Controlling the Crisis[1]

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If it were possible to ventriloquize power today it would only talk over itself, anxiously announcing that "*the whole of our world is in crisis*" while austerely assuring that "*everything is entirely under control.*" This contradiction suffuses our present, a historical moment in which elaborate reports on the disintegration of this or that structure or institution double as advertisements for security programs that promise to ever more intensely, impenetrably, and intimately safeguard a seemingly threatened world. These twin voices of crisis and control mutually constitute the principal rationality of contemporary governmentality and power more generally, a logic within which crisis does not follow from the absence or failure of control, but rather is dependent upon—and is the condition of possibility for—control's instantiation. This text seeks to elucidate how the emergent centrality of crisis in contemporary life, rather than being the consequence of *crises beyond control*, is instead an output of societies organized by the desire to *control crises*. Resonating through technical, discursive, aesthetic, and juridical strategies, the crisis-control conjuncture operates as a planetary force that is transformatively re-orchestrating the operations and organizations of power in the present.

The first section of this text will draw upon Donna Haraway's charting of the "informatics of domination,"[2] Gilles Deleuze's prognosis of the coming "societies of control,"[3] and the "autonomous world of apparatuses" described in Tiqqun's *Cybernetic Hypothesis* in order to theorize the operations of control as well as chart how they've been mobilized by Frontex, the agency tasked with policing Europe's internal and external borders and a truly paradigmatic expression of the dynamics described above. After analyzing Frontex's networked surveillance and policing of migrants—as well as the regulation and circulation of data resulting from those measures—in the second section of this text I outline how the *control and crisis* of Europe's borders have emerged sympoietically, diagramming the crisis-control conjuncture within the historical specificity of the 2015–16 migrant crisis. In the third and final section of the

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2   Haraway, "A Cyborg Manifesto."

3   Deleuze, "Postscript on the Societies of Control."

text, I conclude by looking to emergent practices that aim to counteract, sabotage, and undermine the conjunctive logic of crisis and control that now governs our present.

Crucially, I intend to detail the complementary structure of crisis and control throughout this text only in the hopes of also helping to clarify the ways in which these forms of power are presently being resisted, and speculatively could be resisted in times to come. While detailing and charting the operations of power is unquestionably a necessary task, such an endeavour risks deepening a sense of helplessness and subjugation if it fails to also suggest ways in which power can be, if not entirely undone, at the very least resisted, warded off, or evaded. In this sense, the first gesture of this text should be read as an effort to draw a diagram of power, while the second should be read as an attempt to contribute, however minorly, to the interminable collective project of destituting power wherever it persists.

The Informatics, Cybernetics, and Control of Domination

In *The Cybernetic Hypothesis*, the authors writing within the anonymous and collective framework of the journal *Tiqqun* argue that liberalism has been superceded by the logic of cybernetics, within which "biological, physical, and social behaviors" come to be approached as "something integrally programmed and re-programmable."[4] Both liberalism and cybernetics are fantasies of power, but while the fantasy of liberalism is principally instantiated as a series of institutions, the fantasy of cybernetics is manifest instead as "a diffuse constellation of agents, all driven, possessed, and blinded by the same fable […] (a fable) that hides behind the names 'internet,' 'new information and communications technology,' (and) the 'new economy.'"[5] In contrast to the isolated, individualized, and highly supervised forms of subjectivity that are cultivated by liberalism, cybernetics is instead a project concerned with vacating subjectivity as a means of producing emptied out subjects, blank envelopes that can serve as "the best possible conductor of social communication."[6] According to Tiqqun, the cybernetic project ultimately aims to produce a "new politics of subjects, resting on communication and transparency" that conceives of the individual as "something 'piloted,' in the last analysis, by the need for the survival of a 'system' that makes it possible, and which it must contribute to."[7] Subjects are each made to act as the "locus of an infinite feedback loop which is made to have no nodes," situated within and dominated by interoperable systems of communication and control.[8]

The conceptual delineation between cause and effect breaks down in cybernetic systems, as inputs and outputs mutually affect one another in regulatory feedback loops that push complex systems towards calibrated metastabilities. As subjects enter into feedback processes, they communicate with cybernetic systems which then trigger regulatory responses in a corresponding set of control devices. Rather than try to extinguish the possibility of undesired or unproductive behavior in advance, the

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4 Tiqqun, "The Cybernetic Hypothesis."

5 Tiqqun, "The Cybernetic Hypothesis."

6 Tiqqun, "The Cybernetic Hypothesis."

7 Tiqqun, "The Cybernetic Hypothesis."

8 Tiqqun, "The Cybernetic Hypothesis."

implementation of cybernetic feedback at the scale of the subject is intended to render social uncertainties and indeterminacies eminently manageable, programmable, and productive whenever and wherever they emerge. While the logic of sovereignty is principally concerned with undertaking forms of action that are intended to produce a particular set of planned effects, cybernetics instead seeks to recursively regulate what strays or drifts away from calibrated states. These processual corrections are a cybernetic technique of governmentality enacted through regulation, a form of *piloting* that doesn't attempt to avoid particular events or crises but instead only means to technically *steer* their effects in favorable directions.[9] Like an automated surveillance drone that dynamically adjusts the speed of its propeller in order to compensate for the surrounding turbulence, remaining serenely suspended above its target area, cybernetic systems enact controls to produce metastabilities between the inputs and outputs of a system in an interminable process of regulation that means to minimize the distance between a calibrated ideal and a digitally sensed world, materially instantiating capitalism's ideological structure as a network of technical devices.[10]

For Haraway, the cybernetic organization of power is expressed principally as "the translation of the world into a problem of coding" where "all resistance to instrumental control disappears and all heterogeneity can be submitted to disassembly, reassembly, investment, and exchange."[11] Following the mass production, distribution, and installation of networked computers, it became possible for social behavior to be sensed, stored, and analyzed *en masse* as data, as abstracted sets of numerical values that could be circulated through and processed within the automated computation of machines. Like the abstracting power of price, which establishes an abstract equivalency between all commodities in markets, data establishes an abstract equivalency between anything that can be digitally sensed by or manually inputted into computers.[12] This vast numerical abstraction of the world "transcends the universal translation effected by capitalist markets that Marx analysed so well," emerging as a totalizing cybernetic system which aims to regulate all of the world's activity.[13] For Haraway, "information is just that kind of quantifiable element (unit, basis of unity) which allows universal translation, and so unhindered instrumental power" that permits more and more of the world to be subjected to the "informatics of domination" that characterizes the cybernetic organization of power.[14]

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9 For more on "piloting" as it relates to governmentality and security, see Giorgio Agamben's writing on François Quesnay in "For a Theory of Destituent Power;" for more on the importance of both "piloting" as a mode of governance and as a key discursive figure in the development of cybernetics see Peter Galison's "The Ontology of the Enemy."

10 The metastabilities that emerge between the calibrated idealized states of cybernetic systems and the messy, inconsistent, contradictory, and noisy material world are a technical manifestation of the fantasy of cybernetics. In order for life to be controlled, after all, it must necessarily always already escape control to some degree, and so cybernetic control is always invested in *the fantasy* of a controlled life that *nonetheless always exceeds control* due to the technical structure of control and ontological structure of life itself.

11 Haraway, "A Cyborg Manifesto," 164.

12 For more on the digital-as-form, look to Seb Franklin's *Control*; for more on the digital as it relates to philosophical thought, look to Alexander Galloway's *Laruelle* and *Protocol*.

13 Haraway, "A Cyborg Manifesto," 163.

14 Haraway, "A Cyborg Manifesto," 164.

Within the historical movement of cybernetics, Deleuze argues that the central technique of power is control. Conceived of as a means of computationally acting on the actions of others, control is best understood not as a replacement for but rather as an elaboration of the forms of domination that characterized disciplinary power. While in disciplinary societies a life was imagined as traveling through a series of discontinuous enclosures which often looked something like: Hospital (Maternity Ward) => School => Factory (or Prison, or Barracks) => Hospital (Morgue), in control societies a life comes to be differentially suffused by all of these structures simultaneously as a consequence of their translation into code.[15] For Deleuze, the fixed molds of disciplinary societies are transformed into "self-deforming cast(s) that will continuously change from one moment to the other, or like a sieve whose mesh will transmute from point to point" that can be deployed at a plurality of scales and be precisely calibrated in relation to each subject in particular based upon the data associated with them.[16] While in disciplinary societies a border could be imagined as a fortress-like wall that cuts a landscape cleanly into two distinct territories, in control societies a border instead is envisaged as a dispersed series of networked gates and checkpoints that each open and close dynamically in response to a shifting multiplicity of passwords and codes.

In the contemporary European context, Frontex acts as the central authority responsible for controlling migration on the continent and mobilizes the cybernetic techniques of power outlined above to do so. Founded in 2005, Frontex organizes and oversees a diverse array of programs and technologies that are intended to monitor and police the internal and external borders of the EU, but in practice these measures far exceed the strict spatial boundaries of the political and economic union. Central to Frontex's approach is the use of planetary-scale networks of interoperable surveillance and control technologies, including but not limited to data centers, fiber-optic cables, ground sensors, cell phone towers, and communications and surveillance satellites, that together serve as the cybernetic infrastructure for dynamic zones of control that extend across and beyond the territorial limits of the Schengen area.[17]

As a core part of its operations, Frontex extensively surveils, studies, and aggregates information about migration as a means of more effectively policing and controlling it. Profuse amounts of data are routinely captured, aggregated, and analyzed, all of which are then repackaged and published by Frontex in media-rich "Risk Analysis Reports" that advertise new border control technologies and initiatives, present colorful data visualizations and schematic migratory pattern maps, and detail various predictions about the future of migration that together contribute to the constitution

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15 Prisons no longer require cells, and instead can be made to algorithmically appear and vanish on command with the use of wireless ankle monitors. Hospitals no longer require wards when networked accessories can transmit blood sugar levels to data centers and digitized patches can be activated remotely to deliver insulin. Universities become globally accessible online classes. The psychiatrist's office is fragmented into a million self-help therapy chat rooms. All of these structures exist all of the time as potentials on a network which can be switched on and off dynamically in relation to the signals sent by cybernetic subjects.

16 Deleuze, "Postscript on the Societies of Control," 4.

17 While migration controls have supposedly been abolished within the Schengen Area, nonetheless internal licit and illicit movement remains heavily policed.

of the migrant crisis as an object of cultural concern, security planning, political discourse, and legislative response in the EU.[18]

Frontex's approach to the policing of migration does not involve the deployment of large numbers of security forces, an ineffective gesture given the vast kilometers of borders that encompass the EU, but rather mobilizes cybernetic techniques of power that rely upon the capture, circulation, and analysis of data that is collected from member states and then transmitted back to them in transnational feedback loops. As national security programs deploy technologies and forces at their own borders, the information produced by those operations become inputs that Frontex can then use to recalibrate the EU-wide distribution and deployment of security funding and resources. Facilitated by the European Border Surveillance System (EUROSUR) and Schengen Information System (SIS) information-exchange frameworks, Frontex collects data from individual member states' National Coordination Centres and then produces a "European situational picture and the common pre-frontier intelligence picture (focused on areas beyond the Schengen Area and EU borders)" that is then shared back with each member state.[19] An associated Frontex program titled Copernicus additionally "increase(s) situational awareness by providing Europe with accurate, reliable and up-to-date data collected from satellites and on-site sensors" that contribute another degree of detail of the "situational picture" that is circulated across the EU.[20] These information sharing programs constitute Frontex's core function, which concerns the production of "a constantly updated picture, as near to real time as possible, of Europe's external borders and migration situation" that acts as a "vital part of Frontex's rapid-response mechanism."[21] The production of a "constantly updated picture" of migration is in the end only rendered possible within a cybernetic system organized to facilitate maximal communication between heterogeneous national security forces, technologies, and infrastructures that are made to be transparent to and for one another.

Cybernetic systems ultimately rely upon communication in order to determine control responses, and in control societies the drive for more communication is made to be maximal. The confessional dynamics that animated disciplinary societies, within which subjects were coerced into articulating their interior lives for the exterior world (in the hospital examination room, the courtroom, the psychiatrists office, the classroom, etc.), pale in comparison to the ways in which subjects can be made to involuntarily confess to machines in control societies. Microfacial expressions, pulse rates, body temperatures, perspiration, respiration, eye dilations, and odors are all now the targets of automated machine sensing and analysis, each of which are translated into data and uploaded into security systems at airports and other border crossings that

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18 A full collection of Frontex's Risk Analysis Reports can be found at: frontex.europa.eu/publications/?c=risk-analysis.

19 European Commission, "Eurosur."

20 It certainly would be possible (and productive) to thoroughly trace a direct historical line between a Copernican "Enlightenment" and the weaponized light of surveillance satellites and sensors, but unfortunately I don't have the pages to do so here.

21 Frontex, "Information Management."

algorithmically determine if alerts should be sent to security officers.[22] Attention itself has become a central form of confession in this context, where the amount of time spent looking at various content online is measured to the millisecond in order to build data profiles, determine preferences, predict desires, calibrate the delivery of future content, and/or trigger a corresponding series of control responses. All that is sensible by machines is approached as constituting part of a planetary polyphonous confession, within which subjects engage in an endless autobiographical monologue in the form of the communications and signals they send to a heterogeneous multiplicity of cybernetically driven apparatuses and feedback systems.[23]

Epistemologically, cybernetic systems do not comprehend subjects as individuals (as the indivisible, coherent entities of liberalism and disciplinary societies), but rather as bundles of *dividual characteristics* that can be unique to particular bodies but are more often shared in common by many. Datasets of dividual characteristics can be composed of biometric data such as height, weight, eye, skin, and hair color, genomic markers, fingerprints, and gait, but also can incorporate any information that can be digitally stored in a database, such as citizenship, sexuality, criminal records, or location histories.[24] While the discourses that surround crisis tend to focus on individual bodies as loci of potential violence, for example the "single male refugee" in the migrant crisis that comes to be understood as a parasite or terrorist, these discourses function to produce a *political justification for the enactment of power* that simultaneously *obscures the way in which power is dividually enacted*.[25] The kinds of dividual characteristics that are collected and analyzed uninterruptibly grows more expansive and diverse as states, social media companies, academic researchers, and data brokers compete to invent techniques of sensing and storing novel forms of data based upon the tautological understanding that all data is good, and all that is good is data.

Data is obsessively collected everywhere and anywhere it is found, flowing in increasingly large volumes and amassing in a multiplicity of informatic reservoirs whose depths only grow. In one instance, a video stream from a public webcam installed in a cafe in downtown San Francisco was used by the Chinese government to train its facial

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22 It is worth noting that these forms of algorithmic analysis are highly error prone, with widely varying degrees of accuracy. In particular, facial recognition systems are calibrated to analyze the white male faces of the teams that programmed them, making them less able to recognize faces with darker skin tones or with geometries that don't align with normatively masculine features. Regardless, the accuracy of these systems matters less in relation to the fact of their growing deployment within security systems as well as their integration within the technical operation of power more generally.

23 What is social media, after all, other than endless self-expression oriented towards algorithmically generated publics? As Deleuze notes: "We sometimes go on as though people can't express themselves. In fact they're always expressing themselves [...] it's not a problem of getting people to express themselves but of providing little gaps of solitude and silence in which they might eventually find something to say. Repressive forces don't stop people expressing themselves but rather force them to express themselves; What a relief to have nothing to say, the right to say nothing, because only then is there a chance of framing the rare, and ever rarer, thing that might be worth saying." Deleuze, *Negotiations*, 129.

24 For a critical approach to biometric capture and analysis, see the work of artist Adam Harvey at www. ahprojects.com/.

25 For more on the figure of the single male refugee, see Veronika Zabotsky's essay "Unsanctioned Agency" in this volume.

recognition programs.[26] In another case, Microsoft released a dataset that contains the names and images of 100,000 "celebrities" that it aggregated from various online sources that (unironically) includes the artists Hito Steyerl, Ai Weiwei, and Trevor Paglen and which was used as material for research projects across several continents.[27] While the production and analysis of images remains a central part of cybernetic control, whether expressed as data visualizations or in the images captured by surveillance satellites, the luminosity of the pulses that stream through fiber optic lines and the electrical charges of individual bits within databases far exceeds the limits of visual culture and constitutes a formally broader and more ontologically diverse regime of mediation. By translating the world into the most elementary form of digital difference, the switch between one and zero (presence and absence), anything can potentially be "interfaced with any other" by digitally abstracting them, allowing for the "processing (of) signals in a common language."[28] The complex arrangement of formal elements that make up every different kind of visual composition (maps, graphs, schematics, photographs, etc.) appears excessive and wasteful in comparison to the minimalism and austerity of binary encoding.[29]

The cybernetic organization and expression of power takes shape in banal and everyday forms, just as it is manifest in punctuated moments of extreme violence. It can be expressed as the serving of particular kinds of advertising content to people who have become associated with a particular dividual characteristic, just as it can take shape as drone strikes that are executed based solely upon the analysis of dividual data, such as the suspicious movement of a cell phone over time, without being aware of the identity of the person being bombed.[30] At the level of governmentality, the state may select only those who share a particular grouping of dividual characteristics for the enactment of certain controls, such as those subjects who are associated with the data identifiers "Muslim," "Man," "Under 40," and "Travelled Abroad." Once behavioral, biographical, and/or biometric data is communicated to a cybernetic system, that data can then be acted upon and modulated in order to generate new data that is closer to the socially, politically, and economically desired ideal of the larger system.

Frontex's strategy of producing a constantly updated situational picture of migration might better be described as the production of an *operational image* that is structured cybernetically. While these operational images often involve visual elements,

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26 The cybernetic subjugation of populations has reached its most elaborate and total instantiation in contemporary China, where the muslim Uyghur minority has become subjected to the mass automated surveillance practices of the state. Vast networks of cameras installed in all kinds of public and private spaces including homes, cafes, and on the street, in combination with surveillance of internet communications, have enabled for more than a million Uyghurs to be sent to concentration camps for mandatory reeducation. See Mozur, "One Month, 500,000 Face Scans."

27 See the work of Mega Pixels at www.megapixels.cc/datasets/brainwash/and www.megapixels.cc/datasets/msceleb/.

28 Haraway, "A Cyborg Manifesto," 163.

29 A possible direction for future theorization would be to analyze the potential consequences of quantum computing on cybernetic control, which can compute using not only zero and one, but also the quantumly superposed zero-one.

30 The majority of U.S. drone strikes in Afghanistan and Pakistan are what are known as "signature strikes," where the identities of the people being bombed are unknown. See Entous, Gorman, and Barnes, "U.S. Tightens Drone Rules."

reducing them to a "visual image" would be to miss the ways in which the image also acts as a site of analysis, computation, and data that exceeds visuality in its modes of abstraction. Like a border surveillance camera that captures a photo of the landscape, algorithmically tries to match the various compositional relations of the captured image with coded sets of stored spatial patterns such as buildings, rivers, bridges, trees, bodies, animals, and/or roads, and then makes a calculated set of adjustments to its aperture and zoom as well as possibly activating the floodlights and alarm sirens mounted on nearby security fences before capturing another image and repeating the process, the operational images of Frontex are only produced in order to make various adjustments to a corresponding system of controls that will recursively affect the image in a modulatory feedback loop.[31] In this way, Frontex only produces, analyzes, and circulates an image of migration, a *moving image of movement*, in order to facilitate the operational and cybernetic domination of that movement. As Tiqqun notes, "Empire, armed with cybernetics, insists on autonomy for it alone," and in the context of the politics of movement Frontex should be understood as making a totalizing claim on the autonomy of its own internal movement (the circulation of data, of commodities, of "situational pictures," of security forces, etc.) while simultaneously refusing that same autonomy of movement for all others.[32]

One of the central contradictions that defines the power of contemporary borders is that they both facilitate and hinder movement, allowing for some flows to proceed largely unregulated while forcefully halting others. In the context of the EU, flows of those with proper passports, of commodities, and of financial assets circulate unimpeded, while vast populations are subjected to policing and control measures intended to extinguish even the possibility of their movement. In this way, the cyberneticization of the European border regime can be understood as a rearticulation of historical relations of subjugation and domination which have come to be technically expressed as "an autonomous world of apparatuses so blended with the capitalist project that it has become a political project."[33] While social media posts are subjected to intense monitoring and analysis in relation to border controls, encrypted wire transfers to offshore accounts remain shrouded in privileged cloaks of opacity. While Frontex worries about "individuals posing a security threat and economic migrants attempting to abuse the system by claiming a false nationality" in its annual risk reports, in practice they are only concerned by "security threat(s)" and "abuse(s) of the system" of targeted dividual characteristics that are algorithmically determined to be out of alignment with European power.[34]

In this way, cybernetic control can be conceived as both *totalizing* and *differential* in its processual enactment. Control is totalizing in the sense that everything and everyone in the world is targeted by the expansive digital sensing of interconnected surveillance apparatuses, and so *all subjects are subjected to* the systems of communication and computation that compose cybernetic systems. And yet, crucially, the control measures that are activated in response to that sensed data are fundamentally differential as they are *differently enacted* in relation to *politically differentiated subjects*. While

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31 For more on operational images, see Harun Farocki's series of video essays *Eye/Machine I, II, and III*.

32 Tiqqun, "The Cybernetic Hypothesis."

33 Tiqqun, "The Cybernetic Hypothesis."

34 "Frontex, "Risk Analysis for 2016: Annual Report."

society itself can be understood as being totally regulated by the logic of cybernetics, the intensity of that regulation is nonetheless distributed unevenly, mobilized differentially against particular groupings of subjects based upon how distant their dividual characteristics are from the calibrated settings and norms of the larger social system. In this way, subjects become caught between the two extreme and counterposed processes of de- and reconstitution, in which bodies come to be understood as being *pure expressions of particular kinds of social difference* within a liberal society (along the lines of race, class, gender, sexuality, etc.) just as they are disaggregated and disintegrated into atomized streams of dividual characteristics within the analytic apparatuses of cybernetics.

Ultimately, both liberalism and cybernetics should principally be understood as fantasies, as *political and technical imaginations* of a society's structure that are mobilized to *restructure society in those imagined forms*. The subjects of liberalism and cybernetics never entirely exist in ways that liberal and cybernetic societies imagine them, but nonetheless liberal and cybernetic imaginations act upon bodies as real forces of subjectification that effectively capture them within their respective fantastical structures.[35] As fantasies of power and domination, the infinite number of differences that constitute the gulf between the liberal and cybernetic fantasies of the world and the world itself are not comprehended as being a *problem of fantasies* but rather simply as a *problem for fantasies* to correct. As a consequence, the historical instantiation of the liberal and cybernetic fantasies is inconsistent and often contradictory, allowing for societies to dream of frictionless global flows of information, bodies, and capital on one night, and of border detention camps in need of ever more police, tear gas, motion sensors, and concertina wire on the next.

However, just as the cybernetic organization of power hasn't replaced disciplinary power but rather has substantially transformed its material instantiation and formal enactment, cybernetics should equally be understood not as liberalism's replacement but as a complementary elaboration of its logic.[36] In other words, while the modulatory feedback of cybernetics now constitutes the *principal technical mechanism* of power, governmentality, and control that acts upon dividual characteristics, nonetheless liberal sovereignty remains deeply involved in the *differential enactment and distribution* of cybernetic power across individualized bodies. In this way, contemporary subjectivity itself is increasingly an expression of the formal contradiction that exists between liberal and cybernetic imaginaries, persistently decomposed into a multiplicity of dividual bits and bytes within the machines of cybernetic systems and ceaselessly

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35 For more on the corresponding fantasies of liberalism and cybernetics, see Hayles's *How We Became Posthuman*, particularly the sections on the cyberneticist Norbert Wiener who she notes was "less interested in seeing humans as machines than he was in fashioning human and machine alike in the image of an autonomous, self-directed individual" (7).

36 Deleuze noted throughout his work that the theorization of control would have been impossible if Michel Foucault hadn't already undertaken the theorization of discipline. In *Foucault*, Deleuze notes that for Foucault "(the) prison, as a hard (cellular) segmentarity refers back to a flexible and mobile function, a controlled circulation, a whole network that also crosses free areas and can learn to dispense with prison" (43), which of course already suggests the logic of control. For what it is worth, Foucault also suggested that the 21st century would be Deleuzian precisely because of the emergence of control.

reconstituted into legible individuals within the discourses, regimes of representation, and legal/juridical structures of liberal society.

This apparent contradiction between liberalism and cybernetics ultimately resolves itself conjunctively, within which the *crisis of liberalism* and the *control of cybernetics* come to constitute, sustain, and intensify one another. As a society denounces migrants as being an existential threat to the supposed equalities, rights, and forms of welfare afforded to subjects within a liberal social order, migrants appear as *a crisis* for liberal society and thus in need of cybernetic control and regulation. The ban on women's veiling in various nation states within the EU could similarly be figured as a crisis for liberalism, where the niqab is seen as a foreign cultural imposition that islamophobic liberal societies cannot tolerate. Of course, the unveiled face is precisely also the face that is available for facial recognition systems to capture and analyze, subjecting muslim women to increasing degrees of cybernetic control (it is not coincidental that "veil" and "surveillance" share etymologies, after all).[37] In response to crises, bodies come to be subjectively parsed by and subsumed within historically demarcated forms of liberal difference (as liberalism's constitutive "other") just as they are permeated by concatenated processes of communication and control, conjunctively dominating life ever more intimately and totally.

Simultaneously produced as *individual subjects* and disintegrated into *dividual components*, particularly targeted pieces or patterns of data ("Sends Money Electronically to Nigeria," "Types in Arabic," "Detectable South Asian Ethnic Facial Geometry and Skin Tone," "Wears a Hijab," etc.) can be acted upon by cybernetic systems as a means of dominating a differentiated subject or group of subjects within the enforced hierarchies of a liberal social order. In other words, the totalizing structure of cybernetic control appears alongside liberal crises as part of a conjunctive historical movement, within which a perceived threat to the universality of liberalism must be persistently defended by the differential enactment of cybernetic power. In this sense, subjectivity itself becomes unthinkable absent either the individualizing force of liberalism or the corresponding set of apparatuses, devices, and mechanisms that materially constitute the cybernetic systems responsible for both producing and dominating individual subjects dividually.[38]

Briefly pausing to trace an outline of the shared histories of data collection, computation, and state violence can help to make clear the conditions within which these dynamics took shape. In Europe in particular, the history of these practices echoes and reverberates through colonial projects, the repression of popular revolts, the organization of genocide, through to the contemporary control of migration at the EU's borders, each constituting part of a continuous elaboration, development, transformation, and expression of state power. Plural and diverse histories circulate and coa-

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37 It is also worth noting that balaclavas and motorcycle helmets that are often worn by anarchists and communists in militant demonstrations to avoid being identified by police are also banned in many of these same countries.

38 See Agamben's discussion of the work of Tiqqun: "Tiqqun tries to cause the two plans, the two analyses kept separate in the work of Foucault—mechanisms and techniques of governance, subject—to fully coincide with one another […] the search for new political subjects that have the potential to paralyze, one that still paralyzes the tradition of the left, becomes unthinkable. Theory of the subject and theory of mechanisms are one," cited in Anarchist without Content, "Tiqqun Apocrypha Repost."

lesce into a complex inheritance constituted by the documentation, numeration, and eventual computation of bodies undertaken as forms of mass abstracting violence. As long ago as the Spanish Inquisition, record keeping, accounting, and data collection had already become integral into the processual enactment of state repression.[39] A set of procedures codified in documents such as the *Orden de Processar* (*Prosecutorial Order*) in the late 16th century involved not only the production of a written record of those present at trial as well as their testimony, verdict, and sentencing, but also of their property, biography, religion, race, and extended familial relations. The epistemological structure of the Spanish Inquisition also is what gave it duration as a political and historical force: the documentation of property allowed for its seizure which was the primary source of funding for the trials, while the documentation of familial ties allowed for expanded inquiries to be opened in a cascading series of subsequent trials. The establishment of bureaucratic data collection and processing transformed *the event of state violence* into *a recursive process of state violence* that could unfold over many years—or in the case of the Inquisition(s), centuries—and could be carried out by many different dispersed actors who could simply follow officially documented instructions and procedures.

By the late 19th century, biometric techniques had begun to be developed, practiced within, and integrated into the bureaucratic organization of state power. In colonial India, the British officers William Herschel and Richard Henry adopted fingerprinting as a method to allow illiterate colonized subjects to sign contracts and later was used to identify criminals in Bengal, techniques which were later brought back from the colonies to Britain where they became integrated into the standard practices of London's Metropolitan Police Service.[40] In roughly the same period, biometric photography was implemented in France in the decades following the defeat of the Paris Commune, where mass volumes of city records had been destroyed by fires and thus Parisians could attempt to assume whatever identity they desired.[41] The standardization of portraiture in the form of police mugshots in particular was intended to "reregister a social field that had exploded into multiplicity."[42] The numeration of bodies most infamously took form in the tattooing of numbers onto the skin of Jews, Roma, homosexuals, the disabled, and others in Auschwitz during the Holocaust. By the mid 20th century, the Nazi regime was already using computers in order to process targeted populations and manage their transportation to various concentration and extermination camps across Europe with greater degrees of efficiency.[43] IBM supplied machines and punch cards to the Nazis and also provided routine maintenance, which in combination with the vast census operations that accompanied Germany's expand-

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39 The only reason we know so much about the Spanish Inquisition, after all, is because of the elaborate archives it produced about its own activities.

40 Colonial territories continue to be laboratories for state power. In contemporary Palestine, for example, experimental technologies are deployed by the Israeli state against Palestinians before being packaged, marketed, and sold to a range of other states. See Puar's *The Right to Maim* and Esmeir's "Colonial Experiments in Gaza" for theoretical explorations of this practice.

41 For other relevant histories of biometrics and surveillance, see Simone Browne's *Dark Matters* and James C. Scott's *Seeing Like a State*.

42 Sekula, "The Body and the Archive," 34.

43 See Edwin Black's *IBM and the Holocaust* for a comprehensive look at this history.

ing occupation of Europe allowed for the dividual sorting of the targeted populations, the literal *counting of* and *counting upon* bodies, creating the necessary conditions for the subsequent extermination of millions.[44]

   In each of the aforementioned histories, the creation of an abstract index in which complex and nuanced living bodies came to be counted and numbered was the primary epistemological and political mechanism through which these forms of violence were rendered possible. While the particularities and specificities of each of these histories are not to be disregarded, nonetheless it is important that they be read together as contributing to the larger historical elaboration of state power in Europe which continues to take place today. Over the course of these diverse yet interconnected histories, an important transformation coincided with the emergence of cybernetics and control that is worth highlighting: while early biometric practices such as the mugshot and fingerprinting were conceived of principally as *retroactive* measures through which those who were arrested could be documented in order to be able to recognize them in case they should be arrested again, in control societies biometric data is *preemptively* collected about the entire population based upon the assumption that although not every person is a criminal, every person has the *ineradicable potential* to become one.[45]

   In response to this imminent criminal potentiality that exists in every subject, data is collected in as high of volumes as possible at all times by a dispersed network of facial recognition systems, license plate readers, digital payment systems, cell phone towers, and myriad other technologies not because of any *documented fact* but because of a *social probability* that must endlessly predicted and regulated by cybernetic systems. As shorthand, the shift from disciplinary societies to control societies can be mapped onto a corresponding shift from understanding society deterministically, which characterized modernist practices of statecraft and sovereignty that aimed to produce particular futures, to understanding society as a set of probabilities and potentialities that must be modulated and controlled.[46] As a consequence of the above, the structure of cybernetics and control incorporates and makes productive a degree of indeterminacy by transforming noise into data which can then be used to apply corrective regulatory measures.[47] In actuality, without indeterminacy cybernetics and control would have no relevant object to act upon and instead would simply operate as deterministic machines. Social behavior and arguably life itself are only *social* and *living* to the degree that they escape, elude, or exceed being entirely determined, and as such society and life, as forms of indeterminacy, operate as the material substrate for

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44 On a sobering and (I feel necessary) note, it is important to make clear that the forms of computation and data collection that were practiced by the Nazi regime were extremely meager and unsophisticated when compared to standard data collection and analysis practices today. Should a state equipped with contemporary computational and cybernetic power decide to undertake a similar project of extermination and genocide now, it would be unthinkably more efficient, expansive, and horrific.

45 For more on the preemptive logic at the center of contemporary European border and migration policy, see Farah Atoui's essay "The Calais Crisis" in this volume.

46 This can be read in relation to the historical shift that has occured from the logic of war to the logic of counterinsurgency and policing, which corresponds to the shift from sovereignty to security more generally as the principle *raison d'état*.

47 For more on the relationship between "information" and "data," see the collection *"Raw Data" Is an Oxymoron*, edited by Lisa Gitelman.

cybernetic regulation. The central innovation of the cybernetic organization of power, of the informatics of domination, and of control societies is that they do not treat indeterminacy as a *problem* to be prevented, eradicated, or overcome but as the *proper territory* of governmentality itself.

Following from this insight, it is unsurprising that the rise of cybernetics has been accompanied by the emergent centrality of crises.[48] It has become entirely banal to pick up a newspaper today and read separate stories about how the climate, economy, state, youth, universities, masculinities, immigration controls, church, family, and civilization itself are all in crisis. Whether ecological, economic, military, social, or political, crises aren't exceptional or ruptural and instead simply processually and incessantly act as the context for new corrective control measures. As Giorgio Agamben notes, in crises "the capability to decide once and for all disappears and the continuous decision-making process decides nothing" as they become approached simply as opportunities for governmentality to enact power in "the form of a perpetual *coup d'état*" that isn't interested in *maintaining order* but only *perpetually managing disorder.*[49]

The Control of Crisis, and The Crisis of Control

As much as the European migrant crisis was a *crisis of control*, in which border controls seemingly failed to prevent migrants from entering Europe, it was just as much a *crisis for control*, a historical object for the enactment of control operations. In this sense, both control and crisis acted as part of a larger calculus of cybernetic power that has come to be profusely and diversely expressed at planetary scales. For cybernetics to assume its place as the principal rationality of governmentality, society itself must also come to understand itself not as on a path towards a planned idealization but in a perpetual fall into new depths of crisis. This understanding of the world as being fundamentally in crisis is a consequence of the technical and epistemological structure of cybernetics, in which the world is approached as being in need of interminable correction because it is *literally sensed* as being increasingly out of control as more and more control mechanisms are implemented.

As more communication is established within cybernetic systems, greater amounts of indeterminacy are sensed, and as greater amounts of indeterminacy are sensed, a greater need for communication and control emerges. This corresponding relationship between the production of knowledge in cybernetic systems and the need to implement controls in relation to that knowledge acts as a conjunctive synergy between control and crisis more generally, an epistemological and political feedback loop within which an increase in either magnifies and multiplies the urgent need for the other. Control

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48 It is worth noting that the internet was designed based upon the assumption that large sections of the network would inevitably fail as a consequence of nuclear war, natural disasters, or other catastrophes that could cut off communications. In other words, the architecture, infrastructure, and protocols of the internet were designed specifically in relation to the persistent threat of crisis and system failure. Consequently, the material instantiation of cybernetic control historically coincided with the material potential of crisis. See *Inventing the Internet* by Janet Abbate and *Protocol* by Alexander Galloway.

49 Agamben, "For a Theory of Destituent Power."

and crisis operate together as a singular structure of power that is just as interested in managing crises as it is invested in maintaining them, synchronously emerging as an assemblage of technologies, infrastructures, and policies that reinforce, reproduce, and sustain one another.

Central to any meaningful understanding of the migrant crisis is an analysis of the ways that crisis has emerged sympoietically with the ways it has been controlled, just as control has emerged from within the wakes of its own crisis.[50] The collection and aestheticized circulation of data emerging from the 2015–16 European migrant crisis in particular proved to be immensely productive for Frontex, and enabled a substantial expansion of its infrastructures and operations.[51] In 2015, at the supposed height of the migrant crisis, Frontex reported that an "unprecedented inflow of people" (numbering 710,000) had entered the EU without proper documentation, an increase of 428,000 from the same period in the previous year.[52] While it is unquestionably true that migration numbers increased in this period due to the revolutionary activity and subsequent armed conflicts that were unfolding in the Middle East over the same period, what is significant about this report in particular is that the *number of migrant detections* was used by Frontex to describe the *number of migrants* who had entered the EU without permission, a subtle but crucially important distinction with consequential political effects.

Due to the proliferation of controls at the EU's borders, it is unsurprising that a single migrant can come to be detected multiple times by the dispersed organization of various surveillance systems and security forces. After the reporter Nando Sigona inquired about the source of the figure, Frontex added a clarification at the end of the report stating that:

> "Frontex provides monthly data on the number of people detected at the external borders of the European Union. Irregular border crossings may be attempted by the same person several times in different locations at the external border. This means that a large number of the people who were counted when they arrived in Greece were again counted when entering the EU for the second time through Hungary or Croatia."[53]

Even with the clarification that seemed to call into question the "unprecedented inflow," the report nonetheless achieved the same ends by exaggerating the appearance of a crisis, an exceptional circumstance which necessitates a correspondingly exceptional increase in control measures. As Frontex Executive Director Fabrice Leggeri states about halfway through the document:

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50 For a theorization of the liberatory (as opposed to oppressive) potential of sympoietics, see Donna Haraway's "Tentacular Thinking" and *Staying with the Trouble*.

51 I've used the word "crisis" throughout without any qualification because I'm interested in thinking through what *crises do* rather than *what they are*. While certainly there is a need to critique the ontology, temporality, and discursive structure of crisis, here instead I'll focus on how crisis acts *as a force*.

52 This particular Frontex statement mysteriously has been removed from their website, but the page is nonetheless accessible on the internet archive at: web.archive.org/web/20180208110351/http://frontex.europa.eu/news/710-000-migrants-entered-eu-in-first-nine-months-of-2015-NUiBkk.

53 Sigona, "Seeing double?"

"Urgent assistance is needed, especially for Greece and Italy, to help register and iden-
tify the new arrivals. Earlier this month, I requested the EU countries to provide Frontex
with additional border guards who can assist these two countries in dealing with such
unprecedented flows. I do hope we receive adequate contributions which will show the
true spirit of European solidarity."

The "unprecedented" nature of the flows here of course is suspect, especially consider-
ing that 20th-century Europe was reshaped by much larger mass migrations spurred
on by two world wars as well as by the migrations involved in European colonial pro-
jects. Nonetheless, the "unprecedented" framing isn't intended to function descrip-
tively but rather to help constitute a *present without precedent*, a situation that *cannot be
planned for* but certainly *can be controlled*.

Leggeri's call for "European solidarity" was later formalized and expanded upon in
Frontex's 2016 Risk Analysis Report (produced in 2015), which proposed the establish-
ment of a Frontex Risk Analysis Centre, an information sharing network within the EU,
and an increase in personnel and funding in order to properly respond to the unprec-
edented crisis. In response, by the end of 2015 the EU Commission adopted new regu-
lations that established the "European Border and Coast Guard Agency," a replacement
for Frontex's previous instantiation as the "European Agency for the Management of
Operational Cooperation at the External Borders."[54] Accompanying the name change
was a vast expansion of Frontex's powers which came to include the "right to intervene,"
allowing for the deployment of Frontex security forces alongside various national au-
thorities, the establishment of a "Risk Analysis Centre" that would facilitate the circu-
lation and aggregation of data concerning migration between EU member states, and
the formation of "European Return Intervention Teams" that would assist EU member
states with the deportation of undocumented migrants.[55] In the end, the migrant cri-
sis didn't operate as a *crisis of control* at all, but rather as a *dramatic multiplication of it*,
indefinitely increasing the intensity and scope of Frontex's operations in almost every
domain of operations.

After the European Border and Coast Guard Agency was established, several more
measures were adopted to further regulate, police, and control migration as part of the
larger cybernetic organization of power. Following the 2015–16 crisis, Frontex went on
to extend its territorial reach through the establishment of "risk analysis cells" across
Africa as part of a broader strategy to externalize its borders, extending its control
and sensing capabilities well beyond the European continent.[56] These risk analysis
cells "analyze strategic data on cross-border crime in various African nation states
and support relevant authorities involved in border management," imposing the cy-
bernetic logic of Frontex border control in a deterritorialized and neocolonial fashion
across Africa. Following Fred Moten and Stefano Harney, these risk analysis cells can
be understood as being a militarized offensive against *the surround*, an establishing
of fortressed colonies which in the same gesture also helps to reproduce the fantasy

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54 "Frontex" isn't the legal name of the organization but is widely used as shorthand, emerging from a
    contraction of the French *frontières extérieures* (external borders).

55 European Union, "Proposals."

56 "Frontex opens first risk analysis cell in Niger."

of Europe's hostile exterior.[57] Following from Achille Mbembe, the risk analysis cells could equally be understood as necropolitically constituting part of a European *war machine*, a form of state power decoupled from territorial constraints and made to be "polymorphous and diffuse," a militarized and mobile cybernetic force that is paradoxically captured by sovereignty in order for sovereignty to be able exceed its own formal limits.[58] These measures, along with other complementary border externalization programs in the Mediterranean, Turkey, and elsewhere, displace the borders of the EU from being located *somewhere in particular* to being spectrally expressed across *many dynamic zones of control at once*. As an unbroken extension of Europe's colonial history, the exertion of European power on the territories that it has made exterior has come to be materially reinstantiated cybernetically.

As a formal culmination of all of these transformations, an experimental border technology named iBorderCtrl that automates some of the migration controls at official points of crossing is now being implemented as a pilot program in Hungary, Greece, and Latvia. Mobilizing affect recognition technologies and machine learning algorithms, migrants subjected to the program "use an online application to upload pictures of their passport, visa and proof of funds, then use a webcam to answer questions from a computer-animated border guard, personalised to the traveller's gender, ethnicity and language."[59] The system then analyzes "micro gestures" to determine if the migrant should be allowed to cross using regular security procedures, or if they require additional levels scrutiny from human border guards at points of entry.[60]

The instantiation of cybernetics occurs across diverse scales, with many distinct interoperable layers of communication and control coexisting with one another in nested regulatory hierarchies. While Frontex can be understood as having a particular cybernetic relation with member states expressed in the communication of data and subsequent reorganization of security resources, iBorderCtrl is an example of a cybernetic process enacted on the scale of the subject. As a migrant interacts with the application, their dividual inputs (gender, ethnicity, language, etc.) shape the system's output (questions, computer animations, etc.), which in turn generates a new affective response in the subject which is communicated back to and analyzed by the machine, triggering further algorithmically-driven adjustments to Frontex's communication and control systems. Here, the cybernetic expression of power is horrifically intimate. There is no singular architecture of power imposing itself uniformly upon a population here, but rather an algorithmic multiplicity of uniquely calibrated modulations executed uniquely and differentially in relation to each subject.

As cybernetic systems come to be technically integrated into more and more of society, crisis equally comes to assume its place not as an *event* but as the *persistent condition* of the present. As crisis becomes discursively, technically, and politically mobilized as a means of enacting more and more controls, and as more and more controls epistemologically exacerbate the appearance of various crises, the intensities of both crisis and control heighten. As Haraway notes, "the only way to characterize the informatics of domination is as a massive intensification of insecurity," within which all life

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57　Harney and Moten, *The Undercommons.*

58　Mbembe, "Necropolitics."

59　"Smart lie-detection system."

60　For more on affect recognition, see the "AI Now Report 2018"

simply becomes another fluctuating input for a larger system that in the end is only oriented towards its own duration.[61] In control societies, crises operate principally as the context for techniques of governmentality and forms of power that are defined by the *intensifying control of insecurity*, and the *intensifying insecurity of control*.

In the end, Frontex's cybernetic project can perhaps be best understood by analyzing a word that Frontex itself enjoys using quite frequently: *risk*. Risk is an epistemological but also a political concept that is oriented by a probabilistic worldview that understands everything in terms of its possibility. Risk allows for a form of thinking that embraces uncertainty in order to be able to speculate in relation to it, anticipating different futures in an attempt to better control them in advance of their possible arrival. Risk becomes an object of analysis, from which algorithmic processes can simulate, project, predict, and prognose future trends based upon previously-collected data, producing virtualized futures that can be cybernetically acted upon in the present. Communication is the central means that cybernetics deploys to tame uncertainty, and the more communication that exists the more responsive feedback can become. In this sense, risk is not something to be minimized but rather becomes a productive element within cybernetic communication and control.

And what is crisis, after all, if not the *perpetual amplification of risk*? Like a microphone pointed towards its own speaker that multiplies ambient noise into ear splitting screeches, the instantiation of control in the world ontologically involves a corresponding amplification of risk. In this way, control doesn't only operate to minimize the distance between inputs and outputs in a negative regulatory feedback loop that aims to stabilize European projects of securitization and governance, but can also function to magnify and strengthen particular signals in order to expand the terrain of what is in need of control. Strategically spatialized and differentially enacted across the social field, *positive* feedback—long regarded as antithetical to cybernetic modes of control—thus becomes central to the production of risk and, in turn, the extension and intensification of both liberal and cybernetic techniques of power.[62] In the EU, as Frontex organizes to produce higher and higher volumes of data about migrants, and as that data is circulated across more and more communication nodes, crisis will proliferate and persist as crucially constitutive of the present, creating the conditions for ever expanding and intensifying control. From here, the only question of importance that remains is: What can possibly break the capture, communication, and control of cybernetic feedback?

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61 Haraway, "A Cyborg Manifesto," 172.

62 As the anthropologist Jules Henry writes in a 1955 critique of Walter B. Cannon's theory of physiological homeostasis, which would become a major discursive and conceptual support for later cybernetic theories of feedback and control, "The theory […] can also serve as a *vade mecum* for imperialism—namely, if you want to hold on to your empire, keep it off balance in such a way that only the motherland can maintain it in a steady state. When the outlying possessions are able to regulate themselves, they will want the freedom which their own self-regulatory mechanisms now permit them to achieve" ("Homeostasis, Society, and Evolution," 301).

The Uncontrollable

What is uncontrollable today? What is the remainder of control, what escapes and eludes control, and what threatens to undo it entirely? In other words, what is *out of control*, both *emerging from* control as well as *mobilized against* its totalizing instantiation? Haraway, Deleuze, and Tiqqun each suggest possible ways forward which interestingly and productively resonate with one another, and help to frame practices that have emerged in opposition to control in the EU. The subsequent pages are oriented by the understanding that resistance is a fundamentally speculative endeavour, for if we already knew what would undo control, control would have already come to be undone. Consequently, what follows should not be understood as prescriptive or exhaustive but rather as a means of probing the boundaries of possible resistance and revolt. Relatedly, the majority of the cases I'll be mobilizing in this section concern the practices of migrants themselves, not because I intend to fetishize or romanticize migrants but because, drawing upon an insight from Baruch Spinoza, those who are most affected by power are also those who most closely and deeply have knowledge of power's operations and forces. As such, the choice to emphasize migrant resistance and revolt is meant to help proliferate new opportunities for the adoption of those practices as well as acts of solidarity with them.

In her writing, Haraway embraces the figure of the cyborg, a particular hybridization of the biological and technical that she understands as having the potential to disrupt and undermine the informatics of domination. As she describes, cyborg politics are concerned with the "struggle against perfect communication, against the one code that translates all meaning perfectly [...] cyborg politics insist on noise and advocate pollution."[63] This position, oriented against the communication of cybernetic systems, against the transparency and emptiness of cybernetic subjectivity, and against the totalizing code of computation figures resistance against cybernetics as emerging both *within* and *against* its structure. This is not an understanding of resistance as constituting an outside or escape, but rather about an engagement with the cybernetic form as a terrain of political struggle that is structured by its imminence. Haraway later elaborates that "the main trouble with cyborgs, of course, is that they are the illegitimate offspring of militarism and patriarchal capitalism, not to mention state socialism. But illegitimate offspring are often exceedingly unfaithful to their origins. Their fathers, after all, are inessential."[64] Here, the crisis of cybernetics that has come to be expressed everywhere, in the family, in the economy, in the military, is also the condition of possibility for the emergence of *unfaithful subjects* that can come to be *incommensurable* with the logic of cybernetic feedback that produced them.

Building upon these insights, in the final section of *The Cybernetic Hypothesis* Tiqqun also articulates a series of measures they think can contribute to the abolition of cybernetic power. Towards the breaking down of communication, they write that "interference is the prime vector of revolt" and that "fog makes revolt possible," seemingly echoing Haraway's invocation of noise and pollution.[65] They later go on to elaborate that "fog is a vital response to the imperative of clarity, transparency, which is the

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63   Haraway, "A Cyborg Manifesto," 172.

64   Haraway, "A Cyborg Manifesto," 151.

65   Tiqqun, "The Cybernetic Hypothesis."

first imprint of imperial power on bodies" and then quote Deleuze's insight that "the important thing is maybe to create vacuoles of non-communication, interrupters who escape control."[66] They understand all of these strategies as possibly:

> "Establishing a zone of opacity where people can circulate and experiment freely without bringing in the Empire's information flows [...] producing 'anonymous singularities,' recreating the conditions for a possible experience, an experience which will not be immediately flattened out by a binary machine assigning a meaning/direction to it."[67]

Both Tiqqun and Deleuze locate the possibility of resistance against cybernetics and control in forms of opacity and non-communication that both amplify noise and interfere or interrupt flows of information. Only from this does another kind of life, another kind of experience, become available that perhaps might come to smother and silence the cybernetic organization of power.

In the European context, there are a multiplicity of practices already underway that adopt similar orientations against cybernetic control, and which can serve as models for future resistance and revolt. However, before outlining some of these approaches it is worth briefly outlining why a particular approach *has not worked*, and what this might tell us about other practices of resistance. The passage of the European General Data Protection Regulation (GDPR) in 2016 (implemented in 2018) established a series of rights related to how individuals' personal data could be collected and processed. The law grants "data subjects" within the EU the right to request copies of the data collected about them, the right to have their data anonymized, and the right to have their data removed from an organization's servers should they withdraw their consent which is also known as the right to be forgotten.[68] The GDPR is best understood as a *liberal response to cybernetic power*, a form of legal action which is intended to shelter the liberal individual from the excesses of cybernetic power.

While the GDPR established the legal context for several lawsuits to be filed against large tech companies related to their mishandling of data, nonetheless the supposed protections promised by the GDPR are entirely compromised by the juridical power granted to Frontex and other security agencies which allow for those rights' arbitrary suspension. As part of the logic of the state of exception which defines security and sovereignty more generally, Frontex is allowed to collect and circulate the data of subjects that are considered to be involved in the "facilitation of illegal immigration, human trafficking, or other cross-border criminal activities" that includes but is not limited to the "name(s) of subject, nickname, gender, nationality/ies, names of known accomplices, organised crime group, registered business, personal address, safe house address, means of communications (telephone number, social media handles [...]), means of transportation (vehicle registration, boat name [...]), weapon, photograph(s), non-offence event, offence event, ethnicity, sexual orientation."[69] As explored in the first section of this paper, the liminality between refugee/asylum-seeker/migrant and human-trafficker/terrorist/criminal effectively allows all migrants to be covered by

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66 Tiqqun, "The Cybernetic Hypothesis."

67 Tiqqun, "The Cybernetic Hypothesis."

68 Human Rights Watch, "The EU General Data Protection Regulation."

69 Wiewiórowski, "Opinion on a notification," 1–2.

such exceptions, doing essentially nothing to shield them from Frontex's cybernetic data-sharing programs. In other words, the *crisis of liberalism* emerges as complementary to the *instantiation of more intense controls* in the European context.

In light of all of the above, migrants now knowingly undertake their movement cognizant of their potential computation within and at the frontiers of the EU. While bodies were conditioned by the felt potential of a prison guard's surveillance in the panoptic structures of disciplinary societies, being coerced into internalizing the gaze of authority and instituting forms of self-discipline, today bodies are increasingly conditioned by the felt potential of becoming the subject of computation, being coerced into internalizing the logic of algorithmic capture in flexible forms of self-regulation and control. In this way, the logic of panopticism has been extended by the corresponding logic of *pancomputation*, in which life has come to be lived in relation to its potential computation.[70] In this context, the potentiality of computation is at least twofold, both expressed as the *potential that something will come to be computed within cybernetic control systems* as well as the ways in which *potentiality itself becomes the object of computation in cybernetic risk analysis*. In the first sense, actions, practices, gestures, behaviors, and relations all come to be enacted in relation to their potential computation, or in other words, the ways in which they may come to be subjected to the diverse algorithmic scrutiny and analysis of corporations, states, and other actors. Consequently, migrants come to move always in relation to and informed by the potential of that movement being tracked and analyzed by cybernetic systems. In the second sense, the movement of migrants becomes shaped in advance by the expectation that their movements have effectively already been predicted by machines based on previous data capture and computational analysis. As a consequence of this conjunctive operation, migrants always move autonomously in opposition to the control of migration, mobilizing a form of risk-taking that knowingly opposes and subverts the computational analysis and predictions of Frontex. Technically entangled together, power and resistance formally structure one another in a cascading series of control measures and escape maneuvers. In other words, the autonomy of movement is expressed as a series of subjective wagers that, through their risking everything, reaffirm the ineradicability of the autonomy that Frontex's algorithmic capture means to eradicate.

In response to all of the ways that contemporary migration is now controlled cybernetically, migrants have adopted strategies that aim to cultivate zone(s) of opacity and participate in the collective struggle against perfect communication. Emerging as what Deleuze called "vacuoles of noncommunication," communities adopt sets of practices and relations that constitute spaces opposed to the circuits and apparatuses of cybernetic power that at times act as refuges and at others as platforms from which to stage revolts.[71] The first and most popular of these strategies is the use of encrypted communication technologies by migrant communities that allow for forms of coordination and information exchange that are effectively opaque to cybernetic systems. Smartphones are used to establish secure communication channels with smugglers

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70   While "Pancomputation" is linguistically inconsistent, mixing the Greek prefix "pan-" and the Latin "computare," I have purposefully chosen this hybridization in order to maximize both its conceptual ties to panopticism as well as its legibility for English-reading audiences, as the Ancient Greek word for "compute" (lógos) has a much broader meaning.

71   Deleuze and Negri, "Gilles Deleuze in conversation with Antonio Negri."

that help to facilitate migration into the EU, a process that often involves some degree of exploitation but also at times is undeniably liberatory. Schematic maps of migration paths into the EU that graphically diagram the various steps and phases involved in the crossing of many different borders (and the evasion of many different security forces and architectures) are circulated between various encrypted group chats. Once migrants arrive in the EU, those encrypted communication channels subsequently provide a means to connect with other migrants and establish novel migrant communities that don't expose them to the scrutiny or violence of national authorities. The widespread use of encryption by migrants is an asymmetric response to the "black box" algorithms of machine learning and artificial intelligence that are used to control migration and is a means of becoming opaque to their computational scrutiny and analysis.

Beyond the encryption of communications, migrants also engage in the destruction and/or forgery of various identity documents in order to either refuse "clarity, transparency, which is the first imprint of imperial power on bodies" in the case of the former or add pollution to the "one code that translates all meaning perfectly" in the case of the latter. Frontex organizes to counteract these practices that it claims "can ultimately undermine its internal security" by deploying specialized document experts at the EU's borders in order to "tackle the phenomenon in the comprehensive way by police, border and coast guard, and customs experts."[72] In a survey conducted by the EU-Funded European Migration Network on the challenges of identifying migrants, member states were asked "Are there good practices or challenges in your Member State regarding detecting ID-fraud?"[73] In response, Luxembourg wrote that "The main challenge is the amount of doubtful documents which make a huge backlog seen that there is not sufficient personnel in the special unit of the police to control all of them," Belgium replied that it had trouble processing the "submission of forged or falsified breeder documents (e.g. birth certificate) that can serve as a basis to obtain other (genuine) identification documents. Obviously these type of falsifications are more challenging to detect," while Estonia simply stated that "There are no specific good practices to outline." The overloading of communication systems with the noise of false document submissions as well as the simulation and multiplication of identity that subvert the process of coded translation that are rendered possible through document destruction and forgery are strategies presently being deployed by migrants to undermine the logic of control and cybernetic power.

In addition to the practices described above, migrants have participated in the production of opaque spaces at the fringes of the EU that help to facilitate their migration across the EU's borders. On the Northern coast of Morocco near the Spanish enclaves (colonies) of Ceuta and Melilla, migrants from across Africa have established informal communities in forests where they are able to avoid the repression of Spanish-funded Moroccan security forces as well as make preparations to attempt to cross over the layers of fortified barriers that are erected between the two territories.[74] These spaces also make it possible for migrants to share information and strategies concerning how best to evade the ever-shifting controls of the EU, acting as sites of resistant knowledge production and circulation where a collectively produced and maintained *memory of*

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72 Europol, "Experts meet to tackle document fraud."

73 European Migration Network, "Ad-Hoc Query on Impact of false/forged documents."

74 For more context, see Alami, "Morocco Unleashes a Harsh Crackdown."

movement can persist even as communities of migrants circulate in and out of the area.[75] This spatial otherwise to the zones of control established by Frontex allows for the practices of individuals to accumulate and contribute not only to particular acts of migration, but also to the larger historical movement of migrants that is oriented against the instantiation of cybernetic power, a form of communication that isn't captured by or reducible to the communicative structures of control.

Yet another approach involves organizing against the material infrastructures of cybernetics. In response to Google's plan to build a new campus in Berlin's Kreuzberg, a neighborhood with a rich antifascist and anticapitalist history, a network of people that unsubtly go by the name "Fuck Off Google" organized against the plan and launched a series of actions opposed to the campus' construction that have included noise demonstrations, neighborhood discussions, and other events.[76] Citing Google's participation in mass surveillance and cooperation with authoritarian states, among other objections, the "Fuck Off Google" network advocates for the decentralization of communication as a means of counteracting the cybernetic organization of power. Shortly after the Google campus construction site was occupied by activists, Google formally withdrew from the plan to build in the neighborhood.[77] While surely a symbolic victory given the planetary scale of Google's data infrastructure, nonetheless this opposition to the infrastructure of control societies should be studied as a model for future approaches.

Most recently, a new migrant revolt has emerged as an outgrowth and elaboration of the *Gilets Jaunes* (Yellow Vests) movement which, at the time of writing this, has been unfolding for several months as the weekly emergence of road blockades, protest marches, and riots across France.[78] Going under the name *Gilets Noirs* (Black Vests), a network of hundreds of people organizing across dozens of migrant centers across France have staged a series of actions targeting the architectures and infrastructures of migrant surveillance, detention, and deportation. In May of 2019, the movement occupied a terminal at the Charles de Gaulle airport on the edge of Paris in opposition to Air France's cooperation with the French State in deporting migrants. In a statement released during the occupation, the *Gilets Noirs* claimed that: "We are the freedom to move," going on to write that the airport they were occupying was "above all else, a border. A border without walls or barbed wire. Nevertheless it marks some bodies [...] Those for whom migration comes easy are a minority coming from the bourgeois and/or white worlds. It's this world that colonizes and wages war. The entrance to their fortress is the airport. It is well guarded by the military, police, and cameras

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75 For an artistic exploration of these communities, see Abdessamad El Montassir's artwork in this anthology as well as the accompanying text "The Adouaba Project" co-authored by Krista Lynes and Abdessamad El Montassir.

76 See www.fuckoffgoogle.de/. It may also be worthwhile looking at the chapter "Fuck off, Google" in the book *To Our Friends* authored by the Tiqqun-adjacent Invisible Committee.

77 See: www.mastodon.social/@FuckOffGoogle/100684556388297387 and wiki.fuckoffgoogle.de/index.php?title=MobilizeActions.

78 The political character of the Gilet Jaunes is heterogeneous and contradictory, involving far right nationalist protesters as well as antifascists, anarchists, communists, liberals, environmentalists, and others. For a compelling analysis of the ongoing uprising, see Zoubir, "A Vest That Fits All."

[...] This place embodies racism on a planetary scale."[79] The occupation lasted for a only a few hours before the *Gilets Noirs* left voluntarily, but nonetheless this action should be read as an experimental disruption of the planetary logistics of migrant expulsion. The airport is, after all, not only a nexus of many different expressions and circulations of power but is also one of the central laboratories for the deployment of cybernetic control, and the occupation of the airport terminal is a model for a collective practice of revolt that can disrupt the logistics of cybernetic power. Just as factory workers were understood as having the potential to undo the industrial capitalist system that produced them as proletarian subjects, so too should migrants be understood as having the potential to undo the cybernetic systems that produce them as illegal, and thus disposable/detainable/deportable subjects. What could collective revolts look like against the other architectures and infrastructures of cybernetics?

The present is defined by the accelerated instantiation and intensification of cybernetics, within which control and crisis conjunctively express themselves as an expansive form of power. As social support systems crumble beneath the weight of austerity, experimental cybernetic programs have funding rained down upon them by states and venture capitalists, and even the most dystopian science fiction has trouble keeping up with the latest innovations and technical developments of control societies. But power is never impermeable or invincible, and always imminently contains forces directed towards its eventual abolition. As control bends so as not to break, remaining endlessly flexible and responsive to whatever resistance emerges against it, undoing control entails not chipping away at it but breaking it entirely once and for all. Structured as totalities, control and crisis ultimately offer no way out other than through their total imminent negation, the process of which is surely imperceptibly underway but the outcome of which is unanticipatable. In this sense, all of the former analyses and critiques offered in this text should not be understood as gestures towards the reform of our society, but only towards the perpetually renewed possibility of its destruction. The present, undeniably, demands nothing less.

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79 See La Chapelle Debout, Twitter post, May 19, 2019, 5:09 a.m.