of many protesters, one of which was Maarten Blok from the Netherlands. Though the trials after Gothenburg had many peculiarities, Maarten’s case stands out for the pretext of criminal prosecution that potentially threatens dissent by legally criminalizing it. What I analyze here—criminal prosecution—is not normally considered to have a preemptive character. Maarten’s case, however, reveals how authorities now organize the legal criminalization of (transgressive) dissent preemptively and can count on international judicial cooperation to do so. His case provides a starting point to investigate how, using the pretext of terrorism, the state of exception is transformed into a permanent condition.

On the night of June 3, 2003, Maarten Blok was arrested in front of the squat where he lives in Amsterdam (Steungroep Maarten 2005). Suspicions arise that his arrest has something to do with his arrest during the 2001 EU protests in Gothenburg, which turns out to be true. The Swedish state demanded the extradition of Maarten in order to prosecute him. He was charged with having offended a Swedish police officer and “breaching the peace.” During the encirclement of the Hvitfeldtska School at the 2001 EU protests in Gothenburg (see chapter 5), instead of immediately fleeing after climbing over the containers by Swedish police, Maarten helped other protesters to get over them. After a while, police officers arrested him, and he was eventually deported to the Netherlands, without any further charges.

On the video material gathered by protesters, no assault by Maarten can be identified. Nevertheless, Dutch authorities seem willing to comply with the demand of Sweden. They refused to look at the content of the accusations and only checked whether the legal requirements for an extradition had been fulfilled. Friends and comrades of Maarten set up a support group Steun Maarten (Support Maarten), staging a series of street interventions in order to raise public awareness in the Netherlands around the political character of Maarten’s case and to put pressure on Dutch authorities to prevent his extradition. One of these interventions consisted of putting
a container right in front of the private house of the Dutch minister of justice Donner, in order to see if he would react as did Maarten by climbing over it to get out.

Notwithstanding this creative public appeal by his support group, Maarten is finally extradited to Sweden in August 2004 to face trial. A good part of the solidarity group follows him by bus and organizes noise demonstrations in front of the Swedish prison where Maarten is kept and in front of the judge presiding over his trial. The trial took an unexpected turn. After two days, Maarten’s charges were dropped so that he was free to return to Amsterdam. The Swedish judge viewed the protesters’ video footage, identified the number of the police officer claiming to have been assaulted, and determined that his statement was false.

Quite the opposite happened to a number of German protesters. By 2003, 11 persons in Germany were charged with “rioting” (the Swedish term for this is valdsamt upplopp, which has a German equivalent: Landfriedensbruch, meaning “breach of peace”). However, instead of pushing for an extradition, these protesters were prosecuted and charged by German judges. The 1959 European Convention on Mutual Assistance in Criminal Matters enables such a practice. If there exists a comparable corpus delicti and an equally high maximum penalty, this convention enables prosecution in other countries (than the one where the alleged crime was committed). In the case with Germany and Sweden, these two criteria were met. Since the Dutch law does not possess a corpus delicti comparable to valdsamt upplopp, the convention could not be applied for prosecuting protesters from the Netherlands. In the case of Maarten, Swedish authorities shifted to demanding his extradition.13

The case of German judges prosecuting protesters of the Gothenburg EU summit reveals how judicial institutions cooperate internationally. Though many of the accused persons were arrested during the protests themselves, their behavior was subsequently documented because authorities exchanged video and photo material and other evidence. German courts issued several house search warrants based on Swedish accusations, which were executed by German police in order to confiscate evidence, such as pieces of clothing, visible on the video material provided by Swedish police.

Sentenced protesters describe the atmosphere surrounding the trials following Gothenburg as one of vengeance.14 The number of convictions and the harshness of the sentences exemplify how authorities responded to antisystemic dissent with punitive action. Being significantly higher than after previous riots in Sweden, according to the journalist Erik Wijk (2002), the total sum of sentences amounted to 50 years in prison. A telling change
in Swedish legal practice occurred: instead of those convicted being placed on probation, the accusation of “rioting” resulted directly in jail sentences. The foundation of the accusations in most of the Gothenburg cases was that the riots were well organized and planned in advance. The rioting charges were different from previous ones in Sweden because they were directed against the EU meeting, and were therefore presented as “crimes against democracy” (Svensson 2003). All of the legal cases against Swedish police resulting from 170 legal complaints were dropped or ended with acquittal, such as that of the chief of police of Gothenburg accused for violating demonstrators’ rights. The 2003 Amnesty International report about Sweden criticizes the imbalance between the prosecution of protesters and police.

Fabricated evidence was an important element behind the legal cases generated in Gothenburg. In order to justify the police violence and brutality and to argue that “violent” protesters would have staged a pre-planned and well-organized attack, the authorities edited video footage with selected sequences of various situations combining voice recordings with visual material from other moments, in order to make protesters appear as though they were attacking the police. A report of the Swedish General Elections (2002) suggests that the use of this modified video material in court created an atmosphere prone to punitive legal action:

A defence lawyer suggested that since the opening of the trial of one of his German clients had been prefaced by the playing of the videotape in which the defendant did not appear, that this unprecedented use of audio-visual material in a Swedish court had the effect of creating an emotive atmosphere prejudicial to all defendants, even those not featured on the film or soundtrack. (Swedish General Election 2002)

Another form of judicial prosecution occurring in the aftermath of Gothenburg was group trials. Seven Danes were convicted as a group; eight Swedish activists as being the organizers of the “information center” (allegedly inciting and coordinating the riots). In the charges, the committed crimes were not individualized, but raised against the entire group, stating that each of the persons were equally participatory.

After Gothenburg, both authorities and protesters attempted to coordinate their legal tactical repertoires more internationally and permanently. So-called anti-repression groups from various countries evaluated their experiences with Gothenburg-related prosecution and stayed in contact for the upcoming G8 protests in Genoa. Next to the proposal of establishing a EU
database on (“violent”) protesters and European-wide travel bans, various politicians advanced the option of the reintroduction of border controls to prevent “radical-left border-crossing violence-tourism.” A few months later, the “violent troublemakers” were turned into potential “terrorists.” In the report of a special meeting of the EU Justice and Home Affairs Council on July 13, 2001, international summit protests are for the first time formulated as a “security threat,” warranting anti-terrorist discourses in the way the threat is described.

The tactics of legal prosecution after Gothenburg can be seen as a shift from the experiences of the 2000 IMF/WB protests in Prague where 859 persons were arrested, 350 of which were international protesters. On one side, reports about police violence and harassment of the detained protesters were later abandoned; none of the internationals were sentenced afterward, except for one Danish and one Polish protester. The legal prosecution focused on Czech activists who were kept much longer in detention (before having a trial), some of them more than three weeks. Many foreign protesters, however, demonstrated jail solidarity. When embassy representatives of their respective countries intervened, they refused to leave until the Czech protesters were released as well. Gothenburg thus constituted a decisive adaptation of authorities in tackling the transnational composition of antisystemic dissent by extending the tactical repertoire of internationally coordinated legal prosecution.

These tactical adaptations became fully visible after the Genoa protests. The arrests in Genoa resulted in two major trials against activists: the trial against the so-called group of 25, and the trial around the Diaz school (concerning the raid on the Indymedia center in a public school building granted to the protesters). Police violence, however, was challenged in two major trials: the Diaz school trial and the Bolzaneto trial (the Carabinieri barracks to which the protesters arrested in the Diaz-Pertini schools were brought).

The course of the trials shows how the law as a contested site of struggle offers little ground to protesters. Although, after many years, the Italian judge considered it proven that the treatment of the Bolzaneto detainees was torture, no police officer was ever sentenced because there is no paragraph condemning torture in the Italian legislation. In August 2009, concerning the killing of Carlo Giuliani, the European Court of Human Rights condemned Italy for failing to carry out thorough investigations into his death. The court granted €40,000 in compensation to Carlo Giuliani’s family. However, the court also closed the case by insisting that the police officer had not used excessive force when firing with live ammunition.
Starting in October 2005, the Diaz trials examined the violent raids of the Diaz schools by the national anti-terrorist unit: 61 persons were hospitalized, three of whom were critically wounded. Even four lawyers were beaten up during the Diaz raids. The raids took place under the pretext of finding those responsible for the black bloc actions the day before. However, all of the 93 Diaz victims that were transferred to the Bolzaneto detention center were released four days later due to lack of evidence. The film The Diaz Raid (UK Indymedia, 2001) convincingly demonstrates that the raids were not a tactical move in response to the events of the day before, but were planned a long time ahead of the summit involving Deputy Prime Minister Gianfranco Fini. The two Molotov cocktails proudly presented as evidence after the raids turned out to have been planted by the police. During the trial, which lasted until November 13, 2008, 29 police officers were accused; 16 were acquitted. The others were sentenced only symbolically: their crimes fell past the statute of limitations.

The experience of police brutality and the long resulting trials triggered denser cooperation between anti-repression groups. The Italian group SupportoLegale set up specifically for the 2001 Genoa protests continued to carry out legal support work until today, worked together with similar groups from other countries, accompanied all the trials against Italian police, and documented the available evidence about the protests and the police violence. The cooperation on legal matters intensified after the 2003 G8 protests in Evian. It was above all the case of two protesters heavily injured during a blockade action on a bridge that triggered the realization that a permanent legal team on European level would be very helpful. Legal teams exist in many European countries and consist of law practitioners and volunteers who monitor police during actions, support protesters confronted with prosecution, and often have good contact with supportive lawyers. The idea of a permanent European team never materialized, but various groups stayed in contact and were able to collaborate during future summit protests. Nevertheless, the absence of a more permanent structure was lamented during several preparatory meetings for the 2007 G8 protests.

By September 24, 2007, the Rostock police made 1,121 criminal charges together with 298 charges of regulatory offenses. Passed to the Rostock state prosecution were 1,063 proceedings (Caffier 2007). By mid-November 2007, the Rostock state prosecution began 1,474 investigations. About 1,000 of the cases were soon dropped, half of these because no evidence for guilt could be found, the other half because of minor breaches or minor guilt. At that point, 147 cases were in prosecution or had received a penalty order. Forty-four persons were sentenced, in most cases by fines. A
few persons were sentenced to several months in prison for throwing stones.
Based on complaints received by November, the Rostock state prosecution
initiated 68 investigations against the police, which led to prosecution in
only one case.

The numbers of arrested persons during summit protests are telling: in
Prague, 859 people were detained; in Gothenburg 1,115; in Genoa 310; in
Gleneagles 700; and in Heiligendamm 1,146.\textsuperscript{20} Compared to the numbers
of injured protesters, the number of arrests in Genoa was relatively small.
In Gothenburg, the number was large mainly because of arrests made dur-
ing the raid on the Hvitfeldtska School. That the tactic of mass arrest is a
preemptive one can be seen by the relatively low number of resulting court
cases and verdicts.\textsuperscript{21} Projecting preemption into the future, this data suggests
that protesters may at upcoming summits be turned back at the borders.\textsuperscript{22}

The repertoire to counter criminal prosecution is necessarily restricted.
Reacting to the perpetuation of the state of exception, protesters have started
the difficult process of networking various European antirepression struc-
tures, including legal teams. Now included in the repertoire of summit pro-
testers are good information about legal rights and police tactics in several
languages, consciousness-raising, and public criticism of the security prepara-
tions. In order to prolong the attention of the protesters’ views of the events
at the 2007 G8 in Heiligendamm, a public hearing was organized in Berlin
a few weeks after the summit with several hundred of people attending and
sharing their experiences with violent and abusive police behavior. Three
publications, those by Rote Hilfe (2007), Kommittee für Grundrechte und
Demokratie (2007), and Republikanischer Anwältinnen- und Anwältverein,
Legal Team (2008), also raised awareness through careful documentation of
legal aspects concerning the 2007 G8 summit. But there are contradictions
inherent in activist legal work, based as it is on the frequent appeal to civil
liberties and a constitutional state: a legality that is precisely transgressed
by summit protesters in their revolt against global hegemonic forces. They
never asked for permission.

\textbf{Emergency Making Its Own Laws}

One aspect of the preemptive character of the state of exception is the
introduction or application of emergency laws suspending important rights
of association or political expression and extending the discretionary powers
of police. These kinds of laws can be seen an attempt to formalize the state
of exception. However, the possibilities to do so differ per country and also
depend on its history of legal engagement with transgressive protests. It is therefore important to remember that the de facto state of exception outweighs the formal de jure state of exception and may make it unnecessary.

On November 30, 2006, a six-finger protest march called Sternmarsch—Den Protest nach Heiligendamm tragen ("Star-march—Carrying the protest to Heiligendamm") was registered for the upcoming 2007 G8 protests in Heiligendamm.23 The special G8 police department, Kavala, confirmed the registration with the announcement that a “cooperation talk” would follow for specifying the conditions for the march. Normally in the hands of local administrative offices, Kavala, by a regional decree, was granted full temporary authority over the administrative procedures concerning registrations of public assemblies related to the G8 summit (Kavala 2006: 13). Centralizing administration procedures in a special and temporary police department was a first step in establishing a preemptive state of exception.

Notwithstanding several attempts by the Star-march applicants to obtain a date with the police, the first talk did not take place until on May 10, 2007, one month before the G8 summit. During this talk, Röttgers24 informed the applicants that the six requested routes of the Star-march and their convention in front of the Kempinski Hotel in Heiligendamm (the venue of the G8 summit) were unacceptable to Kavala. Instead, Kavala suggested four alternative routes, each stopping at a distance of 200 meters from the fence. The applicants, in turn, immediately made it clear that these alternative routes were unacceptable since they intended to carry the protest to the actual target of protest: “Unser Protest adressiert sich an die G8, deshalb gehört er nach Heiligendamm”24 (Susanne Spemberg in Gipfelsoli 2007).

In the few weeks between this first “cooperation talk” and the desired date of the Star-march, a fierce lawsuit unfolded—illustrating how the state of exception is enacted preemptively in order to channel and criminalize antisystemic dissent. Only a few days after the first “cooperation talk,” Kavala issued an Allgemeinverfügung (general directive) prohibiting any public assembly in two areas for the period of June 6–8, 2007 (BAO Kavala 2007b). Predictably, the first area was the territory within the fence. The second area, however, covered an additional strip of up to several kilometers around the fence. The reasons given for this Allgemeinverfügung are telling. They are presented as a Gefahrenprognose (threat prognosis). In order to corroborate the threat, the prognosis invokes the danger of (Islamic and international) terrorist attacks. This way, Germany is presented as being part of an “international risk space.”
Interestingly, Kavala admitted during one of the ensuing hearings that the security behind the general directive was required by foreign security forces (in Donat 2008: 48). After the G8 summit, German authorities also admitted that, at the time of issuing the general directive, they did not possess any concrete evidence about attacks being planned (Bundesregierung 2007b). Apparently, a “latent threat” is enough for exceptional measures. In the general directive, Kavala (BAO Kavala 2007b) even holds that, once an event is labeled as being under high threat, concrete suspicions would not be necessary.25

Most telling were two particular justifications of the general directive. On the one hand, Kavala seems to suggest that the presence in itself of any public assembly could potentially disrupt the course of the G8 summit. As Röttgers argues in the general directive, though the police anticipated several thousand delegates and journalists, the presence of several thousand other persons within the area would likely lead to situations of blockage, even if occurring only incidentally. Since the police would need all the available routes for emergency cases, allowing public assemblies would be simply impossible. Besides, 16,000 police officers would not be enough to secure the Star-march. Not surprisingly, this scenario is labeled as a “police state of emergency.” The potential of transgressive protest itself is characterized as the problem. Successful blockades might also damage the international reputation of the Federal Republic of Germany:

If the Star-march were allowed to take place, the protest scene would achieve their goal of blocking all of the access points of the Summit. What should also not be disregarded in this context is that this poses a serious threat to German foreign affairs. This would have a significant impact on Germany’s international reputation. (BAO Kavala 2007b; my translation)

On the other hand, the authorities argue that the official summit delegations might feel offended by the critiques uttered during the demonstrations. They might consider it an “unfriendly act,” and so damage the foreign relations of the Federal Republic of Germany. All of a sudden, the justification for exceptional measures has shifted from the threat of terrorism to the risk of image pollution.

The general directive was immediately countered by the Star-march coalition with an official expedited appeal. Deconstructing Kavala’s risk analysis by pointing out the possibility of less fierce police measures, the lawyer Ulrike Donat questioned the competence of Kavala for the registration of
public assemblies, insisting at least on alternative routes that bring the participants of the Star-march close to the fence. In the appeal, she stresses the right of protesters to articulate their critique publicly and accessibly for the media. The appeal was partly rejected by the regional administrative court in Schwerin. However, it granted the protesters the right to demonstrate at a distance of 200 meters from the fence. A legal back-and-forth ensued with no significant success for the Star-march. On June 6, 2007, just before the Star-march was supposed to take place, the German Constitutional Court affirmed the prohibition of the Star-march. Interestingly, the court rejected the general directive (as an unnecessary measure contradicting the right to assembly) and came up, instead, with its own “risk analysis” over the previous days, which was based on news reports (and the material of Kavala) during the course of the summit protests. As I pointed out in chapter 6, these news reports (e.g., about several hundred police officers being injured or about protesters attacking police with chemical fluids) were the result of false reports issued by Kavala. The ensuing riots on Saturday the 2nd of June nonetheless served as the ultimate justification for dispensing with the constitutional right to dissent.

A last appeal on behalf of the Star-march applicants was dismissed a day later, when the Star-march should have taken place. However, at that moment two mass blockades of the BlockG8 alliance and many decentralized blockades were going on already, and protesters did not seem to care too much. The situation authorities attempted to avoid by prohibiting the Star-march was partly already a reality: a total blockage of all the flows around Heiligendamm. Such an outcome demonstrates that formal legal battles are not always what counts (nor can everything that counts always result in a legal battle). Whereas authorities sometimes strive for a formal de jure state of emergency, they can have a hard time in pushing it through, offering new targets to protesters (such as the general directive). In the absence of concrete laws transposing legislative to executive power and increasing the discretionary powers of police, de facto states of emergencies are much more common. Nevertheless, the “war on terror” has provided some good arguments for making the formalization of the state of emergency a bit easier.

The legal interactions concerning the Star-march perfectly illustrate how a state of emergency is installed preemptively in order to channel dissent and to incapacitate transgressive actions. Invoking an abstract terrorist threat in their risk analysis and arguing for a compelling police emergency, new laws were established by defining dissent as outside of the law, thus criminalizing protest. Because of its preemptive character, the presence of a state of emergency still needs to be justified. Authorities sometimes enact
what they seemingly want to prevent. Whereas the absence of violent con-
frontations (and attempts thereto) might be claimed as being the result of
effective security measures, it also raises questions about the necessity and
justification of the state of emergency. In this respect, the riots in Rostock
functioned as a self-fulfilling prophecy. As the anecdote about the talk-show
program at the beginning of this chapter exemplifies, the critique about
the harsh security preparations—after a period of harsh criticism—made
room for demands for even more police and harsher measures. The general
directive could be presented as a measure of a rational state reckoning
with realistic dangers. After being constructed, an “emergency” makes its
own laws.\(^{27}\)

The general directive was not the only form of legal preemption.\(^{28}\) In
the year before the summit, the German police made excessive use of a new
provincial law “for security and public order,” which significantly extended
their jurisdiction: video surveillance of public spaces, automatic license
plate recognition, preventive surveillance of telecommunication, extension
of police searches based on personal data of individuals, compulsory blood
tests, and video documentation from police vehicles.

But preempting the articulation of dissent through invoking a state
of exception is hardly novel to the 2007 G8 protests in Germany. The way
in which the law was dispensed with in favor of executive powers, legally
prepared beforehand, betrays an interesting learning process on the part
of authorities and police. For the 2000 IMF/WB summit in Prague, for
example, any demonstration was forbidden beforehand without a general
directive. After the 2001 G8 summit in Genoa, for a long time the police
held that the marches of July 20, the day of direct action, had been granted
no permission. During subsequent parliamentary investigations, however,
it became clear that the demonstrations had been regularly announced
(Andretta et al. 2003: 138). Without legally implementing it by suspending
the law, the Italian police measures are justified in retrospect by invoking a
state of emergency. This was different at the 2005 G8 protests in Scotland
where applying an existing emergency public order paragraph (originally
designed to prevent minor football-related disturbances), section 60 of the
Criminal and Public Order Act, the Scottish police could randomly stop
and search protesters. For the first time in Scotland the 2000 Terrorism Act
was enacted extending the possibility of preemptive arrest without charges to
one week. However, many of the 700 protesters were released after several
hours but with draconian bail orders. These required foreign protesters to
leave Scotland (or the region of Gleneagles) as quickly as possible, in order
to meet the bail conditions. Most of the charges resulted in acquittal or
fines. Rather than apply punishment afterward, the Scottish legal repertoire confirms the normalization of exceptional legal measures (above all related to preemptive arrest) during the summit itself.

**Militarization of Law Enforcement**

Law enforcement concerns the legal repertoires authorities apply during protests in the streets. A decisive shift we can observe throughout the past years is the increasing militarization of law enforcement activities. Militarization takes place through the participation of armies and the use of military logistics during summit protests, but also through the adaptation of military crowd control tactics. The militarization of law enforcement normalizes the state of exception and the projected idea of an internal risk space.

During an interview with a German television station, an older, more experienced activist and I were asked about the question of violence during the Saturday protests. One of his responses was interrupted by an ear-splitting noise coming from a Tornado fighter jet crossing above our heads at a frighteningly low altitude. The cameraman immediately turned his camera to the Tornado. My interview partner paused for a moment and then calmly explained that this was exactly the point he had tried to make: the state had prepared for a state of emergency and used all means to avoid dissent from manifesting itself.

But, except for scaring protesters, what did this flight of a military fighter jet accomplish? In his final report, the state minister of internal affairs, Caffier (2007), uncovered that beforehand Kavala had requested the help of the German army for this kind of investigation flight. It turned out that this specific flight was below the legally required minimal height of 150 meters by 70 meters at the moment it flew over the camp. This was excused as an individual error of the pilot due to bad weather conditions. As Caffier (2007) points out in his final report, the reason of this flight (and others) was to detect terrestrial depots and terrestrial modifications, and changes in the building. He denied that persons or vehicles had been observed with these flights. In the period of one month, there were a total of 14 Tornado flights, during which 82 photos were made and transmitted to the police. The federal government (Bundesregierung 2007a) insisted that the army’s support was purely technical and logistical, and therefore cannot be considered a real operation.

The intense involvement of the army in security preparations and operations clearly shows how the invoked state of exception was normal-
ized. Three specific aspects of this normalization nonetheless triggered a debate about the army's participation during the summit. The first one was the aforementioned observation flights with Tornado jets. The second aspect concerned the use of observation tanks. Whereas the federal government denied that an army involvement would be planned for securing the routes from the military airport in Laage (where most delegations were to arrive) to the conference site in Heiligendamm (Bundesregierung 2004), after the summit it admitted that six observation tanks had been operative (practically on each bridge of the highway A19 leading from the airport to Rostock) to do “space control” (Ströbele 2007).

The third aspect triggering public criticism was the “civil-military cooperation” taking place at the public hospital of Bad Doberan. Before the G8 summit started, military police erected a military hospital protected by barbed wire next to the public hospital. During the protests, more and more reports reached the public testifying that military police were present in the civilian hospital, that they accompanied patients and visitors, were present in patients’ rooms, and forced patients to keep the toilet door unlocked. In his report, MP Hans Christian Ströbele (2007: 13–14) mentions the army’s excuse for their presence that they had to secure their own military hospital. The two hospitals next to each other visualize how “civil-military cooperation” conflates internal and external security operations.

Soldiers and tanks have become increasingly habitual elements in the geography of summit protests. In the case of the 2001 G8 in Italy, the military Carabinieri police used military tactics to disperse protesters. The pictures of their tanks chasing protesters, thereby using a tactic called “carousel” (meaning to let the tank circulate in an uncontrolled way), invoke a picture of civil war, rather than a protest demonstration. Moreover, 15 helicopters, military airplanes, and 7 ships of the Italian navy were used. At the 2003 G8 in Evian, Switzerland employed several thousand soldiers for the internal security operations. Amnesty International (2007) reports how the Swiss army secured the airspace with interceptor planes and air defense missiles, constructed emergency hospitals and a emergency communication system, protected the red zone and other “endangered objects,” and crawled through the forests in order to surveil protesters and their camps. For the protests, military tanks were re-equipped for street combat and used for overcoming barricades and transporting protesters to jail. The report by Amnesty International also reveals that all the employed soldiers possessed live ammunition and a leaflet explaining when it may be used, that is, whenever a physically or numerically superior group would launch a dangerous or violent attack—whether with or without arms.
A committee of “critical soldiers” objected to this measure and openly called for refusing their orders for this occasion. They rejected being part of a “state of exception”:

That is why we refuse to create a state of exception in the whole of the region of Lake Geneva for weeks on end. We will not impede the right to freedom of movement and expression of the people who live in the region.

The presence of soldiers and military equipment is not the only sign of the militarization of social conflicts. Summit protests have also become a pretext for introducing military tactics of crowd control: less-lethal weapons, massive use of tear gas (even types of CS gas forbidden by the Geneva War Conventions), concussion grenades, armored vehicles, among others. Tactical training takes place not only among police but also between police and military.

Dressed up as a technical management of resources rather than a political intervention in the form of social control, this tactical collaboration of police and army is often denoted “civil-military cooperation.” Foreign missions taken over by police after military has cleared the ground (for example in Kosovo) are part of this process, as much as soldiers appearing during situations of “internal civil unrest” (and therefore summit protests).

This normalization of the state of exception organized through the conflation of internal and external security and consequent militarization of social conflicts finds yet another expression in the attempt by several European governments to establish an EU riot police force: the formation of the European Gendarmerie Forces by five countries in 2006 as a follow-up to the Pruem Treaty is a first step in this direction. Not coincidentally, the five participating countries—the Netherlands, France, Spain, Italy, and Greece—are precisely the ones possessing militarized police structures. Although the stated intention is to use the EGF for foreign missions, its employment for internal civil unrest remains open and likely (and has in fact been discussed, e.g., in the context of the 2010 riots in Greece).

Both the German party Die Linke (Jelpke 2008: 6) and the police trade union (Gewerkschaft der Polizei 2007) criticized the army involvement in securing the G8. The answer of the federal government to the queries of Die Linke after the G8 summit confirms that 1,100 soldiers and civil servants of the German army were involved in “direct support activities” (Bundesregierung 2007c). This contingent was complemented by 641 military police, 300 physical protection forces of the air force, 40 soldiers for
maritime security, and 350 soldiers for airspace security. In terms of military equipment, the army provided a frigate; 32 mine-detection boats; harbor tugs; 4 medium- and 1 large-capacity helicopter; 10 observation tanks (of the type “Fennek”); diverse “Eurofighters”; Tornado fighter jets and Phantom jets; various trucks, jeeps, and radar devices; 218 night-vision glasses; 98 binoculars; and tents. The most publicly derided material support of the German army, however, was 1,000 bottles of insect protection for the police.

Although many protest groups criticized and investigated the army’s involvement, for anti-militarist and peace groups already involved in the mobilization this created new targets and possible links to their critique of wars and imperialism. During the week of protest, an entire day was devoted to actions against militarization, one of them targeting the military airport in Laage where all the delegations were supposed to arrive. Anyway, being dressed in military accessories, the Clandestine Insurgent Rebel Clown Army was welcoming the opportunity to play and deride soldiers next to the police. Humor turns out to be a powerful weapon in exceptional times.

The militarization of law enforcement tactics shows how authorities normalize the state of exception by projecting the idea of an “enemy from within” and civil-war-like scenarios. Central to this process is the reference to an “international risk space” such that the use of army and military tactics dressed up as administrative support finds an increasing presence during summit meetings. This is how the involvement of military structures has become a normal part of the security preparations. Nevertheless, in the involvement of military structures protesters saw a new target of their criticism of global hegemonic forces and have occasionally managed to politicize the debate about the role of the army. Besides pushing governments (often supported by left-wing members of parliament) to be transparent about the extent and the costs of military operations for summit meetings, protesters have chosen military targets for protests and direct action, but also armed themselves with humor to deride soldiers.

From Exception to Decision

In his *Political Theology*, Schmitt argues that the state of exception is to legal theory what the miracle is to theology (Schmitt 1984: 49). Schmitt explains his fascination with the exception, claiming that the normal state of affairs would prove nothing, the exception everything. Not only does the exception confirm the rule; the rule only exists because of the exception. Schmitt translates this general claim to legal theory, and the role of the state
of exception in particular by arguing that the state of exception reveals a condition of sovereign power that is otherwise veiled by the normal state of affairs. In his view, the state of exception demonstrates the nature of state authority: in order to create laws, authority does not need to be right. Schmitt declares sovereign power to be the highest, legally independent, non-induced form of power: the sovereign is the legal order.

Schmitt argues that any legal order is predicated not upon a norm that could decide in some ultimate instance, but upon a decision that has to be made by the sovereign. The state of exception can never be founded upon a final norm. The decision is instead taken by the sovereign, a pure act not so much to create as to suspend (Weber 1992: 10). Consequently, Schmitt’s Political Theology opens with the sentence: “Sovereign is he, who decides on the state of exception” (Schmitt 1984: 11). In Schmitt’s political theory, the state of exception is a borderline concept that functions as the foundation of political sovereignty.

I argue that Walter Benjamin provides a better understanding for the state of exception than does Carl Schmitt as intrinsic condition of sovereign power and for the possibility of its abolition by focusing conflict on a historical rupture. Benjamin follows Schmitt in seeing the state of exception as inherent to the legal order. In his epilogue to a collection of essays of Benjamin, Marcuse (1965: 99–100) points out that Benjamin’s “Critique of Violence” is directed against the inherent violence of the existing state of affairs. The violent character of law is usually rendered invisible, in order to let it reemerge brutally during “states of exception,” which, in fact, are nothing else than an unveiled normal state of affairs. In Benjamin’s view (1986), the state of exception does not constitute a special moment, but points to an intrinsic condition of the exercise of sovereign power: sovereign power is predicated on the capacity to decide when security is at stake.

Thus far, Benjamin’s and Schmitt’s conception of sovereign power and the state of exception are surprisingly similar. However, whereas Schmitt takes this analysis as a reason to assert the necessity of a sovereign (that can remove the state of exception in particular cases), for Benjamin it provides the ground for putting the very idea and practice of sovereignty radically into question. The fact that the state of emergency is inherent to our current state of affairs makes it necessary to break with the status quo, thus provoking a “real state of emergency” (as the quote of Benjamin at the beginning of this chapter suggests). The state of exception becomes a signifier for the struggle against the continuity of what exists. As Weber (1992: 18) points out, exception is not tied anymore to the definitive and ultimate decision of the sovereign, but to a point in time in which anything could happen.
and nothing is yet decided. In this reading, the state of exception becomes a positive point of reference: “For while Schmitt views the state of exception as the *conditio sine qua non* for the establishment of sovereignty, Benjamin sees sovereignty as existing in order to avoid the state of exception in the first place” (Bredekamp 1999: 260).

This means that protesters provoking a state of exception through applying transgressive tactics push social control to reveal its fundamental political character. Through the interrelation of the state, violence, and the legal order, a political reading of riots uncovers their politicizing effects on the organization of the social world in general, and of social control, in particular. Bringing about a state of exception shows the potential of summit protests for creating a historical rupture. They have forced the other side of the barricade to raise the stakes. Doubtless, Genoa marked a peak moment in this process: after the German intelligence service BND uttered the suspicion that Bin Laden might be supporting European neo-Nazi and skinhead groups to prepare attacks against the 2001 G8 in Genoa, the US Ministry of Defense announced its intention to monitor every cobblestone of Genoa with a military satellite (in Herzog & Kron 2001).

In questioning and opposing the present legal order, transgressive summit protesters raised the stakes for antisystemic initiatives by building autonomous spaces within and against global hegemonic forces. Instead of reintroducing a sovereign moment, many of them have opted for trying to create and extend autonomous spaces, enabling a different democratic social organization from below. This different emergent social order threatens sovereign power with the consequences of “a revolt is a revolt is a revolt . . .” This conception contradicts the idea of (global) civil society formation, rendering central the message of recent upheavals. Civil society literature often suggests a dialogue, even started from below, that smoothly results in the gradual transformation of liberal democracies. A revolt and the subsequent state of exception, by contrast, name the enemy and presume a moment of rupture with the existing (legal) order. One might want to take Bush’s words literally: “Either you are with us or you are against us.” Like the barricade, a state of exception establishes two sides, and hence enforces a decision.

Criminal prosecution after summits has triggered networked cooperation between both protesters and authorities; through emergency laws, authorities attempt to formalize the state of exception in a preemptive manner; and the militarization of law enforcement normalizes exceptional measures and the conflation of internal and external security. As a result, disruption is considered a practice equaling terrorism. The state of exception created in response to antisystemic dissent resembles low-intensity warfare
as a permanent condition of state control. As Hardt and Negri (2004: 22) put it, “war comes to be considered the basis of the internal politics of the global order.”

Such a reading reveals the nexus between law, state (or sovereign) power, and violence. What is politically challenged through transgressive actions at summit protests, then, is law-constituting power and the state’s monopoly on violence. The recurring confrontations during summit protests in Europe, however, testify to the impossibility of governing society merely by law. For constituent power contradicts the process of constituting power. The authorities’ answer has been to reassert the state’s sovereign character in making laws and (re)producing legality. A riot, thus, does not challenge one law, but the whole of the legal order as founded by and foundational for the present global order. These tactics follow Benjamin’s advice cited in the epigraph that it is our task to bring about a real state of emergency.
Back to the Barricades?

Do not think that one has to be sad in order to be militant, even though the thing one is fighting is abominable. It is the connection of desire to reality (and not its retreat into the forms of representation) that possesses revolutionary force.

—Michel Foucault, preface to Gilles Deleuze and Félix Guattari’s *Anti-Oedipus*

This book started with the barricade for a number of reasons. First, historically, barricades have marked the emergence of antisystemic initiatives, the unfulfilled promises of the past that explode rather unpredictably in order to make another history possible. Therefore, I argue, barricades constitute an opening to the possible. Second, phenomenologically, a barricade has two sides. It organizes politics as an antagonistic process in which two forces confront each other. I argue that conceiving of the political as antagonistic process does not mean to restrict this process to just two actors. Third, from a methodological viewpoint, barricades force us to choose sides. For my research, this has meant to take confrontation as a productive starting point for organizing my investigation and to raise questions about the ruling regime of social control: “confrontation as pedagogy of the oppressed.” Fourth, from an empirical perspective, and including objects such as huge fences or container barriers, barricades exemplify the way in which protesters and authorities attempt to disrupt each other during summit protests. The fence is a concrete manifestation of the antagonistic desires of creating (dis)order. Dissent and control antagonistically constitute each other, through mutual incapacitation. Nevertheless, the desire of disruption undergoes a very different dynamics in the doing of control than in the doing of dissent. Fifth, from a theoretical perspective, the contemporary politics of barricades points to the necessity to understand disruption as part of a political process, and, therefore, to unthink political liberalism by using the
viewpoint of disruption, dissent, and antagonism. Barricades may be seen as
the constitutive outside of political liberalism and the state form predicated on
representational politics.

I wanted to take summit protests seriously in their antisystemic potential for challenging global hegemonic power relations. As Deleuze and Guattari argue (in the epigraph to the first chapter of this book), events go as much inside individuals as in the depths of society. How deep they really go can also be deciphered in the way authorities attempt to channel the memory about them. The aftermath of the 2001 G8 in Genoa is a case in point. In a trial against a group of 25 protesters, verdicts were demanded not only for “participating in a riot,” but also for “damaging the image of the city of Genoa” (Media G8way 2007). The charge is simple: protesters are responsible for the violence, and their prosecution revives the city’s old glamour and benevolence. Or is it global hegemonic forces that revive?

Whereas protesters try to interconnect their stories of summit protests and therefore establish a continuity of antisystemic resistance, authorities attempt to present them as separated events, thereby inhibiting the construction of a collective memory. By erasing the history of conflict, the event is depoliticized in retrospect. The proposal to reconstruct the fence in the region of Heiligendamm for tourist purposes is a perfect example of this (Kesseling 2008). Suddenly, the most discussed item of the spatial security measures becomes a profane object for tourist entertainment, decontextualized from its earlier function as separation between hegemonic forces and antisystemic initiatives. All traces of dissent and security measures are commonly deleted as quickly as possible. The image as “war zone” that tarnishes cities and regions that host summit meetings is rapidly swept away, and therefore memorialized as perhaps an ugly but nevertheless temporary state of exception, unrelated to and separated from daily events and politics.

Eliminating the event (as a door to the possible) ultimately relies on the elimination of antisystemic dissent. As I argue in chapter 3, dissent is created through disruptive street interventions (either predicated on the logic of direct action or civil disobedience). Managing disruption thus means to eliminate conflict. Without visible conflict, the event ceases to gain mystical proportions. Because the political is constituted by antagonism, the event—when managed as a conflict-free happening—has been moved outside of the domain of the political.

By analyzing the tactical adaptations of police and authorities in response to the tactical innovations of summit protesters, this book mapped how social control tries to render (the potential of) undesired events unlikely. The social control of summit protests shows that ruling regimes, instead
of controlling territory or individuals, are nowadays focusing on events (in this case, disruption) and populations (in this case, transgressive protesters). By transforming dissent into a problem of political administration, the potentiality of antisystemic initiatives is being contained. Summit protesters cannot be at ease anymore asserting that “we make history” (as one of the most noted spray paintings in Genoa stated). Protests have become a peripheral, normalized imagery of summit protests. As events, they have a hard time reaching the depths of society. This is because of authorities’ tactical adaptations that led to a form of management that contains the potential of protest events. Four sites of struggle are crucial for understanding these tactical transformations.

Four Contested Sites of Struggle

Through studying the interaction between authorities and protesters, I have developed an analytical framework focusing on four contested sites of struggle: bodies, space, communication, and law. Each focusing on the processes of contestation and control, these contested sites of struggle capture the various aspects of street interactions without reifying conflict into frozen sociological categories. The interplay of contestation and control is made palpable by looking at four contested sites of struggle that structure these interactions: the use of bodies, of space, of communication, and of legal means. As opposed to the protest policing literature, I have not focused on a normative assessment of this process, but on how it is socially coordinated by trans-local power relations that exceed the moment of street interactions. Instead of explaining control in terms of preexisting categories, this book explores how the doing of dissent interacts with the controlling of dissent.

First, the analysis of bodies as a contested site of struggle focused on four innovative street tactics used by summit protesters within the traditions of civil disobedience and direct action: the White Overalls, Pink & Silver, the Clandestine Insurgent Rebel Clown Army, and black blocs. Situating these tactics in the street as a context for disciplinary tactics, I show how the use of bodies for contesting global hegemonic power relations asserts a “disobedient body” versus the hegemonic “docile body” a product of disciplinary control. My analysis of these tactics traces the tactical learning process behind them and uncovers the various epistemological premises for creating dissent in the streets. The protected mass body of the White Overalls is explicitly predicated on a novel conception of civil disobedience, reintroducing a clear image of conflict as a broad consensual practice in
the street context. The pink bodies of Pink & Silver and the Rebel Clown Army hinge on creating confusion through the especially unpredictable use of costumes, marching tactics, and humor. Black blocs, by contrast, receive their unpredictable character from their unmediated engagement with history. I argue that their use of tactical violence can be seen as a dialectical image that exposes the violent character beneath the surface of the established order. What all four tactics share is an attempt to reinsert dissent and reveal conflict by making the use of bodies unpredictable.

At the same time, I show how these “disobedient bodies” became subjected to identification tactics of the “blue bodies” of police. Identification serves to make bodies predictable and therefore docile. As manifested in police knowledge, the regulation of bodies is accomplished through an ongoing assessment of new street tactics. The tactical adaptation of police, then, centers on the establishment of protocols for police officers to incapacitate these tactics and their unruly effects.

Second, the analysis of space as contested site of struggle continues the analysis of bodies by looking at their flow through space. It sets out by situating the contestation of global hegemonic forces in a spatial perspective. I argue that global hegemonic and dissenting forces constitute each other through a dialectical process predicated on their necessity for visibility and spatial manifestation. For understanding spatial interactions, I invoke an analogy with Foucault’s idea of disease control: the flows of summit protest- ers are channeled into predictability through the processes of separation and containment in order to avoid further contamination. The tactical adaptation process of authorities indicates a shift to biopolitical forms of control, focusing on the avoidance of an “undesired event” (read: disruption).

Two tactical innovations of protesters are central to the contestation of the spatial manifestation of global hegemonic forces: decentralized swarming and tactical diversity. These innovations enabled protesters to intervene in the material flows ingredient for summit meetings. My analysis maps how through a political administration of space the spatial effects of these tactics are incapacitated and contained preemptively. For a big part, spatial interactions start long before the actual summit and, through this process, prepare the “battleground.” Whereas protesters try to organize alternative spaces and to intervene in the spatial preparations of authorities, police preemptively reorganize space so that global hegemonic forces can consolidate themselves isolated but free of visible dissent. The erection of fences and the move to remote rural locations are typical for these adaptations. Tracing this process over six summit protests, I describe how authorities have shifted their focus during summits from dispersion to containment tactics,
including the avoidance of symbolic disruption. Through their attempts to render disruption unlikely, however, authorities create new possibilities for transgressive action. Red zones and fences have triggered protesters to intrude into these zones or tear down the fences. Also the shift to remote rural venues was at the end successfully countered by the mass blockades at the 2007 G8 in Heiligendamm.

Third, the analysis of communication as contested site of struggle situates tactical communication and shows how authorities increasingly employ a managerial approach to regulate the circulation of antisystemic dissent. Tactical communication repertoires uncover how legitimation processes are tactically organized. Authorities have developed communication repertoires that make them appear benevolent and provide a framework of justification for their excessive security measures. The control of minds proceeds through communication and aims at what passes for truth. Protesters’ repertoires for the circulation of dissent are understood as an attempt to change the condition of the production of (hegemonic) truth.

Authorities focus on the regulation of the flows of communication and the inhibition of an undesired event (the circulation of dissent). This way, they depoliticize the conflicts disclosed by summit protests. Ultimately, the social control of communication aims at the erasure of the history of dissent as an opening to alternative historical trajectories.

Protesters achieve this through communication in decentralized networks, making use of a combination of new technologies and real-life meetings and through ensuring safe spaces for transgressive protest via clandestine forms of communication. By emphasizing confrontation with ruling regimes as an effective way of creating consciousness, transgressive protesters’ disposition for direct action tactics contradicts liberal understandings of awareness-raising as a way of circulating dissent. Making disruption a way of communicating (and circulating) dissent, protesters constitute communication as a political site of conflict.

In response to the global circulation of dissent through decentralized networks, the tactical repertoire of authorities extended significantly. A shift took place from mere scare tactics to preemptive communication management through incapacitation and co-optation. Exceeding disciplinary scare tactics, spin-doctors have come to complement the psy(c)ops by managing the historical containment of dissent and making it a functional part of the production of hegemonic truth. At the same time, police try to disrupt the communication potential of protesters by targeting their communication infrastructure. In targeting the press and the local population, protesters increasingly utilize a similar managerial approach to tactical communication.
Protesters employ tactical repertoires proactively to counter police repression. They often create innovative tactics that are imitated by authorities. Due to their financial power, however, authorities can implement such tactics more comprehensively.

Fourth, the analysis of law as contested site of struggle situates the innovation of transgressive protest tactics in a political reading of riots. Such a reading reveals the nexus between law, state (or sovereign) power, and violence. The recurring riots during summit protests in Europe testify to the impossibility of governing society merely by law. The contestation of global power relations during summit protests shows how constituent power contradicts the process of constituting power. The authorities’ answer has been to reassert the state’s sovereign character in making laws and producing legality: whether formally or not, they enact a state of exception. A riot, thus, does not challenge one law, but the entire legality—principally in symbolic terms, but also with “black” tactics—as founded by and foundational for the present global order.

Preceding summit meetings, risk analysis by authorities invokes a state emergency that justifies taking exceptional measures as preemptive, normalized, and more and more permanent. Dressed up as response to abstract dangers such as international terrorist threats, special temporary laws or lasting changes of civil laws constitute a major infringement on the right to public assembly and freedom of expression. Intrinsically bound up with the idea of exception, emergency makes its own laws. The discourse about international terrorism has resulted in a conflation of internal and external security operations, between democratic dissent and terrorism. Presented as an administrative act of logistical support to police forces, the creeping militarization of law enforcement through the deployment of military tactics at summit protests and the presence of soldiers and their cooperation with police has become a normal state of affairs. Finally, exceeding the temporariness of protest events, legal prosecution and political litigation criminalize antisystemic dissent more permanently. The global character of the state of exception becomes apparent in the increasing cooperation between the judicial apparatus of several states in these matters.

In response, protesters try to create a European network of anti-repression initiatives and legal teams to avoid the time-consuming efforts of rebuilding these structures for each summit protest. A number of time-consuming trials especially in response to the 2001 G8 protests in Genoa have contributed to these networks and regular exchange. However, given the character of the current state of exception, legalist tactics for challenging
the law are limited and rarely promise successful results. The other answer of protesters has been to raise the stakes and to push the state of exception to its limits. Dissent will continue to desire disruption. Striving toward order, control always creates new opportunities for disruptions, creating “disorder” from the viewpoint of control.

Conflict and Interaction: Unthinking “Social Movements”

The explicit approach of this book was to leave behind the sociological category of “social movements” and to examine the phenomenon of summit protests by centering on “conflict,” and therefore on “interaction” and “process.” I believe that this approach was useful and might inspire future research in the field of social movement studies.

My study of the interaction between protesters and authorities throughout six summit protests in Europe contributes to understanding the role of conflict in social movement theory. Conflict is key to contentious politics. In many accounts of street protest, however, the fact of conflicting interests meeting each other is fading out. The tactical repertoires of summit protesters demonstrate how conflict is materially organized in the streets, and how conflict is productive for those seeking to challenge the status quo with transgressive tactics. The materiality of street tactics becomes something like the grammar or software for the visibility of dissent. This is to say, those scholars negating the centrality of conflict in contentious politics in fact side with authorities in their attempt to make conflict invisible.

By understanding summit protests as moments of possible rupture and promise of other possibilities for antisystemic initiatives, this book transcends the narrow conception of summit protests as “protest events.” “Protest events” are not a singular, isolated, nor ahistorical phenomenon but part of interaction processes and infused with social coordination connecting them to the past and to the future. I firmly believe that affirming the potentiality of events can help us to better understand the social world we live in and push scholarship out of the administrative corner of quantitative news analysis or surveys about “protest events.”

I have argued that “social movements” is a contradictory term that, as sociological category, often results in the containment of political potentiality. The reification of humans as the makers of history into thing-like phenomena produces not only sterile and mechanistic scholarly accounts but also poses political problems. My account of summit protests makes
the point that it may be equally fruitful to look at the actual doing of actual people and investigate how this doing is coordinated. In shifting the focus, I have focused on the “doing of dissent” rather than on “social movements.” Investigating social practices may be more revealing than squeezing all human behavior into sociological categories.

Thereby, I emphasize processes as opposed to identity. The very concept of identity reifies social processes by separating existence from constitution. As I pointed out in the introduction, the logic of identification itself is an act of containment, and therefore social control. Scholars working with objectified categories chose sides. Avoiding a frozen ontology of sociological categories, I mapped the processes involved in the interaction between protesters and authorities. I compared the social organization of doing dissent to the social organization of controlling dissent. I hope that this approach can inspire future research on dissent and control and help to move scholarship to more anti-disciplinary and antisystemic grounds.

**Biopolitical Control: Unthinking Social Control**

This book raised the question how the tactical repertoire of summit protesters is rendered ineffective. Thereby I wanted to have an eye on the subtle and less overt forms of social control that many accounts of protest policing neglect. The form of social control I have encountered can best be described as preemptive and networked. Both aspects are important. Preemptive means that one is acting even before a threat occurs. As such, monitoring, information gathering, risk assessment, and preparations in general have become more pivotal to the tactical repertoire of doing control. Networked means that more collaboration takes place both within and across countries. The actors doing control have increased and the networks between them become increasingly interconnected.

I call this form of control *biopolitics*. Instead of trying to avoid protest, biopolitical control centers on the elimination of visible dissent in the streets by rendering disruption improbable. Instead of just repressing protest, dissent is channeled and regulated into predictability and thereby deprived of one of its major capacities: the power of disruption. Order means to ensure the smooth circulation of the summit’s daily flows. Therefore, order is imposed by reducing the probability of undesired events (the disruption of these flows). This is achieved through preemptive forms of control. By disrupting potentially disruptive flows even before they can intervene, disruption is rendered unlikely.
In studying the tactical adaptations of authorities as response to the tactical innovations by protesters, I advance a biopolitical perspective on the social control of dissent. Shifting its focus from regulating individual bodies and individual behavior to regulating flows, social control attempts to preclude the occurrence of an undesired event by ensuring that the normalized flow can go unchallenged. The ascendance of social control to a biopolitical paradigm does not imply, however, that sovereign focusing on territory and disciplinary focusing on individual behavior power (as focusing on, respectively, territory and individuals) has vanished from the material interactions between police and protesters. Behind all four sites of struggle, I have uncovered, sometimes against my own expectations, the presence of sovereign, disciplinary, and biopolitical forms of power. These three forms of power thus intersect. This points to the theoretical necessity of systematically conceptualizing this intersection. My study points to the fact that sovereign power can effectively materialize itself through disciplinary and biopolitical forms of power. This intersection, however, may have altered the way in which authorities look at territory and individual behavior and try to regulate them across borders.

Another aspect of biopolitical control is its networked character. Though social control remains largely organized through the repressive capacities of a local state, the political function of social control in the context of summit protests is a global one: the defense of global hegemonic forces. Intergovernmental and transnational agencies constitute a global site of struggle, in which any form of antisystemic dissent is a threat to the internal order of global hegemony.

The ruling regime of control behind summit meetings thus corroborates a broader development denoted as “securitization,” which focuses on risks and probabilities. Preemptive measures and risk analyses are pivotal to security operations. Not surprisingly, the tactical repertoire of police to avoid disruption is becoming more and more regulated by protocol. Whereas protesters’ disruptive capacity relies on their unpredictability, authorities see security as the occurrence of only predictable events.

Politics without Politics: Unthinking Democratic Theory

Jodi Dean (2011) makes an interesting observation when she claims that the language of the Left has changed from talking communism to talking democracy. This book joins her in finding this development unsettling. As has been pointed out before, all too often “democracy” may serve as an
excuse to avoid talking about structural inequalities, as much as talking “citizenship” avoids taking into account class differences and other social contradictions. The most problematic aspect of all this terminology related to talking democracy is that it reduces politics to a merely procedural and technical matter. Politics becomes the art of expert administration instead of the art of conflict emerging out of the antagonistic character of present social relations. Žižek (2002: 11) has a point in calling the result “politics without politics.” This development equally challenges democratic theory. And it might be at the heart of the question why representation on the global level is so much contested. Transgressive summit protests challenge the mediated character of representative democracy and the pacification of dissent.

Hence, the street as a space of conflict and concrete struggles is important for democratic politics. What transgressive summit protest negates is global governance and the form of political representation. Disrupting the smooth daily functioning of global governance transmits the important desire for something different than the current order. In this sense, dissent indeed creates disorder, but only in so far as it negates order-as-the-established-order. Dissent creating disorder, however, is the innovator, not only tactically, on the streets, but also politically, on the level of creating promising conflict. The negation of the negation is the creation of something new. Liberal representational democracy negates the full ownership of conflict. Through creating conflict on the streets, summit protesters thus negate this negation of liberal representational democracy. They create political choices and this way make visible the antagonism between liberalism and antisystemic radical democratic experiments from below.

Summit protesters continue to experiment with non-institutional forms of politics. In this respect, they carry on an important political development going back to the 1960s wave of antisystemic struggle that is often written off or overshadowed by the de facto institutionalization of most of the organizations that were involved. Summit protesters embody the unfulfilled promises of political liberalism. Pointing to the limitations of governing society by law, they show how global justice is not only an ethical question of “good principles,” but also of ongoing struggle.

In this book I have shown how turning politics into the art of expert administration affects the contestation of global hegemonic forces. Annihilating the antagonistic character of the political and submitting it to a purely technical reason, authorities try to eliminate the two-sidedness of the barricade. Their fences are presented as having only one side: the side where politics is legitimately turned into an administrative act. All the rest is
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public disorder, mindless violence, or even terrorism: the constitutive outside of liberal democracy. In this sense, choosing sides is deemed unnecessary. There is no conflict, only experts with good (or bad) intentions. Unlike political conflicts, moral choices are not two-sided. From this perspective, as researcher, I have joined the “bad guys” who mindlessly threaten the established order.

Turning political questions concerning the current world order into a problem of administration, authorities eliminate antisystemic dissent. However, since the political is predicated on antagonism in a conflictual social world, what authorities really eliminate is not only dissent—and a potential-ity of history producing entirely different outcomes than those that became prevalent—but politics itself. The constitution of global hegemony operates through the negation of global dissent as its constitutive outside. Politics is whatever global hegemonic forces do, which transposes constituted power into an ontology of the present. This way, contemporary global politics, presented as result of administrative acts of global hegemonic forces, is effectively voided of the constituent power of dissent. As emerging behind the tactical adaptations of authorities, the ruling regime of social control is thus deeply interconnected to the struggle over global power relations. Through making social conflicts a question of technical administration, this interrelation is made invisible. Although embedded in the struggle for political hegemony, social control in European liberal democracies presents itself as politics without politics.

I think we have two lessons here that democratic theories might want to take seriously. One is that if the flipside of democracy is social control then we need to incorporate social control studies into the study of democratic systems, especially in the global era. The other is that if currently prevalent forms of social control are using democracy to abolish politics, then we may not side with them and participate in this endeavor. A world without conflict would be a world without dissent and a world without justice.

Recomposition of Global Struggles: Thinking Antisystemic Dissent

In the meantime, the global order has not become any less topsy-turvy. Since 2007, a financial and economic crisis is haunting the (Western) world. The resulting EU austerity programs reinstall the much-criticized neoliberal credo of privatization and deregulation. Failed free trade areas have been supplemented by bilateral trade agreement. The African continent is further
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being sold, and recent programs to tackle climate change turn out to be a new excuse for foreign investment and land grabbing in the Southern world. The wars in Afghanistan and Iraq still have disastrous consequences for the local populations. The “war on terrorism” continues without direction against an undefined opponent. Pretty much anything an average summit protester might have warned us about ten years ago has turned into reality. Nevertheless, although recurring, especially during G20 meetings, the heydays of summit protest seem to be over.

Most of this book can be seen as an analysis of the decomposition of global antisystemic dissent. Composition, initially referring to the working class, concerns the construction and perception of a collective interest. Chapter 2 summarizes the process of composition preceding the period of summit protests discussed in this book. The process of decomposition has been accelerated by the tactical control repertoire of authorities. In the absence of tactical victories, it is always difficult to construct or maintain a common interest.

Nevertheless, there were many moments in the past decade that looked like a beginning of recomposing global antisystemic initiatives. And there are many reasons to believe that this process of recomposition is continuing, and may be even getting stronger, including new tactical repertoires and innovation. Direct action, as pedagogy of the oppressed, remains a learning process that relies on tactical innovation created through studying the opponent’s adaptations. As the interaction throughout six summits in Europe reveals, protesters have found several opportunities to turn disruptive police measures into new opportunities for disruption. We also witness the emergence of climate justice initiatives on the global arena, often in close collaboration with (previous) summit protest networks. Unleashed by protests, resistance, and square occupations, the Arab world is going through major transformations, offering new tactical repertoires to be diffused. In Europe and the US, in response to the current austerity measures, in many countries major squares are occupied as well. African migrant networks collaborate with European initiatives to insist on the freedom of movement and a world without borders. In Latin America indigenous and peasant networks oppose land grabbing as a result of climate compensation mechanisms . . .

Summit protests mark an important moment of the formation of global power relations. They provide moments in which global hegemonic forces manifest and consolidate themselves. This constitutive process of global hegemony can be uncovered as such because global antisystemic initiatives attempt to confront and disrupt it. This makes summit protests spaces with global aspirations. Besides a new tactical repertoire, summit
protesters have also mapped a new theory of power in the global age that can be transferred to future struggles.

Seemingly local events actually constitute global power struggles. The global is thus not a methodological device for abstracting or generalizing local experiences, but an ontological one for understanding the material organization of the conflictual social world in late capitalist Europe. Global power relations are not a matter of an abstract mind or good interpretation, but a material reality that finds expression in the supposedly local everyday world. The extralocal inscribes itself in the local, from where it can be accessed. Hence, it is not “the global” that can be accessed by a sum of its supposedly local parts, but it is the local that has to be understood as the sum of extralocal forces whose cooperation is reflected in the material organization of seemingly local events. Global hegemonic forces do not have one power center. They form a flexible and shifting network with many nodes, and the organizational and tactical choices of challengers have taken this into account.

This book demonstrates how the formation of global hegemony can be understood from the interplay of global dissent with global hegemonic forces. “The global” is not a predefined space but produced through contestation. However, I have proposed to see dissent as the innovator. The last four chapters have shown empirically how authorities constantly adapt to the tactical innovations of protesters, which, in turn, triggers new innovations by protesters. Hence dissenting forces form global power relations. This means that social analysis should offer an understanding of these power relations from the lens of dissent. For the (possible) ruptures within hegemonic relations cannot be grasped from the standpoint of ruling regimes.

More than ten years after the Battle of Seattle, recurring disorder during global summits reminds us that social conflicts cannot be structured (exclusively) by law. How can this negation of antisystemic initiatives be molded into a form of democracy that does not abide by the (teleo-)logic of institutionalization? Creating disorder, transgressive summit protesters make space for potentially different orders. How would a world look that does not start with law and order, but with dissent and disruption as an opening to non-institutional democracies from below?

Many people I spoke to about my research urged me to summarize my results in one sentence. If I really would need to do so, I would share a sad lesson: social control works. Although often functioning more subtly and less overtly, although focusing more on incapacitating and channeling and not on the baton stick or guns, social control stifles dissent, maybe even more successfully. However, there is another lesson more hopeful and
hopefully helpful for the other side of the barricade, and that is: innovation matters. Although it is hard to determine the preconditions necessary for something like tactical innovation to occur, these “moments of madness” (Zollberg 1972) are a recursive phenomenon in police–protester interaction. This is to say: social control works until new tactical innovation has taken place, and thus matters innovation.

Taking this into account, this book turns into an argument against control and for antisystemic dissent. Challenging the ruling regime of social control is an important aspect of challenging global hegemonic power relations. In “Postscript on the Societies of Control,” Deleuze (1992) summarizes the hope for a tactical solution to the problem of securitization: “There is no need to fear or hope, but only to look for new weapons.” The answers to the challenges described in this book need to be found on a tactical level. There are no easy answers, but, as reflected in the Zapatistas’ ideas: struggle is the way forward.
Appendix
Map 1

This map shows the fence (inner circle) and the additional no-protest zone as enacted by the general directive of the Kavala police department (outer circle). Source: http://gipfelsoli.org/rcms_repos/images/22/allgemeinverfuegung.jpeg (accessed 23 September 2009).

Map 2

This map shows where the three action camps were located. Source: http://gipfelsoli.org/rcms_repos/images/22/Karte_camps_3.jpeg (accessed 23 September 2009).
This map is the product of a collective attempt on the Internet to get a full picture of all the actions happening during the week of protests. On the Internet version, one can click on the icons in order to retrieve basic information about the specific action and—if existing—a link to an Indymedia report or online film material. The stop signs signify mass blockades; the clown icons signify actions by the Clandestine Insurgent Rebel Clown Army; the white icons stand for direct actions and decentralized blockades; the tent stands for protest camps; the ‘i’ icon stands for information points. Source: http://www.gipfelsoli.org/rcms_repos/maps/action.html (accessed 23 September 2009).
The crosses map the blockades that took place at the 2005 G8 summit in Gleneagles. The map also shows the position of the protest camp (“Hori-Zone Convergence”) next to Stirling where police tried to lock in protesters. Source: http://www.nadir.org/nadir/initiativ/agp/resistg8/reports/map.htm (accessed 23 September 2009).
Chapter 1. Barricades Are Back

1. Arrighi et al. (1999: 1) introduce the term “antisystemic movements” to capture the struggles against the world system of historical capitalism. This move delimits antisystemic movements from social movements that identify the nation-state as the primary political structure, and, therefore, direct their formal organizations toward control, or at least influence, of the state apparatus (even though an ideological commitment to internationalism might also be articulated). In this book, I will speak about “antisystemic initiatives.” Besides my reservations about the category “movement” (see further on), the reason is that most “social movements” in history have contained antisystemic initiatives.

2. To be sure, reducing antisystemic initiatives to transgressive street politics or summit protest would be an analytical mistake. As Gerald Raunig (2007: 25–26) points out, the revolutionary project necessarily needs to contain three components: resistance, insurrection, and constituent power. Although potentially moving beyond, summit protests manifest above all the moment of resistance. However, potential for insurrection and constituent power—in the form of self-governance and autonomous spaces—are present. In focusing mainly on the moment of resistance through transgressive summit protest, I do not want to suggest that the other three components would be less important.

3. I am aware of the rich neo-Gramscian literature working with the conception of hegemony. Many neo-Gramscians largely have adapted their reading of Gramsci to the cultural turn of the Frankfurt School, who turned the focus of Marxist analysis to the reproduction of consensus in the cultural sphere. As Cleaver (2000: 58) points out, this perspective often results in a fetishization of domination and therefore negates the “dominated” as active historical subject. Moreover, it neglects the material base of hegemony (Strange 1987). In this book, I want to go back to Gramsci’s merging of ideational and material power in the concept of hegemony. This is to say, aside from any ideological project that might be involved, I am interested in how global hegemony is (re-)produced materially through power techniques responding to its contestation on the streets.
4. As opposed to economic liberalism, political liberalism denotes a political tradition having gained hegemonic momentum since the 19th century stressing civil liberties and the relative autonomy of civil society in relation to the state. Although liberal thinkers acknowledge conflictive interests in society, they believe politics to be about creating a political consensus that facilitates “a reflexive equilibrium” through an “overlapping consensus”: a thin form of public morals as opposed to thick private convictions (Rawls 1971). Rawls's political liberalism is widely perceived to have delivered a satisfying answer to the “problem” of pluralistic societies. The strict division between the private and the public, the sociocultural and the political, the invocation of a neutral government perspective, and the focus on the individual, as well as the focus on a negative definition of freedom in the tradition of political liberalism have been criticized from various other political traditions (see Kymlicka 2002).


6. The federal court decided in 2007 that the Militante Gruppe cannot be considered a terrorist group. No charges were made against Holm, but by July 2010, the investigation was stopped.

7. Or, if one wants to include the terms emerging from subsequent epistemological struggles: alterglobalization movement, global justice and solidarity movement, the movement of movements, the anticapitalist movement, among others (see Eschle 2005).

8. Smith appropriates a term from Louis Althusser here, who introduces problematic to point out that the (discursive) organization of a field of investigation is larger than a specific question or problem (Althusser 1971: 31).

9. It was interesting to observe how activists themselves frequently absorb sociological discourses. During an activist conference in Germany, half a year after the G8 protests in Heiligendamm, many debates revolved around speculative questions such as the “influence on public opinion” or “the amount of newly politicized people.”

10. This implies a critique of structuralism and functionalism as reifying social structures, providing an explication of how the social is reproduced, but not how it can be transformed. People's activities are reified as “social structure”; as John Holloway (2002: 137) points out, constitution and existence are separated, which contributes to a radical closure of alternatives.

11. Readers familiar with Latour and the actor-network theory might assume significant similarities between this approach and Smith's institutional ethnography. However, the ontology as proposed by Smith is radically different from the ontology of actor-network theory. While Latour (1988) highlights the agency of objects as coordinating practices of various domains, Smith's ontology starts with the Marxist assertion that history is the product of actual activities of actual people. Such a focus on practices thus centers on human doing and does not reify fetishized social relations by attributing agency to objects.

12. In a more recent work, McAdam et al. (2001) attempt to go beyond the tendency of categorization by shifting the focus of social movement scholarship
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from structures to mechanisms and processes of contention. Richard Flacks (2003) points to the intrinsic danger of such attempts to reshape social movement studies into a coherent scientific field, which might take these studies further away from public relevance.

13. For a recent overview of the different social movement approaches, see della Porta and Diani (2006), Tarrow (1998), or McAdam et al. (1996).

14. In the case of police, this interview strategy turned out to be more difficult to implement. Although I tried to hold a number of interviews, some of them were being denied, others turned out to be useless in terms of getting to know tactical police operations (as opposed to police rationalizations of their own behavior). This lack of access provided another incentive to focus on the material organization of tactical interactions by analyzing institutional arrangements behind actual events starting from the protesters’ side of the barricade.

Chapter 2. Global Dissent: Tactical Trajectories

1. The Revolutionäre Zellen was a decentralized network of militant activists in Germany. Listed as a terrorist organization, this network was active from the 1970s till the 1990s. In contrast to the strict hierarchical organization of the RAF (Rote Armee Fraktion), these activists organized in small and local cells. Only after the arrest of Hans-Joachim Klein in 1999 for being involved in an attack on OPEC did investigators gain some insights into the organizational structures behind this network.

2. On http://www.spiegel.de/politik/ausland/0,1518,147502,00.html (accessed 27 May 2008). In 2008, a similar case occurred in the Netherlands. Wijnand Duyvendak, a member of parliament for the Dutch Green Party with a militant past in the squatter and the radical environmental movements, had to abdicate his membership in parliament after his involvement in some illegal, albeit non-violent actions, became public. Interestingly, he not only renounced violence during the ensuing debates, but also teleologically reorganized history by stating that violence was the wrong way and necessarily had to fail.

3. The French Revolution knows a similar founding myth: the storm on the Bastille. As van der Linden (1999) points out, however, the imagery surrounding this historical moment is highly heroifying. The Parisian insurgents stormed a Bastille that hardly functioned as a prison anymore.

4. Alberto Melucci (1989) makes a similar point when he describes how “submerged networks” provide structures of latency that erupt during periods of visibility. Also Saskia Poldervaart (2006, 2005, 1993) shows how utopian movements have provided a vast laboratory of alternative ways of organizing daily life, which often goes unnoticed in history books about contentious politics.

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6. Post-neoliberal is a notion that is used to indicate how resistance against neoliberal policies is co-opted by institutions and corporations by absorbing the critical discourse in order to re-legitimize neoliberal projects (Brand 2008).

7. Considering earlier historical episodes, such as the utopian socialists, Spanish anarchists, or council communists, it is certainly debatable how far the notion “new” is justified (see Waterman 2005).

8. These terms denote a shift from the stable long-term employment as characteristic for a factory-based Fordist economy to the mobile, flexible, and precarious labor relations of post-Fordist societies (Hardt & Negri 2004: 112).

9. Another example is Provo, a movement that started in 1965 to hold “happenings” in the center of Amsterdam in order to subvert the petit-bourgeois morality of a conservative Dutch society (Duivenvoorden 2008; Kempton 2007; Pas 2003; Mamadouh 1992). In a similar way, the Yippies in the US and the German Spassguerilla (fun guerrilla) used humor for disruptive public actions (Teune 2008; see also Jordan 2002).

10. Bombs were placed with faked letters claiming the attack for the radical left. Moreover, radical political groups were manipulated to incite outbursts so as to influence public opinion to favor authoritarian politics (della Porta 1995: 60). This resulted in an irreversible spiral of violence, also sustained by the emergence of urban guerrilla groups, such as the “Red Brigades.” Thousands of political activists were arrested for alleged suspicion of terrorism. Many years afterward, it was uncovered that a network called Gladio, consisting of high-ranking military and secret services, was behind many of those operations (Ganser 2005).

11. Peoples’ Global Action (PGA) is a global direct action network of grassroots activists and groups. Inspired by the Zapatistas, it emerged in 1998, and was an important coordination and communication tool for European activists in the early phase of summit protests. The ground of cooperation was set by five “hallmarks”: (1) A very clear rejection of capitalism, imperialism, and feudalism; all trade agreements, institutions, and governments that promote destructive globalization; (2) we reject all forms and systems of domination and discrimination including, but not limited to, patriarchy, racism, and religious fundamentalism of all creeds. We embrace the full dignity of all human beings; (3) a confrontational attitude, since we do not think that lobbying can have a major impact in such biased and undemocratic organizations, in which transnational capital is the only real policy-maker; (4) a call to direct action and civil disobedience, support for social movements’ struggles, advocating forms of resistance which maximize respect for life and oppressed peoples’ rights, as well as the construction of local alternatives to global capitalism; (5) an organizational philosophy based on decentralization and autonomy. On http://www.nadir.org/nadir/initiativ/agp/free/pga/hallm.htm (accessed 23 June 2009). Although the biannual European meetings continued after Genoa, PGA provided no ground for coordinating summit protests anymore. Instead, similar networks with other
names were established for this purpose, often adapting the five hallmarks as a working compromise. Central to the 2005 and 2007 G8 protests, the Dissent! network agreed on also adapting the Peoples’ Global Action hallmarks.

12. However, social forum processes have been analyzed as having a potential for the formation of critical epistemologies and counter-hegemonies (Sen et al. 2004). Over the years, the direction these processes should take has been subject to stringent debates (della Porta 2009; Gautney 2009; Marcuse 2005; Conway 2005; Köhler 2005; Smith 2004; Fisher & Ponniah 2003).

13. Nongovernmental organization (NGO) is a fuzzy term for a diverse phenomenon. It is difficult to draw the boundaries. Most so-called NGOs receive government funding and are, thus, in the strict sense, not nongovernmental. One of the major critiques of NGOs, then, is that they are part of a state-managed opposition. Developmental NGOs are often criticized for destroying local grassroots movements by absorbing key organizers into paid positions (Biekhart 1999). NGOs in Europe reflect the process of institutionalization that many antisystemic initiatives of the 1960s and 1970s have undergone.

Chapter 3. Understanding Interaction Tactically


2. Latour (1988) uses the term “translation” for demonstrating how complex social problems are rendered manageable by moving them into a laboratory, and how they are made solvable by inserting laboratory-based cures into the social world. These solutions appear as having emerged in direct response to a socially demarcated problem. Maarten Hajer (1995) calls the process through which social problems become demarcated and manageable as policy problems “discursive closure.” Epiphenomena are defined as a legitimate problem asking for policy solutions.

3. Fillieule and Jobard (1998: 83), for example, suggest that the baton charge is the ultimate means for police when confrontation with demonstrators is absolutely unavoidable. One may wonder when a confrontation really starts. Does the use of tear gas and water cannons before a baton charge not constitute a moment of confrontation? Is the use of indirect force, such as encircling hundreds of demonstrators for hours as the police forces did several times during the 2009 protests against the UN climate summit in Copenhagen, a “minimum” use of force? Reiner (1998: 42) rightly points out that minimum force is a relative term that says more about the necessity of police to justify their behavior in liberal democracies than about the actual police conduct.

4. Other social movement scholars point out that the occurrence of violence is usually the outcome of an interaction process between protesters and police that does not begin with violent acts by either side (Schweingruber 2000: 383–384; Tilly 1978).

5. It is interesting to note that the self-fulfilling prophecy can also work the other way around: when crowds are not getting violent, it is frequently explained...
by a successful policing style, without considering the possibility that it might not have been the (principled or tactical) intention of protesters to use violence.

6. The Crimethinc collective (2008: 110–111) points to an interesting consideration when suggesting that “The fact that the dominant crowd is also a mob, only a more entrenched and institutionalized one, may only be apparent from outside it—for instance, from the perspective of one of the looters. . . . when eighty million television sets go on in unison at the end of the workday, that’s an example of such a crowd in action.”

7. Waddington’s observation, however, shows that police categorizations are not always that clear. Police can, in principle, admit the “professional” approach of transgressive protesters: “Legitimate protest, linked to social problems and organised by people aiming to make themselves heard in order to solve the problems, is sharply contrasted to protests by ‘professional demonstrators,’ who upset public order because they enjoy provocation and revolt” (Waddington in della Porta & Reiter 1998: 25). However, such a distinction itself evacuates the political function of transgressiveness. As a result, this points to the ambiguity of “police knowledge” as an adequate category for analyzing police–protester interaction.


Chapter 4. Bodies That Matter: The Epistemology of Street Interactions


2. When demonstrations in Germany are accompanied by large numbers of police, protesters frequently pause marching for a moment and start to jump all together; this is done to prepare them—after a countdown—to run. This tactic forces the heavily armored riot police surrounding the demonstration to run as well in order to keep pace with the demonstration. What Hamburg’s police probably tried to prevent was not jumping but running.

3. Italy was not the only country in Europe where the Zapatista uprising had great impact. In line with the Zapatistas themselves, many European activists stressed that Zapatism is not a theory, but an “undoubtedly [sic] re-adaptable method.” On https://aktuell.nadir.org/nadir/initiativ/agp/free/genova/busload.htm (accessed 13 November 2007).


6. In Italy as elsewhere, the rapid spread of unprotected labor is denoted as “precarization.” Since the twenty-first century the European Euromayday network reclaims the first of May for “precarious workers,” which resulted in a number of successful simultaneous mobilizations in many European cities (Dorr 2007).


10. Ibid.

11. The Tute Bianche were criticized a few times for actually negotiating about the terms of the clash, and for an elitist and hierarchical organizing structure (Becky 2001: 72). Moreover, some groups from the insurrectionalist spectrum criticize the Tute Bianche for their supposed reformist agenda based on Hardt and Negri’s approach in *Empire* and *Multitude* (Mutines Séditions 2004). However, the Tute Bianche themselves refute these accusations on http://www.nadir.org/nadir/initiativ/agp/free/genova/busload.htm (accessed 13 November 2007).


17. See also the film *Tactical Frivolity*, by Maren Girgensohn (2001; Mirabelle Productions) about the UK Pink & Silver group traveling to Prague.


23. Ibid.


27. Produced by the federal police Baden-Württemberg and the special police organization BAO Atlantik, this *Handbuch zum Nato-Gipfel am Oberrhein* was meant for internal police use, but was found on the streets by someone who put it on http://media.de.indymedia.org/media/2009/04//246698.pdf (accessed 1 April 2010).


32. In the film *Rebel Colours* (Indymedia Centre Prague 2000).


35. The use of the color pink also upsets the tradition of red flags of traditional left-wing demonstration, and in this way also provokes socialist groups by using a color that is considered apolitical.


37. Violence is only discussed here insofar as it relates to the epistemology of black bodies. Whereas chapter 7 deals with violence as a political foundation of social relations, here, I deal with violence as a phenomenological category.

38. The pleasure of the confrontational politics of black blocs is underlined by the Infernal Noise Brigade, a Seattle-based street protest brass band, aiming to support street confrontations with music until their disbandment in 2006. The Infernal Noise Brigade, among others, took part in the 2000 IMF/WB protests in Prague and in the 2005 G8 protests in Gleneagles.

39. US activists I spoke with suggested that police in the US might shoot immediately—with live ammunition—when being attacked, so that this would explain the absence of offensive tactics by black blocs. Moreover, US police have a broader arsenal of so-called less-lethal weapons (e.g., taser guns).

40. Historically, the assertion that violence in contentious politics is reserved for men is false. Rowbotham (1974) provides a historical account of women’s participation in (violent) upheavals.

41. Identifying black bodies as either male or female would only serve police purposes. For this reason, I would object to Jeffrey Juris’s argument that black blocs forge “radical identities” (Juris 2005). Rather, they forge antisystemic activity. Participation in black blocs is not predicated on the logic of identity but on instrumental (tactical) considerations concerning the efficacy of protest.

43. The reverse is likewise true: political protests that do not involve confrontational black bodies are often ignored by mass media as a non-event. A telling example is the December 2007 demonstration against the Treaty of the EU in Lisbon that attracted more participants than the famous 2003 demonstrations in the same city against the proposed war in Iraq. The demonstration proceeded without major incidents. But the day after, hardly any European newspaper even mentioned the protests.

44. Berlusconi’s Mousetrap, by the Irish Independent Media Centre (2002).

45. In the end, whether or not black bodies and riots distract from the actual message is a difficult discussion. Two things should be kept in mind, however. First, media reports during protest events largely leave out whatever the political content is, emphasizing instead the amount of violence that occurs. Second, only after a summit protest does media coverage shift extensively to analysis of the reasons behind the protests and the legitimacy of dissent.

46. A recent publication demonstrates that this correlation between summit protests and broken windows works. The title of Desser and Lieven’s (2009) book translates as “Broken Windows: Alterglobalists Ten Years after Seattle.”

47. See, for example, the film Gipfelstürmer: Die blutigen Tage von Genua (Westdeutscher Rundfunk 2002) about the wide-scale police infiltration during the 2001 G8 protests in Genoa.

48. Insurrectionalist tendencies in Italy are a good example of this latter tendency. Because of their belief in the strength of spontaneous uprisings, they refused to participate in the resistance against the G8 summit in Genoa (Anonymous 2001).

49. Walter Benjamin (2002: 462) opposes the “dialectical image” to that of the “wish image,” the former realizing the unfulfilled promises of the past in the present—in order to unveil the transitory nature of history. The “wish image” is based on a fetishized conception of history and relegates the desire of a historical rupture to the future. As Anthony Auerbach (2007: 11) points out, the dialectical image in Benjamin’s thought is more a constellation against reality than of reality. I will use this interpretation of the dialectical image as a constellation against social reality that uncovers the conflictive character of black blocs.


Chapter 5. “Leave them no space!”: The Dialectics of Spatial Interactions

1. BlockG8 was a temporary action alliance, pushed by the Interventionistische Linke (Interventionist Left), a post-autonomist coalition engaged in a broad process in order to prepare consensual mass blockades that would effectively disrupt the (logistical) flows of the G8 summit.
2. The most telling scene happened in Cancún, Mexico, during the 2003 WTO Ministerial meetings; protesters pulled down a huge part of the fence with ropes and tree trunks. Once the fence had collapsed, they declared that their act of resistance was accomplished, and did not walk into the suddenly accessible space.

3. The considerations behind the choice for this name demonstrate Neil Smith's (1992: 62) point about spatial metaphors tapping directly into the question of power. Kavala is the name of a northern Greek city that is supposedly called "the white city on the Sea." Abramowski saw a certain analogy since the Kempinski complex at the seashore in Heiligendamm also consists of mainly white houses and is on the sea (BAO Kavala 2006: 4). Besides, the color white raises the connotations “clean” and “order.” Activists welcomed this name for several reasons. On the one hand, they immediately gave this police department the nickname “Krawalla,” which refers to the German word Krawall, meaning riot. On the other hand, a few weeks before the summit started, activists organizing an information tour in Greece about the upcoming protests found out that the Greek city Kavala was actually not considered to be the “white town,” but the “azure town.” Moreover, and perhaps even more embarrassingly for the police, the activists learned that in colloquial Greek, kavala—meaning originally cavalry—is used for referring to sexual intercourse. Activists seemed to have taken the invitation quite literally, and spray-painted “Fuck G8” on the walls of Rostock.


7. The fence not only resulted in interactions between protesters and police but also between police and local inhabitants. Especially for those living inside the perimeter fence their freedom of movement was severely restricted during the first week of June. Swimming at the beach was prohibited during those days, and also entering with a vehicle was strictly regulated. Inhabitants had to register their cars beforehand in order to receive permission for access, were checked each time again at the gate, and were accompanied by police forces from the gate to their house during the week of the G8 summit.


9. To make the analogy with German history even more delicate, the group Jewish Voice had announced a manifestation next to the fence for the June 6, 2007, in order to make a link between the fence and the wall being built between Israel and Palestine. After the restriction introduced by the general directive, this manifestation was only allowed to take place with a maximum amount of 15 participants, all of whom would have to identify themselves beforehand to the police. Jewish Voice refrained from doing so.
10. Not all meetings were moved to a rural site, however. Since the protests in Prague, the WB and the IMF, in fact, never came back to Europe for a major meeting. The EU stopped holding major meetings in the member state currently holding the presidency, confining itself instead to meetings in Brussels.


12. The fact that, after the 2007 G8 summit in Heiligendamm, a number of summits were organized again in large cities hints at the possible success of summit protesters in making rural areas in Europe too complicated and costly for authorities’ security operations.

13. Two special brochures—"The World Meets Mecklenburg-West Pomerania. G8 Regional Information Guide" and "The Place to Be: Mecklenburg Vorpommern. Best of Northern Germany"—were even made in order to present Mecklenburg-Western Pomerania as an idyllic and innovative region. The last page of the latter brochure shows a map placing Heiligendamm in a network of cities such as Rome, Paris, and London. In addition, a special spot for advertising the region on television was fabricated, with the slogan: “Ideas need space,” on https://gipfelsoli.org/Multilanguage/Heiligendamm_2007/Heiligendamm_2007_deutsch/Regierung_und_Mainstream/3121.html (accessed 23 January 2009). For a moment, it looked as if the symbolic dimension could be countered by activists, when they presented the fact that the avenue toward the conference hotel was once declared the most beautiful parkway by Adolf Hitler, who was also still mentioned as a citizen of honor in the register of a nearby town. These historical details were widely taken over by the world press and initiated a small scandal about the relation between German history and the political symbolism of the summit’s venue.


15. What happened to boats that attempted to enter the zone anyway one could observe during a symbolic banner action of Greenpeace. When trying to enter with five boats, the Greenpeace activists were brutally pushed aside by police boats.

16. The German police are organized in independent state police units (Länderpolizei) and a federal unit (Bundespolizei), the latter mainly being in charge of national border control.

17. The 1997 Amsterdam EU meeting incorporated the 1985 Schengen Agreement signed by five European Community member states into the mainstream of EU legislation. The Schengen Agreement establishes a space of 25 European countries without internal borders.


19. Major protest events took place during the meeting of the 2007 G7 minister of finances in Essen in February, during a meeting of the ministers of environmental issues in Potsdam in March 2007, and during another meeting of the financial ministers in Potsdam in May of the same year.

21. This became clear through studying the dossier of Andrej H. and other persons targeted by the investigations around the Militante Gruppe. A summary of the dossiers can be found on http://autox.nadir.org/buch/auswertung_11_07.pdf (accessed 26 March 2010).

22. The official reason given for the house raids in Munich was a flyer against the NATO security conference being held in February 2007. This flyer established a link between the anti-militaristic mobilization against the security conference and the mobilization against the G8. The flyer was entitled “Attack the Security Conference and the G8,” and the authorities took this as a call to commit criminal acts: on http://www.autistici.org/g8/files/siko_flyer.pdf (accessed 24 May 2007).


24. Tellingly, none of the activists or organizations searched was convicted and the German Federal Court even declared the searches illegal. Still, often for several months, most of the concerned persons and organizations were without their personal computers, hardware, books, and other belongings that had been confiscated.

25. The police later tried to retrieve the device, but the concerned person could successfully avoid this by saying that he had found it on his private property and that there was no evidence that it belonged to the police.


28. The front row carried a banner saying “Fuck Schengen,” a rather humoristic statement for foreign activists being enclosed in a country that just had abandoned the Schengen Agreement for a few days in order to reintroduce strict border controls; see the film GBG 2001—An Impression (Trojan TV 2001).

29. Here we see that contention over space is not always defined by police–protester interaction. As Zajko and Béland (2008: 731) point out, spatial dynamics are also shaped by conflicts that occur between protesters pursuing different goals and dissimilar tactics. Also a spatially organized diversity of tactics thus poses certain challenges. As Hurl proposes, “The segmentation of space is contingent upon the power of groups to maintain boundaries. The struggle to occupy and transform space has been an antagonistic process” (Hurl 2005: 53).

30. See the film Legitima Diffesa (Legal Forum 2005).

31. Noakes et al. (2005: 38) claim that “strategic incapacitation” is one of the new tactical innovations of protest policing. One has to consider, however, that strategic incapacitation is a mechanism that is at work in most police protester interactions. Furthermore, incapacitating the flows of summit meetings through their blockades and sieges, summit protesters apply this tactic as well.
32. In Genoa, the police fired 6,200 tear gas canisters, 20 gunshots, and wounded several hundred protesters. Among the used tear gas was also the dangerous version of CN gas, which is not allowed for warfare according to the Geneva War Conventions (in Andretta et al. 2003: 33).

33. Surely this is not to say that, for example, there was no tear gas used in Evian and there were no (mass) arrests in Prague.

34. The raids were covered as part of a search operation for weapons. Police claimed to have been attacked before. The only weapon found were Molotov cocktails that had been planted by the police during the raid, as the subsequent trials revealed.

35. The police encirclement was, however, not the only reason for the absence of actions during the second day. This was also the day of the terrorist attacks in London, which resulted in a widely shared feeling among protesters present at the camp that disruptive actions should not take place during that day.

36. The bikes were part of a broader initiative to provide action bikes for protesters in order to enable more rapid circulation. Maybe police tried to prevent this by confiscating the bikes. Two years later, at the 2009 UN climate summit in Copenhagen, the police raided the place where all the action bikes for a special bike bloc were stored, the day before the action.


38. Exposing their experience on Indymedia, the Workers’ Solidarity Movement from Ireland provides an interesting example. According to their report, they have been moving with several groups through the region for two days, hiding in the woods in order to erect several barricades on strategic points on their way through the no-protest zone. On http://www.indymedia.ie/article/83036 (accessed 28 March 2010).

39. In this respect, the 2009 NATO protests in Strasbourg marked an interesting adaptation in the authorities’ space control repertoire. Instead of huge perimeter constructions, the authorities worked with flexible no-go and no-protest zones. These shifting zones were partially enforced by barriers but above all functioned as reminders of the constant threat of being arrested while in the designated area.

Chapter 6. Psy(c)ops, Spin-Doctors, and the Communication of Dissent


2. In Italy there is a central website providing access to a lot of film material about summit protests on www.globalproject.info. For the 2007 G8 protests in Germany a network of video activists was set up called “G8-TV” on www.g8-tv.org. Also the UK-based Reel News and the Dutch Organic Chaos Productions are activist video collectives engaged in summit protests.
3. Activists are generally aware that police can use cell phones not only to intercept phone conversation but also to track the position of individual persons. While switching off cell phones prevents interception, the battery still sends signals, which means that intelligence services can potentially trace who is present at a meeting. Many activists, therefore, prefer to take out the battery during meetings, or, and this is the only real “secure” option, to leave their cell phones at home entirely. However, in the case of Andrej Holm (see chapter 1), police knowledge about this practice led to the accusation of Holm: because he left his cell phone at home, he attended a “conspiratorial” meeting.

4. These laws are connected to the obligatory measures proposed in the The Hague 5-year plan of the EU ministers of internal affairs. By 2009, all EU countries were expected to have implemented data retention measures and other forms of Internet surveillance. On: http://www.statewatch.org/news/2004/nov/hague-annotated-final.pdf (accessed 25 May 2009).

5. Another technological innovation that is used increasingly for the coordination of big protest events is Twitter, a networking tool that allows subscribers to stay in touch with text messages at rather low costs. However, during the time of this research this technology was not available yet.


8. At the 2005 G8 protests in Gleneagles, the name Dissent! network emerged for the first time. The British Dissent! network was founded on the five organizational hallmarks of the Peoples’ Global Action network. In several other European countries networks were formed under the same name. Because there was little continuity afterward, the German network had doubts about using the name. These discussions are documented in Dissent! Spektrum (2006).


10. This preparation group got its name from the German city Hannover where it met. Many activists involved in the Dissent! network criticized this coordination practice arguing that only certain NGO elites would have the time and money for traveling to these regular one-day meetings.


13. The proposal was to annex such a database to Europol or the Schengen Information System. In 2009, the Police Cooperation Working Party of the EU concluded that a database of “violent troublemakers” is desirable but unlikely in the short term, since the precise definition of this category remains unclear and an adequate database was yet to be found (Council of the EU 2009).
14. This was only revealed when several people from the Netherlands engaged in a legal procedure to receive the information on the basis of which their entry to Germany was denied during the time of the G8 protests. Several preparatory meetings between the Dutch (border) police, the German Bundespolizei (federal police responsible for border policing), and intelligence services of both countries took place a few months before the G8 summit (Bureau Jansen & Janssen 2009). Moreover, due to the massive inhibition of border-crossing in the context of NATO’s 60th anniversary in Strasbourg/Kehl in 2009 (at the French-German border) it became clear, that the German police was working with a database of protesters by bringing together the information gathered during Heiligendamm and other previous protests.


20. Certainly, summit protests are not the only context for police to evaluate their communication tactics. Backmund et al. (2008: 111–113) point out how the German police have started to copy the communication tactics used in the
annual protests against the nuclear waste Castor transports in Germany in the past years. These tactics, however, have themselves been influenced by the experiments with communication tactics during summit protests (resulting, for example, in the creation of Indymedia for addressing issues in these protests).

21. In the German police handbook for the 2009 NATO summit in Strasbourg/Kehl, there is even more explicit advice for individual police officers about how to deal with the press: “Assume that you will be filmed and/or photographed during the operations. These shots that principally show you while executing your duties have to be accepted. Take the opportunity to expose a positive image of the work you do.” On http://media.de.indymedia.org/ media/2009/04//246698.pdf (accessed 1 April 2010; my translation).

22. Kavala was not, however, the only source of false reports. The media and press agencies violated journalistic rules by publishing and circulating unapproved news, often without naming sources. One example is a quote circulated by the German press agency DPA on Saturday the 2nd of June, according to which a speaker on the podium in the city harbor of Rostock said the following words when confrontations between police and protesters ensued: “We have to bring the war into this demonstration.” This sentence was quoted in many newspaper articles, television reportages, among other outlets, during the following week, although protesters and other people present rapidly corrected this misquotation. What Walden Bello, a well-known researcher for Focus on the Global South, said in his speech was: “without peace there cannot be justice. Two years ago they said: ‘Do not bring the war into the discussions. Just focus on poverty reduction.’ Then we say: We have to bring the war right into this meeting. Because without peace there can be no justice. In other words: Let us raise the cry ‘The United States and Britain out of Iraq!’ Let us raise the cry: ‘NATO out of Afghanistan!’ ” DPA admitted the mistake after three days, but never publicly admitted to the journalistic processes behind this crucial mistake (see also Backmund 2009).

23. Althusser’s (1971: 174) idea of interpellation is helpful here for understanding internalization. Althusser proposes that systems of meaning construct our sense of self in deep ways. His work deals specifically with interpellation by what he calls the ideological state apparatus: how do we come to speak within the limits of the categories of thought that exist outside us and that can, ultimately, be said to think us? In the case of summit protest, the categories of authorities interpolate protesters and, in this way, come to think them as “good” protesters or as “criminals.”


25. According to the government of Mecklenburg-Western Pomerania, the service number received 11,205 phone calls (Landesregierung Mecklenburg-Vorpomern 2007). The website was accessed 320,000 times (Kavala press release 91 on 8 June 2007). It was hosted on the server of the regional police and was
out of operation only a few weeks after the G8 summit. On www.polizei.mvnet.de (accessed 7 June 2007).

26. As I learned during a debate at the Berlin Perspektiventage, January 17, 2008, with the local party member of the German left-wing party Die Linke van Loh, a local initiative against the privatization measures in Heiligendamm appeared to have been inspired by the summit protests, including the possibility of using blockades and civil disobedience for their local struggle. This is precisely the “virus” of summit protests authorities attempt to contain.

27. As the manager of the retail association North-East, Heinz Kopp, indicated in an interview, many retail sales were confronted with profit losses of up to 80 percent without any chance for compensation (dpa report 27 July 2007). The representative of the Ministry for Agriculture Gernot Haffner, on the other hand, estimated the costs resulting from the damages of fields around Heiligendamm to be approximately 32,000 Euro (caused by protesters and police crossing the fields). On: http://www.stern.de/politik/deutschland/G8-Gipfel-Bilanz-Meck-Pom-Gipfelsch%E4den/596306.html (accessed 31 March 2010).

Chapter 7. “A revolt is a revolt is a revolt”: Violence, Law, and the Exception


2. I disagree with the reading of Hans Achterhuis (2008: 598), who argues that the seduction emerging from Benjamin’s text of taking violence as the “final solution” reveals its utopian character. Achterhuis comes to this conclusion by conflating the hope for a final break through divine violence with the endless circle of law and (mystical) violence. However, in my view, Benjamin did not propose that law and violence constantly follow each other, but that legal orders are always predicated on—and finally expressed through—violence. Divine violence breaking with the legal order is not so much a utopian hope for the future as a project that emerges from the unfulfilled promises of the past, namely, a world free of domination.


6. See also the film Global Protest—The Battle of Prague (Marc Silver & Nick Hillel, BBC, 2000).


8. A film produced for the trials after the 2001 G8 in Genoa makes this argument convincingly by splicing together the video material of street interactions
with the recordings on police radio. Accordingly, the film is entitled *Legitima Diffesa* (Legitimate Defense).

9. Hardt and Negri (2004: 7) point out that the idea of the “state of exception” as a temporary suspension of the constitution and the rule of law, similar to the concept of the state of siege and emergency powers in the French and English traditions, emerged in the German legal tradition. State of exception is not the same as state of emergency. As Carl Schmitt points out not every state of emergency equals a state of exception (Schmitt 1984: 18–19). On the other hand, Agamben (2004: 34) convincingly demonstrates how the theory of emergency is easily transposed into a theory defending the exception of a single case. He argues that the theory of emergency does actually not suspend the law, but exempts a single case from the application of the norm.

10. A good example are the so-called *Notstandgesetze* (emergency laws) introduced in West Germany in the 1970s (partly) in response to the student upheavals.


13. In the German context, the comparative difference between two national judicial systems sometimes inhibited a straightforward prosecution. In one case, the German judge did not consider the evidence provided by Swedish authorities sufficient for a charge of “rioting.” Instead, they wanted to charge the concerned person with passive armament (due to the body protection the person wore as part of the Tute Bianche). This corpus delicti, however, did not exist in Swedish law, upon which the accusation had to be based. These differences complicated the coordination of legal prosecution between the two countries. Being in force since August 2003, the absence of a European arrest warrant (allowing the arrest and transfer of criminal suspects in the EU) posed a clear challenge to the authorities’ prosecution efforts.


17. Although not sentenced, after Genoa three high-ranking police officers were removed: Araldo La Barbera (head of the antiterrorist unit Ucigos), Francesco Colucci (head of the Genoa police), and Ansoino Andreassi (vice-head of the Italian police and member of the G8 security commission).


19. As documented in the material used for the ensuing trials, police used systematic abuse, sleep/food/water deprivation methods, denied medical attention,
and fired tear gas. Gianni de Gennaro, the national police chief, admitted that his men used “excessive force” and abused detainees in custody (in the film *The Diaz Raid*, UK Indymedia, 2001).

20. These numbers are based on the reports of activist legal teams of the respective summits (for the 2003 G8 in Evian I did not find reliable numbers). Since the legal difference between detention and arrest is different in every country, I have not differentiated between these two forms of imprisonment.

21. The development of preemptive mass arrests was fully confirmed by the 2009 UN climate summit protests in Copenhagen, where nearly 2,000 protesters were arrested, about 900 of them during a mass arrest at the first demonstration. These arrests were covered by a newly introduced law package allowing for preemptive arrest.

22. After the 2007 G8, the German Bundesrat decided to install a EU database of “violent summit protesters.” The proposal to annex such a database to the Schengen Information System was discussed in the Council of the EU and subjected to further investigation; on [http://www.statewatch.org/news/2008/apr/eu-troublemakers-7544-08.pdf](http://www.statewatch.org/news/2008/apr/eu-troublemakers-7544-08.pdf) (accessed 1 April 2010).

23. In the original registration six marches with different starting points are mentioned: an “antiracism bloc,” a “global justice—agriculture bloc,” an “antifascism bloc,” a “peace bloc,” an “anti-nuclear bloc,” and a “queer-feminist bloc.” All of the marches were supposed to take a different route in order to arrive in front of the G8 venue in Heiligendamm, with an estimated amount of 1,000 to 2,500 participants.

24. Röttgers could fall back on previous experiences with the legal aspects of public assemblies; during the regular protests against nuclear transports in Germany, she issued several general directives that functioned as ban orders.

25. The presence of US president Bush was seen as a potential danger because he and the US, in general, function as “the concept of the enemy” for many states and organizations. The presence of other states also involved in the military operations in Iraq and Afghanistan, also depicted as posing a threat. To make its case, the directive also lists previous summit meetings disrupted with riots and blockades: the 1999 WTO protests in Seattle, the 2000 WB/IMF protests in Prague, the 2000 EU summit protests in Nice, and the 2003 and 2006 G8 protests in, respectively, Evian and St. Petersburg. The analysis of action plans by other groups calling for blockades (such as the BlockG8 and the Dissent! networks) was supposed to corroborate the threat of the Star-march turning into a transgressive or violent event (without clarifying the connection to terrorism). A series of G8-related property attacks executed clandestinely in the year before the G8 summit was also mentioned as relevant but without providing any evidence between these events and the organizers of the Star-march.

26. In 2011, the regional administrative court in Schwerin decided that the prohibition of the Star-march was unlawful. However, the court’s decision did not condemn the manipulated police reports about the security situation, nor did it compensate the protest organizers for the money that had been spent on the higher appeal at the German Federal Constitutional Court.
27. Before the 2009 UN climate summit protests in Copenhagen, the Danish government prepared an entire law package, namely, by forbidding masking during public assemblies and, in cases of suspected criminal activities, permitting preemptive arrest.

28. According to Kavala, 10 of the 87 registered assemblies were forbidden, 4 of them through the general directive (BAO Kavala Press release 91 “Polizei zieht positive Einsatzbilanz,” 8 June 2007).

29. Next to the Tornado fighter jets there were 12 state airplanes of the G8 countries based in the military airport of Laage. The German navy in Kiel admitted that the US was involved in the maritime security concept and that two US warships would be relocated temporarily to the Baltic Sea. Both ships contain a crew of 370 navy soldiers and are equipped for air defense and maritime surveillance. The radar can reach 100 targets at a time and has a reach of 200 sea miles. On: http://www.ostsee-zeitung.de/archiv/index.phtml?Param=DB-Artikel&cID=2639163 (accessed 20 August 2007).


32. An interesting detail about the employment of the military boats is that, after the rail tracks turned out to be constantly occupied by protesters, they were used 82 times to transport journalists from the official press center in Kühlungsborn to Heiligendamm (Komitee für Grundrechte und Demokratie 2008: 129–130).


34. “Souverän ist, wer über den Ausnahmezustand entscheidet” (Schmitt 1984: 11).

35. The Italian political philosopher Giorgio Agamben (2004) elaborates on Schmitt’s conception of the state of exception by incorporating his perspective on the biopolitical production of life. He sees the state of exception as the central paradigm of ruling, becoming evident in the current “world-wide civil war” (Agamben 2004: 2). And just as does Schmitt, Agamben defines the state of exception as a borderline concept. The biopolitical dimension of the state of exception, according to Agamben, lies in the fact that the suspension of law results in an inclusion of “bare life” into the reach of legal power. Sovereign power necessarily rests on injustice: on bare violence and the imposition of law. In the state of exception, bare life directly confronts sovereign power.
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