Pontifícia Universidade Católica
do Rio de Janeiro

Paulo Henrique de Oliveira Chamon

The mood of time(s):
Melancholia and the Limits of Temporal Thinking in World Politics

Tese de Doutorado

Thesis presented to the Programa de Pós-graduação em Relações Internacionais of PUC-Rio in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the degree of Doutor em Relações Internacionais.

Advisor: Prof. Paulo Luiz Moreaux Lavigne Esteves

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To Edna and Marco
To Manu
And to those who find time to make suspension of disbelief possible

Acknowledgments

Elizabeth Dauphinee's *The Politics of Exile* begins with the life and story of a professor who is so caught up in the ropes of her work that she finds herself starved of everything else. Quickly we learn that, most of all, she is starved of love. I venture that every scholar can relate to such situation—either in general or at some point of her or his life. I most certainly relate. And yet, this is also a dangerous identification: voids of love exist only as a narrative, and even then, as nothing more than one moment in any really great story. We might see and narrate ourselves as love-starved, but only at the cost of deafening and blinding ourselves to the many different instantiations of love in our lives—from reassuring recognition to life-shattering event.

Though the rules of academia might imply this is less formative of the text and the scholar than the listed references, I take advantage of these acknowledgements to take some time to remember and thank those who, over this very long journey, made sure I was never starved, despite my own narratives.

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Abstract

Chamon, Paulo Henrique de Oliveira; Esteves, Paulo Luiz Moreaux Lavigne (Advisor). **The mood of time(s): melancholia and the limits of temporal thinking in world politics**. Rio de Janeiro, 2018. 243p. Tese de Doutorado – Instituto de Relações Internacionais, Pontifícia Universidade Católica do Rio de Janeiro.

In the late 20th and early 21st century, "time"—as a concept, an object, a theme, or a category of understanding and of experience—has been increasingly lmobilized as a critical category in the social sciences and the humanities. In different ways, we have come to be interpellated by the injunction to "take time seriously" in an endeavor to shed light on unacknowledged assumptions, clarify conceptual debates, improve empirical investigations, and work towards better social and political analysis, action, and disposition. In particular, debates in International Relations have responded to this interpellation by considering the limits and possibilities coming from its often-unacknowledged conceptions of time. In this dissertation, I surmise that, even though there is no contending with these assertions and the important work stemming from them, there are also good reasons for us to consider them under a different light. In this sense, I engage this literature not so much in terms of the legitimacy of positions articulated in it, but in terms of their conditions of existence and their particular effects. More specifically, I propose we read this topicality of time as a discursive formation, that is, a set of regularities that organize and distribute "time" in fields of knowledge, affects, and power through which we come to govern ourselves and others. To do so, I start from a reading of discourse that brings together Foucault's early emphasis on fields of dispersion with an interpretation of discursive formations as circuits of affects through which they not only become libidinally invested, but also effectively libidinal. I then develop two arguments. First, by working through debates over time and world politics, I make emerge the fields of concepts, objects, subjects, and strategies under which they take place. In doing so, I argue they tend to reproduce dualisms such as fixity/fluidity, timeliness/disjunction, unity/multiplicity, necessity/contingency, and metaphors of scales and turns that often recuperate the very conceptions of modern politics and subjectivity they proclaim to run counter

by taking time seriously. Instead of reading such ambivalence as a problem, however, I venture we should understand it in terms of the productive effects of the discourse of time. Second, moving towards an understanding of melancholia as an articulation of discursive relations through loss, identification, reflexivity, and enjoyment, I propose we can name the discourse of time melancholic. In doing so, I argue that the above discourse is not only embedded with powerful luring effects, but also that it gives particular form to present melancholia. Given these melancholic fields of knowledge-power that are the discourse of time, I conclude by proposing that the topicality of time since the late 20th century can tell us something about the modes of government being mobilized in world politics at least, if not also beyond.

Keywords

Time; Temporal Turn; Discourse; Circuit of Affect; Melancholia

Resumo

Chamon, Paulo Henrique de Oliveira; Esteves, Paulo Luiz Moreaux Lavigne. **A disposição do(s) tempo(s): melancolia e os limites do pensamento temporal em política internacional**. Rio de Janeiro, 2018. 243p. Tese de Doutorado – Instituto de Relações Internacionais, Pontifícia Universidade Católica do Rio de Janeiro.

Desde o final do século XX, o "tempo"—enquanto conceito, objeto, tema, ou categoria do entendimento e da experiência—tem sido crescentemente mobilizado como instrumento crítico nas ciências sociais e nas humanidades. De diferentes formas, viemos a ser interpelados a "levar o tempo a sério", na busca por lançar luz sobre pressupostos não reconhecidos, esclarecer debates conceituais, aprimorar investigações empíricas, e buscar melhores análises, ações e disposições sociais e políticas. Em particular, os debates sobre política internacional responderam a tal interpelação refletindo sobre os limites e as possibilidades advindas de seus pressupostos temporais, muitas vezes mantidos implícitos. Nesta tese, proponho que, embora não haja como negar estas afirmações nem o importante trabalho delas decorrente, há também boas razões para considerá-las sob uma outra perspectiva. Nesse sentido, abordo essa literatura não tanto em termos da legitimidade das posições articuladas por meio dela, mas em termos das suas condições de existência e dos efeitos decorrentes destas. Mais especificamente, proponho lermos tal proliferação do "tempo" em termos de uma formação discursiva, isto é, de um conjunto de regularidades que organizam e distribuem o "tempo" em campos de conhecimento, poder e afetos por meio dos quais podemos a governar a nós mesmos e aos outros. Para tanto, parto de uma leitura de discurso que reúne a ênfase inicial de Foucault em campos de dispersão com uma interpretação de formações discursivas como circuitos de afetos pelos quais elas não apenas são investidas de libido, mas também efetivamente libidinais. Eu então desenvolvo dois argumentos. Em primeiro lugar, trabalhando com debates sobre tempo e política internacional, descrevo os campos de conceitos, objetos, sujeitos e estratégias a partir dos quais tais debates ocorrem. Ao fazê-lo, argumento que eles tendem a reproduzir dualismos como fixidez e fluidez, temporâneo e disjunção,

unidade e multiplicidade, necessidade e contingência, assim como metáforas de escalas e inversões que muitas vezes recuperam as próprias concepções de política moderna e subjetividade que buscam contrariar ao levar o tempo a sério. Entretanto, ao invés de interpretar tal ambivalência como um problema, proponho entendê-la em termos da efetividade produtiva do discurso do tempo. Em segundo lugar, caminhando para uma compreensão da melancolia como um modo de articulação de relações discursivas por meio de perda, identificação, reflexividade e prazer, proponho que podemos nomear o discurso do tempo como melancólico. Ao fazê-lo, argumento que tal discurso é não apenas embebido de poderosos efeitos de atração, mas também dá forma particular à melancolia nos nossos dias. Diante dos melancólicos circuitos de poder e conhecimento que são o discurso do tempo, concluo propondo que a proliferação do tempo desde o final do século XX pode nos dizer algo sobre os modos de governo mobilizados na política mundial pelo menos, se não além dela.

Palavras-Chaves

Tempo; Virada Temporal; Discurso; Circuito de Afetos; Melancolia

Table of Contents

1. Narrating the Problem

> "As minhas letras são todas autobiográficas. Até as que não são, são" (Veloso)[1]
>
> "Oh Dear! Oh Dear! I shall be too late!" (White Rabbit)
>
> "When philosophy paints its grey in grey, a shape of life has grown old, and it cannot be rejuvenated, but only recognized, by the grey in grey of philosophy; the owl of Minerva begins its flight only with the onset of dusk" (Hegel).
>
> "That idea was nothing less than the invention of a sublime remedy, an antihypochondriacal poultice, destined to alleviate our melancholy humanity (...) my idea had two faces, like a medal, one turned toward the public and the other toward me" (Machado de Assis)
>
> "All writing is recovery from the first line (…) the rest of the text works to stave off the damage or regain equilibrium" (Rickert).

This dissertation is late.

I say this, but not in the sophisticated sense that all writing is prefatory. Nor do I say it in the very fashionable sense that subjectivity is always belated, taking place *after the fact*, in the *future antérieur*. Not even in the somewhat self-congratulatory sense that the contemporary is the one that is never fully of the times.

All these are also true; or, at least, we know, arguable. But no; I say this dissertation is late in the very banal sense that it should have been submitted some years ago, and that it has missed every single deadline that has been part of its process with such clockwork precision that one could almost posit a matter of pride in it.

Such is the irony: that a dissertation that has (""from the beginning"") revolved around first the word, then the concept, then the problem, then the discourse of time, could be so banal in its lateness. The critical reader might interpret these few lines as an unacceptable concession to linear, homogeneous, empty, abstract, and/or modern time. She might even affirm—correctly, I believe—that these statements actually perform the very conception of time that we should

[1] In loose translation: "My lyrics are all autobiographical. Even the ones that are not, actually are"

be wary of. That much is fine—I have one too many stamped pieces of paper calling on me and making sure my lateness is, also, just that.

If, like many today, we are inclined to dwell in challenging the divisions between subject and object, fact and value, research and researcher, life and work[2], we might wonder about the synchronicity in such irony. What else to expect from a dissertation revolving around the complexities of time than that it would face very banal troubles with time? For clarity, allow me to narrate this some more, the other way around.

If all writing is recovery from the first line, we might feel authorized to follow our reflexes to look for such first line, even if only as a retrospectively constructed narrative of origins. The first line, here, was time. First as a word and an insight in a graduate class, then as a concept explored in philosophy, social, and political theory, then as an apparatus of power emerging along the way with modernity, then as a problem traceable back to Summerian myths, Greek philosophical treaties, and Judeo-Christian cosmologies, and, lastly, as a way of constructing problems—a problematization—we might situate, for starters, in the late 20th century. Maybe unsurprisingly, a choice made (by me? For me? In me?) because I couldn't help but feel frustrated and anxious about a sense of lateness, of never managing to *truly be* in the (historical) present I nonetheless was, wanted, and had to be. My unrelenting predicament: the incapacity to be "on time"; a temporal assumption and assessment, if there ever was one.

But why pose these questions in terms of time? One could expect anxiety and frustration over one's location and self-assessment to be widespread in pretty much any present—if not existential or ontological. We might formulate this in terms of modernity, capitalism, foundations, desires, breakdown of familial structure, war, poverty, hormonal processes, forms of education—the list goes on, figuratively, forever. After all, this dissertation can also be short, provocative, dull, inviting, ideological, alienated, a socioeconomic step, a catharsis, the end of a cycle, a hope for a different life, or a sign of tragedy. How come, then, that one's anxieties and frustrations—and my anxieties and frustrations—come to be formulated as

[2] The literature here is vast. I'm particularly drawn to the autobiographical version of this endeavor (Inayatullah, 2011; Dauphinée, 2013; Inayatullah; Dauphinée, 2016; see also the *Journal of Narrative Politics* at http://jnp.journals.yorku.ca/index.php/default/index).

problems with time to be addressed through solutions on time? How come, of all things, one comes to lose (and seek) equilibrium in relation to *time*?

It turns out, there are no shortage of answers to this question. Of course, I wasn't alone in posing such problems: since at least the late 20th century, a proliferation of debates around time have taken place in the social sciences and the humanities, mostly aiming to bring about solutions to theoretical, conceptual, and political troubles (for three useful and historically spread surveys, see Adam, 1990; May; Thrift, 2001; Ross, 2012). On the one hand, a number of conceptual and theoretical debates in different fields of knowledge turned to the concept and problem of "time" as an asset to deal with long held dilemmas. On the opposite direction, different fields endeavored to offer their own take on how the enigmatic issue of time could be dealt with. Increasingly, time acquired the status of a marker for an emerging epistemological, ethical, and political field—or, at least, an emerging site from which and about which to ask questions across disciplinary boundaries. There are many reasons raised for such turning towards time. Besides aphoristic claims to the inherently all-pervasive yet unknowable reality of "time", we might highlight at least three broad lines: the sense that time is increasingly a social fact imposing itself on people who have mostly lost control over it; the sense that the conceptions of time that have upheld our understanding of progressive politics are losing their credibility and, with them, our grounds for struggling over meaning and justice in the world; and the sense that time has always tended to be violently constrained by spatial metaphors and practices in the West, arbitrarily excluding political possibilities and violently denying entire societies a place in "the present"[3]. Given not only the proliferation of debates around time, but also the claim to their timeliness in relation to important social and political processes, we might be excused to refer to the late 20th century as sporting a topicality of time. Given this scenario, that problems would be framed in terms of time might be seen as in line with the times. In this sense, that my initial problem was framed in terms of time and that theoretical, social, and political problems come to be framed in terms of time might be seen as participating in the same process(es).

But read enough of them and you might start wondering whether those good reasons to frame problems in terms of time speak to some ontological stratification

[3] I explore the late 20th century topicality of time in the social sciences and the humanities as well as these important reasons for taking time seriously in Chapter 2.

of reality, some undeniable historical trajectory and generalized historical condition, or if they work to establish the framework in which they are so well positioned to lay claim to legitimate knowledge. Put differently, engage enough with the serious arguments about the importance, seriousness, and centrality of time, allow yourself to be fully convinced by them, and maybe you'll end up wondering how did that convincing work? How come it took so many interpellations for you to notice this fundamental dimension of your own life? How come it took no more than that?

It is in this context that I first turned to discussions on the temporal assumptions underlying international politics: the field of International Relations (IR), where I started, has been marked by waves of attention to time (sometimes interchangeably with history and process) at least since responding to the 1980s and 1990s orthodoxy of structural realism became imperative. Early on, "time" (or is it history and process?) became a core concept for seminal texts of so-called critical IR Theory from different approaches, such as (labels taken with a grain of salt) neo-Marxism (Cox, 1981; Gill, 1990), English school and historical sociology (Buzan, 1999; Hobson, 2002), Critical Theory (Linklater, 1998), social constructivism (Wendt, 1987; Jackson; Nexon, 1999), poststructuralism (Ashley, 1984; 1988; 1989; Der Derian, 1990; Walker, 1990; 1993; Bartelson, 1995), and postcolonialism (Inayatullah; Blaney, 2004; Hobson, 2012). Later, these responses themselves came to be scrutinized for their confusion of time, history, and processes, and for lacking precision on the politics of time (Hutchings, 2007; 2008; 2011; Mendes; Furtado, 2012; Hom, 2013; McIntosh, 2015; Lundborg, 2015; Chamon; Lage, 2015). This later literature, with its focus on time as a distinguished and core concern, had me convinced of the benefits of taking "time" as an entry point for thinking not only about personal problems, but about problems of world politics and, more broadly, issues of modern politics and theory.

Through these engagements and some foray into their own inspirations, it became clear that the sense of temporal displacement I needed to talk about was everything but personal: distributing those that are and those that are not "on time" has been a central mode of operation of modern power. This has been read in different terms, such as the increasing measurement and disciplining of time (Thompson, 1967; Foucault, 1993; 2001c; Landes, 1983; Hom 2010); the institution of a variegated system in which speeding up and slowing down, making late and

making wait are articulated to produce inclusion, exclusion, and value (Sharma, 2014b; Arantes, 2014); the historical achievement of distinguishing past from present, thus situating everything "on its own time" to avoid anachronism (Fasolt, 2004; 2013; Davis, 2008; Koselleck, 2004); the Enlightenment narratives of progress and emancipation, and their exclusion of difference as backwardness and unreason (Laclau, 1992; Brown, 2001) as well as the correlate colonial attribution of people and societies to different points of the same unified world historical timeline (Fabian, 2002; Nandy, 1983; Chakrabarty, 2008; Blaney; Inayatullah, 2010; Quijano, 2000; Mignolo, 2007; 2011; Hindess, 2007; 2008; Helliwell; Hindess, 2013; Lage; Chamon, 2016). The concepts pointing at these processes will sound familiar to many of us today, as we have learned to be, at least, suspicious of them: modernity, progress, historicism, temporocentrism, allochronism, denial of coevalness, periodization, teleology.

When time is the problem, time can also be the answer. Instead of inviting us to better adapt so to finally be on time, an important part of this literature imagines ways of disrupting power practices in the politics of time and instituting alternative ways of engaging with time and engaging the world temporally. As I perused through this literature, each formulation grew more provocative than the previous one, concepts piling up as they offered novel—and most often mind twisting—ways of thinking about time and the world and of being temporally in the world. Often, they insist on the plurality of times and temporalities, irreducible to a single timeline, as well as in the fragmentation of time, confounding the partition of past, present, and future in ways not fully amenable to clear forms or narratives (Bhabha, 1994; Brown, 2001; Chambers, 2003; Grosz, 2004; Hutchings, 2008; Shapiro, 2010; Agamben, 2009; Lundborg, 2012; Solomon, 2014); sometimes, they endeavor to theorize time and temporality in ways more amenable to shared time (Fabian, 1983; Nandy, 1984; Osborne, 1995; 2008; Inayatullah; Blaney, 2004; Elliot, 2008; Prozorov, 2011; Hom, 2013; Erber, 2013; Sharma, 2014ab). After some time going through these texts, I ended up finding myself much like the imagined critique who answered my claims about lateness: quite the adept at identifying unacknowledged temporal biases in myself and others and in explaining sometimes convoluted accounts of alternative ways of thinking about time. And yet, echoing the voice of that unrecoverable first line, I remained as late as ever—if not a little more, as time went by.

In a very generous reading, De Certeau (1986) returns to a famed passage in Foucault's *The Order of Things* to invite us to think about Foucault's laughter as an epistemological moment. De Certeau tells us that Foucault would start his work when he could laugh at a set of claims. To suspend our expected seriousness was a condition of possibility of his investigations—a claim that is made explicit in some of his works, beyond that one textual comment. Following De Certeau's generosity, we might allow ourselves to think that at least part of what makes Foucault's work attractive to some of us is the sense of playfulness that we sometimes catch in his writing and the intuition that to embark in his train of thought might lead us to share in his laughter about something we were thus far dead set on taking seriously.

I wish I could say laughter got me started as well, but honesty leads me to confess that this dissertation, as it is, began with more of a sense of nuisance, perhaps frustration, with repetition. In particular, with the repetition of claims about alternatives to the obviously unsustainable conceptions of time undergirding our ways of thinking and being in the world, claims that slowly began to reveal an established form, a ritualized invocation of canonical figures, and, most of all, a decreasing capacity to generate displacement. We might maybe speak of an encounter with that moment in the life of a critical strategy "at which it solidifies and hardens into a disciplined and cumulative research apparatus; this is the moment at which, having arrived at a sort of plateau of maturity, it begins to slide from criticism toward method, (…) from a revolutionary paradigm toward a normal one" (Scott, 2005, p.386). This moment marks the paradoxical situation in which the regularization and institutionalization of a strategy sets the condition for its loss of critical potential. And indeed, a discomfort grew at each new challenging formulation moving from what appeared to be a known problem towards what risked becoming an expected alternative, yet remaining unable to displace the troubles motivating me to address it. As fate would have it, I found company in this discomfort as well: as the sense of repetition grew stale, it wasn't too long before commentators began wondering about the common ground affirmed by solidified debates (Osborne, 2008; Elliot, 2008; Bartelson, 2014).

It is a second encounter that gave an intelligible form to this discomfort: the call to take seriously that sense of pleasure that comes out of unveiling what has been hidden, understanding what seems problematic and eventually pointing at solutions to it. Indeed, identifying temporal assumptions had become a kind of daily

exercise, and coming to terms with convoluted twists and bending of temporal concepts a personal source of excitement and enjoyment. Yet, as Rickert (2007) reminds us, our unconscious enjoyment of our critical strategies might all too commonly work to attach us to critique more than to transformation, and thus stave off our own displacement in the guise of finetuned critical techniques (see also Alcorn, 2013). And indeed, as I had set out to understand and heal a sense of temporal displacement, to recover from that first still unwritten line, those analysis felt to me like promises of redemption—a responsibility that, I believe, my expectations shoulder with the form and content of many of these arguments. But, as seriousness about temporal assumptions would have us know, redemption never came. In its place, what took hold was that enlightened cynicism that says, "I know this is a problem, but…" (Rickert, 2007): "I know spatialized, linear time, measured through fixed standards is a problem, but still… I lose balance over (this dissertation) being, quite banally, late".

This encounter with psychoanalysis shade light on the troubles I wanted to engage. If an apparent incapacity to be "on time" was indissociable from the modes of operation of power in modernity, and if knowing of their problem and of alternative conception was not enough to produce noticeable change even at the personal level, then maybe these attachments could be read as part of the problem. In this sense, the simultaneous excitement over critical accounts of time and temporality and lingering attachment to the object-time of critique seemed to me to speak to the psychoanalytical concept of melancholia, as that psychic condition of remaining attached to what has been lost (Freud, 1957b; 1961; Butler, 1997). This coming together of the question of time and that of melancholia offered me new venues of hope: if melancholic attachments were related to the discomfort over the solidification of that critical strategy, then maybe overcoming melancholia, undoing that affective structure, might allow for the regained equilibrium I am still looking for. I am still profoundly invested in this hope, expecting to find that poultice which might alleviate my melancholia over time, and maybe that of the times.

And yet, melancholia itself seems inescapably temporalized, however one cuts into it in late 20th century. To speak of overcoming melancholia, criticizing its dystopic overtones, or transvaluating it towards renewed critical potential is to quickly be brought back to questions about the politics of time. If melancholia and time seem be related, then, it might be less in terms of an external solution to each

other and more as an intrinsic intermeshing making for both problems. In this sense, could melancholia be the form of the current state of the life of the critical strategy of time as much as its effect? Could this relation help make sense of the uncanny attraction and nuisance at these debates that moves me towards and against them? Could it also help make sense of the form that these debates take as they solidify in identifiable regularities and rituals?

I heard once that all academic workshop on a specific topic starts with a set of claims about how that topic doesn't really exist, isn't really the problem, can't really be pinned down. If that is true, the following anecdote—and the dissertation that follows—might seem unsurprising. Taking part on a panel on the "politics of time" at a very early stage of my PhD, I remember a professor telling me that "of those three words, I only know what 'of' is supposed to mean". "I don't know what time means anymore", he added, though he had published a book related to the topic just a couple of years before. A bummer for a young student who had just recently decided to write about "time" in IR. Maybe he was right, maybe we should indeed suspend our knowledge of what "time" is supposed to mean in order to avoid the sense of repetition which might come next. I have found a powerful incentive for such an endeavor in the work of Michel Foucault, in particular in his dealings with the theory, methodology, and politics of discourse.

Maybe following that incipient provocation, I situate this dissertation at a particular level of investigation: the level of the discourse of time. I begin by foregoing to lodge myself alongside debates engaging with and offering (alternative) conceptualizations of time to deal with our present concerns. Instead, I would like to investigate what can we make of the emergence of such debates if we read them in terms of their regularity? If we ask how they work and what they do, instead of how they can be solved or better formulated? In other words, how can we understand these debates if instead of taking part in their proliferation, we question the conditions under which such proliferation takes place and, in doing so, shed light upon the specific form this topicality takes and the effects it engenders? From this first set of question, we would then be led to ask how do these regulated modes of talking about time—this discourse of time—constitute regimes of knowledge through which we come to know, recognize, and regulate ourselves and others? Put differently, how to account for the practical effects and the power implications of the discourse of time, who takes what part in it, and how? How to

make sense of the effects of the tendency to lose and seek equilibrium in relation to time, and not something else? And finally, if we remain attached to these debates despite of their capacity to displace us, satisfy us, or redeem us, how to make sense of the pervasive melancholia they produce? How does it not only keep us attached to time, but also effectively spread through the discourse of time into a late 20th century structure of feeling?

After thinking about the word, the concept, and the problem of time, it is these questions—what I will call the question of *problematization* and *discourse*—that became the focus of this dissertation. Under what conditions do we come to read our troubles as time troubles? What is achieved not by this or that conception of time, but by the growing centrality of the epistemological and ethical problem of time? What worlds, internal and external, do we create to ourselves and to others as we collectively focus on problems with time? In sum, as problems with time proliferate, capturing an increasingly larger number of topics and issues, calling more of us to lose equilibrium over time and to search for it in seriousness about time, what to make of the proliferation of these regimes of truth, power, and affects since the late 20th century?

Before presenting the details of the work, allow me one last note. In his *The Reluctant Fundamentalist*, Moshid Hamid says that "[t]he confession that implicates its audience is—as we say in cricket—a devilishly difficult ball to play. Reject it and you slight the confessor; accept it and you admit your own guilt" (Hamid, 2007, p.70). I would have liked to write this dissertation as one such intimate confession. This is the tone I have learned to love accessing and reading. However, years deep into the business of surviving myself through a PhD as much as a still tensioned relation with "time" have turned that implicating energy into confrontative thrusts and sometimes dangerously solipsistic nitpicking. You might feel this in the pages to come. Know that this pains me. I console myself by thinking that "the present is perfect"; that this is what needed to exist for something else to come (no small admission for a work and a voice obsessed with the politics of temporal imagination). Were these pages written as just such confession, the conversation to follow would be of a different kind than the one we will most likely be staging in our minds. Maybe this note is the preemptive apology and a call for unearned generosity.

If I cannot show it, I will nonetheless tell that I do read this dissertation as a confession—if not a particularly intimate or implicating one. More specifically, the confession of someone who discovered a problem in "time", identified with it, and thus set out to look for (temporal) healing, and (temporal) solutions to such problem. All this only to find, of course, that there is no panacea there—as there isn't anywhere else—and that, maybe, there is not even a "there" there—as Rob Walker is fond to say. The mixture of frustration, defensiveness, survival, acceptance, and processing that made for this trajectory pours through the pages to follow. "I throw my corn, I don't call no fowl".

1.1 Plan of the dissertation

It has taken me some time to fix my inquiry on the particular type and level of questions implied in talking about a discourse of time. All too often, I have found myself "slipping" back into questions about the temporal assumptions of different ways of thinking, about the power relations articulated around particular conceptions of time, or about how to better think about time given the troubles I sense. As a matter of fact, I still do—and I wouldn't be surprised to find that this dissertation is much less consistent in its level of analysis than I would have liked it to be. In part, this certainly has to do with the abstractness of the questions and the difficulty of sustaining coherency. However, I also believe it speaks to the attractiveness of questions about time—the very object of this dissertation. Furthermore, I believe that, like me, the reader might feel inclined to promptly take very seriously claims about (im)proper temporal assumptions and their political implications. In this sense, **Part One** of this dissertation (Chapters 2 and 3) is *dedicated to the setting up of the problem* that guides this dissertation and of the particular perspective through which it emerges as a problem against what I believe are conventional erasures.

Chapter 2 is entirely about constructing a specific perspective on the late 20th century topicality of time, a perspective that leads us to the core of this dissertation. I begin by considering different narratives through which the importance of taking time seriously is established in the late 20th century. Put differently, I explore the different ways in which the present has come to be read, almost undeniably, as being troubled by "time troubles", hence calling for

seriousness in our search for temporal solutions to our predicaments. I believe we might easily identify with one or more versions of these problems—they are the reason so many of us wholeheartedly engage in discussions—academic or otherwise—about time and temporality. My aim is not to dismiss these narratives nor to substitute them for other, better, ones. Despite the perspective of this dissertation, I continue to think that the work coming out of them provides us with important insights about the world. Instead, having given us time to identify our troubles, I propose we temporarily suspend the claims to legitimacy with which these narratives endow the topicality of time in order to interrogate, in a Foucauldian vein, the articulation of power and knowledge that is established in those debates. More specifically, through the concepts of "eventalization" (Foucault, 1991; 1997b) and "problematization" (Foucault, 1997ab), I propose that we think about *the conditions under which a sudden construction of troubled times as time troubles becomes possible in the late 20th century* carrying with it particular power effects. In sum, Chapter 2 is an invitation to temporarily shift our critical gears from the problem of proper knowledge and legitimate action towards that of practices of power and modes of government.

Having thus redirected our attention towards the question of the conditions under which the sudden topicality of time comes to organize knowledge and power, **Chapter 3** is dedicated to lay out the theoretical and methodological framework through which we can analyze the late 20th century proliferation of debates on time in terms of a *discourse of time*. The bulk of this framework is constructed in relation to Foucault's late 1960s and early 1970s reflections on discourse as a particular level that is both autonomous and specific in how it establishes fields of dispersion and coexistence of objects, concepts, subjects, and strategies (Foucault, 2013[1969]; 1981[1971]). However, a displacement takes place in this discussion as tensions begin to appear in relation to the temporality of discourse. Foucault offers different versions of this—the "historical a priori", the problem of periodization, the relation of series and event, the possibilities of political change. As these tensions goad us towards a debate on the proper temporal assumptions of a project which endeavors to understand the conditions of existence and power effect of just such debate, they pose a fundamental problem to this dissertation. I respond by engaging a dissonant voice in Foucault, one that might be read as thinking discourse in terms of its resonance, its adhesion force. In doing so, I

propose we think about discourse as not only fields of dispersion, but also as circuits of affect that bring together thinking and feeling in the constitution of regimes of truth and modes of government. This reformulation of discourse is both the precursor and the result of the reading of the late 20th century topicality of time in terms of a particular mood. In sum, Chapter 3 is a theoretical and methodological construction of discourse as simultaneously a field of dispersion and coexistence of concepts, objects, subjects, and strategies to be described and a circuit of affect to be diagnosed—both of which establish, together, the effectiveness of discourse in constructing libidinally invested regimes of knowledge-feeling and modes of government.

Having presented both the problem and the framework through which to engage it, **Part Two** of this dissertation (Chapters 4 and 5) is dedicated to the reading and diagnosing of the discourse of time. As no such analysis can start with everything, I endeavor to do so by looking at the debates on *the relation of time to the study of world politics*. While this is but one among many possible entry points, it carries the benefit of being both consistent with pragmatic criteria for such analysis and easily amenable to overflowing its initial field towards broader implications.

Chapter 4 is dedicated to the surface reading of the fields of dispersion and coexistence of the discourse of time as it emerges in the study of world politics. I do so by engaging two sets of discussion relating time to world politics and International Relations (IR). First, the literature on "time *and* world politics", which aims to bring reflections on time from political theory and philosophy to bear on the study of world politics, thus taking part in what has been called a "temporal turn" in IR. Second, the literature on "time *in* international relations", which aims to investigate how complex assumptions about time are always already constitutive of IR as an expression of modern sovereignty, that is, of the limits and possibility of political life. The tension between these approaches help us both suspend their claim to legitimacy to ask questions about the discourse of time, and make sense of the complexity of this discourse, as they both take part in it in different ways. In a surface reading of these debates, I describe the discourse of time as organized in terms of dualisms such as fixity/fluidity, timeliness/disjunction, unity/multiplicity, necessity/contingency, and metaphors of scales and turns that often recuperate the very conceptions of politics and subjectivity they proclaim to run counter by taking

time seriously. Furthermore, and importantly, I explore the paradoxes internal to each literature and between them as constitutive of the discourse of time, and as inviting a discursive movement that, in their luring effects, open the way for thinking about the circuit of affect of the discourse of time.

Chapter 5 takes over where the previous discussion left off, moving from a surface reading of fields of dispersion towards a diagnosis of the circuit of affect that transpires in the movements of the discourse of time. Turning to psychoanalysis and psychoanalysis-influenced political theory, I argue that we can read the turns and returns that appear as constitutive of the discourse of time as relating to melancholia. To do so, I reinterpret melancholia from the Freudian irresolution of grief centered on the preservation of disavowed loss through identification and the turning of aggression on oneself (Freud, 1957b; 1961; 1975), and from a condition of impossible resolution of loss in political theory—valuated alternatively as a source of heightened critical potential (Traverso, 2016; Khanna, 2004; 2006; 2011) or of arrested radical potential (Zizek 2000; Elliot, 2008; Kehl, 2015). Instead, I turn to Butler's interpretation of melancholia as a circuitry of power and affect that undoes the distinction between analytic diagnosis and political theory, avoiding the tendency in other interpretations to read melancholia and discourse as two separate or separable entities. Reading the discourse of time as a form of melancholia, I make sense of the pervasive adhesion force that seems not only to lure more discourses into connecting with the discourse of time, but also to keep us attached to it. More specifically, given the complex tensions constituting the discourse of time, I argue we can speak of a doubled melancholia. Besides explaining the resonance of time paradoxes, the melancholia of time also offers a way of interpreting power practices and modes of government gaining terrain since the late 20th century in terms of grafting of melancholia and time into each other. I finish this chapter by engaging with the literature on Left Melancholia in order to propose some reflections on how melancholia itself might gain form through the discourse of time in the late 20th century, and how that encounter helps us make sense of difficulties in interpretations of the so-called crisis of the left. I conclude this dissertation by attending to some avenues to make sense of the present in terms of this bringing together of melancholia and time in a late 20th century mood of time(s).

PART ONE.
TROUBLED TIMES; TIME TROUBLES

Introduction to Part One

> What then is time? If no one asks me, I know: if I wish to explain it to one that asketh, I know not (Augustine, 2004, p.317).
>
> Don't ask for the meaning, ask what's the point (Hacking, 1999, p.5)
>
> But whoever pauses here, whoever *learns* to ask questions here, will undergo the same experience as I—that of a huge new prospect opening up, a vertiginous possibility (Nietzsche, 2008, pp.7-8).

I will join a number of studies on time by beginning with Augustine's famous and often quoted aphorism on the (un)knowability of time. However, instead of addressing his reflection directly—unraveling its meanings, searching for an answer, or offering a rejoinder—, I would like to follow two recollections of this beginning: one by Norbert Elias, the other by Johannes Fabian. These two references are situated in different disciplinary fields—the first in sociology, the second in anthropology. They both turn away from Augustine's ontological question towards new directions—a theoretical-empirical research agenda and a meta-theoretical interrogation of anthropology. Finally, they relate to the aphorism quite differently: as we will see, Elias extends it, while Fabian ironizes it. By starting with Augustine, I want to gesture towards lodging this dissertation within the discourse I intend to understand: a set of recent reflections on time and temporality. Furthermore, by starting with these *uses of Augustine*, I want to prefigure the kind of analysis I will pursue in this dissertation: not so much the search for the answer to a question, but the interpretation of the uses of a repetition.

Norbert Elias begins his essay on Time by recalling Augustine's words: "'I know what time is if I am not asked', a wise old man once said, 'if I am asked, I no longer know'". He then adds to them a question: "why then do I ask?" (Elias, 1992, p.1). Indeed, if I seem to lose the knowledge I have of time when trying to explain it, why not simply keep to its intuitive understanding? Elias' answer is most telling: one asks the question because "[b]y exploring problems of time, one can find out a good deal about human beings and about oneself that was not properly understood before. Problems in sociology and the human sciences in general that were not clarified by previous theories now become accessible" (Elias, 1992, p.1). We might read in this a double bind: on the one hand, if we keep to our intuitive understanding

of time, we tend to reproduce the misunderstandings—it would not be too harsh to say "violence"—that come to be associated to our assumptions about time. The problem, here, is that the "I know" part of Augustine's aphorism is so terribly problematic that we cannot let it rest. On the other hand, as soon as we ask the question of time, we enter into a field of debates in which it appears to become impossible to know something of it. Hence, we must take time seriously, study it, produce knowledge about it even if we don't know what it is—precisely because we don't know what it is—because time is a window, a tool, to understand larger and important things.

Elias is not alone in turning to time to understand problems in sociology and the human sciences. Indeed, the late 20th century witnessed a proliferation of debates around time and temporality in different domains of the social sciences and the humanities. A cursory survey of parts of this literature shows the importance that debates about time, temporal concepts, and transformations in temporal dynamics acquired as keys to understand, explain, and diagnose the present and the troubles we face in it. It might not be an overstatement to say that, around the end of the 20th century (though I would make no claim to the exclusivity of this timeframe), time became one of the main "issues"[4] posing questions and offering solutions to problems in the humanities and in politics. In line with this move, different problems from diverse areas of knowledge and practice came to be reformulated in terms of time, or in terms that constituted time as a solution.

In this context, we might feel authorized to wonder how does thinking about time can do so much for us? I begin **Chapter 2** by taking up this question in order to draw out the grounds upon which the topicality of time in the late 20th century stands, that is, to understand the different ways in which we make sense of the relation between time and broader issues in social and political life. Put differently, and unravelling something of the title of this Part, I seek to draw out what justifies our urge to deal with time troubles as a way of better engaging with our troubled times. I present three different answers to this question, which I have conveniently called three "traditions of time": the modernization of time-reckoning and time-

[4] As I will argue, what exactly we take 'time' to be—a concept, a theme, a signifier, an object, a category of understanding, etc—is part of what is at stake in the question I'm constructing. For the time being, and until I can specify my approach, I will use "issue" or "idea" as placeholders to signify some kind of common ground amidst the many differences in the ways time is treated in the literature.

discipline; the emergence of time at the demise of history; and the tensions in the time-space articulation of our present. Each of these "traditions" give us a narrative of the historical and conceptual trajectory that leads us to a present that can be enlightened and intervened upon through a serious engagement with the idea of time. I venture that we can easily identify with some of the ways in which questions of time are put to us through these traditions not only academically—for those of us asking questions about "time"—but also more commonsensically.

The second recollection of the Augustinian aphorism is of a quite different nature and points in a different direction. Johannes Fabian begins his book *Time and the Other*—a work on the uses of time in the construction of the object of anthropology—with an ironic pun on beginnings, repetition, and how thinking (critically) about something (specifically, Time) often engenders taking part in it:

> When they approach the problem of Time, *certain philosophers feel the need to fortify themselves with a ritual incantation*. They quote Augustine: 'what is time? If no one asks me about it, I know; if I want to explain it to the one who asks, I don't know'. In fact, I have just joined that chorus (Fabian, 2002, p.xxxix, my emphasis).

Fabian is right to note that if we look long enough at works on time—and philosophers are not the only targets here—the appearance of one version or the other of the Augustinian aphorism becomes unsurprising[5]. To him, this is reason to move in another direction and talk about anthropology *through* time rather than to talk *about* time anthropologically.

Following Fabian's irony[6] more than his analysis, I begun inserting myself in just that chorus. What catches my attention in Fabian's claim is his suggestion of the existence of a "need for fortification", a fortification that is invoked (so to speak) through a "ritual incantation", and, ultimately, that he himself shares in such need. Here, we might remember that beginnings are always difficult and contested—in itself, this has always been enough to justify an incantation. Furthermore, claims to

[5] Similarly, Adam claims in her discussion of time in sociology that "[n]ot every treatise of time refers to Heraclitus, Kant, Hegel, Husserl, Bergson, Heidegger, Schutz, or Whitehead but I have not come across a single study that does not mention St. Augustine's Confessions" (Adam, 1990, p.33). She further adds that only a part of those actually utilize his thought instead of paying 'mere lip-service' to the aphorism.

[6] I follow Leslie Paul Thiele in defining the ironist as the one who "reserves judgment and withholds support from ideological positions in order to explore and appreciate more deeply the inherent complexities and ambiguities of political life" while being "prefaced or accompanied by a critical confrontation with her own convictions" (Thiele, 2002, p.226; 228).

"beginnings" tend to get caught up in temporal metaphors, which might explain the need for some extra fortification for those beginning to talk about how we talk about beginnings. One must begin, and, for that to happen, the endless loop of previous authorization and justification must, for a moment, be interrupted. As Derrida (1990) reminds us, this need brings to light the mystical foundation of authority—enters our (secular) magic: The Fall, Spontaneous Order, The Contract, The Cavern… Time. Hence, effectively, while Elias' repetition of Augustine inserts itself within (an incitement to) the proliferation of debates and clarifications about time to better understand and deal with the present, I believe this lateral reading of Fabian's use suspends these debates in order to interrogate the conditions under which they become possible. In the words of Fabian, they interrogate the ritual incantations through which thinkers are fortified with nothing less than a mystical foundation to produce knowledge about time.

In the second part of Chapter 2, I propose to read the late 20th century proliferation of debates about time under the guise of Fabian's irony[7]. My aim here is not to diminish or deny the importance of the expansion of discussion about time towards a better understanding of our present, but to momentarily suspend the traditions within which such association makes sense in order to entice our curiosity towards the ritual incantation and the associate fortification that is needed for those debates to become possible in the first place. Put differently, I endeavor to redirect our gaze from the theorization of time and temporality towards the conditions under which the issue of "time" can be a self-evident site for questioning the present. To do so is no more—but also no less—than to invite a redirection of our take of the debates about time in what I believe are, so far, counterintuitive directions. In doing so, I mobilize Foucault's concepts of eventalization and problematization as forms of critical interrogation that avoid the question of the proper formulation and solution to a problem in favor of the question of the articulation of power and knowledge under which a problem emerges in specific ways and with particular effects. Hence, inverting the association of troubled times and time troubles above,

[7] Fabian himself is not so much interested in talking *about time* as in understanding how anthropology is constituted *through time*, that is, through specific ways of talking about time. Yet, even for him, it is by uncovering the representations of time underlying anthropology that it becomes possible to understand its political stake. Furthermore, it is in establishing new, better forms of temporal relations between self and other that the problems he locates in the politics of time of anthropology can be overcome.

I propose we have come to problematize troubled times in terms of time troubles, making for the specific form assumed by the late 20th century sudden topicality of time and for the correlate power effects in which we find ourselves immersed. In other words, I propose we ask not how to better understand the world through time, but what world is constituted by the way we have come to think about time.

We do well to remember and even highlight that any proliferation of debates is only possible within specific articulations of power and knowledge. We might even feel that we get some extra kick out of making such claim in relation to debates which are, as we will see, so substantially articulated in terms of the undoing of any structured form. However, we are less welcome to use this claim to shut down conversation by arresting discussions on the existence of conditions. Instead, we should insist on its use as an opener for new avenues: if beginnings are always a mystical sleight of hand, if time always demand a ritual incantation, what is the particular magic trick that we use to engage with time? How does our secular magic work and in what terms does it produce grounds for those debates? In other words, as an instance of repetition, what kind of effects are associated with the return to that ritual incantation?

We might explore this avenue by reading "ritual incantations" in terms of what Foucault called discursive rituals, that is, the rituals that define

> the qualification which must be possessed by individuals who (…) occupy such-and-such a position and formulate such-and-such a type of statement, in the play of a dialogue, of interrogation or recitation (…); the gestures, behaviour, circumstances, and the whole set of signs which must accompany discourse; (…) [and] the supposed or imposed efficacity of the words, their effect on those to whom they are addressed, and the limits of their constraining value (Foucault, 1981, p.62).

In other words, rituals are ways of selecting and positioning the subjects who speak within a specific discourse and of establishing the performances, contexts, and modes of speaking that these subjects must employ in order to activate the powers and limits that such discourse harnesses and distributes. In this sense, the "needed fortification" for the late 20th century sudden topicality of time would be read as the discourse that organizes the ways of talking about time that are engaged by those who do so and the effects expected from such discourse in the researching subject,

its expected audience, and the object itself. In sum, the discourse through which a knowing subject can engage in knowledge claims around time.

Having redirected our attention and, possibly, enticed our curiosity, **in Chapter 3** I draw out the theoretical and methodological framework through which we can analyze the late 20th century proliferation of debates on time in terms of the discourse of time. I do so in three parts. **In the first part of this chapter**, I engage directly with Foucault's late 1960s and early 1970s reflections on discourse and discursive formation and present the specific level in which an analysis of discourse must be situated: that of the modality of existence of statements in fields of dispersion and coexistence of objects, concepts, subjects, and strategies that make some things, and only some, intelligible, all the while constituting regimes of knowledge through which we come to govern ourselves and others. Simultaneously, in line with dominant understandings of the analysis of discourse, I propose to make emerge the discourse of time by reading and describing the surface relations that make for those fields of dispersion and coexistence in the late 20th century topicality of time.

In this process, however, some difficulties immanent to Foucault's early formulations begin to emerge, notably in relation to the status of discursive rules and how we are to understand the regularities we intend to reveal by describing discursive formations. **In the second part of this chapter**, I note that one way in which these tensions have often been addressed is precisely in terms of the incommensurable temporalities of discourse and subjectivation. However, intentionally sidestepping the move to offer a temporal solution to a temporal problem with discourse, I propose a different way of addressing these difficulties by interrogating a dimension of desire that is left fallow by Foucault's early reflections. More specifically, I propose that we extend Foucault's scattered metaphors on the "heaviness" and "mood" of discourse in terms of the passionate libidinal attachments that discourses, as conditions of existence, entail.

To fully do so, **in the third past of this chapter**, I work out the theoretical and methodological moves through which we can characterize discourse not only as fields of dispersion and coexistence that can be described through a surface reading, but also as a circuit of affect and a structure of feeling that must be diagnosed by listening closely to discourse, following its movements, and naming its symptom. Though part of the authors I mobilize are heavily influenced by

Lacanian psychoanalysis and its mobilization for thinking discourse analysis, my own take on the topic cannot be said to embrace a Lacanian approach[8]. I find two reasons to stand on this tenuous ground. First, at this point, I fall short of grasping both interpretations well enough to draw conclusions from a cross-reading, leading me to opt for an interpretation closer to the Foucauldian framework I started with and leaving for a future work the endeavor of finetuning the issue of discursive affect through an approximation with Lacan and the Lacanian framework. Second, given this moment of my work and given recent moves in IR to shift *from* discourse *to* affect or emotion, and in cultural studies to oppose "Foucauldian" and "neo-Lacanian" discourse analysis, I believe there is some value in making the question of affect emerge within discourse analysis. This is, at least, an issue of personal trajectory at stake: to move *within* a Foucauldian framework instead of moving *from* it is an important way for me to work around tensions and not away from them.

In sum, **Part One** aims to formulate the problem around which this dissertation revolves and that guides its unraveling. I endeavor to do so by inviting a set of reading practices: first, a way of engaging with problems—as a result of the articulation of power and knowledge through which we problematize and through which we make for fields of existence in which we can govern ourselves and others—, then a way of reading texts—for the discursive relations making for the fields of dispersion and coexistence in which they can make knowledge claim and engage in power effects—, and, finally, a way of diagnosing discourses—as circuits of affect and structures of feeling.

Before getting started, I want to indicate one last important caveat. Many of the arguments developed here involve what would promptly be regarded as substantial "temporal assumptions". Indeed, one would be at pains to hide the temporal claims permeating the framework I mobilize ahead, most of all since many of the authors make reference to them explicitly. In any case, even if they didn't, this much would be inevitable: within a discourse of time, every utterance appears as a time-utterance or as heavy with temporal assumptions. However, and for the

[8] By a Lacanian approach to subjectivation I have particularly in mind works such as Žižek (1993), Fink (1995), Butler (1997), Stavrakakis (1999), and Rickert (2007). For similarly inflected works that have drawn more directly a connection to discourse analysis (and, in particular, Foucault's conception of discourse), see Copjec (1994), Solomon (2014; 2015), Dunker and Paulon (2017), and Safatle *et al* (2018). The literature here is of course much broader and involves many internal tensions—one of the reasons for which I avoid framing my own discussion in these terms at this point.

time being, I ask us to sidestep this question by openly *de*problematizing time: as I think about the conditions under which and the power effects of the late 20th century topicality of time in the social sciences and the humanities, I purposefully ignore my own so-called temporal assumptions. I ask the reader to do the same and will call our attention to moments in which we will need some extra attention to sustain this deproblematization. This might seem like a last-minute cop out. It might also seem like a reasonable initial decision, as the circle of reflexivity would quickly become overwhelming—itself a possible discursive. Indeed, as I endeavor to show, some of the effects of this almost intuitive alarm are precisely what is at stake. Thus, if we can endure through such indifference, there might be conclusions at the end to which we could identify. Our retained capacity to do so positively, negatively, and/or (in)differently—and to do so variedly at different moments—might unburden us from excessive prevention.

2. Time: A sudden topicality[9]

Tempo tempo tempo tempo

Peço-te o prazer legítimo
E o movimento preciso
Tempo tempo tempo tempo
Quando o tempo for propício

Tempo tempo tempo tempo
De modo que meu espírito
Ganhe um brilho definido
Tempo tempo tempo tempo

E eu espalhe benefícios
Tempo tempo tempo tempo
O que usaremos pra isso
Fica guardado em sigilo

Tempo tempo tempo tempo
Apenas contigo e comigo
Tempo tempo tempo tempo
E quando eu tiver saído

Para fora do teu círculo
Tempo tempo tempo tempo
Não serei nem terás sido
Tempo tempo tempo tempo

Ainda assim acredito
Ser possível reunirmo-nos
Tempo tempo tempo tempo
Num outro nível de vínculo

Tempo tempo tempo tempo
(Veloso, 1979)[10]

> These pre-existing forms of continuity, all these syntheses that are accepted without question, must remain in suspense. They must not be rejected definitively of course, but the tranquility with which they are accepted must be disturbed (Foucault, 2013, p.28).

[9] Inspired by Osborne (2010), I borrow the phrasing "sudden topicality" from Walter Benjamin's reflection on the irruption of references to Nietzsche's thesis on the eternal return in early 20th century Europe. While our approaches differ, I believe we are dealing with similar a starting point: dominant ways of speaking about time can be interpreted in terms of the conditions under which they suddenly emerge. Benjamin's own reading is as follows: "The idea of eternal recurrence transforms the historical event itself into a mass-produced article. But this conception also displays, in another respect—on its obverse side, one could say—a trace of the economic circumstances to which it owes its sudden topicality. This was manifest at the moment the security of the conditions of life was considerably diminished through an accelerated succession of crises. The idea of *eternal* recurrence derived its luster from the fact that it was no longer possible, in all circumstances, to expect a recurrence of conditions across any interval of time shorter than that provided by eternity" (Benjamin, 1999, p.340).

[10] I thank Victor Lage for showing me this song when this dissertation was still just one word: "time". It is only fitting that it be the last addition to the text, at its beginning. At first hearing, I interpreted it as an instance of conceptualization of time. After thinking through this dissertation and particularly writing this chapter, I believe it can also be read as a particularly enchanted version of Fabian's ritual incantation. Parallax. I invite the reader to return to these verses in the end and search for a similar dual possibility. The verses translate as:
Time time time time
I ask you for the legitimate pleasure/And the precise movement/Time time time time/When the time is right
Time time time time/So that my spirit/Get a defined shine/Time time time time
And I spread the benefits/Time time time time/What we will use for that/Is kept in secrecy
Time time time time/Just between you and I/Time time time time/And when I have left
For a place outside your circle/Time time time time/I will not be nor you will have been/Time time time time
Yet I still believe/That our gathering is possible/Time time time time/At another level of bonding
Time time time time

Since the late 20th century a host of reflections on and around time and temporality have taken hold of different domains of knowledge as well as of popular culture. On the one hand, the idea of time has been used to advance and clarify debates on fields such as social theory, anthropology, the theory of history, cultural studies, philosophy, political theory, and international relations. In these cases, bringing temporal lenses to problems formulated in different fields of knowledge was read as carrying yet unexplored critical potential. On the other hand, these fields endeavored to develop their own explorations of the concept of time, a move that transpires in the multiplication of investigations of social time, anthropological time, historical time, geological time, (world) political time, narrative time, and modern time. Here, it was not so much the case of thinking about problems through time, but of dealing with problems associated with time through tools developed in the social sciences and the humanities. Finally, this expansion of theoretical and meta-theoretical reflections on time was accompanied by a parallel increase in empirical studies dealing with the temporal dimension of different areas and themes, as well as of "the present" in general[11].

To set up the problem I want to grasp in this dissertation, I need us to begin by sharing a sense of such proliferation of debates. This is, in very broad terms, the aim of this chapter. However, to say this is to say too little. Indeed, beyond some bewilderment in face of an empirical excess, I want us to share a specific sense of this topicality, a particular way of looking at it that can invite its own set of questions. To anticipate the end, I need us to be on par with what I will call the *sudden topicality of time*. In this introduction, I present how I would like us to engage with this field of debates, discussions, and reflection around time and set up the rest of the chapter.

One place to start getting an empirical sense of the late 20th century topicality of time is in its institutionalization. In this instance, it is worth noting the appearance of a number of compilations of interdisciplinary surveys of works on time. In an early such survey titled "A Report on the Literature of Time 1900-1980"

[11] For a very good surveying work on this proliferation focusing on the broadness of themes, approaches, and disciplines involved—even if restricted to that which more directly touches transformations in contemporary art—I point the reader to Ross' work (Ross, 2012, pp.28-36). In more specific fields, and covering different moments of reflection on this topicality, I have also profited from May and Thrift (2001), Sharma (2014b, pp.5-11), Hunt (2008, pp.3-23), Friedland and Boden (1995), Fraser (1992), Adam (1990), Hoy (2004), Nowotny (1992), Munn (1992), Gell (1992). These all give a sense of the empirical dimension of this proliferation.

(Fraser, 1981), two-thirds of the over 800 entries listed have been published between 1966-1980. Likewise, the more focused Temporal Belongings Library[12] shows, in its almost 900 entries, a surge in writings on time and community since the 1990s. While these lists are most certainly biased in favor of their own present (both chronological and historical-political), their very existence is indicative of a sense of importance; and, taken with a grain of salt, so might be the increase in entries since the late 20th century. Likewise, we might note the creation and coming to prominence of academic journals such as *Time & Society* (1992), *Theory & Event* (1997), *KronoScope* (2001), and of the series "Study of Time" published since 1972 (now in its fifteenth volume) by the International Society for the Study of Time—an academic association created in the 1960s and followed by many similar ones since the 1980s. To make an example out of a self-authorizing claim, the first edition of *Time & Society* opens with a justification that, at least in part, relies on the fact that "[d]uring the last 25 years, but especially during the last 10, there has been a strikingly rapid increase in scientific, scholarly and popular concern with the experience and idea of time" (Fraser, J.T. 1992, p.9). Other commentators have noted similar patterns since then: in the early 21st century, May and Thrift surveyed how the period of 1980s-1990s has "seen renewed interest in questions of time and temporality across a range of disciplines including sociology, anthropology and—to a lesser extent—human geography" (May; Thrift, 2001, p.2). A similar assessment remains to this day: "across a wide swath of contemporary intellectual discussion there have been significant—more or less subtle—shifts in theme and emphasis that signal this peculiar crisis (or, at least, conspicuousness) of time" (Scott, 2014, p.12). Hence, we may say that, since the end of the 20th century, a substantial increase in the academic work on time and temporality has taken place and has been reflected upon in different fields, to the point of calling for specific surveys, reflections, bibliographies, journals, workshops, conferences, and associations.

Another step is to investigate the discussions on and around time themselves. However, a precise exegesis of this proliferation quickly faces gross

[12] The Temporal Belonging library compiles "an extensive sample that represents the variety of approaches that researchers across multiple disciplines have taken to the problem of time and community". The parameters for the list and some its versions can be accessed at http://www.temporalbelongings.org/the-library.html

difficulties: it is generally agreed upon that offering a comprehensible survey on time and temporality—even if restricted to the humanities and the social science in the late 20th century[13]—is a daunting endeavor, to say the least. This is due, at least in part, to the complexity of the subject—both abstract and dense—, to the sheer size of the archive—involving a broad variety of fields of knowledge and a panoply of different approaches and formulations—, and to its fragmentation into subfields of different disciplines (only very recently something like *Time Studies* has begun to try and gather these reflections under the same category—a phenomenon we should take in with a healthy dose of curiosity). To capture all this requires throwing too wide a net.

Taking a closer look at these debates, a further obstacle emerges: scholars are usually talking about very different things when they refer to time. Indeed, any slightly careful reading raises questions about the homogeneity of the movement towards which the numbers and institutions above point. Analyzing this same spike in references to time, Adam (1990) argues that despite a widespread agreement on the topicality of time in the late 20th century social sciences and humanities, theorists are largely not talking about the same things: "they seemed to be talking about phenomena, things, processes, qualities, or a dimension, a category, and a concept, using the word unproblematically as if it had only one meaning" (Adam, 1990, p.6). Her own survey points to a number of differences:

> it is hard to believe that these theorists have made the same 'phenomenon' central to their work. Between them they associate time with death, ageing, growth, and history, with order, structure, synchronisation, and control. They view time as a sense, a measure, a category, a parameter, and an idea. They define it as an a priori intuition for the conceptual organisation of experience, a social construction with multiple aspects and dimensions, an ordering principle and force for selection and prioritising, the difference between the past and future and its social interpretation, a process by which consciousness is formed, and a tool for coordination, orientation and control. (…) Not only are we faced with an incompatible array of definitions, but we also have to cope with incommensurable ideas about the source of our experience and concept of time. The rhythms of nature or society, information processing, the capacity for memory and expectation, sociality, language, and social synchronisation are all identified as the bases upon which our knowledge of time is built (Adam, 1990, p.15, internal references removed).

[13] And this would be no small restriction: contemporary art, popular culture, and the hard sciences have also been described as given central importance to matters of time at least since that period. At this point, I am incapable of offering a sufficiently systematic overview of these important reflections, as they have remained for the most part outside of the scope of my research.

In sum, despite the increasingly commonsensical inflection of the recurrence to thinking about and through time, it seems that agreements break down as soon as it comes to establish "what, then, is time?". Maybe such locutionary differences shouldn't be overstated; undoubtedly, such lack of unity is expected in face of textual proliferation. On the other hand, as doubts about a common ground increases, some skepticism might start seeping in as to whether we should really be talking about an identifiable topicality—or, more generously, at what level such topicality should be identified. We might sense—with some discomfort—that, some sixteen hundred years later, Augustine's specter still looms large over the shoulder of the late 20th century topicality of time.

In such context, we might do well to follow Elias' question on the aim of continuing to ask questions about time in a scenario in which its meaning is not clear enough to offer a proper delimitation of an object of study and, much less, guidance as a tool for solving meta-theoretical, theoretical, and empirical problems. Here, a shift of perspective might show that there is more to be said about the explicit agreement on the shared centrality of the issue of time. Indeed, according to Adam (1990), a different picture is painted when, instead of looking directly at how these works treat "time"—its meanings, uses, history, nature, ontological status, conceptual field, etc—, we inquire about their *focus on time*: "once we shift our attention from the issue of time itself to the theoretical implications arising from the theorists' focus on time, there emerge common threads" (Adam, 1990, p.15). In other words, once we ask what thinkers turning to time *do*, once we ask "what's the point?"[14], some unifying characteristic starts appearing. In her view, these are: (i) the ever-present influence of philosophers' reflections on time, despite the field in which the issue is taken up; (ii) the generalized call for the rejection of all kinds of dualism; (iii) the unrelenting affirmation of the historicity and cultural dimension of time, especially Western time; (iv) the prevalence of the claim that all time is social time; and (v) the shared belief that "a better understanding of time not only brings to the surface problems and shortcomings in social science analysis, but that it will also improve contemporary social theory" (Adam, 1990, pp.15-16).

[14] I have in mind Hacking's claim that, in thinking about the 1990s proliferation of works on the "social construction" of different things, we should inquire less about the meaning of "social construction" and more about what is done by claiming that a particular dimension of social reality is a "social construction": "don't ask for the meaning, ask what's the point?" (Hacking, 1999, p.5).

I am particularly interested in the status of this last claim, since it works to insert the other threads into a common aim: to improve our conceptual apparatus and social analyses through a better understanding of time. More generally, we might say these reflections are brought together by the common endeavor to improve our understandings of "time" as a way to improve our present understandings and our understandings of the present. In sum, time appears in the social sciences and the humanities both as a theoretical and political problem and as a solution to theoretical and political problems[15].

Hence, in full agreement with Adam's interpretation—and, I believe, with a significant part of the academic doxa—, we might say, as a shorthand, that these different endeavors have in common the injunction to *take time seriously*. In other words, whatever field of knowledge you work in, whichever problem or thematic you are most interested in, to take time seriously—meta-theoretically, conceptually, and empirically—promises to bring about important and most likely unexplored insights. To begin a play on words, the topicality of time can be read as brought together under the agreement that *by solving our time troubles, we can deal with our troubled times*. There is no contending with this assertion.

Accepting such injunction, we might nonetheless wonder how does thinking about time can do so much for us? How can it simultaneously challenge dualistic thinking, reification, and metaphysics, all the while helping us deal with broad issues in social and political theory and practice? In the next section, I take up this question. Starting from a direct identification with the topicality of time in the social sciences and the humanities in the late 20th century and working through at least a part of these discussions and debates, I flesh out the reasons for which we should, indeed, take time seriously. In other words, I want us to locate the different ways in

[15] In this sense, it is worth noting that in face of the above-mentioned cacophony of times, conceptual clarification has been an all-too-common endeavor, thus correcting what (henceforth) appears as a set of (broadly problematic) misunderstandings. An exemplary move in this direction is Hom's extension of Elias' historical sociology of timing to offer a singular theoretical framework through which to interpret and explain every single "time utterance", theoretical or colloquial (Hom, 2013). For moves of this type in more specific fields, see: in social theory, Martins (1974), Friese (1997); on speed culture and time acceleration, May and Thrift (2001) and Sharma (2014b); on the concept of modernity, Osborne (1995; 1996); on the philosophy of time, Wood (2001) and Hoy (2009); on political economy, Osborne (2008; 2015); and for a transdisciplinary take, West-Pavlov (2012). Adam's (1990) own work aims to improve social theory by developing a more precise conceptualization of time that fully realize the mostly failed attempts to move away from dualisms, reifications, and metaphysics. Here, from a similar diagnosis, our works part ways: while I am interested in the conditions and effects of the topicality of time, she endeavors to fine tune it through better theorization.

which the taking up of time can be a legitimate pathway for better knowledge of—and thus better intervention upon—the present, thus simultaneously giving us a sense of the empirical field of debates and, more importantly for me, of its normative stakes. In doing so, I will present three conventional ways of setting up the turn to time and to temporal readings that, I believe, make up for most of the field. I will refer to these as *traditions of time troubles*: narratives through which the issue of time acquires not only centrality, but also urgency in and to our present times.

In perusing through these reasons for which we should take time seriously, I believe we will find that we easily identify with one or more versions of this call, that we indeed feel interpellated by the injunction to take time seriously, that the hailing encounters a predisposition to turn towards it. Nothing less than this identification has led many of us—myself included—down the road of thinking about time. Facing such tendency to assume the reasons for legitimately directing our attention to time, however, I also find reason to pause. Having come maybe too promptly to accept the importance of thinking about and from time affirmed in these traditions, we might also feel invited to give rein to our more skeptical voice, if only to check our grounds. In the second section of this chapter, I take up this invitation in a way that, as far as I can tell, has yet to be systematically explored in relation to the topicality of time.

That I call these regularities "traditions" already foreshadows the shifts of perception I am preparing. Indeed, Hobsbawm famously stated that "'traditions' which appear or claim to be old are often quite recent in origin and sometimes invented" in order to "inculcate certain values and norms of behaviour by repetition" (Hobsbawm, 1983, p.1). Furthermore, Schmidt reminds us that "[m]any of the references to a presumed tradition of thought (…) are really nothing more than retrospective analytical constructs that are elicited for instrumental legitimating purposes" (Schmidt, 1998, pp.31-2), in which case "the individuals and academic practices that have contributed to the development and current identity of the discipline are cast aside for a more epic rendition of the past (Schmidt, 1998, pp.25-6)[16]. Hence, it is often the case that traditions are more important for what

[16] Schmidt calls this an "analytical tradition", in opposition to the "historical tradition", which is "a preconstituted and self-constituted pattern of conventional practice through which ideas are conveyed within a recognizably established and specified discursive framework. A historical

they affirm—in terms of norms, values, and legitimacy—and for what they erase—in terms of current practices and concerns—than for the historical continuities they portend to represent.

However, this is not to say that we should redress these apparently "factitious" traditions in favor of a more genuine one, thus substituting another continuity for the ones presented below, and a more adequate reason to take time seriously for the ones that have thus far interpellated us. Nor do I intend to deny the importance of time by inverting calls for seriousness in favor of a call to not take time seriously—or, in a more provocative formulation, a call to be serious about ignoring time. Instead, my proposition is that we *suspend* the issue of seriousness and its traditions, thus temporarily deactivating the immediacy with which they appear to us in order to open up the question of the specific conditions under which time exists as a matter of serious debate. Suspending this seriousness will involve training our gaze to look to the topicality of time with a sense of irony, a sense of wonder about its suddenness and specificity. Under this light, traditions appear not so much as historical continuities to be affirmed or denied, but as localized practices that help us frame new problems in terms of temporal lenses and tell us in which ways to do this, all the while erasing from view the specificity of how we are called to take time seriously by associating this call to the improvement of knowledge and politics.

In doing this, we engage in the kind of irony intimated by Fabian when he notes that speaking about time always calls for ritual incantations to give us the fortification which is needed to begin: without those rituals, there is no seriousness about time and no tradition within which it can be a legitimate pathway to knowledge. In this sense, and to complete the previous play on words, we might say that, by suspending seriousness and our conventional narratives, we begin to get a sense that it is always under specific conditions—and with intricate political effects—that we come to *interpret our troubled times in terms of time troubles*. In the second section of this chapter, I mobilize Foucault's discussion on eventalization and problematization to propose one way of endeavoring such shift of perspective and develop the implications of doing so for the way in which we think about the relations between knowledge, power, and subjects.

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tradition can entail continuity as well as innovation within a fairly well-defined realm of discourse. Based on these criteria, Marxism is a clear example of a historical tradition (Schmidt, 1998, p.25).

In sum, having started from the indication of an empirical topicality of time in the social sciences and the humanities since the late 20th century, I make two moves in this chapter. First, I engage with this topicality and flesh out the main ways in which we are called to turn to time as a way of improving our meta-theoretical, conceptual, and empirical understandings and, with them, possibly, our social and political world. My aim here is not only for us to share a sense of the empirical proliferation of these debates, but also, and mainly, for us to share a sense of the ways in which we are interpellated to take time seriously, probably identifying ourselves in some of those hailing. Second, I prepare a more skeptical tone towards those narratives, by considering what it means to suspend the immediacy of time troubles and, from there, ask questions about the specificity of practices and concerns that is erased from view. Here, my aim is to cultivate in us a different and for the most part unexplored sense of the topicality of time: a curiosity about the conditions under which it takes place in the late 20th century and about the power dynamics operating through these conditions. For the time being, I wish only to shift our gaze from one type of question, one level of engagement, to another; I wish to get us started in asking vertiginous questions.

2.1. Taking Time Seriously

Characterizations of traditions are never simple: they always involve a dangerous degree of generalization, grouping together things that are different in many respects but the one being asserted as "traditional", and setting apart things that could, under a slightly different light, fit perfectly together. In making such generalizations, it is often more comfortable to rely on explicit references to "tradition"—in those cases, we can at least feel secured in having some support in drawing lines in sand. In the delineation that follows, however, I have mostly worked without such explicit signposts. Put differently, most of the texts and arguments I will engage below don't refer to themselves or to others in terms of a "tradition" of dealing with time. When they do so—as, for instance, Gunnell's reference to the Western tradition of spatializing political time—they rarely situate themselves as part of a tradition. In this sense, we might feel suspicious of whether we are being led to respond to a problem of my own making, that is, whether the traditions of time troubles on which I ground my reading of the injunction to take

time seriously have not been crafted precisely to serve as those grounds and can thus be coined their own kind of retrospective analytical construct. My sense is that though we should keep in mind those suspicions, but that we might nonetheless rely on the very commonsensical dimension of many of the claims below to notice that, even if there is no explicit claim to a tradition, the retrospective construct operates as such.

Hence, despite those difficulties, I argue that we can single out, broadly speaking, three different versions of the *tradition of time troubles* commonly informing understandings of the temporal present: (i) the modernization of time reckoning and disciplining; (ii) the emergence of modern time; and (iii) the opposition of time and space. Each of these traditions affirms, either implicitly or explicitly, a historical trajectory of time in the West, from a point of origin to a contemporary moment of trouble. It is this moment—which can be valued as negative, positive, or indifferent to such valuations—that is said to lead to a renewed attention to the problem and category of time making for the late 20th century topicality in the social sciences and the humanities. In what follows, I discuss each of these traditions and point to some important movements in the literature that have followed the path that it lays forward.

In tracing these traditions, I foreground not so much the specificity of different approaches (an endeavor I take up in Part II, in relation to a much more limited set of texts), but patterns we can identify in the response to the question of the grounds upon which time stands as a pathway for better knowledge and politics in the late 20th century. More specifically, I have explicitly drawn the "lines in sand" in ways that might allow us to identify in these calls for taking time seriously. In other words, my aim is not only to give a sense of the empirical proliferation of debates, nor only to draw conceptually solid traditions, but also, and mainly, to invoke modes of thinking about the present that, I believe, are already familiar to most of us—as academics interested in issues of time, but also, more broadly, as participants in the construction of common senses about the present.

2.1.1. Modernization, time-reckoning, and time-discipline

In the first tradition, we take time to be a core problem because we sense that, in face of the growing role of practices of time-reckoning and time-discipline, it has acquired the pressing force of a social fact increasingly confronting modern society. We might translate this confrontation in two main related forms: on the one hand, time becomes an instance of disciplinary power that imposes time-thrift onto modern life; on the other hand, time becomes a measured resource whose scarcity is constantly accentuated by a culture of speed and acceleration. In this context, Nowotny (1992) argues that the sudden topicality of time in empirical, theoretical, and metatheoretical investigations can be said to converge around time becoming a problem due to its increasing scarcity. In other words, as measuring and organizing time becomes more central, modern society becomes more subject to discipline and scarcity under acceleration. In this context, it is understandable, even expected, that we would turn our attention to time in order to come to terms with—and perhaps find ways to resist—the accumulating power effects of practices of time-reckoning and time-discipline.

The historical trajectory envisioned to lead to the above problem of time is that of the reorganization of Western society through the rise of forms of time-reckoning and time discipline, driven by and leading to social, symbolic, and technological developments. Such developments are usually associated with the slow process of disembedding time from natural markers such as the cycles of days and seasons, making for its growing autonomy as a social fact. Often, this historical trajectory is set in terms of narratives of modernization, urbanization, and industrialization, thus read as the processes in relation to which time becomes increasingly measured and disciplined.

A foremost contribution to this narrative remains Thompson's early essay connecting time reckoning, time-discipline, and the transition to industrial capitalism in England through both material and symbolic-cultural processes. In his words, through "the division of labour; the supervision of labour; fines; bells and clocks; money incentives; preachings and schoolings; the suppression of fairs and sports—new labour habits were formed, and a new time-discipline was imposed" (Thompson, 1967, p.90). This new labor discipline and its associated time-thrift, all of which emerged out of tensioned and disputed processes, were instrumental in the emergence and consolidation of industrial capitalism in England. Furthermore, they had a central role in the ideologies accompanying its expansion, as discourses on

the laziness of the native took the same form of previous claims about the (now conquered) laziness of the undisciplined British worker. Thompson's initial formulation has had a great impact in historical sociology and political economy alike, having since been revised to account for the multiplicity of temporal dynamics within capitalism (Glennie; Thrift, 1996), revisited towards specifying the relations between clock-time and capitalism (Martineau, 2015; Harootunian; Postone, 2012), and expanded to consider colonialism (Cooper, 1992).

With greater emphasis on the sociological impacts of modern time reckoning than to its political economy, other processes have also been investigated as taking part in the transition towards the increasing regulation of time as a social fact. Such is the case of technical developments in lighting, heating, agriculture, and mobility (Giddens, 1991), technological innovations in measurement, communication, transportation, and artistic representation (Kern, 1983); and the invention of the mechanical clock and the concept of the fixed hour (Landes, 1983; Harootunian; Postone, 2012; Stevens, 2016). In different ways, each of these investigations points to the strengthening of time as a social fact that comes to be experienced as an impersonal force imposing itself on society after being disembedded from its natural grounding.

Within this tradition, current problems with time leading to and justifying the proliferation of debates on the topic are mostly related to the creative or dystopic effects of the autonomy of measured time and of acceleration. In this sense, Thompson (1967) already argued that time-thrift would simultaneously create leisure time and surrender it to market-regulation, since time-disciplined subjects would be incapable of enjoying time in other terms. He expected a dialectic to arise around this issue, opening the possibility of society to move beyond the time discipline of industrial capitalism. The two sides of this tension—the production of free time and of its capture through measurement and discipline—have further been explored in debates on and around time. For some, the potentialities for and of free time in a society in which work increasingly occupy a smaller portion of one's life open ways for new forms of social arrangements, what we might call a post-work society (Weeks, 2011) or a society of free time[17]. For others, the transformations of capitalism such as the growth of the entertainment industry and its capacity to

[17] See, for instance, the project "Tempo Livre" [*free time*] (https://tempolivre.org/).

capture free time as part of post-industrial capitalism invite skepticism towards the potentialities of free time (Osborne, 2008). Still others have pointed out how speaking of time discipline calls for a gendered approach, as free time work very differently when read in terms of the sexual division of labor and the distinction between productive and reproductive work (Kristeva, 1981; Elliott, 2008; Weeks, 2011)[18].

In another vein, this trajectory has led to the affirmation of a "culture of speed". The critical inquiry of speed also "fits within an important trajectory of thought that includes histories of capital as it became coterminous with different technologies and their temporal and spatial effects"; similarly to debates about time discipline in capitalism, "[t]hese critical histories describe clocks, trains, telegraphs, and other global metronomes with their attendant temporal dictates of ticks, tocks, nanoseconds, and light-years (Sharma, 2014b, p.5). Following these tracks, commentators have associated the experience of time in late 20th century to that of the late 19th century, describing both in terms of intensified acceleration or compression of time-space and pointing at the unsettling effects on individuals and collectivities that the process of speeding up can have (Kern, 1983; Nowotny, 1992; for an overview, see May & Thrift, 2001). A similar sense of disturbance from a speeding up world has informed claims to the obsolescence of the modern State due to the growing gap between the acceleration of political processes and the time of State and democratic politics (Wolin, 1997; Brown, 1997), as well as to the transformation of the coordinates of international politics (Der Derian 1990; Walker, 1993). Not all assessments of acceleration, however, are negatives. Building on the disarticulating potential of capitalist acceleration as opening spaces not only for domination, but also for resistance, the "accelerationist manifesto" runs against the grain of dystopic readings of the "culture of speed", emphasizing its open potentialities (Williams; Srnicek, 2014). Others have criticized the "received wisdom of time-space compression" for its lack of nuance towards the multiplicity of speeds making up the present, calling for careful analysis of how different technological and symbolic practices coalesce in distinct dimensions of social life

[18] There is a very substantial literature from Marxist political economy I am not approaching directly here, though it relates directly to this tradition of time. This literature involves not only the centrality of categories of time in Marx's theory, but also of the role of Marx in contemporary philosophy of time. I cannot go into this literature at this point, leaving most of it out of this survey and of the dissertation in general.

according to different rhythms and resulting in a substantially variegated temporal landscape (May; Thrift, 2001).

In sum, one way in which the proliferation of debates about time since the late 20th century has been interpreted is in terms of a trajectory of thought in which the increasing discipline and measurement of time produces an imposing social fact to be reckoned with and a culture of speed that calls for responses. These lead, expectedly, to sociological and cultural transformations; to the reorganization of production, consumption, and political economy in general; to crisis of political regimes; and to new forms of subjectivation. Here, our attention to time is needed because, in our days, the constant lack, loss, control, and exteriority of time to social and political subjects is at the center of any discussion of social and political life.

2.1.2. Time after History[19]

In the second tradition, time is a core concern for us due to a generalized sense of demise of our modern understanding of history and, most often, of the conception of time and politics embedded in narratives of progress. Among other things, this demise opens up time to a new set of questions and problems that follow two broad lines. On the one hand, the sense that, after history, a new temporality emerges, posing new limits—and sometimes possibilities—to politics; on the other hand, the sense that modern time was always a problematic set of power dynamics that are now being unveiled, inviting the search for alternatives. In both cases, it is as if, in David Scott's words, "[o]nce self-evidently convergent, time and history (…) now seem to be diverging from each other" so that "*time has suddenly become more discernible*, more conspicuous, more at odds, more palpably in question—*as though the ends of history somehow marked the beginnings of time*" (Scott, 2014, p.12, my emphasis). In other words, as modern history loses ground—either historically or politically—the taking up of time as a central site of problems and of intervention becomes not only topical, but needed and even urgent. It is thus

[19] I have worked through some limits and possibilities of this tradition for thinking historiography and political modernity in my Master's thesis (Chamon, 2012). At the time, I took this rendition of the forms of time as a given (not a specific tradition) and, thus, as a fundamental thread to think about modern politics. During the research, tensions emerged between the historiographical and political implications of this starting point. Looking back, the attempt to solve these tensions were bound to collide with the limits of taking a tradition as a given. In part, this explains the step back I am taking in this dissertation.

expected that we would turn to serious considerations about time, unveiling how it often unknowingly shapes our present possibilities.

At the center of this tradition is the emergence of modernity *as* modern time: "modernity" comes to be associated not only with a break with previous forms of life, but also with a particular late 18th century understanding of time; and "time" acquires characteristics that are particularly modern, in opposition to both premodern and nonmodern temporalities. In this sense, the historical trajectory in terms of which this tradition operates revolves around the reorganization of Western society and of its imagination of itself and the world in terms of the rise and fall of a specifically modern conception of time, most often traced back to the end of the 18th century and alternatively described as historical, future-oriented, linear, progressive, universal, or secular. In this context, the decline of this sense of time leads inevitably to questions about the status of political modernity.

A particularly influential version of this narrative—the more common rendition in theories of history and in many treatises on modern political time—comes from Koselleck's semantics of historical time[20]. According to Koselleck, modernity—*Neuzeit*, new time—is defined in terms of a new experience of time emerging in the late 18th century. Time comes to be characterized by an irreducible gap between past experiences and expectations of the future. While so-called premodern time assumed an overlap of experience and expectation—such as exemplified in the Renaissance's motto *historia magistra vitae* or in depictions of circular and cyclical time—, modernity opens up the future towards being qualitatively different from the past; something *historically* new might now occur out of the sheer force of *history* (Koselleck, 2002; 2004). Closely following Koselleck, Carvounas claims that this "disjunction between the past and future demanded a new, modern conjunction of past, present, and future. The future (…) becomes in the modern age the focal point for a new organizing principle or transcendental anchor" (Carvounas, 2002, p.12). In particular, the future not only

[20] In focusing on Koselleck's depiction I leave out a number of other equally relevant narratives, such as those on secularization (Marramao, 1995; 1997), on Benjamin's category of the "homogeneous and empty time" (Benjamin, 2007), on Foucault's description of the episteme of the modern age as the "historicization of all beings" (Foucault, 2002; see also Bartelson, 1995a). These are all important and would be needed for a fuller account of this tradition. However, as they all tend to meet on the idea that the late 18th century simultaneously transformed conceptions of time, history, and politics, I believe we can get a sense of these grounds for taking time seriously by following only one of them.

replaces the past as a mode of temporal coordination, it also does so by providing a political vision of a better future. Commonly cited together, Kant, Hegel, and Marx appear, in this trajectory, as the "most imaginative and fundamental moments depicting modern attempts to reconcile the modes of time, while simultaneously providing humanity with a new political vision" as they endeavored to provide "humanity with the vision necessary to journey forward into the modern age, visions which include new interpretations of the past, present, and future, and new ways of conjoining them (Carvounas, 2004, xiii; see also Brown, 2001, pp.5-10).

Nothing short of a full reimagination of social and political life is associated with these transformations of our understanding of time. Indeed, politics itself come to be an activity oriented towards the construction of better futures, breaking away from all that is undesired in the past and the present—thus marking all that is "undesirable" as past. This becomes the ground for both individual and collective action, as expressed in the temporalization and future-orientation of concepts such as progress, revolution, and modernity, and the pervasiveness temporal exclusions that accompany the creation of a historical present differentiated from all that is relegated to the past (Koselleck, 2002; 1988; Brown, 2001, Introduction).

From this rise of modern historical time, this tradition invites us to contemplate the effects of its demise. These ends of history are translated in different terms across theoretical approaches and political positions. Nonetheless, they all encompass one version or another of the interpretation of the present in terms of lost utopia, decreasing expectation, or barred futurity, that is, of the demise of a relation between time, history, and politics in terms of the modern concept of progress. Indeed,

> [l]ike its counterparts felt by politicians and the public at large, contemporary academic doubt about the modernist narrative of progress issues from a variety of points on the political spectrum. While some hold that history's long march has come to an end as liberalism has triumphed around the globe, others argue that this march was always a fiction, and still others insist that something called 'postmodernism' heralded the end of progress, totality, and coherence even if history had unfolded progressively up until that point (Brown, 2001, p.8; see also Elliott, 2008).

I refer to this general formulation as the "end of history *problematique*", that is, not a phenomenon but a disposition allowing for an array of questions. On the one hand, we assume that a definite relation between past, present, and future, a specific

modern way of envisioning history has come to an end, been lost or abandoned, or has become indefensible. On the other hand, we recognize that such concept of history is intrinsically related to how we understand politics. The tension, then, is plain: how, in a context of the demise of history, can we sustain political claims? How to contemplate the future of politics and a politics of the future in a time in which "the future" seems lost, impossible, and/or dangerous. I will highlight three versions of this formulation: the transformation of historiography, the loss of the future, and the death of the future[21].

In the first trend of the end of history *problematique*, problems with the understanding of history elaborated over the late 18th century relates to the reformulation of historiography. Though time appears closely related to the agenda of historians and philosophers of history[22], it is by the late the 20th century that discussions on the temporality(ies) of history become central to the field, mainly in reference to the works of Koselleck[23] and Ricoeur (Hunt, 2008). Here, historiographical investigations of the relation between time, history, and progress already signaled the denaturalization of this understanding of historical time (Nisbet, 1980; Domingues, 1996; Rossi, 2000; Hunt, 2008; Ariffin, 2012). However, it was the direct engagement with Koselleck and Foucault that more

[21] I will leave aside the idea that history has come to an end by achieving its course in the final victory of liberalism over its competitors. I do so not out of the irrelevance of this position, but because it bears little impact of the tradition of time troubles I am engaging. The well-known site for this position is the common interpretation of Fukuyama's claim on the "unabashed victory of economic and political liberalism" heralding "the end of history as such: that is, the end point of mankind's ideological evolution and the universalization of Western liberal democracy as the final form of government" (Fukuyama, 1989, pp.1-2). Fukuyama himself bore ambivalent feelings towards this post-historical civilization, seeing in it a lack of struggle for recognition, of daring, imagination, and, ultimately, the end of art and philosophy. In this sense, he comes close to (but never fully does) theorize the problem of *time without history*. Most responses, however, have engaged in a polemic over the victory of "the universal homogenous state as liberal democracy in the political sphere combined with easy access to VCRs and stereos in the economic" (Fukuyama, 1989, p.7), contributing to making the "end of history" an epochal commonplace (Anderson, 1992).

[22] While Peter Burke (2004) offers a good survey of 20th century historians' early investigations of social times in different societies, we might differentiate these studies from the endeavors to single out a temporality proper to history. Here, the early work of Braudel is noteworthy not only in its differentiation of history, sociology, and philosophy in terms of their respective conceptions of time, but also in arguing for the centrality of the multiplicity and interrelation of historical temporalities—the short term or the event, the cyclical or conjunctural, and the *longue durée*—to the historian's task (Braudel, 2009).

[23] Anecdotally, the ubiquitous references to Koselleck became a sort of embarrassed running joke in a 2016 Conference organized by the International Network for Theory of History (INTH) and the Sociedade Brasileira de Teoria e História da Historiografia (SBTHH) titled, in a retrospective irony, after the work of two different thinkers: "The Practical Past: on the advantages and disadvantages of history for life". See also the collection of essays by Bevernage and Lorenz (2013) dealing with Koselleck's legacy and historical time.

consistently challenged both the naturalization of modern history and its analysis through modern historiographical tools—as opposed to building a historiography of history. Here, the association of temporal and spatial difference as a mechanism of historical knowledge—the problem of "historical distance"—became emblematic of attempts to deal with this double critique (Bevernage; Lorenz, 2013; *History & Theory*, 2011). Likewise, Harthog's reflection on different regimes of historicity pointed to multiple ways through which past, present, and future can be organized to produce fields of historical knowledge, modern historiography consisting only one of them, which has been losing its centrality at the end of the 20th century (Harthog, 2013; see also Turin, 2016). Finally, Koselleck's semantics of historical time itself was revisited, pointing to the potential for thinking about modern history in terms of the overlapping of multiple temporalities instead of the more traditional rendition of modern historical time in terms of future-oriented progressive narratives (Jordheim, 2012; see also, Zammito, 2004; Bouton, 2016).

In the second trend, troubles with time come from the sense that the future is not what it used to be, that the progressive expectations we used to harbor as a guide for historical and political consciousness cannot be sustained anymore. An early intellectual history of this trend has been written by Niethammer (1994) as an investigation of the German-French genre of *posthistoire* in postwar-Europe: a widespread mood among the elite around a "fantasy of a meaningless but ever continuing course of events" (Niethammer, 1994, p.144). This mood has been noted as permeating the late 20th century as well, along with its political implications, as a dystopic tone accompanies most of the literature on the end of historical time. Indeed, Koselleck (2004, ch.2; see also 1988; Hadar, 2017) worried that the constant possibility of breakdown of modern categories of future-oriented temporal coordination would lead to an always imminent generalized civil war—a thought that instilled a share fair of conservatism in his response. Following closely Koselleck's construction of modern historical time, Carvounas argues that an analysis of late 20th century trends in cultural, social, and political theory reveals that as "we look upon ideas of progress, upon philosophies of history, and upon future-oriented utopias with a jaundiced eye, we lose that which gave the modern present a sense of direction, a sense of purpose, and a sense of destiny. As a result, our present is becoming directionless, purposeless, and ever more dangerous" (Carvounas, 2002, p.105). His response, however, seems more of the order of the

reconstruction of prospective visions of the future than of Koselleck's conservatism.

From a very different perspective, Lasch also speaks of the diminishing horizon of expectations coming from a "waning sense of historical time" and how this "profound shift in our sense of time has transformed work habits, values, and the definition of success" (Lasch, 1979, p.53). Notably, in a context in which any strong concern for posterity is lost, self-preservation substitutes for self-improvement and individual therapeutics, self-fulfillment, and self-awareness for collective social struggle. This culture of Narcissism "makes the worst features of earlier times—the stupefaction of the masses, the obsessed ad driven lives of the bourgeoisie—seem attractive [to its subjects] by comparison" (Lasch, 1979, p.99). This sense of diminishing expectations was taken up and expanded in different directions as a diagnosis of the present. Arantes (2015) speaks of a dystopic "new time of the world" that substitutes a temporality and politics of permanent crisis and intervention for future-oriented political projects. Likewise, D'Allonnes (2012) argues that the generalization of Crisis as a collective singular and a mode of government threatens modern democracy by undermining its (modern) temporality. From a different framework, Gumbrecht (1996; 2012; 2014; see also Turin, 2016) notes that the diminishing horizon of expectations creates a sense of "broadened present" in which the experience of time is altered and the possibility of learning from history and projecting politics dwindle. Not all readings are dystopic, however. A few interpreters find new political possibilities in this posthistorical world. For instance, David Scott reads the loss of futurity coming from the demise of anti-capitalist and anti-imperialist struggle—what he calls the "catastrophic aftermaths of postsocialist and postcolonial futures" (Scott, 2014, p.2)—as a moment for formulating new ethical-political dispositions in which to respond to the demands of our times.

Nonetheless, most of the hopeful readings of this tradition come not so much from the sense of the loss of progressive narratives, but of the death of progressive narratives—in the same sense that Foucault spoke of the death of Man (Foucault, 2002) and the death of the author (Foucault, 1998). Thus, in the third and last trend, the future is not, and has never been, what it was supposed to be: progressive narratives of history are revealed to have always been a fiction, even if a particularly productive one. Thus, "it is not that this version of history has played itself out, has

taken place, and is now over; rather, it is that the belief in the possibility of such a history ever taking place, regardless of its temporal placement in past, present, or future, is now in permanent crisis" (Butler, 1993b, p.3). Drawing more substantially in the philosophical version of this tradition of time, the death of history has led to many responses.

On the one hand, the loss of grounds upon which to rest a belief in progressive narratives has led to the explicit attempt to find new grounds for it. Here, an important intervention remains Habermas' (1990) reworking of the philosophy of language and action to ground the possibility of a formally universal cosmopolitanism on communicative action. In other words, Habermas find in the death of history the opportunity to construct a discourse of modernity which is neither a giving up on Reason nor its simple recuperation, but its reconstruction in view of a renewed theory of language and rationality (Habermas, 1987; 1990). From a different approach—and, I believe, a more convincing take on both the diagnosis of modern time and the social processes involved—Osborne wonders about the new forms of totalization that become both possible and necessary when "modernity", as a historical category of periodization and unification erodes (Osborne, 1995). This involves not only the recharacterization of modernity from changing geopolitically coordinates (Osborne, 1995), but also the fact that the temporal distinctions of modernity now share the field with claims to 'the contemporary' as a mode of temporal ordering of society seems (Osborne, 2013; 2014).

On the other hand, many interpreters have kept to the project of the philosophy of time and have taken "the failure, the impossibility, of a certain version of progressive history as the very ground for a different set of social relations (…) the basis for a different kind of promise, the promise that never comes due" (Butler, 1993b, p.6). These readings locate in the growing acceptance of the impossibility of the ideals of progressive history the potential for drawing new ethical and political positions in relation to ideals of universalizing history. For some, this death of history is the site of the logical expansion of political possibilities: as the telos of history cannot be traced anymore, some space is opened for reinterpreting emancipation in new terms, now temporary, playful, and open to challenges (Laclau, 1992). For others, it is an opportunity to scavenge the Western archive for alternative conceptions of time emerging in the breaches of progressive

time (Brown, 2001, especially chapter 7; Chambers, 2003; Patton, 1997; Lindroos, 1999; Grosz, 2004).

Of course, the political implications of progressive narratives are not restricted to Western political communities. Indeed, they have been shown to operate as the root of the denial of coevalness to other cultures and societies, that is, to the tendency to locate those who are different as equivalent to the past of Europe, marked by backwardness and a temporality of the "not yet". Here, many reflections on colonialism have relied heavily on reflections on time, most of all in their relentless criticism of narratives of progress and universalizing concepts of history. This has included numerous analyses of the consequences of these modes of being and thinking (Fabian, 1983; Said, 1978; Quijano, 2000; Guha, 2002) and many endeavors to find alternatives in its interstices (Nandy, 1983; Bhabha, 1994; Chakrabarty, 2008b), in the struggles against it (Mignolo, 2012; *Contexto Internacional*, 2016), and beyond it (Mbembe, 2001, ch.1).

In sum, one way in which we have come to easily identify with calls to take time seriously in the late 20th century social sciences and humanities has been in relation to what I have called the "end of history *problematique*", that is, the claim that the modern historical time upon which our understanding of history and politics relied faces troubles. In particular, we sense that our conceptions of the future and of futurity itself has come to one version or another of and end, whether because the future seems no longer available as a political and historical category after the events of the late 20th century, or because we have become all too aware of the violent ends to which modern futures led themselves. In other words, as the modern conception of time that grounds our very understanding of politics faces troubles, nothing less of a generalized political crisis looms near. In this context, we are hard-pressed to engage our temporal assumptions and their intimate connections to history and politics. Put differently, we are quite expectedly called to take time seriously as a condition for a necessary renewal of our troubled times.

2.1.3. The opposition of Time and Space

In the last of these traditions, we are called to take time seriously quite simply because time is a force of unpredictability and unruliness to be reckoned

with. This force is most often assumed, taken as something of an ontological dimension. As long as myths, concepts, states, or structures assured that the world of men was subsumed under all-encompassing unities, the passing of time could be embedded within a known whole. When these unities started to breakdown, human time escaped the grasps of space, thus posing problem: how to reckon with a fleeting, unpredictable, uncontrollable time? This reckoning might take the form of attempts to control it and keep it at bay through spatialization, or it might take the form of endeavors to sustain life, action, and politics in time, escaping its capture in space. In this sense, the late 20th century topicality of time results from emerging troubles with space-time articulations of political and social life, troubles that, according to Hom, recapitulate "a longstanding relationship between human existence and time", the basic idea of which being "that the passage or flow of time brings dissolution, discord, death, and other disturbing experiences to human existence" (Hom, 2013, p.2)[24].

The imagined breakdown underlying the historical trajectory of this tradition might have taken place millennia ago or be as recent as the effect of growing acceleration or the coming obsolescence of the Nation-State. The main inflection point, however, is that a stable relation of time and space breaks down, posing anew the problem of time. In a depiction that goes back as much as possible in history, Hom traces this "most venerable way of speaking about time" (Hom, 2013, p.4) back to Ancient times in the Near East and the separation between the eternal and the temporal, when the "[o]riginal time gods, like the Persian Zurvān or the Zoroastrian Ahura Mazdāh, split in two and their infinite, benevolent halves withdrew to the heavens while their malevolent halves gained dominion over the human or 'sublunar' realm" (Hom, 2013, p.6).

In an iconic formulation of this tradition, Gunnell argues that "[t]he moment that the eternal presence of the primordial time of the myth was lost, a sense of temporal distance intruded into the psyche" (Gunnell, 1968, p.12; see also Gross, 1985, pp.55-6). According to him, political philosophy emerges as the attempt to tame this emerging contingency of human time within a man-made political space:

[24] While many of the themes in this tradition will remind us of versions of the end of history *problematique*—to the point in which versions of them melt into each other—, I insist in keeping them apart for the explicit association of time and space that permeates the present formulation of our troubles with time, and for the naturalization of the force of time which is rarely a part of the previous tradition.

> From the Hebrews and Homer to Heidegger, human being has been distinguished by the condition of temporality, and it was in conjunction with the articulation of the ideas of time and history that the conscious concern with the problem of political order first emerged. Political philosophy as a symbolic form appeared in response to the problem of the existence of society in time and succeeded the myth as a means of providing a theoretical ground for human order and expressing the place of society in the cosmos. (…) [P]olitical vision, from its beginning, has been closely bound up with the impulse to abolish or regenerate history by the construction of an ordered space, a man-made cosmos, organized in accordance with what is most permanent in man (Gunnell, 1968, p.15)

Likewise, Leo Strauss speaks of the crisis of political philosophy in the transition from classical political philosophy—the endeavor to give universal answers to the questions of right, wrong, and order—to the modern age of historicism—the breakdown of all transcendental parameters. In this context, all that can be hoped and worked for is the latter's recovery of some capacity to arrest the ravages of time by elevating political order above the fray of historical contingencies (Strauss, 1989a; 1989b; see also Vatter, 2000, pp.307ff; Gunnell, 1985). If Marramao (1995) looks to a more recent frame, he can still point to the Renaissance as harboring the imaginary of time as a devourer and a force of destruction to be arrested by the artifice of political community. Pocock (1975) names this understanding the "Machiavellian moment", a "moment" relating both to the appearance of Machiavellian thought in historical time and to a problem demarcated in conceptualized time that accompanies Western thought up to modern historical modes of intelligibility. According to Pocock, this is the moment in which "the republic was seen as confronting its own temporal finitude, as attempting to remain morally and politically stable in a stream of irrational events conceived as essentially destructive of all systems of secular stability" (Pocock, 1975, p.viii); or, in a formulation foregrounding the relationship of time and space, the moment in which "the particular contingency or event was viewed as arising in time, and when the particular society was viewed as a structure for absorbing and responding to the challenges posed by such events" (Pocock, 1975, p.9).

In all these cases, the breakdown of spatialized unity—cosmological, philosophical, cultural—calls for new modes of taming the unruliness of time, less we find ourselves faded to live in the vagaries of time. Keeping with the opposition of time and space, however, others will endeavor to take advantage of time against

its capture in space. In this sense, Gross (1981) argues that since time is the stuff of social relation, attempts to spatialize it are to be seen as a problem, not a solution. From a different perspective, Jameson (1984) argues that the postmodern spatialization of time captures the potential for transformation in the historical process, making for a dangerously dystopic present.

Critical engagements with the tradition of spatialization have also marked late 20th century debates in social theory that have endeavored to ground political action in time, against the perceived in both functionalism and structuralism to freeze time under structure, continuity, eternity, and strict dichotomies. This was the case, for instance, of Giddens' theory of structuration (Giddens, 1984), and Bourdieu's theory of practice (Bourdieu, 1977; 1992). These theories conceptualized time as constitutive of social action, thus reformulating social theory on more dynamic grounds and with more creative understandings of agency and practices. This spurted debates about the achievements and limits of these theories, many of which pointing to the unachieved potentials of temporalization in them and the obstacles emerging from spatialized temporal assumptions underlying sociology (Friese, 1997; Adam, 1990; Parker, 2000). With a similar intent, social theory also worked towards social theories *of* time, by 'sociologizing' philosophical insights on time and grounding what they characterized as subjectivist or metaphysical temporal claims in social processes (most notably here is Elias, 1992; see also, working from him, Adam, 1990; Hom, 2013). At about the same type, similar calls were being made to account for the role of temporal assumption in the conceptual tools of anthropology, aiming at taking time more seriously not only as an object of ethnography, but as constituent of its tools (Gell, 1992; Munn, 1992; Birth, 2008). Pushing this call for temporalization further, Butler's concept of performativity invited considerations of agency that both laid bare the insistent metaphysics of social constructivism (Butler, 1993a) and offered a more thorough understanding of the temporal process of subjectivation (Butler, 1993a; 1997). These considerations also highlighted the need to include more specific accounts of time in conceptions of sexual differentiation and gender identification (Butler, 1990; 1993a; Currie, 2010).

In some renditions of this tradition, the late 18th century emergence of modern time we encountered above is read in terms of the transformation of the adversity of time and political community: the former no longer is seen as an

external force threatening the latter, but as a constitutive dimension of it—what came to be called the "historicization of all beings". In this context, the State and the subject come not only to have a history, but to be nothing but the result of their historicity. Foucault (2002) gives a paradigmatic account of this transformation of the relation of time and space in late 18th century—though without the correlate calls for the spatialization of time (see also Bartelson, 1995a). Following with the above tradition of spatialization, Gunnell (1968) argues that as time becomes, from the ever-threatening adversary of political community, its father, a renewal of political philosophy and political vision becomes necessary. Here, the opposition of time and eternity acquires a different turn, translating not so much in the attempt to tame temporal contingency within political space, but in the attempt to tame the historicization of space.

We can see distinct attempts to deal with this disruption of political space in the emergence of the figure of the Nation-State, endeavor to imagine a community that would simultaneously tame space and time (Anderson, 2006). The difficulties of doing so, however, have themselves led to different ways of exploring the time-space disjunction built into the Nation-State to take advantage of the disruptive forces of time, most notably, though not exclusive, in postcolonial contexts (Bhabha, 1994; Shapiro, 2001; Chatterjee, 2004). In another famous expressions of this shift, Arendt criticizes Marxism for substituting the social for the political, and historical processes for responsible and creative political action. Her position has been read both as endeavoring to control the vagaries of time through timeliness and spatialized political community (cf. Hutchings, 2008), and as recovering political action in time from the constraints of historicism and contractualism (cf. Samnotra, 2016), thus alternatively playing into the tradition of the problem of time and challenging its current form.

In a more philosophical vein, Osborne (2008) offers an explicit definition of this tradition, in such historicized form, in terms of a two-centuries-long philosophical debate over the priority of history and time. In his view, this tradition is "inaugurated" by Feuerbach's critique of Hegel, according to which Hegelian philosophy abolishes time, since in totalizing philosophy from the standpoint of its own present "the immobility of reason in the Hegelian philosophy must necessarily result in the immobility of time; for if time still sadly moved along as if nothing had happened, then the Hegelian philosophy would unavoidably forfeit its attribute of

absoluteness" (Feuerbach, 2014, p.34). In a more current vocabulary, we might say that, according to Feuerbach's reading, Hegelian philosophy eternalizes the present, thus disavowing all figures of the past as lost (any past not recovered in the totalization is disavowed) and of the future as open (all of the future exists immanently in the present)—both figures of radical Otherness henceforth associated with time (Osborne, 1993). A similar tension is usually associated with the clash between the Enlightenment and the Romanticist backlash, the common opposition being Herder's cultural relativist critique of Kant' claims to European universality (Koyama, 2016; Hobson, 2012, pp.72-3; Hutchings, 2008, pp.38-9). In rendition of the tradition, the topicality of time can be thought as

> the current form of the 170-year-long contest between *post*-Hegelian and *anti*-Hegelian philosophical problematics (...) over the relative priority of the concepts of history and time. As such, it constitutes the concept of history as a *problem* within the philosophy of time; and it constitutes the concept of time as a *problem* within the philosophy of history. There is a dual and asymmetrical problematization of time and history (Osborne, 2008, p.17).

Osborne (2008) goes on to argue that the philosophy of time is currently predominant in philosophical discourse[25], the permanence of "history" in its agenda being largely due to its unavoidability in discourses "concerned with thinking the globally intersecting temporalities of capital, communicational and political forms" and their pressure "to think the concept of history as the speculative horizon of the unity of their object" (Osborne, 2008, p. 16). Indeed, the late 20th century has been marked, in philosophy, with endeavors to deal with the traces of metaphysics that remain in philosophies of time (Wood, 2001; Grosz, 2004; Hoy, 2004; Watson, 2008). On the one hand, this has led to an attempt to reverse this unbalance in philosophical discourse, such is the case of Osborne's grounding of Heidegger's existential temporalization in a distinctively human sociality (Osborne, 1995) and Lundborg's call for a balance between the philosophy of time and the time-space coordinates of modern politics (Lundborg, 2012, p.115; 2016). On the other hand, as the hold of history as a category for such "speculative horizon" loses strength in

[25] Indeed, a lot of the attention to time in the late 20th century in many fields is derived from the philosophical works of Nietzsche, Bergson, Husserl, Heidegger, Derrida, Lyotard, Levinas, and Deleuze. Thus, it might be the case that philosophy is less marked by a sudden topicality by the late 20th century—or, at least, that this topicality should be approached more carefully in its relation to the one I have been engaging so far.

the process through which "difference has turned against development conceived at the level of world history as a succession of stages" (Osborne, 1995, p.40), we are to expect the topicality of time in non-philosophical discourses as well.

Hence, one way in which we have been called to take time seriously has been in relation to the tension between the unruliness of time and its spatial ordering in political space and categories. The characterization of the vagaries of time in this tradition of time troubles might go as far back as millennia ago, or be as recent as the late modern transformation of the coordinates of political life. In either case, the important point is that the space-time articulation of social and political life is called into question, in search for renewed forms of spatial ordering or for a more sustained capacity to live, act, and do politics in time.

In sum, over the late 20th century, and still in recent years, a growing literature has shared and promoted the agreement that more and better—"serious"—attention to "time" leads not only to improved theorization in the social sciences and the humanities, but also to a more precise diagnosis of the present and, eventually, to better politics. In this sense, we note that Elias' response to the return to Augustine is symptomatic of a much broader tendency: the topicality of time is brought together in the agreement that *by solving our time troubles, we can deal with our troubled times*.

The achievements of these movements cannot be overestimated. They have contributed substantially not only to the development of specific fields of knowledge, but also to overall interpretations of 'the present', whether it is in terms of modernity, coloniality, capitalism, historicism—or as itself a problematic category. The project that led to this dissertation itself began with an identification with some of these problems and concepts and a desire to take part and advance this conversation. As stated above, I would expect the reader to find resonance, both analytically and experientially, with many of these points. And, as the continuing proliferation of debates of this kind and the quality of the work coming from it indicates, there is still much to be done from this starting point[26]. However, as indicated above, the aim of this dissertation is not to directly contribute to the search

[26] The recent publication of a special edition of *Millennium: Journal of International Studies* on the politics of time in International Relations indicates not only how alive the topicality of time remains, but also the powerful and diversified analyses stemming from taking time seriously.

for answers in and through time, but to locate a moment of intensity in this movement of thought and, from there, to "learn to ask questions"—hopefully, vertiginous ones. In the next section, I return to this moment of intensity to draw out a different set of possible questions.

2.2. On Suddenness: Eventalizing Time

The traditions explored in the previous section are brought together by the fact that they institute the grounds upon which calls to take time seriously are authorized as leading to legitimate ways of engaging our troubled times. In doing so, they read the late 20th century topicality of time as a fundamental—and often urgent—response to time troubles. There are more than enough reasons for us to identify with these urgent matters and to take (academic) action towards them. In a sense, then, these traditions contextualize the topicality of time to the point of underplaying its suddenness; to put it differently, they insert this suddenness within a continuity that makes it less of a *sudden* topicality than a needed or even a self-evident one, given our historical and/or conceptual trajectory. This tends to foreclose the kind of questions I want to ask, as it limits the sense of the topicality of time we may share to a very narrow—we might say, serious—one. Thus, in order to open way for the investigation I develop in this dissertation, we must first sidestep our identification with the injunction to take time seriously towards a different—more sudden—sense of the topicality of time. In this section, I explore one possible avenue in this direction.

We can begin to retrain our sensibilities through the exercise of "eventalization" [*événementialisation*][27], the process of "making visible a *singularity* at places where there is a temptation to invoke a historical constant, an immediate anthropological trait, or an obviousness which imposes itself uniformly on all", and, more specifically, a breach "of those self-evidences on which our knowledges, acquiescences and practices rest" (Foucault, 1991, p.76; see also 1997b). To eventalize the topicality of time is to shed a very definite light on it in order to highlight its *suddenness*, thus breaching the self-evidence on which our

[27] For a reading of Foucault's method in terms of the centrality of the concept of the event, see Flynn (2005, ch.3).

turns to time rest. In other words, it means treating it as a singularity: something that cannot be fully contained in known continuities, in one or more instances of self-evidence, in an authorized field of knowledge that we could directly access in search for truth, meaning, and/or legitimacy. When we are called to take time seriously, we are jump started into entering the field of knowledge of time in order to provide solutions to our temporally troubled times. On the contrary, in the eventalization of the late 20th century topicality of time we are called, first, to identify the specificity of the way in which time *suddenly* emerges as a site of proliferating knowledge, as a site of metatheoretical, theoretical, and empirical improvement and, therefore, of potentially better politics.

I find a pathway to this task in a contrast between two modes of critical engagement noted by Foucault: on the one hand, "the form of critique that claims to be a methodical examination in order to reject all possible solutions [to a problem] except for the one valid one"; on the other hand, an engagement that is "*more on the order of 'problematization'*—which is to say, the development of a domain of acts, practices, and thoughts that seem to me to pose problems for politics" (Foucault, 1997a, p.114, my emphasis)[28]. This distinction between the search for *valid solutions* (or formulations) to a problem and the identification of how a particular domain of practices and thoughts becomes a problem that demands certain solutions from politics and scholarship is at the heart of the shift of perspective I endeavor to present here. Indeed, it allows a different engagement with the traditions of time troubles and the correlate calls for seriousness precisely because it refuses to take for granted their claims to legitimacy, instead asking for the conditions under which they become self-evident, even enticing.

To think in terms of problematization is, therefore, to displace the traditional way in which knowledge and power are related. Indeed, Foucault notes the tendency to relate knowledge and power through the question of legitimacy (we might say "valid solutions"): better knowledge establishes more legitimate solutions and illegitimate solutions repress legitimate knowledge. The question then becomes "what false idea has knowledge gotten of itself and what excessive use

[28] In what follows, I rely mainly on Foucault's commentaries on his own work in terms of histories of problematization—a self-definition that appears in some of his later works and interviews. I have found the interpretation of 'problematization' in Bacchi (2012) very useful and similar to my own; while also relying partially on Butler (2002) and Shapiro (2013, ch.1).

has it exposed itself to?", a mode of interrogation that easily leads us to the political question "to what domination is [knowledge] therefore linked?" (Foucault, 1997b, p.59). Instead, by interrogating the simultaneous emergence of knowledge and frameworks of problems and solutions, thinking through problematizations operates "a neutralization concerning the effects of legitimacy and [turns instead to] an elucidation of what makes them at some point acceptable" (Foucault, 1997b, p.51). Foucault moves from general claims to knowledge and power (in the singular) that are usually invoked when speaking of knowledge (*connaissance*) and domination and, instead, look at the specific procedures and effects of knowledge which are acceptable in a specific domain (*savoirs*) and the particular and defined mechanisms of coercion which seems likely to incite behaviors and discourses (*pouvoir*) (Foucault, 1997b, p.51). The question then ceases to be that of identifying legitimate modes of knowing and being towards that of describing the specific articulation of knowledge and power that establishes a problematization. In his words:

> we should abandon a whole tradition that allows us to imagine that knowledge can exist only where the power relations are suspended and that knowledge can develop only outside its injunctions, its demands and its interests. (…) We should admit rather that power produces knowledge (and not simply by encouraging it because it serves power or by applying it because it is useful); that power and knowledge directly imply one another; that there is no power relation without the correlative constitution of a field of knowledge, nor any knowledge that does not presuppose and constitute at the same time power relations. These 'power-knowledge relations' are to be analyzed, therefore, not on the basis of a subject of knowledge who is or is not free in relation to the power system, but, on the contrary, the subject who knows, the objects to be known and the modalities of knowledge must be regarded as so many effects of these fundamental implications of power-knowledge and their historical transformations. In short, it is not the activity of the subject of knowledge that produces a corpus of knowledge, useful or resistant to power, but power-knowledge, the processes and struggles that traverse it and of which it is made up, that determines the forms and possible domains of knowledge (Foucault, 1995, pp.27-8; see also 1997b, pp.52-3).

Through this dislocation Foucault means that we should think about knowledge not in terms of which form is legitimated by its capacity to more properly offer insight into truth and meaning and, therefore, to inform a better (also more legitimate) politics, but in terms of how particular conditions make certain knowledge-claims valid and, in the process, produce, reinforce and rely on modes of coercion.

Let me quickly refer to two examples of displacements of this kind. In *Discipline and Punish*, Foucault (1995) argues that humanization operates as part

of the carceral system by distributing visibilities, calling experts to make punishment humane, and by making for the calls for prison reform that both disguise and take part in the workings of the carceral apparatus. In this sense, humanization is less a meta-narrative of the trajectory of punishment in the West—from the violent *supplice* to the humanized (or humanizing) prison—than one of the discursive strategies bringing together knowledge and power in the carceral complex. A similar move opens *History of Sexuality vol. 1*, where Foucault (1978) argues that repression operates in the apparatus of sexuality through the taboo of sex, which distributes when, how and by whom sex should and shouldn't be talked about and which locates the secret truth of the subject in an elusive and forbidden instance of its sex. Here, again, the repressive hypothesis is displaced from a meta-narrative of the trajectory of sexuality in the West—from its massive repression by the Church, the bourgeoisie, and/or the patriarchy to its liberation in the present—to one discursive strategy articulating knowledge and power in the apparatus of sexuality. In both cases, meta-narratives of historical trajectories—humanization, repressive hypothesis—locate proper knowledge on the side of legitimacy—more humane, freer—, and its repression on the side of power. In both cases, by resituating these narratives from the standpoint of legitimacy to that of validity and acceptability, the question becomes that of the intermeshing of power and knowledge through which punishment and sex appear as specific problems.

Thus, in this perspective, problems are not something to which we relate immediately, they are not self-evident or given; and neither is, therefore, the search for solutions to them. Instead, they both emerge from a set of concrete practices and processes being taken up as problematic for certain constituencies. Foucault refers to this through the concept of problematization, that is, the process that makes possible

> the transformations of the difficulties and obstacles of a practice into a general problem for which one proposes diverse practical solutions. It is problematization that responds to these difficulties, but by doing something quite other than expressing them or manifesting them: in connection with them, it develops the conditions in which possible responses can be given; it defines the elements that will constitute what the different solutions attempt to respond to. This development of a given into a question, this transformation of a group of obstacles and difficulties into problems to which the diverse solutions will attempt to produce a response, this is what constitutes the point of problematization and the specific work of thought. (Foucault, 1997a, p.118; see also Foucault, 1999, "Lecture 2" and "Concluding Remarks").

At first sight, this claim may seem obvious; however, its effects are far-reaching. I present these by highlighting four dimensions from this long quote.

First, according to Foucault, a problematization involves not only setting the conditions for formulating a specific problem, but also, and inseparably, the conditions under which a limited array of (often contradictory) solutions to the problem become possible[29]. This means that since problematizations lead to the simultaneous posing of problems and solutions to a responding field of 'politics', we shouldn't expect anything like politics to fully do away with a problem by encountering the best possible solution to it. Speaking of a madness and mental illness, Foucault argues that: "there is [no] 'politics' that can contain the just and definitive solution. But (…) there are reasons for questioning politics; and politics must answer these questions, but it never answers them completely (Foucault, 1997a, p.114). In sum, problems—and particularly for our purposes, time troubles—do not 'fall from the sky' or 'rise from the ground'; that we return to time troubles, and that we do so in specific terms, has something to do with the way in which we have come to problematize, to make temporal problems out of things. Indeed, there is something of the order of the problematization of time which disposes us to see certain problems—or, to say it differently, to see problems in certain, temporal, ways.

Second, this transformation of obstacles and difficulties into a definite set of problems and solutions takes place through the work of *thought* [*pensée*]. According to Foucault, thought is a specific practice which "allows one to step back from [a] way of acting or reacting, to present it to oneself as an object of thought and to question it as to its meaning, its conditions, and its goals (…) the motion by

[29] This reading might seem too structuralist for our sensibilities and as an interpretation of Foucault. At this point, I can only partially cater to the (shared) need guiding this assessment. While I stand by this interpretation, I agree it is incomplete. Foucault repeatedly argues that to speak of an episteme, an apparatus of power, or a framework of problems and answers is *not* to speak of a structure imposing itself, immutable, from outside. "Change" occurs, even if it often takes place obliquely to the level of generalization in which we describe systems, at the unstable limits of discourses: clashing processes, emerging practices, and discursive encounters: "political practices have transformed not the meaning or the form of the discourse, but the conditions of its emergence, insertion and functioning (…) these transformations in the conditions of existence and functioning of the discourse are neither 'reflected' nor 'translated' nor 'expressed' in the concepts, the methods or the data of medicine: they modify its rules of formation" (Foucault, 1977, p.243). Yet, to say this rarely resolves the questions that emerge when relating unstable limits to system transformation. I return to these questions in the next chapter—though I anticipate that the reader who turned to this note after a spike of discomfort might remain unsatisfied with my take on them—and as a broader implication of this dissertation—at which point I hope we may also share a displacement of our economy of comfort.

which one detaches oneself from it, establishes it as an object, and reflects on it as a problem" (Foucault, 1997a). In this sense, the work of thought is not a representation, a subjective or intersubjective image, or the unraveling of a process, but the constitution of a field of intelligibility in terms of which it is possible to think about practices, their problems and solutions. In this sense, problematization is "the totality of discursive or non-discursive practices that introduces something into the play of true and false and constitutes it as an object for thought (whether in the form of moral reflection, scientific knowledge, political analysis, etc)" (Foucault, 1988, p.257). Put differently, to track a problematization is to track the constitution of a field of knowledge in which a set of practices can be thought, reflected upon, assessed, debated, and judged. Hence, the problematization of time is inseparable from the topicality of reflections on time in the late 20th century. Better said, the problematization *is* that topicality, since it takes place precisely by constituting the field of intelligibility in which time can be taken up by thought—or, in a more familiar vocabulary, can be taken seriously. In this sense, the proliferation of debates on and around time offers less paths for solving time troubles than a framework in which time troubles can be taken up as objects of assessment, reflection, judgement, and solutions.

Third, Foucault argues that the work of thought through which problems emerge in problematization is always of the order of the creative and the singular: "when thought intervenes, it doesn't assume a unique form that is the direct result or the necessary expression of these difficulties; it is an original or specific response (…) to these difficulties, which are defined for it by a situation or a context, and which hold true as a possible question" (Foucault, 1997a, p.117-8). In other words, there is no direct relation between a set of obstacles and the form that a problem takes, no definite continuity can be established, no origin can be secured, no final cause can be traced. The work of thought is always the "taking up" of a set of difficulties in terms that must be identified in their specificity. However, "the fact that an answer is neither a representation nor an effect of a situation does not mean that it answers to nothing, that it is pure dream", it means, instead, that "given a certain situation, you cannot infer that this kind of problematization will follow" (Foucault, 1999, s/n). Hence, "[t]he study of [modes of] problematization (that is, of what is neither an anthropological constant nor a chronological variation) is thus the way to analyze questions of general import in their historically unique form"

(Foucault, 1984, p.49); it is, precisely, a way of side-stepping the opposition of essence and continuity by highlighting the singularity of a historical construct. In this sense, the problematization of time is not reducible to any ontological feature of "time", nor is it the effect of a well-established tradition of reflections on time or of a centuries-old continuity in the development of Western society. This is not to say that the problematization of time emerges out of thin air—or that we take its analysis to be anti-historical—, but it does mean that establishing the singularity of how we problematize is at least as necessary as tracing its history or genealogy—and that it shouldn't be made to follow from an established historical narrative or tradition of thought. The problematization of time emerges out of particular practices and concerns that circumscribes questions to which time is meant to provide answers; these practices—which I will call discourse in the next chapter—are what must be specified. Here, it becomes clear how reading time as a problematization displaces the traditions that naturalize time troubles, thus also eventalizing the topicality of time—highlighting its suddenness alongside the singularity of problematization.

Fourth, since, every problem is a problem *for someone* and any responses can only be judged from specific perspectives, a problematization also sets the conditions under which the constitution of subjectivities take place; the (collective or individual) subjects to which a particular problem refers are effects of problematization. In Foucault's terms: the analysis of problematization do not take "any of those 'wes' whose consensus, whose values, whose traditions constitute the framework for a thought and define the conditions in which it can be validated. (…) [T]he 'we' must not be previous to the question; it can only be the result—and the necessarily temporary result—of the question as it is posed" (Foucault, 1997a, p.114). Hence, the turn to problematization is also a turn from what Foucault calls an 'analytic of truth'—"the question of the conditions under which true knowledge is possible"—to an ontology of ourselves and of the present—"the question: What is our actuality? What is the present field of possible experiences?" (Foucault, 1997c, pp.99-100). To turn from the search from solutions to the problem of time to the analysis of the problematization of temporal assumptions is also to turn from the givenness of the subjects of "our present problems" to the question of how they are established by the very problematization they address, and how the analysis of this problematization can open ways for other subjectivities.

The implication here is that, since problematization always take place in terms of particular subjects and a correlate field of knowledge and politics, the search for proper solutions is itself an effect of the problematization that sets the terms of a problem for politics, scholarship, and subjects. We might therefore be wary of expecting these instances to offer definite solutions to problems that always already emerge alongside them. Taking an example straight from one of Foucault's clearest shift to thinking the prison in terms of a problematization, he argues that one should not "regard the prison, its 'failure' [read 'problem'] and its more or less successful reform [read 'solution'] as direct successive stages. One should think rather of a simultaneous system [read 'problematization'] that historically has been superimposed on the juridical deprivation of liberty", a system that emerges reading problem and solutions, failures and reforms, simultaneously. In this sense, "[t]he carceral system combines in a single figure (…) programmes for correcting delinquents and mechanisms that reinforce delinquency. Is not the supposed failure part of the functioning of the prison?" (Foucault, 1995, p.271).

In sum, the analysis of problematization involves the shift from the immediacy of problems and their comfortable insertion within received continuities towards the analysis of how problems, solutions, subjects, and judgements emerge simultaneously when a group of practices is suddenly taken up as an object of thought and intervention in the terms of an emerging body of knowledge and a set of practices of power that cannot be reduced to historically and logically existing continuities.

Interrogations of this kind have been raised in relation to the different traditions of time troubles presented above. More specifically, instead of being affirmed or negated, it has been shown that, as interpretative devices, they operate, producing power effects, organizing and governing fields of knowledge, politics, and subjectivities, all the while enforcing their self-evidence under narratives of continuity. When read in these terms, they appear less as general empirical narratives or conceptual analysis and more as localized strategies in a discursive economy.

At the more general level, West-Pavlov (2012) argues that the commonsensical reference to the (un)knowability of time—the Augustinian doxa according to which time is "all-pervasive, yet elusive (…) eminently common-sensical and highly abstract" (West-Pavlov, 2012, pp.4-5)—has worked to keep one

version of time self-evident and, therefore, immune to critique. Indeed, to West-Pavlov, the enigma of time is a constructed illusion: the "paradoxical mixture of not-needing-to-be-discussed and not-being-able-to-be-discussed constitutes a double subterfuge which is one of the most effective conspiracies of modernity (…) leav[ing] a particular version of time intact and immune to critical scrutiny" (West-Pavlov, 2012, p.5). By defining time as enigmatic and mysterious, temporal problems are naturalized, becoming an intrinsic part of "our" life, not the effect of a problematization. In this sense, the enigma of time appears as a technique that sustains dominant versions of time in place, notably erasing what he takes to be the plurality of temporality making for contemporary global practices.

In this sense, Sharma (2014b) argues that the discourse of speed that accepts that 'we' increasingly live in a 24/7 sped-up world that disorients individual and collective subjects erases the power effects of time differentials—how the production of time differences work as a practice of power—by casting "all individuals as extremely vulnerable" and thus "preparing more and more sites for the institutions of modern power to intervene in bodies in increasingly invasive and inequitable ways (…) [through the shared] expectation that one must recalibrate" (Sharma, 2014b, p.18; see also 2014a; 2013). In this context, "the work of the critical Left is not to confirm this world and simply flip it on its head, merely exposing it as corporate, capitalistic, dehumanizing, and antidemocratic. Instead, the goal of critical thought is to rescue the politics of time from domination by structures of power" (Sharma, 2014b, p.25). Of course, the problem here is not to claim that there are empirical instances of acceleration, nor that they can play into the hands of 'corporate, capitalistic, dehumanizing, and antidemocratic' powers. However, as a cypher for the present, "speed" becomes a power practice that hides its effects under a continuous narrative.

Something similar takes place around narratives highlighting the growing imposition of time as a measured and disciplined social fact more than speed and acceleration. Here too narratives of modernization and industrialization often rely on a unified and repressive conception of power that erases the singular struggles that emerge as time reckoning and time discipline sets conditions under which power and knowledge operate—struggles such as those around how time reckoning operates, in what terms, through what technologies, and how it comes to be embodied by different subjects (on such perspectives, see Hom, 2010; Foucault,

2001c, pp.80ff; 1995). Thompson is again emblematic here for expressing the tension between both perspectives: on the one hand, he points to the emergence of fields of struggles around emerging practices of time-reckoning and time discipline, struggles that situate subjects in a variety of possible positions; on the other hand, he reads this emergence into the historical trajectory of the dialectics of British industrialization and the contradictions of capitalism (Thompson, 1967, p.86). From a different perspective, Chakrabarty (1992) reminds us that the association of the present with the intensification of processes such as acceleration and capitalist temporal regimes also turns modernity into a cypher for Europe and North America, effectively excluding the Third World from the realm of the present.

In relation to a different tradition of time troubles, we can read both Davis (2008) and Fasolt (2004) as laying bare the political implications of the practice of periodization taken for granted in different narratives on the rise and fall of modern time. Speaking of the tradition of historical time, Davis argues that "the germane issue is not empirical correctness or error, but the elision between a theory of history and the historical change it purports to examine" (Davis, 2008, p.87); more specifically, "the problem that engages Koselleck as well as his predecessors and successors on this topic is not at all empirical, despite frequent recourse to empirical evidence. It is a philosophical struggle concerning the radical newness—or the possibility of the radical newness—of *Neuzeit*" (Davis, 2008, p.94). This struggle is, ultimately, the conceptual and political struggle over periodization. Davis argues that periodization "does not refer to a mere back-description that divides history into segments, but *to a fundamental political technique*—a way to moderate, divide, and regulate—always rendering its services now. In an important sense, we cannot periodize the past" (Davis, 2008, p.5, my emphasis). In particular, this political technique has been mobilized in "mid-twentieth-century efforts to buttress a divide between modern historical consciousness and a theologically entrapped Middle Ages incapable of history, and to disavow the intellectual basis of its own thinking about history, temporality, and periodization" (Davis, 2008, p.15). This intellectual basis is the conflict over sovereignty and the correlate productions of the present as modern, capitalist, and secular, in hierarchical opposition to the medieval, feudal, and religious. In this sense, Fasolt (2004) reminds us that as a discursive practice that is always erased as such under the guise of a historical empirical process, periodization constitutes subjects as unburden from the delimitation of the past and

thus “free and independent agents with the ability to shape their fate, the obligation to act on that ability, and responsibility for the consequences” (Fasolt, 2004, p.xvi; see also Fasolt, 2005); society as homogeneous by drawing “an imaginary line between the present and the past in order to avoid confronting disagreements we have with ourselves *about* our agreement in a shared form of life” (Fasolt, 2013, p.186, italics in the original); and the State as the ground for modern politics: “[i]f history is the form in which we contemplate a past that is immutably divided from the present, then citizenship, sovereignty, and the state are the categories by which we declare our freedom to change the present into the form that we desire for the future” (Fasolt, 2004, p.7). In this sense, the break in time “is essential to the integrity of the modern world. Its nature is political, not historical” (Fasolt, 2004, p.227). Finally, Davis also argues that this production of the modern world in opposition to the medieval one emerges alongside the production of the “colonial other”: “[t]he construction of a ‘medieval’ period characterized by irrational superstitions was fully involved with the identification of colonial subjects as irrational and superstitious” (Davis, 2008, p.5; see also Ganim, 2000). In sum, these studies have shown that the periodization grounding narratives of present time troubles should be taken less as empirical descriptions of the past—and the present—than as discursive practices that work towards producing sovereign subjects, societies, and States by excluding from the realm of modern existence different modes of being and thinking, attributing them to the past and/or to the colonial other (and its heirs).

Butler (1993b) offers a similar Foucauldian reading of the more ontological version of this tradition, according to which the breakdown of modern time leads to the valuation of the unrealizability of totalization as an opening to new political possibilities. In her view, however, the result of the unrealizability of an ideal can “just as well be (a) the degradation of the ideal, (b) the proliferation of other ideals, (c) the closing of the gap between the ideal and what is realizable, (d) permanent disappointment, disillusionment, rancor, and doubtless numerous other possibilities” (Butler, 1993b, p.7). The point, of course, is not to empirically affirm or negate the possibility constructing this tradition, but to argue that problems emerge as this claim acquires a particular status, associated to the affirmation of a logical relation. Indeed, Butler points out that logical relations themselves work by abstracting the role of sedimented social practices—the “purely logical” is, after all,

that which is neither historical, social, nor constructed. However, "[t]o exempt the sphere of logical relations not only from social practice but, more importantly from social power is to ratify the social power of the logical analysis and to substitute what can be derived logically for what can be produced historically" (Butler, 1993b, p.10). And what is this social power? Following Nietzsche, Butler argues that "the fabrication of unattainable ideals retroactively constitutes the subject as a necessarily failed striving (…) and then valorizes and romanticizes that self-defeat as its own constitutive necessity" (Butler, 1993b, p.8; cf. Nietzsche, 2008). In doing so, we might expect that such discursive practice could "not only limits the sense of power or efficacy but sanctifies those limits as well", thus posing the question of "how the very production of the limitless possibilities paradoxically paralyzes the political will" (Butler, 1993b, p.10). In this sense, claims to the opening up of possibilities in the aftermath of history appear less as a diagnosis of the democratic potential of the present to be explored by those who can relate properly to it, and more as a discursive practice that produces and naturalizes subjects with strong limits to their political will by affirming the infinite potential of those very subjects facing the opening up of new possibilities.

Elliott (2008) brings together both trends of this tradition by arguing that arguments about troubles coming from the demise of modern time and arguments about expectations coming from the loss of credibility of modern time share an interpretative tendency to associate the endpoint of a historical narrative with the realization of its goal in time: while the former laments the uniformity of having reached that goal or the newfound impossibility of realizing it, the latter doesn't dispute the association but, instead, foregrounds its dangers. In doing so, however, both diagnosis of the experience of politics in the absence of teleology operate to situate subjects in "static time", an "experience of time as devoid of significant change", "the sense of dis-ease that accompanies time when it is perceived to become divorced from significant change" (Elliott, 2008, p.3; p.169, en.3). In other words, as a discursive practice, "such political forms will appear to place us on a metanarrative path in which our own drive to produce freedom appears eventually and inexorably to render us unfree, trapped in a homogeneous world at odds with both change and human agency (Elliott, 2008, p.33). There is, of course, no necessity to this operation and ensuing sense of static time and loss agency; however, "to the extent that political forms equate the distance of freedom with a

temporal remove from a satisfaction that is also a narrative endpoint, they become vulnerable to interpolation in [it]" (Elliott, 2008, p. 33, emphasis in the original).

Hence, narratives naturalizing the inscrutability of time, narratives of acceleration making for the problems of a "culture of speed"; narratives of industrialization, modernization, or urbanization making for an increasingly imposing time; narratives of modern time making for themes of the end of history and the spatialization of time; and narratives on logical possibilities making for an open futurity have all been displaced from their role as meta-narratives of the trajectory of time in the West and relocated as discursive strategies articulating knowledge and power to produce effects in society. They reveal traditions of time troubles to be discursive practices operating within an economy of practices of knowledge and coercion and producing particular effects—parts of which relate to reconducting the topicality of time to grounds of authoritative knowledge production, thus erasing its singularity. In this sense, they are similar to the work I propose in this dissertation. I diverge from them mainly in focus: I am more interested in the conditions of existence of the late 20th century topicality of time than in practices such as time reckoning, time discipline, time breaking, and time opening. In other words, instead of asking about the articulations of power-knowledge setting the conditions for a culture of speed, the imposition of controlled time, the periodization of modernity, or the logical opening of future possibilities, I investigate the conditions—and the associated power effects—of the topicality of time: what does it take for us to speak about time in the way we do, to invoke time as a critical category in the way we do, and with the limits and possibilities we impose on ourselves when we do so?[30] Anticipating the vocabulary I will unravel

[30] I am certainly of the mind that these projects are related in different ways and may benefit from each other. I know that this dissertation does. It is worth noting, however, that to read the topicality of time in terms of a problematization is not to make an argument that is in some sense broader, more general, or encompasses the above, "more partial", studies. Instead, it is to tackle a different set of problems, thus a different problematization, with different conditions of existence and power effects. Of course, this doesn't mean that no relation can be established between them—as Foucault has taught us, discourses cross, build on each other, ignore each other, all in very unexpected and organized ways. But it is to say that these studies don't relate as Russian dolls, from more specific to more general. To ask what reducing the present to acceleration does is different than to ask what reading the present in terms of time troubles does—even though acceleration can be read as a time trouble; and even though time troubles can be read in terms of acceleration. We cannot surmise one from the other. But we can find sustenance to suspend traditions that erase problematization in the late 20th century topicality of time by showing how those traditions take part in the power-knowledge nexus of other problematization.

in the next chapter, we might say that, while they pose question to a variety of discourses *on* time, I investigate a discourse *of* time.

In this sense, however, I also hold a partially ambivalent reaction to the endeavors above. Indeed, though they reveal the intermeshing of knowledge and power in particular traditions of time troubles, they also keep to the task of rethinking the present in (different) terms of time. Indeed, West-Pavlov proposes the pluralization of temporalities as the way out of the illusions of modernity; Sharma proposes "power-chronography" as a tool for mapping and challenging the power effect of time differentials; Hom focuses on time as a core power practice of contemporary world politics; Davis and Fasolt associate the problem of sovereignty to the production of temporal boundaries; Butler turns to local, more realizable, futurities; and Elliott proposes alternative modes of narrative temporalization. This is, of course, correct on their part: to point to a discursive practice does not mean to throw it away—an impossible task in any case—, but to rework its operation by engaging differently with and through it. Nonetheless, as time looms close, I read their work with two eyes: one for the potential of working with time but against its power effects, the other for the operation of the recuperation of the topicality of time.

From this focus on the topicality of time, we might turn to one last critical engagement with traditions of time troubles. Following Walker's interpretation of the tradition of political realism, we might read them as the "replay of a venerable theme (…) of reified metatheoretical controversies" (Walker, 1993, p.118) that constitute Western thought in terms of great dualities. The iterations of this venerable tradition are known to us; to name a handful, they interpret Western thought in terms of the duality, the tension, the simultaneous holding together of time and eternity, time and space, history and structure, time and history, histories and History, Hellas and Judea, Machiavelli and Hobbes, Aristotle and Plato (or sophistry and Plato), City of Man and City of God, Romanticism and Enlightenment, difference and identity, pluralism and universalism, change and stasis, flux and stability, or contingency and necessity. Here, more nuanced readings of Kant, Hegel, and Marx tend to argue that the tensions above can be read as taking place within their own work (Hutchings, 2008, p.49-52)[31]. In the tradition of time

[31] On this particular ambiguity played out in these three classical references in this tradition see, on Kant, Hutchings (2011), Walker (2009), Bartelson (1995b); on Hegel, Blaney and Inayatullah (2010,

we are looking at here, these oppositions tend to be depicted in terms of the tension between a universalizing singular time and a pluralizing multiplicity of times (Koyama, 2016; Hutchings, 2008; Chakrabarty 2008a). According to Walker, "[t]his momentous formulation of a radical opposition (…) continues to haunt contemporary social and political theory in its search for new horizons" (Walker, 1993, p.114). From the viewpoint of the inexorable duality of these concepts, the formulation of any one of them as the ground for our problems appears as a discursive strategy, a politically effective attempt to erase one pole in favor of the other. In this context, it becomes difficult to take any of the above traditions of time troubles as historical trajectories establishing unproblematic grounds for taking time seriously. In Walker's terms, "[w]ithin a discourse that pits universalism against pluralism, structure against history, identity against difference, the counter assertion of one against the other makes considerable sense. The key mystery remains why this discourse is itself treated as the great unchanging given" (Walker, 1993, p.123).

This is a particularly useful critical reading for our purposes, as it invites a reading of traditions of time troubles in general in terms of discursive practices. In this sense, we might say that it engages not a specific interpretation of our temporally troubled times, but the problematization of time itself. However, in doing so, it also subsumes "time troubles" into the widest possible tradition, erasing the singularity of the late 20th century topicality of time, turning it into that same "replay of a venerable theme (…) of reified metatheoretical controversies". Indeed, to highlight the complexity of the Western tradition in its interplay of opposites—instead of the dull affirmation of one value—is both valuable in what it shows and dangerous in what it always already subsumes. Hence, though it invites a reconsideration of the grounds of our very seriousness about time, indicating that the interpellation might work much more as a discursive practice than as a self-evident call for legitimate knowledge and politics, to bring to light the problematization around the suddenness of the late 20th century topicality of time, it must also be suspended.

In this sense, as I argued above, I read the late 20th century topicality of time as being united by the common attitude of turning to time in order to formulate

ch.5), Hutchings (1999, pp.98-110); and on Marx, Chakrabarty (2008b, ch.2), Blaney and Inayatullah (2010, ch.6), Rao (2016).

better solutions to present problems. In this sense, it operates according to Foucault's first critical attitude. Whether through conceptual, linguistic, or historical analysis—and independent of their epistemological dispositions—it searches for *valid* temporal perspectives and temporal conceptualizations to deal with the temporal problems making for our present. It starts from an agreed upon problem with time and excludes invalid temporal perspectives and concepts in search for the valid one. Instead, I would try to redirect our gaze and our sense of the topicality of time by claiming that it is united by a common problematization: it is not so much that time is a solution to problems, but that obstacles and difficulties are taken up as temporal problems to which temporal answers can be given. Indeed, this problematization responds to difficulties by constituting time into an object of thought that exists in the play of true and false, better and worst knowledge, progressive and dangerous approaches, etc. We can say that *these reflections read "troubled times" in terms of "time troubles"*—and, therefore, that they are united in the sense that by dealing with such troubles, we can unravel ways of dealing with our times.

2.3. Concluding remarks

In this chapter, I have endeavored to invite in us a shift of perception towards what I have called the proliferation of debates around time in the late 20th century social sciences and humanities. From the start, let me restate that my aim has not been to do away with what I have called the topicality of time: there is no denying the important work that has been done and continues to be done by posing temporal questions to our present, both theoretically, conceptually, and empirically. In going through but a part of these endeavors in organizing the "traditions of time troubles" above, it becomes clear that calls to take time seriously have been effective in revealing and challenging the regimes of power that operate under the explicit or implicit guise of time in our present. Whether the site of contention is the struggle against increasingly regulated regimes of time keeping; the troubles and possibilities of the speeding-up of social and political processes; the tensions over the alleged rise and fall of modern conceptions of time; or the dangers and hopes in the interplay of time and space, these studies have been important ways of engaging with contemporary social, political, and conceptual problems. However—and I

would ask us to take this not as faultfinding but as an opening to unexplored directions—they often have done so in the spirit of vindication, henceforth leading themselves to side with legitimacy against domination in ways that make them susceptible to erase the articulations of power and knowledge that make for their own conditions of validity. As calls to take time seriously expand, we might be increasingly curious about the effects that are established through those conditions of validity. I have proposed that one way of promoting this change of light is to suspend—not deny or criticize—the claim to legitimacy of the different ways in which dealing with time troubles appear as a valid way of dealing with our troubled times.

Indeed, while I agree that it cannot be said that there is a common conceptualization, representation, or mobilization throughout the late 20th century topicality of time, I believe it has come to appear reasonable to start from the diagnosis of a problematization of time, of a topicality at the level of the work of thought. If the analysis of problematization "tries to see how the different solutions to a problem have been constructed; but also how these different solutions result from a specific form of problematization" (Foucault, 1997a, pp.118-9), then to study late 20th century sudden topicality of time through the concept of problematization is not to search for better ways of dealing with time troubles in order to deal with our troubled times, but to grasp the power-knowledge nexus through which objects, subjects, and knowledge came to be articulated in the process of constituting troubled times in terms of time troubles. Hence, instead of entering the field of knowledge to improve it, we stop at the threshold, the limits, and we question the conditions under which that field exists and claims authority and legitimacy as a site of knowledge about the present (Foucault, 1981; 1997b). In doing so, we also avoid reading the topicality of time as the necessary response to a set of obstacles or the replay of a venerable tradition, sitting comfortably within pre-established historical continuities as nothing more than a variation upon a theme to be located in one version or another of a canon, of conventional narratives. Instead, we make the topicality itself into a theme while exploring its complexities as a network of practices; only then might we feel called to search for the series in which it is an event. We might say, in other words, that the topicality of time is not a response to a present we can identify in conventional depictions of our troubled times; the *sudden* topicality of time is the irreducible present from which we must

start. Hence, to talk of a problematization of time means to investigate the conditions under which time becomes a way of giving form to a set of difficulties in ways that are socially and historically contingent, though politically consequential.

Finally, to return to the more evocative vocabulary with which we started, we might say that Fabian (I would add, unwittingly) invites the treatment of the topicality of time as problematization. His ironic tone foregrounds that there is no talk of problems with time—much less the proliferation of such talk—without a ritual incantation granting fortification. The articulation of power and knowledge through which troubled times come to be read as time troubles are just such needed fortification. If philosophers—and, as we have seen, many others—keep returning to them, we might want to take up the task of deciphering its magic, of understanding these conditions of existence and validity. To do so, in the next chapter, I explore the concept of "discourse" as a way of making sense of what I have been referring to, without too much specificity, the conditions of existence of the sudden topicality of time.

3. "Let's suppose that [time] does not exist"[32]: the discourse of time

> "The time of the philosophers does not exist" (Einstein, to Bergson)
>
> [T]he history of a concept is not wholly and entirely that of its progressive refinement, (…) but that of its various fields of constitution and validity, that of its successive rules of use (Foucault, 2013, p.5).
>
> Criticism does not begin until the reader has overcome this attitude [of faultfinding] and has submitted to the discipline of following the author's thought and reconstructing in himself the point of view from which it proceeds (Collingwood, 1933, p.218-9).

Assuming the previous chapter went well, we come out of it sharing a different sense of the proliferation of time in late 20th century than the one we started with. Our curiosity might have been enticed towards the "needed fortification" through which we read troubled times in terms of time troubles, the power-knowledge nexus through which that problematization takes place. In the present chapter, I propose we pick up where we left off and hone this curiosity with tools to pursue it. Hence, from the sharpening of our ironic disposition in the trail of Fabian's, we move to the training of our forms, that is, to the working through of a particular way of making sense of these metaphorical ritual incantations, or what we might now call the conditions of existence that have permeated our change of light in relation to time.

On several occasions commenting on his method, Foucault (2007a; 2008; 1998; see also Harcourt, 2008) states that his works start from the assumption that a universal doesn't exist. As an unquestioned given, such universal can work as a fixed ground upon and around which to unify and organize a variety of different practices into intelligible entities. Hence, for instance, "sex" works to unify and organize pleasures, fantasies, desires, bodies, visibilities, psychoanalysis, and medical procedures under what appears as a single object and instance of the subject's intimacy—and, ultimately, truth (Foucault, 1978). However, according to

[32] I adapt this title from the aphorism through which Foucault explained, in a course at the Collège de France, the core rule of method guiding his works since his study of madness (Foucault, 2008, p.3).

Foucault "we must not imagine that the world turns towards us a legible face which we would have only to decipher; the world is not the accomplice of our knowledge; there is no prediscursive providence which disposes the world in our favor" (Foucault, 1981, p.67). Hence, if instead of assuming that the world is at our disposal for investigation, we assume that such universal doesn't exist, the question emerges as to what kind of analysis can be made of these practices, now both dispersed and outside a domain of intelligibility. In this sense, commenting on his study on madness, Foucault notes: "[i]f we suppose that it [madness] does not exist, then what can history make of these different events and practices which are apparently organized around something that is supposed to be madness?" (Foucault, 2008, p.3). In one of his plays on words which I find particularly illustrative, he states that "for phenomenology, madness exists, but is not a thing, whereas one has to say on the contrary that madness does not exist, but that it is not therefore nothing" (Foucault, 2007a, p.164, quoted in translator's note ‡).

In this sense, we might think of discourse as defining "a limited space of communication" in which participants "talk about 'the same thing', by placing themselves at 'the same level' or at 'the same distance', by deploying 'the same conceptual field', by opposing one another on 'the same field of battle'" (Foucault, 2013, p.142). Or, to turn to a previous formulation, discourse is the "table", the site in which different elements can emerge establishing relations to one another (Foucault, 2002). Discourse operates by organizing fields within which different engagements can become of the order of meaningful debate, of the order of truth and falsity. Within such "regimes of truth", "things" can become objects of knowledge, amenable to be judged true or false, can be, in Foucault's words, "in the true"—or not even that (Foucault, 1981).

Indeed, in establishing fields of possible truth, discourse also excludes practices, objects, positions, oeuvres, or subjects from such intelligibility. At the limit of discourses, there is always that "constitutive outside" whose unintelligibility is the condition of intelligibility of all that is "in the true". Indeed, Foucault acknowledges that "[t]here may in fact be—and probably always are—in [discourses], exclusions, limits, or gaps that divide up their referential, validate only one series of modalities, enclose groups of co-existence, and prevent certain forms of use" (Foucault, 2013, p.124). This much is inevitable. Discourse is always, simultaneously, a field of possibilities and of exclusions, a space marked by the

gaps constituting it, "a violence which we do to things" (Foucault, 1981, p.67). In this sense, each such investigation into a universal "inevitably disturbs a much larger nest of beliefs (...) [and] opens out well beyond its initial question to consider the imbrications in modernity of power, subject formation, conscience, guilt, confession, and more" (Brown, 2001, pp.96-7). Starting from a specific universal attached to present modes of self-understanding—for instance, as more humane in punishments or as sexually liberated—Foucault goes on to interrogate larger modes of organizing society. In his own words, thus, the question "is to see how men govern (themselves and others) by the production of truth (…) the establishment of [discursive] domains in which the practice of true and false can be made at once ordered and pertinent" (Foucault, 1991, p.79).

I believe we can read these two sets of questions—on dispersed practices and modes of government—as accompanying most of Foucault's work, despite the by now well-known differences between the answers he provided to them over the years[33]. Traversing them is the problem of making sense of practices in their dispersion and singularity, without giving up on the description and analysis of an ordered and ordering field established through them. In this chapter, I turn to a reading of such answers that focuses on the autonomy of the order of "discourse", mostly how it was articulated by Foucault in the late 1960s and early 1970s.

Following this line of inquiry, we might assume that "time" doesn't exist—which doesn't mean that it is nothing, but that it must be made sense of differently. In this context, the question emerges as to how to make sense of the "limited space of communication" in which the late 20th century debates relying on time as an object, theme, or concept through which to make diagnoses and solve issues acquire intelligibility? In order to address this question, in this dissertation, I propose to interrogate time in terms of discourse, to think in terms of a *discourse of time*. Furthermore, by approaching the "putting into discourse" of time in terms of its specific practices and their concrete political effects, we might inquire how men govern themselves and others through a discourse of time, that is, a domain in which

[33] Due to the limitations and objectives of this work, I will not trace what we can make of these differences and of their movement in Foucault's reflections. For some such readings starting from different entry points into his work, see Dreyfus and Rabinow (1983); Burchell *et al* (1991); Han (2002); Flynn (2005); Bonditti (2012); Bonditti *et al* (2015).

the proper understanding and usage of time can be made into something at once ordered and pertinent.

This narrow focus on a particular interpretation of discourse undoubtedly downplays a lot of Foucault's reflections, including important and difficult concepts such as "archaeology", "genealogy", and "dispositif" (which will mostly remain implicit below), as well as many of his subsequent revisions and shifts[34]. We might feel suspicious about the coherence or legitimacy of such crude selection. Nonetheless, I would ask us to (more generously) read this as a response to Foucault's (2001a; 2001b) own call to use his work as a "toolbox" from which to take concepts, ideas, and analysis as useful tools to dismantle different systems of power, according to specific needs.

In this sense, the reading of discourse I propose through these texts is particularly useful for the dismantling ahead of us. In part, this is so because it offers one way of thinking about the conditions under which we problematize time that doesn't rely on preestablished continuities and unities. However, it is also due to the way in which "discourse" is itself set up in relation to questions of time. Indeed, in the Introduction to Part One, I warned us that a certain *de*problematization of the temporal assumptions of this dissertation would be needed in order to get the work started, less we get too quickly enmeshed in exactly the kind of circuits of self-reflection I aim to investigate. The possibly uncanny mixture of apparent structuralism and calls for singularities in the previous chapter might have raised the first alarms. These will continue below.

Indeed, in the late 1960s, having produced a series of analyses through the so-called archaeological method, Foucault was hard pressed to reflect on the methodological delimitations he had been following, notably in order to clarify their relation to historicism, on the one hand, and to structuralism, on the other. Questions abounded, particularly in relation to *The Order of Things* (Foucault, 2002), due at least in part to interpretations that read the book as overly structuralist in its depiction of episteme and dangerously relativist in its commitment to radical discontinuity, both elements which risked to "remove all basis for a progressive political intervention" (Foucault, 1972, p.225). In engaging these questions,

[34] Forced to recur to one of these terms, I would more comfortably locate the present analysis in terms of an archaeology, defined as "the general theme of a description that questions the already-said at the level of its existence" (Foucault, 2013, p.148).

Foucault always starts from the steadfast refusal of approaches that would "persistently [transform] time into metaphors through the images of life or the models of movement" (Foucault, 1972, p.240; see also 2013, Introduction). In this sense, in his two more sustained methodological engagement of this period—*The Archaeology of Knowledge* and *The Order of Discourse*—he poses the issue of discourse in explicitly temporal terms: discourse is, at least in part, a way of countering the temporality of the history of consciousness, accounting for the relation between multiple temporalities, and specifying the specific modes (plural) of temporality of discourse.

Hence, at first sight, to ask us to deproblematize time as we engage with a discussion of discourse might seem too disingenuous to pass by unattended. My sense, however, is that we might use this in our favor, in particular because I take the issue of time to be an open question in this formulation of discourse. By this I mean that Foucault struggles with the question of the relation between discourse and temporality, repeatedly situating discursive formations obliquely in relation to temporal paradoxes, but ultimately unable to do away with those paradoxes. In this sense, to think about the late 20th century topicality of time in terms of a discourse of time might open way for a particularly rich approach precisely in how it refuses a clear distinction between the tools of analysis and the object of analysis[35].

I find an entry point to this type of question in Foucault's description of the rules of discourse as a "historical a priori"—a formulation particularly heavy with apparent "temporal assumptions". We can sense the tension of the *a priori*—the transcendental ground that makes knowledge possible—pulling against its *historical* dimension. If the a priori is historical, it cannot be a priori, but part of a historical process; and if it is a priori, then it is not historical, but the very condition for history[36]. Endeavoring to situate discourse in an oblique relation to this paradox,

[35] As this dissertation may reveal, the temporal tensions Foucault was hard pressed to engage with are not fortuitous: they are precisely what we would expect of the discourse of time. Furthermore, the alternative pathway I will develop in the second section of this chapter becomes itself not only a tool to think about the discourse of time, but also, possibly, a way of thinking about discourse itself. While these are, ultimately, a couple too many loops of reflexivity for me to keep track, the question remains open for consideration throughout the text and for further reflections.

[36] We can sense some proximity here with Hegel's opening to his Introduction to the Philosophy of History in which he presents the method of philosophical history as sitting at the disjuncture between the *a posteriori* "factual" principle of history and the *a priori* "speculative" principle of philosophy (Hegel, 1998, p.10). While I don't think they deal with this tension in the same way, it is noteworthy that they start from a similar conundrum. Later on, I present an interpretation of their work that

Foucault claims we must understand how "history may be not an absolutely extrinsic contingence, not a necessity of form deploying its own dialectic, but a *specific regularity*" (Foucault, 2013, p.146, my emphasis). The issue of the status of those regularities is central to the mapping of discursive formations; I will approach it following two different trends in Foucault's work—none of them solving it, but each offering a different type of engagement.

The first trend—which is the basis of the reading of discourse I offer in the next section—relates to the level in which Foucault situates the analysis of discourse. Indeed, we might find the above conundrum to be a familiar one: it relates to attempts to come to terms with structuralism and hermeneutics, philosophy and history, speculation and empiricism, structure and agency. But to Foucault (1981), the important point is that, in addressing these tensions, Western thought have all too often worked to erase discourse as an autonomous order by reducing it to "the smallest possible space between (…) thinking and speaking—a thought dressed in its signs and made visible by means of words, or conversely the very structures of language put into action and producing a meaning-effect" (Foucault, 1981, p.65). In this sense, either discourse is taken as nothing but the wording of thoughts already there in the mind of the subject, or as nothing but the structure of language becoming concrete. In both cases, the dimension of discursive relations—interposed between thought and speech or language and speech and offering up a limited number of objects, subjects, concepts, and strategies—remains hidden. Against this erasure, Foucault endeavors to reassert the specific order of discursivity, its singular level and the ordering taking place in and through it "between tradition and oblivion, [discourse] reveals the rules of a practice" (Foucault, 2013, p.146). Since it is at this level that I want to situate the conditions under which the sudden topicality of time in late 20th century emerges, in the next section, I follow Foucault's work to specify it.

However, while still addressing the issue of regularity, Foucault states that, as a repeatable entity, the statement—the constitutive element of discourse—is both "[t]oo repeatable to be entirely identifiable with the spatio-temporal coordinates of its birth (…)" yet simultaneously "too bound up with what surrounds it and supports it to be as free as a pure form". In this sense, the same tension of the "historical a

endeavor to bring them closer together. It is also worth remembering here Foucault's provocation about Hegel waiting for us at the end of our attempts to move away from him (Foucault, 1981).

priori" reappears in the "specific regularities" invoked to open up the "specific level" of discourse.

Here, however, I find a recessive voice, a possible hint, in the vocabulary that Foucault mobilizes to make sense of this tension. Indeed, he adds that the statement is "endowed with a certain modifiable *heaviness*, a *weight* relative to the field in which it is placed" (Foucault, 2013, pp.117-8, my emphasis). It would seem that if discourse operates at a particular level, it is also composed of a particular "heaviness"—one we can surmise is distributed unevenly. This appears again when, speaking of the level of discourse as not having the metaphysical status of the "library of all libraries, outside time and space", Foucault states that discourse has neither the "weight of tradition", with its long trajectory of sedimentation, nor the "welcoming oblivion" of a field freed for all new speech (Foucault, 2013, p.146). Again, these metaphors speak of a heaviness of discourse, and now also of a mood. I don't believe there is much to go on with these elements in Foucault's own framework. However, they do point towards a possible direction for thinking about discourse. In this sense, in the second and third sections of this chapter, as the exploration of the level of discourse starts leading us towards the expected temporal tensions, I propose that, inspired by these metaphors, we explore the issue of discourse in a different direction. In the second section, I more directly negotiate the place of an approach relating to the resonance of discourse, proposing we read this so-called "heaviness" in terms of how discourse produces attachments to itself. In the third section, I specify one way to go about engaging these attachments in their particularity to each discourse arguing we can read discourses as operating in terms of specific circuits of affect or structures of feeling.

In sum, to engage with the sudden topicality of time as a problematization, we need a particular approach to the issue of conditions of existence. In this chapter, I propose we unravel such approach by bringing together two literatures. First, a particular reading of Foucault's conception of discourse, mostly as articulated in his late 1960s and early 1970s methodological reflections on his work as a way of analyzing conditions of existence of knowledge. Here, the aim will be both theoretical—to specify what is discourse—and methodological—to specify how to go about analyzing discourses. Second, a reading of the relation between discourses and affect which foregrounds the circuit of affect and structure of feeling that grants discourse its resonance. Again, this will involve simultaneously a particular

theorization of discourse and, from there, the specification of a mode of analysis. In this sense, this chapter, both in its lacks—of reference to specific concepts that mark the "Foucauldian canon"—and in its excesses—of added elements that come to drive "discourse" in potentially unusual directions—aims to construct the tools that I believe we will need to approach the system of knowledge and power of the problematization of time. As I hope to make clear in what follows, by unsettling taken-for-granted unities and relocating our analysis at a different level, these tools give form to what might now be our shared discomfort with the ease with which time came to be articulated within political thought as an undisputable ground for solutions to complex political problems.

3.1. Reading time: the regularities of discourse

We can get a first sense of the specific level of discourse I endeavor to specify in this section by looking at the double meaning encapsulated in the felicitous title of his inaugural lecture at the *Collège de France* "The order of discourse" [*L'ordre du discours*] (Foucault, 1981). Here, "discourse" appears as an order, a dimension, a level, which organizes knowledge, making some things intelligible and not others. This order is not reducible to others such as preexisting unities—like language, logic, social context, class interests, transcendental conditions of possibility, or a subject—and historical continuities—like capitalism, modernization, or industrialization. In this sense, discourse is an autonomous dimension and an autonomous force, that is not subsumed under other processes. Yet, discourse is also a substantially ordered dimension: "in every society the production of discourse is at once controlled, selected, organised and redistributed by a certain number of procedures whose role is to ward off its powers and dangers, to gain mastery over its chance events, to evade its ponderous, formidable materiality" (Foucault, 1981, p.52). Indeed, it is *through* these discursive practices of organization, control, selection, and redistribution that discourse makes some things intelligible by being disposed through regular modes of dispersion and coexistence, while keeping others excluded or subordinated. In sum, the autonomous order of discourse sets conditions for knowledge precisely in how it is regulated by discursive practices; and it takes part in the kind of regulation of ourselves and others by instituting regimes of intelligibility in which we exist and

relate as subjects, with objects, through concepts—and in which others don't. Hence, discourse

> appears as an asset—finite, limited, desirable, useful—that has its own rules of appearance, but also its own conditions of appropriation and operation; an asset that consequently, from the moment of its existence (and not only in its 'practical applications'), poses the question of power; an asset that is, by nature, the object of a struggle, a political struggle (Foucault, 2013, pp.136).

Looking at the ways through which the production of discourse is "controlled, selected, organised and redistributed" in Western society, Foucault indicates an ambivalence. On the one hand, Western society seems to incite and love discourse: "[w]hat civilization has ever appeared to be more respectful of discourse than ours? Where has it ever been more honored, or better honored? Where has it ever been, seemingly, more radically liberated from its constraints, and universalized?" (Foucault, 1981, p.66). In this sense, Western society is marked by a certain *logophilia*, by a love of the proliferation of discourses, of the freedom to speak and write more and freely. On the other hand, Foucault notes, in the obverse side of such love of discourse, a deep *logophobia*: a fear of the unruliness, untamed proliferation, autonomy and specific reality of discourse (Foucault, 1981, p.66). Thus, Western society's incitement to discourse walks hand in hand with attempts to tame it.

Such double bind appears clearly in Foucault's treatment of the modern "putting into discourse" of sexuality, that is, of how modern sexuality is simultaneously widely discussed and controlled, or, more specifically, how its discussion is brought about through strongly regulated practices of (dis)authorization. In other words, an incitement to discourse on sexuality walks hand in hand with delimitations about when, where, how, and whom gets to speak about sex, and to which concrete effects (Foucault, 1978, pp.8-13). Furthermore, such logophobia also leads to the location of these limitations in dynamics taking place in other orders than discourse itself, such as readings of changes in sexuality in terms of the rise of capitalism (Foucault, 1978, pp.5-6). Thus, in the domain of sexuality, Foucault shows how not only discourse emerges in specific terms related to how it is controlled and organized, but also how its autonomy is undermined by making it dependent upon other dynamics, such as capitalism.

I propose that we can read the proliferation of debates and discussions about time that we have accompanied in the previous chapter in similar terms. Indeed, the movement towards "taking time seriously" claims not only that we need to speak more about time—thus avoiding unacknowledged temporal biases—it also claims that we need to speak better about time, that is, not in any way. In this sense, it seems to speak directly to the kind of "putting into discourse" that cannot be separated from highly regulated practices of (dis)authorization and its subsuming under other dynamics that we have associated with the double bind of logophilia and logophobia[37]. Furthermore, as seen, the different traditions of time troubles we have sketched all work towards inserting the autonomy of a discourse of time under other dynamics, such as modernization, industrialization, the end of history, or the Western canon. In this sense, we might wonder if the late 20th century attraction to the unruliness of time doesn't walk hand in hand with a fear of the unruliness of the discourse of time. A fear, we should add, that doesn't amount to a general erasure, but to specific and diverse practices of regulation—practices which include, but are not subsumed to, prohibition.

Importantly, Foucault's endeavor to understand discourse involves not the effacement of such *logophobia* in favor of an idealized transparent relation to discourse and its proliferation, but the analysis of how these procedures of control, organization, and distribution of discourse work and which effects they produce. In this sense, the point is not to see through the rarefaction of discourse that can be associated to taming its dangers—as if something more plentiful and authentic resided underneath it—nor to compensate for such rarefaction by offering interpretations and exegeses—as if something more meaningful was hidden in between lines—, but to map and understand the procedures that, in taming discourse, simultaneously bring it into existence in its specific reality. Hence, the analysis of discourse

[37] Dreyfus and Rabinow (1983, pp.44-8) point out that the relationship between Searle's speech act theory and Foucault's archaeological project is much closer than the latter's argument in *The Archaeology of Knowledge* lets on. For them, the difference is of the type of speech act being investigated: while Searle is interested in everyday speech acts, Foucault is concerned with what they call "serious speech acts", that is, speech acts that are validated through systematized and institutionalized networks that distance them from everyday usages. Indeed, Foucault appears to have agreed with this proximity in correspondences with Searle (Dreyfus; Rabinow, p.46, note 1). While I don't fully subside to their reading, the concept of a "serious speech act" resonates well with the different claims to "take time seriously" that abound in the literature I'm approaching.

> does not question things said as to what they are hiding, what they were 'really' saying, in spite of themselves, the unspoken element that they contain, the proliferation of thoughts, images, or fantasies that inhabit them; but, on the contrary, it questions them as to their mode of existence, what it means [that they] have come into existence, (…) left traces, and perhaps (…) remain[ed] there, awaiting the moment when they might be of use once more; what it means [that they] have appeared when and where they did—they and no others (Foucault, 2013, p.123)[38].

Therefore, to analyze discourse is to understand how the ways through which discourses are organized, controlled, and distributed make it acceptable and even obvious to speak, think, and behave in ways that are, in principle, neither obvious nor necessary, while making others both unintelligible and disposable. In this sense, it is to make discourse emerge simultaneously in its autonomy and its specific limited reality. What both tasks demand is to substitute the analysis and mapping of discourse for the acceptance of those continuities and unities through which discourse is made to disappear as an autonomous order. In this sense, from the suspension of the traditions of time troubles we worked towards in the previous chapter, the analysis of discourse in which we will engage in the next Part of this dissertation endeavors to map the organization and redistribution of discourse that makes the late 20th century sudden topicality of time an obvious site for specific modes of speaking, thinking, and behaving—and not others. In mapping these procedures, in the next Part, I aim to make emerge the discourse of time in both its autonomy and specific, limited, reality.

While the analysis of language refers to sentences, the analysis of logic to propositions, and the analysis of speech acts to conditions of felicity, the analysis of discourse refers to what Foucault calls the statement [*énoncé*], that is, "the modality of existence of the verbal performance as it has taken place" (Foucault, 2013, p.123). In other words, to read a "verbal (our written) performance" as a statement is to question it in terms of the specific way in which it takes place, in which it exists. Importantly, unlike the sentence, the proposition, or the speech act—all of which can be read as one possible instantiation of the infinite

[38] I have slightly edited the translation to clarify a possible double meaning. The original reads "what it means *to them* to have come into existence (…); what it means *to them* to have appeared when and where they did—they and no others" (Foucault, 2013, p. 123, my emphases). This phrasing might give the impression that Foucault is questioning the meaning that emergence has *to* a discourse, as an instance of subjective constitution of meaning. I can find no sense in this claim. Instead, I think Foucault simply questions the existence of certain statements and not others. This double meaning is in the original French version as well.

possibilities allowed by language, logic, or context—, the statement "is not in itself a unit, but a function that cuts across a domain of structures and possible unities, and which reveals them, with concrete contents, in time and space" (Foucault, 2013, p.98). In other words, the statement [*énoncé*], the "enunciative function"[39], cuts across a field of possibilities—linguistic, logical, contextual—and makes emerge only a limited number of them. In this sense, it is located at the level of what effectively exists. As concretely impossible to account for by any particular investigation as this number might be, it remains finite and limited. As a function cutting across a field of possibilities making for particular regimes of existence, the statement is first and foremost a principle of rarefaction, a law of rarity.

Let me first illustrate this with a common example. Consider the series "1,2,3,4,5…". Ask a logistician to deduce the next number in the series and you will most likely be told that, logically, it could be any number—the rule of the series can just as well be "the last number plus one" as "the last number plus one four times, then *pi*", or any other, really. But ask the same question from the viewpoint of the statement, and you find yourself in need of knowing in what terms that series exist. We might learn, for instance, that it exists as an example of serial continuity; in which case the next number is "6"—whether or not it is a logically precise answer. In this sense, if the next instalment of the series turns out to be "8", the logistician will gladly adjust expectations concerning the possible rules of the series, while the discourse analyst is more likely to find reason to pause at the unexpected deviation from the law of rarity of that statement. We might endeavor

[39] It seems that the relation between "statement" and "enunciative function" in *The Archaeology of Knowledge* is never fully specified. While it might seem that the "function" is *of the* "statement", it is also the case that the statement *is* a function. I believe this elision relates to the tension I mentioned in the introduction of this chapter. The statement appears as alternatively a unit and a function because to settle which it is would also settle the status of discourse. Indeed, if the statement is a unit, it might then be read as part of a whole ("discourse") in the same sense that the sentence is a unit of language. However, as a unit, it can be accounted for empirically and thus establish the starting point for an account of "what actually exists". On the other hand, if the statement is a function, we might read discourse as a system and loom dangerously close to bodily metaphors which Foucault avoids, such homeostasis or organic development. However, as a function, the statement can operate as a principle of rarefaction in other fields. Enmeshed in these possibilities, the statement remains both a unit—through which we can account for what exists—and a function—through which we can cut through other fields of possibilities. Consider, for instance, the following paradox—one of many Foucault unveils as emerging from this work—"the description of statements does not attempt to evade verbal performances in order to discover behind them or below their apparent surface a hidden element (…); and yet the statement is not immediately visible (…). *The statement is neither visible nor hidden*" (Foucault, 2013, p.122, my emphasis). Being undecidedly both—the statement and the enunciative function—it takes part in sustaining the ambivalent position of discourse as both the rules of dispersion of what actually exists and that dispersion.

a similar reading of a temporal statement. Consider, for instance, the following statement about time troubles, extracted from narratives on the death of history seen in Chapter 2: “the loss of credibility of teleology opens up futurity”. As we have seen, this argument is logically sound: as the single path connecting present to future loses ground, there emerges possibilities for reinterpreting emancipation in different, plural terms. From the viewpoint of the statement, however, we might note that this claim exists as the ground for political hopes towards a radical democracy, thus begging the question of the conditions under which a logical possibility seamlessly becomes a logical foundation. Finally, in the broader context of a space of communication, we might not that

> Different oeuvres, dispersed books, that whole mass of texts that belong to a single discursive formation—and so many authors who know or do not know one another, criticize one another, invalidate one another, pillage one another, meet without knowing it and obstinately intersect their unique discourses in a web of which they are not the masters, of which they cannot see the whole, and of whose breadth they have a very inadequate idea—all these various figures and individuals do not communicate solely by the logical succession of propositions that they advance, nor by the recurrence of themes, nor by the obstinacy of a meaning transmitted, forgotten, and rediscovered; they communicate by the (…) conditions of operation of the enunciative function [that] defines a field in which formal identities, thematic continuities, translations of concepts, and polemical interchanges may be deployed (Foucault, 2013, p.143).

Hence, we can think of discourse as “the general system of the formation and transformation of statements” (Foucault, 2013, p.146), that is, as “the difference between what one could say correctly at one period (according to the rules of grammar and those of logic) and what is actually said. The discursive field is, at a specific moment, the law of this difference” (Foucault, 1972, p.238). In turn, the analysis of discursive formations “takes that rarity as its explicit object; it tries to determine its unique system; and, at the same time, it takes account of the fact that there could have been interpretation (…) but to analyse a discursive formation is to seek the law of that poverty” (Foucault, 2013, p.135). It doesn’t try to compensate for this rarity by producing more meaning, more sentences, more propositions, nor does it seek to establish a broader field of possible statements from which existing ones are only a partial instantiation. Instead, it is the analysis of the rules through which the enunciative function operates the appearance of the effectively existing: it is the analysis of discourse.

In fact, while sentences and propositions might exist in isolation, statements always refer to other statements and, more generally, to the fields of existence emerging in relation to them. While it is a law of rarity and rarefaction, the enunciative function is nevertheless a productive function: by cutting and rarifying, it makes emerges specific fields. Indeed, Foucault (2013) will argue that discourses are not characterized by the object they refer to, the subject upholding them, the concept unifying them, or the argumentative strategy mobilize through them. Instead, discourse is the system that makes for the dispersion and coexistence of groups of concepts, objects, subjects, and strategies. Therefore,

> [t]o describe a statement is not a matter of isolating and characterizing a horizontal segment; but of defining the conditions in which the function that gave a series of signs (…) a specific existence, can operate. An existence that reveals such a series as more than a mere trace, but rather a relation to a domain of objects; as more than the result of an action or an individual operation, but rather a set of possible positions for a subject; as more than an organic, autonomous whole, closed in upon itself and capable of forming meaning of its own accord, but rather an element in a field of coexistence; as more than a passing event or an inert object, but rather a repeatable materiality (Foucault, 2013, p.122).

But if the level of discourse is interposed between the (linguistically, logically, contextually) possible and the effectively existent, without being reducible to laws and processes at another level, while retaining the status of a regular system, then the question emerges as to how are we to individualize a discourse? In other words, if discourse is an ordered system for the appearance of that which appears, how can we establish its limits, how can we describe *one* discourse in particular? Put differently: if what exists is neither random nor determined by pre-established structures of possibilities, how can we explain its limits and regularity? According to Foucault

> A statement belongs to a discursive formation as a sentence belongs to a text, and a proposition to a deductive whole. But whereas the regularity of a sentence is defined by the laws of a language (*langue*), and that of a proposition by the laws of logic, the regularity of statements is defined by the discursive formation. *The fact of its belonging to a discursive formation and the laws that govern it are one and the same thing* (Foucault, 2013, pp.130-1, my emphasis).

At first sight, this claim seems paradoxical, so I'll rephrase it a couple of times for clarity. While sentences and propositions follow laws external to their concrete

appearance—laws of language and laws of logic—, the laws governing the formation and the appearance of statements are one and the same: the discursive formation. Hence, discourse is a field in which a group of statements find themselves regulated by a set of rules, but these rules are not of a different order than the statements, they are of the order of the relations established through these same statements. Both the rules of existence and the existing entities are situated at the same level. Put in still other words, the rules that regulate the formation of statements are the very mode of existence of those statements, the relation they establish with each other, the way in which they circulate, exchange, appear, disappear, and are repeated. Hence, to analyze a discourse "is to weigh the 'value' of statements. A value that is not defined by their truth, that is not gauged by the presence of a secret content; but which characterizes their place, their capacity for circulation and exchange, their possibility of transformation" (Foucault, 2013, p.136).

In sum, discourses are systems of rules for the specific and regulated emergence and repetition of fields of objects, subject positions, conceptual operations, and strategies. However, these emerging fields are not somehow caused by a metaphysical capacity of discourse to create realities, but by the very way in which they are dispersed and made to coexist or exclude each other. The rules of discourse *are* fields of coexistence; the fields of coexistence *are* discourse. To map a discursive formation is to reveal the level of the statement, the function relating to a particular mode of existence of units and their relations and to describe the enunciative function is to individualize a specific discursive formation (Foucault, 2013, p.130). In this sense, the analysis of discursive formation is of the order of *description*: "[o]ne is led therefore to the project of a *pure description of discursive events* as the horizon for the search for the unities that form within it. (Foucault, 2013, pp.29-30). Noting this, Foucault called himself a "happy positivist", and Dreyfus and Rabinow spoke of "a phenomenology to end all phenomenologies" (Dreyfus; Rabinow, 1983, pp.44-52).

We can now come full circle in the specification of what I have called the analysis of the discourse of time. In the previous chapter, we interpreted the late 20th century topicality of time as a mode of problematization through which troubled times could be read in terms of time troubles. I began the present chapter proposing that we read the conditions under which this took place in terms of a

discourse. We can now specify this by defining the discourse of time as the system of rules which organize the modality of existence of the late 20th century topicality of time. Put differently, the discourse of time is the set of rules through which *statements* about time can emerge in a shared space. Finally, we can further articulate this shared space as the specific fields of dispersion and coexistence of objects, concepts, subjects, and strategies through which that limited space of communication is sustained. In sum, the analysis of the discourse of time is the mapping of the fields of dispersion and coexistence through which the late 20th century topicality of time can be both intelligible and meaningful, can be taken seriously in its articulation of discussions that are "in the true". And we might add, in line with the two questions that opened this chapter, that it is through these fields of temporal objects, temporal concepts, temporal assumptions, and temporal moves that we come to govern ourselves and others as subjects of time in the late 20th century.

3.2. Resonating time: the attachment to discourse

The descriptive inclination in Foucault's archaeology—which sustains the analysis of discourse I proposed in the previous section—has led commentators to point to a tension between reading the rules of the discursive formation as descriptive and as prescriptive (Dreyfus; Rabinow, 1983, pp.81ff). On the one hand, Foucault works with descriptive rules, that is, rules taken as the "pure description of the facts of discourse". On the other hand, Foucault consistently claims that discourse is governed by rules, that they produce subjects and objects, and that they impose themselves upon those who take part in it. Thus, rules are riven between the description and the prescription of regularities. The result of this double bind is "the strange notion of regularities which regulate themselves" since "the archaeologist must attribute causal efficiency to the very rules which describe these practices' 'systematicity'" (Dreyfus; Rabinow, 1983, p.84).

To Dreyfus and Rabinow, this tension is indicative of an unthematized insight in Foucault's work: the regularities being described "must be evidence of some underlying systematic regulation", which would go against Foucault's claim that discursive formations are autonomous by relating them to an external regulative power (Dreyfus; Rabinow, 1983, p.84). In a different direction, Bartelson (1995,

p.72) dismisses the more prescriptive claims as unfortunate slips, sticking to the more consistent descriptive position according to which the rules of formation of a discourse are located inside that discourse. In doing so, however, he is faced with a different problem—one that also troubled Foucault's own work: to account for the transformation of discourses given the lack of an external point from which to assess and explain discontinuities[40]. In his words "we can arrive at thick descriptions of incommensurable discourses, but we will face a serious problem if we want to explain the transition from one glass bowl to another" (Bartelson, 1995, p.72). Finally, to Copjec, the tension boils down to the presence of two voices in Foucault. A dominant trend in his work (and that of most Foucauldian approaches) would reduce the social field—here, discourse—to the description of relations obtaining in it; however, a recessive trend, which can be find in his theorization more than his mobilization of discourse, "account[s] for the *constitution* of domains of objects and knowledges, or the *mode of the institution* of the social, and could not rest content with a mere analysis of the relations therein" (Copjec, 1994, p.6, emphasis in the original). This "mode of institution" cannot be external to discourse—which would undo the autonomy of the discursive field—but must nonetheless be placed beyond the domain of positive existence—which would allow it to be described alongside the domains it produces[41].

In this section, I propose a way of taking up the same tensions by constructing their problem in a slightly different way from the above. Indeed, I believe we can also read the stakes of the problem of description and prescription in the question of how to move from a description of the discourse of time to the

[40] Indeed, Foucault faced this problem in his early archaeological works when the primacy of discontinuities led him to the problem of periodization. In *The Order of Things* (2002, pp.55-56; see also Foucault, 1972) this is noted as a difficult problem for the archaeology of knowledge that he decides to leave aside in order to begin the project. In *The Archaeology of Knowledge*, Foucault (2013) takes up the problem again, now noting the paradoxical temporality of the event as both singular and repeatable and positioning the matter of periodization within discursive formations. Finally, Foucault (1977) turns to genealogy as the history of the present in order to connect past and present in his analyzes. Though it is unclear whether Foucault offers any straightforward solution to the question of the transformation of discourse, his insistent encounter with the question reveals the presence of a problem. Victor Lage and I have endeavored to work through some of these issues and their implications for genealogies in IR (Lage; Chamon, 2013; Lage; Chamon, 2016).

[41] I believe something of this order can be located in what Foucault calls the genealogical analysis of the emergence, which "designates a place of confrontation but *not as a closed field offering the spectacle of a struggle among equals*. Rather (...) it is *a 'non-place', a pure distance*, which indicates that the adversaries do not belong to a common space". (Foucault, 1977, p.150, my emphasis). Hence, one part of genealogy is to account for what is not, at first, a common field of existence, and in which the relation among elements is "no more a 'relationship' than the place where it occurs is a place" (Foucault, 1977, p.150).

reproduction of this discourse in anything more than voluntarist or contingent terms without returning to a conception of structural rules, imposed on participants from the outside. Hence, unlike Bartelson, I'm less interested in stressing the explanation of transformation than in highlighting an understanding of continuity. Furthermore, unlike Dreyfus and Rabinow, I believe that doing so calls not for bringing about the extra-discursive, but for deepening our understanding of the conditions of existence of the discourse of time in lines that make resonate the metaphors of weight and heaviness we sometimes find in Foucault's work. Lastly, unlike Copjec (and other Lacanians), at this point at least, I'm less interested in thinking about how this unspeakable mode of institution is simultaneously the site of the undoing of the discourse of time than in identifying how it might account for that which, in discourse but beyond its description, makes for its heaviness and tone. In sum, I am interested in the question of how can we move from the description of the discourse of time to an analysis of the reproduction of its regularities, of how the discourse of time is reproduced in terms of its own mode of existence?[42]

It is Hutchings' (1999) exploration of the possible approximations of Foucault and Hegel through the similarities and differences between phenomenology and genealogy which, I believe, offers an understanding of the relation between description and prescription that guides us in such question. One of her main concerns with this uncanny encounter is to account for the relation between ethical reflection and prescription. Through Hegel, she defines phenomenology as aiming to "explore and expound contemporary political life in terms of the principles of its self-understanding articulated in the legal and political institutions, practices, and theoretical reflections of its day" (Hutchings, 1999, p.102). Understood as the work of immanently describing two irreducible

[42] Admittedly, such formulation risks returning us to a familiar conundrum. In Bartelson's terms, we would say we might understand how we recognize ourselves in the reflection cast by a glass bowl, but we still fall short of understanding transformation. Let me begin by stating openly that this is a matter of minor concern to me at the moment. In other words, I am *mostly* satisfied to understand how discourses tend to be reproduced despite being so fundamentally contingent. This disposition risks the performative production of the effect of stasis it endeavors to understand. It also speaks to the autobiographical dimension of a project that is willing to explain stasis in a discourse in which the opposition of stasis and movement is central. I remain uncertain on how to deal with this tension at the core of my work. I would nonetheless like to offer one caveat, to ease the tension as I invite a reader with opposite dispositions to move forward with me: if the forces and processes through which a discursive formation produces resonance and recognition can be identified, we might speculate that the disarming of these processes have something to do with the opening up of discourses. Furthermore, we might be so generous as to situate resonance and dissonance as concomitant processes.

dimensions of spirit—both what is constructed by and constructs self-conscious being, and the reflection on this 'ethical life'—, phenomenology resembles the "pure description of the facts of discourse", as sketched above. Despite these similarities, Hutchings (1999) notes a core difference between both approaches: while Hegel's phenomenology is consistently descriptive, famously forgoing substituting what ought to be for what is, Foucault's genealogy, while descriptive, includes the prescriptive orientation towards freedom as the critique of present limits—thus avoiding the tendency in Hegelian phenomenology to underemphasize the power effects of its own truth claims.

However, it seems that both critical orientations share a common ground of argumentation. Speaking from a Hegelian phenomenology, Hutchings claims that, ultimately, "it is the adequacy of the theoretical articulation of a particular shape of spirit, as judged by those participating in and constructing it which generates the meaning and effect of his theoretical work" (Hutchings, 1999, p.107). In other words, what she calls the "relative identity" between the ethical life and reflection on it—two dimensions which can never be fully identical. Similarly, Dreyfus and Rabinow claim that Foucault realizes his own diagnosis and prescription are "ultimately an interpretation to be judged in terms of its resonance with other thinkers and actors and its results" (Dreyfus; Rabinow, 1983, p.264). Thus, like Hegelian phenomenology and Foucauldian archaeology and genealogy, the truth and judgement of an analysis is "rooted in the theorist's own relative identity with the object of his or her analysis and validated solely in terms of the reader's recognition of that identity as in some sense the reader's own" (Hutchings, 1999, pp.117-8).

If, finally, we refuse to treat this relative identity and self-recognition in terms of free floating attachments—as I believe we should—then the question of how to relate the descriptive and prescriptive dimension of a discursive formation can be reformulated in terms of how to account for the resonance of a discursive formation, for one's recognition in it, as part of the rules of that very discursive formation. Indeed, if resonance or recognition are predicated on an instance external to or behind discourse—for instance, a pre-given subject or a fundamental meaning—then discourse loses its autonomy. Hence, we might reformulate the question above in terms of how to account for the resonance of the discourse of time in terms of its own discursivity?

Following Wendy Brown, I believe this kind of investigation is mostly precluded from Foucault's work due to his relentless foreclosure of the role of 'psychology'. Indeed, though Foucault is heavily indebted to Nietzsche, he also downplays the role that desires play in the latter's understanding of genealogy and diagnosis of modernity:

> though Foucault draws extensively from Nietzsche, he eliminates from genealogical work the constitutive place Nietzsche assigned to desire and ideals, and especially to their interplay in forming historically specific subjects and in crafting history. Yet Nietzsche's 'psychology', which Foucault jettisons, is fundamental rather than incidental to Nietzsche's genealogy: desire not only animates history but is transformed by it. If genealogy traces, *inter alia*, the historical variability of human beings themselves, our changing form and content as historical subjects, then desire is both the source of this plasticity and the surface on which it unfolds (Brown, 2001, p.99).

Due to this rejection of the constitutive role of 'psychology' and desire, Brown locates in Foucault an unexamined optimism and volunteerism. In her view, he offers, for the most part, a "physicalist and insistently nonpsychic account of power, practices, and subject formation" and "a quasi-empirical concern with the relative capacity or space for action in the context of certain regimes of domination" (Brown, 1995, p.63). Therefore, in turning the question of freedom into an issue of the heterogeneity constituting a power-knowledge nexus, Foucault thinks power and resistance, reproduction and transformation, in terms of the ever-present possibility of resistance in the face of power. But is the presence of heterogeneous forces enough to account for resistance and agency? Or does this formulation account only for the formal possibility for freedom? According to Brown, such formal account becomes a problem if we consider the diagnosis that "the modern subject does not simply cease to desire freedom (…) but, much more problematically, loathes freedom" (Brown, 1995, p.64). In this sense, Foucault's "lack of attention to what might constitute, negate, or redirect the desire for freedom" leads him to "tacitly assume the givenness and resilience of the desire for freedom" (Brown, 1995, p.64). In sum, in Foucault, the opening of a space for freedom by the critique of limits is always already complemented by a desire for

such freedom; where there is power, there is resistance; and where there is resistance, there is the desire for and the practice of freedom[43].

However, according to Brown, "whether or not resistance is possible is a different question from what its aim is, what it is for, and especially whether or not it resubjugates the resisting subject" (Brown, 1995, p.64). Indeed, the description of discursive dispersion, including the articulation of the exclusions that are constitutive of it, "is ultimately ineffective in explaining how it is that [discourse] maintains its hold on our desire, regardless of our conscious, self-reflective understanding of its meaning and import and our desire for some notion of the good" (Rickert, 2007, p.125-6). As such, "no critical reflection on the social order can forgo the analysis of the apparatus of subjects' libidinal engagement in the [discourses] that determine such order" (Kehl, 2009, p.27). Against the underplaying of such analysis, Brown argues we should redirect the problem of freedom from the question of the formal spaces for difference, of the productive tension of description and prescription, towards "a question about *the direction of the will to power*, a will that potentially, but only potentially, animates a desire for freedom" (Brown, 1995, p.64, emphasis in the original).

We might read such redirection through a part of the trajectory of Butler's recovery of Foucault's concept of subjectivation [*assujétissement*]—the simultaneous process of being made subject *to* power/discourse and the subject *of* power/discourse. At first, mainly in *Gender Trouble* and *Bodies that Matter*, her concept of performativity—the process in which, on the one hand, subjects refer to

[43] It is worth noting that some attention to passionate attachments is not completely absent from Foucault's conceptualization of power. In opposing the repressive hypothesis—according to which power represses sexuality in bourgeois society—Foucault argues that the mutual relations of power and pleasure are central to the form power acquires in the apparatus of sexuality: "The power which thus took charge of sexuality set about contacting bodies, caressing them with its eyes, intensifying areas, electrifying surfaces, dramatizing troubled moments. It wrapped the sexual body in its embrace. *There was undoubtedly an increase in effectiveness and an extension of the domain controlled; but also a sensualization of power and a gain of pleasure. (…) The medical examination, the psychiatric investigation, the pedagogical report, and family controls may have the over-all and apparent objective of saying no to all wayward or unproductive sexualities, but the fact is that they function as mechanisms with a double impetus: pleasure and power*. The pleasure that comes of exercising a power that questions, monitors, watches, spies, searches out, palpates, brings to light; and on the other hand, the pleasure that kindles at having to evade this power, flee from it, fool it, or travesty it. The power that lets itself be invaded by the pleasure it is pursuing; and opposite it, power asserting itself in the pleasure of showing off, scandalizing, or resisting" (Foucault, 1978, pp.44-5, my emphasis). However, facing such claims, one could still legitimately ask: how come the subject feels enticed, excited, or sexualized by the powers of the gaze, the touch, the drama? How does the social regulation of pleasures direct pleasure towards said regulation? And how does power and pleasure reinforce each other? Indeed, how can we explain that a power that *appears* to prohibit forms of sexualities *actually* comes to articulate pleasure and power?

existing norms to emerge as intelligible and, on the other, norms are only instituted by being repeated by emerging subjects—, reformulates agency in terms of riven temporality (Butler, 1993a). In the Foucauldian terms used above, this is equivalent to the tension of regularities being interpreted by foregrounding the "two incommensurable temporal modalities" of subjectivation (Butler, 1997, p.14)[44]. However, Butler will subsequently highlight—particularly, but not exclusively, in relation to gender—that this conception of performativity might all too easily transmit a sense of volunteerism in reducing the workings of performativity to literal performances, thus erasing that "what is exteriorized or performed can only be understood by reference to what is barred from performance, what cannot or will not be performed" (Butler, 1997, p.145). In this sense, returning to her initial work on performativity, Butler highlights that it should be connected to a kind of acting out of repressed desires, that "indeed, what I 'choose', has something profoundly unchosen in it" (Butler, 1997, p.162). In this trajectory, I read Butler as interpreting the matter of regularities in discourse first by foregrounding the riven temporality shot through that process and its correlate possibilities of resistance, and then redirecting part of our attention towards the relation between power and desire.

It is her staged conversation between Foucault and psychoanalysis that helps advance a reading attentive to these latter issues. This conversation involves a mutual critique. On the one hand, Butler claims that "one cannot account for subjectivation and, in particular, becoming the principle of one's own subjection, without recourse to a psychoanalytic account of the formative or generative effects of restriction of prohibition" (Butler, 1997, p.87). That is, to properly account for subjectivation, the Foucauldian analysis of power needs to be placed in conversation with a psychoanalytic account of desire. On the other hand, however, in order to do so, psychoanalysis must both respond to Foucault's critique of the "repressive hypothesis" (Foucault, 1978; see also Whitebook, 2006), and avoid romanticized definitions of the unconscious as a necessary site of resistance outside power or in excess to it. Indeed, to Butler, "[t]he Foucauldian postulation of subjection as the simultaneous subordination and forming of the subject assumes a specific psychoanalytic valence when we consider that *no subject emerges without a passionate attachment to those on whom he or she is fundamentally dependent*

[44] We might note, here, how the issue of agency and resistance is problematized in terms of time—a version of the readings of troubled times as time troubles we have engaged in Chapter 2.

(Butler, 1997, p.7, my emphasis)[45], what we might call an identification at the site of oppression, a mixture of vulnerability and pleasure, dependency and love. As existence is postulated on this dependency, subjects are predicated on a fundamental attachment to it; a form of complicity between the subject and power is built into the process of subjectivation. In line with this insight, we might say that since subjects are dependent on the discursive articulation of power and knowledge to exist, subjects emerge with a passionate attachment to discourse. It is of the order of discourse to produce such passionate attachments as part of its operation. Said differently, "at some level we obtain enjoyment (…) from [discourse], much as our tongue incessantly worries a painful tooth or we perversely derive pleasure from watching a friend fail (Rickert, 2007, p.128-9)[46].

In sum, instead of searching for an "underlying systematic regulation" unifying discursive formations and imposing themselves on subjects (as Dreyfus and Rabinow) or assuming the adherence to rules (as Bartelson), we might feel invited to look into the attachments that equip these formations with their resonance, their "heaviness", their pull, our enjoyment. While claims to such "passionate attachments" have often been invoked to debunk the political claims of the oppressed, to shy away from the analysis of the psychic and libidinal dimensions

[45] One effect of Butler's theorization is to sidestep Foucault's historical dimension. If, for Foucault, the emergence of the articulation of pleasure and power is an event taking place along the 18th and 19th centuries, Butler's use of psychoanalysis universalizes this relation. I believe this is a central dimension of Butler's "Foucauldian perspective within psychoanalysis": at least in part, it takes for granted a connection between pleasure and power that Foucault insists on historicizing. While hers is not a properly anti-historical move—indeed, her theory of subjection opens space for the historical investigation of social regulation and resistance—it does fix a dimension of subjectivation as transhistorical. We might go so far as saying that this becomes the condition of possibility of the history of how subjects simultaneously take part in their own subjection and resist power from within. A similar argument (and subsequent debate) is raised in relation to her concept of performativity (Butler et al, 2000). In more sympathetic terms, White (1999) refers to this as one of the dimensions of her weak ontology. My endeavor to think through the tensions of discursive formations through circuit of desires takes for granted the same connection of power and pleasure. While I cannot suspend the universality of "time" and of the "power-pleasure relation", I try to account for part of the singular articulation of power and pleasure in the discourse of time in Chapter 5.

[46] Rickert's reading of enjoyment is not the same as Butler's understanding of attachments. Indeed, Rickert goes to lengths to differentiate his Žižekian inflected position from Butler's (Rickert, 2007; pp.143-151; see also, Copjec, 1994; Dean, 1994; for Butler's position, see Butler, 1993a; for a discussion focused largely on this point, Butler *et al* 2000). Part of these disagreements seem to me to be matters of inflection, when not simply polemic. Another part, however, refers to the status of desire in relation to the order of discourse., and the possibilities for transformation from there. While these disagreements are important, since I move away from the strictly Lacanian formulation, I will underplay them in favor of the common agreement on the centrality of attachments to discourse.

of subjectivity would lead to an incomplete understanding of discourse[47]. What is needed, then, is not so much to ignore these attachments, but to account for how they are, from the beginning, inseparable from discourse. Put differently, the aim would be to account for the internal resonance of discourse in terms of these passionate attachments.

3.3. Diagnosing time: the mood of discourse

So far, we have seen that, in order to specify the autonomous level of the discourse of time, we followed Foucault in carving a space marked by the statement as the specific modality of existence of verbal and written performance. In the regularity of this enunciative function, we were to find the system of rules organizing the fields of objects, concepts, subjects, and strategies we are calling discourse. However, in establishing the ordering of the discourse of time in its regularity, we raised questions about the descriptive or prescriptive dimension of the system of rules of discourse. I proposed that one way of dealing with this tension was to reformulate it in terms the resonance of the discourse of time. Hence, the question became that of redirecting our analysis of the discourse of time in such a way that it may account not only for the heterogeneous relations endowing fields of dispersion and coexistence with a specific regularity, but also for its resonance. Finally, I advanced the idea that such redirection could be moved forward by focusing on the passionate attachments to discourse that are part and parcel of subjectivation. Hence, if we can only take time seriously in terms of the discourse of time, it would be expected that those of us engaging in problematizing troubled times in terms of time troubles would emerge already attached to the discourse of time through which we, our thinking, our work, and our present acquire intelligibility.

Yet, to say only this might still be too broad a version of the issue. Indeed, I would like to think of the resonance of the discourse of time not only in terms of

[47] In a similar move, Jessica Benjamin argues that "[e]ven the more sophisticated feminist thinkers frequently shy away from the analysis of submission, for fear that in admitting woman's participation in the relationship of domination, the onus of responsibility will appear to shift from men to women, and the moral victory from women to men. More generally, this has been a weakness of radical politics: to idealize the oppressed, as if their politics and culture were untouched by the system of domination, as if people did not participate in their own submission. To reduce domination to a simple relation of doer and done-to is to substitute moral outrage for analysis" (Benjamin, 1988, pp.9-10).

the existence of attachments—which, we might presume, should be disarmed—, but in terms of their specificity to that discourse. What is then necessary is to articulate a diagnosis of passionate attachments to discourse in terms of the description of a specific discourse. In this sense, while I would gladly start from the assumption that the discourse of time operates through attachments and enjoyment, I would also like to be able to think about how, more precisely, it does so. If, following Rickert's claim in his discussion of pedagogy from the viewpoint of desire, "[w]hat is important to see here is how [discourse] channels our desire and helps integrate it into our social activity" (Rickert, 2007, p.126), then my question is about how the discourse of time, specifically, channels our desire into the "largely unconscious enjoyment one derives from habits, attitudes, beliefs, and activities" (Rickert, 2007, p.3)? In this section, I explore one way of doing so in the characterization of discourse as a circuit of affect and a structure of feeling.

Indeed, according to Safatle, "[i]f it is not the tacit adhesion to systems of norms that produce social cohesion, then we should turn to the circuits of affects that perform this function" (Safatle, 2015, p.18, my translation). I read this claim to mean that since the reproduction of discourse cannot be deduced from the mere existence of rules, and since the resonance of those rules cannot be located in the reified desire of subjects, the question might productively be redrawn in terms of how "circuits of affect" work to produce and sustain the regularity and unity of discourse. In this sense,

> we should start from the acknowledgement that societies [discourses] are, at their most fundamental level, circuits of affects. As systems for the material reproduction of hegemonic forms of life, societies [discourses] equip such forms of life with adhesion force [*força de adesão*] by continuously producing affects which make us assume some possibilities over others (Safatle, 2015, p.17, my translation; see also, in English, Safatle, 2017).

While this position remains somewhat torn between description—"discourses are circuits of affects"—and prescription—"discourses produce affects"—it nonetheless invites us to relate the way a discourse acquires "adhesion force"—how it resonates, how it involves passionate attachments—to the question of the particular way in which affect circulates in that discourse. We might think that the dispersion and coexistence of objects, concepts, subjects, and strategies which we called discourse in the previous section is here also associated with—or, maybe

better said, held together through—a particular way of feeling, which we might call, to play with words, a mood of thinking.

We might associate these circuits of affect with what Raymond Williams called the "structure of feeling", a term he develops to simultaneously grasp the more fixed and finished modes of thinking and the less definite mode through which thinking is felt. In his words, in speaking of a structure of feeling,

> we are talking about characteristic elements of impulse, restraint, and tone; specifically affective elements of consciousness and relationships: not feeling against thought, but thought as felt and feeling as thought (…) We are then defining these elements as a 'structure': as a set, with specific internal relations, at once interlocking and in tension. Yet we are also defining a social experience which is still in process, often indeed not yet recognized as social but taken to be private, idiosyncratic, and even isolating (Williams, 1977, p.132).

We might sense the tension deliberately built into the concept between a fixed set of relations that implies an established mode of feeling that can be subjected to analysis, logic, and reason and a focus on process articulated precisely in opposition to reason, logic, and ordered patterns, as an "actual alternative to the received and produced fixed forms" (Williams, 1977, p.131). This tension runs throughout Williams work (Matthews, 2010). We might notice the similarity with the tension we have encountered in Foucault's articulation of the regularities of discourse. However, in explaining his reference to "feeling", Williams also states that the point is "*not only that we must go beyond formally held and systematic beliefs*, though of course we have always to include them. It is that we are concerned with meanings and values *as they are actively lived and felt*" (Williams, 1977, p.132, my emphasis). We might thus venture that two dimensions are meshed together in this short piece: on the one hand, feeling as opposed to fixed concepts, a move that poses the problem of the tension between reified structures and social processes; on the other hand, feeling as the counterpart of thinking—"thought as felt and feeling as thought". I am interested in working through this second dimension of structures of feeling as an alternative to the (of course important) cultivation of the tension between fixed systems and processes and a step towards thinking about the resonance of discourse[48].

[48] Of course, Williams' analysis is not situated at the level of discourse. Consider, for instance, the following claim: "In spite of substantial and at some levels decisive continuities in grammar and vocabulary, no generation speaks quite the same language as its predecessors. (…) The difference

Such intermeshing of thought and feeling runs counter the dominant trend in Western thought which, from Plato to the Enlightenment, "has represented the mind as a spacious interiority capable of infinitely subtle and flexible formulations of rational thought and imagination (…) the capacity to take human progress to unimagined ends and (…) impaired only by the polluting presence of emotion and passion" (Alcorn, 2013, p.3). In this sense, to bring them together is an invitation to reconceptualize our understanding of knowledge. There is no thinking process that isn't also a felt process, expressed, among others, in its impulses, restrains, and tone. Alcorn (2013) pursues this relation by investigating how thinking always takes place in emotional circuits that bring together the will to knowledge with a "desire not to know", that is, an active though unconscious avoidance of certain thought processes due to how they are felt, to the emotional contexts or structures of feeling in which thinking takes place. In other words, modes of thinking are always veered and guided in terms of complex emotional landscapes which articulate desire, enjoyment, and denial as the flipside of thought. Alcorn further argues that "the solution to the desire not to know is not to banish emotion from the context of thought but to explore and reflect upon the various demands of emotion in relation to any context of thought" (Alcorn, 2013, p.34). We should not expect to get rid of emotion, but instead investigate the emotional landscape in which a particular thinking process takes place[49]. It is in this latter sense that a discursive formation is not only a mode of thinking, it is also a mood of thinking.

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can be defined in terms of *additions, deletions, and modifications, but these do not exhaust it*. What really changes is something quite general, over a wide range, and the description that often fits the change best is the literary term 'style'. *It is a general change*, rather than a set of deliberate choices, *yet choices can be deduced from it*" (Williams, 1977, p.131). Here, it appears clearly enough that the structure of feeling to which Williams refers works as a condition of possibility, a structure proper, from which choices can be deduced—we might venture, infinitely. It would be unfair to Williams to underplay his insistence on unfixing our conceptions of the social: he is clear that the "structure of feeling" is not about the fixity of reified category, but about the presence of moving and living processes (Williams, 1977, pp.128-9). While I take this to be an important insistence on the tension contained in *structure* of *feeling*, it remains a tension located at the level of conditions of possibility.

[49] Alcorn's (2013) argument remains, I believe, wedded to the possibility of proper use of reason through properly flexible emotional contexts. Indeed, the quotation above continues to state that "The exploration of emotion can work as a reorganization of emotion, and this reorganization allows the core self to broaden its conscious awareness and thus more effectively assimilate information for problem-solving purposes" (Alcorn, 2013, p.34). In this sense, the aim is ultimately to realize our pedagogical tools through a psychoanalytic framework. Put differently, Alcorn's reading of the relation of thinking to emotion is formulated in terms of failure and success, of the obstacle to reason that emotion might offer, and the successful use of reason that might come from proper emotional flexibility. Given his metaphor of the mind as "thirsty mule, unwilling to drink even when it has been brought to the water" (Alcorn, 2013, p.9), our aim is to make it so that the mule will drink the

In sum, we might say that the "work of thought" that characterizes the topicality of time in late 20th century is also a "work of feeling", a work that is felt. Guiding the vocabulary towards the one we have been building, I would propose that if we previously identified the conditions of existence of that the discourse of time in terms of fields of dispersion and coexistence, we might now venture that they must find a correlate in how they "are actively lived and felt", that is, in the specific structure of feeling of the discourse of time. Put differently, we might say that between a set of possible linguistic structures, logical deductions, and speech acts, only a number of them actually takes place in the late 20th century topicality of time largely due to how temporal thinking is always an emotional, felt, process. To keep close to Foucault's vocabulary, we might say that it takes the joint work of the "will to knowledge" and the "desire not to know" to articulate discourses. It is this joint work that makes for the structured landscapes of feeling that are the resonance, the adhesion force, the circuit of affect of the discourse of time. More precisely, it makes for the structure of feeling or circuit of affect that *is* the discourse of time—for the mood of time.

If we are to analyze discourse in a way that simultaneously describe its fields of dispersion and coexistence and its circuit of affect as of the same order, though not reducible to each other, we might do well to follow Dunker's (2015) call to avoid those "diagnostic rationalities" which separate diagnosis from social theory by thinking "diagnosis as an exclusively medical or psychoanalytic function that is, from there, displaced or applied to social theory" (Dunker, 2015, p.36, my translation). In our terms, we might say that we should avoid separating the diagnosis of the resonance of discourse from the description of discourse, by reading the first through a psychological framework and the second through discursive analysis. Indeed, this split between psychology and discourse assumes that each exists, fully constituted, apart from the other. But to say this would be also to assume that there are discourses which are not circuits of affect—and circuits of affect which have no discursive counterpart. This would run counter the understanding of discourse *as* a circuit of affect. Furthermore, it risks leading to forms of reductionism which would subsume one dimension to the other.

water. This does not invalidate what I take to be a disturbingly thought-provocative work, but it does mark a wedge between his association of thoughts and feeling and the one we are striving towards here. For a similar critique towards previous works by Alcorn, see Rickert (2007, pp.202-3).

First, by reducing affect to discourse, it would read our modes of feeling as epiphenomenal instances of more fundamental discursive formations. We might call this a *sociogenesis,* or *logogenesis*, of affect. Such analysis would aim at unravelling how society or a social formation—here, a discursive formation—causes, produces, or constitutes an affective condition in its subjects or members. It would seek the explanation of how a mode of feeling is created by a discourse. From this, we might go so far as expecting individual authors engaging in a discourse should be diagnosed with a particular affective structure. While it is possible that some discourses establish social conditions which enable particular modes of feeling, to remain at this level falls short of understanding the circuit of desire that is a discourse. Hence, we should differentiate, as much as possible, between affects caused by discourse and discursive affects.

Second, the opposite reductionism, of discourse to structures of feeling, would lead to what we may call a *psychogenesis* of discourse: the investigation of how the diffusion of a particular mode of feeling led to a specific discursive formation, seeking the explanation of discursive formation in affective predisposition of different groups. Such endeavor would risk a kind of fallacy of composition in which the particular mood of the members of a group would cause a regularity of discourse. If it is possible that psychological dispositions incite the participation in different modalities of discourse, we should also differentiate the affects that lead to a discourse from the affect that is discourse.

Finally, even if both reductionism are avoided, we might still fall short of treating discourse as a circuit of affect by anthropomorphizing discourse, treating it as analogous to human beings who possess a particular psychological structure—or, worse, who suffer from a psychological condition. Instead of investigating discourses as conditions of existence of subjects, it would treat discourse itself as a subject with no condition of existence, as a subject to a medical diagnosis with no ties to social theory. Such investigation would not only treat discourse as an individual, but also treat human beings as individuals who own internal psychic structures. Furthermore, in imagining that a discursive formation "contains" a structure of feeling, this endeavor would risk pathologizing discourse, in the sense of assuming that some discourses are more or less affectively adequate than others, ultimately seeking an "affectively normal" discursive formation—or to somehow "heal" discourse.

To avoid the separation of diagnosis and social theory, we might want to follow Dunker's depiction of the diagnostic rationality based on the principle that "a symptom cannot be separated from its modes of expression and of social recognition, nor from the myths which constrain its choice of terms, nor from the theories and romances from which it gets its form and meaning" (Dunker, 2015, p.39, my translation). In psychoanalysis, Dunker tells us of two consequences of this principle. First, it means, in contrast with other diagnostic rationalities, that the analyst "considers and includes the pre-constituted diagnosis given by the analysands themselves" which, to him, reveals the "role of the analyst as the one who must welcome and recognize, in the symptom, a knowledge that is unbearable, despised, or negated by the symbolic forms in which the subject takes part" (Dunker, 2015, p.39, my translation). In other words, the first role of the analyst is to listen carefully to what is brought by the analysand and diagnose in it the unsayable which drives speech. Second, it means that "unlike organic sickening, which follows its inexorable path, indifferent to naming, suffering is *altered as it is named*" (Dunker, 2015, p.38, my translation). Put differently, the diagnosis is never the simple application of an existing symptom to a particular case, the diagnosis itself interferes in—realizes and transforms—the symptom.

To put this in the terms we have been using, we might say that the diagnosis of a discursive circuit of affect must start from the description of that discourse, the fields of dispersion and coexistence which are that discourse, and welcome in it the structure of feeling that is expressed and makes possible those articulation, even though it is not explicitly stated. As something that is both in discourse but not of its description, the diagnosis is bound to speculation. This speculation, however, is never detached from discourse, as available codes and myths constrain its terms. Hence, to diagnose a discourse is less a speech act of the order of Austin's (1962) christening—the speech act "I name you X", proffered by the proper subject under the proper conditions being felicitous—and more a discursive practice in which a structure of feeling is simultaneously the condition of existence of discourse and its effect.

I believe this is how we should more fully understand Edward Said's insightful (if in passing) diagnosis that "*Orientalism is a form of paranoia*, knowledge of another kind, say, from ordinary historical knowledge" (Said, 2003, p.73, my emphasis). Notice how Said is precise: the discourse of Orientalism isn't

a consequence of paranoia—an absurd reduction of the historical and social processes taking place around that discourse—nor and it is not a cause of paranoia—calling for (social?) therapeutics for diagnosis and treatment. It is not that Marx or Disraeli were paranoid people, nor that a large number of European individuals were paranoid; instead, *Orientalism is a paranoia*.

Turning to psychoanalysis, we find that paranoia is "characterised by more or less systematised delusion, with a predominance of ideas of reference but with no weakening of the intellect and, generally speaking, no tendency towards deterioration" (Laplanche; Pontalis, 1988, p.296). We might thus venture that there would be no Orientalism without such systematized delusion and predominance of reference without weakening of the intellect; in fact, we might just as well use those terms to define Orientalism, taken as a discourse. In the opposite direction, we might also wonder (though I keep this affirmation speculative) what of "paranoia", as it has come to be defined in psychoanalysis, is owed to Orientalist myths, tales, and narrativity, and to the encounters and intersections between the psychoanalytic and the Orientalist discourse[50]. Hence, we shouldn't think about paranoia and Orientalism as two elements external to each other; they are inextricably linked: paranoia is part and parcel of Orientalism—and, we may surmise, vice-versa—and effectively produces its adhesion force, the circuit of affect through which it exists as a discourse.

We might take advantage of Dunker's diagnostic rationality and translate it into a practice of reading and diagnosing discourse; perhaps better said, a practice of careful listening to discourse. Indeed, while this practice must, in line with the kind of analysis of discursive formations proposed above, read the surface of discourse for its fields of dispersion and coexistence, it must also "listen" carefully for the structure of feeling of discourse, for that which is in the saying though not itself said. The point, it must be noted, is not to search for a deeper truth hidden in

[50] Indeed, we might wonder how much of the clinical material famously informing the making of psychoanalytic discourse relates to what Nandy (1983) called the "cultural pathologies" that colonialism brought about in colonies and metropoles alike, including the "magical feelings of omnipotence and permanence" that became part of British selfhood—as well as other imperial cultures. In particular, we know from Bhabha (1994) that the ambivalences of colonialism shoot colonial relations through with paranoia. On the one hand, to be a "colonizer" is to desire to be loved and recognized by despised others, structuring a demand for love ("I want them to love me") that turns to hatred of denied recognition ("I hate them") and paranoiac fear ("They hate me"). On the other hand, to be colonized is to desire to take over the subject position of the colonizer while keeping to the pain of colonization, thus structuring its own form of paranoia.

the silence of discourse, but to listen to the very present structure of feeling through which thought is felt and feeling is thought. Furthermore, such listening shouldn't take the form of applying the law of an immutable structure of feeling to the concrete case at hand, but, giving priority to the listening, work out how discourse impinges on affect as much as affect does on discourse.

Addressing the issue of the desire not to know from the perspective of the tracking of its process, Alcorn (2013) claims that we may identify emotional landscapes by tracking linguistic patterns or logical deductions and noticing when they "veer". Indeed (in a perhaps too abrupt yet useful inversion) he notes that "'links' in thought are determined by emotion. (…) Emotion, not logic, drives patterns of linked thoughts" (Alcorn, 2013, p.29). Put more mildly, we might surmise that, in listening through a discourse, we might endeavor not only to describe the fields of dispersion it regulates and through which it exists, but also to follow the process through which those fields are linked together and placed apart. Here, we might be reminded of that intimate reading practice that Collingwood attributes to philosophy. To Collingwood (1933), while we might read historians and other sciences to obtain the result of their work—the process of source finding being separated from us, readers—the reading of philosophy cannot be the search for a readymade product. Philosophy, like literature, is a process that can only be achieved by taking part in its motion, by following the thought process or narration engaged by the author. As in dialectics, the product of philosophy cannot be separated from its process; it is that process in an altered form. In this sense, "[i]n reading the philosophers, we 'follow' them: that is, we understand what they think, and reconstruct in ourselves, so far as we can, the processes by which they have come to think it. There is an intimacy in [this] relation" (Collingwood, 1933, p.211). This intimate connection is fundamental, as only by sharing an experience—we might say, only by taking part in a feeling—can proper listening take place.

So much for philosophical criticism, so much for the analysis of discursive formations. The reader of discourse must be, first and foremost, a good listener, able not only to describe the fields of dispersion and coexistence of a discourse, but also to *follow the process of their institution* in order to identify (with) the affective circuits in which they take place, to reconstruct the structure of feeling that organizes it, its emotional context. Unlike Alcorn, however, our aim in doing will be not so much to make reason work properly by engaging in more adequate

emotional context, but to engage in those emotional contexts, experience them, as the condition for understanding discourse. We are to apply Collingwood's claim about reading philosophers to the reading of discourse; if to the "basic and ultimate task of following or understanding [discourse], coming to see what [it] means by sharing [its] experience, the task of criticizing [its] doctrine, or determining how far it is true and how far false, is altogether secondary", we might venture that to criticize its structure of feeling or determining how best to articulate emotional context is, likewise, secondary. Instead, "[a] good reader, like a good listener, must be quiet in order to be attentive; able to refrain from obtruding his own thoughts, the better to apprehend those [in the discourse]; not passive, but using his activity to follow where he is led, not to find a path of his own" (Collingwood, 1933, p.215).

Hence, we might listen carefully to the movements of discourse, follow them in order to better understand it. In doing so, we might find ways to specify the structure of feeling that is inseparable from the existence of discourse, that pervades and guides the constitution of its fields of dispersion and coexistence. Put differently, we might grasp at that which in discourse escapes direct description, while nonetheless remaining a constitutive part of it. Such specification is not straightforward: it involves not only working from within the movement of discourse, but also in terms of the codes, myths, and theories that are available to express this discursive circuit of affect—a circuit that simultaneously makes for discourse and is made through it. However, this intricate relation is what allows us to approach discourse itself as a circuit of affect and, hence, make claim to the resonance and adhesion force of discourse in terms that avoid both eroding its autonomy while going beyond the formal existence of heterogeneous force. In this sense, this practice of listening might open the way for us to establish the reproduction of discourse in terms of the resonance of its circuits of affect.

3.4. Concluding remarks

This chapter has endeavored to move us from an acquired curiosity in relation to the conditions under which troubled times came to be read in terms of time troubles towards the theoretical and methodological training of our forms to pursue such curiosity. In particular, I have endeavored to explore how the concept

of discourse can help us make sense of the late 20th century topicality of time—thus inviting us to think in terms of a discourse of time.

In doing so, we have gone through different engagements with discourse. First, I followed Foucault's late 1960s and early 1970s methodological discussion on discursive formation in order to define discourse as a specific level of analysis which can be differentiated from linguistic, logical, and socio-historical investigation. I have determined this level as that of the system of rules organizing the modality of existence of temporal statements, that is, the level in which claims about time emerge in relation to particular fields of dispersion and coexistence of objects, concepts, subjects, and strategies. In doing so, I proposed the reading and surface description of these fields as the proper methodology to establish the conditions of existence of the discourse of time and its correlate power effects through which we come to govern ourselves and others. Second, in order to sidestep the temporal tensions in which the dilemma between the descriptive and prescriptive dimension of these discursive rules led us, I proposed we thought about discourse in terms of how it produces resonance, that is, forces of identification and self-recognition. More specifically, I argued that the dependency of all subjects and of knowledge production itself on discourse leads discursive formations to establish passionate attachments—one would rather be limited in its existence than risk not existing at all. Third and finally, I worked through different concepts—adhesion force, circuit of affect, structure of feeling, desire not to know—in order to specify the way in which particular discourses operate these passionate attachments, that is, how specific discursive formations can be said to establish their own mode of resonance. More specifically, I proposed we think of discourse as a circuit of affect, a structure of feeling, meaning that the conditions of possibility of knowledge are not only fields of dispersion and coexistence, but also modes of feeling that can be diagnosed and specified through a practice of listening and following the movements of discourse that simultaneously capture the terms given and their relations with existing modes of expression and recognition. In sum, by conceptualizing discourses as circuits of affect, that is, as inseparable from a structure of feeling that is part and parcel of the work of thought, we have begun working through ways of side-stepping the formal problem of the descriptive or prescriptive nature of regularities—encapsulated in Foucault's fortuitous

formulation of the historical a priori—in favor of an account of how the resonance, heaviness, or adhesion force of specific discourses work towards their reproduction.

Having in mind this theorization of discourse and the correlate methodological approach, we might now turn to the aim of making sense of the conditions of existence of the late 20th century sudden topicality of time as a particular mode of problematization. Hence, in Part Two of this dissertation, through the surface reading of its fields of dispersion and coexistence, the recognition of its pattern of resonance, and the diagnosis of its circuit of affect, I propose an analysis of the discourse of time. In doing so, I endeavor not only to reinterpret those debates, but also to point to how we have come to govern ourselves and others through their regime of truth. Put differently, in what follows, I aim not to clarify our uses of time or settle social and political debate through temporal claims, but to understand the kind of world we situate ourselves in as we engage the fields of dispersion and coexistence through which "time" emerges as amenable to knowledge claims.

In order to do so, however, one last point need to be settled: we still need to establish starting points: how to start the reading and listening of a discourse that is characterized by fields of dispersion and coexistence? We need either a sense of the fields we are talking about—which would already give us the shape of the discourse we intend to demonstrate—or a sense of the discourse—which would limit the dispersion in non-discursive terms. Nodding at this methodological difficulty relating to the analysis of discourse as a description of discursive relations, Foucault notes that

> it is not possible to describe all the relations that may emerge in this way without some guidelines. A provisional division must be adopted as an initial approximation: an initial region that analysis will subsequently demolish and, if necessary, reorganize. But how is such a region to be circumscribed? On the one hand, we must choose, empirically, a field in which the relations are likely to be numerous, dense, and relatively easy to describe (…) [and] on the other hand (…) relatively unformalized groups of discourses (Foucault, 2013, pp.32-33)

Foucault makes two important points on how to begin the analysis of a discourse. First, having established the present from which we draw the analysis, the establishment of the point of entry to that present—the "initial region"—responds first and foremost to a pragmatic need: the more numerous the relations and the less

formalized they are, the easier it is to describe a discourse and make emerge the specific level of the statement. There are problems with this, since to identify a nest of network implies already knowing what we are looking for. However, we might calm some of our skepticism by noting Foucault's second point: the choice of entry point is not aimed at containing the analysis, but only as a self-destructing ground: as the analysis of discourse resituates the initial delimitation in terms of the autonomous level of discourse, it undoes the very limits that it took as a starting point. Hence, the analysis of discourse must start in an initial region, aiming precisely at undoing it for the sake of fully grasping the discourse being investigated.

We might get a better sense of this by turning to Bartelson's (1995) reading of the genealogy of discourse as both episodical and exemplary. While I don't work in terms of genealogy, the definition serves the analysis of discourse I propose here. By "episodical", Bartelson means that our aim is not to "to depict an age, an event or a culture in its entirety (…) but only those historical accidents and details which serve to make the present more intelligible" (Bartelson, 1995, p.76). By "exemplary", in turn, he means that even episodes should not be depicted as continuous moments, but as sets of examples. In this sense, genealogy is, at least in part, of the order of injunction: one must use a general assumption about an episode to choose examples from an empirical body, and then use those examples to account for the episode: "an example is chosen on the basis of a hypothetical rule which governs the formation of examples within this field, and then used to support the hypothesis of such general rule" (Bartelson, 1995, p.8). Likewise, the analysis of the discourse of time to follow is not an attempt to explain the "*zeitgeist*" of the age (Foucault, 1972), nor to exhaustively describe every single discursive relation giving the discourse of time its objects, concepts, subjects, and strategies. Instead, I select a number of episodes—selected both for their dense network of connections and their still emerging formalization—that work to make the discourse of time intelligible as a discourse by multiplying examples of its operation.

We might feel suspicious of the kind of arbitrariness that makes itself clear in the excessive circularity of these formulations[51]. Indeed, they seem inevitable

[51] Bartelson describes the standard objection to this arbitrariness as stating that "[t]o the extent that genealogy denies the necessity of a suprahistorical point of view, it must lapse into fiction. To the extent that genealogy does not deal with fixed identities, its object of study is fluid. To the extent

once we note that the analysis of discourse is simultaneously an account of the present and of the vantage point from which it is written. Claiming Bartelson's words about genealogy, we might say that the analysis of discourse is purposefully elliptical: its role is not to judge the present from outside itself nor to relate the present to its more truthful representation: it is no more—and no less—than to "cut the present down to size" (Bartelson, 1995, p.83), to jolt us into realizing that we, 'our' present, and 'our' perspective is not as important as we would think—and, therefore, that our initial decision not to take it too seriously might have been a good one after all.

that genealogy is episodical, the choice and definition of the episodes to be investigated are never undertaken from a stable set of criteria. To the extent that genealogy is exemplary, its sampling of examples is never representative and does not cover the wealth of sources" (Bartelson 1995, p.77).

PART TWO.
THE DISCOURSE OF TIME IN WORLD POLITICS

Introduction to Part Two

> "[W]hen exits close and options are cancelled our vision is suddenly sharpened and we can catch ourselves in the act of seeing" (Kariel, 1977, p.129).
>
> Critique is the exercise of narrating one's wound through another's.

Part One of this dissertation set up a problem for us: by suspending the claim to legitimacy of the late 20th century proliferation of debates around time in the social sciences and the humanities, it invited the question of how to make sense of the nexus of power and knowledge, the regimes of truth and modes of government, that are articulated around that sudden topicality of time? Put differently, we worked towards the construction of the question of what world is constituted by the way we have come to think seriously and profusely about time? Furthermore, we also examined theoretical and methodological positions from which to offer an answer to such question by specifying it in terms of the description and diagnosing of a discourse of time. In doing so, however, we noted that to begin such work of description and diagnostic it was necessary to delimit an entry point into the discourse of time—even if it would come undone as a set of limits during the analysis—less it become impossible to make sense of all the material that could come up.

In **Part Two**, I address the question of the discourse of time by describing and diagnosing the conditions of existence of the discussions and debates around time in relation to world politics and, more particularly, as it takes place in the disciplinary field of International Relations (IR). I offer three reasons for this decision on a starting point.

First, the study of world politics and the field of International Relations are the institutional loci of this dissertation and in which I have come to be located. In this sense, these questions—about both the politics and the discourse of time—were first formulated in this site and in relation to this literature, and they certainly remain tied to it, even if often in unacknowledged ways. Furthermore, international relations have proven itself, perhaps counterintuitively, a site particularly prone to raise the questions I propose here, as it is, in fact, in relation to them that they first

occurred to me. In retrospect, I surmise there are two sets of reasons for this—they compose my two other (more formal) justification.

In the second place, then, the field of study of world politics is particularly useful as an entry point to the question of the discourse of time because it fits the pragmatic criteria that Foucault invokes for entry points into discursive analyses (see Chapter 3). Indeed, the simultaneously recent and intense spike in works and references dealing with time in world politics make for a site in which discursive relations are both dense and not too institutionalized. On the one hand, it is difficult to ignore the proclaimed rise in discussions about the centrality of thinking about the role of time and temporality in world politics, an affirmed "boom" which has spurred many publications, conferences, panels, and edited volumes for some decades now. On the other hand, most of those taking part in such increased density these days would promptly argue that this is a novel trend—if a trend at all—and that there is still a lot of traction to be obtained. In this sense, this literature is particularly prone to be described in terms of the discursive relations it articulates. Furthermore, given the self-narrated novelty of this turn to time, the archive is manageable in terms of both size and accessibility. Most importantly for my purposes, an incipient literature criticizing the recent topicality of time in IR from the perspective of an even more serious engagement with time has more recently begun to appear (Hom, 2018; Agathangelou, 2016). These critical voices lend strength to my initial call to not take these engagements with time in the study of world politics too seriously in order to suspend their claim to legitimacy and interrogate the discourse of time[52]. In sum, by offering a dense though manageable network of relations which is neither too institutionalized nor so uncontentious as to make the suspension of claims to legitimacy too difficult, the topicality of time in the study of world politics offers a particularly useful entry point to describe and diagnose the discourse of time. Finally, in part due to this rapid proliferation, many of these texts can be labelled what Foucault calls "practical texts", that is, texts that

[52] I have come across both these pieces too late in my construction of the problem of time in/and IR to be able to fully flesh out their relation to my own construction. At first sight, it seems to me that, although we share a skeptical outlook towards part of what might pass (contentiously) for a "temporal turn in IR", they are invested in reforming this movement in order to produce a substantially more serious engagement with the topic—while, on my part, I am more interested in being less serious about time and more serious about discourse. There are important relations between these two kinds of work, both together and with and against each other. At this point, however, I cannot fully address this tension and the productive insights that might come from it.

operate explicitly as practices, telling us how to act and why to do so—that is, offering rules and justifications for them (Foucault, 1991; Bacchi, 2012). This makes for a favorable archive to address issues of problematization and power-knowledge nexus.

Third and finally, I believe that international relations actually offers a privileged site for this analysis not only in its form, but also in its content. In particular, as I endeavor to show in Chapter 4, debates around time and temporality in world politics are tensioned in terms of what exactly makes for their more relevant contribution. If, for part of that literature, the recent emergence of these discussions offset a long-term silence on the topic, for another part, debates about the temporal articulation of modern sovereignty not only intimate a longer lineage but offer a reading of the relation between time and modern politics in general which poses problem to most common references to time in the social sciences and the humanities. In this sense, debates starting on world politics might, as we would expect them to, quickly undo their ground and move to broader issues, not only due to the tension towards claims to temporal awareness, but also due to the repositioning of those tensions in relation to the broader problems of modern sovereignty and modern politics. In sum, in this part of the dissertation, I propose to address the discourse of time by describing and diagnosing the recent and not-so-recent debates on the relation of time to world politics. In doing so, I take advantage of a set of pragmatic benefits (density, manageability, lack of institutionalization, critical self-awareness) which—out of luck or necessity—are situated in a site which quickly opens itself up to problems of modern sovereignty and modern politics that are not contained to whatever we might want to define as the empirical dimension of world politics.

In order to do so, this Part is divided into two chapters, each dedicated to one of the theoretical and methodological approaches to the analysis of the discourse of time I have presented in Chapter 3.

In **Chapter 4**, I describe the discursive relations articulated in the debates relating time to world politics in order to make emerge the discourse of time. Starting from the proliferation of calls to take time seriously under the claim to a novel temporal approach in the study of world politics, I work towards suspending the claim to legitimacy of this narrative of improvement in order to direct our curiosity towards discursive questions. To do so, I explore the tension that can be

read between a literature discussing time *and* IR and another one engaging the issue of time *in* IR. While they can each be said to raise critical questions to the other, directing us towards a solution to problems with our understanding of world politics, I propose we don't try to solve the debate and, instead, use it as a source of skepticism towards the claims to self-evident legitimacy of each approach. Thus suspending the immediacy of the claims to time in world politics, I engage in the description of the discourse of time by turning to two sets of texts.

In the first part of this Chapter, I turn to a first group of arguments under the guise of what I have called "time *and* world politics", that is, the way in which time—more specifically, complex theories and philosophies of time—is "brought in" as a critical tool to interpret and engage with troubled times in world politics. Here, I will follow one commentator whom, in line with a (often disliked) tendency in theories of international relations, characterized this bringing in of time as a "temporal turn". As expected, given the explicit movement to think about world politics through issues of time, this literature has a lot to tell us about the discourse of time. Thus, I propose a surface reading of this "temporal turn", revealing the discursive relations that establish its fields of dispersion and coexistence of concepts, objects, affects, and strategies. In doing so, however, a paradox emerges at the heart of this literature. Instead of doing away with the paradox or with the literature sustaining it, I propose we explore this paradoxical set up of the discourse of time.

I do so by engaging, **in the second part of this Chapter**, with a second set of texts under the sign of "time *in* world politics", that is, the way in which different conceptions of time are read as always already part of modern sovereignty and, therefore, of world politics. In this sense, the literature mobilized in this section can be read as taking part in the discourse of time. However, it is also critical of the assumption that "time" can be easily added to world politics from the outside. By reading the temporal turn through these arguments, I shed light on the relation between the emerging paradoxes of the temporal turn and the modern political discourse it tends to silently reproduces. However—and this is where we must insist on nuance in our reading—in doing so, these arguments also tend to open themselves to the critique that they freeze time in the very same way that the temporal turn set out to correct, and that their critical uptake is only as secure as the ground they invoke to stand on by taming time. In this sense, we might say that

though this literature invite skepticism towards the temporal turn, it does so in ways that might invite skepticism back towards it. Again, instead of discarding this paradox, I propose we take it seriously as a constitutive dimension of the discourse of time. In this sense, I argue that the discourse of time can be characterized by this movement of paradoxically turning and returning from and towards time in the formulation of time troubles and time solutions.

In view of this particular movement of discourse, **Chapter 5** is dedicated to make sense of this dynamic of paradoxical turnings by diagnosing the circuit of affect of the discourse of time. In doing so, I argue that the discourse of time is a form of melancholia, and that we can make sense of this claim by both diagnosing the discourse of time as melancholic and by reading melancholia as interpellated by the discourse of time. I do this is three steps. **In the first part of the chapter**, I look at a fairly traditional reading of the Freudian conception of melancholia, most of all in his earlier work on the subject, in order to approximate the concept from the discourse. However, as they remain externally constituted, this first reading doesn't get us to a full description of the discursive circuit of affect. Hence, **in the second part of the chapter**, I turn to Butler's reinterpretation of Freudian melancholia not as a psychic process but as a full-blown circuitry articulating power and affect. Through this reconceptualization, I more fully unravel the discourse of time as a form of melancholia, a discursive circuit of affect that not only make for the adhesion force of discourse, but also for an important part of its effectiveness. Last but not least, in **the third part of this chapter**, I propose to understand how melancholia is captured within the discourse of time in the late 20th century social sciences and humanities by engaging with the debate on Left Melancholy. In doing so, and as the discourse of time proliferates and is grafted into more discourses and dimensions of life, we might wonder about the *mood of times*, that is, the circuit of desires that articulate so many academic debates and political dispositions in our contemporary

In sum, **Part Two** is dedicated to approaching the question of the conditions of existence and power effects of the late 20th century sudden topicality of time—as formulated in Chapter 2—by deploying the theoretical and methodological tools presented in Chapter 3 in order to make emerge the discourse of time through a discursive reading of the literature calling us to take time seriously in relation of to the study of world politics in International Relations. I do so by engaging in one

injunction—to avoid easy exits in favor of staying with the tension and seeing what kind of world it constitutes—and using it to investigate the conditions of existence and power effects of both the fields of dispersion and coexistence at the surface of discourse, and the circuit of affect that is that discourse.

Again, before getting started, I want to reinforce one caveat which has been raised in the methodological discussion in Part One. Many of the themes that I highlight in the analysis that follows will feel familiar to those accustomed to Enlightenment debates on time, history, and historico-political transformation. This might lead to a sense of ahistoricity in both my method and argument. I believe we might calm our (shared) suspicions in considering that to understand the field of forces in which a discourse emerges is a step in the investigation of its history or genealogical descent. Said differently, that the questions raised here are familiar doesn't mean we must read them as variations upon a theme—often found in canonical texts. We might, instead, ponder seriously about the theme, and then trace its trajectories to those places—and/or different ones. That these analyses don't impede each other might allow our familiarity to incite curiosity instead of suspicion, or to make space for a productive sense of estrangement.

4. Time and/in International Relations

In reading recent studies explicitly dedicated to issues of time and temporality in International Relations (IR), one can expect to encounter a justificatory claim to the effect that they fill a lack in a field of studies which has long relegated time and temporality to a background position in theorizing, and only recently begun to explore the concept directly—and to many fruitful insights. In this sense, the introduction of a recent edited volume titled *Time, Temporality and Global Politics* (Hom *et al*, 2016)[53] affirms not only that "IR as a whole exhibits something of a 'temporal blindness' compared to other disciplines", but also that "[i]n recent years, some IR scholars have turned their attention to time and the temporal dimension of international politics (…) show[ing] how the adoption of what could be described as a 'temporal lens' can greater enhance our understanding of various human phenomena" (McKay, 2016, p.4 and pp.1-2)[54]. In what comes in a particularly normalized version of this claim—the insertion of "time" within the well-established (if somehow worn out) disciplinary history of successive "turns"—a commentator claimed that "following the various critical, linguistic, sociological, and practical turns in IR scholarship, we now may be witnessing a *temporal turn*" (Berenskoetter, 2011, p.664, my emphasis).

Taking cue from the vocabulary in these quotations, we might notice the problem addressed by a "temporal turn" as articulated in such a way that temporal solutions ("temporal lenses") to time troubles ("temporal blindness") appear as a way of improving our understanding which has, up until this point, been hampered (hence the "novelty"). Put differently, the temporal turn from blindness to new lenses invoke a way of problematizing our understanding of world politics in a way that is familiar, even relatable, to the broader tendency to read troubled times in terms of time troubles. Likewise, it invokes a call to take time seriously in our study of world politics—a call that has not gone unanswered.

[53] I explicitly quote this formulation for both its straightforwardness and for the book collection in which it appears. Dedicated to "cutting edge scholarship presented in a format that preferences brevity and accessibility" and distributed under Creative Commons, the e-IR book collection offers a good place to identify current ways of posing problems.

[54] For some other recent examples, see Edkins (2011, p.127), Morini (2012), Hom (2013, pp.12-19), McIntosh (2015, p.469; 475), Solomon and Steele (2016, p.12), Agathangelou and Killian (2016), Huysmans and Nogueira (2016, pp.311-314), McKay (2016).

Before further exploring the problem beginning to be sketched, however, a complication emerges, since to raise these points is also to be faced with a bibliographic puzzle. Indeed, the claim to a position of marginality of time in the field of IR sits uncomfortably next to the importance of the category in critical inquiries since, at least, the 1980s[55]. The works of Ashley (1988; 1989), Der Derian (1990; 1992), Gill (1991), Walker (1991; 1993), and Bartelson (1995) quickly come up as some of the contributions that have explicitly engaged with issues of time and temporality, most notably in relation to the issue of modern sovereignty, though they rarely appear—with the eventual exception of Walker—as common references in the temporal turn in the same way more recent contributions do.

It would thus seem that claims about the relation of time and temporality with IR are caught between *contending conceptual trajectories*. On the one hand, the "temporal turn" summons the cure of a previous blindness through the new lenses of investigations about time and IR—and the correlate transformations in our understandings. On the other hand, the context of existing, well-known literatures dealing with the topic in the field challenges both the claims to blindness and to novelty. Such diagnosis at cross-purpose is reflected in the distinction between the themes of two recent conferences in the field. The 2014 Annual Convention of the International Studies Association (ISA) starts from the claim that "International relations scholars are keenly aware of the role of temporal dynamics in understanding phenomena of international politics, and the influence of temporality is acknowledged in works adhering to diverse methodological traditions" (ISA, 2014). On the other hand, the 2017 Annual Millennium Conference seeks "to draw our disciplinary assumptions of time, temporality, and history out of the dark (...) [since w]hile many disciplines—from sociology to culture studies to philosophy—have long grappled with 'the fourth dimension', the discipline of IR still has much to rethink" (Millennium, 2017). It would seem that the field (at least institutionally) takes time and temporality to be both a resolved issue and a deeply undertheorized one. Given these contending positions, how to make sense of critical accounts of

[55] There is a vast literature that precedes this so-called turn and that can be read as engaging in similar arguments or reading practices (see Ashley, 1984; Schmidt, 1998). That being said, my point here is not to argue that a "temporal turn" should *actually* be located some two decades prior to the implied chronology, nor to claim some original and originative insight in the dissident literature emerging in the 1980s. Instead, I want to highlight the erasures accompanying any such dating in order to bring out a tension that might displace calls for seriousness about time from its location at the side of legitimacy at the end of a tradition of silence.

world politics that call us to, at last, take time seriously, in a context of existing reflections on the problem?

The predominant way through which this has taken place within the temporal turn is, maybe surprisingly, through a narrative of conceptual improvement[56]. Indeed, noticing the same type of discrepancy, Hom raises two hypotheses: "[e]ither there is an enormous misunderstanding dividing the field (not beyond the realm of possibilities), or loose wordplay has proliferated to the point of absurdity" (2013, p.19, n.47). In both cases, we might notice that a previous failure to properly deal with time—due to lack of understanding or seriousness—leads to the tension.

From this viewpoint, a trajectory of time in IR can be read as retrospectively guiding claims to a temporal turn. Starting with so-called structural realism—and the ensuing so-called "neo-neo synthesis"—gaining terrain as a theoretical orthodoxy in the 1980s and 1990s (Waltz, 1979; Baldwin, 1993), a number of critical responses can be read as arguing against their lack of sensibility to history, process, and time in the shaping and understanding of international politics. This involved historical sociological approaches arguing the need to account for the historical emergence of the modern state in relation to variegated forms of political community and the transition from medieval times to modern times (Ruggie, 1993; Spruyt, 1994; Reus-Smit, 1999; Teschke, 2003; Hobson, 2002), the historicist critique of the ahistoricity of neorealism (Cox, 1981; Bieler; Morton, 2001), the sociologically inflected foregrounding of process over structure that informed constructivist responses to structural realism (Kratochwil; Ruggie, 1986; Wendt, 1987; 1999), and the cosmopolitan argument for the improvement of international politics towards an emerging post-Westphalian world politics (Linklater, 1998;

[56] We might consider other strategies of accommodation between these contending trajectories, though none of them acquire the discursive force of claims to improvement. On the one hand, claims to historical and cultural change might invite us to take time seriously due to the limitation of previous temporal reflections to particular historical contexts (which speaks increasingly less to a postmodern, late modern or late capitalist present) or cultural contexts (which cannot be universalized beyond the West). In world politics, such claims are more commonly found in security debates on preemption and the ensuing changing temporal orientations of security, in transformations of global capitalism, and on non-Western conceptions of time. On the other hand, claims to the variety of temporal issues in world politics might invite us to take time seriously due to the limitation of previous temporal reflections to specific topics. Such claims commonly ground endeavors to unravel the range of practices and power relations that have been and continue to be necessary to create international temporal regimes, such as the World Standard Time (Hom, 2010; Stevens, 2016b).

2007). However, many of these approaches were based on accounts of history relying on unacknowledged assumptions of progress, eurocentrism, and state-centrism. Responding to such problems, investigations on the spatiotemporal assumptions grounding our understanding of politics can then be seen as endeavoring to take up not only the faux structuralism of the neo-neo synthesis and the teleological underpinnings shared by them and their critiques, but, more broadly, the foundations of modern politics in the project of controlling history and time in sovereign space (Ashley, 1984; 1988; 1989; Walker, 1991; 1993; Bartelson ,1995; Der Derian 1990). These latter approaches, in turn, come to be seen as themselves insufficiently attentive to issues of time, despite their serious critique of the literature "preceding" them in this series.

One straightforward version of this argument is conjured up by Hutchings' critique of so-called critical IR theory—in its Frankfurtian, postmodernist, and poststructuralist guise—from the viewpoint of time (Hutchings, 2007; see also Hutchings, 2005 on theories of global civil society and Hutchings, 2011 on post-Kantian cosmopolitanism). In her view, "although these arguments do much to undermine the role of the idea of *progress* in accounts of international political time, they are less successful in undermining the notion that a *singular* temporal perspective has a privileged status within international politics" (Hutchings, 2007, p.81, emphasis in the original). Hence, by turning to the temporal assumptions underlying arguments by Cox, Ashley, and Der Derian (as well as the broader field of critical theories inspired by the political philosophy of Habermas, the post-Marxist materialism of Virilio, and the untimely politics of Derrida), Hutchings shows that the lack of specific discussions on 'time' leads to the failure of living up to their aim of addressing plurality and difference in world politics. In a similar vein, Hom (2013) offers a thorough overview of recent and not-so-recent works in the field that have engaged in 'time utterances' from a variety of theoretical perspectives. He shows both that the field relies on "various temporal metaphors and 'times of…' but almost no coherent explication *of Time itself*, whatever that might be" (Hom, 2013, p.19), and that despite such repeated references to the concept, "it is unclear whether most IR scholars have thought about Time thoroughly enough to provide an adequate framework for understanding its role in international political phenomena or their study" (Hom, 2013, p.19; see also p.232-3). Indeed, Hom shows that even in face of references to a temporal turn, "Time

itself" is usually conflated with either specific temporal interpretations (such as progress, decline, and acceleration) or fuzzy discussions about the shape of time, opposing "linear time" while recuperating equally "linear" metaphors as alternatives (Hom, 2013, pp.12-19). From such a temporal viewpoint, recent works have endeavored to refer back to historical sociological approaches to world politics in order to read them in terms of their relation not only to progress and Eurocentrism, but to time more generally (Vaughan-Williams 2005; Lundborg, 2015).

In both cases, we can read calls to take time seriously in a context of existing time discussions as expressing a theoretical need given previous failures at expanding our accounts of world politics and its plurality. In other words, despite previous critical works relation to the category of time, they have failed to deepen this discussion by engaging more seriously with time and timing[57]. In this context, the literatures presented above come to be organized as a series: historical and sociological accounts of world politics are more sensitive to history and process than "structuralist" ones, although they continue to assume progressive timelines. Critical engagements with such assumptions lead debates on the spatiotemporal grounds of modern sovereignty to be more sensitive to issues of time, but these continue to be mixed up with matters of history and with unified assumptions about time. In reading the trajectory of time in world political debates in these terms, the temporal turn can be seen as the more serious and complete engagement with temporal problem in interpretations of world politics[58].

The insights coming from these approaches have undoubtedly fine-tuned our understanding of world politics. However, despite the strength of these

[57] If they remain, in my opinion, the clearest formulations, Hutchings and Hom are certainly not alone in this narrative of conceptual improvement. See, for instance, Berenskoetter (2011), Mendes and Furtado (2012), Solomon (2014), and McIntosh (2015). I have also worked in terms of such narratives in previous engagements with this theme working with Victor Lage (Chamon; Lage, 2015; Lage; Chamon, 2016); some of the cracks leading me to the project of this dissertation shore up in the latter.

[58] The introduction to the edited volume quoted above is particularly informative of the power of this narrative and its relation to received traditions of time troubles, precisely in just how it manages to ignore difficulties in its own claim to a "temporal turn", even when overviewing the pre-existing work on time in the field (McKay, 2016, pp.4-6). Indeed, such acknowledgement of a historical tradition of interrogating the time(s) of international politics doesn't prevent the author from concluding with a section devoted to "Accounting for the Neglect [of time]"—here explained (away) as an effect of the elusiveness of time (think Augustinian aphorism) and the history of a field obsessed with timeless space (think the tradition opposing time and space) (McKay, 2016, pp.9-10). Extrapolating from this, we might wonder how the "temporal turn" manages to settle these divergences as a condition of its validity.

arguments and this disciplinary narrative, we might take some time to wonder about other ways of engaging the apparently paradoxical accounts of the role of "time" in interpretations of world politics. Indeed, in the trajectory presented above, interpretations of world politics appear as an endeavor to represent, understand, and organize the world. In this sense, most of the problems are framed in epistemological and ethical terms—how best to know world politics. However, the literature on time and modern sovereignty I refer to read IR theory not as a set of tools to understand processes taking place under the name of "international politics", but as an expression of the limits and conditions of the modern political discourse. In this sense, questions are framed in terms of how political problems are formulated, in relation to what discourses, and to which constituencies. Speaking to this distinction it has been said that the

> problematic character of the international is now often reduced to a matter of 'perspectives,' deflecting discussion onto the epistemological grounds upon which the problem of the international is to be known, often with ethical qualities being attached to the choice of appropriate epistemologies. What counts as a problem, or as what some might call a research-guiding question, is thereby deferred in favour of debates about the appropriate stance to be taken towards that problem as a matter of legitimate scholarship. (…) [T]he discipline encourages the assumption that the problem of the international refers to a realm of reality with clear boundaries about which the discipline can generate substantial claims to knowledge, whether scientific, realistic or even critical (Bigo; Walker, 2007, p.728).

Importantly for my purposes here, these boundaries have themselves been described in terms of space and time. In other words, while approaching issues related to the temporality of world politics, this literature insisted in tackling them not so much in terms of appropriate (temporal) stances towards a given object/problem, but in terms of the conditions under which specific problems came to be articulated as problems within political discourse, in particular, modern sovereignty. In turn, these conditions were articulated as the ambiguous entanglements of both time and space, time and history, history and structure, determinacy and contingency, simplicity and complexity, the international and the world, the social and the political. In particular, starting from such tensions, we can read into these works an invitation to be skeptic towards any attempt—critical or otherwise—to sever these connections through the privileging of one pole over the other, while keeping the problem that their intermeshing produces in place. In this sense, we might say that, while the literature in the temporal turn invites us to think

about time *and* world politics—that is, to take time seriously as a site of critical insights to question world politics—the literature on the temporal conditions of modern sovereignty also discussed time, though asking us to think about time *in* world politics—that is, to take time seriously as a constitutive dimension of what we have come to call world politics.

Given the distinctiveness of this latter literature, we might feel invited to raise doubts on the narratives of conceptual improvement that ground the temporal turn. We might respond to these displacements by calling for the recovery of (perhaps more complex) discussions whose forgetting has resulted in theoretical and political deficiencies. Such call for a return given a perceived "derailing" of the discussion has been made in IR theory in relation to different topics, such as language (Epstein, 2013), materiality (Lundborg; Vaughan-Williams, 2015), and practices (Martin-Mazé, 2017)[59]. In this sense, we might argue that, instead of a "temporal turn" thinking time and world politics, taking time in world politics seriously might involve considering a temporal *re*turn to previous discussions.

And yet, I would expect us to be unwilling to discard the apparent valuable insights promised by the reflections brought together in what I have been referring to as the temporal turn. Indeed, if claims to a temporal return can be read as inviting reflections on how the temporal turn can operate as part of mechanisms of reification and reproduction of modern sovereignty, we have also seen how a literature on time and IR can be read as responding that such claims to "modern sovereignty" remain trapped within a singular and unified timeline precisely because they lack a sustained reflection on time (cf. Hutchings, 2007).

In bringing these two moments into conversation—the time-space of modern sovereignty and the temporal turn in IR—we might prefer to follow Lundborg's provocative suggestion that "both of these kinds of engagements with time must be taken seriously and that, perhaps, it is the relationship between them that raises the most challenging questions" (Lundborg, 2016, p.262). Indeed, Lundborg works from a conceptualization of the event—derived from Deleuze (Lundborg, 2012) and Derrida (Lundborg, 2015)—that takes time seriously as a

[59] We might read this tendency to call for "returns" as taking us back to the "turnminology" of IR (Mielniczuk, 2009) and, we might add, a form of response in terms of *re*turns to 'previous' literatures that may appear more as a recovery than a problematization (on this distinction, see Foucault, 1984a).

disruptive force that has all too often been ignored in studies of world politics. However, while doing so, he recognizes that "there is a risk of entering the game of offering new alternatives to a politics that is based on successfully dealing with alternatives by capturing them within the limits of what constitutes 'proper' political life" (Lundborg, 2012, p.115). Indeed, we might read him as calling for a most heightened sense of seriousness about time: to account for both the risks of having the time of the event caught up in the lines of modern sovereignty *and* the risks of assuming "that the processes of producing those temporal borders would suddenly lose their capacity to deal with elements of uncertainty and contingency" (Lundborg, 2012, p.115). Hypersensitive about time troubles, Lundborg invites us to read world politics in terms of a balance between the demands for seriousness about time *and* world politics and time *in* world politics.

As I have pointed out, however, my aim in this work is not to take time seriously—much less being serious towards two different types of engagements with time simultaneously. On the contrary, I am interested in suspending the self-evidence of the access to legitimacy of calls for seriousness in order to address the discourse of time. In other words, if one effect of the temporal turn in IR is to erase themes and insights I identify in the literature on modern sovereignty, I would be less tempted to return to this literature or to balance it out with complex temporalities then to understand the knowledge and power effects established through their encounter. I believe we might find sustenance for doing so in the set of troubles that begin to appear once we look closely at the trajectories of time in IR—as I have done in this introduction. Indeed, these troubles might incite us to question not so much how to approach time towards a more legitimate account of world politics, but to suspend that search and, instead, ask about the kind of world politics that is produced by that search.

Under this mode of thinking, claims to the temporal turn or to an imagined return or balance appear as "ritual incantations" proper, that is, as practices that bear powers and produce effects. As such, these claims can be read as discursive practices that simultaneously mask the discourse of time by locating debates on the relation of time with world politics on the side of legitimacy by inserting them in the continuity of a narrative of improvement, and take part in the operation of this discourse by inciting us to take time seriously, that is, in the terms of the discourse of time. Hence, instead of making sense of contending trajectories of time in IR by

speaking of a clean "temporal turn", of an equally straightforward "temporal return", or still of a difficult precise balance between the two, we might turn to the conditions under which it becomes possible for us to speak intelligibly about the presence or absence of discussions about time in/and IR, their improvement or decay over time, their loose wordplay or precision; that is, ultimately, about temporal turns and/or returns. Put differently, if Lundborg is right about the need to pay close attention to this relation—and I believe he is—then an analysis of the discourse of time needs to account for the non-space in which these positions meet, that is, it must describe the fields of dispersion and coexistence in which such encounter becomes possible.

In order to do so, in what follows, I engage in two movements, each expanding in one of the paths laid out in this introduction. In the first section, I turn to the literature making for the "temporal turn" in IR and, by engaging some of its exponents, I offer a surface reading of its fields of concepts, objects, subjects, and strategies. In doing so, my aim is not to account for the truth or legitimacy of the arguments presented but to interrogate how they work, what they bring together and what they keep apart. I will argue that this discourse is organized around dichotomous conceptual fields and scalar fields of objects that underplay question relating to political transformation and result in paradoxical formulations. In identifying such paradox, I argue that the temporal turn might at least partially fall short of realizing its proclaimed aims of being more sensitive to plurality, difference, contingency, and uncertainty. However, my purpose in doing so is not to do away with the discourse or to correct it, but to understand how it works—paradox included. In the following section, turning to the literature on the relation between time and modern sovereignty, I organize their arguments to show how they can be read as simultaneously criticizing the temporal turn and falling prey to its critical bite, and doing so from within the discourse in time. In following the play of arguments, I work to clarify some of the way in which that discourse operates. My aim in this section is not to prove one literature to be "better" than the other, but to understand the ground that is constituted by their interaction. The (dis)encounter between these movements marks the ambivalence making for the discourse of time. I conclude this chapter by making emerge this discourse from my reading of the literature in IR—a discourse that organizes concepts, objects,

subjects, and strategies in ways that have important impacts to the study of world politics, but also maybe beyond.

4.1. Taking time for time in world politics

In this section, in order to describe the discourse of time as read in the "temporal turn" in IR, while limiting the proliferation of texts, I will focus primarily—though not rely exclusively—in those interventions that have become central references in discussions about time *and* IR. As we will quickly realize, these works span across a variety of themes, subfields, and approaches, and rely on very diverse intellectual references to make their claims. They can hardly be united in terms of a specific intellectual heritage or even a conceptual framework, and we will find ourselves at pains to unify them under a singular object of analysis, set of metaphors, or methodology and epistemology. This much seems enough to raise questions about the artificiality of grouping them under a single label and about the value of interpreting them through this entry point. Indeed, the reading I offer of the texts below might promptly be criticized for not doing justice to the individuality of each argument, for failing at the task of reading them in their own terms. I would argue this is, at least in part, intentional: it speaks to the discursive approach to displace the level of analysis of a text from its internal meaning to its surface description. In this sense, then, this diversity might indeed be read as making this selection a good entry point to identify the set of relations through which it becomes possible to speak of a single discursive formation. Though I believe much of what I'll say relates to adjacent topics—such as critical historiographies and practice centered or process-oriented analyses—I leave them aside for the time being, focusing on claims organized around the appearance of a debate specifically around time and IR. In the conclusion of this chapter, I engage some of the implications of the possible dissolution of this initial delimitation into a regime of power-knowledge that might cut across disciplines and institutions.

Through the surface description of the temporal turn, I argue that four interconnected procedures make for the discourse of time. First, the formation of a conceptual field through the constitution of an analytical tradition of the modern/western conception of time and the opposition of this tradition to an alternative conceptualization of time that the discourse constructs as better. Second,

the articulation of the field of objects correlate to the politics of time—and, more specifically, the better conceptualization of time being argued for—through scalar metaphors on levels and complexity. Third, the naturalization of a desire for the tradition of time and of the need to overcome or repress this desire in order to achieve better knowledge and politics. Fourth, the construction of inversion—or turning away and towards something—as the central strategic move in the discourse. I present each of these procedures in the four subsections below, simultaneously suggesting how they build on each other and establish conditions of existence.

4.1.1. Traditional time and an-other time

Despite the variations in the ways in which the Western tradition is depicted in the "temporal turn" in IR, and despite each author's different influences and points of entry, a more or less stabilized set of concepts can be traced in association to it. Quite commonly, this tradition is associated with so-called "linear time". This conceptualization is maybe the most recurrent geometrical metaphor for time—alongside what sometimes appears as its opposite, cyclical or circular time[60]—and has become central to many works. One exemplary case within the "temporal turn" is Edkins' work, where linear time refers to the conception of time through which the nation-state formulates its own historical continuity, suiting "a particular form of power—sovereign power, the power of the modern nation-state" (Edkins, 2003, p.xv; see also, 2006; 2014). Linear time is necessary to "close things down (….) [and] remember through linear narratives of nationhood" (Edkins, 2006, p.108), to "any view of history as a progression" and thus to "any concept of the nation" as "a sovereign body that exists in parallel with and alongside other nations" (Edkins, 2003, p.95). Likewise, Shapiro (2000; 2001; 2010; 2016) speaks of "the linear time of the calendars of the West" consolidated over the 17th century and fully expressed in Hegel's philosophy of history. Thus, it not only makes for national time, but also

[60] Often, in the terms of the tradition of time around modern historical time, circular and cyclical time are identified as non-modern or pre-modern conceptions of time, thus being kept outside of the modern "tradition". Most of the authors I will be dealing with in this section, however, tend to locate both linear and cyclical time as spatializations of time within geometry, thus taking part of the tradition of time which relies on the opposition of time and space more than on the confluence of time and history (for these traditions, see Chapter 2).

for a historical process understood—under the hedge of unity—as the necessary self-reconciliation of Reason (Shapiro, 2010, pp.26-34).

These conceptualizations of "linear time" in relation to the nation and World History articulate a broader set of concepts and practices. For Edkins, "linear time" is variably associated with closure, forgetting, progress, clear distinctions, the separation of past, present, and future, and the objectification of persons. For Shapiro, the reproduction of gender-roles and generational dynamics within the family (Shapiro, 2000; 2001); the erasure of urban life and plurality (Shapiro, 2010), the temporal hierarchization of races; the mechanical rhythm of capital and labor; and the security practices of profiling (Shapiro, 2016). For Stephens (2010, p.34), the "idea of time as progressive, linear, and unified" is also the time of modern citizenship; for McIntosh, such "common representation of time as linear, neutral, and unitary" is a "classical view" that "encourages a view of reality that strives for laws, theories, and hypotheses that apply across time and are generalizable" (McIntosh, 2015, p.471); and for Hom and Steele (2010), both "linear-progressive time" and "cyclical time" endeavor to close possibilities by invoking the certainties and closed temporality of transhistorical universal solutions, of the directionality and directability of history, and of fixed identities.

Moving away from geometrical metaphors, Hutchings and Hom also affirm a temporal tradition. For Hutchings (2008)[61], it is the tradition of Western political thought which ranges from Machiavelli to contemporary theories of world politics, passing through the Enlightenment philosophies of history such as expressed in historicism[62]. Such tradition assumes that (i) politics is about controlling and creating new time, (ii) the temporal experience of Western modernity is the universal reference for all political times, and (iii) theorists must be timely to direct the present correctly (Hutchings, 2008, pp.154-5). In sum, it assumes time to be *unified*, *universal, and singular*. Something similar appears in Hom's reference to a "venerable tradition" going back to Near Eastern Antiquity and constituting time as "a malevolent force", "symbol of wreck and ruin", the passage of which "brings

[61] Hutchings' book, *Time and World Politics*, has been symptomatically described as "the first work in IR dedicated exclusively to Time" (Hom, 2013, p.20; see also McKay, 2016, p.6).

[62] It is worth reminding that Hutchings acknowledges that these "historicist versions of the philosophy of history radically underplay the ambiguities and tensions in the work of the thinkers often cited as authors of historicism: Kant, Hegel and Marx" (Hutchings, 2008, p.52). Though she offers more nuanced readings (Hutchings, 2008, pp.40-49; see also Hutchings, 1999, pp.98-110 for Hegel; and Hutchings, 2011 for Kant), she keeps to the existence of a tradition (see Chapter 2).

dissolution, discord, death, and other disturbing experiences to human existence" and that can only be evaded through passing escapes towards eternity, such as those that have come to be expressed in claims to time as "a neutral dimension", an "abstract, unified, and unthreatening feature of existence" (reconstructed from Hom, 2013, pp.2-6). The intermeshing of these two descriptions of time in the tradition leads academic and political projects to read the taming of the flow of time as a condition of their viability. Thus, Hom affirms a millennia-old tradition that unites thousands of years of history within a framework in which the taming of time is the main form of human existence.

Bringing these different formulations together, a field of concepts begins to emerge around the so-called Western/modern tradition of political time: linearity, unity, continuity, universality, determinacy, eternity, closure, control, taming, timeliness, reconciliation, generalized laws, clear-cut distinctions, the nation-state, sovereign state/power, and progressive history. While it is arguable that none of these metaphors in themselves do much to advance a clear conceptualization of political time (Hom, 2013, ch.1), it is noteworthy that they are disposed as a field of proximate or associated concepts relating to "tradition" in the discourse of time.

In the present discourse, this tradition of time is opposed to a different—and considered better—conceptualization of time that articulates its own more or less stabilized set of concepts. Hutchings (2008) calls this alternative perspective "heterotemporality": time as both plural and untimely. Neither a singular time—imperial or subaltern—, nor multiple disconnected times, heterotemporality speaks to the disjunction that comes from multiple temporalities crossing each other without a common timeline or present to share as a framework (Hutchings, 2008, p.166). Following her oft-used formulations, heterotemporality is about thinking world political time "in plural rather than unitary terms", emphasizing "a logic of plurality and difference" instead of "subsuming plurality under the logic of an overarching unity" (Hutchings, 2008, p.24 and p.72)[63]. In this sense, she will also

[63] Hutchings recovers this term from Chakrabarty's (2008) reflection on the disjunctive temporality making for subaltern pasts. Unfortunately, I cannot go too far into his own characterization of this problem, although it fits perfectly the aim of describing the discourse of time in world politics. In particular, I venture that Chakrabarty poses the *problem* of dealing simultaneously with "heterotemporality"—which is necessary to write affective histories of subaltern pasts—and the universalizing time of capital and the State—which is necessary for demands of rights and justice. Chakrabarty (2008) never bridges the gap he institutes between the two approaches, suspending the issue and working exclusively from the viewpoint of affective histories in a project of reforming historiography; throughout the book, he refers explicitly to the ethical and political limits of doing

differentiate it from the commonly invoked Derridean hauntology which, in affirming the spectral presence of erased times in every attempted presence, unhinges narratives of progress at the cost of unifying time under the Western experience of blocked futurity and his quasi-transcendental imperative of the "Messianic without Messianism", making other times quite literally unthinkable except as an insurance of theoretical humility. Thus, though the "watchwords of postmodernist and post-structuralist critical approaches are terms such as 'plurality' and 'difference'", Hutchings claims that "the legacy of the revolutionary calendar is not completely shaken off, and the account of international politics remains, in Spivak's memorable phrase, 'the willed (auto)biography of the West'" (Hutchings, 2007, p.82; see also 2008, pp.166-169)[64]. To Hom, this heterotemporality is itself the expression of the empirical reality of international politics, since "the more discordant aspects of Time's flow such as dissolution, imperfection, and discomfiting surprise (...) are just what international politics is composed of and what sets it apart from other domains of inquiry" (Hom, 2013, p.236). Such distinctiveness evokes the need for more flexible timing standards than the ones adequate to so-called simpler domains. Furthermore, "since IR must reckon ruin, we (…) must begin by developing timing standards scrubbed clean of the smell and taint of eternity" (Hom, 2013, p.237); thus, a more sanitized approach to international politics would call for "much more supple themes that not only accommodate but privilege the idiographic, the inconsistent, and the ephemeral aspects of international life" (Hom, 2013, pp.234-5).

These formulations are consistent with those of a previous collaborative work, in which Hom and Steele (2010) counterpoise "linear time" to "open time": a temporality that invites prudence and skepticism by remaining unfounded and attuned to contingency and the flow of becoming. Similarly, for Edkins, linear time is opposed to "trauma time", the time that marks the traumatic in the social order or, better said, that marks the social order as traumatic and fragmentary: "trauma

so, and to the need of also engaging with the time of capital. In this sense, I read Hutchings' use of "heterotemporality" as bridging that gap in favor of a disjointed temporality, realizing the dualism that was set up on that text in the first place. For a different engagement with Chakrabarty which operates a similar bridging, though in the opposite direction—reinforcing the sense of a dualism hovering over our shoulders—, see Blaney and Inayatullah (2010, ch.6-7). I hope to explore this dynamic in terms of the discourse of time more carefully in a future work.

[64] For a similar critique of Derrida's spectral politics, see Elliott (2008, pp.42-46) and Sajed (2010). For a similar argument, posited in terms of the opposition between anti-colonial struggles and modernist/narcissistic philosophies of limits, see Shilliam (2015, pp.1-12; 2013; 2016).

time is of the order of the recognition and surrounding of the trauma at the heart of any social or symbolic order" (Edkins, 2003, p.16), thus exposing "the lack that underpins a sovereign political symbolic order and reveal[s] the radical relationality of life" (Edkins, 2011, p.127)[65]. It is the time of not-forgetting (Edkins, 2003; 2006), of the recognition of the other as missing, of the agony of not knowing (Edkins, 2014; 2011), of photography (Edkins, 2015)[66]. Similarly, Shapiro first calls for acknowledging the existence of other times alongside linear time—such as capital time, family time, women's time, non-Western times (Shapiro, 2000; 2001). Later, he notes how alternative temporalities are not about a given "reality", nor the effect of a better ethico-political disposition of the scholar, but what emerges through specific encounters that challenges dominant practices of temporal and subjective management (Shapiro, 2013, p.xv-xvi; 2016, p.14). By staging these encounters, he highlights non-presence and disjuncture (Shapiro, 2000; 2001), contingency, lived temporality, and the multiplicity of the city and its inhabitants (Shapiro, 2010), the historicity, contingency, and irreducibility of the event (Shapiro, 2016).

I want to point to two dimensions of the constructions beginning to emerge in this description. First, the invocation of another temporality often avoids an easy opposition: Hutchings' heterotemporality is not simply "multiple temporalities", Edkins "trauma time" is not only the opposite pole of a dichotomy, and Shapiro's alternative temporalities are not simply there to be identified. In other words, the set of concepts being articulated attempts to place this "other time" in an oblique relation to tradition. Second, this nonetheless involves establishing a set of concepts that seems to invoke some form of opposition with those associated with tradition: plurality, multiplicity, relationality, fragmentary, discontinuity, interruption,

[65] "Trauma time" is also commonly used by Edkins (2003, pp.229-230; 2006, p.131) to refer to time that *interrupts* the time of sovereignty through the unexpected and the unfit—and which linear time then endeavors to *reincorporate*. In this sense, the opposition of linear time and trauma time is, at times, ontic, and, at other times, ontological. In other words, when the opposition leads to a dynamic of disruption and incorporation, it seems that trauma time and linear time can somehow be reconciled, even if only through movement; on the other hand, when the opposition leads to the radical disruption of linear time by trauma time, it appears reconciliation is impossible. As we will see, this variation is at the heart of the discourse of time, being played out, in this specific instance, inside the multiple voices of Edkins' texts.

[66] One particular instance in which this dualism shows its face is in the variation of meanings of the constant dualism between linear time and trauma time in over a decade of work by Jenny Edkins. Indeed, though the meaning and attributions of "linear time" and "trauma time" change over the year, the dual construction itself is never displaced.

contingency, flexibility, ephemerality, openness, untimeliness, disjuncture, ideography, inconsistency, unexpectedness[67].

4.1.2. Scaling objects: levels and complexity

The above conceptual field also relates to the field of objects associated with international politics. Hutchings (2008, pp.9-10) reminds us that debates about the meaning of the "world" reflect differences in understandings of "politics"—explicating political and disciplinary tensions between International Relations, Political Theory, and the Sociology of Globalization[68]. As conceptions of time change in this discourse, so do understandings of "the world" and, therefore, at least potentially, of politics.

As part of the project of thinking heterotemporality, Hutchings establishes her own use of "the world" as referring to "political developments that are not confined to any particular state or region in their origins and effects", that is, that pertains to "the world as a whole" (Hutchings, 2008, p.10). I read Hutchings to mean that to embrace heterotemporality leads us to reconfigure politics beyond the limits of the state as a category of intelligibility: to understand politics heterotemporally is also to understand politics as overflowing territorial containers. In this sense, "the world" changes from a set of confined territories as the point of reference for politics to an apparently more complex and certainly more encompassing "wholeness". In a similar vein, Hom claims that international politics includes "all the totality of change continua that might possibly require integration and coordination" (Hom, 2013, p.231). Hence, it is "the realm in which paeans to academic progress lose their seductive harmony, where scientistic epics are exposed as tall tales, and where the glib elegance, dear stability, and eternalist certitude of more domesticated pursuits are baptised in the river of Time" (Hom, 2013, p.236). As rigid timing standards lose their hold, so do more limited understandings of

[67] This echoes what Osborne (2008, p.17) calls "the dualistic conceptual structure of the mainstream of twentieth-century European philosophy of time", as in spatialized time x duration (Bergson), ordinary time x originary time (Heidegger), homogeneous and empty time x Now-Time (Benjamin), and simple, homogeneous and continuous time x conjunctural differential time (Althusser). In a similar vein, Jameson (1997) argues that even Deleuze's endeavor of building a monist philosophy expresses a similar dualistic undertone in its treatment of time.

[68] For a critical reading of conceptualizations of the "world" in "world politics", see Prozorov (2014, ch.1).

international politics as involving the coordination of change continua only in terms of given territorial units. The opening to the river of Time is also the opening to all possible irruption of the will to integrate and coordinate and, therefore, to a much more encompassing understanding of (international) politics.

Edkins' association of trauma time with radical relationality and the gap in the symbolic order leads to subjects and objects that remain ontologically missing and to a world that is never fully present (Edkins, 2006, 2011; the basis of this argument is set in Edkins, 1999). In such world, international politics is not about clear delimitations–we may assume, among others, of territories and sovereign authority—but favors the "acknowledgement of the inevitable openness of possibilities, and the impossibility, and risks, of attempts at closure (...) the recognition of radical relationality and the inevitability, and indeed the necessity, of vulnerability" (Edkins, 2006, p.114-5). According to Edkins, this is not a matter of achieving a new condition, but of grasping a politics "that we already have" by looking at the right places and times: a politics that operates "locally, on a small scale, face-to-face", that "it is in everyday life", and that we can look for it "in the realm of the everyday, in the lives of the oppressed, the missing, the formerly disappeared, the survivors of betrayals... in anything and everything that escapes the attention or capture of sovereign power" (Edkins, 2011, p.137-8; see also 2014). Faced with the difficult problem of re-introducing into politics a world that must remain ontologically missing, Edkins turns to scalar metaphors that can only tenuously respond to her dilemma, as it remains unclear how the local and the everyday escape sovereignty or recognize radical relationality. In a related move, Shapiro's association of the tradition of time with Hegel's philosophy of history accompanies an association of alternative temporalities with a different scale of analysis—most notably, though not only, the global city, the city-dweller, and the complex connections established in those sites (Shapiro, 2010). A similar move from the national delimitation of citizenship towards the city as a site of alternative political engagement appears in Stephens (2010).

On the one hand, heterotemporality and flexible timing standards invoke a field of objects that refuses the limitation of progressive history, the nation-state, and sovereign politics, instead embracing the "wholeness" of world processes. It is nonetheless striking that these movements say very little about changes in politics itself. In Hutchings, "political processes" are taken as a given, despite the change

of scales in which they take place, and Hom's main preoccupation seems to be with the scale in which the will to integrate and coordinate change continua operate. On the other hand, trauma time and disjunctive time lay claims to a world of incompleteness and lack, not of excesses that, while hard to confine, remain known. Even in those cases, however, questions about the changing nature of politics can be kept out of sights through scalar metaphors moving from national and sovereign limits towards local, face-to-face, everyday relations such as those taking place in global cities. Thus, in each case, changes in the scale of politics work to ease questions and tensions about conceptions of politics.

Of course, the State and sovereignty do not disappear as objects of knowledge in the discourse of time; they are, however, repositioned. The State and the system of States appear as specific scales—both a specific level and a set degree of complexity—that can be opposed to other scalar possibilities of objects, such as the whole world and the local, both of higher complexity. Likewise, sovereignty becomes a form of power and a set of delimitations mostly associated with a particular level and simplicity of form. Finally, the scales of the State and international politics are set to be overcome in favor of more complex, wider and/or local processes for either better ethico-political purposes or epistemological and empirical adequacy.

4.1.3. Beware: time attachments

A further procedure constitutive of the discursive field of time relates the conceptual field above to a set of affects. In other words, what is at stake in the construction of the terms of debates is not only a matter of how we think, but also of how we want to think, how we desire to be, and how we are tempted into being political. Put differently, the discourse of time effects an economy of affects that distribute subject positionalities by organizing both what they are and what they want to be.

This is explicit in Hutchings' argument that the problems of the traditional assumptions of world political time seen above are inseparable from an *attachment* to unity, a *temptation* for timeliness and prophetization, and the *hubris* of intellectualism:

> In the first place, [temporal assumptions of theories of world politics] are inadequate because (…) they are *profoundly blinkered by their attachment to the idea* that we can use western modernity as the key to making sense of the past, present and future of the world as such. In the second place, they are unsatisfactory because they put the theorist in the position of time-traveler and prophet, thus *succumbing to an old temptation* about the nature of political time within western political thought. This is *the temptation of* thinking that politics is conditioned by the possibility of making or controlling time (Hutchings, 2008, p.160; see also 2007, p.88).

In other words, singular and timely world political time goes beyond a mode of thinking that we traditionally assume; it is also something that we want and desire, that tempts us and to which we are attached. We find a similar claim in Hom (2013, p.10), to whom "the problem of Time has long engendered a strong desire for the eternal". And if we return to the Fuentes's story often quoted by Shapiro, we are told that "the West has been in love with its successive, linear, and positivistic notion of time" (Fuentes, 1982, p.63): nothing short of love is at stake.

Though the same postulates appear in Edkins' work, her reading posits not one but two simultaneous and contradictory desires. On the one hand, in the face of trauma, such as the horrors of the Nazi camps, "there is a temptation to retreat into the comfort of easy solutions to the question of memory (...) [and to] represent what happened in a linear narrative" (Edkins, 2003, p.175). On the other hand, some memorials, like the Cenotaph and the Vietnam Wall, "respond to some desire other than the need to celebrate and re-narrate national glory in the aftermath of trauma" (Edkins, 2003, p.108) as they endeavor to mark trauma. Despite being attentive to contending desires, Edkins position towards them is made explicit in the call to "find a way of remaining faithful to [trauma's] different temporality" (Edkins, 2003, p.59). In other words, though she exposes two desires, it is to one of them that we must respond if one's faith is to remain unshaken, the trauma is to be marked, and subversion is to be achieved or sustained.

We might find similar implications in other constructions of the conceptual field of the discourse of time in IR. For instance, though Shapiro himself doesn't always foreground love and impulse in Fuentes' text, he does point out that his own approach is devoted to "resist the *closural impulses* in (…) texts (e.g. official histories) that invent a singular, prepolitical culture as the legitimating condition of state boundaries" (Shapiro, 2000, p.82, my emphasis). To resist an impulse towards closure appears as a way to resist the grasp of linear time. In a similar vein, Hom argues that "all projects—critical or otherwise—need to *temper the desire* for stable factors, durable structures, accurate predictions, or any sort of fixed outcomes"

(Hom, 2013, p.236-7, n.16, my emphasis), all of which he associates with non-flexible timing standards. As if to ascertain this, an affective economy is associated to these concepts: "[i]f IR scholars necessarily reckon a ruinous realm, as the historical record and their own remarks suggest, then the 'smell' of Time is the essence of intellectual courage, not a 'taint' on their academic honor" (Hom, 2013, p.236): flexible timing standards are either "the essence of intellectual courage" or "a taint on academic honor". We might sense a blackmail imposing itself: face the smell of Time, or be a coward; keep your academic honor, or taint it (possibly, with eternity)[69]. We might wonder about the dangers lying ahead that such heavy stakes must be hung over our heads. But we might also wonder about the strength of the posited desire for stability that would call for such intransigent voice to keep us on the right path, to keep us faithful.

Bringing these claims together, we see a particular set of attachments, temptation, desire, impulse, love, or affection appearing as part of this discourse. More specifically, we can identify a triple movement of acknowledgement, naturalization, and repression. By acknowledgement and naturalization, I mean that a set of attachments to and temptations for tradition is identified as a given disposition of subjects in this discourse. Furthermore, its simple postulation seems to imply that it is a natural result of the long-standing existence of the tradition of time—a model of subject-power relation that all too commonly resort to images of the reproduction of modes of thinking and their imposition upon subjects. It therefore follows that such (inherited, imposed) desire must somehow be resisted, tempered, tamed, or controlled for a better conceptualization of time—and, we could add, a better world politics—to emerge. In this scenario, "desire" or "attachment" assumes the role of mediating between the dichotomous conceptual field of the discourse of time. By locating such economy of desire at the surface

[69] It would seem this opposition is reinforced through gendered metaphors: courage and honor on the one side, seduction, taint, and impurity on the other. Hutchings (2016) argues this gendered dimension of temporal assumptions by stating that the masculine disposition endeavors to control time by trying to be its *father*, while the feminine disposition accepts that it cannot but be its *daughter*. Edelman (1998), in turn, notices that the commonsense association of futurity with children and the generation patterns of the heterosexual family makes temporality indissociable from the heterosexual matrix. I cannot go into the complex relations between temporal and gender metaphors at this point, nor explore the long literature articulating these positions—this presents itself as a further avenue of investigation of the discourse of time.

level of discourse, however, we are left with little theorization of its operation, being led to accept (or reject) its imposition upon subjects[70].

4.1.4. Strategies of (redemptive) inversion

The available strategies for those engaging in the discourse of time in world politics seem to be prefigured by the above discursive procedures. Specifically, as the domain of concepts is increasingly split and associated with different constitutions of the fields of objects and problems, movements from one side to the other—or the perhaps subtler balance between the poles—emerge as dominant strategies.

In this sense, accompanying the trajectory of the discipline narrated in the "temporal turn" in terms of a conceptual improvement from temporal blindness to taking time and world politics seriously, the discourse predominantly authorizes inversions moving (and inviting movement) away from tradition and towards heterotemporality, flexible standards, trauma time, temporal disjunction; away from the sovereign power of the nation-state and towards other scales—worldly or local—of higher complexity; away from a desire for tradition, eternity, and linearity and towards the more adequate unwavering faith on plural, fragmented, contingent, and open times.

The opposite inversion—from the "temporal turn" towards a recovery of traditional concepts of time—is substantially underplayed as an explicit strategy. Often, it appears as an unintentional effect of residues from the tradition of time that remain despite the turn—residues that are anticipated (we might say, preempted) in the economy of desires accompanying this discourse. Indeed, though the dominant strategy is an inversion away from traditional time and towards other times, the contrary inversion remains part of the discourse as an always present possibility conditioning our determination. Here, we might expect demands for more seriousness about time and more righteousness in our control of our temptations. Nonetheless, the discourse is set up in ways that allow for a return

[70] I take up some of the implications of dealing with desire in this term in Chapter 3. I return to this question in Chapter 5.

towards the set of concepts and objects making for the tradition of time[71] (I come back to what I take to be the more provocative movements in this direction in the next section).

In reading Shapiro's recent work, Klausen speaks of a "contrast between two kinds of texts or representational effects, the aesthetic and critical as against the unreflective and therefore anesthetic" (Klausen, 2017, p.560). This opposition, through which aesthetic encounters are supposed to correct our unreflexive modes of being, constitutes what he calls an "aesthetic of redemption": thinking redeems us from the violence of the ordinary[72]. This redemptive move seems to also guide Shapiro's use of thinking encounters to bring about disjunctive and contingent temporalities against what he calls Hegelian linear time. Speaking more broadly, I believe we can read the strategies available to those taking part in struggles within and through this discursive formation in similar terms. In this sense, substantial authority—to the point of a "redemption from the violence of the ordinary"—accrues from strategies of inversion in this discourse, also leading subjects to look for redemption by turning, accompanying the discursive movement—even if this might require a fair share of repression[73].

In sum, two (hierarchically valued) strategies are available within this discursive formation: either one *turns* from tradition to alternative temporalities, or one *returns* towards tradition despite calls for turning. This discursive configuration creates what Foucault called the *speaker's benefit*: the kind of authority that comes to those who are positioned as speaking truth to power (Foucault, 1978): in the split field of the discourse of time, inversions accrue authority. Such speaker's benefit transpires in the surprising subject-position who is invoked to argue for the dominant inversions of the temporal turn.

[71] A case in point is Chandler's (2013) polemic opposition of the full contingency of post-humanism to the dialectics of freedom and determinacy of humanism, a construction that endeavors to defend the adherence to the latter against the advances of the former.

[72] This is in contrast to both an "aesthetical of the normal" and an "aesthetic of inhospitability"—the former endeavoring to understand how "the normal is produced by effects of truth, is desired and made into an object of practice and affect" (Klausen, 2017, p.562), and the later aiming to "reflect damaged life, while mocking the alleged authority of art to intervene with alternatives" (Klausen, 2017, p.563).

[73] Edkins speaks to this almost redemptive dimension of her work in an autobiographical reflection: "I used to think that some memorial practices did that, refusing closure, refusing a re-writing of authority and authorization, refusing a new beginning along the same lines as the old", a belief that, she argues, expressed "a dream that holding on to trauma, encircling it, can save us" (Edkins, 2016, p.103). In the context of this paper, I would point to this less as a matter of individual thinking and more of discursive dispositions.

Consider, for instance, the following claim by Hutchings:

> *World politics is* a shifting and unpredictable conjunction of times, *and so is the theorist* seeking to render the times of world politics intelligible. Thinking the present without the authority of *kairos* to ground and orient judgement [heterotemporality] is profoundly destabilising for those of us used to taking for granted the kind of temporal meta-narratives discussed in this book. But *this destabilising is equally the freeing up* of our sociological and political imaginations" (Hutchings, 2008, p.176, emphasis added).

First, we might wonder from what position is the claim about world politics and theorists being made? Can we take for granted the authority of those occupying it? Isn't the political temporality authorizing this claim somehow at odds with so much of the argument so far? Indeed, though Hutchings criticizes the idea of timely interventions, I find it difficult to see how we could inhabit this move in any other terms. Indeed, Hutchings doesn't only invite us to read others immanently; she also offers a better way of conceptualizing time than the one she locates in theories of world politics[74]. It seems that, ultimately, her argument for the plurality and untimeliness of "heterotemporality" must itself rely on the timeliness of her intervention as a theorist. Second, we might wonder how come destabilization can lead with such determining certainty to the freeing up of imagination? What kind of teleology of understanding can connect with a unidirectional line the loss of stability to the freeing of imagination? Or, likewise, what kind of all-encompassing present can assure the full identity between destabilization and freedom? Indeed, the timeliness of Hutchings' claim seems to go hand in hand with the exclusion of alternative reactions to the loss of authority of *kairos* to orient judgement, allowing only for a subversive version of it. In sum, while the association between destabilization and freedom of imagination opens space for a subversive political

[74] In a recent commentary in this work Hutchings says that "[s]omewhat against my Hegelian grain, I took a deliberate decision to set up my project in Kantian, or perhaps Durkheimian, epistemological terms" (Hutchings, 2018, p.255). I am not properly versed in Hegelian or Kantian philosophy and methodology, but I am led to wonder if this shift has something to do with the fact that I feel influenced by her approximation of Hegel and Foucault (in her more "Hegelian grain"), while willing to suspend the claim to legitimacy of her take on world political time. Put differently, the shift from the hypothetical (Hegelian-Foucauldian?) question "what is the relative identity between our ethical reflection on time and our contemporary ethical life?" (a possible formulation of the question of this dissertation in Hutchings' (1999) terms) to the (Kantian?) question "how do we think about the world through time and how should we do so?" might be what is at stake in her own repositioning as well as in my different take on two distinct moments of her work (see Chapter 3 of this dissertation for my explicit engagement with her 'more Hegelian grain').

outcome driven by the ethico-political disposition of heterotemporality, the limitation to this subversive dimension betrays its own unifying temporality. Once again, we see the tension between the defended temporality of becoming/desire and the very straightforward line from a destabilize subject to its freed imagination being hidden under an arbitrary—but certainly powerfully driven—determination of outcomes. These limitations are not only tantalizing in themselves, they are also profoundly at odds with Hutchings' own call for plurality and uncertainty.

They are, however, significantly in line with other claims constituting the "temporal turn" in world politics. In this sense, Hom argues that "*[T]he only way to truly reconcile the problem of Time* is to dissolve it by engaging its purportedly troubling features and standardising them as minimally as possible" (Hom, 2013, p.265, my emphasis). Again, we can sense the limitation coming out of a very inflexible timing standard. And speaking of the tension between linear time and trauma time, Edkins notes that

> [There is] a struggle over whether to *tell* the story as part of a linear narrative or whether to *mark* the trauma without compromise. (…) [S]ome people want to try to *hold on to the openness that trauma produces*. They do not want to forget, or to express the trauma in standard narratives that entail a form of forgetting. They see trauma as something that unsettles authority, and that *should make settled stories impossible in the future* (Edkins, 2006, p.94 and p.108, my emphasis).

In all these affirmations, we might note the teleology of understanding through which destabilizing is equated with freedom of imagination, flexible timing standards become the only way to dissolve the problem of Time, and the negation of linear time is enlisted in a politics of continuity that reduces narrativity to participation in sovereign power and the Nation-State and establishes "marking" as the sole subversive strategy towards constituting a better future of unsettled authority[75]. We might also wonder about the temporal status of ontological claims about the nature of "world politics" and "the theorist". Finally, in both cases, it would seem the intervention against tradition appears as a timely contribution to the understanding of world politics. After all, no theoretical intervention can escape

[75] In this teleological context, it is not difficult to understand the worry that emerges in Edkins' conclusion: "[a]nother possibility, of course—and one that is deeply worrying—is that the state, or whatever form of power is replacing it, has taken charge of trauma time" (Edkins, 2003, p.233). If trauma is supposed to be our *only* subversive way towards a preferred future, its "capture" invokes a final capitulation, when the repository of all our hopes is taken.

a dimension of timeliness, if only because it produces a present in which its relevance is affirmed.

These elements of temporal unity and timeliness seem at odds with the proclaimed calls for plurality, heterogeneity, contingency, and disjunction that accompany the temporal turn in IR. Indeed, they are the kind of dispositions against which so many of these aims have been formulated, and they tend to be associated with the kind of political limits that were intended to be overcome by scaling beyond (and beneath) them. Nonetheless, they seem to constitute an inseparable part of the conditions of existence of the temporal turn, as splits lead to inversion, and inversions to fixed authority. We might note this in the strange mixture that comes from the appeal to an improvement of the temporal underpinnings of our understanding of world politics away from the temporal assumptions that are the condition of that very improvement: a paradoxical *improvement away from improvement*, we might say. To call this a "paradox" is not to invalidate the important insights that have already been articulated in this literature, nor the ones that will continue to be. However, it might invite us to wonder whether, given these conditions of existence and despite its insights, the temporal turn can really succeed in realizing its proclaimed aims—or if it will have to do so on the condition of keeping the unity, homogeneity, and determinacy embedded in its discourse well away from view, at most as unintentional (though tempting) residues of tradition.

To point to this structured realm of thought and to the existence of such paradox at its heart might close the subject. If we can indeed read in the temporal turn a discourse of time that unveils the self-defeating nature of its proclaimed aims, we might feel authorized to give up on it—much of our training has come to invite just such chastising of paradoxes. However, we have also come to know that to point to a structured realm of thought and to the existence of paradoxes fall short of a full-fledged immanent reading of discourse and, therefore, of the full potential of critique as a way of narrating one's wound through another's. More likely, paradoxes indicate a point of departure, since they are common ways through which discourses operate and sustain their workings, and through which we are sustained through discourses. In the next section, we turn to the literature on time in modern sovereignty in order to find one way of making sense of these paradoxes while remaining within the terms of the discourse of time, thus also deepening our description of that discourse.

4.2. Sovereignty out of time; time out of sovereignty

In this section, I turn to arguments about modern (world) politics in the works of Jens Bartelson and Rob Walker which can simultaneously be read as taking part in the discourse of time yet formulating a position which can be read as critical of the temporal turn. However, in making such critique, they also open themselves to the argument that they take part in traditional assumptions about time, thus inviting more seriousness about their temporal underpinnings. My aim in what follow is not to settle this staged dispute, but to use this staging as an opportunity to follow the dynamic of the arguments and to continue to trace the contours of the discourse of time. In order to do so, I begin by presenting how a critique of the temporal turn can be read in each author and how it is related to their own understanding of time in modern (world) politics. I then indicate how, in doing so, they open themselves to be criticized, in the terms of the temporal turn, for reproducing problematic accounts of time. While this opening can be pointed out through an external critique—that is, from the viewpoint of the literature about time *and* world politics—I argue it can also be done by engaging their recessive voices, and through their critical mutual engagement, hence finding temporal tensions in their own terms.

To start this cross-reading of the literature on time and world politics and the discussion on sovereignty and time, it is useful to approximate the two sets of text by reading them as addressing similar questions, and then highlighting their differences. In this sense, let me begin by inviting a reading of both Walker and Bartelson as taking part in the problematization that read troubled times in terms of time troubles and time solutions. While this might not be as explicit as in the works above, it also doesn't take too much legwork.

The core reason leading both Walker and Bartelson to raise their pen is the sense that the main categories which we have at our disposal to make sense of political life have fallen short of doing so. Walker claims to be "concerned with the degree to which an increasing preoccupation with speed, temporality and contingency undermines established categories of analysis in what has conventionally been one of the most spatially oriented sites of modern social and political thought [international relations]" (Walker, 1993, p.13). In his later work, speed and acceleration lose some of their centrality, though troubles with our

imaginaries of political change continue due to the widespread sense that the present cannot be properly described within the parameters set by modern sovereignty, whether read in terms of early-modern spatiality and temporality or the Enlightenment and its Romantic response (Walker, 2009)[76]. Likewise, Bartelson also takes issue with the unthought foundations of knowledge and politics with which we engage into thinking about transformation in the present. For my aims here, I am particularly interested in his early assessment of the contingency of sovereignty upon understandings of time and history (Bartelson, 1995a) and on his later argument about the limits of uses of history and time as tools to critically engage with the foundations of our political discourse (Bartelson, 2001; 2014). Hence, in both cases, we face troubles with our categories of thinking due, among others, to the tensions in how modern sovereignty relate to time.

In line with the literature explored in the previous chapter, both Bartelson and Walker might be read as engaging with the limits coming from the way in which we have come to think about time in modern politics. Furthermore, as expected, the "solutions" they offer to such predicament revolve, at least in part, around reflections on time. However—and here lies the difference I want to explore in this section—instead of proposing categories more appropriate to our temporal preoccupations, better able to describe the present, or better able to sidestep the incongruities in our thinking, they turn to a detailed engagement with our established categories. In doing so, they endeavor to steadfastly resist moves to escape from our predicament that end up reproducing that same condition. Most importantly, in doing so, they can be read to argue that our attempts to solve our troubled times by shifting temporal assumptions are actually part of the problem, thus inviting a dose of skepticism towards the temporal turn.

We can read a critical engagement of the temporal turn in a derivation of Bartelson's more specific engagement with the critical strategy of temporalization

[76] It is worth noting that the reference to an empirical ground for the sense of dismay troubling our present is one of the few instances in which Walker "touches ground" by claiming that a process "in the world" challenges our categories of thinking. Pointing at this moment, Guzzini (1997, pp.280-1) notes that a sympathetic critique might question why this empirical claim shouldn't itself be read as a mode of thinking, an interrogation that would shift our attention from the effects of this change towards the effectiveness of a mode of thinking—we might add, a mode of thinking about troubles with time. I believe Walker is sometimes more precise, relying on incongruities between modes of thinking instead of an opposition between empirical transformations and categories of thinking. Nonetheless, the possible critique ventured by Guzzini, on the effectiveness of a mode of thinking, is precisely the question I pursue in this dissertation. Though I came to this piece late in my work, it helps give sustenance to the project—even if, ironically, "*ce n'est peut-être pas très intéressants*".

in regard to the state (Bartelson, 2001, ch.5)[77]. According to Bartelson, temporalization works by showing that any given present is but one possible constellation of authority out of multiple forces and processes, it deprives that present from its self-sameness and continuity in time, revealing it as the effect of a diversity of contingent forces. Substituting contingent non-unified processes for the necessity imposed through an authoritative center, temporalization reveals complexity and multiplicity where simplicity and unity resided. In this sense, attempts to temporalize the state endeavor to show how the state is no more than the temporary and fragile effect of an incoherent set of practices, practices that it cannot explain nor legitimize at it emerges, out-of-joint with itself, through them. In a formulation that might sound familiar from Hutching's discussion of heterotemporality, Bartelson claims that, with temporalization, "the state has gradually been replaced by a multitude of different loci of power. There is no overarching source of authority in the sense of a singular center from which governmental practices radiate" (Bartelson, 2001, p.179). In this sense, the state is not only showed to be a construction, but also "treated as wholly simultaneous with and expressive of varying techniques of government, rather than as their implicit justification or theoretical explanation" (Bartelson, 2001, p.173). While Bartelson frames temporalization specifically in relation to the state and governmental practices, we might sense that the temporal turn is but a generalization of this strategy, a call for us to ground all critical knowledge on conceptions of time underlying so-called temporalization.

However, Bartelson argues that

> with a plurality of governmental centres, the question remains of what keeps them in check and bestows their acts with the minimum of coherence necessary for the maintenance of political order. The beheading of political theory thus leaves us either with a multitude of petty heads, or with the (…) trouble of explaining the relative coherence of political practices without recourse to any overarching (…) source of that coherence (Bartelson, 2001, pp.179-180).

Referring to the Foucauldian injunction to "cut the King's head", he suggests that "[t]he remains of the royal body therefore seem fully capable of a life of their own" (Bartelson, 2001, p.180). I read Bartelson as arguing that temporalization

[77] The same argument is summarized in terms of the temporalization of sovereignty in Bartelson (2014, pp.57-64; 2011).

substitutes necessity for a spectral and ultimately unexplainable coherence of contingency. In other words, there is a tendency, when explicitly negating necessity, to assume forms of coherence of the multiplicity of processes invoked by temporalization that cannot be avowed, since the uptake of temporalization resides precisely in its negation of such coherence. Bending slightly Bartelson's words, we might say that, as an ultimate mode of immanent criticism, practices in the temporal turn cannot but "assume what they set out to criticize: the necessity of [time] being identical with itself" (Bartelson, 2001, p.181).

Hence, "while temporalizing the state helps us make sense of the meaning and experience of statehood as seen from within, it does not and cannot question its own perspective" (Bartelson, 2001, p.180). Put differently, if the state is no more than the temporary effect of plural and contingent practices, it is also no less than the spectral center lending them coherence. Read in terms of the generalization of temporalization, we might venture that if, in the temporal turn, "the present" is no more than the effect of plural, contingent, flexible, and disjunctive temporalities, it is also no less than the spectral center lending coherence to the temporal turn, the necessary backdrop to its ensuing explanations and judgements. Hence, while the temporal turn is utterly effective in revealing how whatever we take to "be" is no more than the temporal effect of dispersed practices without an overarching temporal order ("source of authority"), it also reveals that temporal order to be no less than the background upon which temporalization can take place.

In sum, according to Bartelson, temporalization is an ambiguous endeavor: it must simultaneously assume the presence of that which it unhinges—and in being defined by the latter move, must disavow the former. It is in this sense that Bartelson argues that the contingency argument always already assumes that which it sets out to criticize: "arguments from contingency themselves derive much of their rhetorical force from those very promises or expectations they set out to criticize: any act of criticism that struggles to expose the contingency of things has the identity of those things as its own foundation" (Bartelson, 2001, p.153). In other words, by insisting in revealing the contingency of what appears to be necessary, this type of argument tends to become attached to the very necessity being criticized. It is unsurprising, then, that the temporal turn, in insisting on contingency as an ethical, political, and/or empirical ground, would have identity as its own foundation.

Importantly, this tendency shouldn't be taken as a mistake that can be solved by becoming aware of the problem. It is, to Bartelson, part of the way we have come to articulate knowledge, authority, and time. In this sense, he offers two ways of making sense of this paradox. First, it is intrinsic to our understanding of concepts, since while contingency arguments

> believe that concepts are but general names by means of which we constitute our sociopolitical world (…) they nevertheless have to assume that some of [their] meanings remain stable enough for their object of analysis to remain the same across the span of their inquiries. Such immutable meanings turn out to be a condition of possible contestation, insofar as they constitute a tacit agreement about what interlocutors meaningfully can disagree about, in and out of the academy (Bartelson, 2014, p.62).

In other words, to temporalize a given concept is only possible if something of said concept is arbitrarily kept constant, as a condition of possibility of that very investigation. In this sense, though sustaining Nietzsche's aphorism to the effect that "only that which has no history can be defined", Bartelson insists that "only that which has been defined can be subjected to historical analysis" (Bartelson, 2001, p.35; 2007, p.122). Or, as he summarizes, "what one contests, one always presupposes and therefore also to an extent de-contests" (Bartelson, 2014, p.60). There is an intricate relationship between contingency and necessity that precludes any simples exchange of the one for the other.

Furthermore, such confluence of contingency and necessity, plurality and coherence, temporalization and essentialization, in turn, is connected to a deeper articulation of knowledge, authority, and time in the Western tradition. In *Genealogy of Sovereignty*, Bartelson, somewhat echoing Foucault, argues that:

> [w]ithout a proper mode of knowledge to render it intelligible, sovereignty cannot exist, and loses its capacity to organize political reality through a demarcation of inside from outside, of Same from Other. Without a proper form of sovereignty, knowledge loses its power to organize reality, and to constitute objects and fields of inquiry as well as criteria of validity and truth (Bartelson, 1995a, p.83).

One of the dimensions of the relationship of sovereignty and authority to knowledge relates to time: knowledge must assure that existing entities and their identities and differences have an intelligible relationship to time. Excavating this relation, Bartelson offers a narrative of the tradition of time which is familiar to us.

Beginning with the claim that "at least since Plato's *Timaeus*, the question of time had proven a perennial enigma to Western philosophy" (Bartelson, 1995a, p.95), he narrates the transvaluation of this enigma from the opposition of the temporal realm to the divine eternal realm towards the question of safeguarding mortal beings from the corrosive influence of time and contingency (Bartelson, 1995a, p.244). This attempt to arrest the ravages of time is then narrated over the Renaissance, the Classical Age, and the Modern Age.

I am particularly interested in how Bartelson reads, still in familiar terms, Modern age sovereignty—the period from the late 18th century onwards—in terms of the "historicization of all beings", the rearticulation of knowledge and authority as inseparable from time. We might hear the echoes of the traditions of time trouble depicted in Chapter 2. However, and here is the important point, his own reading of this transformation not only challenges the Western tradition of time as articulated in the temporal turn, but, in doing so, also grounds his skepticism towards strategies of temporalization. Indeed, to Bartelson, in modern knowledge, identity and difference come to be related *in time*, setting everything they touch in an endless motion, since "what is different can always be shown to share in common one single property, namely that of being different, which then in fact makes them identical; [and] what is identical can always be shown to suffer from an initial separation (…) which makes it different from itself" (Bartelson, 1995a, p.209). Differential temporalities can always be shown to cohere around some identity, while identical time can always be shown to be riven from the inside, a tension which "breathes life into the *aporia* between being and becoming. On the one hand, that which is historicized can be thought to retain its essence through time as a condition of its intelligibility. On the other hand, that which is historicized may find its identity suspended in thin air" (Bartelson, 2001, p.36; see also, Bartelson, 2007).

Thus, fully in line with the kind of dilemma presented above, Bartelson notes that, in this regime, "[a]ll that was solid certainly melted into air in this process, yet everything previously considered fluid simultaneously became petrified, *since time itself took on the quality of a thing*" (Bartelson, 2001, p.38, my emphasis). In order for temporalization to become a generalized strategy, for a temporality of becoming, plurality, contingency, flexibility, and out-of-jointness to ground our reflection, nothing less than time must have become a "thing", a de-

contested element able to assure both unity and timeliness, the focal point of a discourse.

As time becomes a thing—both a condition of knowledge and its object—the interplay of being and becoming emerges at the heart of both modern knowledge and authority. We might sense the constitution of a tradition of time which is not only about its taming, but about its emergence as an aporetic tension between being and becoming, taming and unhinging, plurality and unity, contingency and determinacy. In line with conventional depictions of the trajectory of time in Western thought, Bartelson shows that, from the late 18th century onwards, concepts such as progress, universal history, revolution, and dialectics, have endeavored to reconcile this dual demand. The staying power of this tension is, nonetheless, one of the upshots of Bartelson's simultaneous reading of the transformations in knowledge and politics in the modern age.

According to Bartelson, this historicization of knowledge and being entails a profound transformation in issues of political authority: "there remains a strong tension between the demands of political order and the recognition of its inherent temporality" (Bartelson, 2001, 38), since

> if concepts of political community are grafted on to a plane of historicity, this implies that such a historicized notion of community can hardly be used to justify particular forms of authority, since any such move exposes that authority to the same profound historicity, thereby depriving it of timelessness and thus of any transhistorical legitimacy. If (…) the ultimate conditions of political order vary across history, any such order becomes difficult to legitimize in other than strictly temporal and therefore also contingent terms (Bartelson, 2001, pp.39-40).

The endeavor to reconciliate this duality sets the conditions for the divide between the domestic realms of the State and the international realm of the system of States: "[h]istory, as the unilinear and dialectical succession of conflicting forces, is as much poison as it is antidote; it solves the problem of order within the state, but poses a problem of finality outside it" (Bartelson, 1995a, p.232). On the one hand, this new arrangement of identity and difference constitutes a dialectics of conflict through which the Nation-State is read as emerging from a historical process of unification, though such unification can only be warranted by its previous existence in the state. On the other hand, the system of States emerges as the negation of this *telos*; since every reconciliation of the dialectic sublimates

conflict to a new level of complexity, the sharp division between State and State system relies on the international sphere appearing as the antithesis of the dialectic of conflict.

In sum, "the international at the point of its emergence is inseparable from its own essential historicity; history, as we [k]now it, is as much a precondition of the international as a result of it, since both arise out of a new and distinctively modern arrangement of identity and difference in knowledge" (Bartelson, 1995a, p.186). Put differently, the constitution of the international is inseparable from the duality of time that organizes modern sovereignty: the taming of time being always predicated on some untamed temporality—and vice-versa. In this sense, the division of State and State system

> emerges as the unintended consequence of the clash between the core concepts and forces of modern knowledge, between the *a priori* and the *a posteriori*, between the empirical and the transcendental, between subject and object, between the universal and the particular, between philosophy and history, between finalist dialectic and presentist historiography, between Man and his Other (1995a, p.247).

We might venture, among those clashes, the one between the Western tradition of time and heterotemporality; linear time and trauma time; Hegelian History and Deleuzian time; fixed, external, timing standard and internal, flexible, ones.

In sum, we might read Bartelson as offering a critical interpretation of the temporal turn; an interpretation that helps us make sense of its paradox. In particular, following Bartelson, we might read the tendency in calls for taking time seriously in matters of world politics to rely on disavowed timely and unified temporal assumptions as the effect of the relation between time, authority, and knowledge in a Western tradition. Hence, we might say that Bartelson's critical reading is itself articulated in terms of the discourse of time, indicating a tension within its terms.

This tension can be furthered by turning to Walker's work and how it can similarly be read as pointing at limits in the temporal turn from within dimensions of the discourse of time. Though he has not engaged with something like the "temporal turn" in the same systematic way he has dealt with realism, liberalism, or cosmopolitanism, we might catch glimpses of a critical attitude that addresses our needs in his endeavor to trace these modes of thinking to a modern political

discourse. In this sense, we might read the temporal turn—in its call for changing temporal assumptions and scaling objects of analysis—into Walker's reflections on the

> contemporary political analysis gather[ing] under the sign of the spatiotemporal. Some refer to a shift from spatial forms maintaining order through time to patterns of movement, speed and acceleration that work through time to bring new relationalities, networks, movements of information and capital, places within circulations, and lines of flight destined for some apparatus of capture. (…) Some refer to a simultaneous move towards both local and global, as the modern subject, modern sovereign state and modern system of sovereign states lose their capacity to resolve all contradictions between universality and particularity within a spatiotemporal particularity (Walker, 2009, p.252).

As towards so many others, Walker is skeptic regarding these interpretative tendencies. In his sense, despite all their insights, most tend to keep an implicit acceptance of the limits of political imagination set by the modern political discourse, therefore doing little to help us understand and take part in political transformation. Indeed, though many contemporary interpretations "urge us to think about less constrained—more heterogeneous—forms of diversity and pluralism", they are not "likely to get very far, certainly in political terms, without attending to the relations—and thus boundaries—through which we have learnt to reconcile competing claims to both unity and diversity (Walker, 2016, p.3)[78]. Hence, in his view, what is at stake "is not the availability of evidence that boundaries are rather more complicated than they are supposed to be, but what it might mean to speak about political life at all, given forms of complexity that are at odds with principles of inclusion and exclusion articulated in relation to clear thin lines at the edges of the modern state and system of states" (Walker, 2009, p.36).

In this sense, noticing an opposite temptation to the one so commonly acknowledged and reified in the temporal turn, Walker claims that our desire for more complex, contingent, and untimely depictions of the world all too often

[78] In a more scathing tone, Walker criticizes those "celebrating one half of a dualism—difference, pluralism, language, temporality, relativism—so as to reaffirm specifically modern framings of dualistic options (…) [such as] attempts to conflate modernity with clearly universal and grounded conditions of Enlightenment (against which mere relativism may be identified by those who claim to be enlightened) rather than with the traditions of both skepticism and critical possibility that I take to be the more conventional, and more persuasive, expressions of what is at stake in claims about a specifically modern understanding of philosophy and culture. Both tendencies have led to a widespread banalization of debate about theoretical and methodological principles in the analysis of international relations, and drive the current vogue for 'isms' and 'perspectives'". (Walker, 2009, p.274, n.35).

operates by keeping in place our assumed categories of political order to ensure the political after all else is done. I find it worth quoting him at length here, for the movement of thought it seeks to impart:

> *The obvious temptation* is to insist that *of course* there are others; other cultures, other traditions, other ways of being in the world than those given by the tightly solipsistic discourses of modern sovereignty. *Well yes, and no*. (…) [O]ther ways of being: *certainly, just* put their substantive claims under the formal authority of sovereign states and modern system of states to ensure that all these other identities, all these other claims to Being and being in the world don't get out of hand; are ultimately subordinated not to the epistemological and hermeneutical negotiations of the historian or anthropologist, but to some authority that knows where, when and how to draw the line. Other ways of knowing: *fine, just* make sure we know their status in relation to modern authorizations of authority. Stop being so caught up in the tight and narrow discourses about sovereignty; open up to others; recognize alterity as the condition under which any selves, including the self-identical modern self, are possible; forget about the arrogances of modern reason: *well, possibly. Just* be prepared to make an exception when necessities arise, and remember that exceptions are both necessary to legitimize the rule, and will require the suspension of what is taken to be the norm. Complex zones of inclusion and exclusion, and of understandings and negotiations across the divide, can be reduced to no less complex but very thin lines and decisionistic moments at the drop of a sovereign declaration (Walker, 2009, pp.146-7, my emphasis).

Walker's "of course" can be read here as more than a figure of speech—though it certainly is this as well. It marks the acceptance of all claims of a complex world and of complex alternative epistemologies, ontologies, and ethics that one can summon—including those around temporalities. Hence, it is undeniable that, *of course*, complex temporalities can be invoked through turns to time. However, we are invited to follow this with an ambiguous "yes and no", to continue every acceptance with a silent "however". Yes, they can be invoked, *but* with some skepticism as to their capacity to displace accounts of what politics must be.

Therefore, while interpretative strategies such as the temporal turn might be empirically more provocative than the dominant interpretations of world politics, and though they might establish perfectly defensible ethical grounds, they tend to keep untouched the issue of the limits of political imagination of modern sovereignty. We might venture that the fields of objects of the temporal turn, in its silence about political transformations beyond changes of scales, might work to keep the issue of sovereign decision unresolved—or, better said, resolved as usual. Put differently, the established modes of institution of coherence tend to remain, even if implicitly, as a last resource to make sense of the complexity of world politics.

Again, and importantly, we should refrain from reading this in terms of a mistake, or the kind of silence that can be filled with more and better words. The point here is not that the temporal turn somehow "forgets" to engage with politics, but that this engagement is constrained by the very way in which the modern political discourse is organized. Indeed, to Walker, "in speaking about challenges to our understanding of political community, we run into the limits of our own ability to speak of politics at all" (Walker, 1990, p.168)[79]. In other words, if our understanding of politics is contingent upon political discourse, then our capacity to understand political transformation is limited by our very conception of politics. To Walker, these limits are best expressed in terms of modern sovereignty, as sovereignty is not only constitutive of political order but itself constituted by political discourse.

As a problem, sovereignty refers to a wide set of troubles concerning the conditions under which legitimate authority gets constituted and authorized, and thus, "how we come to terms with attempts to distinguish claims about authority and those about power, claims about power from those about knowledge, or claims about sovereignty and those about subjectivity, just to name three key sites" (Walker, 2002, p.14; see also 2009, p.197). According to Walker, in the modern formulation of this problem, modern sovereignty offers an answer to the problem of political community as it is posed in response to the demise of overarching (premodern) universalities. In this context, modern sovereignty affirms, in a context of lack of intelligibility, the limits in space and time within which one can reconcile unity and diversity between free and equal subjects, and beyond which no such reconciliation is possible and political claims must be forgone. Furthermore (and this is the more challenging point) it also implies an understanding of how those spatiotemporal limits can change without giving up on politics. In other words, modern sovereignty establishes the possibilities and impossibilities of the being and becoming of politics.

[79] In a more recent, lengthier, though equally forceful formulation: "Our ability to know and engage with the modern state and system of states is enabled by our own conditionalities and achievements as subjects of the modern state and system of states (…) Any claim to a normative vision of escape from the modern state and system of states will be caught within accounts of what it means to be a visionary, to effect an escape, to imagine the possibilities of being otherwise that are already produced by modern accounts of political necessity, possibility and subjectivity" (Walker, 2009, pp.60-1.)

Walker's interpretation of modern sovereignty and the modern political discourse involves a move that warrants special attention. In his interpretation, priority is given "[not to] the temporal agony of a socio-political theory torn between Enlightenment universalism and post-Nietzschean nihilism, but [to] the spatial preoccupations of early-modern debates about where and what political community can be given the dissolution of medieval and feudal hierarchies" (Walker, 1993, p.61). Reinforcing this idea, he later affirms to be "more persuaded by readings of modernity as an era in which the possibilities of temporality and change expressed by the Kantians and Hegelians were already enabled by the articulation of a spatiotemporally specific account of spatiotemporal foundations of the kind we find in Hobbes" (Walker, 2009, p.65). Therefore, "no matter how much we might be impressed by the dynamic and temporal quality of modernity as a culture of change (…) the primary forms through which modernity finds expression politically affirm claims about spatial continuity" (Walker, 2009, p.252). In this sense, Walker locates the main elements of the regulative ideals of modern political discourse in early-modern spatiotemporal delimitations of politics, affirming they have priority over "temporal agony". In this sense, we might venture that the temporal turn tends to keep the limits of political imagination in place because those limits are its very condition of possibility.

To sum up the complicate articulation of spatiotemporal limits of modern sovereignty, we might say that it organizes unity and diversity by establishing thin lines of differentiation. Traced in space, those lines discriminate spatial jurisdiction in terms of the division between the "inside" and the "outside" of political community—the former delimiting the space of possible politics, the latter of its impossibility. This formal division is instituted across higher and smaller scales: the interior space of subjectivity, of civil society or the nation, of the state, and of the community of states can all be opposed to—and conditioned by—the external multiplicity of identities, of the State, of the system of states, and of the world as a whole. In each case, the internal possibility of unity is conditioned by the external necessity of difference, a split through thin lines that is as absurd as it is constitutive of the modern regulative ideal of politics by articulating universality-within-particularity and particularity-within-universality. Traced in time, those lines demarcate temporal trajectories through a distinction between past and present, absence and presence. While the past is absent, the present is amenable to the

intervention of an equally present modern subject. Before any narrative comes to fulfill specific ideological orientations, the very distinction of past and present is political in its affirmation of the presence and freedom of the political subject. This division can then be replicated not only to organize complex temporal trajectories, but more generally to distinguish modernity from previous times, and the modern political community from the world that it left behind (cf. Walker, 2009, ch.2; 2016).

Fundamentally, lines in space and in time mutually authorize our spatial and temporal imagination: "[t]he boundaries that divide our spaces on the ground also enable our political imagination in time. Conversely, our ability to understand ourselves as modern subjects, acting in the temporal trajectory we have come to treat as the inevitable ground of modern freedoms, also maps our political imagination in space" (Walker, 2009, pp.31-2). In this sense, interpretations of modern politics all too often rely in riven strategies that start from one set of lines or the other. Thinking about lines in space, we quickly note their arbitrariness and inadequacy to our present predicament and engage in serious debates about the spatial configuration of politics that cannot be contained in the simple architecture of modern state in a system of states. In doing so, however—and as the temporal turn endeavors to demonstrate—we rely on temporal assumptions subsumed into the taming powers of space. Starting with lines in time, however, we might note their arbitrariness and engage in serious debates about the temporal configuration of politics—enters problems of time. Walker invites us to consider that, in doing so, we all too often rely on the spatial assumptions that establish the internal space within which politics might become possible—as long as differentiated, by a thin line, from its outside. In his harsher words, "much of the sclerotic character of contemporary political analysis builds on the construction of an army of stereotypes on either side of this apparently endless debate between spatial continuities and temporal transformations" (Walker, 2009, p.66).

At first glance, this narrative might seem disingenuous—who, given the prevalence of discourses about globalization, flows, structural transformations, late capitalism, and complex boundaries would believe in such crude thin lines and their implicit modern spatiotemporality? Who, given the amount of historical investigation suggesting the complexity and unevenness of anything like a transition from pre-modernity to modernity, would believe in a straight line from

then to now? Who, given the proliferation of concepts of relationality, event, contingency, complexity, disjuncture, and decentering would restrict themselves to straightforward demarcations, logic of non-contradiction, and historical teleologies? And who, witnessing the many-fold forms, locations, and practices of violence and freedom would not flinch before describing our present in terms of the Weberian monopoly of legitimate violence and the Schmittean declaration of exception at the borders of the State as the ground for securing freedom? Ultimately, we would do well at least to remain skeptical of our belief in these stories. Walker is not oblivious to that; indeed, he does claim that reimagining political imagination calls for nothing less than a serious combination of questions about the relation of identity and difference that do not replicate the architecture of modern subject, state, and state system with questions about politics in time that do presume the need to control and tame time in space (Walker, 2009, p.256).

However, he is also aware that doing so would deprive us of any ground to differentiate modernity from the world outside and before it, and hence of the framework through which we might pose and answer questions relating to political community, political life, and the problem of sovereignty. In this sense, we might do well to remember that

> [t]he difficulty, of course, is that such stories [of thin lines and modern sovereignty] are both plausible and implausible: implausible as history, but intensely plausible as our regulative account of what history must have been for us to have become what we are and for us to be able to imagine what we might become in any imaginable future (Walker, 2009, p.226).

The point, then, is that although these limits are increasingly unconvincing in face of changing discursive and empirical conditions, they continue to operate as our regulative ideals, precisely because they are the discourse within which we know how to refer to the constitution and transformation of authority: “as tends to be the way with regulative ideals, the less that practice conforms to the ideal, the more the ideal works to regulate the practice” (Walker, 2016, p.26). In other words, though political practices conform less and less to the resolution of problems of unity and diversity expressed in modern sovereignty, modern sovereignty continue to regulate commonsense, scholarly, and practitioners’ understanding of what politics is and should be given who we have become. Many worlds can be described today, and in

a variety of ways; however, the thin spatiotemporal lines of modern sovereignty continue to guide what it means to ask and answer questions about political life.

At this point, we might feel the unrest from the tension building up between the importance, urgency, and apparent clarity of what needs to be done, and the constant affirmation of a force returning us to modern sovereignty at the site of the unhinging of our political imagination. In making sense of this strange tendency, it is indispensable to note Walker's caveat to his own approach. In his own words:

> To read the claims of modern politics on terms given by the regulative claims of the modern sovereign state, as I have been doing here, is certainly to underestimate the historicity and contingency of causalities and events that the claims of state sovereignty systematically efface, not least because these claims work very hard to privilege the priority of spatial differentiation over temporal contingency (Walker, 2009, pp.82-3)[80].

In other words, Walker avows that his interpretation of the modern political discourse in terms of the regulative ideals of what he calls modern sovereignty involves underplaying the contingency of this discourse—a critique leveled against his previous work and picked up again by his commentators more recently[81]. By underplaying this contingency, we often find ourselves caught in a difficult ambivalence. On the one hand, as we seek to strengthen our capacity to think otherwise about thinking and doing politics otherwise, that is, in ways that do not immediately play into the set of alternatives already embedded in our present, we are led to notice the erasures that all too often accompany our attempts to foreground contingency in our understanding of world politics. On the other hand, however, in underplaying the contingency of the modern political discourse, we

[80] On a longer and more nuanced formulation that allows us to come full circle following his argument: "It may be, as I have insisted, that the appearance of continuity has been *an effect of a great many temporal practices*, especially of the practices of state/system sovereignty that have become our modern archetype of structural stasis, but the appearance of continuity and spatial order has been precisely *the necessary ambition* of a politics organized within a contradictory arrangement of sovereign states within a sovereign system of states" (Walker, 2009, p.252, my emphasis). On the one hand, Walker claims to foreground the temporal practices which are constitutive of the apparent continuity of sovereignty—an emphasis on its contingent dimension—; on the other hand, however, such apparent continuity is the "necessary ambition" of the modern political discourse. We might sense the tension building up to be encased in this concise formulation—"necessary ambition"—as the potentiality of desire pulls against the determinacy of necessity.

[81] For a thorough critique of his early work, see Bartelson (1998; 2001). For the persistence of this critique towards his later work, see the commentaries in the 2011 special issue dedicated to *After the Globe; Before the World* in *Contemporary Political Theory* (vol.10, n.2). Similar critiques have been leveled against the Foucauldian framework that silently underlies his approach; for a reading in these terms, see Lage and Chamon (2015).

make it difficult, if not impossible, to locate, constitute, or trust *any* grounds for this.

This is one way of reading Brassett's (2011) claim that the concept of "political imagination" in Walker does too much work with not enough conceptualization. How does imagination work? Is it a matter of becoming conscious of limits that instigates imagination? Is it something as idealist or subjective as the word seems to imply? We don't get too many answers to these questions. What we do get is the sense that our imagination is blocked by a temptation to move from one side of a dualism to the other; a temptation to turn to the complexity of the world before attending to our political limits, a temptation to return to the terms of the discourse every time we attempt to move out of it. "Political imagination" and "temptation" are intrinsically connected in Walker and, together, they do the work of articulating the transformations contemplated by the limits of a discourse with those that can emerge by interrogating such limits.

In sum, we might read Walker, like Bartelson, as offering a critical interrogation of the temporal turn, inviting skepticism towards its claims in ways that might shed light on the context in which its paradoxes—of inversion—and silences—on politics—are articulated. In particular, following Walker, we might read the tendency to leave questions of political transformations untouched in the temporal turn as the effect of the modern political discourse, as articulated through modern sovereignty. Furthermore, Walker's reading is itself articulated in terms of the discourse of time, that is, in terms of the specific temporal assumptions grounding modern sovereignty. In this sense, it invites a further exploration of the fields of dispersion and coexistence of that discourse. However, and finally, in doing so, his interpretation opens itself to the critique of relying on traditional conceptions of time in its underplaying of the contingency of practices of sovereignty.

We have seen, through this particular reading of parts of the work of Bartelson and Walker, that a critique of the temporal turn can be articulated from within the discourse of time. Put differently, though both authors read troubled times in terms of time troubles—more specifically, troubles with the taken for granted relationship between knowledge, authority, and time in our political discourse—they do so in ways that raise critical questions to the temporal turn, in particular by grounding its paradoxes in a broader relating time and politics. In this

sense, both authors can be read as raising doubts towards the capacity of the temporal turn to realize its proclaimed aims of better epistemological and ethical grounds for thinking and doing world politics. To them, such attempt is indeed doomed to repeat, in veiled terms, the forms of authority of a system which is articulated precisely on its capacity to capture contingency within intelligible political terms. Furthermore, however, we might also have noticed that, while doing so, both authors have opened themselves to the critique of relying on linear, timely, fixed conceptions of time in the articulation of their argument. As pointed out above, while these authors might be read as raising skepticism towards foregrounding contingency, they might also be read as doing so from a standpoint that, itself, substantially rely in deterministic accounts of time in knowledge and politics.

Finally, both Walker and Bartelson articulate such critique by interrogating how time is articulated in our political discourse, that is, our unacknowledged (spatio)temporal assumptions. It seems, then, that the discourse of time accommodates, in calls to take time seriously not only an inversion from singular, unified, timely, fixed, linear, deterministic time to plural, untimely, flexible, disjointed time, but the very tension between a Western tradition of time (and its dire consequences) and disruptive alternatives to it (and their consequences). By splitting (Benjamin, 1988) these positions, the discourse of time sets up an opposition that can be played out, in alternate ways, through so many turns, returns, skeptical outlooks, and repressed Hopes.

Indeed, we might find a further hint in this direction in their mutual engagement, which not only highlights—perhaps unintentionally—the multiple turns articulated by the oppositions of the discourse of time, but also brings to the fore the issue of the fields of political objects that come to be articulated in this discourse.When engaging with Walker's work, Bartelson argues that "the sovereign state is rendered a historically specific solution to the more perennial problem of political community, yet what makes that problem look perennial is the fact that it is abstracted from the modern solution to it: the state" (Bartelson, 2001, p.167). Put differently, the problem of sovereignty at the center of Walker's framework is indissociable from the consolidation of modern sovereignty and the modern state—of the modern political discourse which establishes both problems and solutions—, not a more perennial problem receiving a more recent solution. However, in

dissociating both, Walker ends up "arguing that the state is contingent upon things themselves contingent upon the presupposed presence of the state [which] is equivalent to saying that the state is an inescapable limit of the political imagination, and therefore tantamount to demonstrating its necessity" (Bartelson, 2001, pp.167-8).

Unravelling this claim, Bartelson associates Walker's pessimism towards political transformation to two assumptions: the rigid distinction between modern and pre-modern political orders—which grounds the novelty and *presence* of modern sovereignty and the modern political discourse; and the reification of the modern international system as an inescapable condition of modern political life (Bartelson, 2011, p.289). He later adds a third: Walker's implicit insistence that the skepticism that informed early-modern articulation of modern sovereignty and that informs his own thinking is still operative in his present—fundamentally an assumption of timeliness (Bartelson, 2011, p.290). To Bartelson, by fixing these, Walker effectively makes it impossible to make political transformation intelligible except as a wholesale transcendence of modernity and its limits—a transcendence that is foreclosed *a priori* by the ontological status of modern sovereignty. Put differently, Bartelson (2011, p.289) locates in Walker a "selective application of the principle of historical ontology" which results in the present inability to do what early-modern thinkers are said to have done: redraw political discourses without fully reproducing them.

One instance in which this reification becomes particularly relevant for our purposes is in the double role that time acquires in Walker's framework. On the one hand, as we have seen, the temporal agony which we have located in the temporal turn is said to be conditioned by early-modern articulation of modern sovereignty. In this sense, contemporary political analyses relying on time can be read as part of the modern political discourse. On the other hand, Walker describes modern sovereignty as the spatialization of time, as subsuming "all intimations of a chronopolitics within the ontological determinations of a geopolitics" (Walker, 1993, p.6), since "Hobbes' guiding instinct was to transform all opportunities for temporal contingency into the possibility of spatial order (…) an instinct that conventionally marks him off from Machiavelli's prior attempt to articulate the possibility of a politics in time (Walker, 2009, p.65). Or, put inversely, "Machiavelli's earlier attempt to articulate a politics of temporal judgement, of

knowing when and how to act in order to create and sustain political possibilities in a world of temporal energies and contingencies (…) faded as liberalism turned towards more constrained alternatives" (Walker, 2009, p.156). In this latter case, contemporary accounts of politics as taking place in complex and contingent temporalities is not so much part of modern sovereignty as that which modern sovereignty is constituted against, so that "politics as an art of timing and contingency remains profoundly disruptive" (Walker, 2009, p.253). Put differently, in allowing "time" to work as a constitutive outside of modern political discourse, it also becomes an easy recourse for a politics of inversions.

I believe we should read this double role of time not as an error, but as an effect of Walker's operation. His need to think about difficulties leads him to point to the presence of time in modern discourse—to avoid an escape through inversion—, while his need to think about change and transformation leads him to point to the presence of time as fully outside of modern political discourse. In a sense, we get 'time' as signaling both an internal alternative and an external possibility.

In this sense, Bartelson points to an undue reification in Walker, which is tantamount to a freezing of time by turning assumptions into necessities. On the contrary, he ventures that by accepting that "this disjunction and this system are real only by virtue of having been conceptualized into existence in the past" (Bartelson, 2011, p.289), we might admit more fully the possibility of political transformation beyond the expected limits of modern sovereignty. In doing so, Bartelson seems to invoke a principle of contingency at the heart of this critique: by making what seems necessary appear contingent, by turning from fixed temporal assumptions towards more flexible ones, we might engage with world politics in ways that more properly account for the coming into existence of different worlds[82].

Curiously, Walker's critique towards Bartelson (2001) might be depicted in uncannily similar terms. Despite his agreement with a skepticism towards critical endeavors to imagine alternatives to the state, Walker

[82] We might make one more turn in this dance and remember that, alongside his critique of temporalization, Bartelson (2001; 2014) is also skeptical of critical strategies that rely on denaturalization as a way of undoing the authority of concepts. In his view, by assuming that concepts are "dead enough" to be denaturalized, but "not dead enough" to have lost their capacity of organizing our thinking—which would render the critical denaturalization nonsensical—this move tend to allow the critic to keep a spectral version of that concept in place. This is, indeed, a critique he directs at Walker's work and, I believe, indirectly, at himself.

> would want to resist the all-or-nothing character of Bartelson's conclusions by insisting (…) that the forms of circular reasoning and political pessimism that are so characteristic of most critiques of the state and states system rest upon assumptions that may be constantly reproduced in practice but ought to have very little status as serious scholarship, whatever their status in the construction of modern scholarly disciplines (Walker, 2009, p.279, n.4).

Put differently, while Walker agrees with Bartelson's skepticism, he worries that his formulation of the problem results in a position according to which the only way to get rid of our current predicament is through complete transcendence of our political discourse—a familiar critique if there ever was one.

And indeed, in closing his book on critical engagements with the State, Bartelson argues that the challenge to those who want to find ways of thinking politics beyond the state concept is nothing less than "rephrasing the entire problem of political order, thus disposing of statist interpretations of authority". And he adds, "But this is hardly possible within the present theoretical context, since it would violate the initial conditions of the self-identity to be subjected to criticism: its target would vanish in front of the eyes of the critic, as would its very politicity" (Bartelson, 2001, p.181). Or, as he puts elsewhere "Only when this [statist] perspective itself has been long forgotten, will we be totally entitled but not the least tempted to speak of the end of the state" (Bartelson, 1998, p.322). Given Bartelson's depiction of the "present theoretical context", we might wonder if the overcoming of the state concept and its limits might not involve precisely the transcendence of the dominant articulation of knowledge, authority, and *time*—a recognizable invitation, indeed.

Furthermore, I take Walker to mean that "serious scholarship", a scholarship that takes critiques of the state and the states system "seriously", ought to articulate alternatives in ways that neither fully reproduce nor fully reject our political discourse—which "explains why I think it so important to understand the political effects of intellectual practices" (Walker, 2009, p.279, n.4). We might read this late and maybe surprisingly hopeful note from an author which has so consistently been read (though not self-identified) as a pessimist as implying that there is no way to establish that intellectual practices will necessarily be caught within given accounts of what thinking alternatives must be. Put differently, the temporality of (intellectual) practices should not be fixed in the kind of linear, singular, unified

assumptions which can only account for "all" or for "nothing", less we find ourselves caught in undesirable all-or-nothing predicaments—precisely those we set out to work so hardly, and seriously, to evade. To refer to a long quote above, *of course*, we do better to understand the more complex operation of intellectual practice—but also *just as long as* we "make sure we know their status in relation to modern authorizations of authority", so that "the more the ideal works to regulate the practice".

In sum, the mutual engagement between Walker and Bartelson can be said to reveal a convoluted dance of displacements. Both authors formulate their work against what they perceive as a tendency of political discourse to end up in dead ends and entrapments when trying to escape the limits of modern sovereignty, and both criticize in the other the tendency to create that same sense of entrapment by making escape an all or nothing matter ("what I argue about you, you argue about me"). Furthermore, this external split—between Walker and Bartelson, in their engagements—mirrors an internal split—between the dominant and recessive voices internal to their texts. In this sense, by making a critique of the other's unacknowledged entrapment, Walker and Bartelson challenge, even if only implicitly, that which, in their own thought, creates a sense of entrapment by making the limits of modern sovereignty immutable shy of a complete overhaul. ("what I argue about you, I could also argue about myself").

To articulate such critique, however, they each recur to a kind of critical reading—the move from simplicity to complexity and temporalization, respectively—that their own work is formulated against ("what I argue about you/me, I counterargue in my work and in my defense"). In this sense, and curiously, each author criticizes in the other the exact lack of contingency that the other criticizes in them—all the while simultaneously criticizing the temporal assumptions sustaining critical endeavors relying on a move towards contingency. In a sense, then, we might read them as "turning temporal" in their mutual critique, despite their suspicion of any such move in their own reflections on modern sovereignty. In this sense, I argue that we meet here the mirror image of the paradoxical "improvement away from improvement" we located in the temporal turn in a "temporal escape away from escapes in time".

We might notice that what allows for such paradoxical disposition is a certain splitting: the dominant voice of their work sustain their position, while the

recessive voice is directed explicitly at the other, thus remaining only implicit as a self-critique ("If I were to accept this critique, I could no longer make my argument about you/me"). It seems nonetheless important to foreground that this split is constitutive of the entire working of the argument: it is through it that we find ourselves in the position of sustaining both an indispensable critical account of the temporal turn and a healthy suspicion towards that account. Or, inversely—coming from the same organization of discourse—we may prefer to turn serious attention towards temporal assumptions that go against the tradition of time, while sustaining a healthy skepticism towards all attempts to do so. I believe such situation explains the incentives we might feel to follow a route of balance, such as the one I have attributed to Lundborg (2012; 2016) above. However, it can also be seen as a perfect situation to sustain our attention towards the discourse of time that we can describe in it.

Hence, for my purposes in this chapter, we might reread this tension in terms of the discourse of time. To begin with, both Bartelson and Walker criticize the temporal turn by pointing to reifications coming from its own (spatio)temporal assumptions. By thus entering the turns and returns of the discourse of time, however, they articulate such critique precisely by opening themselves to being criticized by the temporal turn for grounding their skepticism in conventional accounts of time. I argue we can read in this a system of shifting economy of contingency and determinacy, temporal tradition and alternatives, internal and external temporal critique, that is played out throughout the discourse of time—we might say, that *is* the discourse of time.

This set up of the discourse of time establishes a valuable critical movement. However, it also continues to operate in relation to its own delimitation of the lines and scales of modern sovereignty. As every critique and self-critique is made with an eye to that distribution of objects, what remains articulated at each turn and return is the persistence of those lines. Indeed, at the level of this mutual engagement, it appears that we are constantly at the verge of thinking and being otherwise, until we are pulled back. A certain relation between political imagination and temptation seems to be at work here, though never fully articulated. As in the case of the temporal turn, above, the economy of desire making for temptations to keep doing that which makes it impossible to be otherwise is acknowledged and naturalized. It would seem only that, unlike expected in the temporal turn,

repression for temptations of turning is not enough—we might need to add to it a repression of our desires to escape as well. We might thus catch glimpses of fields of dispersion and coexistence similar to those of the temporal turn: calls for inversion, carrying inescapable paradoxes, and unavowed temptations around them that appear to call for repression for an escape (made structurally impossible by the terms of discourse), and a resulting field of (political) objects that avoids questioning political transformation. In the concluding remarks to this chapter, I bring together these two trends of the discourse of time in one final cross-reading.

4.3. Concluding Remarks

In this chapter, I have suspended the claim to validity of a so-called "temporal turn" in IR as well as of an imagined "temporal return" and read them as discursive practices that simultaneously erase the level of discourse and take part in its discursive operation. In doing so, I describe the fields of dispersion and coexistence making for a discourse of time. Hence, instead of asking how to be properly attentive to time and temporality in relation to our understandings of world politics, I have endeavored to make sense of the discourse through which time becomes a matter of serious debate in IR. This has involved both a surface reading of the discursive relations around important works on time *and* IR (what I have called, following a commentator, the "temporal turn" in IR) and a critical engagement and surface reading of the critique of modern sovereignty that articulates questions of time *in* IR.

I have shown how the temporal turn establishes dualistic conceptual fields, opposing the Western tradition of time founded on linearity, unity, determinacy, closure, control, timeliness, and progress to alternative temporal assumptions relying on elements such as plurality, fragmentary, contingency, flexibility, openness, untimeliness, disjuncture. Furthermore, by affirming the ethical, empirical, and political superiority of the latter over the former, the "temporal turn" distributes authority to strategies of inversion towards the latter. In doing so, I have shown that it produces intrinsic paradoxes relating to the assumption of unity and timeliness at the very site of the call for plurality and disjunction, a paradox that could be summed up in the quest for an "improvement away from narratives of

improvement". In return, I have shown that the works of Bartelson and Walker on modern sovereignty could be read as raising skepticism towards such strategies of inversion by making sense of the ensuing paradox in terms of the discourse of time. In particular, through their reading of modern sovereignty, they posit that the reproduction of (disavowed) forms of coherence and unity in strategies calling for contingency and complexity can be read as an effect of the modern articulation of authority, knowledge, and time. In doing so, however, both Walker and Bartelson must fix the ground of modern sovereignty in such a way that opens their argument up for the critique of reproducing the Western tradition of time. In noticing such tendency in each other works—and, on recessive voices, in themselves—, they begin to circle a parallel paradox to the one above in suggestions of a "temporal escape away from escapes in time". In face of this riven field of concepts and strategies of inversion, I argue that the discourse of time is a dynamic playing out of this shifting economy of turn and return, contingency and determinacy, plurality and unity, timeliness and untimeliness in the movement away from a "tradition of time".

Furthermore, I have shown that a specific economy of desire and temptations is posited as articulating these fields of concepts and the strategies of inversion moving around them. In particular, both reflections on time *and* world politics and on time *in* world politics assume the presence of a significant temptation to return and reproduce the tradition of time despite the superiority of moving away from it. This temptation, a clear obstacle to the achievement of a better temporal scenario, must be resisted as a condition of possibility of heterotemporality, flexible timing standard, trauma time, etc. In a similar vein, Bartelson argues that our political discourse makes the state concept into a secret source of enjoyment of its critics, and Walker seems to indicate that, at the very site of escape from modern sovereignty, something pulls us back towards its regulative thin lines—though this force doesn't get theorized so much as posited. In fact, Walker also posits a similar desire in the opposite direction: the temptation to affirm contingency against determinacy, and complexity against similarity is strong enough that it must be resisted if we are to make proper sense of modern sovereignty. In this context, we might wonder about the amount of repression and vigilance that must make for the subject which attempts, heroically, to sustain a cautiously struck balance between the temporal turn and the analysis of the

temporal underpinnings of modern sovereignty. In all these cases, the discourse of time seems to assume a certain economy of temptations which in fact erases the problem of desire by subsuming it to a known—indeed reified—quantity to be repressed as a condition of realization of any proper politics.

Finally, I have shown that the temporal turn organizes fields of objects in terms of scalar metaphors of levels and complexities, as strategies of inversion towards better concepts of time are associated with the more complex sites of the "totality of relations" making for the "world" beyond the state or of the "small scale" and "local" evading the state. In both cases, I have ventured that transformations in politics are more or less easily contained within claims to a change of scale and complexity which leave mostly unmoored questions about what those displacements mean. Picking up on this, I have read Bartelson and Walker as showing that the scalar organization of modern politics is itself an effect of the way modern sovereignty articulates lines in time and space delimiting the being and becoming of possible politics. Put differently, these authors read modern sovereignty as encompassing turns towards contingent, flexible, and plural time within the practices through which modern sovereignty reproduces its limits. However, as their mutual engagement reveals, both readings of modern sovereignty result in a sense of entrapment in which political transformation can only take place in terms of a complete overhaul of the conditions of existence of modern politics—an all or nothing scenario which produces the stasis it seeks and finds in world politics. In this sense, while shedding light in the silences produced through the discursive relations between the fields of concepts, objects, and strategies of the discourse of time, both Bartelson and Walker appear to reproduce those silences in their own articulation of the concepts of time and political objects of the modern political discourse. In this sense, I argue that the discourse of time tends to produce a stalemate in relation to political transformation, as it ultimately offers no field of change which is not also conceptualized as, in fact, a field of capture and reproduction.

In sum, we might say that, for part of the literature, time and modern sovereignty exclude each other. Where there is a proper understanding of time, sovereignty falters in its attempts to fix grounds for politics, making time a radical externality to the problem of sovereignty. Contrarily, where sovereign claims rule undisputed, the plurality, out-of-jointness, and flexibility of time must be reduced;

indeed, it is on the condition of doing away with a chronopolitics that sovereignty rules our political imaginary. In this context, we should expect political transformation to ensue unexpectedly from the radical externality of time—though how we might make sense of it remains a question. However, from a different approach, the relationship between time and modern sovereignty is more intrinsic: we might say that one "comes out" of the other. Hence, conceptions of time work on the basis of sovereignty, being authorized on that fixed ground; likewise, sovereign claims are only possible because they rely on the previous existence of time. In this sense, there is no point in laying claim to time as a radical externality to our modern political framework—after all, as we are often told, the point is precisely the problem. The important remark here, is that instead of choosing one approach or the other, the discourse of time seems to work precisely in the ambiguous site in which they encounter and becomes surreptitiously interchangeable, shifting "time" from the position of radical externality to that of constitutive outside of sovereignty, and vice-versa.

We might read in this ambiguity the play of turns and returns that have appeared as constitutive to the discourse of time. But how, then, to make sense of these turns as discursive practices? I find one productive way of making sense of these ambiguous movements in Butler's (1997) reading of the discursive practice of "turning" in terms of the simultaneous emergence of what must be kept in place to make movement intelligible, and of what must move to make fixity intelligible. On the one hand, we are led to imagine that a field of referents must already exist for a turn to take place, a field that is then presupposed, but not formed. On the other hand, we might insist that the field is formed by turning, that the turn is constitutive. Here, however, the referents are only formed; we might wonder what, then, is turning, and how come we know of its movement? It would seem, then, that as a discursive practice turning appears as both the condition of possibility of fields and horizons, and as taking place in relation to existing fields and horizons[83]. In this

[83] Compare this to Christine Ross' interpretation in relation to the temporal turn taking place in contemporary art: turning is "a *generative moment* in which a new horizon emerges in the process—leaving behind the practice that was its originating point […]. In a 'turn,' we shift *away* from something or *towards* or *around* something, and it is *we* who are in movement, rather than *it*" (Rogoff, 2008 quoted in Ross, 2012, p.15, emphases in the original). This description mobilizes "turning" to indicate the movement of a preexisting (collective) subject away, towards, or around a preexisting "something", knowing subjects and knowable objects constituting the fixed points from the perspective of which the movement of turning can be identified.

sense, Butler claims that to speak of turns "is a strange way to speak, strange because it figures a process which cannot be detached from or understood apart from that very figuration" (Butler ,1997, p.69). Or, adapting one of her claims on tropes[84]: "not only is generation what a [turn] does, but the explanation of generation seems to require the use of [turns], an operation of [discourse] that both reflects and enacts the generativity it seeks to explain" (Butler, 1997, p.202, n.1).

It is by understanding the double edge of this generative moment that we might make sense of the turns and returns of the discourse of time as discursive practices. Indeed, in view of this circularity, Butler notes that we not so much come to *know* something when we consider the strange trope of turning, as we are "caught up" in its "luring effects" (Butler, 1997, p.69). To understand turning involves taking part in the tropological gestures of the turn. Given the centrality of turns to the discourse of time, we might note a similar dynamic. On the one hand, the discourse of time is a condition of possibility of turning; it establishes the fields in which turning upon oneself and towards others is not only a valid, but a preferred strategy. On the other hand, however, the discourse of time is itself a turn, it exists through those turnings, or emerges in turning. In this sense, then, we might say that we do not come to know the discourse of time when we consider the role of turning; more to the point, we are caught in it, in the "luring effects" of its turns, at the very moment we try to understand what that discourse—and/as its turning—is. I surmise that, as we try to know the discourse of time and find ourselves lured by its turnings, we might take advantage of our situation to ask about that luring effect, to interrogate the way in which our desire is ensnared in the discourse of time as an effective part of that discourse. In the next and final chapter, I invite one such attempt.

[84] Butler remarks the common etymological root of "turn" and "trope": "turn" in fact translates the Greek sense of "trope" (Butler, 1997, p.201, n.1).

5. The Melancholia of Time

> "[W]ithout some small effort to study the attractions of temporal displacement, we fear we will return to the moment where trumpets and drums will have to be sounded to declare the need for another new IR/IPE" (Blaney; Inayatullah, 2010, p.201).

I would hope that, while keeping up with the turns through which we have explored and exposed the discourse of time, we might have sensed a certain vertigo creeping in. If not because the successive turns slowly undercut our sense of grounding, then because as ready-at-hand references crumble, the maps we have drawn to deal with our present lose their imaginative grasp and fundamental questions make themselves urgent again. I might be allowed to speak of a moment of heightened self-consciousness, that growing sense that, just in case, as we check our navigation tools, we might as well verify whether we have, ourselves, been turning as expected—or if we've swirled in the wrong directions.

Facing such vertiginous self-consciousness, in this chapter, I propose we change gears. Instead of trying, once more, to solve the troubles of not enough or too much time—now predictably embarking in another set of turns—and instead of describing the fields entangled in those movements—as I have done in the previous chapter—I propose we attend to that nagging self-consciousness, that strange vertigo. In doing so, I suggest reading them as a dimension of the effectiveness of the discourse of time—one that, we should keep in mind, assails us even in this more or less detached descriptive endeavor. More precisely, I propose we investigate the way in which these movements of this discourse simultaneously rely on and produce a specific set of affects, a particular mood. To begin where we finished our previous chapter, I propose we attend to their luring effects.

In order to do so, I work from the idea, introduced in Chapter 3, that discursive formations are not only fields of coexistence of subjects, objects, concepts, and strategies, but also structures of feelings, circuits of affects. In this sense, I will argue that, as a circuit of affect, the discourse of time can be characterized as a form of *melancholia*. But to say this is to start at the end; let me walk back now to make the case.

In Chapter 3, I argued in favor of side-stepping the tendency to keep affects and discourses in external relations to each other, one being of the order of

psychology, the other of social or political theory. Such separation would lead us towards one of two misunderstandings I want to avoid for the purpose at hand. First, what would be a *sociogenesis* (or *logogenesis*) of melancholia, that is, the investigation of how a phenomenological melancholia is caused by a particular 'social' formation, how the discourse of time causes subjects (individual or collective) to suffer from melancholia. Second, a *psychogenesis* of the discourse of time: the analysis of how melancholic people or a melancholic society (however we interpret this turn of phrase) are the root cause of the discourse of time. Each of these endeavors effect one type of reductionism: of melancholia to a by-product of the discourse of time in the former; of the discourse of time to a side-effect of generalized melancholia in the latter. In both cases, what we miss is the level of discursive relations proper, that is, how *the discourse of time is a form of melancholia*[1].

I also argued that one way of thinking about this relation is by looking at the dynamics around *naming symptoms*. We saw that to name a symptom is to simultaneously welcome what is brought by the analysand, expressing a disavowed knowledge in this pre-diagnosis, and transform a symptom while remaining in touch with its reigning modes of expression, myths, and theories. In this sense, to name the circuit of affect of the discourse of time means to work from within its terms in a way that resonates with both the discourse and reigning modes of expression.

At this point, however, I find reason to pause. If, indeed, circuits of affect cannot be separated from their modes of expression, myths, and theories, to name the discourse of time "melancholic" might seem to carry too severe a load. Indeed, melancholia has a long trajectory in Western thought. In that Antiquity which became a mark of "Western thought", melancholia is associated simultaneously with a disease of fear and sadness, and with contemplative thinking. It is seen as a condition resulting from an excess of black bile which could lead, when cold, to sloth and apathy, and, when hot, to agitation and eroticism. It is also associated with the planet Saturn (the "saturnine disease") and the god Cronos, both related to birth and destruction, harvest and death. In Aristotle, the more positive side of melancholia acquires an almost sanctified dimension when the troubles of melancholia become associated with heightened sensibility to the world and creative genius (Ginzburg, 2001). In this sense, in its classical representation, the

melancholic is an unstable individual, oscillating between madness and geniality. Over the Renaissance, this representation "came to be clothed with value and social recognition. The recoiling and ruminations of the melancholic, its heightened sensibility blurring into genius, granted its symptom the meaning of a promise of solving the cultural malaise" (Kehl, 2009, p.42). This association of melancholia to knowledge is taken up in Romanticism, serving to praise both the mood of sadness and the aesthetics emerging from it as a kind of experience and exploration of limits and finitude. However, over the same period, melancholia also loses acceptability as a social condition—bourgeois masculinity displacing it as the least masculine of diseases—remaining an indication of a creative displacement from the social bond (Ginzburg, 2001; Kehl, 2009). In sum, from Antiquity to Romanticism, melancholia was "a type of discontent that denounced the maladjustment between members of a given society and the conditions of the social bond. (…) Consumed in ruminations, regrets, doubts and investigations, the pre-modern melancholic searched for clues to help respond properly to the enigma of the Other" (Kehl, 2009, p.41). Bringing together opposites extremes, madness and geniality, apathy and contemplation, recoiling and knowledge, melancholia's ambivalence has been invoked as a recurring theme in Western thought, up to recent days.

More specifically, however, melancholia has also acquired a renewed and particular topicality at the turn of the century, in relation to the Freudian-inspired interpretation of melancholia as a kind of arrested, interrupted, even impossible mourning[85] (cf. Žižek, 2000; Khanna, 2006). Žižek goes as far as stating that, by the end of the 20th century, "the mistake of deprecating melancholy can have dire consequences—papers are rejected, applicants don't get jobs because they express the 'wrong' attitude towards melancholy" (Žižek, 2000, pp.658-9). It would

[85] The association of melancholia with mourning is not unprecedented. According to Ginzburg, Constantine the African associates melancholia—as a disease of sadness—to loss, claiming that people afflicted with melancholia are often those "who lost their children and dearest friends, or something precious that they couldn't restore" (Constantine the African, quoted in Ginzburg, 2001, p.103). The relation, however, acquires a specific valence in Freud's work, its relation to the tradition being somewhat debated. For Ginzburg (2001), it remains important for thinking about contemporary articulations of melancholia in clinical contexts. On the other extreme, Kehl (2009; 2014) argues that Freud fundamentally breaks with the tradition, by both underplaying the role of creativity in melancholia and retracting it from the public realm to the private sphere of interiority, familial relations, and hatred towards objects precociously lost. Thus, with Freud, melancholia would be privatized and lose its status as a name for the social symptom. As we will, Butler (1997) reads into Freudian melancholia more space than Kehl grants, notably in thinking the relation between melancholia and the social tissue.

therefore appear there is a highly organized discourse around melancholia. To add insult to injury, this late 20th century revival of melancholia is thoroughly enmeshed in claims about time—stemming either from Freud's opposition of "normal mourning" as a completion of grief to melancholia as interrupted or impossible grief or from Benjamin's scathing critique of "left-wing melancholia" and his defense of "melancholia" against the homogeneous and empty time of modernity. In this context, to take part in this naming will hardly pass for a detached diagnosis. Indeed, to read the topicality of time in terms of melancholia, to eventalize the discourse of time within the terms of an unquestioned discourse of melancholia, ought to raise some alarm. As in each previous warning, detour, and caveats in this dissertation, I would immediately claim this alarm as mine too.

In this context, to name the discourse of time a form of melancholia, to eventalize the discourse of time within the terms of an unquestioned discourse of melancholia, will hardly pass without raising some alarm. As in each previous warning, detour, and caveats in this dissertation, I would immediately claim this alarm as mine too. However, if symptoms—here, circuits of affect—cannot be dissociated from the modes of expression, the myths, and the theories about them, then we might also find in this alarm reasons to push the analysis further. Indeed, to lay claim to a proliferating site of expression, and notably one relating to issues of time, can make for productive convergences. Even more so since they appear to already be thoroughly intermeshed. In other words, if it is not fortuitous that the discourse of time is, here, named melancholic, we might wonder if this is less due to my idiosyncratic reading of the material, than, at least in part, to the way these discourses have come to intertwine. In other words, less a matter of diagnosis or speech act, and more of the order of discursivity.

I explore the intricate relation that starts to emerge in this avoidance of separating diagnosis and discourse by discussing the two meanings grafted together in the name *melancholia of time*[86]. This double meaning can be explicated by attending to the simultaneously objective and subjective dimension of the genitive "of". To make for a clearer explanation, I will start with a straightforward, well-

[86] For aesthetic reasons—and as a matter of shorthand notification—I will interchangeably use "melancholia of time" and "melancholia of the discourse of time" from now on. It might be worth reinforcing that, unlike in other parts of this dissertation, this particular elision of "time" and "the discourse of time" takes no analytical dimension.

known example. When we speak of the "writing of the Nation", two meanings are possible. On the one hand, "Nation" can be the subject, in which case we are speaking of the writing that a Nation "does", what it can be said to write. But "Nation" can also be the object, in which case we are speaking of the writing about a nation or that one does for a nation, the nation as written by a subject. In this case, "writing of the nation" is an ambiguous sentence that simultaneously mean two distinct but fully interrelated processes: the encounter of self-making and being constructed that is necessary for any Nation to appear as such[87]. Closer to the use I will make of this ambiguity, Dunker (2015) speaks of the "pathologies of the social" [*patologias do social*] as meaning simultaneously "this pathology that we call The Social" and "that social something which habits, unacknowledged, in a pathology", a concept that allows him to simultaneously develop a diagnosis of the symptoms of contemporary Brazil while challenging the dominant diagnostic rationalities that separate the psychic from the social[88]. The same double reading informs my conceptualization of the "melancholia of time" as an investigation that avoids being reduced to a sociogenesis of melancholia or a psychogenesis of discourse. But let me break down each step a little further.

First, "melancholia" can be read as the subject of the discourse of time, a situation we could reformulate as "the melancholia that afflicts the discourse of time", "that acts on the discourse of time", or "that is the discourse of time". Topographically, we might say we gaze at the discourse of time from the viewpoint of melancholia. In this sense, we inquire about the way in which an identifiable circuit of affect—melancholia—makes for, appears in, the discourse of time. Metaphorically, we may say that the aim is to place the discourse of time in the analyst's couch and, starting from the symptoms and pre-diagnosis it has brought to us so far, offer an interpretation in terms of the concept of melancholia—or, to be more specific, through a particular version of the concept of melancholia. While, of course, this will stretch the concept, I am more interest in jolting our attention to time in a particular direction.

[87] This example has been made famous by Bhabha's dwelling on the ambiguity of the sentence "writing of the Nation" to argue that such writing nation is always simultaneously pedagogical (taking the Nation as its object) and performative (taking the Nation as its subject), the Nation effectively writing it/self (Bhabha, 1994, pp.145ff).

[88] Though here and above I follow some of Dunker's insights in putting together the question of the melancholia of the discourse of time, my analysis works differently from the kind of Lacanian discourse analysis he proposes. At this point, I cannot properly address the relation between them.

Second, “melancholia” can be read as the object of the discourse of time; in this sense, we are speaking of “the melancholia that obtains in the discourse of time”, “the melancholia shaped by the discourse of time”, or, inversely, “the discourse of time that is melancholia”. Our gaze is now inverted, and we look at melancholia from the viewpoint of the discourse of time. Indeed, if naming a symptom also changes it, we shouldn’t expect melancholia to remain undisturbed when it interpellates the discourse of time. Thus, we investigate how melancholia is not a fixed structure across time and space applied to a discourse from the outside, encompassing minor variations of expression, like a *species* under a *genus*, but one that is also taken up and transformed in the discourse of time.

In sum, in this chapter, by following these two lines of inquiry, I propose to understand the circuit of affect of the discourse of time—or, what amounts to the same thing, to understand the discourse of time—by grasping how “melancholia” and “the discourse of time” imbricate, how they are *grafted into* each other. In other words, I argue that to understand the weight and the effectivity of this discursive formation calls for taking seriously the circuit of affect that *is* the discourse of time, the discourse of time *as* a circuit of affect.

I begin this investigation somewhat against my own rules through an approximation of melancholia *and* the discourse of time. My aim will be to “listen” to the discourse of time and venture how it could be diagnosed as a case of melancholia, as, in a way, “afflicted” with melancholia. To bring together diagnosis and discourse in these terms fall short of a proper analysis of the discursive circuit of melancholia. However, to do so allows us not only to intimate the connections to be developed but also, more importantly, to glimpse how melancholia itself might be captured in the vicissitudes of the discourse of time. To side-step the problems of this first reading and develop its insight, in the second section, I propose a more thorough reading of the melancholia of time by engaging with Butler’s conceptualization of melancholia. In doing so, I will argue that the discourse of time can be characterized as melancholic and that this particular circuitry provides it with its adhesion force, with the pull through which its permanence is orchestrated despite the lack of external imposition or historical necessity. More specifically, I will argue that the melancholia of the discourse of time can be specified in terms of a doubled melancholia.

In the third section, I move in this direction by working through a late 20th century instance in which melancholia is taken up, in relation to time troubles, in order to deal with our troubled times: the melancholic character of the Left. In doing so, my focus will be on what these works tell us about a certain "temporalization" of melancholia—I can expect nothing more than enticing our curiosity towards a more substantial understanding of the present in terms of the rise of a temporalized melancholia.

5.1. Time and Melancholia

When the discourse of time is placed on our metaphorical divan, what does it say? From our previous chapter, we get a sense of the kind of "free associations" that take place, what gets connected and what gets separated, what is confessed as tempting and what is marshalled in repression, and, most of all, the kind of ambiguous play of turning through which those elements are brought about. Indeed, we know the discourse of time is riven with turns: it turns away from some conceptions of time and towards others, it turns from silence to proliferation, it turns towards itself in search for residues, it turns on itself as it cannot but find them. It is always also turning back: it turns back, unexpectedly, towards traditions of time, it turns back from attempts to escape, it turns back from its own intimation of turning. It is also haunted by temptations: the lure of progress, timely intervention, linear time, eternity; but also by the rejected appeals of other and more complex ways of being temporal—we might call them heterotemporality, disjointed times, untimely politics, or simply seriously temporalized thought. Time and again, these temptations are indulged; time and again, they are repressed: they lead to splits, to criticism, to self-scrutiny, and to self-restrain. None of this is hidden: it is wide open at the surface of discourse. To better understand the kind of circuit of affect implicated in this talk, however, we need some more instruments. I have ventured that the Freudian concept of melancholia can help us undertake just that task. Allow me to start, somewhat abruptly, there.

At the core of Freud's interpretation of melancholia is its association with mourning. In his 1917 essay "Mourning and Melancholia", following his conventional practice of comparing a pathological affect with a normal one, Freud turns to mourning to understand melancholia. While the connection is not

unprecedented[89], it assumes a specific valence in his work. In Freud, mourning refers to both a "mood" and a "work", implying that it is neither a passing condition—it is a state of being that lasts and characterizes the ego—nor a passive one—it is a psychic activity of dealing with loss. More specifically, mourning is a reaction to the loss of a love object through which libido is slowly and arduously withdrawn from that attachment and freed for new investments. It is the process that brings the ego from the recognition of a first death of the object—its 'external' loss—to its second death—its 'internal' loss. Expectedly, this is a difficult process, leading to the retraction from the world and inhibition of mourning.

According to Freud, mourning and melancholia have a similar symptomatology of retraction from the world and inhibition. However, melancholia involves one particularity: "a lowering of the self-regarding feelings to a degree that finds utterance in self-reproaches and self-reviling, and culminates in a delusional expectation of punishment" (Freud, 1957b, p.244)[90]. Put differently, while mourning appears as a loss in the object, the self-debasement of the melancholic appears as a loss in the ego. Or, as Laplanche (1998) puts it, while mourning establishes a debate with the object—about the reality status of its loss—melancholia establishes a debate with the ego—about its worth(lessness). These traits will lead Freud to initially present melancholia as a kind of arrested or blocked mourning. Although, as we will see below, this characterization will change, the association of melancholia to loss and self-aggression will persist throughout his years of reflection on the topic, and in his legacy.

[89] According to Ginzburg, Constantine the African associates melancholia as a disease of sadness to loss, claiming that people afflicted with melancholia are often those "who lost their children and dearest friends, or something precious that they couldn't restore" (Constantine the African, quoted in Ginzburg, 2001, p.103).

[90] Though Freud significantly underplays the more creative and contemplative potential in the tradition of melancholia, he still nods towards it. Speaking of the self-beratement of the melancholic, he claims that "he has a keener eye for the truth than other people who are not melancholic. When in his heightened self-criticism he describes himself as petty, egoistic, dishonest, lacking in independence, one whose sole aim has been to hide the weaknesses of his own nature, it may be, so far as we know, that he has come pretty near to understanding himself; we only wonder why a man has to be ill before he can be accessible to a truth of this kind" (Freud, 1957b, p.246). Furthermore, though this only appears at the end of his essay and Freud never fully develops this insight, he adds that "[t]he most remarkable characteristic of melancholia, and the one in most need of explanation, is its tendency to change round into mania—a state which is the opposite of it in its symptoms" (Freud, 1957b, p.253). According to Kehl, fully characterizing the melancholic *complex* must include mania, which may be key in understanding the relation of melancholia to creative genius in the terms of the Freudian framework (Kehl, 2014).

If Freudian melancholia is, in very general terms, related to loss and self-beratement, how is this to help us think about the discourse of time? At the risk of getting ahead of myself, I want to hint at the approximations towards which I invite us in reading the discourse of time in terms of melancholia. First, I call us to consider the strategies of inversion that we have seen are central to this discourse as involving losses, since they are predicated on leaving something behind in turning away from it. Second, I also invite us to consider the self-surveillance that transpires in the stringent voice calling us to resist temptation and keep our path untarnished as a kind of self-beratement. At this point, I would only ask us to consider these approximations, in the hope they will grow on us as the analysis continues.

At this point, it is Freud the good listener that takes center stage, asking us to take seriously what is said by the melancholic. We should refrain from correcting their claims or giving answers to their questions, acknowledging instead that, beyond any claim to correspondence with reality, the melancholic "must surely be right in some way and be describing something that is as it seems to him to be (…) [H]e is giving a correct description of his psychological situation" (Freud, 1957b, pp.246-7). We are to welcome this truth. However, we must also know this as a superficial truth; in face of it, Freud endeavors to understand its unconscious psychodynamic truth. To skew this towards the terms we have used so far, we might say that he endeavors to understand the conditions of existence of the symptoms—notably the self-beratement—of melancholia, the set of processes in which they become valid and can, henceforth, be affirmed or denied. This involves, as we have done, to work within the terms of the discourse.

First, Freud notes that, often, in melancholia, neither the patient nor the analyst can tell exactly what has been lost. It might be a straightforward loss such as the death of a loved one; but it might also be a loss of love without a loss of object ("it is still here, but something has changed, it is not the same anymore"); or that the object can be named, but not what has been lost in it ("I have lost it, but I don't know what this means"). It is useful to recall Kehl's (2014) note that every loss of a love object is also a loss of the place I occupy in my fantasy of that object, of what I believe I am for that object. In this sense, I might be able to name what I lost, but not the placement that I lost in it. Thus, in one way or another, "melancholia is in some way related to an object-loss which is withdrawn from consciousness";

it is a loss "of a more ideal kind" (Freud, 1957b, p.245). In other words, the loss that constitutes melancholia isn't fully avowed by the melancholic. Our task is not to tell them what has been lost—if we could decipher it—but to engage the dynamic in which the melancholic effectively *cannot know what is lost*.

Second, and more emphatically, Freud notes that the melancholic "really is as lacking in interest and as incapable of love and achievement as he says (…) [h]e has lost his self-respect and he must have good reason for this" (Freud, 1957b, pp.246-247). We should refrain from rushing to contradict melancholics' self-beratement by presenting evidence of their worth, and instead listen carefully. In doing so, something uncanny appears in the form and the content of their self-reproaches. On the one hand, melancholics are not-at-all reserved about it; they will say it out loud, to all those who want—and most of those who don't want—to hear about it. This sociability moves melancholics away from more usual kinds of self-denigration. On the other hand, listening carefully to melancholics' self-debasements, we note that much of what is said does not apply to them. Nonetheless, and here lies the key, "with insignificant modifications *they do fit someone else*, someone whom the patient loves or has loved or should love. (…) So we find the key to the clinical picture: we perceive that *the self-reproaches are reproaches against* a loved object which have been shifted away from it on to the patient's own ego" (Freud, 1957b, p.248, my emphasis). While a few genuine self-reproaches are scattered among these, their role is to mask that self-reproach which has been returned to the ego from a love object. In a concise formulation, Freud argues that "their [the melancholics'] complaints are really 'plaints'" (Freud, 1957b, p.248). Thus, melancholics don't hide their self-debasement, their worthlessness, because these critiques come from "a mental constellation of revolt", they are but anger towards an object that is returned against the self.

How does that return take place? In face of loss, the libido is detached from an object, however, "the free libido [is] not displaced on to another object; it [is] withdrawn into the ego. There (…) [it] serve[s] to *establish an identification of the ego with the abandoned object*" (Freud, 1957b, p.249, my emphasis). In other words, the response to loss in melancholia, a loss that is never fully known, never fully avowed as loss, is an identification with the object of attachment. Through this process, Freud tells us that "the shadow of the object has fallen upon the ego" (Freud, 1957b, p.249; see also 1955, p.109). Additionally, this identification leads

to a splitting[91] of the melancholic's ego in two instances, one of which judges and gets infuriated against the other, treating it as an object, as the lost object. This critical instance—which is the seed of "moral conscience"—judges the ego with the same severity it would have reserved to the object. Here, "one part of the ego sets itself over against the other, judges it critically, and, as it were, takes it as its object"; there is a "critical agency which is here split off from the ego" (Freud, 1957b, p.247; see also 1975, pp.109-110). According to Freud, this severity of judgement comes from the love-hate ambivalence that the melancholic bore towards the object—an ambivalence which is the essence of all love relations, torn as they are between love and hatred (see, in particular, Freud, 1955, p.102; 1957a). However, the splitting of the ego in identification is also the splitting of that ambivalence, so that

> If the love for the object—a love which cannot be given up though the object itself is given up—takes refuge in narcissistic identification, then the hate comes into operation on this substitutive object, abusing it, debasing it, making it suffer and deriving sadistic satisfaction from its suffering. The self-tormenting, in melancholia, which is without doubt enjoyable, signifies (…) a satisfaction of trends of sadism and hate which relate to an object, and which have been turned round upon the subject's own self (Freud, 1957b, p.251; see also, 1961, p.53).

We can identify in this description the second stage of the movement from sadist to masochist drives, where, in a *turning around* of the instinct towards the self, the external object is abandoned for the self and the aim of the instinct turned from active to passive (Freud, 1957a). This moment brings about a *medium voice*: the aim to hurt the other turns not into that of being hurt, but of hurting one*self*, of *self*-inflecting pain. In other words, the turning around of the drive upon the subject declines in that medium voice in which one instance of the ego criticizes the other, setting the conditions for *self*-debasement and *self*-depreciation, as we see in melancholia. The dynamics of unavowed loss and identification, in splitting the

[91] Jessica Benjamin explains the concept of splitting as follows: "The psychoanalytic concept of splitting, like that of repression, has a narrow, technical use as well as a broader metapsychological and metaphoric meaning. Just as repression became a paradigm for a larger cultural process, so might splitting be suggestive not only for individual psychic processes but also for supraindividual ones. Technically, splitting refers to a defense against aggression, an effort to protect the "good" object by splitting off its "bad" aspects that have incurred aggression. But in its broader sense, splitting means any breakdown of the whole, in which parts of self or other are split off and projected elsewhere. In both uses it indicates a polarization, in which opposites—especially good and bad — can no longer be integrated; in which one side is devalued, the other idealized, and each is projected onto different objects" (Benjamin, 1988, p.63, footnote).

ego, sets the conditions under which the self comes to observe itself, think it*self*, judge it*self*, and criticize it*self*.

In sum, we can describe Freudian melancholia in terms of a *scene*. In it, a subject suffers a loss, but this loss is, at least in part, unacknowledged, disavowed. Unable to come to terms with the loss, the libido invested in the object re-turns into the ego and is invested into the ego identification with the object: "the shadow of the object [falls] upon the ego". In doing so, the ego splits, separating between a critical agency which judges and berates the other part *as* the lost object, inflicting upon it the hatred of an ambivalent relation to the object. In this sense, the self-denigration of the melancholic—the complaints—are forms of denigration of the object which have now been incorporated into the ego—they are, in fact, plaints against the object. In sum, "an object-loss was transformed into an ego-loss and the conflict between the ego and the loved person into a cleavage between the critical activity of the ego and the ego as altered by identification" (Freud, 1957b, p.249).

If, now, we have accepted the superficial truth of the discourse of time that I have indicated above—the reading of turns as losses and of self-surveillance as self-beratement—what are their psychic conditions of existence? We might begin by noting that, in the turns associated with its strategies of inversion, the discourse of time is organized by leaving behind constellations of concepts. In this sense, the dualism of this discourse organizes it around one of two losses, distributed according to which turn is being undertaken. On the one hand, we are invited to turn away from a tradition of time and its correlate concepts and objects, moving towards the concepts and objects associated with alternative, complex, temporalities. In this movement, the former must be lost for the latter to be gained. On the other hand, the insistence on the lasting importance of the tradition of time and its subsuming of turns to alternatives depends on the loss of the more topical complex conceptualizations of time. This is no more than the unraveling of the constitution of the field in terms of the mutual exclusivity of dualisms. In each case, the loss of time is accompanied by a correlate loss of possibilities such as we have seen in Chapter 4. Importantly, however, whichever way we cut into the discourse of time, these losses remain unavowed: through the discursive practices claiming a temporal turn, imagining the benefits of a temporal return, or the more nuanced balancing out of both options, the discursive formation inserts those strategies within narratives of improvement and escape that read losses as gains, as solutions

to the time troubles making our troubled times. The discourse of time might be said to turn from losses in order to disavow losing from turning.

In this context, I suggest that we can productively read the discourse of time in terms of melancholia. As such, we should expect the attachment to those disavowed losses to be preserved in terms of ego identification. I venture this is, indeed, an important way of making sense of the kind of pervasive attachments to the conceptions of time that are "left behind" in each turn. In this sense, the temptations that seem to plague both sides of the discourse of time can be seen less as an effect of a tradition that is difficult to break away from, and more as the effect of melancholia. In other words, the temptations of traditional conceptions of time and of temporal escapes from tradition can both be seen as the effect of an identification with a lost object.

Last but not least, we can hear the echoes of a discursive moral conscience emerging in the calls for resisting and repressing those temptations for turns to be completed. The Freudian split of the ego and of ambivalence is maybe more marked on that heightened *self*-consciousness, *self*-vigilance, and *self*-constrain that interrogate whether one has broken tenacity, lost faith, and thus fallen off the trails of seriousness about time. Just as the critical instance berates the ego with the hatred towards the object that cannot be avowed, so do our critical conscience, our critical reflexes, berate us for the times we preserve in turning. The complaints of the discourse of time can be read as plaints towards the lost time re-turned, in the medium voice, against the self. Put differently, as I lose a temporal universe by turning away from it, I melancholically identify with that conception of time, becoming what I cannot have, and criticizing myself for this.

In sum, placed in our metaphorical divan, what we get from the turns, desires, and repressions of the discourse of time might be read in terms of a Freudian melancholia. Turning away from singular, unified, linear, timely, progressive time, the discourse loses those concepts and objects as possibilities and preserves them in identification; this identification emerges as temptations that must be surveilled, preempted, and repressed at all costs—under the risk of missing the turn. Symmetrically, (re)turning away from escapes in plurality, disjointedness, untimeliness, contingency and flexibility, the discourse loses those concepts and objects as possibilities and preserves them in identification as well—as both that

which we seek and we invite in others. Another set of temptations emerge, calling for coherence and tenacity on our part.

This first foray gives us a sense of the melancholia of time. From here, we might wonder why these losses cannot be mourned, our investments freed to turn towards more appropriate temporal fields instead of being caught up in the self-beratement of melancholia. Taking a step back, we might want to question the political implications of this melancholia, measuring its benefits before condemning or supporting it. Ultimately, we might conclude that we should find ways of undoing the identification, so that attachments can be substituted. This valorization of mourning's capacity to substitute one investment for another reads melancholia as an obstacle to be overcome, a pathology to be healed for grief to be achieved. Freud himself hints towards such possibility in speaking of the difficult process leading to the "end of melancholia"[92]. In a transvaluation of mourning and melancholia, we might also conclude that melancholia can be the condition for a proper ethico-political disposition towards futurity, its tenacious attentiveness and constant self-critique carrying heightened critical potential. This is, for instance, Khanna's position, in which "consciousness of loss (e.g., a loss of an ideal like [a field of time]) results in a radical self-criticism, a criticism that undoes the subject through the process of a critical agency" (Khanna, 2011, p.198; see also, Khanna, 2004; 2006)[93]. It is also the position that Žižek (2000) disparagingly labels hegemonic in early 21st century political theory.

In keeping to these readings, however, we remain at the level of the ideological positions that transpire in how particular issues are dealt with in a

[92] In 1917, this end is indicated in relation to that of mourning: "Just as mourning impels the ego to give up the object by declaring the object to be dead and offering the ego the inducement of continuing to live, so does each single struggle of ambivalence loosen the fixation of the libido to the object by disparaging it, denigrating it and even as it were killing it". Through this constant disparaging, which appears to consciousness as self-beratement, "[i]t is possible for the process in the [unconscious] to come to an end (…) bringing melancholia to an end" (Freud, 1957b, p.257).

[93] In particular, Khanna (2006; see also 2011) offers an interpretation of the field of postcolonial studies in terms of her interpretation of melancholia. Here, postcolonial studies are pervaded by an ethos of self-critique and refusal of easy solutions and complicity that makes for a powerful disposition towards futurity. Without as much precision on melancholia, but in a similar direction, Sheshadri-Crooks (2000) also characterizes postcolonial studies as a melancholic field. I cannot, at this point, compare our readings of this field in view of the difference that I see in my current understanding of melancholia and theirs. I nonetheless point out that Khanna's association of the "impossibility of complete digestion of the past" and "constant critique" with "a hope for the future" resonates closely with one of the traditions of time troubles we discussed in Chapter 2 (see in particular the critique in Butler, 1993b.)

discourse and how they can be valued according to an external measure[94]. Put differently, the scene presented above speaks to how certain strategies within the discourse of time become afflicted with the pathological disposition of melancholia. In this sense, it follows the diagnostic rationality according to which analytical diagnosis and social/political theory are kept separated, assuming the discourse of time is fully constituted before engaging in what might bring about melancholia[95]. Indeed, what both these normative positions share is the possibility of imagining the discourse of time and melancholia as existing apart from each other. Being both self-constituted, they can then be expected to return (or fall back) to that situation—the discourse being freed from its melancholic attachments—or, alternatively, for the discourse of time to achieve a heightened critical potential through the ethico-political disposition of melancholia. Furthermore, we are hard pressed to point out that the normative positions from which we come to judge the affection of melancholia—as obstacle or asset—are themselves embedded in the discourse of time. Notice the familiarity of the tension between a (slow and painful) resolution of grief in time and timely manner and an ethos of self-critique opening up futurity by locating an (im)possibility at the heart of the untimely process of mourning. While I stand by my position that the simultaneous reading of the topicality of time and of melancholia can be seen as an energizing pointer for the work we have been unraveling in these pages, to remain at this level in our analysis might be to respond rather too quickly to the injunction to take time seriously in dealing with melancholia. In doing so, we miss the full potential of reading not the melancholia in the discourse of time, but the discourse of time as a form of melancholia. Or, in Freudian terms, to understand not only the psychodynamic of a melancholic affection, but the psychodynamic of a discursive formation. In order to do this, however, we need a more thorough approach to Freudian melancholia.

5.2. Time's melancholic turns

[94] Foucault calls this "secondary" or "reflexive" relations, in opposition to "primary relations"—how two things are connected with not reference to discourse—and to "discursive relations"—the set of connections and dispersion through which concepts, objects, and subjects are given to a discourse, "the group of relations that discourse must establish to speak of this or that object" (Foucault, 2013, pp.50-1).

[95] On this "diagnostic rationality", its problems, and a possible alternative reading of the relation between feeling, affect, and discourse, see Chapter 3.

I find such an approach is opened up by Butler's interpretation of Freudian melancholia in *The Psychic Life of Power* (Butler, 1997). I am particularly drawn to the ambivalence both of her reading and in her reading. I believe this pervasive ambivalence can not only helps us suspend the discourse of time that begins to creep in the previous interpretations but, more importantly, it can also direct our reading towards associating melancholia and discursivity[96]. Butler's interpretation relies on the fact that the distinction between mourning and melancholia, which Freud is initially at pains to sustain—and which grounds the reading of melancholia as an arrested mourning—falters in the text (Butler, 1997, pp172ff). First, the symptomatology, which initially appears as marking the difference in the element of self-beratement, is blurred—this becomes clear, among others, in the emergence of the category of "pathological mourning", a form of mourning which includes self-beratement as responsibilization for loss[97]. Second, Butler shows that the different elements that Freud continuously raises to settle the boundary between these conditions tend to get confounded. While Freud initially claims that melancholia is "a loss of a more ideal kind", mourning is later referred to as a reaction to the loss of ideals, more precisely, ideals that come to substitute for lost ones. Freud will also associate melancholia to a relation of ambivalent love-hate towards the object that is lost. However, this ambivalence is said either to be an

[96] On the one hand, this reading of an ambivalence in Freudian melancholia is, in my view, what gives Butler's reading its distinctiveness and its creative potential. On the other hand, however, I find it difficult to establish the status of melancholia in Butler's own framework (1997)—a possible effect of her engaging in that same ambivalence. At times, I read melancholia as an almost ontological ground of subjectivity, a condition of possibility of the subject—ambivalent as it is. In other words, in these passages, there is no subjectivity without the ambivalent bedrock of melancholia, without loss, incorporation and self-punishment. Such passages have led some to argue that melancholia works as a "weak ontology" of her work (White, 1999), one that has remained in place throughout her thinking (McIvor, 2012). Nonetheless, Butler also takes steps to avoid reifying melancholia as an unshakable ground, calling it a "logic in drag" and repeatedly stating that "[t]here is no necessary reason for identification to oppose desire, or for desire to be fueled by repudiation" (Butler, 1997, p.149; see also 2005, p.15; 2009, p.175). This second disposition also transpires in interpretations of melancholia as an ontic condition, such as her description of the melancholia of gender (1993a; 1997) and of melancholic responses to 9/11 (Butler, 2004, p.36). Since I am interested in how melancholia operates as a circuit of affect in the discourse of time, I leave open, for the time being, the role of the concept in her philosophical framework. I would surmise, however, that something of the melancholia of time we are describing here might transpires in this indecision and in the debates that followed.

[97] See Laplanche (1998, p.308) for a different reading, locating "pathological mourning" as a category situated one step removed from mourning, on the one side, and another from melancholia, on the other. While mourning is a loss of object, pathological mourning refers to a loss with ambivalence but without identification, and melancholia to a loss with ambivalence and identification. Here, the middle category seems to work to reinforce the extremes instead of blurring them.

element of all love relation (see, in particular, Freud, 1955, p.102; 1957a) or to be the effect of loss (Freud, 1957b, p.256), which makes it a complicated dimension to uphold the distinction between two reactions to loss. Finally, though Freud will insist that the alternance of melancholia with mania is a feature absent from mourning (Freud, 1957b, p.53), he will later recognize that such alternance is also not a necessary feature of melancholia (Freud, 1975, p.132).

Freud will ultimately embrace this eroding boundary in his return to the melancholic scene in *The Ego and the Id* (Freud, 1961). In this later work, we can read a double inversion taking place. First, from the increasing pathologization of mourning[98], Freud moves to the normalization of melancholia. In his words, "we did not appreciate the full significance of this process and did not know how common and how typical it is. Since then we have come to understand that this kind of substitution has a great share in determining the form taken by the ego" (Freud, 1961, p.28). The process of substituting an object investment by an identification is not only "common and typical", it also takes part in forming the ego, which we are to take as "a precipitate of abandoned object-cathexes" (Freud, 1961, p.29). The melancholic scene, from a deviant version of mourning, becomes both quantitatively common and qualitatively central. Second, from identification as a response to an unavowed loss, Freud invites us to consider the possibility that "this identification is the sole condition under which the id can give up its objects" (Freud, 1961, p.29). Under this new light, the melancholic scene is not so much about reacting to the loss of an object that existed apart from the subject, but about setting the conditions under which losses become possible, paradoxically, through preservation. Melancholia becomes a condition of possibility of loss and loss becomes formative of the ego[99].

[98] We should not let pass the irony that Freud dedicates to our common attitude towards mourning. He states it twice in the beginning of the paper. Speaking of the symptomatology of mourning he notes that "[i]t is really only because we know so well how to explain it that this attitude does not seem to us pathological" (Freud, 1957b, p.244); and again, describing the painful work of mourning, he repeats "[i]t is remarkable that this painful unpleasure is taken as a matter of course by us" (Freud, 1957b, p.245). It seems that, from the early steps of his investigation, Freud wanted to displace our sense of comfort with mourning. Already here, therefore, we have traces of a subtle undifferentiation between mourning and melancholia, pathology and normality.

[99] These formulations reach their apex as Freud (1961, pp.32-3) reformulates the Oedipus Complex in terms of the dynamics of object-cathexis and identification. This makes, on the one hand, for the generalization of the melancholic scene to the bedrock of the formation of psychic life and, on the other hand, to the reformulation of the Oedipal scene into its "complete" version, as the more common, simpler, triangle misses the dynamic of cathexis and identification. Here, Freud surmises that all individuals face two sets of relations in the Oedipus Complex: an affectionate object-choice

Butler (1997) reads this shift in the Freudian scene not only as a transvaluation of mourning and melancholia in which the former comes to be subsumed under the latter—though it is also that—but, much more fundamentally, as a shift in how we think about psychic life. Indeed, she notes that Freud's inversions imply an overhaul of the meaning of "letting the object go". From a resolution of grief, "to let go" of a loved object comes to mean "to preserve" that object by transforming it—from external to internal—and by simultaneously forming the ego—which makes the external/internal distinction possible. Thus, against "psychological discourses that presume the topographical stability of an 'internal world' and its various 'parts'", Butler argues that "the crucial point [is] that melancholy is precisely what interiorizes the psyche, that is, makes it possible to refer to the psyche through such topographical tropes" (Butler, 1997, p.170).

Importantly, to do this, melancholia is displaced from a psychic process to a circuit that articulates desire and power. Hence, while the preservation of the object *in* the ego makes loss possible, it is the reflexive circuit of attempting to substitute the ego for the object, to preserve the object *as* the ego, that institutes the distinction between ego and object. Likewise, while the identification with the object leads to self-beratement of the ego by the critical instance, it is the circuits of identification with the object and beratement of the self as object that creates the topography of ego/critical instance. In sum, to Butler (1997) what Freud reveals is not so much how an ego loses an object that exists apart from it, but how the figure of *turning*—taking oneself as an object, substituting the object for the ego, and measuring the ego-object according to an ideal—constitutes the circuits through which we can think and talk about the topography of ego, critical instance, objects, and turns[100]. In her words, "the phrase 'withdrawn into the ego' is the retroactive

for the mother and an ambivalent relation to the father, and an affectionate object-choice for the father and an ambivalent relation to the mother. In the resolution of the complex, two substitutions take place: the identification with the father on the one side conditions the loss of the father affectionate object-choice, while retaining the mother object-choice; mirroring this dynamic, the identification with the mother conditions the loss of the mother affectionate object-choice, while retaining the father affectionate object-choice. Thus, "[t]he broad general outcome of the sexual phase dominated by the Oedipus complex may, therefore, be taken to be the forming of a precipitate in the ego, consisting of these two identifications in some way united with each other" (Freud, 1961, p.33). Not only is ego formed by the melancholic double of loss and identification, but the fundamental elements of ego formation come to be melancholia from our relations to our parental figures.

[100] This characterization calls to mind the two forms of estrangement that Freud exposes in his essay on the uncanny; more particularly, how the uncanny feeling of familiarity and distance might come not from something that happened in the past and was subsequently repressed, but as the belated

product of the melancholic process it purports to describe. Thus, it does not, strictly speaking, describe a preconstituted psychic process but emerges in a belated fashion as a representation conditioned by melancholic withdrawal" (Butler, 1997, pp.177-8).

Hence, Butler confounds the distinction between mourning and melancholia by showing that melancholia is a circuit that distinguishes—and connects—social and psychic life and, as such, conditions mourning: arrested, impossible, pathological, or otherwise. Through this ambivalence, melancholia is resituated not only in terms of the ego, the critical instance, and the world, but as constitutive of the circuits that articulates them. More precisely, melancholia emerges as the circuit of affect and power in which ego, critical instance, world, and turns are caught up in being simultaneously produced *in turning*. In her words, "melancholy offers potential insight into how the boundaries of social life are instituted and maintained, not only at the expense of psychic life, but through binding psychic life into forms of melancholic ambivalence. Melancholia thus returns us to the figure of the 'turn' as a founding trope" (Butler, 1997, p.168). Melancholia takes us back to the luring effects of turning and, thus, to the circuit of affect of the discourse of time.

The importance of this interpretation for us cannot be overstated. Butler (1997) offers a way of thinking about melancholia not simply as a psychic condition or a psychic process to be traced, but as the mode of existence of discourse, the circuit of affect under which we can think in terms of subjects, objects, concepts, and strategies. In other words, unlike the initial reading I offer above, Butler reads melancholia and discursive formation as inseparable; or, put the other way around, she offers us a way to think about discourse as a form of melancholia.

In this interpretation, "turning"—the melancholic turn—acquires a specific valence that is associated with the concept of foreclosure: a prohibition that works not as a repressive force on objects and desires that exist apart from their prohibition, but as a generative force that produces fields of objects and desires in barring others from emerging as possible (Butler, 1997, pp.23-5 and pp.55-56)[101].

effect of a present event (Freud, 1955). This is also the overall movement of the concept of trauma in Freud, leading to the idea that it takes two traumas to make one trauma (Laplanche; Pontalis, 1988, pp.465-8).

[101] On the concept of foreclosure in psychoanalysis, see Laplanche and Pontalis (1988, pp.166-169); for our purposes, especially the dual definition of the simultaneous "introduction into the subject" and "expulsion from the subject".

We might make this clearer by attending to two distinct formulations of prohibition. On the one hand, the repression of existing objects follows the injunction "you can't do that". The subject and the object, apart from each other, are kept that way by the external voice of prohibition. On the other hand, foreclosure is better defined as a preemptive loss in which something is simultaneously disavowed as a possibility and lived as possible through that disavowal. The formulation here is that well-known "I *couldn't possibly* do that", a form that "concedes the possibility it denies, establishing the 'I' as predicated upon that foreclosure, grounded in and by that firmly imagined possibility" (Butler, 1997, p.8). The target of foreclosure cannot preexist the turn away from it, since its very possibility is negated, but it is precisely this negation that leads to the emergence of an "I" that exists only through that disavowed possibility. To put it differently, we might say that foreclosure grounds turning upon a double disavowal: "I have never loved" and "I have never lost" (Butler, 1997, p.23 and pp.139-140). Since I have never loved something, I can never have lost it and therefore I have no grief. However, we can sense the kind of (melancholic) ambivalence into which one is caught up in this formulation, a circuitry that lures the "I" at the site of its disavowal. Indeed, in my impossibility of loving something, I confess a loss; and in confessing loss, I live love. In other words, if "I have never loved", then I lose something; if "I have never lost", then I do love.

Now, if foreclosure remains a subjective operation, melancholia is again restricted to a psychic process and we are likely to miss out on its discursive dimension. More importantly for our purposes, we are likely to miss out on what makes for melancholic forms of discursivity. This is often the case in readings of "internalization" in which the ego is taken to internalize critiques coming from external agencies—or, say, temptations coming from a conventionalized tradition. Against this, Butler notes that "forms of social power emerge that regulate what losses will and will not be grieved; in the social foreclosure of grief we might find what fuels the internal violence of conscience" (Butler, 1997, p.183). I read this to mean, in our terms, that it is at the level of discursive relations proper, of the knowledge-power nexus, that we ought to locate the operation of foreclosure. Here, melancholia's ambivalence takes full discursive valence. On the one hand, foreclosure is regulated by the conditions of existence of discourse, so that the latter becomes a condition of possibility of melancholia. In the turns of discourse—the

properly discursive violence of offering and denying existence—melancholia is instituted. On the other hand, melancholia, taken properly not as a psychic economy of containment, but as a generative circuit of affect and power, is a specific mode of existence of discourse. In other words, the turns of discourse are the condition of melancholia; the turns of melancholia are conditions of discourse. The violence of melancholic discourse is not so much of the order of an external imposition, but of the constitution of a circuit in which subjects emerge as aggravating themselves. Butler claims that "[s]ocial power vanishes, becoming the object lost, or social power makes vanish, effecting a mandatory set of losses" (Butler, 1997, p.198). We might rephrase this by saying that not only discourse mandates a set of losses through its conditions of existence, but discourse itself emerges as these losses. In this way, discourse simultaneously produces melancholic fields and exists as a form of melancholia.

With this in mind, we can break down the melancholic circuits that are simultaneously the condition of existence and the effect of discourse in three dimensions. While they are simultaneous and inseparable, their separate description can help us make sense of the effectivity of the melancholic circuit.

First, the foreclosure of an object precipitates the distinction between the internal space of the ego and the external world by preserving the object through ego identification[102]. Here, foreclosure disavows an object of love before it can emerge as such; neither the object nor the subject who might have loved it exists before (in the double sense of the term) the other. Under the pressure of prohibition, the subject emerges substituting itself for the object, reflexively taking itself as an object, "looking in" the newly crafted internal space. This curbing of desire returned towards oneself institutes the circuit of self-reflection, a circuit that not only catches desire but also becomes, itself, desirable. Thus, the substitution ultimately fails—the ego is not the object—but in failing it insists in separating the subject from the world of objects, the ego from the 'external world'. In this sense, the turn from object to ego "fails successfully to substitute the latter for the former, but does

[102] Butler's famous hypothesis is on the melancholia of gender. As compulsory heterosexuality forecloses homoerotic love, it produces in the external world a domain of heterosexual love objects as well as the impossibility of same-sex love, a loss that is made possible by its preservation through identification. Hence, to assume a "masculine gender" is to exclude the possibility of male love by preserving it through increased masculine ego identification (Butler, 1993a, pp.179-180; 1997, pp.144-150).

succeed in marking and perpetuating the partition between the two. The turn thus produces the divide between ego and object, the internal and external worlds that it appears to presume" (Butler, 1997, p.170). Hence, the turn is the condition of emergence of the division of subject and world as much as it depends on that division to take place. This circuit of turning and differentiating becomes itself desirable under the guise of self-reflection.

Second, the foreclosure of a desire precipitates the distinction between desired ideals and prohibition by preserving desire through its prohibition. Just as there is no precedence of subject and object, neither desire nor foreclosure operate as a primary force: "[t]he repressive law is not external to the libido that it represses, but the repressive law represses to the extent that repression becomes a libidinal activity" (Butler, 1997, p.55). Here, melancholia operates by instituting a circuit in which unavowed desire appears, displaced, as the desire for, and enjoyment of, prohibition. In doing so, prohibition is not imposed from the outside but assumed as a libidinal activity and sustained by desire. In Butler's words, the "'afterlife' of prohibited desire is in the prohibition itself, where the prohibition not only sustains, but is *sustained by*, the desire that it forces the subject to renounce. In this sense, then (…) desire is *never* renounced, but becomes preserved and reasserted in the very structure of renunciation" (Butler, 1997, pp.55-56, emphasis in the original)[103]. We see this dynamic at stake in the enjoyment extracted from self-denigration in the double injunction of the critical instance as it appears, in *The Id and the Ego,* under the guise of the super-ego: simultaneously the ideal "You ought to be like this (like your father)" and the prohibition "You may not be like this (like your father)" (Freud, 1961, p.34). Foreclosed desire—here, for the father in the Oedipus Complex—is displaced and preserved as the circuit between desiring to be the father and desiring the prohibition of being the father.

Third, the foreclosure of loss itself precipitates the distinction between intelligibility and its limit, while preserving the unavowed loss (the loss of loss) as that irreducible trace which cannot be avowed and thus limits and conditions circuits of self-reflection and self-punishment. We might expect substantial

[103] A paradigmatic example here is Nietzsche's reading of the strict ascetic as directing its entire libidinal economy to the renunciation of pleasure, thus deriving pleasure from prohibition, desiring the prohibition of desire, and living that desire through prohibition. It is also the case of homoeroticism being lived through the prohibition of homosexuality, that is, of a renounced desire not being abolished, but deployed for the purpose of renunciation (Butler, 1997, p.143-4).

aggression to be marshalled against avowing this constitutive loss, a recognition that would undo the discourse, but that can only take place in this discourse. Here, a final circuit is instituted: loss threatens the discourse whose emergence relies on its disavowal, leading to stronger beratement against that acknowledgement. Indeed, in melancholia

> [t]he ego comes into being on the condition of the 'trace' of the other, who is, at that moment of emergence, already at a distance. To accept the autonomy of the ego is to forget that trace; and to accept that trace is to embark upon a process of mourning that can never be complete, for no final severance could take place without dissolving the ego (Butler, 1997, p.196).

In sum, with Butler, melancholia can be read as a condition of existence of discourses emerging in turning. Notice the distinction in relation to the Freudian scene above[104]. There, the scene of loss and recoil started from the separation between ego and loss, the discourse and melancholia. Here, under the pressure of foreclosure, a turning takes place; however, this is not a turning away and towards something that is already there—since intelligibility cannot precede foreclosure—, but a turning that both constitutes melancholic discourse and explains the circuits of its emergence. As an investment is turned upon itself, discourse institutes itself as a form of melancholia through a triple circuit intermeshing desire and power. First, the turn that attempts to substitute the ego for the object fails, successfully instituting a circuit of self-reflection which ingrains subjectivity as grounded on that founding movement and as separated from a world that is, nonetheless, recognizable to it. Second, the turn that forecloses desire displaces it to an afterlife in desiring prohibition, instituting a circuit in which prohibition both sustains and is sustained by desire, in which self-beratement is simultaneously demeaning and enjoyable. Finally, the attempt to disavow loss leads to the marshalling of aggression against its recognition, instituting a circuit in which self-denigration simultaneously protects and threatens the ego. As the wheels of melancholia turn, the discourse "burrows in a direction opposite to that in which [it] might find a fresher trace of the lost other, attempting to resolve the loss through psychic substitutions and compounding the loss as [it] goes" (Butler, 1997, p.182).

[104] Of course, Butler argues, rightly, that this *is* a Freudian scene—even if one that reads him with and against himself—or his many selves. In this sense, my previous reference to the scene of Freudian melancholia highlighted particular features and indulged in hiding the others for this moment.

In view of this understanding of the relation between turning and melancholia as a discursive circuit of affect, I propose we read the injunction to "take time seriously" as taking place under the sign of foreclosure. If taking time seriously is not only to turn away from conceptions and practices of time due to their troubling effects, but also to institute a relation of "never loved, never lost" in the movement of turning, then the discourse of time might be said to emerge in foreclosure, in the denial of a possibility that "cannot happen, and if it does, it certainly did not (…) it happens only under the official sign of its prohibition and disavowal" (Butler, 1997, p.139). In sum, the injunction to "take time seriously" is an invitation to turn that is simultaneously constitutive of the discourse of time, constituted in that discourse, and the figure through which we can understand the mode of existence of that discourse as a form of melancholia. Through this particular mode of existence, the discourse of time can be read as the kind of circuit of affect I have attributed to melancholia. Indeed, in working through the different ways in which we are called to take time seriously, I surmised we might have found ourselves overly disposed to respond. This predisposition to turn towards the hailing voice appears, in the context of melancholia, akin to the "passionate expectation of the law" that Butler argues structures Althusser's hailing scene and which "forms the passionate circle in which the subject becomes ensnared" (Butler, 1997, p.129). We might now endeavor to read such adhesion force in terms of the luring effects of melancholic turns.

If my hypothesis about the melancholia of time is correct, then, when we turn to take time seriously, we simultaneously substitute the lost temporal concepts and objects of that turn, through identification, with the emerging "internal space" through which we are subjects in this discourse. In doing so, we effectively engage in circuits of self-reflection that produce subjects and objects as distinct temporal instances. We "look in" for the temporal objects lost, and we "look out" for the field of temporal possibilities. This movement of self-reflection becomes itself enjoyable as it substitutes for a curbed desire. Therefore, if the scene is instituted in the foreclosure of time, we might expect to be caught in circuits of temporal reflection—both reflections about our temporal assumptions and about the temporality of the concepts and practices surrounding us. And we might enjoy those reflections, finding what we search, or missing it and searching some more. In sum, we emerge in discourse through the loss and preservation of temporal possibilities

which we are then enticed to revolve around as seriously as possible, in fact, as the very possibility of seriousness.

This enticing goes further, as we now know. It also involves the split of the discourse of time in its turning—a split between the part that emerges through identification with time and the critical instance which surveilles, judges, berates—and enjoys—that very identification. As desire for time is renounced, it becomes attached and lives on in its prohibition—we come to desire the prohibition of certain temporal dispositions as a way of desiring those dispositions, and we come to enjoy our self-punishment over those desires.

We might acknowledge this identification as no more than recessive voices and residues; call them temptations. Indeed, references to the temptation of particular understandings of time abound in the discourse of time, constantly reminding us that its seriousness demands a resolute—even faithful—determination, that its critical endeavor cannot but be accompanied by a vigilant eye and an intransigent voice. In other words, the temporal desires that are often naturalized in the discourse of time appear here as an effect of its emergence in turning; the calls to resist, temper, and repress temptation as procedures through which this very desire is preserved through its prohibition. Just as asceticism enjoys the prohibition of desire, the discourse of time enjoys the prohibition of desire for temporal concepts and objects—and repeats that desire in repeating prohibition, repeats the temptation in turning. Therefore, it is not so much a matter of a desire that is imposed on the subject from outside due to a pre-existing and influential tradition that is at stake, and more so a desire that is an effect of the discourse of time as much as its condition. In this scenario, the temptations of time constituted in the discourse appears as unavoidable as the calls to temper them, an enjoyable calling out, a simultaneously self-constraining and enjoyable repression. Our attentive critique, our vocal self-denunciation, our secret source of enjoyment. This interpretation of the mode of existence of the discourse of time points at its formation through circuits of self-examination for traces of time (that are inscribed through their disavowal) and for desires for time (that are reproduced through their repression). In this sense, the discourse of time is a (melancholic) circuit of self-examination and self-beratement that produces and reproduces the discourse itself.

This is not the only form that identification acquires in the discourse of time. Alongside the displacement from disavowed loss to berated temptation is a more

fundamental disavowal connected to the founding legitimacy of the call to take time seriously, the legitimacy that is reproduced through narratives of time trouble and which disavows the constitutive loss of the discourse of time under the guise of a gain. Indeed, the very existence of the discourse of time comes to depend on this loss of loss. Here we might begin to interpret the paradoxes of redemptive inversions of the discourse of time not so much as elements that can (or shouldn't) be corrected, but as the limit of intelligibility of that discourse, the instance of marshalled aggression whose acknowledgement must somehow be disavowed lest the discourse founders. The trace of the other that simultaneously constitutes and threatens the melancholia of time. Nothing short of this demand feeds the imperative tone of the call to take time seriously and the desiring anticipation we held towards it. We might as well turn melancholic before we turn undone.

We might feel tired out by the recurring grammatical paradox, the vicious circles we are asked to engage in time and again: at every turn, we simultaneously constitute and presuppose what makes for that turn—and get lured and attached into those circular turns, forced into a logical conundrum from which there seems to be no escape. At some point, we ought to wonder whether we might not turn *differently* at the injunction for seriousness? Might we not avoid the circuits of discourse and prohibition entirely? Least of positing a fundamental structure to ground the above paradox in some form of necessity—call it "logic"—, we are certainly forced to respond that we might. Maybe even that we should—though I would make this normative claim only half-heartedly, unsure of what might be lost (and already attached to it). In my view, however, much more significative than the imagination that we could be other-wise is the astonishment from sensing that, despite this possibility, we most often don't, we all too easily embark get seduced into just that melancholia of time. In this context, I find our engagement with these luring effects, with the adhesion force of the melancholic circuits of the discourse of time, all the more important—and potentially enlightening of our predicament.

However, to speak of this resonance and adhesion force of the discourse of time falls short of fully addressing the issue of discursive circuits of affect. If, on the one hand, melancholia makes for the resonance of the discourse of time and helps us make sense of how we seem to continuously turn in the same ways, on the other hand, it is itself a discursive practice with its own effectiveness. Put differently, if discursive practices such as the narratives of improvement and escape

of the temporal turn (and return) work both by hiding the level of discourse and by effectively taking part in its operation, we should expect the melancholia of time to do the same. In making sense of the effectiveness of the melancholia of time, I venture we ought to start with the play of turns and returns that we have located at the core of the discourse of time. In doing so, I argue that, in discussing the melancholia of time, we should speak of a *doubled melancholia*, that is, of the encounter between two dynamics of foreclosure.

Indeed, the discourse of time involves subjects by producing two simultaneous circuits. In the first, the identification with the tradition of time becomes the condition for turning towards alternative temporalities and the set of concepts and objects associated with it. This identification is displaced in terms of temptations and a process of self-vigilance and self-critique for every instance of reproduction of that loss conception of time is instituted. In the last instance, however, the preservation of a lost tradition of time in identification can perhaps be more clearly articulated as the improvement away from narratives of improvement. As these narratives are turned away from, they simultaneously become a ground of that discourse, an authority that is both a benefit of the speaker and somewhat riven. Here also, perhaps, we might find clues for the tenacity of so many other dispositions in theoretical and political discussions that have been associated with a Western tradition of time.

Parallel to this, a second circuit is instituted in which the identification with alternative temporalities become the condition for (re)turning towards the tradition of time in raising suspicion towards attempts to escape from our predicament by turning to time. This identification is itself displaced in terms of temptations that become subject to serious vigilance and repression. At the limit, however, this preservation of tradition makes itself clearer in emergence of tentative temporal escapes away from escapes in time. As these escapes are turned away from, they also become another disavowed ground of this discourse, granting an authority which remains riven. We might wonder if the proliferation of intimations towards more flexible and contingent approaches in theoretical and political debates might find resonance in this dimension of the discourse of time. In this sense, both the paradoxical “improvement away from the temporality of improvement” and the symmetrical “temporal escape away from escapes in time” might be read as so many acting out of melancholia.

More specifically, it might be worth considering the contemporary resonances of a discourse that calls for vigilance against forms of unity, closure, fixity, universality, and eternity (to name a few) in favor of the positive description of flexibility, plurality, openness, and contingency (again, to name a few), all the while retaining a deep identification with the former and reliving it through its prohibition. Likewise, we should consider the resonances of the mirror image of this discourse, the call for vigilance against plurality, openness, and contingency in favor of the steadfast stance for unity, closure, universality, and eternity, all the while retaining a deep identification with the former and its sustaining through prohibition. Maybe more importantly, however, is the ways in which these two facets of a discourse get entangled, so that they can not only be alternatively invoked, but also slide into each other.

5.3. Melancholia turned temporal

As we have seen at the end of Section 5.1, in the late 20th century, melancholia is beset by temporal claims and by interrogation of its own temporal assumptions. If nothing else, Freud's (1957b) association of melancholia with a condition of *interrupted* mourning has made it almost too easy to raise questions on the possibility of its resolution in time, its institution of arrested time (Zizek, 2000; Elliot, 2008) or of critical out-of-jointness (Khanna, 2005; 2006; 2011; Traverso, 2017). We might thus say that if the topicality of time is intrinsic to its melancholia, at least something of the topicality of melancholia is similarly intrinsic to its temporalization—here taken, specifically, as its crossing with the *discourse* of time.

In this section, however, instead of exploring this connection around the problem of the (ir)resolution of melancholia, I would like to interrogate a more specific issue: the interpretation of late 20th century politics in terms of melancholia, more specifically, of Left Melancholia. By looking explicitly at a claim to political melancholia, I endeavor not only to understand its temporalization, but also to engage more explicitly with one way through which we have come to govern ourselves and others through the melancholic discourse of time. I propose we do this by a cross-reading of two opposite interpretations of left melancholia—one by Wendy Brown and another by Jodi Dean. Both interpretations recover Walter Benjamin's concept of "Left-Wing Melancholia", a concept he articulates in his

harsh review of the poetry of Erich Kästner and the New Objectivism movement in German literature (Benjamin, 2005ab). In this recovery, however, they connect that concept to the discourse of time resulting, in line with the dynamics of that discourse, in very different though thoroughly enmeshed readings of the present. In this sense, they might be read as revealing that alongside the discourse of time as a form of melancholia, we might find the discourse of melancholia as a form of temporalization.

In a famous 1999 essay, Brown diagnosed the late 20th century crisis of the Left as resulting from its "failure to apprehend the character of the age and to develop a political critique and a moral-political vision appropriate to this character", a failure due to "its anachronistic habits of thought and its fears and anxieties about revising those habits" (Brown, 2003, p.458). In her view, those anachronisms, fears, and anxieties were related to the refusal "to understand history in terms other than 'empty time' or 'progress'" (Brown, 2003, p.459). In other words, a particular attachment to a conception of time makes for what Brown calls Left Melancholia.

According to Brown, "Left-Wing Melancholia" is "Benjamin's unambivalent epithet for the revolutionary hack who is, finally, more attached to a particular political analysis or ideal—even to the failure of that ideal—than to seizing possibilities for radical change in the present" (Brown, 2003, p.458). Detached from the world, ideals become reified into immutable things to be loved in themselves independent of transformations in concrete political conditions. In this sense, Brown argues, the late 20th century Left is a melancholic Left: "[w]e come to love our Left passions and reasons, our Left analyses and convictions, more than we love the existing world that we presumably seek to alter with these terms or the future that would be aligned with them. (Brown, 2009, p.460). This conservative attachment "installs traditionalism in the very heart of its praxis, in the place where commitment to risk and upheaval belongs" (Brown, 2009, p.463). Hence the "fears and anxieties" of the late 20th century Left over revising its past, "anachronistic habits of thought", despite their loss of political traction and repeated failure. Indeed, Brown tells us, that, in melancholia, "attachment to the object of one's sorrowful loss supersedes any desire to recover from this loss, to live free of it in the present, to be unburdened by it. This is what renders melancholia *a persistent condition, a state, indeed, a structure of desire*" (Brown, 2003, p.459).

Turning to Freud, Brown calls us to understand the disavowed loss of the Left that leads to its melancholia. She argues that besides the many ontic losses that could easily be attributed to the Left in the 1990s—which are fairly easily avowed—, there is also, using Freud's words, a loss of "a more ideal kind", unaccountable and unavowable:

> the promise that Left analysis and Left commitment would supply its adherents a clear and certain path toward the good, the right, and the true (…), a promise that formed the basis for much of our pleasure in being on the Left, indeed, for our self-love as Leftists and our fellow feeling toward other Leftists (…) [A promise] contemporarily signified by the terms *Left, Socialism, Marx,* or *the Movement* (Brown, 2009, pp.459-460, emphasis in the original).

To preserve this promise, the melancholic left displaces the aggression and criticism that would be directed at its failures to others. More specifically, Brown argues that, to preserve the idealization of the Left promise, we come to hate and punish the set of practices, both theoretical and activist, too easily grouped under the label of "identity politics" or "cultural politics" and, likewise, the group of theoretical dispositions bundled together under names such as "poststructuralism", "post-modernism", and "discourse analysis", all of which "are held responsible for the weak, fragmented, and disoriented character of the contemporary Left" (Brown, 2009, p.461). In this way, the loss of a Leftist promise can be disavowed and the love for a reified Left preserved from the passing of the epoch "in which the notions of unified movements, social totalities, and class-based politics were viable categories of political and theoretical analysis" (Brown, 2003, pp.463-4).

Some fifteen years later, Jodi Dean critically engaged Brown's essay producing a different diagnosis of the crisis of the Left, offering her own interpretation of Left Melancholia by pointing at two "misunderstandings" in Brown (Dean, 2013). First, according to Dean, Benjamin's concept of Left-Wing Melancholia "targets intellectual compromise, adaptation to the market, and the betrayal of the workers' movement (…) his concern is not with a traditionalism at the heart of praxis [as in Brown] but rather with the sublimation of left ideals in market-oriented writing and publishing" (Dean, 2013, p.79-80). Indeed, she directly contradicts Brown's interpretation, arguing that, to Benjamin, Kästner's "is not attached to an ideal; he has compromised revolutionary ideals by reducing them to consumer products" (Dean, 2013, p.79). In this sense, to Dean, it is not that ideals

are reified into empty love objects, but that political struggles are transformed into articles of consumption and objects of pleasure. In other words, "Brown suggests a left defeated and abandoned in the wake of historical changes. Benjamin compels us to consider a left that gave in, sold out" (Dean, 2013, p.85). This reinterpretation also leads to a redefinition of the Freudian scene of Left Melancholia. According to Dean, the loss that Left Melancholia disavows through preservation is not the fantasized promise of The Left, but the betrayal of revolutionary ideals: "What Brown construes as a real loss of socialist ideals for which the left compensates through an obstinate and narcissistic attachment, Benjamin presents as (…) a compromise and betrayal that ideological identification with the proletariat attempts to displace" (Dean, 2013, p.85). In other words, in her view, the melancholic left disavows the loss of revolutionary practice resulting from the compromise of its commitments by identifying (ideologically) with the proletariat and preserving a commodified form of struggle.

Furthermore, to Dean, this compromise is a way of giving up on one's desire, which is severely punished by the superego. She reads the turning around of aggression on the ego as constituting a *drive*: "in drive, one does not have to reach the goal to enjoy. The activities one undertakes to achieve a goal become satisfying on their own. Because they provide a little kick of enjoyment, they come themselves to take the place of the goal. Attaching to the process, enjoyment captures the subject" (Dean, 2013, p.86). In other words, as the melancholia left gives up on the desire for revolutionary practices, it develops a way of enjoying the substitutive compulsive drive, of enjoying through its failures: these melancholic practices "shield this left, shield *us*, from confrontation with guilt over (…) betrayal as they capture us in activities that feel productive, important, radical" (Dean, 2013, p.88). In sum,

> This left has replaced commitments to the emancipatory, egalitarian struggles of working people against capitalism—commitments that were never fully orthodox, but always ruptured, conflicted and contested—with incessant activity (…), and so now satisfies itself with criticism and interpretation, small projects and local actions, particular issues and legislative victories, art, technology, procedures, and process. It sublimates revolutionary desire to democratic drive, to the repetitious practices offered up as democracy (whether representative, deliberative or radical). (…) For such a left, enjoyment comes from its withdrawal from responsibility, its sublimation of goals and responsibilities into the branching, fragmented practices of micro-politics, self-care, and issue awareness. Perpetually slighted, harmed and undone, this left remains stuck in repetition, unable to break out of the circuits of drive in which it is caught—unable because it enjoys. Might

> this not explain why such a left confuses discipline with domination, why it forfeits collectivity in the name of an illusory, individualist freedom that continuously seeks to fragment and disrupt any assertion of a collective or a common? The watchwords of critique within this structure of left desire are moralism, dogmatism, authoritarianism and utopianism—watchwords enacting a perpetual self-surveillance: has an argument, position or view inadvertently *risked* one of these errors? (Dean, 2013, p.87).

Noting the opposition between these two readings of Left Melancholia, Nunes (2017) points out that, at a closer look, each rendering of Left Melancholia addresses a different target. For Brown, the melancholic is "the 'old school' leftist which would rather enjoy the failures of younger generations of activists than questioning its own usual analyses and prescriptions" (Nunes, 2017, p.137, my translation), while for Dean, the melancholic "can be recognized for its attachment to the kind of practice that is usually associated to the post-1968 left" (Nunes, 2017, p.138, my translation). Importantly, then, we might read each essay as addressing the position that it would attribute to the other. Dean's argument would then be read as a confirmation of Brown's diagnosis of the Left's melancholic attachment to ideals; consider, for instance, the following diagnosis: "In our present of undeniable inequality, class war and ongoing capitalist crisis, the relevance, indeed *the necessity, of unified movements and class-based analysis is undeniable*" (Dean, 2013, p.80, my emphasis). We might read, in references to necessity, unity, timeliness, and certainty, echoes of the attachment to empty and progressive time that Brown associates to Left Melancholia. Likewise, we would read Brown's argument as a confirmation of Dean's diagnosis of Left compromise; consider the following interrogation: "How might we draw *creative sustenance from socialist ideals of dignity, equality, and freedom* while recognizing that these ideals were conjured from historical conditions and prospects that are not those of the present?" (Brown, 2003, p.464, my emphasis). Again, the inference to an out-of-joint temporality and to revolutionary ideals as a source of creative sustenance might ring familiar as an attachment to fragmented, branching, and disruptive practices which Dean's associates with Left Melancholia's opposing a temporality of emancipation.

Which interpretation, then, is the correct one? Which left is truly melancholic? Nunes offers an alternative position: "instead of choosing between the two [interpretations], to decide that they are both correct", a decision that would take us to realize "that we are, indeed, dealing not with one, but with two melancholias—and, therefore, also with two different lefts" (Nunes, 2017, p.138,

my translation). He then turns to the relation between these positions: returning to the Freudian scene of melancholia, he points out that the left melancholic is explicit in chastising—more specifically, blaming—the other. Indeed, both Brown and Dean identify Left Melancholia as a tendency of the left to dwell on its own failure while simultaneously blaming such failure on some other—moralism, dogmatism, authoritarianism and utopianism on the one hand; identity politics, cultural studies, poststructuralism, and post-modernism on the other[105]. This produces a "specular structure" which affirms a dichotomic system of identification "according to a series of terms that negate the other—unity, centralism, concentration, identity, closure, the Party-form; multiplicity, connection, dispersion, difference, opening, the network-form (or no form at all)" (Nunes, 2017, p.140, my translation). In sum, from two different interpretations of Left Melancholia, we are led to posit not only the existence of two melancholia and two Left subject position, but also of a specular structure that constitutes each position as well as their mutual critique in terms that mirror, both in form and in content, the temporal tropes of the discourse of time.

Furthermore, as long as the mutual opposition structures the mode of discursivity, self-critique and critique of the other are split. In this sense, each side protects itself from recognizing its own limits and failures:

> As long as both see a section of the left as tending to react to the experience of shared defeat by blaming the other, each diagnosis can point at the other as proof of the existence of precisely this kind of behavior. That is, as being guilty of transferring the blame to someone else; more precisely, of blaming everything on the other who always blames someone else (Nunes, 2017, p.139, my translation).

Finally, we might nonetheless speculate whether such "dance of responsibilization and de-responsibilization" doesn't also contain a kernel of self-beratement. Couldn't it be that, in an inversion of the melancholic scene, the chastising of the other also contains a displaced chastising of the self? More specifically, since to face one's own failures would imply questioning one's certainty, the critique of "the other who blames someone else", of "the one who will

[105] It might be worth noting that these terms here acquire a particular sense, which relates to what Dean called the fragmented, branching, practices of a certain Left. In other words, the point is precisely *not* to offer a nuanced characterization that might look anything like what we might want to call, for instance, "poststructuralism" or "cultural politics". This is of course not Brown's doing, but the working of a commonsense caricature working in close relation to the discourse of time.

not face its own failure and question its own certainty", is also the critique of one's own doubt being displaced (Nunes, 2017, p.140).

In this sense, we find in the system formed by the two Left Melancholia not only the attachment described by Brown (2009), but also the drive described by Dean (2013): by repeatedly doing the same thing while expecting the same (failed) results, the melancholic punishes himself for his defeat and compromise while simultaneously extracting enjoyment from just such failure. Put differently, in the fields of possibilities of Left Melancholia one is invited to enjoy not only the temptation and attachment to fragmentation, disruption, and incessant activity, on the one hand, and utopianism, discipline, and centralization, on the other, but also and importantly, the repetitive drive of the circuit of mutual critique.

Nunes (2017) argues that the specular structure of Left Melancholia erases from Left politics the "question of organization", that is, the concrete question of how best to organize to achieve a goal. In this sense, melancholia erases a better path for the Left through an attachment to mutual opposition. However, in arguing this, Nunes, like Brown and Dean, takes melancholia to be a kind of pathology, a psychic process constituting an obstacle to a more adequate Left[106]. Such perspective quickly invokes questions on the possibilities of overcoming such melancholia towards a Left liberated from its arresting consequences. And in fact, in an open discussion of Nunes' argument[107], these are precisely the questions that emerge: if Left melancholia blocks possibilities, how are we to "cure" it? These questions surreptitiously return us to the problem they endeavor to solve: the argument for *overcoming* melancholia will invoke something like Brown's critique of melancholic attachments to empty time and progress, while the argument for the critical potential of not relying on such temporal assumptions might invoke Dean's critique of our enjoyment of melancholic "incessant activity". In this, we might note the luring effects of the turnings of the discourse of time. As the Left endeavors to

[106] The danger to which he points in his own use of psychoanalysis to understand social processes—that, in relying on the analogy of social groups to the human psyche, it is always liable to either generalize too much (bringing together too disparate positions to be reliable) or not enough (not revealing enough to warrant its mobilization)—is revealing of the diagnostic rationality at stake (Nunes, 2017, p.149, n.25).

[107] The discussion is available at https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=gU71pdl6924

deal with its problems, it finds itself invited to reproduce them, lured back into the circuits of the discourse of time and, now, of temporalized melancholia[108].

In a different direction, then, we might surmise that Left Melancholia is not so much a pathological condition of the Left, caught in a given structure of desire due to the historical defeat to neoliberalism in the winter years of 1980s and 1990s. Instead, it is a mode of existence of "the Left" as it emerges as a position within the terms of the late 20th century discourse of time. In other words, there is no pre-existing Left that "turns melancholic"—and might, hence, "return" or revisit its turn; what we might find is, instead, the emergence of a riven subject position in the discourse of time.

Indeed, I believe some elements of this position transpires in the texts above. When Brown is discussing the unavowable loss of the Promise of the Left, it remains unclear whether the promise existed and was then loss, or if the event of melancholia constituted the Promise as an "idealized romantic ideal". While I believe the first interpretation is more faithful to the bulk of the essay, Dean is keen to attribute to her the second position, noting that, after all, there never was something like a secured Promise in the Left. Likewise, Dean tells us that the compromise with capitalism led the left to abandon the good fight and identify ideologically with the proletariat. We might wonder, however, whether the compromise led to the identification, or the identification led to the compromise. Finally, Nunes states, in a recessive voice, that the divide between the two lefts "did not emerge as a simplistic dichotomy" before the years of defeat, but as a "dispute over the nature of revolutionary politics"; it is, in his words the "retrospective movement [that] allows us to see that, from the start, the identities of both sides were deeply tied to each other" (Nunes, 2017, p.140, my translation). Nunes here is clearly referring to the historicizing movement of accompanying the two lefts to their "origins". We might however wonder if this retrospective movement is not of

[108] Nunes' response to the queries is also familiar to us from the discourse of time: to escape the stalemate of dystopic impossibility as much as that of infinite mourning, he invokes a "good enough" solution—"good enough" to get the left out of melancholia and back into the question of organization, where, we assume, it belongs. We might sense here the kind of solution seeking to strike a balance between both demands and both desires. However, given the amount of enjoyment that one must resist and repress to sustain this position, we might wonder about the reproduction of desire in prohibition that accompanies such middle ground. In a similar vein, dealing with temporal issues of tension and *telos* in contemporary Brazilian left politics and in political pedagogy, Nunes (2015) argues that neither the presence of an authoritarian leadership (the sin of excess) nor the absence of effective leadership (the sin of lack) can properly create the kind of *tension* needed to produce politics as pedagogy.

the same order of the one pointed out by Butler when she claims that the psychic process of loss and identification is a "retroactive product of the melancholic process it purports to describe" (Butler, 1997, pp.177-8). Likewise, Nunes might unwittingly open such reading when he states that "[a]lthough 1917 and 1968 are obviously no more than abbreviations for the diverse fidelities that these two events inspired over the years, these two dates allow us *to name* what remains, without a doubt, the most important split within the left" (139-140, my emphasis). As we have seen, however, in *naming* 1917 and 1968 the most important split within the left, Nunes is not only performatively bringing this split into being, he does from within a discourse in which the particular stake of this split, and its melancholia, can exist. In this sense, we might wonder whether 1917 and 1968 were historically consolidated before the winter years of neoliberalism, or if their existence is tied to an emergence within the terms of the discourse of time[109].

We might conclude from this that the mobilization of political melancholia as a way of making sense of late 20th century leftist politics is very closely related to both the form and the content of the discourse of time. Indeed, it involves similar attachments and splits, revealing that "melancholia", as a critical category is not only temporalized in the problem of (ir)resolution it poses, but also in the way in which it sets up opposite alternatives around the temporal possibilities set up in the discourse of time. In other words, that the self-diagnosis of Left Melancholia might easily bring about the discourse of time might invite us to consider whether melancholia, in its late 20th century articulation, is not always already connected to time for us.

5.4 Concluding Remarks

[109] There is, of course, a historical dimension to this question. Whether or not two self-identified "Lefts" existed at the onset of the 1980s is also a historical question, the answer to which gives us important evidences to discuss the redressing of the Left in the 21st century. But, as pointed out in Chapter 2, history is also always a political technique, not only because it produces political narratives, but because it is political in producing sovereignty through the distinction of presence and absence in time. To make this question into a historical one comes, therefore, with important political implications—the kind of implications that are necessary to think about how to redress the Left in the present, but also the kind that might be side-stepped to understand how the Leftist sovereign subject becomes a (historical) question. I would urge us not to read this as a dismissal of historicization, but as a postponing of the activity of history to an engagement with the questions of the history of what, and how (see Trouillot, 1995, ch.5; Fasolt, 2004).

In this Chapter, I have endeavored to diagnose the circuit of affect of the discourse of time, identifying in it what I have tentatively called a doubled melancholia. My aim in doing so has been twofold. First and foremost, I wanted to grasp how the discourse of time produces resonances, acquires adhesion force, in such a way that it continues to reproduce itself despite a sense that its intrinsic paradoxes might make it ultimately unable to realize its purported aims. In this sense, the melancholia of time gives contours to the luring effects of the discourse of time and its capacity to produce attachments. Second, and, admittedly more superficially, I have questioned the effectivity of this structure of feeling, that is, the way in which it takes part in the production of particular regimes of knowledge (and feeling) and modes of governing through we come to understand and govern ourselves and other in the world.

Doing so has involved two moves, encapsulated in the duality of the formulation "melancholia of time". On the one hand (in the first two sections), I have diagnosed the discourse of time as a form of melancholia, as operating through melancholic circuits of power and affect; on the other hand (in the last section), I have proposed that in the late 20th century, melancholia itself might have come to be temporalized. My aim in starting this doubled move has been to avoid separating "time" and "melancholia" in a way that would maybe too easily allow one instance to solve the troubles brought about by the other—whether by a transvaluation of the time of melancholia towards a perpetual potential for critique or in a "solution" to the paradoxes of the discourse of time through a "cure" of melancholia. Instead, they have come together to compound a problem for our present.

In the first move, I have argued that the discourse time is a form of melancholia, which has taken us back to the opening of the problem dealt with in this dissertation. In Chapter 2, I located at the root of the late 20th century topicality of time the injunction to "take time seriously". In Chapter 4, I pursued some of the conditions under which this seriousness is established in reading the fields of coexistence that make for the discourse of time. I showed they are organized through dualisms, strategies of inversion, and claims to temptation in such a way that taking time seriously through one version of its fields is also to turn away from the other. In the first section of this chapter, I invited us to read this turn as a loss, a loss that might be read as taking part in the psychodynamic of the melancholic condition that all too often plague our engagements with time. While this reading

pointed to important approximations between time and melancholia, to remain at that level fell short of the kind of discursive role I believe melancholia plays in the discourse of time as its indissociable circuit of affect, placing melancholia in a position of causing—and thus maybe also solving—our time troubles. Put differently, while it shows that time can be melancholic, it does so at the cost of imagining a "cure" to melancholia that might free discourse from it—if this position led me to this concept in the first place, I have come to find in it shades of the discourse of time which both explained the attraction and invited skepticism. To sidestep this entry into the discourse of time, I moved towards a more ambiguous interpretation of Freud's text found in Butler. Here, I reconceptualized melancholia from a psychic condition to a discursive circuit of affect and moved to read the discourse of time in these terms. In this sense, the discourse of time is melancholic not because of how we find it hard to let go of certain categories or modes of being, but much more fundamentally because of the way in which it produces, in its turns and returns, a topography in which time emerges as an instance of serious reflection and self-reflection, subjectivity and objectivity, desire and prohibition, and whose intelligibility is protected by silencing its constitutive paradoxes. In other words, the melancholia of time is a structure of feeling in which we embark and get attached as a condition and effect of wondering seriously about time in our times.

In the second move, I have argued that the late 20th century mobilization of melancholia—of which, of course, my diagnosis takes part—is itself not dissociable from the discourse of time. One instance of this connection can be identified in how the critical potential of melancholia is associated to its capacity to either be realizable in time or to bend time towards new critical potentialities. Indeed, the late 20th century mobilization of melancholia is constantly surrounded by serious claims about its temporality. A more in-depth exploration of this relation remains a part of this reflection to be developed in future works. Instead, in the third section of this chapter, I explored only one way in which melancholia has been used to offer a diagnosis of the times for the late 20th century so-called crisis of the Left. In doing so, I have showed that something of the way "Left Melancholia" speaks to the present can be seen to rely on the circuits of the discourse of time. The stalemates that ensue from debates around this become, in this sense, understandable and even expected.

Brought together, these two moves aim to explain how easily we get lured into the circuits of the discourse of time, the strategies of inversions it produces and the circuits of critique and self-critique through which it keeps its field of objects in place. This last point has remained underexplored, although it speaks loudly of the importance of this investigation. If the discourse of time is a form of melancholia through which we are lured into a specific regime of knowledge and modes of government, then to make sense of the latter, of the political order which is legitimized by this specific mode of argumentation about time, is imperative. In this sense, in speaking of the melancholic movement of the discourse of time, I have invited us to wonder about the contemporary resonances of the interplay of calls for vigilance against unity, closure, fixity, and universality (to name a few) and fragmentation, openness, flexibility, and contingency (again, to name a few), which retain a deep identification with what is denounced, though in a disavowed form. In this chapter, I pointed to only one instance of this in the discussion of Left Melancholia, where the disavowal and preservation of both sets of concept takes place through a specular structure that produces enjoyment in its luring circuits but not the transformation it purports to. I believe this crossing of dilemmas and debates of "the left" with the discourse of time in the late 20th century—possibly the emergence of "The Left" as a political subject in the thralls of the discourse of time—is a venue to make sense of contemporary political transformation in terms that take the discourse of time seriously, if not time itself[110].

[110] While I have kept to an argument about "the left", I believe something similar might be mobilized to make sense of other transformations in the so-called political spectrum. I have particularly in mind a recent argument by Wendy Brown on the transformation of right-wing political discourse in the United States and the structure of desire accompanying it. While I cannot fully make sense of this connection, I find resonances in her description of the emergence of a new right-wing political subject: "Behold the aggrieved, reactive creature fashioned by neoliberal reason and its effects, who embraces freedom without the social contract, authority without democratic legitimacy, and vengeance without values or futurity. (…) It does not need to be addressed by policy producing its concrete betterment because it seeks mainly psychic anointment of its wounds. For this same reason it cannot be easily pacified—it is fueled mainly by rancor and unavowed nihilistic despair. (…) It cannot be wooed by a viable alternative future, where it sees no place for itself, no prospect for restoring its lost supremacy. (…) It probably cannot be reached or transformed yet also has no endgame. But what to do with it? And might we also need to examine the ways these logics and energies organize aspects of left responses to contemporary predicaments?" (Brown, 2018, p.75).

6. Final remarks: mood of time(s)—timely moods

This dissertation has traveled a long and convoluted path, tackling the question of how claims to take time seriously as a proliferating critical strategy in the social sciences and the humanities since the late 20th century produces problems and solutions within fields of knowledge and affect through which we come to govern ourselves and others. Put in the terms mobilized above, then, this dissertation has endeavored to approach the late 20th century topicality of time in terms of *a discourse of time*. In order to do so, I went through a number of steps, let me recollect them at this point.

The first part of the work was dedicated to the setting up of the question of the discourse of time in the broadest possible terms. In this sense, in Chapter 2, I have worked through a transversal reading of different fields of knowledge in which calls to take time seriously have been mobilized as a critical strategy both conceptually and empirically. In doing so, in Section 2.1, I proposed we could isolate a number of specific regimes of justification—what I have called "traditions of time troubles"—through which reflections on time are superposed with claims to an improving of our understanding of the present. My sense is that we ought to easily identify with one or more of these claims as they are at the root of many very influential reflections in most fields of knowledge in the late 20th century and easily interpellate us towards thinking seriously about time in whichever field or topic we work. Having done so, in Section 2.2, I argued that there is potential value in suspending these regimes of justification and, instead, inquiring about the intermeshing of knowledge and power in claims to engage in certain ways of knowing as a path to better intervening conceptually and/or politically in the world. As a support to such invitation, I noticed how many of the regimes of justification through which we are interpellated to take time seriously have themselves been shown to operate as discursive strategies that simultaneously erase their power effects all the while organizing modes of government. In sum, Chapter 2 invited us to take seriously not the issue of time, but the way in which this issue has become a site of dispute over what is serious knowledge and what is not, what is a precise interpretation of the world and what is not, and, therefore, what is a proper basis for thinking and intervening in the world and what is not.

Having raised a new set of question about the late 20th century topicality of time in Chapter 2, Chapter 3 offered the simultaneously theoretical and methodological underpinning of the rest of the dissertation. More specifically, I proposed to read the intermeshing of knowledge and power through which problems and solutions around time are raised in terms of what Foucault called "discourse". Here, the discussion moved from closer to further away from Foucault's own reflections on the subject. Hence, in Section 3.1, following Foucault's methodological reflections on discourse and archaeology in the late 1960s and early 1970s, I proposed to read "discourse" as the set of connections through which a limited number of things come into effective existence in regular—that is, neither deterministic nor contingent—fashion. In this sense, I argued that the discourse of time was the limited articulation of concepts, objects, subjects, and strategies that came into existence in calls to take time seriously and made for some things, while locating others beyond the pale of existence. While this allowed us to establish clearly the regime of knowledge of "time" and thus the conditions under which power struggles could be articulated, Foucault's own reflection stumbled consistently and explicitly upon problems with the issue of "time". As I later argue, this is indeed intrinsic to the discourse of time: as soon as we try to understand it, we tend to be lured into its turns as a condition of knowledge. In Section 3.2, to avoid getting caught up much too soon in the problem I wanted to understand, I proposed we followed a recessive voice in Foucault's text and side-step the tension of the descriptive or prescriptive dimension of discursive rules—a version of the problem of contingency and determinacy, or, in his terms, of the "historical a priori"—by asking about the heaviness and mood of discourse, that is, how it resonates with its times. I begin laying out one way of doing so in Section 3.3, where I argue that we might think of discourse not only as fields of dispersion of concepts, objects, subjects, and strategies, but also as circuits of affect, structures of feeling which connect thinking to feeling and can be traced as one element of the adhesion force of discourses. While I recognize that more work needs to be done in this front—notably taking more seriously psychoanalysis as a way of thinking about the relationship between diagnosis and social and political theory—this first foray into this issue allowed the formation of a stable enough ground to engage in an investigation of the regime of knowledge and affect of the discourse of time. I intend to work on this front of the dissertation more closely in future researches. In

sum, Chapter 3 offered a particular reading of discourse, with Foucault but also in other directions, through which we can make sense and effectively engage in an investigation of the discourse of time.

While Part One of the dissertation laid down the general terms of my approach to the late 20th century topicality of time, Part Two was dedicated to making emerge the discourse of time in its specificity. The problem that was posed here—and which is intrinsic to any discourse analysis—was that of establishing a point of entry into the material, since discourses don't follow disciplinary boundaries (on the contrary, disciplinary boundaries emerge in discourse), but all investigations is necessarily limited not only in space and breath, but also by the terms of the intuition that leads to its beginning. In this sense, Part Two and, in particular, Chapter 4, are limited to the discourse of time in the study of world politics. While I believe there are good reasons to start here (besides my own location), the tension of ambition running through the transition between the two Parts of the dissertation is undeniable. Indeed, While the first reveals the desire to situate the problem at the level of the social sciences and the humanities, the second engages that problem from the much more localized field of world politics. While the more limited approach might open ways for us to think about resonances with similar movements in more of the sites presented in the very broad Chapter 2, and while I indicate some possibilities at the end of Chapter 5, the disjunction also raises question about the degree to which we might actually be talking about the same things. Indeed, a more substantial disjunction—besides this possibly quantitative one—relates to the problematization indicated in the first part and the more limited one taken up in the second. While three different traditions of time troubles were presented in Chapter 2, each of them with a number of ramifications, only one of them is effectively taken up in the discourse analysis, as it appears to be the dominant one in IR. I remain suspicious that there is more at stake than only one of those traditions, however, the dissertation leaves it up to our imagination to draw the connections. Feeling up this gap with a careful analysis of the archive is a work that remains to be taken up after this one.

Hence, in the more limited ambition of Part Two, in Chapter 4, I proposed the cross-reading of what I take to be two different endeavors to make sense of the relation of time to world politics spanning from the 1990s to current debates. One, which I have interpreted as dealing with time *in* world politics, the other with time

and International Relations. Through a surface reading of the former and its relation to the latter, I showed that the discourse of time might be read as articulating two contradictory relations of time to modern sovereignty. On the one hand, these are exclusive categories: where time is taken seriously, modern sovereignty falters under the threat of a politics in time; and where modern sovereignty manages to sustain its illusion of stability, it does so at the cost of doing away with any serious engagement with time. On the other hand, these are indissociable categories: modern sovereignty is articulated as a response to serious politics in time, that is, it is a discourse instituted to offer a political way of dealing with the complexity of time; and seriousness about concepts of time demands the kind of stable ground that modern sovereignty is articulated to institute. My point here is that the discourse of time establishes both an internal and external relation between time and sovereignty, so that debates can continue to be articulated in these terms, turning one way and returning the other, while keeping the discourse of time in place. In sum, Chapter 4 laid out the field of dispersion and coexistence that is the discourse of time, pointing at the paradoxical formation that, as is often the case in, sustain the field of debates while making difficult—if not fully impossible—the realization of their proclaimed aims.

Two important questions relating to the discourse of time then emerge. First, how can we make sense of the permanence of these debates in such an unstable—and unsatisfactory—ground. If, indeed, neither the proclaimed aims of the reflections on time in world politics, nor those of time and International Relations, can be fulfilled within the discourse of time in which they are articulated, how come this discourse continues to organize those debates? Or, put differently, how come we continue to organize debates in terms of that discourse? Second, if this discourse cannot achieve the aims expressively proclaimed in it, what does it effectively achieve? Put differently, if the discourse of time fails at offering a proper take on time and, therefore, on ethics and politics, what does it succeed in doing? What does it effectively do? What political order does it legitimize?

Turning to these issues, in Chapter 5, I argue that the discourse of time is a form of melancholia: in its constitutive sets of turns and returns, repressed temptations, and heightened (self-)critical voice, the discourse of time can only exist as melancholia. To take part in it, to emerge in its midst, is to engage in melancholic turns that organize a field of knowledge and feeling around

dichotomous temporal concepts, avowal and disavowal, desire and prohibition and. This circuit of affect makes for the resonance and adhesion force of the discourse of time, as our turns effectively constitute an internal and external search for time, a living of desire in prohibition, and a disavowal of the fact that these searches and prohibitions amount to a loss. Melancholia is not, however, a term that is applied from the outside to the discourse of time, both enhancing the problem and offering a (therapeutic) solution. Instead, the mobilization of melancholia in the late 20th century is already temporalized, caught in the fields of possibilities offered by the discourse of time. In this sense, melancholia cannot offer solution to time, nor can time offer a solution to melancholia: these discourses are grafted into each other constituting the melancholic circuits of the discourse of time which can then cross and engage a number of different discursive formations over the late 20th century, making for that sudden topicality of time.

I concluded Chapter 5 with a section on Left Melancholia, showing how the melancholic circuit of time can be seen as articulating at least a part of the debates on the crisis at the turn of the century. This offered simultaneously a take on the temporalization of melancholia and on the relation between the discourse of time and modes of government of self and others. This question remains, however, substantially underplayed in this dissertation, making for what seems to me its most glaring limitation. Having established at least the contours of the regime of knowledge and affect of the discourse of time, its relations with modes of government remain only implied in dispersed and scarce moments. When these relations appear, they sometimes fall into the unsatisfactory tendency to claim an erasure, as if the effectivity of discourse was limited to what it makes it impossible to say. A more thorough reflection on the discourse of time should reveal more adequately what the discourse of time succeeds in doing as it struggles with its internal difficulties in improving our conceptual apparatus and escaping from the sense of entrapment if unintentionally generates. If not the most structural, this remains the most important—perhaps urgent—dimension of this research to be taken up in the future.

Many limits of this—and thus future research avenues—have been presented above. First, the need to tackle more seriously with the literature on psychoanalytic discourse analysis and, more fundamentally, with the tenets of psychoanalysis as ways of thinking about social and political life. In particular, two

things interested me here. On the one hand, how we come to be affectively attached to discourses in ways that reposition the question of history and logic towards the question of resonance and affect. On the other hand, how this very research question speaks to an increasing governmentalization of psychic and affective life, a perception that comes not only from the topicality of melancholia in late 20th century, but also from the profusion of research and commonsense discourse about psychic life.

Second, I have indicated the need to be more thorough in the empirical analysis of the discourse of time, not only clarifying further its role in the study of world politics, but also starting from different entry points to see whether they take us to the same place or to others. Here, two sites have called my attention, despite their lack in the dissertation. On the one hand, the debates on postcolonial studies which have substantially relied on temporal tropes to articulate critiques of teleological understanding of history and the denial of coevalness—it is yet another irony of this dissertation that the tensions I narrated in the introduction first emerged in relation to these reflections, though they are the ones who ultimately got left out. On the other hand, I am interested in the 1990s recuperation of continental philosophy in political theory, notably the different takes in dialectics and the ensuing debates, which I believe speak profusely to the discourse of time.

Third, and most urgently, this investigation needs to come to terms with the effectivity of the melancholic discourse of time. In this sense, it needs, first, to assess more properly the effects of the discourse of time in world politics—a work that I believe has find a first expression, though not in these terms, in Bartelson's argument about the governmentalization of sovereignty and its intermixing of calls for flexibilization with heightened nationalism. However, more broadly, I am interested in thinking about broader political resonances of this discourse. This involves not only thinking further through something like Left Melancholia, but also to relate this phenomenon to the important transformation of right-wing politics since the early 21st century, most notably in how it also manages to establish complex encounters between calls for fixed boundaries with denial of futurity. All this has been left as speculative trends in this dissertation, when it has been addressed at all. The relevance of this work beyond academic disputes—whose role I would avoid denying—, however, demands that these dimensions be taken

seriously, until that seriousness is itself questioned with someone else's laughter or boredom.

Last but not least, the struggle of coming to terms with writing this dissertation has led me to believe that the form of the work reveals something perhaps only implied in its content: a more than slight obsession with side-stepping a simultaneous attraction and discomfort with the proliferation of sophisticated dealings with the issue of "time" in the social sciences and the humanities which nonetheless managed to produce a sense of regularity and ritualized repetition more than of displacement. In retrospect, I venture that a lot of the turns of phrase, longwinded passages, convoluted argumentation, and hair splitting that get all the more common as the discussion advances has more to do with this nagging obsession than with a conceptual necessity for the work. We might be allowed to think that this is the effect of the still early stage of part of these reflections and, therefore, that the work ahead involves, besides expanding in the directions pointed above, to clarify what is already here. That much is undeniably true. We might nonetheless also wonder, in line with the discussion on structures of feeling, that this obsession has been constitutive of my reflection in its best as much as in its worst, and that maybe it is a symptom more than an obstacle. More specifically, I am caught wondering, at the (late) end of this dissertation, if this obsession with turning all loose ends back into the knot as to make sure that "all exits are closed", to try to ensure (most obviously failing) that nothing is lost, but preserved in a higher level of complexity, isn't as constitutive of this dissertation as its problem with time. Put differently, in the end, it might be that *this dissertation is melancholic*.

7. References

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