

T.C.
İSTANBUL BİLGİ ÜNİVERSİTESİ
SOSYAL BİLİMLER ENSTİTÜSÜ
KÜLTÜREL İNCELEMELER YÜKSEK LİSANS PROGRAMI

BOREDOM, ITS COMMUNITY AND POLITICS

YÜKSEK LİSANS TEZİ

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TEZ DANIŞMANI:

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ÖZET

Bu çalışmanın amacı, tüm dünyayı kaplayan, belki de modern dünyanın her tarafına eşit oranda sirayet ettiği söylenebilecek az sayıdaki veçhesinden biri olan sıkıntı üzerine, birikerek artan bir kavramsal bagajla düşünce egzersizi yapmaktır. Sıkıntıyı tarifsel ve anlamsal imalarıyla ele alır. Dünyanın anlamsızlaşması ve sıkıcılaşması, dünyanın anlamı olduğu düşünülen modern tarih, ve bu tarih boyunca insanı üretmek üzere çalışan antropolojik makine ile bağlam kazanır. Makinanın operasyonu sonucunda birey sıkıcı bir 'totalite'nin parçası olarak ortaya çıkmakta. Kişinin kendi kendisine ulaşamadığı bir totaliter yapıya dair sıkıntı hali en nihayetinde bir etik problemi yönüyle ortaya çıkıyor. Bireysel parçalarını birbirine özdeş kılan totaliter bir yapı. Sıkıntının nihayetinde bir cemaat tahayyülü operatörü olduğu gözlemlenecek. Kendinden bile kopuk olarak derin sıkıntı içinde askıda kalmış olan bireyin kendini dünyadan ayıran duvarları aşarak bir tekillik olarak ortaya çıkışıyla aşıyor. Sıkıntı, isteksiz ve felç halindeki bireyden cemaati içinde ortaya çıkan ve benliğiyle ilgili olasılıkların peşine düşen bir tekillik olarak belirmesine giden süreci anlatıyor.

Anahtar kelimeler: Sıkıntı, birey, tarih, totaliter, olasılık, toplum, cemaat, tekillik.

ABSTRACT

The aim of this study is to conduct a thinking exercise on boredom, that probably is one of modernity's few aspects that can be said to affect the whole face of the world in equal rate, with the help of an accumulated theoretical baggage drawn from various thinkers. Boredom is taken into consideration both descriptively and both in meaning. It gains context with the world's boring meaningfulness, modern history thought to give meaning through which the anthropological machine produced man. Man is thus produced as an individual being hung up in a boring totality. Boredom, regarding man's state of inability to reach its own self as belonging to a totality, appears as a problem in its ethical aspect. The totality that has its individual parts consigned to being identical to each other. Boredom will be seen to be an operator for dreaming new ways of community in the last instance where it will be presented within the framework of practices of self. The emergence of a singularity within this community wears down the walls surrounding the individual rendering him inaccessible. Boredom finally tells the process of passage from an unwilling and paralyzed individual to a singularity appearing within the community, in pursuit of possibilities regarding the self.

Keywords: Boredom, individual, history, totalitarian, possibility, society, community, singularity.

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INTRODUCTION

The problem put here is the reading of boredom as an inevitable result of modernity through the lens of singularity theories to arrive to the exploration of the possibility of a community to be born of boredom. The issues of boredom, passion and community will be explored through the medium of fandom, cyberculture and the many works of popular culture such as computer games and tv shows. Only to conclude, in the end into the question of the politics thereof.

This engagement intends to bridge certain theoretical approaches to the issue of boredom haunting this modern world so that the imagination of new ways of community can be made complete to arrive in the end to the outlying political task of such a community. Boredom will be explored not only as the consequence of a technologized world as dull as it gets nowadays, but also as a new way of engaging “the games of truth” where the pursuit of life is not a plan to be made but rather a passionate “taking place”. Boredom, imagining community and the resulting politics would be then, considered through the lens of Singularity theories, once established against the backdrop of a “boring” modernity founded upon the historical individual.

The “grayness and the commonness” of the world will be revealed as the magic of the world long thought to be lost as the upcoming modernity

packaged it into mere technicalities. In which case, boredom will present and embrace whatever being finds desirable profaned into the common use of the common man instead of the bored man of our day and time that trifles with whatever thing he has got in a drifting manner. The passage from the latter to the former will be considered within the framework of the ethics of boredom.

The first chapter, a rather descriptive one will perform the task of laying out the feeling of boredom that haunts us, that haunts the world. Boredom will be described as a spirit, as our bored soul. This chapter will focus more on the mood of the bored one rather than what boredom really is. In this sense, the thing described here will be the feeling of boredom itself as well as the drifting sort of life the bored one leads in boredom's face.

This depiction of boredom as a spirit will help in outlining the surrounding world and bored man's frustration with it. Philosophical anthropology will be touched upon, only to be renounced later as this very chapter will serve to set the stage for the next one where the bored man will be the focus of the study rather than his drifting way of life.

This first chapter entitled '**The Spirit of Boredom**' is divided into two sections. The first one of them is entitled "**Killing time, and 'Work'**". This section will take care to use the concept of 'work' both as a source of boredom and both as an usually suggested cure for it. From this very

beginning though, this study will hint at the fact that its aim is not to cure but to come to terms with it.

In each section a similar concept will play the role of operator in analyzing boredom and in furthering it to the next section. Therefore in the first section, theoretical approaches focusing on 'working' will be presented, drawing mainly from Siegfried Kracauer who will help set the stage for boredom's spirit due to an onslaught of interests and work. The bored man will appear as an 'unserious' type willingly killing his time to resist against the onslaught of interest the boring world is taking in him. The unseriousness this section will allude to will serve the purpose of resistance against suggested types of activities in face of boredom, the 'work' to be more specific.

The second section named **“Killing the Spirit, and 'Magic'”** will be operated by the concept of 'magic'. The choice terminology may seem showy at first given how the term 'killing' is repeatedly used throughout the study. Despite that, 'killing' will appear in a metaphorical way to establish a certain sort of a reckoning with the operator of choice the relevant section runs with.

This second section will present us with how the world comes to be the boring place it is today. The operating concept of 'magic' will help get to the bottom of the opposition between passions and interests while the

theoretical foundation for this task will be Albert O. Hirschman who reads the establishment of modern capitalism through the lens of this opposition. Picking up where Siegfried Kracauer will have left, Giorgio Agamben's theoretical sources on 'indifference' will push the bored man away from the interesting things of the boring world all the while underlining his inability to channel passion into things that he would like to desire. Towards the end of the chapter the spirit of boredom will be developed thoroughly with the fleeting help of Jean-Luc Nancy on the 'grayness of the world'. The final *coup* will be given when Foucault will appear to connect unmistakably the spirit of political modernity with this depiction that is the spirit of boredom.

At the end of the first chapter, we will be situated in such a domain that bored man will be drifting through the inevitable passage of time in indifference to the small things of the world in a banal and unserious way while feeling trapped in this modern spirit of boredom.

The next chapter entitled '**The Meaning of Boredom**' will focus more on what boredom means as a concept. It will help to form the foundation for an implicit critic of modernity as issues like, the anthropologism, identities, history, and the definition of man in comparison to the animal will be bordered.

Opening where Foucault will have left, the first section of the second chapter will be called as follows: '**Boredom as Meaninglessness, and**

Games of Truth'.

This section will focus on a theoretical approach drawn from Lars Svendsen who works on the philosophy of boredom. This theory will present us boredom, as meaninglessness. It will help to reinforce the general idea that we live in a 'meaningless' world where meaning itself is nowhere to be found. This meaninglessness will come forth as the parts of the world that surrounds the bored man will appear all bleak and empty. It will then go on to border the subject of objectivity, in that those parts coming off as meaningless will be meaningless on the grounds that they appear in pure objectivity. Foucault's theoretical resources on how objects and subjects come to be constituted will be summoned to better come to terms with what really is meaningless and thus what *boredom as meaninglessness* actually implies in respect to the emerging subject within what Foucault calls the 'games of truth'. This will only be fortified with the concept of '*situative boredom*' derived again from Svendsen to provoke the issues of identity in the midst of all this meaninglessness.

While Agamben's certain resources will have a secondary effect to this point what comes next will be the stage where Agamben's study on the distinction between man and animal through which he analyzes boredom in its profound state will be the headliner. This section is called “**Boredom as Animal, and 'Man&Animal'**” where the concept of man will be defined in comparison to the concept of animal. More precisely though, the political

definition of man in comparison to animal will be carefully analyzed by Agamben as he follows in the footsteps of what Foucault and Agamben call respectively; 'anthropologism' and the 'anthropological machine'.

The split between animal and man, more to the point, the way this split is articulated politically as well as historically will be built upon Foucault's then earlier analysis on the subject's formation. Boredom as animal will refer to the mode of boredom one suffers as one's very anthropological status is being defined as part of these games. It will be updated at each turn by making recourse to what man really longs for in the animal that will come to be separated from him.

In the final instance the last section of the second chapter will be named **“Killing the Animal, and 'Possibilities'”**. This one will focus strongly on the analysis of 'Profound Boredom' that Agamben develops step by step in following the courses of Heidegger. It will lay out the most analytical description of boredom this study will give. In particular, this analysis will be divided into what Heidegger had called and – Agamben had picked up in his study: 'Structural moments'. As these moments will be explored in details, man's own self will be exposed as well as others possibilities of being. The denial of these possibilities are going to be attributed to the forming of a system of totality based upon the identical beings of its members while ushering them towards a historical agenda that will finally be the bridge to the next section of ethics. The metaphor of 'killing the

animal' will serve the purpose of this revelation where bored man hung up in suspension will realize his inability to become whole again with his animal part – as that part is called animal only after man is decided upon – as well as his inability to reach these other possibilities.

The second chapter will thus have established the totality within which profoundly bored man is revealed the many possibilities concerning his *self*. These possibilities made manifest during the structural moments of profound boredom will be told to be inaccessible as bored man finds his *being hung up* the way a paralyzed being would be. The total open space beyond the sight of bored man will be put as the space where the essentially political conflict reigning the outside world plays out.

The third chapter will mainly focus on the issue of '**Ethics of Boredom**' where the first section will debut by **Foucault's** analysis on how modern history is made. Through a careful application of Foucault's archaeological work on the making of history a link will be established to the possibilities laid out fully at the end of the second chapter. What Heidegger's previous work on these possibilities claimed as an originary possibility attributed to man through History, will be made to show that it is nothing more than a **historical singularity** rather than a necessary compulsion. The concept of singularity will be given as the embodiment of the first and originary possibility although this very same concept will help to prove that bored man's being is in no way consigned necessarily to this particular possibility.

Next, the second section entitled as '**Totality and As Suchness**' will focus on two particular things essential to this discussion. First, this open space where, according to Heidegger, the essentially political conflict reigns, where bored man is revealed the whole picture on the concealed and disconcealed things as well as the inaccessible possibilities are made manifest will be shown to constitute a 'totality'. **Heidegger's** essential political question will be further explained. **Foucault's** resources on the political technologies of modernity will be summoned to help give context to this totality and its technologies on its constitutive individual parts identical to bored man. The totality will be shown to be a social and historical totality. Therefore it will be closely tied to the 'History' of the previous chapter. As a result, the question of singularity will be posed again, only this time it will be further explained by **Agamben's** take on singularities, namely '**As Suchness**'. At this point, certain drawings will be made to compare the 'As Suchness' of a singular being to the as such&suchness that forms the categorical identities, the likes of which we will have seen as a result of the anthropological machine's political work on man.

As suchness will push the discussion even further into the domain of the third section '**Community and Limbo**'. This part will mainly focus on the kind of community that can be constituted of singularities. To this end, the theoretical resources of **Jean-Luc Nancy** as well as the brief appearance of

Marc Augé will be entertained. Augé will help to tell that the community of singularities is a place of in-between states, while Nancy will initiate into the forming of such a community. The main theoretical body will be complete when **Agamben's** concept of '**Limbo**' will come into play. Limbo will imply this space in between. Coupled with the seemingly religious figures this state of limbo will have social and historical implications as it will come to provide a certain way out of History's hold on the individual. As this hold will be seen to wane, singularities will emerge in a community of boredom.

The next section will be drawing heavily from the theoretical work of **Nancy** as the concept of **Unworking** will be outlined under different lights only to be backed up by **Agamben's** interpretation of the term. The two will come together to form the basis of the foundation of community. This will come off as a reckoning with the totality that would rather keep individuals separated away from each other as well as from themselves. This chapter will provide unworking as a way to break off of this individual within a totality. The broken off singularity will be launched towards a community whose **boredom** and endless supply of **joy** will have already been linked to each other with the help of the previous chapter's leading concept of **Limbo**.

In the end, the passage from the bored individual of the first chapter who were no one but a drifter, from bored man of the second chapter profoundly rooted to the totality unable to explore other possibilities made inaccessible

by totality's hold to a joyful singularity will be established. This passage will be marked by the passage from the metaphor of **killing time** to **killing Time** which will have been hinted from the very title of the section “**Killing Time and 'Unworking'**”.

In the last instance, this passage will mark the new horizons regarding the question of boredom when, the last section will have presented us with **Foucault's** essential concept of '**Practices of Self**'. It will be shown that throughout the whole transformation of individual to singularity, the discussed issue was an issue of ethics. This section rightfully entitled as “**Ethics and Practices of Self**” will be the benchmark of the whole chapter, if not the whole thesis. All the traditional arguments that the reader will have heard on the issue of boredom (on what it feels like to be bored and on what it means) will be taken to a new level made possible by these practices, which are nothing other than man's working on his self rather than being locked to the work done unto him by the anthropological machine.

It will be this conclusive moment that will lead to the last chapter, namely **Conclusion**. The whole story will have to come to terms with itself as the passage from each part of this study will be listed as they will be linked to each other to form the initial problematic. The problematic will have led to a new horizon as the findings on the study of boredom will have brought the issue of Ethics towards the end.

I/ THE SPIRIT OF BOREDOM

A. Killing time, and 'Work'

“Those who still don’t have enough time to get bored nowadays are certainly those who are boring the most” (Siegfried 177; 2002). Those people who always have something to do, something with which they need to be preoccupied with are really busy people having lots to do yet little time to do it in. The people who are so fully preoccupied with their jobs, with those matters that need to be taken care of, have very little time in which to accomplish much, so they have even less time to stop for a moment and take a step back from all this stream of work. It feels as though their *selves* were erased and gone only to be left with an inability to remain constant in a place, at a certain position. Boredom comes at us as such.

It is clear that what we allude to here is the constant traffic of our modern working life. The cities we live in are covered from one end to another with businesses. Workers come to be identified with their job, they become to be known for their work performance while they get this sensation of belonging to their workplace. It is not surprising at this point to have companies modeling their work experience around the model of family. In the constant daily struggle of working, workers work pretty hard to settle in this family.

Yet where do this feeling of boredom comes from then?

We feel like we are being watched over with this boredom surrounding all our activities. Even in our most busy days when we are rooted deeply in matters of business, or even when we are streaming ourselves from one end of the city to the other in a constant buzz of things needing to be taken care of and of activities to attend to, in the midst of all this boom there is still, an indeterminate amount or form of boredom that haunts us. Regardless of how busy one is, one is bored to the core. Boredom seems to come at us from within *ourselves*.

It is then not a simple question of who has time to get bored and who doesn't. In the cities we live in, in these positions we fill, we almost always feel like we are dwindling away in tarrying from one end to another. The most boring is not to be considered simply as those who busy themselves to death to escape boredom. The most boring and the most bored are not to be distinctively set apart from each other. Regardless of our being this busy or not having to do anything at all we go on through our daily lives under the threatening yoke of boredom whether or not we recognise being this bored before.

What is apparently striking in this view is that the working man is reduced to its time and traffic. To be more specific, the worker has the possible options of choosing between work and leisure. It is the worker's sole

strategy to use his rational mind to decide the best allocation of time between work and leisure. The worker has this rational capacity to judge, to balance and to allocate accordingly. And he offers his labor in light of this serenely rational decision to the companies who on the other hand demand nothing but what the worker is apt to give. The worker is clear on offering his labor to the demanding companies who clearly demand nothing but his labor. He can express all his daily activities in terms of how much time it takes, depending on the amount consecrated to specific duties. There is boredom in the management of time and labor.

Busy people have hardly enough time in their hands to allow for more room for '*peace-time*' (Kracauer 177; 2002). What appears here as *peace-time* can also be called '*serenity*'. It is a time of peace, a time of serenity when people do not have to pursue the wearing and formal chores that reduce them to this aspected man in the first place. When all that man can seem to be doing is to use his time consecrated to work or to other necessities required of him (duties of parenthood, tasks to be done in service to the nation etc.) in the best manner possible to procure the most effective outcome it is highly likely that at the end of the day man will be feeling as bored as before. This stillness of boredom is in stark contrast to fast moving technologic times whose speed is exponentially increasing. And in this race, there hardly is time enough for man to find peace, to find a time of stillness not buried deep within boredom.

There we see the working man being reduced to its supposedly most irreducible aspect proper to his nature. This nature appears in a long line of tradition of thought. Generally speaking, man is attributed a certain nature. Man, free in his choice of activity, is expected to work in order to realize that nature in his work(Wartenberg 79; 1982).

This one aspected take on the working man is clearly problematic not only in the sense that it reduces the man to only one aspect. Were man to be resized to better allow certain other later-to-be-explored aspects would it allow him to beat boredom? Hardly so, since it is not about the number of aspects man has but the very fact that it is being reduced to a certain aspect, or a configuration thereof, is what makes man's life managable. The working man manages his own life in respect of his needs, by allocating a certain amount of his clearly 'disposable' time. His needs appear here in the sense that that is exactly what the man of our age and time has been reduced to. There is boredom in every aspect of man as a result of this problematic take on man, and the way he is governed thereof. In the case of this study, this nature thus attributed to man will not be retained any longer, even though the affliction that a presupposed nature visits upon bored man will be explored further in details in the next chapter.

Boredom in the case of the working man springs from the problem of time as well as the man's being reduced to a necessary realisation of himself in his work. The problem here is that a giant societal working machine would

only interest itself with certain activities of human life that are directly related to man's capacity for work, regardless of political regime. (Nalbantoğlu 174-176; 2002).

In not ever being able to find peace in the face of the time's invasion, which can also be considered the advent of an ever working society, man is simply bored. This here leads us to the question of a more banal and daily boredom. The busy people, as well as jobless people they are all bound up in it. It is not possible for anyone touched by the this advent, either as a listed worker or as a transient unemployed, to feel any uplifting in this banal boredom as it leads in a spiral into daily preoccupations. These preoccupations however, they are seldom man's way out of boredom. They can at best be momentary preoccupations to be replaced with the next morally compatible interest that comes out (Kracauer 178; 2002). The man thus bored all the time would wish for a redemption or a way out of this banal boredom into, presumably and hopefully a '*truer*' boredom (Siegfried 178; 2002). This means that the boredom proper to one's daily struggle is rather a vulgar kind of boredom. One that leaves man exhausted. There is no satisfaction of a job well done unless there is a sort of voluntary engagement from the part of the worker. *Truer* boredom would just mean that there is a sort of satisfaction to be gained out of one's dealings with boredom.

Even though we the busy or drifting people of this world afflicted with boredom pass from one task to another, or from a seemingly shallow

preoccupation to another, it seems that none of us is entirely devoid of the serenity we seek against the advent of boredom (Kracauer 178; 2002). Since even the most secluded areas of our daily life are prone to technologic probing, bored man cannot consider them as shelters from boredom. As such it becomes apparent that total seclusion from the probes of technologic surveillance is not an option to block oneself from boredom. On the contrary bored man will find himself quite under surveillance even in those moments when he dallies himself away from the boring world in private places. The coping strategies with boredom take many forms. Sometimes it takes the form of joyful dalliances away from prying eyes (in the seclusion of one's monitor, out of the boss' eyesight) or sometimes of a serene rest on a couch (while a pile of documents lie waiting on the desk). At other times it is a shallow trifling that takes the span of hours on an end to kill the thought.

Regardless of its form though, the coping with boredom does not ensure that one accesses oneself. The world of boredom ensures on the contrary that even when one is not involved with the world, even when one is immersed in one of the previously mentioned forms the world makes sure to get involved with one. No matter how bored and unresponsive the bored individual becomes, the boring world, or rather the world of boredom is interested in the individual stubbornly. This ensures that one can never be alone with oneself in quiet contemplation (Kracauer 178; 2002).

This boredom leaves us with such a spirit. The cities are crossed from one

end to another with a relentless traffic of activities filled with anxious people agitated to the point of restlessness. On the other side are those people with no tasks at hand, passing time in a lazy afternoon, loitering around on sidewalks and in streets filled with neon signs. It almost feels like the spirit of man lost in intense boredom in this world crossing over him from all sides is confiscated and sent far away(Kracauer 179; 2002).

The spirit of this spectacular world covers the bored individual on all sides, immersing the individual in a never-ending stream of spectacles while man, the still spectator, the drifter in this stream of light, had lost his spirit long ago, though, that spirit is still not erased from the face of the world which is why man cannot embrace true boredom (Kracauer 179; 2002). As the images of the spectacle passes before man's eyes there rests only their passing. Man remains an emptied man staring empty into the abyss that is their passing trying to find some meaning in all this.

It appears that our conception of boredom has long conceived of it as a spirit. As some sort of spirit that dominates the world and bores the people in it by rendering them inaccessible to themselves.

There remains for the bored man only a few options to deal with boredom. That is he either passes time in a drifting manner devoid of passion. Or he either surrounds himself with a constant buzz of activity. Either way man is thought as devoid of passion, or as a soulless being whose very soul is cast

far away. In this way, bored man comes side by side with the likes of him who are as well bored with the world(Kracauer 180; 2002). Bored man then, instead of mourning for his soul so supposedly lost in a spectacular passage cannot find any personal space. And also, as he experiences his daily life, again, as a feeling of coming close to abyss he neither can find any personal meaning. Instead of continuing on to a mourning bored man finds himself at a realization that what have been predicated of him as a graceful *soul* and as a graceful *meaning* supposedly filling has not been the case at all in the first place. The invasion of boredom is not any longer boredom pushing the predicates away into an abyss but but bored man's realization of his being without content in the first place(Agamben 1999). In other words, boredom does not make out of man, for example, a vulgar man by way of having him neglecting his duties that are seen to be the source of his attribute of grace. The contrary, boredom enables the man to realize that these qualities were not given from the beginning but attributed to him as a necessary and proper content. His proper content is not lost now that he is sent into a vulgar boredom. He just realizes that he didn't possess that content in the first place. Therefore man now has the chance to explore the limits of his impersonality in the face of boredom.

This chance begins with a step that man takes against the onslaught of interest that the world takes in him in order to take the reins in his hand to further his exploration on himself(Kracauer 180; 2002). Man is against this spirit that is boredom and its total invasion in order to find himself in his

exploration. So the bored man is not only drifting with the flow or running through this spirit of boredom, but he also pits himself in a constant struggle against it.

Therefore, man's options in the face of boredom may actually take the form described earlier but they are by no means less true than another sort of resistance. Boredom itself is a resistance. Because in the final instance, regardless of whether the man has the time and things to do, or whether he has nothing to do at all, the bored man is the man who simply cannot enjoy time for itself. Boredom itself is a resistance in the sense that it is bored man's way of expressing that he cannot enjoy the passage of time. To better express that, bored man does nothing but passes time.

It is in this resistance that is boredom, but that also is against boredom, that man claims to be living (Kracauer 180 – 181; 2002). So whenever the bored individual is in an energetic buzz or in a bored drifting toying with the lifeless, meaningless things lying all around in an attempt to pass time, man is not in any less true boredom. This is banal boredom, but in the speed of light that our world turns now the banality of boredom is all that remains to us. It is all that is needed to keep the individual bored as well as alive in this feeling of nothingness (imagined to be an abyss).

What keeps man alive may come off as a drifting. It seems that drifting through boredom might not be what comes to mind when one thinks of

being alive. The liveliness of this mode of boredom is not in its dynamism but it lies in its *unseriousness*(Kracauer 180; 2002). The life that keeps man in the gears of the workplace, of the barracks or of any other serious institution is, as we have put it in the beginning, boring whether or not it is graceful or dutiful for man to follow this life. It is highly possible that these institutions try to predicate man of these qualities in an attempt to make the gears continue their operation. Bearing man's being impersonal, without content, it becomes clearer why the drifting is more alive even though less compatible with the predicates. Man drifts through the passage of time because in taking a stand against boredom man takes a stand against the predicates. This is the unseriousness that the bored individual is after.

The term unseriousness points to a stance of resistance then. But, a stance taken against what? All the institutions mentioned in the previous paragraph (the school, the military etc.) they all have their own rules, regulations, and daily chores to be performed that govern all of man's work within them. Man work within these institutions to realize his duties. Whether or not these duties are justified according to a certain institutional narrative is not the question here. But on a more daily basis these undertakings are performed in a serious way. The seriousness with which the way daily life is regulated within is what remains to man the most at the long end of the day. Therefore, unseriousness stands for a resistance against the way daily life is regulated thus.

It is the deconstruction of seriousness that marks man in every stage of boredom made manifest. It is bored individual's pastime. What he is precisely doing is simply passing time through whatever form that we have alluded to before.

In a way, man kills time with so many unserious things that seem to serve no other purpose than neglecting one's serious callings, in order to kill boredom. Man does not just regain access to himself that was supposedly on hold and sent away. In killing time, what he does is to confirm that he doesn't have access to himself and that he never had.

In boredom man is surrounded by the things with which he is to preoccupy himself. He can only go as far as killing time with them. On the outside, the world calls to him in hoping and pushing to catch his interest to further him into the boredom that all this march in fact is. Therefore in killing time he not only passes time but also preoccupies himself so that the world does not interest him or that conversely it is maybe because the world is not interesting the bored man can only kill time in it.

I/ THE SPIRIT OF BOREDOM

B. Killing the Spirit, and 'Magic'

Man thus drowned in boredom may not respond to whatever is happening around him. What had come to our attention as a result of this is that man's killing time is a sort of unresponsive state towards the march of boredom. Man remains unresponsive to the surrounding world trying to engage him in its many not-so-interesting things man is just killing time in his inaccess to himself.

The bored individual is killing time with whatever it is that he has at his disposal. Whatever thing he has at arm's length. It wouldn't matter then for the man to preoccupy himself with *this* little thing over here or *that* curious thing over there. In this sense whatever thing implies the thing that 'it does not matter which'(Agamben, 2007). It doesn't matter whether the being that the thing is interests the bored individual or not.

It is true that in this case, the bored individual is both indifferent to the surrounding world and its affairs as well as to this thing that he is passing time with – that is also going to be less of a curiosity in little time.

It has long been an image bored man has in his mind describing the world as a place devoid of magic. The world is pictured as bereft of magic. It is

described as a soulless piece of rock drifting through the void of space. The man without content bored to death with this soulless world is also imagined as a man without soul. In his dance with the abyss, doing nothing but killing time in the most superfluous way, man is thought to be a soulless husk. The popular fiction narrates him as a machine with, at best, some residues of a ghost residing in it. Or, in fantastic fiction, when man appears as a ferocious beast, it is because of the desire to find some appearance of soul within the man thus devoid of soul. On the one hand, the blank staring eye of the machine and its monotonous voice indicates man emptied of soul. On the other hand, the intense emotional swings of the beastly man represents bored man's desire to reach a resemblance of soul within himself.

This state of the boring world devoid of magic and man's desire for animalistic intensity seem to coincide with each other. Since man is still able to desire this pursuit is as much about having a passion as it is about soul. Man's soul is what makes him pictured as a passionate being in most of the popular fiction. Conversely, soulless beings appear as automatons lacking any individual passion and serving no other purpose than obeying a certain passionate leader figure.

There is an overlapping area where magic and passion comes together under the yoke of boredom.

For this reason let us first turn to seek what magic might mean for us.

Although magic appears as a property of the world, some sort of natural happening that can be controlled by those who are able to wield it in fictions of all kind, the meaning of magic does not lie there. Magic is not solely about wielding it as some sort of sorcerous power as it usually appears in these fictions. That would imply that there is a magic to wield, as is generally believed, in the world. Magic is not simply the child of the union of the world's magic and of the individual sorcerer's ability to wield it. It lies deeper. It has other implications.

A child's true fascination with magic lies in his first experience with the world (Agamben 19; 2007). It is not because the child discovers that the adults, the people who were here in this strange world before him, the very people under whose care he has been taken, are stronger and as such capable of feats far greater than his weak capabilities would allow. It is not a blatant problem of strength for the child. His frustration is the very fact that he can't do magic. The child is simply not capable of wielding magic. As he will soon come to realize, maybe in a straightforward way or maybe gradually in time, that it is because the world does not have any magic in it to wield in the first place. The frustration goes on through the child's own self passing, to the spirit of the world. The child's frustration is with himself, and then with the world. There just is no way he is cheating his way out any situation.

This awareness that takes the form of frustration is sometimes accompanied

with a sudden feeling of sadness. And sad beings are prone to boredom as it is their desire to forget about their sadness. Since boredom renders anything it touches gray, it helps in forgetting. Once the reason why is thus forgotten, the child is ready to believe in the existence of magic once again. Though, it is not easy to maintain this illusion for long. The child now realizes that what is earned through merit and what is therefore considered a success to be proud of can never guarantee happiness (Agamben 20; 2007). He is aware that only through trickery of fortune that he can attain happiness. To follow the right way to do things to succeed, and to merit mention and appraisal as a result, is one way of living respectably but to live happily is quite different. It is achieved only through magic that is not present in the world.

Therefore it is impossible to live happily without striving to be capable of magic one day. It is also quite an endeavor to keep that spirit alive for a child who buried his awareness that magic is impossible, deep within. This endeavor makes that life becomes boring indeed, because the childlike wisdom that realizes the meaning of magic as the difference between a respectable life and a happy life, makes it really difficult for the child to lead his life in hopes that his wisdom is flawed. In this case it is the difficulty of remaining a child – that is being still capable of believing in magic's existence – while growing up would seem to be the total forgetting of this belief. It is the childhood's most defining characteristic that is at issue in growing. The childhood world's characteristic is in a constant conflict with a

grown up's world's most defining characteristic, that is, in a conflict with letting go of this hope.

Though on the other hand, the child must follow the instrumental mind's tenets to make his way through life's many attainable paths and inaccessible places. The instrumental mind teaches the child first things first. It is that the child has and will always have necessities to attend to. The way to success is attained with the right use of one's rational mind perfectly capable of judging the self-evident *rightness* or *wrongness*. To succeed the child now has to find the most economic way to it. The economization of the road is developed as a project. In the end, the child learns to make plans, to make preparations, to build strategies to reach the desired goal. The mind's instrumentalization is a must in our modern boring world where there is so much traffic that one gets easily lost in its winding paths. The instrumental mind and the modernity upon which it is based obliges the grown-up child to leave his faith in magic behind. It obliges the child to find and follow the most economic path to merit an end. The means to an end is not magic but the instrumental mind.

In being confined in between these two states the child becomes bored since he can be said to have access to neither.

Our childish fascination with magic has a lot to do with the grayness of the world. We find ourselves drowning in this grayness where everything seems

the same and the usual. We have long been living in a world that is boring because it feels like lacking in passion. The lack of passion is the reason why our world lacks colors.

This grayness is typically evoked to describe the commonness of everything in the world. Colors in this case refers to things that stand out, that attracts one's attention. And the grayness implies that the colorless things of the world all seem the same. There is nothing particularly engaging about these things which is why there is no attraction in this grayness. Man does not feel a pull towards them. When it is said that the bored man drifts through time it is to verify that this is an aimless drifting through a gray world, that is, a world that holds no attraction. Therefore the bored man cannot be said to be after about a certain vocation in a passionate way.

The way our colorless world was established dates back to an old debate between passions and interests. It had once been practically advanced how great it would be for all individuals if the world abandoned the passionate endeavors of the great leaders, rulers, kings and nobles, whose selfish adventures were nefariously ruining the lives of their lessers (Hirschman, 2008). How great it would be if the rulers of the old world would be bound up by the laws, that it would finally mean that, the free and rational individual would at long last be able follow his/her own interests, without regard for the rulers and their ambitions.

It was these ambitions that made the stuff of legends. The romantic aristocrat runaway from his castle in search of epic adventures, the king declaring war on his

rivals who had wronged him. All these historical thematics draw from the vivid world of passion that was thus separated from our own. From now on, the fascinating and passionate struggles of the ancient times were only to be found as the stuff of dreams and tales. It is because of this separation that the bored were from that point forward to look into that past in hopes of finding the passion that long seemed to be lost.

Therefore, in this separation of the adventures of the passionate from the rational interests of the toiling lot, lied also the separation of mankind from its old and faithful friend, the faeries, those graceful ones. Mankind not only separated itself from its troubled past of century-long wars, but it also separated itself from its immortality, from the magic of the old, it separated itself from itself (from, what made of man, a kind of many). Man was separated from its mysterious aspect, where the remaining ones were considered to be immanent left to its modern devices. That is precisely how the modern day had come to be known for its grayness while the magical world teeming with passionate characters and their stories were separated from us.

Did this modern era turn out to be the greatly anticipated hotbed of interests? Because now that the detrimental passions of higher beings were out of the way it was now time to establish a modernity based solely on the interests of the common people. Once this modernity that is also the time of the forming of the nation-states had been established the common people on the streets could now profit from it by following their interests. There were hard set rules on how to follow those interests, namely the rules for the direction of the mind(Descartes; 1985). These rules taught us the underlying principles on the function of the duty of the rational mind, that is,

to produce sound judgements out of self-evident and indivisible knowledge. It was now time to instrumentalize this rational mind to follow one's path to success. Since the mind was capable of this judgement the man could also deem a certain plan of actions to be draining or effective. It is the rational man's capacity to choose the most economic way to success.

Considering how this supposedly honest way to merit and success is one devoid of magic, our childish wisdom keeps reminding us that there is no happiness to be gained from the successes of an instrumental mind. Our boredom with this gray modern world points to us to the roots of our unhappiness.

In replacing passion with interests modernity had done another operation as well. It founded itself on the argument that the rational man following his interests would be able to reach his goals. And that the following of individual interests was in no way detrimental to the interests of the society. Quite on the contrary it was in the best interest of society that the individual follow their own interests. The first and easier question arises then. How come, in a world that holds nothing of interest anymore can there be anything of interest other than the simple killing of time, for the rational man to follow? In other words, is it possible for man to follow any specific interests other than sitting soulless simply killing time in a world of boredom that is very much interested in him? Either the world is filled with interesting things that fade quickly into nothingness that does not interest the individual anymore or either the world is not interesting at all. In either case the bored man is idle, he is not engaged passionately into an interest other than short bursts of engagements. Therefore what the bored individual seeks is not the pursuit

of interests but the death of interest. In an attempt to achieve this he kills time by the means of which he kills his interest in time.

In other words, the bored individual not interested in anything fails willingly at using his time in an effective way in pursuit of his interests all the while succeeding in killing time in the most effective way – in an attempt to announce once again that he is not interested in such pursuits.

This question has an underlying implication though. The implication is that the reason why the individual is bored is his childish wisdom about magic which assumes that the instrumental mind can achieve ends while this achievement is naught but boring. This mode of boredom is only reinforced when the rational individual thus delivered into it fails to reach ends with his best instrument at hand. The bored man who learns that this instrument that is his rational mind is all he needs to reach goals. Though when this fails the man is left with nothing but frustration. And in our current day and time it fails so spectacularly that the instrumentalization process to attain a specific end sometimes does not even begin.

The establishment of this modernity claimed that the replacement of the nefarious passions with interests would stop some capricious ruler's passionate and therefore unchecked action from hurting the common lot under his rule. On the other hand it also lead down the path to the appearance of the instrumental mind as a mean to whatever end the individual would desire. Paradoxically though, the process defended so fanatically did not turn out to be that way.

There are certain spheres of rule that remain out of our touch no matter how hard we might strive to attain effective positions within them using our instrumental methods to the best. For example, the most recent economic crises the world had seen had been managed in such a way that the common man had no effect in it. The administration processes have excluded the very same people who were sold the argument that the pursuit of interests through the instrumental mind was not only possible but also necessary. Even though they might have had their chance to speak, the economic sphere of rule determined how the crisis were to be managed, just like the mobilisation of the resources for this management managed the daily lives of those affected the most by the crisis in the first place. It is in such a spirit that boredom comes as a realisation that certain spheres of rule remain out of access for the common man no matter how instrumental he is in his pursuits (Agamben et al. 11-15; 2010). There just are these inaccessible domains that the common man cannot have any effect on.

Likewise, when the modern model of sovereignty had been established as a way to ensure people's sovereignty instead of a capricious leader, the common lot was excluded from the management of such matters. This establishment was historically, the establishment of modern nation-states. They were then to found their own nation-markets. To thrive on those markets would mean to establish economic protection programs that would elevate the state's need, and ambitions to hoard more resources over the common man's own interests. This model lead to the government's

economization over man's own economization over himself. When the markets clashed with each other, wars resulted, at the end of a long economic competition (Chang; 2003). Therefore at the end of a long historical string of governmental rule the common man was left again at the hands of a model of sovereignty that while being a different one from the previous juridical model was nevertheless as much detrimental to its population. The replacement of the unchecked passions with the self-centered interests had throughout the history of modernity inverted to its original configuration. In other words, there were no such inversion in the first place (Hirschman; 2008).

This model of rule however is different in many ways than the older one. It is given that at a certain point in history there's an emergence of a number of states and nations thereof. They are all in stark competition with each other. They all possess certain resources that they are to augment in order to further their sovereignty over the populace. These nations are at hard competition with each other (Foucault et al. 112; 2000). And in these competition that throughout history bordered on war countless times man becomes just a facet to rule. The facet then, can not gain access into these games by solely playing the game of interests. Boredom's spirit passes over this fact.

So far boredom has been imagined to be a spirit. It has been posited to be like a ghost-like spirit haunting us at every turn whether or not we want it.

It's been described as a cloud of dust that settles on our shoulders again no matter how hard we shake it off. Or in some cases as a sinister mist that falls all around us. Regardless, boredom has been taken as a feeling that everyone gets at some point in their lives which is why it appears as a spirit haunting us no matter how hard we try to ignore or avoid it.

As it turns out, the world's problem that marks it heavily with this spirit is neither the absence of passion, nor the absence of magic. The first one points to the reign of interests instead of passions that however turned out to be the sovereignty of state powers that passionately pursue their supremacy over their competitors which was at least as much detrimental to their people. While on the other hand the latter does not mean man's inability to cast magic, or the world's deprivation of magical properties but the childish individual's realisation that that happiness is not the merits of the instrumental mind.

To get back on track with the nation-state: This new formation of nation-state did not come fully into effect before its institutions were established in relation to all of the aspects it sought to rule. Its greatest asset was without a doubt the very same population it draws its legitimacy of rule from. The political techniques used to assess its population in a formation proper to its rule started, at first, as the institutions of confinement. In these institutions were put people who were on the marginal lines of society, or rather, people who were to be constituted as the marginals who would then have to be

normalized according to the historical needs of capitalism, in nation-state formation(Foucault et al. 19; 2000). What happened in the last years can be seen, in this light, as a refinement of these political techniques of confinement, and of their proliferation throughout the face of the world that takes the form of globalisation.

It is this confined and overly regulated space that is administered on the level of formality as well as on the level of scientific knowledge that is at issue here. In this space where these practices and the knowledge formation they draw from converge into each other, emerges the spirit of “political modernity”(Foucault et al. 19; 2000). The spirit of political modernity coming all the way down from the separation of passions and interests that defines the way the individual establishes a relation with his own soul. This spirit of political modernity and boredom described as a spirit is coincided then.

What to do of the man that is deemed to be like the soulless automaton of the popular fiction then? What of this man unable to engage life in a passionate way and thus seems to be a soulless drifter?

This man does not come out of nowhere. He comes to be constituted. It's not that his soul long thought to be confiscated and sent away is locked in some secret and secluded place. His truth does not lie deeper in secret which is to

say that boredom does not point to a hidden truth that could be pried open for all to see. Man's constitution does not mean that.

Man comes to be constituted within the production of truth that come to be operated in the space of these fundamental institutions. This production does not declare what this man's truth is but rather it declares rights and wrongs based on which man founds a conscious relation with the truth . The way his experience with the truth is established marks also how he comes to be constituted as the subject of a certain experience(Foucault 19; 2000). What is at issue here is the man appearing as the subject of a certain experience with the truth. The way this experience is established is more significant in the constitution of man than whatever truth it is established with can ever be. Therefore, bored man's experience with boredom is more deterministic in his daily life than what the boredom really is.

The modern spirit lies within the conscious relation founded with the experience that man is the subject of. The soul that was long thought to be imprisoned within the body is actually the spirit of political modernity that the body is imprisoned within(Foucault 19; 2000). Therefore it is not a question of where man's soul is sent away in boredom. But it is question of man himself being sent away and locked in the spirit of boredom. It is within this very spirit of boredom that encompasses the face of the world where the forces of the body of the bored man are being disciplined.

In the final instance it appears that in killing time against the relentless advent of boredom there lies also an underlying resistance finer than the shallow idleness that killing time would at first imply. Man does not only fight against the passage of boredom but also against the working of modernity in himself since it is boredom's spirit that is now modernity's as well. Man does not only kill time but he also does kill the spirit of boredom that is now where he is imprisoned. This is how the bored man sitting in idleness killing time and soul drifts through the confinement that the spirit of boredom is.

II/ THE MEANING OF BOREDOM

A. Boredom as Meaninglessness, and 'Games of Truth'

It is against this infernal background that the modern man comes to emerge. In a world thus devoid of all fascinating content the bored man has no choice other than to be normalized. In this normalization there is a work done on him by the political machine born from modern sovereignty.

There is a particular kind of boredom proper to modernity that one suffers when one does not feel like belonging to the situation where one finds oneself in. In other words, whenever the bored man feels like he doesn't belong to this particular place, or to this particular group of people, to this point in time, he's experiencing a particular kind of boredom given as 'situative boredom'(Svendsen 21; 2005).

Situative boredom is intrinsically tied to the way the modern spirit of boredom dominates the world by working his craft into an individual. The sense of belonging is primarily a question of identity. People feel at home with similar people or in familiar places with which they have identified themselves. The problem of existence, this feeling of existential boredom that almost immediately springs to mind the feeling of nothingness proper to the post-war era is also a question of identity since the individual feels like he belongs with nowhere and no one. This belonging to a specific group of

people or to a particular place in time forms the basis of identity. And when a certain steady line is reached throughout time connecting these belongings into each other a certain sense of self appears as man becomes able to trace himself in a meaningful narrative(Svendensen 78; 2005). Therefore situative boredom and identity are intrinsically related to each other.

In modernity man comes under inspection not to affirm man's existence but to craft out of and into him an identity that he will come to be known as, as well as an identity that he will belong to(Foucault.; 2000).

Both approaches from different thinkers point to the roots of boredom's modern provenance.

Again, in the case of situative boredom, man runs the risk of not feeling like he doesn't belong to a particular identity category that he's been known as so far. Likewise, his sense of belonging to a particular group of people on the basis of having the same identity, in other words, on the basis of being identical with each other is threatened as well under the yoke of situative boredom.

Man, as the product of the nation-state is as well a product drenched and soaked in the spirit of history. He is being pushed forward by an infernal history. And towards the end that he aims, he finds naught but exclusion from the spheres that are to rule his everyday life, like the sphere of

economy. On top of that, man is submitted to a constant buzz of work with an elasticity so high that time invades his daily system like all he can do is to go with the flow. Confined from all angles as such, and feeling bored with himself as well as with his sense of belonging the bored man moves closer to the verge of nothingness. Therefore the boredom of modernity that the individual is subjected to is neither simply an existential boredom cut off from the rest of the world nor a temporary situative boredom that is bound to pass when one changes the situation.

Man is confined in between those angles, and he is bored because of that. His boredom is as real as his being confined.

The modern feeling of boredom that is always bound up with the hard challenges of time also comes with a certain sense of emptiness (Svendsen 82-94; 2005). In a technocentrism that consigns all of the things around the individual to a pure functionality it is hard to find any meaning in them. It is because man is surrounded by meaningless things that don't attract him he feels like he is surrounded by an emptiness.

In a rebellious and childish protest against this feeling of meaninglessness the bored individual launches himself at the face of death in an attempt to test his reality. Only in confronting reality with the instruments of technology can the bored individual reaffirm that they are real and meaningful indeed(Svendsen 82-94; 2005). Yet in pursuit of crashing

confrontations to find a sense of meaning in life man also attacks himself as this sense of self was the primary initiation of boredom. This is why in hurting and in pushing oneself towards the limit one reaffirms one's own reality. This test of reality gains context when put this way: Since the boring world is an empty place the meaningless things that fill are not real which is why the word remain empty no matter how much of it seem filled. Therefore the destructive behavior oftentimes encountered in fictional works of popular culture (especially in action movies and in the current gaming culture) is an aesthetical attempt to test to see whether they hurt back or not. If they do, that confirms their reality, and if they don't, they can be ignored as unreal things, so to speak.

Because the romantic is always greater than what is being rendered back to him as reality, he will never be satisfied. Though, we have already established that boredom is as real as being confined. Boredom as meaninglessness then take on a different note, it is because the technocentric world is filled with objects that emerge insofar as they are functional the man is bored (Svendsen 90; 2005). The surrounding objectivity where everything appears as objects which emerge in their pure functionality makes the bored man realize they are real but he does not find them meaningful which is precisely why he is bored with them. This is a passage from an empty world devoid of meaning and reality to a overly filled world that as is as much real as it gets while still remaining meaningless.

This is the experience of boredom as as meaninglessness.

This mode of modern boredom derives from the emerging of objects. The necessary link that at first seems quite evident between functionality and an object's meaninglessness, or put simply, the link between meaninglessness and the objects surrounding us is not that apparent when one delves deeper. It is for this reason that it would be more meaningful to discover the emerging of the objects thoroughly in order to understand the boredom as meaninglessness.

Objects appear as objects to be studied under the domain of some disciplines and scientific principles. They are placed under the watchful eye of the scientist, or of the practitioner of the discipline. There they are submitted to cataloging, to analyses, to experiments, to dissection and the like. All this work that is carefully recorded and redistributed aids in the forming of a large body of text. This course is basically the course of the forming of the human sciences that shaped itself alongside with the study of its object. The study of the object takes steps that, at each interval, form a body of knowledge on the object. This accumulation falls under the domain of different specialists to whom the object always has different properties. What is most striking in this is that the object once rendered silent and then worked on is now under the yoke of a field of knowledge and of practices proper to the field. In being thus rendered an object proper to a number of fields where the object appear as the same object with different aspects the

object becomes the property of examination. As long as there is a formation of knowledge that can be spoken through proper specialists and the like the object has no remarkable properties that belong solely to the object. There is the passage from a world filled with meaningless but real things to a world filled with so much meaning produced on these very much real things although, this meaning is the specific domain of a given specialist and not the domain of the bored man with no such qualities to make him a specialist.

The gold that was once the subject matter of much myth springing from its beauty, its color, its being-like-a-star, is now rendered an object falling under the rightful domain of economy. It is now evaluated according to the rules of this discipline that now regulates the distribution of the object gold that is no longer the *Gold* that could evoke some feeling of magic. We are once again facing the problem of magic, the human science of economy renders the once magical *Gold* an inert piece of rock. Therefore, no matter how high its value in the system of economics based on its rarity is, the rock that was one *Gold* is no longer an enigmatic thing. As such, it does not fascinate us. There are certainly ways to get it, but it doesn't have a meaning since now it appears as an object of economic functionality as well as the subject of study of a number of disciplines. The gold is no longer determined as a mythical piece of adornment. It is just that piece of adornment that could be bought at a certain market value under the right circumstances according to a table of values that the economics determine(Foucault. 177-180; 1990).

In the most nominalist sense, the gold just has an exchange value. And no matter how big of a value this might be – which is subject to change by the way – gold is reduced to being expressed in this manner. There is no reclaiming it as there is nothing to reclaim. Gold as we knew it did not change, or it's not that gold as we knew it existed before. It is just that gold is not an enigmatic and untouched part of our imagination. Gold is thus *reduced*. Whenever the lost magic is hinted, this reduction of the object to the domain of its proper discourse is actually meant. Namely, gold and economic discourse in this case.

This is what the appearance of an object as meaningless actually refers to. What is meaningless here is not the object, that is the gold. Gold would still hurt if thrown to someone, it would still be painful if someone were to murder to get his hands on gold. But the meaninglessness now refers to this reduction. The meaningless thing is not the object per se but it is the way it comes to be the object that it is.

To be bored of gold in this case would mean nothing other being bored off all the formal and disciplined ways in which gold emerges as an object proper to economy that only the economist can speak of. It is man's attempt to wrest the realness of things from the formal objectivity that appears as this aesthetical destruction previously mentioned, that man unleashes in an attempt to cope with *boredom as meaninglessness*.

The bored man thus left in between the states, surrounded in a technocentric objectivity of meaninglessness his boredom gains a reality of its own. It is no longer the narcissistic's dissatisfaction with the world's emptiness of meaning. It is no longer about the dissatisfaction of the shallowness of life that reveals nothing real in it no matter how stubbornly we scratch it.

Even though man's boredom of objects is thus laid out the fact that man becomes bored of himself as well still remains to be explained in details. In other words, it is not only the things that appear as objects in their respective discourses. Man's boredom with his self lies in there. It lies in the fact that man himself appears as an object as well.

It is worth noting at this point that the tradition one can put as 'philosophical anthropology' had long attributed man a nature, that man in turn had to realize. Then the experience that man goes through is inspected according to this nature. To be more specific, the theoretically defined properties (that are admitted to be universal) of this human nature is used as the fundamentals based on which the experience will be explained. This theoretical stance is what Foucault would call 'anthropologism'(Foucault 12; 2000).

In the case of boredom such an inspection would have us concentrate solely on the subject and the experience of boredom this subject lives. In the first section of this study one such approach has been referred to even though it

hasn't been retained. The reason why this anthropological approach is not retained is because each such attribution actually refers to an acknowledgement made to adjust to the necessities of a particular juncture in history. To better understand the experience of boredom it must first be stressed how the subject comes to be constituted (Foucault 12; 2000).

Contrary to the universal properties the anthropologism discovers in man Foucault's analysis emphasizes the historicity of problematization. Problematization is the inclusion of some particular ways of being or of ways of behavior into systems that Foucault calls 'games of truth' by way of becoming the object of discursive (like what economics is to gold) and non-discursive practices (like what the determination of gold's market value by economic authorities is to gold), at certain moments in time, in given historical contexts. These problematized ways of being and conduct are put into these systems that are called games of truth on grounds that within these games are produced the truth of the matter at hand. Within these games are also founded the experience of the subject. The term is a 'subjective experience' in the subject finds itself as the object of some experience defined and treated (both in the sense of 'cured' and 'dealt with') respectively by discursive and non-discursive practices (Foucault 15; 2000). From that point on, these games are played in between the fields of discourse proper to the matter at hand, and practices, that in example may take the form of administrative ones. The subject becomes both the subject

of the experience thus defined and categorized and both the object of that experience whose definition is based on relevant discursive knowledge.

To round it up: The subject, just like the object, appears as an object of various disciplines and of the discursive formations that work on it. The subject emerges as part of the games of truth when, some forms of being and conduct are being problematized, that is, when they are considered a problem in this particular historical context. The emerging subject comes into play as the object of some discursive practices, (drawing from the immense body of work that has accumulated in time), and of some non-discursive practices (that are, again, usually – but not limited to – administrative practices).(Foucault 12; 2000)

Let us remind ourselves that the emergence of objects under certain domains of discursive knowledge was what rendered those objects boring. What this means for the question of boredom is as follows:

The boredom as meaninglessness and the definition of this subjective experience implies that alongside of the appearance of objects, the subject who is the bored individual also emerges as an object, that is source of much boredom as well. The subject bored man finds himself boring, he finds his *self* thus produced and put in the games of truth as *meaningless* as well as other objects that emerge within these games.

To return to the works of fiction: When the monster bashes against the object-filled worlds in the form of aesthetics of destruction unleashed, like I touched upon earlier, man attacks himself as well. What the man destroys is not only the meaningless world of technological objects but also himself, his body that is the focus of discipline(s). The bored man attacks his *self* that turned out to be where his sense of meaning is inscribed as per the games of truth. In a beastly rage of destruction man not only expresses a wanton manifestation of boredom but also the very expression that he is from now on and always have been confined in these games. His actions, as well as his thought on problematic and already problematized matters are thus regulated within and throughout these games. The aesthetics of destruction expresses bored man's desire to wrest himself free of these regulations albeit in a futile way. More on its futility will be explored later in the conclusive chapter.

There is the seed of man's fascination with the aesthetics of destruction that at first seemed the only way to confirm an object's realness. In scratching the surface stubbornly the monster was searching for the truth buried deep within. It is no longer the case of finding a hidden and unique truth through the monster's claw's scratching. But the beast the man unleashes towards the world is a protest against the anthropological machine that makes him.

In killing his self, man kills his meaning. And in raging against the meaning, man rages against the nexus that produces him, as the subject, as the only

subject of boredom. To kill the boredom of meaninglessness man kills his
meaning.

II/ THE MEANING OF BOREDOM

B. Boredom as Animal, and 'Man&Animal'

We are from now on in the domain of the beast, we are following in the footsteps of the animal to better come to terms with man's fight with boredom. The animal, has so far appeared as a rebellious attempt to attack at the root of boredom as *meaninglessness*. It is man's attack toward himself to kill his *meaning* that is his load.

It is worth noting that the animal is both the symbol of man's protest against the boring world and both the symbol of man's desire of passionate intensity. Both symbolism owes to the many works of fiction dotting the gaming culture. But on closer inspection, animal will be revealed as distinctively apart from man from the perspective of anthropologism hinted at in the previous section.

Therefore it is time to begin with a promise that whatever that sets man and animal apart, will one day disappear from our world (where the appearing of objects deepens one's boredom). On the last day, the relations between animals and men will take on a new form, and that man himself will be reconciled with his animal nature (Agamben 3; 2004).

The underlying implication in here is that man, as a species, is housing an

animal inside him. The particular nature evoked here is seemingly keeping an animalistic side as well. Since it alludes to these two sides reconciling with each other, we can assume that as of now, they are in conflict. And this alone is a good indicator showing that man's body may not be worthy of heaven that's above concerns such as the internal conflict between man and animal. If in the last day things will change it might not be the uplifting of man. It wouldn't be a reconciliation if the animal side is completely subsumed in the human one.

The Gnostic mythology seems to hold the images of the man reconciled with the animal within.

"In Gnostic mythology, the archons are the demonic entities who create and govern the material world, in which the bright and the spiritual elements are found mixed and imprisoned in those dark and bodily" (Agamben 5; 2004)

The imagination portrayed here presents us with quite an accurate forecast on our current daily lives. Our world is neither purely heavenly nor is it a place of pure hellish darkness. It is ruled by demonic entities while in bodily and terrestrial places live those shiny and spiritual elements. This is as close a representation as it gets in regards to modernity. This is the modern world where demonic and heavenly live side by side while the initial claim was that it would be the perfect establishment of paradise on earth. Such a conception wouldn't shelter the demonic.

It is not a surprise that we ended up in such a limbo, considering that every

reinforcement of heaven's walls brings the deepening of hell's abyss(Agamben 5-9; 2007). This symbolical state of limbo may refer to any real state in our world since modernity harbors the heavenly and the hellish side by side. Both of which have vocations of their own rather than being adrift like the bored ones are. Therefore, belonging to neither category, the right place to locate the bored ones of the world would be these states of limbo where boredom is felt in the most profound way since the blessed life as well as the damned one seem to be an arm's length away while forever remaining out of reach.

The long held dream of post-apocalypse pictures a world in which Man is annihilated, his civilization with all the buildings and cities that dot the world is destroyed to the point of a post-war serenity. Civilization is no more, as is its atrocities, the suffering it has wrought all over the face of the earth. Yet in this dream there are the traces of a somewhat clouded design, something left unsaid. Or rather maybe, something that is not hidden but something that seems out of place.

Agamben points out that the said disappearance of Man is not a cosmic catastrophe but that the natural world remains what it has been so far for all eternity(Agamben 6; 2004). So far so good for the rest of the natural world but what about our species then? Agamben continues by clarifying that it is not a biological disaster either but it is that "Man remains alive as animal in *harmony* with Nature or given Being". In this statement lies the key to

understanding the actual worries about our world, about our interaction with the world, about the nefarious effects of our capitalist regime spreading poison and destruction all around nature. These worries have found their supreme expression in the current debates surrounding the issue of global warming that has been going on for some years now. The end of man then, starts off as a metaphorical dream of putting an end to the conflict between the devastating ambition of capitalist onslaught and the solemn Nature.

It does not stop at this point though. On the contrary, the end of Man points not to the end of the species as a whole but to the end of Man properly called (*Man by way of definition on what a "man" really is*) and of his Action (Agamben 6; 2004). Man properly called man is the man who is different than the animal. He is given in his difference to the animal. And Action appears in the strong sense of the term that describes the kind of hard action that the historical Individual had spread, or witnessed his history spread. The practical meaning for this is the disappearance of the bloody wars and such. It means that not only the damage Man had done to Nature will be stopped but also the suffering Man had wrought on other man will too end.

The desire to achieve a post-apocalyptic serenity is also called the end of Time or more importantly perhaps for those who are yet to come to terms with the injustices done to them throughout Time, the end of History. In the end of History there lies not only the cessation of all hostilities between

Man and his social world but, according to Agamben, it also points to the end of *Philosophy* in that since the world has just ended Man no longer changes himself and that he does no longer require that he changes his basic understanding of the world and of himself that lies at the root of all his knowledge (Agamben 6–12; 2004). But the rest of his activities including "art, love, play (...) in short everything that makes Man *happy*" can be preserved indefinitely.

The correlation between philosophy and happiness is a joy to find at this moment. Because *boredom as meaningless* is basically what we feel when there is no meaning in the world and this thus necessitate us to think on our knowledge, to think on our understanding of ourselves and of the world. Philosophy as contemplation on our own selves is what follows the experience of *boredom as meaninglessness*. Then it only follows that in the end of History, Man will no longer be confined into things that bore him. He will not be forced to contemplate in order to find a meaning in life, in what happens now, what will happen next, and in what has happened up until now, which is as we know it, as it claims itself to be, what History is about. In the end of all History as we know it, Man is not any longer bored and is preserved indefinitely in a bundle of happiness that is only natural when all loss of meaning and thus all need for philosophy in the first place is gone. Since there is no meaning lost, there is no boredom and as a result no need to search for meaning. History ends, the Individual is no longer bound within the atrocities of History, Man no longer has to be called anything and

in turn does not have to think on that, and as a result, boredom as a meaninglessness no longer is a haunt.

Conversely, we were bored to meaninglessness of the world because we could never end History. History on the other hand claims also to carry the meaning (*hidden*) in (*the origins of*) our past, *of* our past, our sense of future and thus it was the primary reason of meaninglessness, and thus, *boredom*. Considering how a narrative that can connect one's origins to one's destination is what gives one a sense of identity (Svendsen 78; 2005) our boredom with History carries also the implication that we are bored and troubled of our identity (to this origin) as well. More on how our boredom of History will be of conclusive value and will appear later on.

Since one so much bored with the world is generally seen as one that is mostly indifferent to what happens to and in the world, then the question becomes how to end History at all so that both the bored Man and the damaged Nature (Being) is saved from the perils of our History, that so long condemned us to the hands of boredom in the first place? There, I believe we are in the sphere of politics.

The post-apocalyptic phase is the reminder of the desire to reach the the post-historical one while the post-historical one is the desire of the end. So should the fiction that the post-apocalypse is is not taken heed of, we could very well find ourselves ending in apocalypse itself. This is what it keeps on

reminding us of.

In that respect, apocalypse already happened since History is not done with yet. Were the post-history to be reached though, all the narratives of post-apocalypse would be rendered invalid, or rather there would no longer be any History of apocalypse, while the ones that already happened would be the price paid so far.

That is why we want to be done with the Man altogether so that we can move on to the play and to the happiness. Conversely, that is again, precisely why playing against the boredom as meaningless, and against the vacuity of the world is an act of resistance against History. A resistance that does not play out necessarily as a form of hardship but comes off as a joy in stark contrast to the history of hardships of all the forms of armed – or not – resistances. The player looks for ways to happiness and to deal with boredom in getting far away from it, in emulation of the dream of a time where Time will no longer move on in the sense that *moving on* implies *moving onwards to a future* and *moving on from a troubled past*.

The dream of post-apocalypse is a game played *as a dream of post-apocalypse* but played *for the dream of non-apocalypse itself*.

In this sense, the representation of an almost careless post-apocalyptic fervor taking the form of a destruction within a game has within itself an

inscribed meaning to fight off the boredom of the world and our boredom with the world. That is, the destroyer of worlds no longer fights solely the place the fight is taking place in but also the future time of that place. Then it is with great pleasure that the destroyer of worlds takes down the digitally remodeled worlds that springs out of our own historicity bit by bit into ruins.

Destruction of all the worlds, aimed at the time when our own world is no longer there. When it is no longer *ours*.

Bataille's own fascination with death apparently took the form of a much deeper fascination with joy as well. When talking of Bataille and his Acéphale community Agamben (Agamben 6; 2004) evokes the following expression, in exact wording:

"For the small group of forty-year-old-initiates – who were not afraid to challenge the ridiculous by practicing 'joy in the face of death' in the woods on the outskirts of Paris (...) the acephalous being glimpsed in their privileged experiences might have been neither human nor divine, but in no case could it be animal"

There is much to be said about the joy described in this passage. The previous passage has accompanied us to the end of everything humane but *the joy of happiness* while this one here craftily married the joy of being in the end of History with the death that our History had dealt out plentifully. It is only in the feeling and proximity of death that Man – that is yet to be

freed of his being properly called – feels a joy unseen in any way. Death and History are immersed into each other in such a way that it is only in their face, in the face of the boredom that they produce together as the spirit of the world that we can feel, or rather, *practice* joy. Then joy is no longer a matter of feeling but also a form of practice to keep death at bay. Yet since it is only in its proximity joy is a feeling.

Then *joy as a feeling* comes from the very death/history that we employ *joy as a practice* to save ourselves from. It is in this limbo that we play.

No longer the childish joy one feels when immersed in the endless stream of play is to be considered as an irresponsible getting away from history, from the facts of life. Since shutting oneself to those hard facts - springing from our historical truth - is a getaway as well as a reckoning with them. It is in this state of limbo that the bored individual yet to be freed from his History feels and practices joy in hopes that there is an end.

In the politics of boredom, to challenge the ridiculous has a special meaning for this reason.

"The end of history involves, then, an "epilogue" in which human negativity is preserved as a "remnant" in the form of eroticism, laughter, joy in the face of death." (Agamben 6; 2004)

The only difference is that the bored individuals all around us don't just wait

for the post-History. They experience this kind of ‘remnants’ everyday, taking the form of little escapism. Since man started his journey towards the rediscovery of the animal within by first killing his meaning and spirit, the remnants are all that remains to him. To denounce the passivity in face of war, death and other perils by reading it as an absence of reaction (Agamben 8; 2004) would be to undermine the strategical passivity. It would be a call to forfeit all ability to feel and to employ joy at best and a call to arms against the coming future at worst that would be nothing else than the strengthening of the totality the not-yet freed individual is still bound to. In this light, to remove oneself from the mass reaction that such a call expects to awaken would be to take our sole resistance in face of death, joy, and then blacken it until nothing remains but the inevitable onslaught of responsibilities and Action¹, that was sought to be done with in the first place.

There is this understanding that (Agamben 8, 2004) "if Man becomes an animal again, his arts, his loves, and his play must also become purely natural again". This belief rests largely on the argument that there is a proper human nature, a human nature proper to its being. This is exactly why when humanity is cleansed from the changes that happened along the way, more precisley, of the technologic changes that humanity itself had produced throughout its history to return to that predestined pure state. This

¹ Action with a capital “a” denotes the excessive suffering Man had historically visited upon others. Practically it points to wars and totalitarian slaughters. But it doesn't and couldn't stop there, as the history of modern nation-states are filled with yet to be explored atrocities that hadn't always been exposed in such displays as wars and the like had been.

proposition, or rather this *forecast*, implicitly says that the pure state proper to humanity is the one that remains untouched by itself.

In the end of time (Agamben 11; 2004) not only will the humanity be totally annihilated but the end will also entail the end of human language. It follows naturally that the philosophy, the “love of wisdom” will disappear as well. The thought that in the end of time when all the conflicts and atrocities that our civilization had so easily come to be associated with will also bring an end to philosophy betrays a much deeper thinking. It is this tendency to think that philosophy, the wisdom that living in these troubled times necessitates will no longer be required for the harmonious being of post-history. This in turn, is the equal of saying that our hectic times are what calls for such philosophy, for such a wisdom in the first place. We are living in such a messy world that we desperately need for the help of philosophy. That is why our dream of the harmonious end involves the end of this need. We dream the time where we will no more need philosophy.

Then again, it is only fitting for me to say that since our times are in such dire straits for wisdom, Foucault was only right when pointing out that the metaphorical model for the new intellectual was the figure of a sage (Foucault 25; 2000). Because we turn to sages to help us deal with the many problems of the modern life that we needed no more heroes to save us from. It is only logical then for us to dream about a time where we will not even need the sage. This dream has the implicit meaning that the quest for

meaning that is philosophy will cease when we will no longer be in dire straits. Herein lies the connection between boredom and philosophy.

So far the idea of post-history has been considered with the human condition (Agamben 9-12; 2004) of ceasing to be human. But there were sparks of a post-historical but still human condition, in contrast to the oftentimes evoked post-historical animal life, in the Japanese snobbery whose pure state surpassed the “natural” or “animal” states that arose in Europe or elsewhere from the “historical” Action of from the being forced to Work. Historical action that had been described as carrying the evils of modern history and the condition of being forced to work that is elevated to its highest peak in history in our current times, with the proliferation of the globalisation processes. Two states that are tied to each other as origin and project, as the foundational origins that supposedly carry the most pure meaning and the drivenness of that meaning into the future as tasks within a totalitarian project. Snobbery lies in between these two states.

Therein are hung an enormous number drifters who form the community of the bored ones of this world since at neither end of this vector can they find meaning at all. The origin that is claimed to be History’s most perfect moment, its most perfect essence is no longer a thing of beauty, quite on contrary it is known as the begetter of much blood-shed. On the other hand stands the future that is the object of the whole historical project that the totality of the individuals is asked to strive for. In between the two, though,

lies a place where there are those trapped, or rather those that *prefer* to be trapped in. This state of limbo between these two states is the only place where one can remain resolute against the onslaught of History, or Time, or whatever better term there is in one's mind. The denizen of this limbo then, is the one that can find no meaning at neither end, and as a result is the one bored with both of them. But this denizen is also the one that resists against both of them while this form of resistance plays out as boredom as snobbery – which is in essence² is the exact mode of boredom as meaningless.

Snobbery in Japan apparently had another aspect to it though. It was given that in face of desperate times of social or economic inequalities, the *formalized values* (Agamben 11; 2004) essential to the Japanese culture would rule supreme. Even the most snob of all people would not pause to commit a “gratuitous” suicide forfeiting all individual claim on one's own life, whether through the traditional samurai sword or through an act of war-time *kamikaze* coming from a fighter pilot. It is the sacrifice of a man without content for the sake of a struggle (Agamben 11; 2004) with social and political content. An otherwise negativity without use put to use for greater plans.

Snobbery as a resistance practice against History due to failure to believe in its claims of holding the seed of the most perfect meaning in the world, is

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Essence is invoked for lack of better term but not to evoke a historical essence that is considered way better than any other.

nevertheless *a* form of resistance, and more importantly, *the only* form of resistance that the individual seems to have access to at the moment.

I prefer to conceptualize this state of so-called snobbery taking place in a state of limbo instead of in an post-historical epilogue since it is a taking place happening in between the historical individual's supposedly meaningful past and his or hers future tasks. And since no animal can be a snob (Agamben 9-12; 2004) it is acknowledged that this post-historical condition, that is again, rather a state of limbo than post-history, is a human condition than an animal one.

Man, in this (Hegelian) understanding (Agamben 12; 2004), exists within the tension between his animality and his action of negation that masters and then destroys his own animality. Only in this respect Man can reach his humanity. This thematic of mastering the animal, the beast within is a common theme among games and other media that deal with the problem of boredom by bringing the repressed animal forth. It has long been a belief that it is the natural state of the human world that makes it so boring.

The life of the animal is generally seen as more exciting than the life of man that is predominantly boring. To better understand the difference between man and animal would first require us to pose the question of 'living being' and would push us in the right direction to realize the reason of this predominant boredom. There seems to be a distinction between *l'animal*

existant au-dedans (the animal existing inside) whose life can be viewed as (Agamben 14-15; 2004) “merely the repetition of, so to speak, blind and unconscious functions (the circulation of blood [...]etc.)” and the *l’animal existant au-dehors* (the animal existing outside) who is the one defined through its relation to the outside world. The interesting thing with man is that he has both of them inside (Agamben 15; 2004) living together. It represents the split between the vegetative life and the relational life.

Biopolitics can be said to be modern state's starting to take care of the forces of life of its population (Agamben 15; 2004). Modern state is interested in the forces of life of its population and therefore of its population's creative and productive capacities in an attempt to further its own maintain on power (Foucault 17-18; 2000). What has happened in the passage from the previous model of rule to the modern one was the multiplication of aspects of life to be known, categorized, and more to the point ruled. Modern state's sole concern in regards to its population wasn't just to procure its security, but to further these aspects of life, to augment them just like any other resources that the state had at its disposal and would see augmented to better compete with other states.

This model of political power would derive from the political technologies the modern sciences made available rather than the deadly normative punishments derived from legal systems in order to increase the said productive forces of life even more. This model of power would increase

and order these aspects of life rather than opting for the domination of legal punishments that could in the last instance end in death. This strategy would have all the technologies at state's disposal so that they can be applied as part of normative politics (Foucault 17; 2000).

And so it is at the split of vegetative and relational life that the modern state exercises its apparatus by including the care for the animal man has inside into its politics now carefully transformed into biopolitics. This fine transformation open man's inner animal to the care of as well as to the right of intervention from the state. Boredom's political implications are touched at this juncture more than ever.

Now that we are within this domain where the vegetative life coincides with the biological heritage of the nation, it goes without a doubt into the domain of the state to take care of that. As the state cares for the biological, or vegetative, life of its population to regulate its relational life better it begins to intervene into the animal that exists within man and thus into the relational life of the individual through the individual's biological life. As the state finds in itself the authority to intervene in the individual life in order to better follow its sanitation politics, the animal who doesn't understand regulations and politics will come forth in an unmistakably violent manner. And thus no more the human who coexists with the animal can be just fine with the interruption.

Then (Agamben 16; 2004) it appears that the ‘caesure’, the distinction between man and animal passes first of all within man. This makes our current question a question of humanism. Man has always been thought of “the articulation and conjunction of a body and a soul (...) of a natural (or animal) element and a supernatural or social or divine element”. Natural and supernatural coincides within the split, that is mainly a political split, between man, and animal, that is, between man and politicillay defined man.

These *supernatural creatures* are then nothing but political creatures. The dream of dealing with boredom by summoning one’s inner animal results from the tension of the politics. It results from the tension that the intervening biopolitics to be more specific. There is an incongruity between what is human, and between what is posed as human. This is why Agamben proposes (Agamben 16; 2004) that we investigate “the practical and political mystery of separation” rather than getting stuck with the metaphysics of what separates man from animal. Because in the mind of popular culture what appears as an animal, as a beast, as a supernatural creature that can not live in our civilization the way humans/we do is no longer defined by its metaphysical properties but by his being a political beast. It points to rather specific and practical issues.

Since animal (Agamben 18; 2004) life has these two primary functions of nutrition and generation that are directed to preservation of the species there is also another question that comes to mind. What happens to the worry that

preservation is, to the national agenda that the state produces out of the idea of preservation at the end of time? Won't these functions be entirely useless? It becomes apparent that the idea of a paradisaical life at the end of all History would incorporate the very bodily functions (Agamben 19; 2004) of man as 'blessed' as his spirit would be. The thought that maintains that the bodily functions of the man would be excluded from paradise on account of the body not being blessed in this case serves nothing other than the agenda of the state, that is the direction the historical project is taking towards. So that in the end the bodily pleasures of the man, that are usually seen in this light as 'animal' serves nothing more than profaning the blessed historical paradise. The split part of man is touched in hopes that the bored individual can find a passing paradise of his own.

When *Nevermore*³ writes the following passage in his song called "Voyager" it is to outline this longing:

"I am the voyager, I have tasted all the pleasures of the flesh and chocked the pleasure of the mind"

The issue of boredom borders the question of pleasure; in the case of *boredom as animal*, as the animalistic side of man is not solely the domain of vegetative life but, as the discussion of post-historical condition has shown, it is also the domain where the bodily pleasures are procured.

³ Nevermore is a heavy metal from Seattle formed in 1991. The song mentioned here is from their album titled as "Dead Heart in a Dead World". As the title suggest it is an album dealing with the melancholy of a world devoid of life and meaning.

The interest-following rational model rests in stark contrast with this though. This model's historical aim had long been given as the establishment of the good rule of the population who seemed to have suffered a lot from the domination of the passions in the historically previous model (Hirschman; 2008) – as it has been outlined in the first chapter.

In the fictions of popular culture this claim has been usually presented and criticised as the theme of 'establishment of human paradise on Earth'. A paradise whose driving motive is to minimize the injustices of the world – if not to get rid of them altogether – thought to be caused by the unchecked domination of passions. Noting that the animal is excluded from paradise on grounds that it doesn't live a blessed life (Agamben 19; 2004) it is almost already excluded from Man's paradise on Earth as well. This furthers the bored man deeper into the state of limbo previously discussed since his very boredom implies that he is aspiring for his animal side while it remains in conflict with the paradisaical life that pushes it away.

Therefore there is no room for the animal in this rational model of modern paradise. As a result of this exclusion, man is bored as his animalistic side is drowning. What appears as unholy, infernal or abyssal in our games and spectacles operates on the exclusion of animal life, of the bored and burdened individual's desires, from the pursuit of a rational and thus blessed mind. The animal then will no longer be simply protecting his territory, we

have come to realise the fact that protecting the territory is the state's strategy. But the animal is in stark contrast to the life the state advances. In that, the animal that is no longer simply protecting territory is moreover attacking the very foundations of that rationality.

The theme of the messianic end of the history, of the world implies (Agamben 21; 2004) the vanishing of the distinctive line between man and animal. The distinction between what man is and what he is not makes recourse to first philosophy.

The exact reason for this is that "man" is decided upon and produced out of this operation that splits man and animal. If this line vanishes then certainly man's relational life and his animal life would be superimposed upon each other flawlessly which means that man and animal, and therefore the divine would no longer be thinkable. Thus, it would indicate that since the blessed realm of modernity is based upon the divine then no longer the limbo that rests between the divine and the abyssal would be possible. The residents of this limbo whose humanity rests largely on the opposition of man and animal that exists no more won't any longer be the case either. As a result of this, man's boredom with his being properly called, that is with his being politically separated from what will be called his inner animal will no longer be the case either.

What is being produced as the proper human being also has a side effect. We

had established that what drives us to drink from the fountain of spectacular gore was a search for reality, for *meaning* to be more specific. Yet this search so far has clearly shown us nothing else than the way in which a ‘man’ to which a certain *humanness* will be attributed in the domain of separation from animal that will then be all the more attractive to the bored one, is produced. This realisation is all that takes for the individual who is bored with what and who he or she is to be *annoyed*⁴ as well. After all, the individual is finding himself meaningless as the rest of the objects surrounding him in which case to realise how little of a control he has over what he is as well as what he is to himself will certainly be an annoying experience. This in turn explains better than simple boredom the reason why there is such a spike in the aesthetics of rebellious vulgarness in the spectacle. Annoyances bring life to a drifting sensation that boredom usually is, albeit a discontent life.

It is not difficult and unheard of to tie the vulgar aesthetics that accompany our fooling around to escape boredom with a sort of indifference. One that is almost always quickly bound with a social indifference, since ‘the future of the society rests on the responsible shoulders of our young’.

This seemingly social indifference is tied to a place in time where the conceptual distinction between man and animal occurs. In the case of the

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Note that ‘*to annoy*’ translates to a meaning like ‘*to bore one’s heart*’ in which case the boredom of the heart comes closer to an emotional letdown than the experience of boredom as ‘*feeling nothing*’.

bored man: we are talking about the distinction between man and animal – through which man is given to us. In these places – called 'zones of indifference' in proper terminology – it is impossible to assign to man currently being worked upon certain identities, since it is impossible to set him apart from the animal until the setting apart itself is done with (Agamben 24; 2004). It is worth to note at this point that in these zones of indifference one is also indifferent to oneself as one can find no meaning in one's self as well as no sense of self. This is boredom in its most perfect indifference.

This means that the impossibility to assign identities in these zones and the experience of *boredom as meaninglessness* that is in this case *boredom with oneself* – or *boredom as animal* to follow the terminology of this study – make the two sides of the same thing: politics and ethics. Agamben does not have a name for what emerges further, nor do we as of the moment.

Further down the road where the terms 'man' and 'animal' are to collapse into each other we are entering into the domain of politics, as well as philosophy that we did border previously. In the sense that defining through our conception of *humanness* what is licit or conversely, illicit we define ways of behavior and conduct of character, the political question becomes a question of ethics. The way of cognition is indeed how we deem anything as '*animalistic*' or '*human*', yet this cognition is not tied to a universal substance of 'animalism' or 'humanism'. It was a political task that defined

the distinction in between. It will then be again, a political task to realise the singularity of this distinction.

While remaining within the zone of indifference the individual finds no meaning within his identity, and therefore, he is bored. It is also, as a result of this political demarcation that the bored individual can not be assigned other identities as long as he is within the domain. This reads almost like a textbook style description for what being in limbo should feel like. The 'man' in this limbo knows being properly called as well as he knows being-indifferent. This (Agamben 26; 2004) is how man come to recognise himself not as carrying any specific identical quality but as simply as human.

Agamben says the following on the matter:

“...man has no specific identity other than the ability to recognise himself. Yet to define the human not through any *nota characteristic*, but rather through his self knowledge, means that man is the being which recognizes itself as such, that *man is the animal that must recognize itself as human to be human*” (Agamben 26; 2004)

Agamben refers to a term he calls 'as such' that denotes man's being without specific quality to identify him with in this passage. Later on, this *as-suchness* will be explored in further details when man's *self-knowledge* alluded in this passage will be complete as he finally – symbolically – kills the animal. But for now, it will be important to retain that man's as-suchness points to his being taken into consideration not through any of his properties

that could be reason enough to wear an identity.

Let us continue again in Agamben's words:

"Homo sapiens then, is neither a clearly defined species nor a substance; it is, rather, a machine or device for producing the recognition of the human"

The mechanism detailed so far is (Agamben 29; 2004), as Agamben calls it, "the anthropological machine of humanism". It basically says that the machine holds man suspended between a celestial and terrestrial nature, between animal and human. This suspension confirms man's lack of nature which in turn confutes the argument that a 'man' is one with dignity and thus there are some behaviors that simply are not proper to the dignity of a man. A dignity granted by his nature. It is generally expected for a proper man to possess a certain way of behavior proper to this dignity, to this grace.

The theme of grace oftentimes invoked to prove a certain being's dignity is not an uncommon theme within the domain of a range of popular culture works dealing with the issues of human nature.

"[...]you may shape yourself into whatever form you prefer. You can degenerate into the lower things, which are brutes; you can regenerate with your soul's decision, into the higher things, which are divine" (Agamben 29-30; 2004)

As a result the bodily and the spiritual are no longer to be considered base or grand, vulgar or graceful, or finally, "degenerate or divine".

The not-necessarily-graceful human that can shape himself into all kinds of *being* is constitutively nonhuman insofar as he can receive all natures and faces. What constitutes a human is no longer his substance but his being able to be a non-human. The humanist approach nominates a single face of all the faces the human one, and expects to see the proper dignity in every action of man only to rediscover the very lack of dignity (Agamben 30; 2004). Therefore to humanize man after a political demarcation that set him apart from the animal took place will only be a futile attempt since the animal never had that dignity in the first place and that man doesn't necessarily carry that dignity. This is precisely why bored man almost never responds to an attempt to reconcile him with this humanist approach that searches for the dignity that sets man apart.

This face of the human being that is known to identify him is in the process of being undone and erased as though it were going through a transition (Agamben 30; 2004). Since our *boredom as meaninglessness* suggests that the seed of historical narrative – that was supposed to make sense – contained within our identities no longer makes sense to us, our constant transition would mean the search for a meaning by changing our selves. It is not only that the faces we wear are subject to change but our *meaning* also is. The fact that we are bored of the meaningless world is the reason of our constant transition. And this transition not only takes the form of shapechanging but also takes the form of change in one's inner world of

meaning.

Shapechanging generally appears as an ability to wear the shapes, and in time their *identities* as well in the popular fiction. The *Lunars* in the tabletop game *Exalted* for example appear as characters that can physically and spiritually turn into animals, as well as other humans. Thus, the popular fiction can be said to deal with the issue of what makes a man a man and not an animal for a certain time now.

However, what has long been suggested was that the anthropological machine differentiated man from animal by a presupposed identifying characteristic of 'man' (Agamben 34; 2004) which was language. In cyberculture as well as the popular culture deriving from the fantastic literature 'man' always desired to be done with this language.

It has long been man's fantasy to communicate, to form communities without the need for language, often that would prove detrimental as when the language gets out of the way the result is generally a fusion of the communicators, as is exemplified by the long-time classic 'overmind' theme. The being that is born of fusion driving whole species across the galaxy in an unquenchable quest for domination, in the pulp sci-fi movie *Starship Troopers*.

The settings of high fantasy do represent alternatives as well, in the form of

mental powers practiced by *sorcerers* where language often appears as the key to casting sorcery, and thus sorceres would seek ways to communicate using solely their mind. The most apparent cyberpunk example coming to my mind is *Ghost in the Shell* anime series adapted from the manga book of Masamune Shirow.

Other than that, the gritty, ‘down and dirty’, modern day setting of *True Blood*⁵ presents us the faes, those graceful ones, communicating with each other, again in a place that they only reach through their soul. In this place of hedonistic communion they do talk to each other but the thing is they can reach this place of serene beauty any time they feel like to and without even uttering a word. In this place there is language, but hardly any need to refer to it. I believe that the vampires represent the excessive promiscuity willing to reappropriate and to intensify the pleasure to be had in these modern times, while on the other hand, the later appearance of the faeries represent the hedonistic sexuality. It is through this faeries sexuality that a communion longing for the pre-modern times are glimpsed. The thing that this supposedly pre-modern, hedonistic communion of the few surviving faeries in *True Blood*’s setting seek, looks like to be a pure and originary essence untouched by the contamination of death. It is worth noting at this point that according to *True Blood*’s lore, the gardens of the faeries have been destroyed by the greedy vampires seeking the ability to ‘walk under the

⁵ *True Blood* is a TV series from the scenarists of *Six Feet Under* – the show that is a haven of debates on *Gay* studies. The series deal with the relationships between humans and vampires at a crossroads when the vampires, represented by a certain *League* on the political arena decide to reveal their long-secret existence in the midst of human civilization.

sun'. So it means that the reclusion of the faeries of this world that marks the passage from the magical ancient times to the dull industrious modern day world, coincides with the desire of the vampires to take part in the world of the panopticon⁶. That is, their wish to reconcile their 'creature of the night' aspect with the modern world. What it means in overall is that this infernal nature of the human being (whose fictional representation might be a range of nightly creatures including vampires) that can not reconcile with the ever present gaze of the modernity is at issue here. Since the arriving modernity was what destroyed the faeries' home, they seek in a childish longing the 'good old days'. Yet, as we all come to know, there was never golden age to begin with (Nancy; 1990). Whatever form he takes, then, there just is no world without language for the human being. To resist to the blistering sunlight while remaining a vampire who burns at its first touch, man will have to come up with a different sort of politics. As we are bound to language, we are bound to the world being without magic, that is the primary reason why it is mainly a boring place.

Agamben seems to confirm the idea that a world without language for the human is simply a fiction for, for man to exist (Agamben 35; 2004) there must be language otherwise man is simply not. On the other hand though, *our* language was never a *given* as the fiction confirms it countless times⁷,

⁶

Foucault: "*The panopticon appears as the gaze, therefore the light reveals and gazes upon while the dark hides and soothes.*"

⁷

This only furthers the argument that to deconstruct or outright bring down the given, the self-evident, we refer to fictions.

we had to create it and by creating it we seemed to have defined ourselves as well. What appears slowly at this conjunction of Agamben's *language* and Foucault's *discourse* – where the human subject come to appear both as a subject and an object – man finds what is most boring about this world, as well as a way forward with this boredom, if not simply out.

On a related note, the child's wisdom proclaiming that happiness can only be reached through magic has a strange interaction with language. Magic, as it appears in stories as well as in history, is a secret science of names. What the mage capable of casting magic does when summoning a creature by his name is freeing the summoned creature of its shackles to its secret name that he's bound magically to the point of failure to respond when called by it. In this way, magic becomes a way to happiness, not for the mage, but for the creature it calls by name. The secret language of the mage accompanied by the language of the voiceless, that is accompanied by the gesture, is nothing but a list of secret names. And as such, language holds the mysterious power of freedom for the creatures it binds by name, for those having access to this secret science (Agamben 20-22; 2007).

So it means basically that human and animal differs in that the first one has language while the latter do not. As a result the desire for a non-speaking man is only a shadow cast by this fact. Though this is in no way to suggest that the fact that humans do have a language is a given. Quite the contrary, this whole machination of *anthropologism* tells us that the language is an

historical product (Agamben 38; 2004). Specifically that product is made through the *work* that was the source of their boredom in the first place. The passage from the initial desire for the aesthetics of destruction to the latter will to build kingdoms marks the passage from ‘animal kingdom’ to ‘human kingdom’. While it feels relieving to let go of one’s animal side, one has to appropriate these mechanisms of power to deal with boredom in the long run.

When all seem the same and meaningless, when we are in the throes of an inescapable boredom that even an infinite stream of trifling spectacle can not pull us out of, we are delivered *inwards* to this historicity as it claims holding the seed of meaning for us. Since boredom is like a mist surrounding us we turn inwards as the only place we can go. Though there is the fact that we have only ever been *inward* to our selves. This not only means that we are already separated from the animal but also separated from the rest of the world. Then it only follows to say that the boredom that is outside of an individual can not have been experienced at all. It is therefore time to admit that the boredom of the world is not *outside* but *inside* of us, us as historical individuals doubly and absolutely blocked off of the world. To be blocked off can also be put this way; to be *concealed*. This concealment means that when one blocks off oneself from the rest of the world, one can be said to be concealed.

When the bored individual is thus cut off or simply in hiding of the world he

is delivered further inwards. We have boarded the issue of an individual's identity as his narrative, as his personal history before. In this respect, an individual's identity is his sense of self which is composed of a whole narrative starting from his origin. This origin is thought to hold that person's most perfect moment (Faubion 369-393; 1999). The bored individual is *concealed* and thus delivered to this historicity that is a production, a work produced by our modern society to find that society's most perfect moment. By most perfect moment what we hear is that part of that is untouchable, that never changes. In the face of our modern world's blinding speed if anything meaningful remains to the bored individual it must be this core upon which the whole narrative is built. Because the claim is that it remains as pure as ever no matter what.

In this respect one can quite easily reverse the formulae: Conversely, it is because the individual is delivered to a work crafted into himself as his *historicity* by the modern society that he is bored. This also implies that it is because the only thing remaining constant and thus meaningful in the face of an ever-moving world is this pure moment⁸ that the individual is bored.

It is in the operation of the anthropological machine that there appears a space of exception where neither man nor animal, neither man or non-man takes place. This space is on the contrary perfectly empty (Agamben, 2004), and so must be the man that is articulated inside in ceaselessly to be decided

⁸ Note that the Turkish word for 'moment' (*'an'*) is also the root of the Turkish word for 'meaning' (*'anlam'*)

upon. This perfectly empty man is therefore also a man devoid of sense. He is not meaningful to himself either. We are left in this space where man and animal are articulated, dislocated and made anew, this space that is more like a limbo than a final destination. It is in this limbo that we are nothing but a *bare life* (Agamben 38; 2004). We are bare, but we are all too aware that until the articulation somewhat slows down to a decision about what we are and about which part should be left behind we remain bare. In this respect, the man in limbo is more than aware of this political operation as well as of the emptiness it is actually being operated on. Boredom becomes even more of an encumbrance so long as the machine deciding upon his definition continues the articulation. As the machine goes on, man is bored even more. The machine halting to a decision does not change the fact man remains aware of the initial emptiness, and also the decision will be made anew in an endless update (Agamben 38; 2004).

Now that the separation has been made there opens an environment where the animal and man differ heavily in behavior. The animal rests mostly drawn to its '*carriers of significance*', that is, things which are interesting to it (Agamben 40; 2004,). Significance, appears for man much like the same way it does for animal. Though in the throes of boredom, we don't find anything quite to our liking. We sail from pastime to pastime but can't quite land on any particular one, regardless of the range of options. The reason for that is that, in boredom, all the things that could and will try nonetheless to occupy us seem to us as "*insignificant*" little things. What is more striking in

a world filled with things that does not strike us as significant at all is that when all is said and done, we, the bored ones, end up finding ourselves quite insignificant. This insignificance is in stark contrast with the experience animal has in childish abandon.

The insignificance the of the human experience of the world becomes even less enriching despite the richness in which the bored individual is tumbled into considering the animal experience. The animal does simply live and looks for things to trifle with to kill boredom the way man does. For the animal, only the significance matter. The animal is *immediately* united to the elements of the significance attracting it in an intense and passionate way, “the likes of which we might never find in the relations that bind man to his apparently richer world” (Agamben, 47; 2004). The immediacy means that the relation is experienced in an unmediated way. The relationship of the animal to its significant attraction is passionate. The relationship is felt and lived in this passion. The animal, “...*is* this relationship; she lives only in it and for it.” (Agamben 47; 2004). This not only means that the animal’s relationship with its significant one is passionate enough to provoke us into associating ‘passion’ and ‘animality’ but it also implies that the human experience will always be unable to attain such an *immediacy* and *passion*. The desire of man, held deeply seated in the thrall of his boredom is without a surprise then, to be as ‘animalistic’ in his relationship as the animal. Boredom leads one to seek the intensity of the animal allowed to it by its living in the relationship. Though our constant boredom with our

supposedly richer world seems to imply that this immediacy constantly fails to be captured. The animalistic passion is what makes the animal experience to us the bored ones so wonderful. In response to our constant boredom with the world we can only hope to live in our relationships that provokes such unmediated passion in us. Conversely, what comes to us as mediated fails to provoke the same intensity of passion and therefore, simply bores us.

The animal is surrounded by carriers of significance forming a ring that is known as ‘the disinhibitor ring’⁹(Agamben 51); 2004. The animal does not enter into a relationship with the whole ring but with the most immediate and first one of those disinhibitors that affects it. The rest remains unable to penetrate in, to catch its attention. This particular mode of being proper to the animal defining the relationship it enters with the disinhibitor is ‘*captivation*’. The animal is captivated in the sense that it is also stunned, taken away, blocked, or absorbed in its relation with the disinhibitor¹⁰ (Agamben 52; 2004).

The following passage explains the nature of the animal’s relationship with its disinhibitor (Agamben 52, 2004):

9

The term ‘disinhibitor ring’ is coined by Heidegger, in his courses on the animal environment but later picked up again by Agamben, in his reading of Heidegger. It is through Agamben that I refer to the term.

10

Agamben clarifies that all these words appearing alongside ‘captivation’ etymologically refer to the verb ‘nehmen’ (‘to take’ in German)

“Insofar as it is essentially captivated and wholly absorbed in its own disinhibitor, the animal cannot truly act (*handeln*) or comport itself (*sich verhalten*) in relation to it: it can only behave (*sich benehmen*).”

It becomes evident in this passage that the animal can only behave in captivity, in being fully taken in with its inhibitor. Behavior in this manner consists of any and every kind of possible behavior. The animal knows no limits in behaving to its disinhibitor, though, one must note that, this way of behaving is fundamentally opposed to the way man *comports* himself as a person (Agamben 52; 2004). The animal does not act at all, it does not comport as ‘*having a self*. In this sense, what has been previously unknown to the dividing anthropological machine is seen as that man has to carry his own self to comport at all while the animal is not limited in his set of possible behaviors towards its disinhibitor which is its sole captivity.

The animal’s captivity also excludes any possibility to “...take up a position over and against this...” disinhibitor (Agamben 53; 2004). It means that the animal is unable to recognize to whatever disinhibitor it is not engaged into. This is why the animal is said to behave in an environment but not in a world. The animal is aware of its environment insofar as it is engaged into it, there is no world surrounding the animal of which it is aware and to which it is painfully bound to the way the man is bound to its boring world.

When put that way, the desire of man to *be like an animal* takes on a

different meaning. Man desires to be passionately captivated into a disinhibitor in a disinhibited way, by letting go of his self – which seems the only way for such captivation. In this mode of captivation is a radical break with the rest of the world. Therefore the problem of boredom is taken on a whole new dimension as well. Man is bored of his being incapable of such captivation which is to imply that man's boredom is primarily a boredom with *himself*. The boredom of the man is deeply tied to the question of *self*.

There, the ethics of the problem of boredom begins to surface as its tie to one's self became more apparent. Man desires to let go of his self, of himself, to attain an almost animal-like captivation. The reason why man's problem with his *self* prompts the issue of ethics will be the most issue of the chapter on ethics. For now let us retain that man's boredom with himself is primarily in the domain of ethics.

The animal's way of relating itself to its disinhibitor is not as smooth as it might appear at first sight from the point of view of such a desire though. The animal is so utterly *taken by* its disinhibitor that, the very possibility of relating to it, is on the brink of *being taken away* from the animal (Agamben 53; 2004). The animal is apprehended when the disinhibitor to which it relates so fully is withheld from it. It is not that the animal can have whatever it feels like but it is that it follows it nevertheless. It feels as though it never gets tired or bored of this effort to be captivated.

It is of central importance to the question of boredom to understand that neither the animal's environment nor the beings are revealed to the animal. The animal's captivation lies beyond the possibility of being closed or disclosed (Agamben 54; 2004). As a result of this not being a question of being closed it is not a question of *openness* either. Neither the animal, nor its environment is revealed *as such* in this equation.

In this case, the animal's relation cannot truly be considered as a relationship since there is no openness to another to be related to. It is here that, again, we come closer to grasping the issue of man's boredom with the world. Man's desire to be more animalistic comes closer to not being in a relationship at all. Although in this case man strive to not only getting away from the world in a stillness or in a continuous stream but he also looks for a certain vacuity where there is only emptiness to which one can, by definition, under no circumstances relate to. Therefore, man's desire for emptiness betrays how our underlying boredom may not be solely about the world's emptiness, but from now on, about the world being overloaded. This is exactly why the bored one is aiming for emptiness when submerging himself into a captivation.

Considering how the animal cannot experience neither itself nor its environment as a being (Agamben 54; 2004) it can be said that it stands in between its environment and itself. It finds itself being ceaselessly driven towards its disinhibitor though in a suspension since the possibility for a

relation is exactly what it lacks. The animal is in between, just like the bored individual, though in the individual's case there is no captivation. On the other hand, the animal experiences neither itself nor its environment as a being. The animal does not experience itself as a subject, nor does it experience its environment as an object. As a result, the animal can not reflect on itself as the object of a certain experience as well. There is no subjective experience here.

Man's desire to the *nonrelation* of the animal can be better understood with a closer inspection. The nonrelation lies within the ontological status of the animal environment (Agamben 55; 2004), beings, while being open, remain nonetheless inaccessible to the animal. The inaccessibility is the source of the nonrelation, a sort of "poverty in world"¹¹ that describes an openness without disconcealment. The animal, thus cannot in any way enter into relation with this environment, which is the source of the poverty. Though on the other hand, man, builds 'kingdoms' out of the world. The passage from an animal in nonrelation, from a poverty in world, to a kingdom-crafting man, to the world itself, is what is best exemplified in the case of the kingdom building mythical creature that the *Lunar* is, in the tabletop game *Exalted*¹². Man desire to be less like *the kingdom-building Lunar* and more like the *animal Lunar* when bored and borned of this supposedly

¹¹

This is again, a term borrowed from the reading of Heidegger in Agamben's work.

¹² *Exalted* is a tabletop roleplaying game published as a series of books, each detailing a certain part of the setting making that part accessible for play. The book titled "*Manuals of Exalted Power: Lunars*" makes the character type known in the game as *the Lunar Exalted* which is but one of the possible options in the game though the most relevant one to our debate of animal-human opposition.

richer world. But then again, his will to power comes into play in a way and as a result he desires to be more like the *kingdom-building Lunar* and less like the *animal Lunar*.

In the animal's nonrelation there is also this to retain to better engage the problem of boredom: The animal is being taken by whatever disinhibitor while being in a nonrelation with it. The animal is taken by the disinhibitor while having nothing to do with it in the first place. Though the very fact that it is taken by it in captivity means that it is nonetheless open to it (Agamben 55; 2004). Captivation in an openness is what is at issue here. This means that the man letting himself be taken in captivity with a disinhibitor of choice in emulation of the animal to cope with his general boredom, is nonetheless open to the world of beings and things around him. That is, the man captivated in nonrelation is nevertheless aware of the world around him no matter how fully engrossed he is in his disinhibitor.

The open is the place of the essential conflict between the unconcealedness and concealedness of being (Agamben 57; 2004). Initially it has been thought that man was standing before a world, before an outside that he could not enter while the animal was able to see and wander around in it – still in a nonrelation though. Man was thought to be trapped within himself able to look only inwards. We had also established that it was in man's ability to name the things and not in the animal's since it never had language to begin naming with. Therefore man must have looked out into this open,

into this place of conflict to realize and thereafter must have named it as the conflict. Hence, it turns out that what the inward looking man is gazing at is exactly the open, that outside where the conflict reigns (Agamben 58; 2004).

Therefore captivation in one sole thing does not render the animal-emulating man blind to the world, quite the contrary, captivation in the case of bored man would point to being aware of what is going on in the surrounding open. This is precisely why man is bored in the first place, even in the throes of captivation man cannot take himself away from the conflicts outside of him. Since he cannot isolate himself to this world of conflict between things, he tries to make do with a captivation that hopefully will be more intense than the conflict.

The animal on other hand though, does not have the 'word' the way man has it and as such does not know of it (Agamben 58; 2004). It does know neither the words, nor the things. Its part is not to make a distinction between the two. The animal is excluded from the conflict between the two. It is driven to them on the sole basis of being driven towards.

The animal's motility arises from the amount of excitability things that come inside its disinhibitor ring stimulates. The animal is stimulated every now and then disinhibiting things are revealed to it based on whether or not they can excite the animal. Though the animal can never let the disinhibitor that has stirred such an excitement in the animal be (Agamben 58; 2004).

This captivation in excitement that never lets go of the emerging disinhibitor who by the way emerged in the animal's environment just because it was exciting to it, almost describes a childish obsession with exciting things. Just like a child who by definition of the word 'child' resonates 'immature', the animal has this ring where every now and then new and exciting things emerge that the animal tirelessly pursues. Even when the animal rushes itself towards its exciting disinhibitor with '*greatest abandon*' – yet another descriptive term in Agamben's reading that reminds of a child's careless joy – it does not see what it is after nor can it still comport itself (Agamben 59; 2004). There is the seed of the animal's captivation. It consists of abandoning the rest of its concerns, not that this is to imply that the animal has any, but in comparison with the man's fascination with this mode of captivation it says a lot about our boredom. This animal that man is so fully fascinated with possesses quite a small ring of disinhibitors, can abandon the rest of them in an instant to pursue the one that excites it the most in a stupendous flight of fancy. What has long been seen in our culture as the freedom to leave it all behind and fly away as a sort of the romantic's dream of *freedom* has its roots in this fascination. Man is bored and moreover bored with all of the things that get in their own ring that in turn gets larger by the uninvited inclusion of all kinds of daily effects. He does indeed dream of getting away from the ring in a similar flight of fancy following one sole thing that captivates him regardless of what kind of being it is and also regardless of what kind of an outside the flight will take him. That is the fascination of the man depicting his rather romantic view of the animal

world. That is also, in the overall, the description of passion.

Further reading confirms that this is indeed about passion. The animal, that is at once open and not-open, in other words, the animal that is neither open nor not-open attributes “*unmatched vehemence*” to its disinhibitor in which it is captivated, taken and absorbed (Agamben 59; 2004). It is neither concealed on its own nor does it disconceal its disinhibitor that it is so passionate for. The animal is passionately in the open, though it is still closed in an opacity since it can not disconceal for real its disinhibitor’s being. For that reason, while being passionately bound to it the animal can not truly know what it is.

This sort of intensity in captivation is more spellbinding than any kind of human knowledge. captivation (Agamben 59; 2004). The fascination with this intensity, with the fact that the animal does not have the ‘word’ betrays a deeper desire of the human to be done with the knowledge altogether. The underlying desire to be *free* of knowledge itself to the somewhat romantic dream of ‘*flying away*’ here becomes ever more clearer in here within the foundations of man’s fascination with animal. Man is simply fascinated with the animal because it can reach this intensity as it is not bound up in knowledge the way man is.

Though in the final run, it still remains impossible for the animal to comport itself towards the not-open. Because it is basically excluded from the

domain where disconcealment and concealment are in conflict with each other (Agamben 60; 2004). And this conflict is essentially what the systems of knowledge that man's thought revolves around. The animal is in no way borned as the man is, and as such, it remains a child in its pursuit of non-knowing captivation.

This is the spirit of the animal's captivation. This is the spirit that the man condemned to the spirit of political modernity wishes to be spirited away into. And since there is a strong connection between this captivation and human boredom (Agamben 61; 2004) there is a strong connection in between this captivation and political modernity as well. So far, we have established the decisive line separating man from animal that was the source of many of man's dreams of dealing with the boredom. By underlining the fact that the separation is a political one indeed we have also showed that the question of boredom is political indeed as well. And now, at this turn, the boredom's political character is beginning to emerge. At the place of conjunction between the worlds of man and animal, at their closest proximity we will find boredom in its most profound state (Agamben 62; 2004). The boredom as *animal* is neither an unchecked destructive manner towards the boring world nor is it a radical break with the discourse or the language. But it is the opening of the road to this most profound state.

II/ THE MEANING OF BOREDOM

C. Killing the Animal, and 'Possibilities'

The analysis of profound boredom begins by first laying out the fundamental '*structural moments*'¹³ where *Dasein* – the human Being – is almost always predisposed toward other things (Agamben 63; 2004). There lies the attunement between the openness of the animal and of the man.

The first one of these structural moments is '*being-left-empty*' (Agamben 63; 2004). It comes close to the animal abandon yet actually is quite different in all ways. The animal abandon is filled with enthusiasm while this here designates an abandon in emptiness. Boredom appears as the feeling of emptiness in its first moment. The bored man thus feels like being left in an empty place whether on his own, or whether as a result of some other event. Man sits in an empty place, in a place that seems empty to him. The bored man does not want to do anything but sits through this emptiness all the while there are actually things to trifle with. His trifling with small things may be an attempt to fill this emptiness bits by bits. Another take would have it so that man is just underlining the fact that he is bored of this feeling of emptiness by trifling with things devoid of meaning.

13

We are here, again, as we have been this whole time, in the terminological field first laid out by Heidegger, picked up in this work on man, animal and their proximity that is boredom, by Agamben. The designation of '*structural moment*' is one such picking.

Whatever the bored man prefers or finds himself doing without actually having a say in the matter, this basic feeling of emptiness and the wait that comes with it, namely being-left-empty is quite similar to what I have earlier taken note of as simply '*killing time*'.

The things that we occupy ourselves with or conversely the things that we leave lying around, witness our waiting by in boredom. Maybe we have been occupied up until that moment came or maybe we are using diversion tactics to keep boredom at bay. We may be taken by things the way the animal is, regardless of our position in this. Regardless, our being-taken-by is not as passionate as the animal's. We suddenly, or gradually find ourselves in an abandonment in emptiness. It is not that the things are taken away from us, no, that would seem to provoke anger in return, but it is that they "...*have nothing to offer to us...*" anymore. This kind of indifference does not go away though, as we cannot free ourselves of the diversions that we are left abandoned in. So, no flying away like the animal can and would do were it to be in this position. We are quite on the contrary delivered to the things that are from now on going to be empty for us and have been for a while now. There is a captivation for whatever reason (Agamben 64; 2004).

The beings surrounding us and witnessing to our passage in boredom do not completely disappear. The emptiness in question here is not the description of an oblivion. It is more like an emptiness that envelops the beings in their totality which are revealed as such precisely in their indifference (Agamben

64; 2004). Man is delivered to boredom in the midst of beings that he can see for what they are as such. Because man is indifferent and because the beings in their totality are indifferent in themselves as well man is delivered to this boredom. We are nearing the domain of *boredom as meaninglessness* in this emptiness of individual things forming a totality. They do not offer us, the bored ones any further possibility of action.

The indifference should not roughly translate to snobbery at this point. Because what is at issue here is not some simple indifference to the things going on around us. It is quite contrarily beings refusing themselves in their totality in relation to these possibilities (Agamben 65; 2004). It is refusal to enter into a relation, now that everything seems empty. The totality then, not only refuse its constitutive parts' possibilities, since the initial bored man is also a part of that totality in the first place it also denies the man his possibilities.

Since being-left-empty is denied many other possibilities the bored man is left in a metaphorical emptiness as well in a literal one. The totality of which each being-left-empty on its own is a part of, has the potential to deny these possibilities to its members. Therefore the totality can cause the individual bored man to be left empty of other possibilities (Agamben 65; 2004) in the most literal sense, as well as it can engender the feeling of emptiness that accompany boredom (which is nothing other than the metaphorical meaning of being-left-empty).

What have been rendered identical in the initial historical project of the constitution of 'totality' is now the very base for boredom. The initial phase of the boredom is being-left-empty because the individual and identical parts of a totality in denial denies the bored man his possibilities as well as denying the rest of the individuals their own possibilities (Agamben, 64-65; 2004). It is man's feeling of boredom arising from denial to 'other ways' of action and being, that man does not feel like doing anything at all. The aim of his boredom on the other hand is directed both at the identical individuals both at the totality that produces them as well as being produced by them.

The boredom caused by the indifference of beings that seem to imply a careless stance towards other things as well as their being indifferent from each other, that is, their being identical to each other is more than a fleeting sense of emptiness. The totality has the power of possibility-denial. Yet it is not simply a commanding power that dominates the identical beings that it is formed of. The identical ones all refuse themselves on their own as well.

Bored man, Being, are delivered to this totality in denial. In this sense it is much like the animal who, in its captivity is exposed in something unrevealed (Agamben 65; 2004). In this proximity between man and animal politically separated from each other, man is constitutively delivered to his own proper being, "*lost in a world of his own concerns*" (Agamben 65; 2004). His proper being is the exact place where he is the same. Therefore,

not only the other ones are identical to each other but also they are identical to him as well. The indifference then does not solely mean bored man being careless about the concerns of the world. But quite on contrary, he becomes aware of other beings' concerns as well in his being delivered to his own world of concerns as well as being delivered to other beings to whom he is identical. Therefore, boredom, even from its very first structural moment, is not solely about a passing snobbery, given that snobbery was at first conceived of as a careless stance of indifference against the rest of the world. But until now not only we have established that bored man is always aware of conflict that reign what is outside of him, but now we also realize that bored man is aware of the concerns of others as well as his own.

Being is exposed to what captivates it, that is, the other beings in the case of bored man, just like the animal were exposed to its disinhibitor. While the captivation of the animal was a passionate one, man's captivation is a deliverance based on his boredom, which is primarily why he was coveting the animal's captivation in the first place. The most determining difference in between the two modes of captivation is that the animal is out in the open while it cannot see what is exactly going on while the man's captivation underlies that he is perfectly aware.

We are no longer in the territory of *boredom as escapist snobbery*. In being delivered man is left hovering, therefore there is no escape the way an animal can do flapping its wings to fly away.

It is nonetheless striking though regardless for them to be in this closest proximity in their most different moments. Both are open to a closedness that obstinately refuses itself (both as a totality both individually) (Agamben 65; 2004). The difference is roughly that the animal does not care (because as it cannot see the open and does not have the word, it cannot simply care but for its captivation) while man has a possibility to care. Boredom of man, is the dream of the animal left in this purest state. Man is bored with his inability to be *just* like the animal.

The openness to a closedness marks the second structural moment of boredom – after the first one 'being-left-empty' struck –, namely 'being-held-in-suspense' (Agamben 66; 2004). Being is on the verge of experiencing its other modes, namely, its possibilities. But as it is held-in suspense in this second structural moment, it cannot go that way. The refusal is without a doubt a denial in this phase since the possibilities are completely inaccessible. Though this inaccessibility betrays the fact that they are present. The possibilities would be possible (to reach), if only they were accessible. If they were accessible, they could have been become actual experiences for the man to see and recreate in a different light, in a different but possible way.

In being indifferent other possibilities emerge. Insofar as they are just an emerging but not captured, the man is held in suspense. Conversely, as long

as the man is held in suspense the possibilities are just an emerging. A far off call for other possible configurations inaccessible, yet made known by their very being inaccessible (Agamben 66; 2004).

Boredom's middle stage is an announcement then. First boredom exposes bored man to possibilities. Then, secondly, it announces that they lie inactive¹⁴ (Agamben 66; 2004). That is the pure potential of boredom. This is a threshold where conceiving of a politics for these possibilities emerge hand in hand with their inaccessibility.

The thing held in suspense here is Dasein in the sense that it cannot reach the possibilities. Seen in this light, the possibilities can be said to be held in suspense as well. It is from now on the very possibility of Dasein of doing specific things out of itself, that is blocked off by this suspense. This deactivation is a matter of doing – of '*poter-fare*' (Agamben 66; 2004). Therefore, it is a question of '*pouvoir*'. The French word evoked here sends us to the matter of power as a *being-able-to-do*. The inactive possibilities confront us with nothing other than the political subject of power, as well as, the political *subject* – himself or herself. *Being-able-to-do* as a concept of power points to a rather complex take on power similar to the games of truth taken into consideration in the previous section. This is not some sort of

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Agamben makes a vital clarification at this point to say that the German verb "brachliegen" that he had translated, and I have borrowed from as, "to lie inactive" also means left unworked, uncultivated. It is at this point that the argument that 'a person's configuration of self is already a work', becomes undeniable as the very other possible works are denied to him or her.

power to be grasped, to be held, or to be transferred to another. It does not simply take a *powerful* blow to break free of whatever cage is holding man. On the contrary, bored man whose boredom might be resulting from this very fact, must have to do within the frame of the games of truth. The power games played here is not to imply to find the hidden truth for all to see, that the one whose truth was held in captivity could not in any way see or obtain, since he was somewhat corrupted in captivity (Foucault et al. 13-30; 2000).

The next challenge facing Dasein is to realise how the possibilities come to be possible in the first place albeit they still remain out of touch. Whatever makes possible the possibility of Being is the issue with the denial (Agamben 67; 2004). This denial is not an arbitrary choice though, it is not the determinism of possibilities that is searched here. It is simply, what makes possible all these possibilities the question here. The reason why is that, since we can state no proper content for Dasein, we cannot determine it as a specific possibility of *this*, or of *that*. We can only capture that, that which makes Dasein “*authentically possible(,) is a necessary compulsion toward the singular extremity of this making possible...*” (Agamben 67; 2004)

I must stress at this point that what appears here in this reading of profound boredom as *Dasein*, as human Being, can be captured as none other than a historical, specific singularity. A certain singularity appearing as such and

such in certain social, economic and cultural contexts. This singularity emerges from within a certain nexus formed at the meeting field of discursive and non-discursive practices where each node is in an actual relation of power with another.

Therefore, what at the beginning stage of the third structural moment appeared as a necessary determinism that supposedly determines the singularity of Dasein, is in fact, naught but the resulting subjective experiences that finally determine us as a subject. It is fundamentally the whole apparatus of separation that determined animal and man as distinct and separate in the first place. It is therefore of utmost importance that we seek not a necessary, which is to imply a historicity when all things said so far are considered, originary, singularity that is the root of all the other possible singularities. But we should realize that there is a set of singularities that are *as possible* as any other including the *current one*.

The disconcealment of the originary possibility in the withholding of all the inaccessible possibilities that the second stage of boredom summarily is (Agamben 67; 2004), is the very origin of all possibilities. While the deactivation or rather the disconcealment, put in better terms, is the key to understanding the making possible of access to all the other possibilities, I have already established that it is no longer a question of origin. The question of pure potentiality is on the very contrary the rendering possible of *equal* potential for all kinds of possibilities rather than privileging one of

them by making it ordinary and thus *more* possible. Put this way, pure potentiality is about making the access to other possibilities more democratic. Since, there is an equal amount of possibility in reaching them all(– considering we have gotten over the suspense though).

With that out of the way, it would also be important to realise that anything that is possible also falls under the domain of impossible. What makes it play between the possibility or impossibility of a certain possibility, is a *being-able-to* as well as a *not-being-able-to* (Agamben 67; 2004). We are within the domain of power games as we are situated at a specific point in a range of possible moves –to certain ends – in the game at any given moment.

In the animal's captivation there is an immediate relation between the animal and its disinhbitor that the animal can in no way suspend and deactivate(Agamben 68; 2004). A pure possibility, that is, a *simple* potentiality since the recent intervention that I have drawn from Foucault, does not exist within the animal's relation. The animal is always playful, but it does not make moves. It simply flows with the game. Therefore the animal can never be considered as having entered into a power relation with its disinhbitor, which is why I posited that there is no potentiality with the animal.

Profound boredom, coming first as a realisation then an announcement of

possibilities, is the ‘*metaphysical*’ operator that then operates the passage from the immediate world of the animal, to the world of man that is mediated by boredom itself (Agamben 68; 2004). It is because man is bored that he is aware of his potentiality, and it is exactly because it is within his power to have potentiality within his grasp that he is bored.

It is vital that boredom’s role in this is retained. Man’s passage to this understanding is not an immediately cheerful one, quite the contrary it was his understanding that he never understood any knowledge *just like* the animal never does. This is a burden that man takes on, since it happens through a suspension and deactivation of the animal’s relation with its disinhibitor, that man politically separated from the animal whose mode of captivity remains a dream, albeit one that is just being deactivated, is able to *do potentiality*.

The bored man’s power to seek out his potentiality springs from the very fact that he is bored and cannot play in full abandon like the animal can. Therefore, the passion that so closely tied with the animal world comes into play in one of two forms. Either as an act of renouncing one’s power – or claim to power as is generally the case with modern epics – or either as a full crash course of power that burns short and fast but bright – as is the case with the spectacles surrounding modern celebrities.

The economic model of rationality that can also be considered as one of the

two legs the modernity is founded upon tells us that the rational individual is dotted of perfect information. The rational individual can make the most rational choices in the face of all economic challenges whether it is his work he is offering, or whether it is different goods to choose from. Since he has all the information he needs he can calculate the consequences to the very end. This is what makes modernity so predictable and its economic base a good model procured to the rule of the state. The perfect information, then, is the information that is not withheld of the individual, the one that he has full access to, the one that is not concealed.

Yet it would seem that concealment is a big factor in defining the human world. What is concealed can be unconcealed and what is unconcealed presupposes a previous concealment (Agamben 69; 2004). Since here in the economic theory perfect information presupposes that all information is unconcealed it also presupposes that the information now in the open was previously concealed. Insofar as economics is the field where the play between concealedness and unconcealedness occur this field becomes a place that is open at the same time as it is not-open.

The irresolvable struggle that goes on between the disconcealment and concealment, between unconcealedness and concealedness is what defines the world of man so utterly torn by conflicting forces. This here is exactly what defines the internal struggle between man and animal (Agamben, 2004, s.69). This game of nontruth belonging to the truth, of the world of

animal leading to the world of man is how the struggle plays out. Therefore, man's boredom with his world leading him to the world of animal is the ground of this conflict. It is never possible for man to become *like the animal* for each time the animal is bordered thus the internal struggle would play anew. Man's boredom then, endures even the heaviest of all struggles by way of procuring the ground for man's *being remaining man* than his *turning into an animal*. This is the struggle of man, he swings between *of being bored* with his world and *of being fascinated* with the animal's.

Initially though, it had been established that the anthropological machine had determined what man is in opposition to, and in separation with the, animal. Since man is what man is, only after the animal is what man will no longer be, the internal struggle in between would mean that man is being sent from being to nothing. This belonging to each other of animal and man in their separation is what leads us to posit that being and nothingness belong to each other as well as truth and nontruth (Agamben 69; 2004,). It is this belonging that is at the base of the following conclusion.

Being – *Dasein* – is finally defined as “being held suspended in nothing [*Hineingehaltenheit*’, nearly the same word that describes the second essential characteristic of boredom]”. It turns out, that at the end of a long analysis of profound boredom, Being itself is inscribed deep within this boredom. Man has been said to be suspended in what has been come to be known as the second structural moment of boredom. It becomes clearer why

man is in so much boredom, even though sometimes there are no apparent reasons, now that the same mode of being suspended is used for Being as well. In being bored man is suspended as well as he is suspended in Being in the first place. Man lives, exists, goes on in the very particular way of being that is boredom at the same time it is man. Therefore whenever he comes to a plurality of possibilities, say basically about what to do or what to be, amongst which he finds himself in suspension, man is bored with Being in the first place. The inaccessibility as the source of another layer of boredom comes only after that. This inaccessibility of possibilities takes place in the second moment of boredom where being and nothingness seem the same. As a result, the possibilities, that we the bored people of man's world, cannot access seem to us as *nothingness* since they could as well be our way of *being*.

To sum it up, we are delivered to the concerns of others as well as to our own concerns in boredom's first moment. These possibilities made manifest and inaccessible at the same time make boredom's second moment. There is also nothingness in our Being which is essentially the same suspension as the second moment. Therefore, things in their inaccessibility make us feel as if we are empty, as though they were meaningless as a result of this emptiness. It makes us feel like nothing. This is precisely why in boredom other possibilities manifest to us, while seeming like they *mean nothing* as they remain inaccessible.

“Dasein is simply an animal that has learned to become bored; it has awakened from its own captivation to its own captivation. This awakening of the living being to its own being captivated, this anxious and resolute opening to a not open, is the human”
(Agamben 70; 2004)

The anthropologism first defined the animal within, and then withdrew it from man. Then man was left to wonder at the animal's captivation so fully taken in it. And then man was thrust into an abyss of boredom, that is so boring that, it is not even howling. In this stark passage from fascination to boredom, man has awakened himself as the animal who was passionately bound within its captivation, to the animal that has come to realise its *own* captivation within *itself*. The animal is no more, it is now bored man. And as such, the once fascinating captivation is now a thing of nostalgic past.

In boredom man realizes that he can no longer be *just like* the animal. But in fact he could never be just like the animal. This means that, what man had been longing for in the animal all this time, namely this captivation, is actually a hint at man's own captivation within himself as he is denied other possibilities. Metaphorically speaking, man has thus killed the animal since it is revealed now to him that he is being suspended among many possibilities denied to him. In – the metaphor of – '*killing the animal*' man has come to recognize himself as being denied these possibilities.

Now, man has learned to be captivated in realizing that he can never be captivated the animal way. So he killed all hopes of being as captivated as

the animal can be.

III / THE ETHICS OF BOREDOM

A. History and 'Singularity'

At this particular juncture I stop to look all the way back to note the humble beginnings of this thesis. I can draw a straight line from the beginning of the first chapter throughout the whole study to this chapter. It started as 'killing time' in the face of boredom on one's own. It quickly developed into a depiction of boredom's spiritual status. Then the connection between boredom's spirit and the spirit of political modernity had been established. Thereafter the study continued on to lay out how modernity produced and defined man in comparison to the animal, which was essential for the analysis of boredom in the final run. There had been different concepts for each section that served the purpose of an operator. Each section concluded with the help of a metaphor of 'killing' to make way for the next one.

When put that way, one can easily track one's steps back to the origins of the thesis.

I did not however craft this thesis by first designing a straight line on which I based each stage with each one giving way to the next one smoothly. That is however the way how I strategically chose to interpret it. The trick here is that I developed this take to prove a linear path up to this point. In order to give integrity to the whole story. The need for integrity appeared only after I

have come this far. This is not to imply that there is no continuity, quite the contrary, there is one. The continuity lies within the fact that there was a problematic long before the writing stage began. Throughout all the phases of researches, of taking notes, of putting it all together, that problematic served a crucial role; it defined my strategy in bringing the various pieces of the thesis together. It ensured that the pieces stuck together.

The whole process that I can basically sum up as such was not clearly devised but began by a problematization. After the initial problematization I have garnered all the necessary stuff to make it come all together according to my strategy. The thesis formed around that strategy.

Therefore what exactly happened was that there wasn't any straight line. This wasn't a linear work. Time did not flow that way during the thesis. It happened, beginning from more than one origin. All of these provenances came together in a finely crafted web, they at some points met with each other, and at each accidental meeting, some remnants were left over. The remaining parts were quickly integrated into each other. This integration required my specific efforts but sometimes, most of the time that is, it happened organically on its own. It wasn't smooth, but it wasn't all over the place. It was *as such* because the body of text, developed according to certain disciplined standards, were being remodeled in parallel with the design of the problematic. Even as I wrote parts, even as I am currently writing this particular passage the remodeling *took place* – and is taking

place.

The parts of this thesis were not written in a chronological way. It actually began its life from the exact middle of it. This is not to say that the beginning wasn't there at that point. What this means is that the material that was to become the first chapter wasn't as fleshed out as it is now. It couldn't be put in words the way it can be put now. The middle part of the thesis had an agenda towards which it would slowly march (– according to the main problem the thesis first put at the beginning). Therefore the first chapter, that was an incoherent conglomeration of separate works on their own, had to support this march. Which is why it was subjected to a transformation as the thesis were in the process of development.

In other words: It was the boredom as *meaninglessness* that first came to life, which was then followed by the *animal* alternative. And then, a proper beginning stage was set. To lay out the spirit of boredom to set the stage for what it means to us seemed like a good start. But it seemed that way only after the next part had been completely worked out. The thesis was coming on its own not in smooth and unbroken continuity but in bits and pieces coming around in contiguity. As each event was completed, the sections were set as units on their own. Now that the units were indivisible, meaningful on their own, they could come from the previous one in order to lead into the next.

This is precisely why when I look back at the beginning I can claim I see a beginning, an origin. An origin so pure that it gives meaning to the rest. An origin so decisive that it designates the direction the rest takes. An origin so defining that the rest can always be brought back up as though climbing back the stairs to pick up something left at home. This is not only, how this thesis had been done. This is also the way the modern history had been, and to this day is still being done (Foucault, 2008).

The history of the modern nation state is given as a linear one. It revolves around a problematic, that usually takes the form a mythical origin. The nation state myth lies there. It draws its whole legitimacy from that point. It is of utmost important that the origin stays that way. That it stays as pure, as untouchable as its most perfect moment. This history's most perfect moment is its origin. It draws its meaning from there. And if something were to happen to that core, the whole operation could be at jeopardy (Foucault. 9-29; 2008).

Let us pause a moment here to recapitulate a few things that have been said so far on boredom in their specificity: We don't have a specific content for Being. We cannot say for sure what it factually is, the way we can determine things at hand as 'this' or 'that'. But we can talk about what makes Being authentically possible:

“...those beings refusing themselves in their totality do not make an announcement concerning arbitrary possibilities of myself, rather insofar as this announcement in refusal is a *calling* [Anrufen], it is that which makes authentically possible the Dasein in me.”

(Agamben 67; 2004)

Being is not an arbitrary announcement of whatever possibility of its self it embodies. Or, whatever arbitrary possibility that a certain being embodies in announcing that it specifically is 'this' or 'that' being. However, in announcing the refusal, Being declares that it is made possible in the first place. It is that which Agamben puts as '*calling*' that makes Being possible in the first place. This announcing toward this calling – that possibilities do exist and that being in question is denied them – is what also announces the first possibility that renders Being possible. This originary possibility is also called the *potentiality* of Being to embody these possibilities. It does not point to an arbitrary choice among the possibilities though, it is “a *necessary compulsion [Hinzwingen] toward the singular extremity of this originary making possible*” (Agamben 67; 2004).

As it's been pointed out by this passage we can already recapitulate that Being's potentiality to, simply be a possibility is a necessary push toward a singular case that is also its origin. We can come to terms with what is being called in here as the '*singular*' origin, is a potential to be able to (be, or do) as well as a potential to be not (to be, or do). Since it comes under our purview only when the other possibilities that Being does not embody at this particular juncture in time, are specifically deactivated, the singular embodiment of our originary possibility is made known by this potentiality to being able not to embody the other possibilities. It is because a specific being constitutively has a potential-not-to be a specific possibility, that it has

a potential to be a singular possibility. This singularity is at first given to us as necessarily compelled to be the possibility that it is.

The thing to be recapitulated points to us what now comes under our attention as a singularity that is necessarily compelled to a certain specific origin. The singularity is an originary possibility that is necessarily the way it is.

The totality that has the beings situated within has been pointed out to have this ability to deny its constitutive beings their potentiality to other possibilities. While we have now also come to express that those beings embody an originary possibility as part of the totality. The other possibilities are simply there to declare what makes their being singularly possible. We do realize that it is singular cases when we realize a certain being. But we also point out that there were no other possibility for the specific being in question to be since the singular case that currently and originally is, is not arbitrarily chosen but necessarily attached to it.

Profound boredom reveals to the being bored its necessary singularity as the other possibilities are revealed inaccessible. It can be put this way: Being, or whatever specific being, does not have the freedom to arbitrarily choose a desired possibility for itself. Being's self is determined in a necessary compulsion – which is what profound boredom lays out before our eyes.

In discussing the philosophical tradition that approaches the question of human experience by attributing man a certain nature assumed to be universal, I had taken care to point out that I was not to retain that assumption,, given how I laid out how man comes to be constituted within games of truth. Though, there had been such claims from time to time. These claims admitted that a certain nature attributed to man had been said to be universal and given, they had been given to us as our default state of being. Man is attributed an admittedly universal nature. Yet there is more to add to that equation; Foucault says that these natures, are certain singularities that emerged under certain historical conditions that each had come to respond to the needs of these historical conditions on their own(Foucault 12; 2000).

In other words, the traditional claim that a certain human nature is a given universal constant, presupposes that this nature would remain thus under all historical conditions. But contrarily to this tradition's claim, man comes to be known as opposed to the animal within the games of truth that set the anthropological machine to determine and thereafter articulate him as his object of study. We have presented this to be so throughout the whole second chapter. This was what constituted man's boredom as animal. In profound boredom, man realized that this originary definition of his being as opposed to the animal was a singularity, set within a totalitarian framework admitted to be a necessary compulsion. But, it is this singularity that is set to be so that responds to a certain historical juncture.

It is therefore no longer the case where every singularity is necessarily thus and how they point to the necessary historical origin. But it is on the contrary that each and every singularity is a historical configuration according to and depending on the historical conditions and context based on which they had come to emerge as part of their respective discourses.

A singularity then, is not a necessary compulsion upon which History is built. Modern history came to be constituted as it has been laid out during the first part of this section. But a singularity is, given as a historical configuration depending on historical happenings. The way History is practiced as a discipline is nothing other than, the attempt to historically freeze these singularities and render them universal constants as necessary and historical compulsions.

To return back on track on how History comes to be constituted let us remember that previously to this discussion on singularities we had just said that modern history is founded upon a sort of a mythical origin that represents its most pure, perfect and meaningful moment. This moment would have that the individual, the specific being upon which the totality that History actually is would be as such, That is, History founds itself upon this necessary and pure origin as it founds itself upon the historical individual that has come to be the way it is as a necessary compulsion.

Singularity, can only be understood then, as it comes under our attention as the driving conflict between the claim that is a necessary compulsion that forms the basis of history, and the historical individual that it is based upon. The originary being is thought to be a necessarily originary being that is the vector of History. But as we realize, the admittedly originary being is nothing else than a specific historical configuration, in other words, a singularity.

III/ ETHICS OF BOREDOM

B. Totality and 'As Suchness'

We have laid out the bored individual's relation to the totality within which he finds himself left-empty and suspended, when profound boredom strikes. It was within a historical timeframe that man came to be defined in difference to the animal, as part of a political operation. This historical singularity were thought to be necessarily so. It is discovered in the previous chapter that bored man's being had the potentiality to be anyone of those possibilities that are revealed to him in his profound boredom. In the final instance though, the historical establishment of the totality, that the individual is part of, is actually realised through the individual bored man's being necessarily and originarily consigned to just one of those possibilities. Bored man's potentiality is consigned to a necessary and originary possibility instead of being left to his own arbitration. And it was also discovered to be within the domain of modern state's politics, to found that historical individual that the historical totality would be founded upon in return. In the long run, modern state's political technologies rested heavily upon the welfare and care of its population. Therefore man's profound boredom is to be taken into consideration within historical, political and lastly social spheres.

Bored man is associated with this totality that hangs him in profound

boredom where his being compelled to a necessary possibility while being denied to all the other ones. He comes to be associated, thus, as part of a belonging that is revealed to him, as part of the revelation of all the denied possibilities. That much, we had said throughout the analysis on profound boredom even before we came to realize profound boredom's relation to these historical, political and social spheres. Man is related to these spheres in denial of the other possibilities by his part as well as by the totality's part. Therefore, he does not belong with the denied ones but with the ordinary one. In the final run, bored man's relation with the totality whether it be a social, historical or political one, is a question of belonging.

It can be said then, that bored man comes to be a constitutive individual part of the totality, as the totality constitutes him by compelling his being-left-empty to an – oftentimes a historically narrative – origin, and thus declaring him an individual member of the total. In short, bored man belongs as an individual to the totality. Therefore he remains an individual within the totality as long as he belongs with it.

In the early parts of this study when boredom as meaninglessness was being discussed we had drawn a certain parallel in between the meaninglessness and the concept of 'situative boredom'. Let us recapitulate the fact that situative boredom meant the kind of boredom one feels when one is not feeling like one belongs to a particular place or group. At this point, it is vital to realize once again History's claim on meaning. As we had stressed

before, History points the individual to an origin that is at its most pure moment. This origin is what carries the narrative meaning for the individual.

When put in this way, it becomes clearer that situative boredom comes close to boredom as meaninglessness. Boredom as meaninglessness plays out as the kind of boredom one feels when a particular thing becomes meaningless for one. Therefore one can be said to experience this boredom when the Historical narrative becomes meaningless.

Furthermore, the immense number of spectacles surrounding us from all sides, trying to catch the corner of our eyes even in the slightest so that we may be drawn in them, renders uncertain, by way of fiction, the very seed of meaning in our history(Debord 112, 183; 1992).

Therefore when one feels that History's narrative on the founding origin is meaningless as a result of the immense amount of spectacles surrounding us this is felt as a boredom as meaninglessness. Which transforms in the end into a situative boredom as bored man in his most profound boredom may as well feel like he does not belong to the totality especially when meaning is nowhere to be found within it.

In other words, meaning functions like the operator that intermediates the individual's sense of belonging to the totality that he comes to be an

individual part of. Therefore when meaning is gone, or never was there to begin with, the individual does not belong to the totality.

This might in fact be why the totality denies its constitutive members access to other possibilities but on the contrary keeps them consigned to originary possibilities that it tries to keep universal as well. Because in making them able to access to other possibilities, it might as well risk its hold on the originary meaning as it was handed to the individual in the form of historical narrative, which was thought to be necessary rather than a singularity among many.

In discussing when and where man and animal were coming on their own as separate beings, we had realized a zone of indifference where, since both were being operated on in their separation from each other, it was impossible to identify them in a precise manner. Following that, it was posited that were this separation not to occur, or were it to be rendered invalid as part of a post-historical condition, the resulting being would simply be as such. It was noted that this referred *as-suchness* would be discussed later on.

Being such and such is the one being that is identified as belonging to a particular set by having a certain property or certain properties (Agamben 1; 2007). The striking thing here is not having certain properties, i.e, being of a certain ethnic origin. But it is the fact that by dint of being of a certain

ethnic origin being is carrying an identity through which it belongs to a certain set – to which identical beings that are identical by dint of having the same ethnic property belong as well. In this understanding, being such and such is being identified as belonging to a certain group by dint of these properties. Belonging is established as being is defined by a certain property, or by a certain number of properties.

In this light, man belongs to the totality as one individual part, as being a not-animal. The political constitution of man in difference from animal serves the political function of identification with the totality of the man, by way of belonging in it through his property of not being an animal. His belonging to the set, that is the totality, is established through his properties that set him apart from animal.

Being-as-such, however, is being taken into consideration with all its qualities, attributes, or finally, with all its properties (Agamben 1-3; 2007). Contrary to being such and such which is picked as part of the totality by having a certain property, being as such is not taken into consideration as having this or that property. Therefore it's not studied as its identification with a certain set. In the case of profound boredom then, being-as-such is not studied as being-identified with the totality since it is not coming into its own with only a certain number of its properties being highlighted.

In face of boredom as meaningless that serves as the situative boredom man feels like he doesn't belong to the totality. On the other hand being such and such is given here as the condition of belonging. Being as such does neither appear as being identified as man or as animal, nor as belonging to the totality. Being such, which is nothing other than what a singularity is in Agamben's terms, is not reclaimed just for another class or set to belong to, nor is it reclaimed by the fact of generic absence of belonging, but for the very fact that it does belong to itself in the first place (Agamben 3; 2007).

Killing time as a lifestyle had been presented before as a way to deal with boredom. But what we hear by dealing with boredom is not being done with it altogether. Killing time in shallowness could at best be an alternative to pass boredom. The bored individual trapped within his small world can at best hope to live through boredom instead of not living it at all (Svendsen, 2005). Therefore boredom as a lifestyle is not a question of aesthetical choice but it is the lifestyle that wrests free one's own nakedness, *as suchness* from the yoke of History.

The role boredom plays in this is a most valuable one. In profound boredom, bored man is revealed the many possibilities that he might have had opted for had he not have been consigned to a default one by the totality that he finds himself belonging to. Though in being bored (both as meaninglessness and situatively) man has his sense of belonging lessened if not outright done with. Therefore profoundly bored man cannot solely be described as an

individual's belonging to a totality. Since bored man's being is thus freed from emerging solely in belonging he is no longer to be considered in regards to his certain properties that made up the condition of the belonging. In this respect, bored man appears not as such and such but he appears as being as such.

III/ ETHICS OF BOREDOM

C. Community and 'Limbo'

Previously, we have come to say that bored man, plunged into profound boredom, was the one who found himself belonging to a totality of identical, yet separate beings. They are said to be separate in the sense that they remain beyond reach, since being-suspended in this totality was already laid out to mean that, bored individual cannot go to the other individual parts making up the totality, as he cannot opt for other possibilities. Being in suspense means that the bored individual can neither opt for other possible, say, versions of himself nor can he precipitate towards other individuals.

In being appearing as such, in being emerging from this totality as a singularity, bored individual no longer is an individual of the totality but a singular being on his own. This will be the founding line of the community.

Let us ask ourselves “where do these singularities come from” to be more specific, just like Agamben did when discussing the forming of community (Agamben 5-9; 2007).

Agamben proposes that the answer lie within the term *limbo*. In this region resides those who are beyond redemption, he argues, given that “the truly unsavable life is the one in which there is nothing to save” (Agamben 6;

2007). Limbo denotes a place where the residents are neither blessed, nor damned. They lack a greater vision, and therefore are exempt from the perils and rewards of that vision, whether it is a religious one or not. That is why the creatures of limbo are astray, they neither aim for the rewards of a blessed life, nor are they doomed to the perils of a hellish life. Therefore it can also be pointed out that the residents of limbo care little for the promises of a blessed life – whether such a life is claimed by a religious dedication or economic success is beyond discussion. They are not marked eternally by the pains of a hellish life like the residents of hell are though to be.

It is true then, that being in limbo implies being in between those two states. In discussing animal in the second chapter, I had addressed this issue, that the animal figure is neither consigned to hell nor is it admitted to heaven. It must be that animal is a creature of in between then. Since the animal figure came to life only after it had been removed and taken away from man, man can also find himself in limbo the way animal does. Especially given how bored man realizes his self, which is one among a number of singularities, when he metaphorically kills the animal as explained within the last section of the second chapter.

The state of limbo also implies a state in between an origin and an end since it is the region in between. In discussing the totality where bored man comes to be constituted as the bored individual, we have addressed several of its aspects. We have said that the totality was a historical, social and political

one. To sum it up, Heidegger's initial concern when discussing the nature of the animal and man, was the difference between the animal's relation to its environment and the relation man had with his world. He then continued to show how man was creating his world out of the environment and how he had to keep his world's integrity intact against all intrusions. This was the richness of the human world in contrast to the poorness of the animal's environment.

Heidegger saw the means to construct such a world throughout the establishment of society. Through such a social group man was able to, both construct and both maintain a work of art, to which the creation of man's world was an example. Social man was able to build his world and maintain it as the individual parts, that form the society, all had their parts in the work. It was the totality within which other individual parts will also come to be constituted in return. Therefore man's work on this totality is to be considered as a work on other individuals as well.

Yet Heidegger also took care to point out that it was possible only within the framework of history to make all the constitutive individuals of a society come together. History was what brought man together with his own kind in societies. History was the starting point for the establishment of the social totality as well as it was its aim in time. As modern history was made and practiced to originate from an initial origin, and as it was thrust into an endpoint in time in a linear way, so too does society's history progresses. A

social totality thus comes to be constituted as an historical totality too, since it was history's origin where the society was formed. Marching in a linear progression, society is bound to converge to a projected point on the line. That is, all totalitarian societies have a future project in front of them as well as they do have an initiating origin at their roots. This historical destiny is what renders the totality a historical one as well.

When the state of limbo is said to be in between a beginning and an end, we may hear, being in between a historical origin and a historical project that is the nation's destiny. Therefore, bored man is a singularity, emerging in between the historical totality's narrative beginning and end, belonging and partaking in neither. The state of limbo is a timeless zone, where one's experience of the passage of time almost feels like a non-linear one. It is a perpetual limbo in between the totality's narrative of origin and the mission it gives to its constitutive individual as a project. When put that way, the residents of limbo appear not to belong to the totality while they also appear as being suspended in profound boredom.

Augé's work dealing with what he calls the *non-places* of modernity borders the issue of limbo as well. According to his anthropological approach, *non-places* are places that are in between. They are those places that are neither the beginning of a journey nor its end (Augé; 1995). They don't mark the reason or the aim of an undertaking. But they are the kind of places that modern world is dotted with, they mark a passage in between what might be

the beginning and end of a journey. Rather than engaging their residents in instrumental undertakings in order to attain such an end, they rather have them waiting, in a perpetual and unclear zone. Airports, highways, terminals of all sorts are place to be counted as non-places(Augé; 1995). They are neither the necessary milestones that make for a narrative integrity, nor are they neutral enough to remain unreal compared to those milestones forming a narrative. Therefore they are neither hard-set places nor are they non-existing. This is exactly why they are non-places, that remain to be as they are regardless of their resident being's passage. Marc Augé marks them as places where singularities convene, not on a unified agenda, but on their way to other places. Non-places where the high speed flow of time halts to a standstill, are places of limbo, where the singularities come from.

It is also established various times that, bored people who find life meaningless are referred back to their most pure moment. That is, to the meaning the history says it holds for them. Though, it appears that people all around, are truly frustrated with all of the historical experiments so far (socialism, communism, liberalism etc.). Therefore it becomes all the more difficult to believe in the story that History is (Augé, 1995). The historical projects that such movements have presented to their followers as political programs to be followed failed, and to this day, still continue to fail their promises. As such, they fail to satisfy these singularities. What makes sense to the bored one is no longer the historical project that is to be rigorously followed, but it's these zones of limbo where such historical determination

does not take hold for a passing moment. Boredom as meaninglessness plays a vital role when it means that bored man, is no longer interested in such historical undertakings, but rather, prefers to remain in this indeterminate limbo.

The limbo is no longer a post-historical condition to be enjoyed when man is done altogether with the whole History. But rather it is this almost timeless zone that one finds oneself in every now and then one is in between. There, one is no longer bound to search for a meaning. It was also established that in zones of indifference man was left unable to be identified with anything at all while he was being worked upon. So, the limbo is where one is situated within one such zone where one can't be identified with anything at all. In limbo then, man is no longer consigned to his difference from animal just like he is not consigned to searching for a meaning.

It is within this limbo that singularities come to be. The answer to the question of provenance asked at the beginning of this section points to this state of limbo, where singularities emerge in between other states. It is a non-place where being, while remaining inside of a totality, also remains outside of the totality since limbo remains outside the totality's historical ambitions.

In the beginning of this section on community and limbo, I have also pointed out another aspect of the totality. In totality, individual parts

remained separate from each other.

The separation of an individual part is what makes the individual an individual in the first place. To be an individual, there must first be a separation of one from the rest of the world. On top of that, the individual must also be absolutely warded off from itself as well. In this double-separation lies the seed of how absolutely the individuals are separated from each other as well as from themselves(Nancy; 1990).

In discussing profound boredom, we had explained its structural moments. In the first structural moment one's being was delivered to its concerns as well as to the concerns of others, while being an individual part of the totality also meant that it remained separate from others. This absolute separation of the individual is what renders others out of reach. It is also what renders the many possibilities surrounding one's self inactive, inaccessible. Nancy advances the idea that when this separation is broken, one singularity precipitates toward the other and singularities come to emerge(Nancy; 1990). They come side by side. Singularities come to be together when the walls surrounding the individual does not any longer ward them off of each other and of themselves. This is primarily how the community of singularities is formed.

But the question remains; since it is within profound boredom that the individual is separated from each other and from themselves, doesn't the end

of the separation implies that the individual is bored no longer? The answer lies within the concept of limbo, again.

Agamben says the following on the matter:

“Neither blessed like the elected, nor hopeless like the damned, they are infused with a joy with no outlet.” (Agamben 5; 2007)

The residents of limbo are neither elected to heights of a blessed life nor are they hopelessly damned like souls in need of saving. It means that they are aware of the sufferings as well as the inaccessible rewards of life. Claiming none of those rewards, belonging to neither modes of living, nor partaking in the vicious cycles of suffering, the resident singularities of limbo remain neutral in respect to them. In this neutrality lies a sort of joy that the singularity can find no outlet to express. The community of the residents of limbo share in an inexpressible joy while remaining utterly rooted within profound boredom.

This community of bored ones in limbo is the community where the residents belong to neither, where they are neither this nor that, when they need not listen to the obligations of a totality to realize a given destiny.

III/ ETHICS OF BOREDOM

D. Killing Time, and 'Unworking'

The striking thing about our aforementioned state of limbo is that its residents can be considered to reside within a zone of indifference. Let us remind that these zones were given to us as those spaces where man is neither man properly called man, nor animal.

This foundational understanding drove the anthropological machine all the way down to the proclamation that man came to be constituted as such and such, which in turn was the basis of our analysis of profound boredom.

Bored man within profound boredom could be understood as the animal who had come to learn to be bored. This understanding is just a way of speaking out that, man came to be constituted as animal who learned to be bored. Within the state of limbo however, man and animal are not so different from each other and therefore, it is not within possibility to experience boredom founded upon the anthropological work performed upon man.

In other words, in limbo, bored man has the chance to realize that there is a work done upon him. To be more specific, the state of limbo offers the chance to realize that work and therefore to act upon that work.

In following in the footsteps of the man who spends time with this woman who seemingly has no interest in the man, in other words, in analyzing Marguerite Duras' "Malady of Death", Maurice Blanchot presents us both characters. Our man is desperately looking for a semblance of life. He is said to feel almost like he had tried everything, yet there seems to be nothing he would enjoy. He would feel unbecoming of himself whenever he feels like living. Throughout the whole story we witness this man arguing with the woman, though arguing with himself over the woman. Towards the end, the woman whispers to this man who seems to do nothing but get bored of himself. She whispers that the man had been struck with nothing else than the malady of death.

In more than one circumstances, the man is cited to be treading without purpose near a sort of metaphorical death. Our man struck by this malady cannot seem to get interested in anything, not to mention not seeming getting interested in his self as well. The descriptive feel of the whole book almost points to a sort of a lack of engagement. It is almost to imply that 'death' as given in this story coincides with the very spirit of boredom outlined in the first chapter. Nothing is serious and meaningful to the man. He drifts through time, not-so-interested in the world while trying to catch unto something through the woman.

This *unserious* mode of drifting repeated a number of times throughout the

first chapter on boredom's spirit is given to us as a malady in Duras' novel. Blanchot tells that community is not the place where one cures the sickness of the other. Community is nothing else than where one shares his malady with the other. It is nothing other than the simple exposition of the sick ones who lay side by side exposing their being sick with this malady to each other(Blanchot; 1988).

Regardless of how many times and how many different things the man tries, his boredom – that is his malady – never passes away. The more he tries to grasp the woman, she seems to be impossible to grasp, to wrap one's head around. The woman is fragile, she emerges as such, as being impossible to grasp easily. There is no defining or boredering her, she is as such, a singularity(Blanchot; 1988). All the while the man, is locked in as an individual, which is why he always try to have the woman acquiesce to his whims. Yet the more he tries to put the singularity in front of him into a context, the more he tries to define an identity which he will come to know the woman by, the more she eludes him. The community we have here is not therefore a community where the malady can be spread – if we are to consider the spreading of the malady as a metaphor for 'not sharing but forcing the malady'.

To share the malady would be to accept it as such, instead of trying to force one's terms on it, just like the man tries to define the singularity that the woman is, instead of simply accepting her for what she is, that is *as such*.

The community of bored ones is not simply the community where boredom is shared in between, but it is where bored man first comes to terms with his boredom instead of trying forcefully to shape it into something else.

The individual that we established through Nancy's intervention as doubly-closed off of the world, is separated from other individuals as well. This is a *must* for the constitution of the individual. Therefore it is not a surprise to find the bored individual standing inside this mass and complex web separated of all the things surrounding him. The individual is paralyzed within the totality of beings. This '*being hung up*' within the totality seems to comply Nancy's absolute separation. Though what we must hear of the absoluteness of this separation is not the sole fact that individual parts are separated from each other; they are separated from themselves as well.

We had said the same thing earlier on when profound boredom was in the way of analysis. We had established that in the second structural moment of profound boredom – which were then going to be discovered to be the general state of Being – where possibilities about *oneself* and about the *selves of others* were made manifest while remaining out of reach. The individual is revealed that he or she is completely and absolutely separated from other versions of his or her *self*, while remaining aware but away from the possibilities of others. Others to him, or to her, seem unable to access their possibilities as well. In the absoluteness of separation we find the

individual's inability to communicate with others by way of proximity. It simply seems impossible for the individual to zero in to another one while remaining firmly rooted to this totality.

Whenever there is talk of community then, there is a struggle against this totality, which would rather have its individuals tucked safely within their '*being hung up*' states. Conversely, the forming of a community would endanger the integrity of the totality that keeps its individuals further away from other possibilities.

It becomes clearer in this light that, community is formed from within, and outwards of, the totality. Since the totality was a social project, a community is a struggle, a resistance even, against the onslaught of society. The totality was made of homogenous individual parts who all carried the same historical seed as meaning and as a result, who were all projected towards the same historical end. The community is the place of emerging of singularities who are not necessarily consigned to the default and historical origin, and therefore who don't have to carry out its project towards the dictated historical end. These singularities come together not in that they chose to come together, but because they emerged as such. They were not categorized according to distinct qualities borrowed from the historical narrative. They do not feel necessarily obliged to carry out the responsibilities of such a narrative.

The community of bored ones is not solely the community of bored people coming together to find respite from the totality. It is the coming together of these singularities in that they play upon each other as well as *themselves*.

How do one singularity play upon its *self* or upon that of another one while remaining a paralyzed part of the totality? In this respect, it seems that community is only there for the sharing, rather than the curing of this paralysis that is boredom, just like Blanchot mentioned it is (Blanchot; 1988).

How does the community pulls singularities together then? The answer lie not in the things of the world within the totality, but in the fact that they are tied to each other within this web. The community is not achieved through a singularity playing upon another one. It is a singularity pulling and tugging at the threads so that the thing at the other end of the line tingles. To be more specific, a singularity acts out upon the threads, that is, the relationships that binds one or more to each other. It might be impossible for the singularity to totally reach out to another one within the totality but it doesn't mean that this singularity has no way to affect what he or she desires to affect, from where he or she is. This is how a particular relation between singularities comes to be formed as the basis of a community, against the individualizing totality that would rather keep them apart – and separated from each other.

Nancy's *désœuvrement* comes into play at this point. *Désœuvrement* points

to a certain process that incorporates the crumbling down of the walls surrounding the individual (Nancy; 1990). These walls are metaphors for the absolute separation that keeps the individual apart from the rest. *Déseouvement* then, is how the separated individual comes to bring the walls down, that is, brings the separation to an end. *Déseouvement*, or *Unworking* in English, carries within it 'work'. Unworking however, does not translate to not working. But rather, it has something to do with the work done upon the individual. It is related to the very work that birthed him as the individual. In that, it is undoubtedly related to the games of truth that constitutes the subject man – or in other words, man properly called man according to the anthropological machine. Unworking is, as a result, a process where one first realizes one's *being worked upon*. In that, unworking can be said to be an operation in that *zone of indifference* summoned various times by Agamben – as that place where man is being worked upon to be determined as carrying an identity.

Unworking is not the reversing of this work though.

On the contrary, it becomes an option when man comes to recognize his *self* as the product within these games of truth, when he realizes that at one point, within such a zone where it is almost impossible to differentiate between *this* or *that* – between *man* and *animal* to be more specific – he had been worked upon to be called *man* – and not *animal* – by the anthropological machine. Unworking is neither man collapsing back unto

animal, nor is it man refusing to work just like he had been subjected to one such work and defined as such&such as a consequence. Unworking puts man, or it puts a particular singularity at this particular junction in time, in another path where he or she recognizes that as a result of *being worked upon*, it is quite possible to *work upon one's self* on one's own as well. Unworking and the inoperative community to be born thereafter refers us to a community made not out of individuals reduced to a certain aspect of theirs by the separating totality, but out of singular beings within their totality. Unworking begins only after man recognizes its *self as such*.

For Agamben, this *déseuvrement* (Agamben; 2004) lets a singularity out of the entrapment in between *man&animal*. *Déseuvrement* on a larger scale leads to a community where singularities finally come to appear as such rather than the categorical as such&suchness of totality's individuals. The latter condemns its individual parts to a social totality with a unified historical agenda while the first – reached through *déseuvrement* – is naught but singularities being free of these burdens. They, according to Agamben's observation, lead their daily lives in a constant management not for the sake of a destined end but for the sake of the present. Therefore it can be said that they remain in a perpetual limbo the whole time.

The perpetual limbo is by definition a zone of indifference as we have put before in this chapter. As a result, singularities living in this limbo can and will always work upon themselves, in other words, they will *unwork* the

historical or social work done upon them by the totality. It presents us with a new way to engage the games of truth by way of enabling us to *unwork*.

We had said that History told us a linear tale debuting from a mythical origin projected towards a dictated historical end. And that its individuals were carriers of the seed of origin . This only meant that these closed off individuals were to follow that route. Yet here we had bored individuals plaguing the world like the malady of death they so desperately carried. In this perpetual *unworking* the residents of limbo – as put by Agamben and quoted before in this chapter – were drawing from a limitless well of joy. Therefore, the bored individuals who were coming to the realization that they were consigned to these so-called *originary* possibilities, who were coming to recognize themselves as historical singularities were also in a perpetual play between this limitless joy and this malady of death that is the spirit of boredom haunting the world.

In other words, we had the bored individuals drifting through the passage of time restlessly in an attempt to kill time. Though from this '*killing time*' to ease the boring passage of time, unable to latch onto a thing of interest, we have finally arrived to another aspect of boredom. The bored individuals of the Historical totality they do not only kill time to deal with boredom. Profound boredom puts them in such a position that bored individuals who are now regarded as historical singularities, they do also kill Time to form communities for and of themselves.

From the restless killing of time, through the recognition of singularities we are now stading next to the metaphor of killing Time. Killing Time comes to us in the sense that History's hold on the bored individual is beginning to pass. In killing time, the singularity is done with the linear modern History. It is also done with the totality that founds and is founded upon this History.

And through a final passage from the social totality to the community these singularities achieve a radical new way to engage their perpetual daily lives in stark contrast to the bored drifter in time.

It is possible to show this play between '*killing time*' and '*killing Time*' with the help of the terms '*consecration*' & '*profanation*'. Let us begin by rewinding backwards a little. We have established History's firm claim on individual meaning through its narrative. We had also pointed out that *boredom as meaninglessness* might come to us as – and when – such a narrative might lose its meaning for us. This was also stressed as endangering one's own personal narrative as Lars Svendsen so keenly showed when he said in “Boredom as Meaninglessness” that the individual crafts for himself a consistent identity through self-narration. The individual narrates his own personal history as his identity(Svendsen; 2000). When History's meaning is lost to the individual then he is delivered to crafting a meaning on his own, through his personal experiences.

History's claim is achieved through the intervention of a method that could be named as '*consecration*'. The consecration is the act of confiscation to remove something that was until that moment accessible to the most common (people). The consecration is a holy gesture. More specifically, it is an operation that renders the thing thus removed '*sacred*' so that the aforementioned common man cannot access it anymore. What can be done in response to this removal of what once was accessible now rendered the property of an elite, would be an act of '*profanation*'. This gesture in opposition to the first gesture of consecration would profane the thing so rendered sacred. In this sort of defilement the thing would be rendered common and accessible again. To profane, then, is a political action aimed to render the thing inaccessible accessible (Agamben 73-92; 2007).

It might be theft, but it might also take the form of simple exposition.

To expose would mean that there is a platform for this exposition and it would also require spectators. It is those spectators that would see the exposition, they would see the thing naked. In nakedness, the thing and the spectator would lie side by side. Why because could there be any other meaning for a community than to lie side by side in silent exposition to each other. This is sharing for the community in its most simple way for the community (of two lovers) to see (Blanchot 49; 1988).

Put it simply, the community that do not in any way seek to cure the malady

of death&boredom is the community where its member singularities are laid bare side by side in simple exposition and sharing.

Therefore profanation cuts to the heart of the nexus of relationships that swirls around the supposedly core essence of the narrative. In exposing the emptiness in nakedness, profanation aims to expose it for all to see.

The political action profanes History, in wresting its hold on personal meaning the fiction is revealed *as such*. The story is not about this or that property, but it is about being *as such*. Therefore it does not promote a belonging based on properties. Love, is wanting the other being as such, with all his or her properties. In this sense, the singularity is finally pulled free of the *whatever* in the sense that “*being, it doesn't matter which*”. The singularity can now finally desire “*whatever*” in the sense that “*being that always matters*”(Agamben 1-2; 2007). Profanation is this chapter.

There is no longer a question of true boredom that means that we the community of bored people can not find peace in a *truer* boredom as had been presupposed in the beginning by Kracauer. Trifling with *whatever* thing that the individual is indifferent towards is no longer the case. The bored individual kills time with *whatever* he/she comes by in order to arrive to the point of killing Time with *whatever* he/she desires. The community is this passage from killing time in just *any* manner to killing Time in just *the* manner.

III/ ETHICS OF BOREDOM

E. Ethics and the 'Practices of Self'

The establishment of a community played a central role in the previous chapter. Our community that we might finally opt to call the community of boredom – with good reason – is where singularities come to emerge out of boredom. The concept of *unworking* – backed up by the political meaning of *profanation* – was the operator to help us out of the totality into this community.

Nancy says that once the separated individual is no more, the emerging singularity is, the '*passion of Being*'(Nancy; 1990). What is striking in this description is that earlier in the beginnings we had argued that the spirit of boredom, now covering the face of the whole world, dated back to the underlying struggle between interests and passions. The thing to retain out of this struggle was that, to render the world a safer place for the common lot suffering from the excesses of the unchecked nobility, who frequently followed their passions at the expense of their people, modernity installed a system where everyone, even the once-suffering common people could follow their interest without fear of the ruling elite's passionate excesses.

What had resulted from this operation was what we had come to discuss as the '*totality*' all along. Then, the following passage happened; the interest-

following, hung up, profoundly bored individual came to be the singular one, endlessly joyful though perfectly aware of the sufferings of others within the community of boredom. Unworking was the essential step in this passage.

In other words, since Being was given to us – towards the end of Heidegger's notes and quoted through Agamben in the late parts of the second chapter – as what we had encountered in the second structural moment of profound boredom. The general state of *Being* was *being hung up* – aware though eternally away of other possibilities and of the political conflict ruling the world.

When the community of boredom is established though, we have arrived at the point of singularities rejoicing in the simple *passion of Being*, blissfully joyful, able and willing to follow their desires even though in the face of the political conflict which was the essential concern of Heidegger. It is probably because of the fact that the political question still remains that, this joy of theirs knows no outlet.

To better come to terms with this fact would require us to better understand the political implications of profanation because, it will help us further this chapter on Ethics to its conclusive moment.

Therefore I will tend to recapitulate on what had been said so far in a

simplistic manner:

Profanation is the very act of rendering what was consecrated – taken away from the use of man – accessible again. Profound boredom that is mainly due to totality's hold on its individual parts is simply the revelation of other possibilities of one's *self* as well as other ones' *selves* made manifest by way of remaining inaccessible. What pushes *Being* – for which we don't have a proper definition – into context is that it embodies a potentiality for possibilities. Let us note that although the totality would rather have that *potentiality* latch unto the origins it sees fit the perspective gained through the understanding of historical singularities tells us that this origin must not necessarily be the origin. The totality's originary possibility is simply whatever one – in the sense that *being that doesn't matter which*. A singular *being* in return then is the one that is a precipitation towards *whatever* – in the sense that *being that always matters* – possibility. Therefore the passage from a bored individual to a joyful singularity is achieved through the act of profanation.

Singularity can be put in these terms then; a singularity is the substitution of whatever possibility originally consigned with *whatever* possibility (made manifest within profound boredom) profaned from the wrest of the totality – which was a political action altogether.

We have also laid out how the community of boredom comes to be

constituted of these singularities. Let us also recapitulate that *Unworking* was the vital part that played this passage from whatever possibility to *whatever* one.

It is evident that *unworking* refers to a form of *work* on one's *self* – since it doesn't mean not working or reversing the work at all. It is the sort of work one can enact upon oneself and maybe hope to enact upon another one through a conscious relationship with another singularity. It is therefore, in the last instance, a *work* performed upon oneself on one's own.

From the political shores of the profanation we now fully border the ethical aspect of this study on boredom. Ethics is an issue regarding character. It is a joy to return to the domain of Foucault at the moment after all the operative concepts evoked from various thinkers have carried the study to its pinnacle.

According to Foucault, ethics is an engagement that one enacts on one's own with oneself. His study took him to observe a wide range of moral options, moral systems all put in place at different junctions in time – whether the morality of the Ancient Greek or the moral systems of modernity (Foucault; 1997). Throughout such a long study Foucault observes certain methodic approaches one adopts in constructing a sort of a conscious experience with the moral world surrounding him. These subjective experiences form the basis of how one's conducts and behaviors are constituted.

In detailing the *boredom as meaninglessness* which was primarily due to the emerging of objects as part of respective discursive fields of knowledge we had put the concept of *games of truth* into play. It was within these games of truth a subject would go into a subjective experience as part of which he or she would emerge both as a subject and both as an object throughout which he would maintain certain conscious experiences that he would come to know under certain names respective discourses had dubbed as. It was according to the non-discursive practices surrounding these experiences the subject would form his own judgements on how to act and behave in given situations. It is clear that we are alluding to a certain experience one goes with one's self in here.

Foucault shows us time and time again that one's own relation to oneself goes into the domain of ethics (Foucault; 2000). It provides for the basis upon which one builds one's entire judgement&value system regarding the morality that surrounds him, in this given particular junction in Time and Society. Foucault's take on these ethics also provides for the issue of freedom. There is no 'spreading one's wings' and 'flying away' as it has been proved to be the case as man envied animal. Animal was told to be the one who is lost in captivation in its disinhibitor while man in difference to animal was only able to comport himself towards it.

The animal mode of romanticized freedom of letting itself be captivated,

taken away is no longer the issue here. Were man to let himself, to let his *self* taken away in such romantics it would only mean to consecrate his self. If man desires to let his *self* be out of reach, be inaccessible as all consecrated things are that is for the same reason why he dreams a post-history where Philosophy won't be needed at all. The boredom of the matter is, that, getting away, being taken away, being captivated, these flights of fancy, they all do represent bored man the chance to silence his own relation to his *self*. It is a voluntary oblivion of one's self since bored man desires whatever there is.

Though whenever we arrive at the prospects of a community of boredom of singularities we are within the domain where man is desiring *whatever being*. In other words, in establishing a relation with one's self, one has the ability to *work* upon one's *self*. Though the model of flight of fancy would only mean to imitate animal, who, was defined as part of the work of anthropological machine that would rather define man properly called in difference to animal, that is man in his clear cut qualities presented as such&such – allowing certainly to list him as part of a categorical identity. To give in to the envy of the animal would translate to give in to *work* of the anthropological machine that the totality so plentifully makes use of.

On the other hand, Foucault's take on ethics enables in man the ability to *work* upon his *self* on his own rather than adhering to the *work* done upon him. The first case clearly makes a reference to *unworking* the latter while

the latter would certainly imply to forfeit of any potential relation one might get with one's *self* in an attempt to enact the first. *Unworking* presents an ethics that Foucault called in his own time as “*practices of self*” to denote one's working on his *self*.

In this sense, Foucault believes that one may achieve to get into a relation of power within the regime of truth where the games of truth are played by way of working on one's own as *practices of self*(Foucault; 2000).

Therefore, we are no longer situated, within the spirit of boredom, where bored man appears as nothing other than a soulless being. But instead we are in the domain of singularities precipitating themselves toward possibilities they may explore by working on themselves.

Our modern world is no longer this soulless rock upon which the spirit of boredom rests. But it is within the confines of this world that the community of boredom finds itself a place beyond the reach of the passage of time, a place of limbo so to speak, where its resident-members can joyfully practice on themselves.

The world is no longer boring because nothing seems meaningful. The personal narrative that one brings along as one goes on through life is no longer threatened by this mode of *boredom as meaninglessness* since the practices of self imply also how one can make a meaningful narrative out of

oneself as though one's self were the product of a fine craftsmanship.

Bored man is no longer constrained between having to accept being man properly called man and coveting animal. Bored man can now opt for *whatever singularity* as he works his practices on himself.

More importantly, Kracauer's revolutionary redemption from boredom might not be what one has to expect all his life while drifting through its passage without ever feeling neither interest nor passion at all. Practices of self enable for the one to work on oneself without the need for outside intervention, certainly not redemption. Bored man is not seeking to return back to animal, which is nothing but another historical mode of being now being dissected away from man as a result of anthropologism. But instead, bored man establishes a finely crafted stance from within him through his *own* practices.

All the traditional arguments against boredom seem to fail us at this point. Boredom simply cannot be taken into consideration with these terms. If nothing else, boredom in its most profound state is but another operator concept to carry the discussion to this conclusive moment. Profound boredom is the moment where a great deal of ethics are concerned. These ethics dubbed "*practices of self*" are but ways to access *whatever* possibility once inaccessible.

If nothing else, *practices of self* within the context of profound boredom are nothing but substituting the work done upon the individual within a totalitarian agenda by a singular work done by oneself on one's own.

CONCLUSION

Boredom is probably one of the most stubborn afflictions of political modernity. In studying this particular affliction I have taken care to emphasize different aspects of the problem.

At first boredom has been laid out as a spirit that covers and governs the world of common man. The word thus so common and gray has long been believed to be haunted by it after all. Boredom was not only imagined to be a spirit. It has been imagined as nestling in one's soul as well. A more analytical approach has been made to list certain types of boredom among which the one called situative boredom was the foremost one in this study.

Boredom's spirit has thus been laid bare in relation to magic, interests and passion. After that point, an agreement has been reached stating that boredom's spirit had its roots in the spirit of political modernity. The themes summoned so far indicated that the bored man does nothing but killing time to cope with this mode of boredom.

Deepening the spiritual silhouette of boredom was an attempt to fill it with meaning. This process started by first showing that boredom is mainly experienced in one's daily life as a form of meaninglessness. This was quickly accompanied by the proof that the bored man himself appears as meaningless as well in the regime of truth he finds himself in. This was due

to the fact that what appears as an object, with solely a technical context, rendered it meaningless or too limited in its meaning. It was followed by the fact that man appears in his functionality in the meeting point of discursive and non-discursive practices as well.

Therefore the issue with this mode of political boredom was to outline the process that made man politically defined as a man surfacing as the object within a totality. In outlining man's political determination, this time we have faced man experienced by what I ought to call boredom as animal.

Throughout the chapter on animal, emerged boredom's relation with history itself. Practicing snobbery in the face of boredom had come to mean the same thing as practicing joy in the face of death. In boredom that man feels while longing the animal's not-boring environment, man faces his own concerns as well as the concerns of others.

Thus boredom has to be taken into consideration not solely as a form of killing time, but also as a form of killing Time. That is, as a form of practice to the work History had done on the individual. In this respect, boredom comes off as a possibility of passage from a historically boring world to a more desired world.

In this political light of the matter boredom's ethics has been put under analysis to seek other ways of engaging the world full with passion and

community rather than a not-so-interesting dull world within a totality.

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