Power and Globalization

Patterns of order in a globalizing world

vorgelegt von

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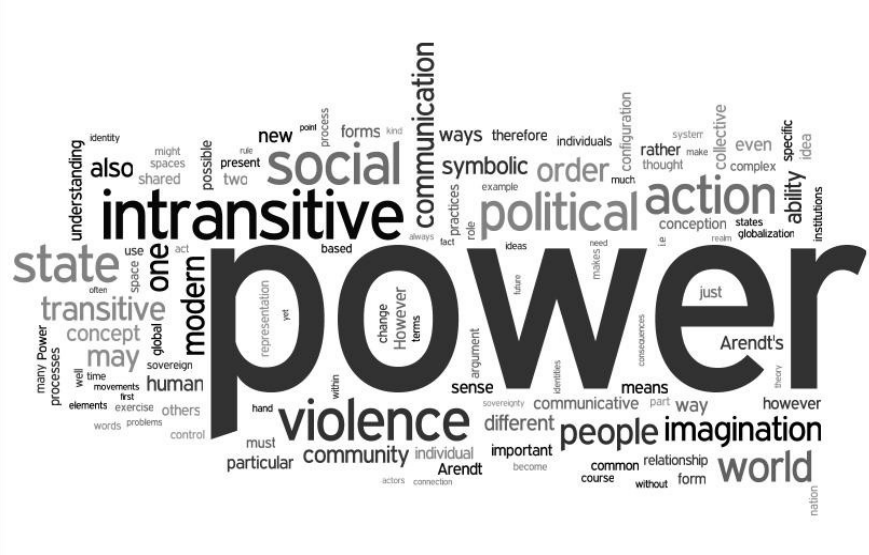

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1. The theoretical challenge of power

Bruno Latour once dismissed power as “the illusion people get when they are obeyed” and argued for abandoning the concept altogether, for it failed to address the central question of how and why the energy transmitting orders through space was generated (Latour 1986: 268). And indeed, power debates have focused on the connection between order and obedience rather than on conditions upon which the possibility of issuing an order depends. The condition of power as the power to command is something else and not itself power. In a significant deviation, Hannah Arendt made the very creation of a common space of action the defining element of power. To her, power was the speaking and acting in concert which brought the common space of appearance into being (Arendt 1958, Arendt 1971). Power, it could be concluded, is not just a contested but a somewhat arbitrary and, in any case, complex concept. Nonetheless, the concept is being recovered time after time. Apparently, it touches upon something, which is intuitively perceived as important. The concept speaks to our emotions, it seems, signalling that the phenomenon in question is considered important.

My pursuit of the issue of power results from a twofold frustration. On the hand, theoretical debates on power never seemed quite intuitively accessibly to me until I came across Hannah Arendt presenting a concept of power, which matched my intuitive understanding. I have been struggling since with the question, how my intuition could fall so far from that of most people. Or, put more abstractly, what Arendt's idea might have to do with the more conventional understandings of power that would justify using the term power for something as different as speaking and acting in concert. The second frustration is shared by many others and concerns the inadequacy of conventional political science concepts in tackling the complexity of the contemporary world. It has become commonplace to begin any analysis of politics with a statement of this frustration and numerous new approaches and conceptions have emerged.[1] Transcending the state as an implicit cognitive and normative framework, however, has remained difficult (Schlichte 2005: 26) and an alternative and collectively shared framework for thinking has yet to emerge. It seems, that global ordering is so complex that, while we need adequate concepts to understand it, it cannot be understood through a single concept or set of processes (Urry 2003: 15). In my analysis, therefore, I will draw heavily on the wide variety of alternative approaches to understanding the complexity of the contemporary world, for they contain and reveal some dominant features of processes of globalization. At the same time, I hope to be able to make a contribution to these debates on adequate conceptual frameworks by indicating what role an adjusted conception of power may be able to play.

1 Too many to introduce here in fact. Notable ones, which seek to transcend the state-centredness of political science, include James N. Rosenau's (1991) concept of "turbulence", Saskia Sassen's (2006) analysis of "global assemblages", Manuel Castells's (1996) idea of "flows" (Flows) and Appadurai's (1996) suggestion to speak of "scapes" in order to capture emerging forms of interaction. I will return to some of them later in the argument.

I pose the question how an enriched understanding of power contributes to understanding complex processes of globalization. I will argue that by reconsidering power we can gain a better understanding of the contemporary world and of the kind of change we are witnessing. I will therefore also have to consider how power is represented in our idea of the state and, consequently, what the nature of the change circumscribed by globalization is. This is, in a strict sense, this work's contribution to political theory and, thus, will form the core of the text. Based on these arguments a new perspective emerges on the ways we shape our future. The proposed framework is analytical in that it does not prescribe any particular course of action. There is a critical potential in the proposed framework of thinking, however, as it suggests different forms of order each of which will yield different consequences. It cannot in itself provide the normative framework from which to judge which is preferable, but it provides an alternative for speaking about these forms of order – all of which are empirically relevant and widespread. It takes up the task, than, of critically re-evaluating existing depictions of reality in order to consider under-represented aspects of reality and present ways of capturing them (Shapiro 2002).

The following introduction comprises three parts. The first briefly considers the contemporary world and indicates why reconsidering power can enhance our understanding of processes of change. By way of this description, I pose, the hypothesis of my argument. Consequently, claims made may only be shown to hold throughout my argument. The second part considers the way this argument can be made and the limitations that result. This includes some methodological considerations as well as reflections on the normative and cognitive assumptions underlying the argument. The final part provides an outline of the argument which can serve as a guide for readers through the text and which includes a suggestion for a possible if challenging alternative reading order.

Puzzling patterns of power

Our world has been described in myriad ways and globalization has become somewhat of a catch-all term for debates on contemporary change. Simply put, globalization may be defined as denoting "the expanding scale, growing magnitude, speeding up and deepening impact of transcontinental flows and patterns of social interaction" (Held/McGrew 2002: 1). It is, in the broadest sense a stand-in for the idea, that the contemporary world is characterized by a variety of real historical transformations with regard to global interconnectedness and dependence (Dürrschmidt 2002: 12). Many authors have developed more refined perspectives. Manuel Castells (1996) introduced the network society characterized by global flows. Arjun Appadurai (1996) suggested to think of different kinds of global scapes, in which interactions followed different rules. Zygmunt Bauman (2000) opposed the solidity of modern societal arrangements with "liquid modernity", in which all relations become flexible and are continually changing. Michael Hardt and Antonio Negri (2000, 2004) described Empire as the ruling of a specific logic, opposed by the illusive Multitude. John Urry (2003) draws on complexity theory to understand the manifold complex interactions that result from contemporary change. These, and many other approaches, are partly

complementary and partly contradictory, especially with regard to the newness of the observed phenomena and the timing of the beginning of the process of globalization. They seem to agree, however, on a number of important features of globalization.

Firstly, it has become commonsensical to argue that globalization induces significant dynamics leading to change which requires a rethinking of the very ideas through which we understand the social world. This is apparent, for example, in the frequent references to a reconfiguration of time and space, which are the basic conditions of human interaction. Both attain new roles as there are compressed (and elongated). This is prominently expressed by David Harvey in *The Condition of Postmodernity* (1990), which has become the reference point for thinking about the time-space-compression associated with globalization. Secondly, it is widely agreed that globalization is multidimensional, affecting all areas of human life, and global in character, affecting everyone and every place. But, it does not do so in the same way and to the same extent everywhere and for everyone. Globalization is a fundamentally contradictory change, leading to more interaction and less, dissolution of identities and reaffirmation, integration and fragmentation of political systems, economic development and deprivation. This ambivalence is expressed, for example, by the term fragmegration coined by James Rosenau (1990, 1997). Given this ambivalence, it is helpful to think of globalization not as a single process but as a number of related processes. Thirdly, most authors agree that the ongoing change can only be adequately understood if we break conceptual jails and find new concepts for what is going on. Hence the remarkable creativity, which has resulted in many new concepts geared at semantically capturing the complexity inherent in globalization.

Finally, in almost all of the literature on globalization there is a strong sense, that the changes are most severely affecting arrangements of power. The focal point of political science traditionally being the state, the changes in the way states can and will act because of economic interdependence, the emergence of new actors on the political stage, and the increased complexity of social interaction are most often cited as an indicator of this change. Three interlinking scenarios are debated. The first is now almost entirely discredited, but had some influence in the early 1990ies, namely the notion that the state, and therewith power as we know it, is disappearing.[2] Apart from being thoroughly discomforting, this claim has been proven wrong empirically – states are still around and not uniformly getting weaker either. So is power. The second scenario takes this into account and looks at the kinds of power shift*s*, that we might be witnessing. The presumption is, that actors other than states are emerging, which exert power and must be considered in order to understand contemporary governance arrangements.[3] This perspective has done much to help us understand, how globalization is

2 Martin Albrow's *Global Age* (1996) is sometimes quoted as proposing such a view, because of Albrow's radical critique of the nation state. But even his critique is more differentiated. In all full radicality, the position, that the state will simply disappear, has probably never been taken. Still, many analyses still begin with the reaffirmation that such a view would be absurd and that the state still has a role to play.

3 This is probably the most frequently taken position. Many actors have been identified, such as NGO's, private actors and corporations and international organizations (Mathews 1997, Strange 1997, Keck/Sikking 1998 , Cutler 2002 etc). Governance research, large and important as it may be, is for the most part a variation of this position.

being shaped and regulated. However, it has also begun to reveal some weaknesses in the underlying conception of power, which is usually a variation of Max Weber's famous notion of power as "the probability that one actor within a social relationship will be in a position to carry out his own will despite resistance, regardless of the basis upon which this probability rests" (Weber 1968: 53). Actors matter, even if they frequently fail to get others to do what they want or at least not do what they do not want. A third scenario has therefore emerged, which claims that power itself is being reconfigured. In the first instance this means, that power should no longer be reduced to simple command-obedience relations but works in much more complex ways, through rule-setting, arguing and so on. Power may also be exercised anonymously and without clear hierarchies. New tools and mechanisms of power emerge and these must be considered as new phenomena.[4] Interestingly, the concept of power itself remains as illusive as ever and one might argue, that even the most sophisticated understanding of power developed in globalization theory is only a variation of concepts of power that have been debated in political theory for a long time and, therefore, is not new at all.

My argument is not in opposition to any of these scenarios per se, in fact, they are quite compatible with it. I agree, that power is an adequate entry point for re-conceptualizing our vocabulary of the common world and that globalization is at least in part characterized by a reconfiguration of power. I will argue, however, that the concept can only be helpful if we realize its full complexity. Gerhard Göhler's distinction between intransitive and transitive power, provides the adequate starting point. Göhler argues, that despite their seeming disagreement, Max Weber's and Hannah Arendt's concepts of power refer to the same phenomenon, merely highlighting different dimensions. Transitive power, of which Max Weber's conception is but one example, focuses on the ways actors influence each other. Intransitive power, which is much closer to Arendt's conception, is concerned with establishing the common space of action in which the influencing may take place (Göhler 2000).[5] My hypothesis is, that in the modern state intransitive and transitive power are represented in a fixed connection, which renders intransitive power almost invisible as power, degrading it to a function of the state. Transitive power becomes a synonym for power as such in the modern state. It is this fixed connection, which is severing and we are now witnessing the (re-)emergence of intransitive power as an independent phenomenon. This understanding of power implies both, that power is more than is often assumed and less. In particular, it is not equivalent to the ability to force someone by violent means and not with anonymous behavioural structures either. If the concept of power is to be recovered, it must be supplemented by other understandings of order. Examining the ways they are related and their relations are changing, then, enables a systematic understanding of patterns of order in a globalizing world.

4 Such positions include Joseph Nye's (1990, 2004) conception of soft power, Manuel Castells's communication power (2009) and also things like Göhler's concept of soft governing (2007, Göhler et al 2010) as mechanisms of the horizontal and intentional exercise of power.

5 Chapters two and three will be devoted to clarifying these concepts further, I will therefore refrain from more detailed definitions here.

Approaching the problem

Political theory, if it is to have relevance beyond the narrow confines of its own discipline, must be problem-driven, rather than theory-driven. The concern must be with finding better explanations for relevant phenomena by considering previous theories that have been put forward, trying to see how they are lacking and whether some alternative might do better (Shapiro 2002: 603). The problem driving my analysis is why the available political science vocabulary seems so inadequate and, more specifically, which role of the complex concept power plays. Real world change and theoretical debate are intricately mingled in this question. What makes the problem relevant is the importance of conceptual tools for understanding and influencing change and I will hence not look for explanations in the sociology of science but for analytical answers in the underlying understandings of the relevant theory. My argument is a conceptual analysis power, but not in that it stipulates a deducted expression, or reports and reveals the linguistic use of the term power (Oppenheim 1981: 178f). Rather, I present a more explicative definition, which may not be verifiable as true or false, but can be appraised as good or bad in terms of its suitability for the analysis of current dynamics of change (Oppenheim 1981: 179, Berger 1967: 175).[6] My argument is an attempt, then, to draw on theoretical frameworks and empirical generalizations in order to arrive at analytic definitions which, when further developed, enable the building of new theories capturing the current world in more adequate ways (Melucci 1985: 794).

Such a problematizing redescription is "a two-step venture that starts when one shows that the accepted way of characterizing a piece of political reality fails to capture an important feature of what stands in need of explanation or justification. One then offers a re-characterization that speaks to the inadequacies in the prior account." (Shapiro 2002: 615) The most important thing, however, is to then devote considerable efforts to persuade the sceptics of the superiority of the new depiction. My text engages in this in two ways: it re-reads modernity through the lens of the proposed conceptual framework and thereby attempts to show that the differentiation between transitive and intransitive power is implicit in the modern narration. This step serves to show that we are not witnessing the emergence of a new phenomenon, but rather that modernity constituted a stable relationship between the two dimensions of power favouring the visibility of the transitive dimension. The second part of the argument suggests that this previously stable relationship is dissolving in a globalizing world. The argument there might not be enough to convince all sceptics so the aim is more moderate and could be described as simply raising justified interest in the dual conception of power. None of this will disprove any more traditional conceptions of power, nor does it seek to do so. Firstly, as a conception drawing on the basis of these previous works it cannot plausibly distance itself in such a way. Secondly, I will not argue that it is in any way "more true" than those other conceptions. I merely

6 Felix Oppenheim himself illustrates his reconstructive approach by means of different concepts, one of which is power. My reconstruction differs significantly from his, which equates power with control (Oppenheim 1981: 184). However, that is not necessarily a contradiction, since my reconstruction fulfils a different purpose and hence has a different treshold for fruitfulness. Alternative definitions should be chosen, according to what is to be explained (Oppenheim 1981: 182, 188).

argue that the proposed conception makes other aspects of reality visible and that these aspects are of particular interest in analyzing contemporary political developments. As there are "always multiple possible true descriptions of a given action or phenomenon" (Shapiro 2002: 604), the challenge will be to argue for the applicability of the conception.

The purpose of the following argument is clearly analytic. The proposed conception is designed to enable a better understanding of ongoing change, without implying normative judgement of that change. In particular when situating the conception of power in contrast to other concepts, such as violence and the social, it will become clear that the main value of the two-dimensional conception of power lies in the way it provides fruitful analytic distinctions. These distinctions enable us to move certain events and tendencies from the margin of analysis to the centre. Such shifts are hardly without consequence for the overall framework of analysis. More specifically, by reconstructing manifold and distinct events of resistance, world building and social movement as instances of power, they are presented as early incidences of an emerging order rather than as abnormalities and exceptions. They co-occur with new and old forms of violence and the social, which equally contribute to the constitution of order. The proposed concept remains analytic for it allows for many different outcomes, but it is also driven by a critical impetus. Quite the way considering instances of power in the proposed way may show new forms of political community emerging, it may also make visible the distinct lack thereof and reinforce the central role of the state in political order and stability. The analytic distinctions reveal opportunities for empowerment and also how better control and submission of people may be achieved. The proposed two-dimensional concept of power, in other words, has critical potential but lacks a normative foundation. Its normative value lies purely in providing a new depiction of reality, which puts new and hitherto under-appreciated problems on the table and uncovers implicit assumptions and values. While this implies alternative routes for action, I do not prescribe any as this would transcend the theoretical intention of my argument.

The reconstructive endeavour of my argument implies a diversity of approaches. In reviewing the power debate this means boiling down complex debates to specific characteristics. This is not to dismiss the finer variations of the debate, but to be able to review power conceptions along the lines of typical features displayed by exemplary representatives. In arguing for the plausibility of the two-dimensional conception of power, the task will be to reconstruct familiar ideas in a specific analytical language, namely that of the proposed conception. With regard to the past this draws on exemplary modern conceptions of the political community, re-evaluating them using the two-dimensional conception of power. This brings out the implicit presence of both dimensions of power in modern conceptions and exemplifies the relationship between intransitive and transitive power in the state. Finally, in an attempt to reconnect empirical generalizations with analytical definitions I will draw out instances of power in the contemporary world. Such an eclectic approach has limitations. Firstly, it necessarily leaves out more aspects than it includes. Secondly, it cannot provide a complete review of all relevant theoretical and empirical literature. The scope of the argument is simply too large to do that. The distinct strength of this eclecticism is the stringency it

gives to my argument. I will restrict myself to arguing my case instead of refuting previous debates. This is in line with the my purpose, namely to present a new reading of familiar ideas and problems. The second strength of this directed eclecticism is that I can draw on many sources from a wide variety of approaches, which contributes to a better understanding of where further research can begin to dig deeper. Especially when considering the concepts of violence and the social and their relation to power, it is not possible to review all relevant literature in much detail. I will indicate, however, how relevant literature relates to my argument.

Political inquiry invariably happens on the basis of specific normative assumptions, even if its purpose is not outright normative. It is therefore prudent that I reveal what my specific assumptions are. The first is, that I assume human relations are not just arbitrary but always ordered in some way and that these orders may be analytically understood. If that was not so, analysing them would make no sense. It is therefore, one of the most basic assumptions of all political enquiry. Beyond that, I assume that these orders are not inevitable or naturally given. They are artificial, created by and through human practices. This, of course, is the underlying assumption of all modern political thought (Kersting 2000: 68). The resulting assumption is less frequently acknowledged, namely that we can influence these orders, in fact, create, destroy and change them at will. This is not the same as saying any such change is easy or equally possible. Changes in shared practices are in fact very hard to achieve. But they are never logically or practically impossible, just more or less probable, and sometimes pressingly urgent and at other times highly unlikely. The difficulties in willing change have frequently been understood as external constraints on human action. I understand them as internal constraints generated by our ability to cooperate – or the lack thereof. The normative impetus of my argument is, accordingly, to recover this conclusion to be drawn from the artificiality of our social world – that, like it or not, this world is made by our actions and that we can change it by changing what we do. Whether that assumption warrants a positive or a negative outlook depends on the perception of human nature that goes with it. A negative view of human nature surely makes the outlook that we shape our world look rather gloomy. A more positive view focusing on the myriad forms of cooperation and creativity gives a more desirable result. In order to give my argument on power the desired credit, I will focus on instances that imply a positive outlook for most of the argument – and return to the darker sides of this conclusion toward the end. Either way, the assumption itself seems rather inevitable.

Power is at the centre of my analysis. Clearly, it is not the only phenomenon shaping our shared world. Therefore, the argument presented here only considers a very small part of social reality, even if power comes up under many different circumstances. Its ubiquitousness is not a sign of dominance. Other forms of order are, depending on circumstance and evolving through time, equally if not more relevant. I believe, that violence and the social are such forms, and I will try to delineate them from power as clearly as possible. The task at hand is achieved, in other words, at least in part through delineating forms of order. Discerning which forms of order emerge under which circumstances and why is more difficult. This question begs for empirical analysis. Wherever possible, I will indicate what

theory suggests about possible answers and lines of inquiry but, clearly, the theoretical perspective provides limited insights. My analysis suggests that there is indeed ways of designing analytical frameworks which capture the complexity of the current world, while being in themselves consistent and not simply replicating the complexity of the world. The proposed conception of power is particularly suited to recognizing and questioning emergent spaces of order.

The outline of the argument

The argument is presented in four chapters. Following this introduction, chapter two focuses on the concept of power itself. It begins by reviewing previous debates on power in terms of the distinction between transitive and intransitive power conceptions and thereby introduces and qualifies the two dimensions. In the first part I focus in particular on transitive power and consider previous debates on power. I also explicate my hypothesis on the relationship between transitive and intransitive power. Subsequently the argument turns toward Hannah Arendt's concept of power as a prototypical intransitive conception and I critically evaluate Arendt's concept and indicate in how far her ideas can serve as the basis for a substantiated conception of intransitive power.

Chapter three is devoted to the development of a substantive concept of intransitive power. I introduce in more detail the three elements that form part of this dimension of power: communication and action, the symbolic representation of the common space of action, and the skill of imagination required. The chapter ends with a summary of the theoretical framework, which is to be applied to some examples in chapters four and five.

Chapter four considers how the theoretical framework applies to the history of and thought on the modern state. While I can only provide a sketchy "history of the state", I achieve two other, related purposes with regard to my argument. On the one hand, I clarify further how to understand transitive and intransitive power by relating both dimensions to significant interpretations of statehood. Rereading rather well-known ideas in light of the proposed conception of power supports its validity and concomitantly provides interesting insights into the history of the state. On the other hand, I lay out the typically modern configuration of intransitive and transitive power and thereby set the stage for the analysis of contemporary developments in chapter five. The state, I argue, represents a fixed connection between intransitive and transitive power which tends to increase the visibility of transitive power while assuming intransitive power as a kind of background condition. In order to fulfil these purposes the chapter is divided into two parts. The first looks at the development of the idea of the state, in particular how from contractual theories of the 18th century through 19th century theories of the state the intransitive dimension of power is gradually obliterated and subsumed under other questions. The second part considers nationhood and sovereignty, illuminating the way they structure the modern configuration in particular ways and indicate a very specific connection between transitive and intransitive power. I conclude by pointing out the consequences of the central role of statehood in our understanding of politics in terms of the proposed two-dimensional conception of power. I argue

that our perspective on power is limited by taking the state to be the main object of analysis, making social science discourse less perceptive to some contemporary developments. In this way, chapter four accomplishes insights into why it is so difficult to transcend the limits of state-centred thinking and capture politics beyond the state.

The fifth chapter turns towards contemporary developments and shows how the proposed concept of power enables a better understanding of emerging patterns of order in a globalizing world. Its proposition is that the formerly fixed connection between transitive and intransitive power is increasingly dissolved and, consequently, questions of intransitive power gain importance. Subsequently, the chapter focuses in particular on tracing emerging instances of intransitive power. The chapter begins by reviewing globalization and laying out which developments in particular challenge the modern configuration of power. In the second part, I trace the elements of intransitive power - communication and action, symbolic representation and imagination - in some exemplary instances. They are partly overlapping and clearly related and include the development of global social movements and the WSF, the Zapatistas as an indigenous yet transnationally relevant movement and local state-building efforts in Africa. Rather than shedding new light on these examples themselves, this section seeks to demonstrate how these processes appear in a new light, when the two-dimensional conception of power is applied. The result is, similar to the effect in chapter four, a new reading of contemporary developments through the two-dimensional conception of power. This approach reaffirms the plausibility of the suggested approach. The final section of this chapter turns toward delineating power, placing it in relation to related concepts. The first part re-evaluates the relationship between intransitive and transitive power. The second part delineates power from violence and the social as alternative ordering principles and suggests, that a more complex understanding of political order is fruitful for understanding the complexities of globalization.

The argument, while problem-driven in the above sense, is presented as a deductive argument – going from the general insights gained from theory to the more specific insights that empirical observation holds. This is somewhat opposed to my personal journey to the conclusions that are presented, which began with empirical observations and only then approached the more theoretical questions. Empirical observations lead me to the theoretical question, to which this text seeks an answer. The reason for presenting an inductively gained insight in a deductive manner is methodological: deriving the same conclusion, thoroughly, from empirical observation would have required an impossible amount of empirical research. I am very glad I could draw on excellent empirical examples and well grounded empirical research in the last chapter, in order to support my theoretical argument. It remains, however, a proposed theory in need of empirical testing. The deductive nature of this text is therefore by no means arbitrary, but necessary. Yet, a more empirically based perspective may be possible for the daring reader. If one were to start with chapter five, a picture of the contemporary world would emerge, which shows how communication and action, symbolic representation and the skill of imagination come together in certain instances. One could then turn to chapter three in order to understand how and why that is power. Chapter two would

satisfy the curiosity as to how this relates to the conventional understanding of power and chapter four would then reveal how that is a change to previous configurations of power. The internal structure of the chapters, which largely evolves along the three elements of intransitive power – communication and action, symbolic representation and the skill of imagination – reflects my belief, that given unlimited time, the argument could have been made inductively. For the moment, I am happy to provide a theoretical proposition that hopefully offers food for thought.

2. Reflections on the concept of power in political theory

The complexity of the social experience of power is reflected by the extensive and controversial academic debate surrounding the concept.[7] And yet, power remains a nastingly elusive concept, power conceptions vary widely and conflict frequently. In light of the complexities of the debate Mark Haugaard's suggestion to think of power as a family resemblance concept appears quite attractive. It would imply, that conceptions of power are not connected by one common feature, but instead display a number of overlapping similarities, none of which is common to all. This allows us to take into account the different language games of debates on power without the need to exclude any one of them for not referring to power (Haugaard 2002a: 1ff.). On the downside, this idea does not make it any easier to grasp an intuitive idea of what it is we talk about, when we talk about power. Yet, the prevalence of the concept marks it as useful and instilled with a certain explanatory or at least hermeneutic strength. The question to ask then, in the context of my attempt to better understand the role of power in the processes of globalization, is not "What is power?" nor whether any one conception or categorization is better than another. It is rather, in how far the here suggested conception offers a new perspective on the phenomena in question and whether this perspective illuminates hitherto unrecognised patterns.

The variety of available power concepts suggests that power is a multidimensional phenomenon of which single conceptions only ever allow us to look closer at certain aspects. My aim is to better understand processes of globalization and the changes in the configurations of power associated with them. I need, therefore, a dynamic conception of power, which can account for changing patterns of power. Göhler's differentiation between intransitive and transitive power (2000, 2004) provides an adequate starting point. Despite their indisputable differences, Göhler argues, most concepts of power actually refer to (different dimensions of) the same phenomenon. Göhler aims to provide a categorization that accommodates the commonly known concepts of power and this provides the nucleus of the conception of power to be developed here. However, a useful categorization is not yet a fully developed conception. In the following chapter the aim is to provide a preliminary understanding of a two-dimensional conception of power based on the distinction between transitive and intransitive power. The chapter is divided into three parts.

The first part approaches the distinction between transitive and intransitive power directly. Firstly, I will explicate the distinction in some detail (2.1.1) and will show, how this distinction has been employed so far and how it resonates with some other distinctions that have been made. Since previous debates on power tended to favour questions of transitive power, many important features of this particular dimension have been extensively discussed. The following section (2.1.2) will therefore attempt to give an overview over transitive power conceptions in order to map the variety of approaches. It is not necessary to review all controversies of previous decades in detail, but useful to

7 For an excellent overview of the central questions see Clegg/Haugaard 2009.

show the breadth of the debate and indicate the extent of the ground covered by these debates. The last section of this chapter contains preliminary thoughts on the relationship between transitive and intransitive power (2.1.3). I will formulate the guiding hypothesis of my ensuing analysis in chapters four and five. The second part of this chapter is devoted to Hannah Arendt's concept of power. She is a strong representative of an intransitive understanding of power and her conception even if implicitly contains many elements of what intransitive power entails. I will approach her conception of power from three distinct angles. Firstly, I will place it in the context of her overall line of thought (2.2.1). Then, I will distinguish power from two other important concepts in Arendtian thought, namely, violence and "the social" (2.2.2). The third section explores the strengths and weaknesses of the concept more systematically and delivers a critical appreciation of her thinking on power (2.2.3). However, as Göhler notes, intransitive power is more than just a new name for Arendt's concept of power. Also, given the nature of the Arendtian idea with its many implicit and explicit assumptions and propositions, simply following Arendt bears the danger of leading us into a conceptual network that cannot easily be related to the general debates on power. It turns out that the intransitive dimension of power is still in need of clarification, which will be the focus of chapter three.

The emphasis placed on the intransitive dimension of power is not to imply that transitive power is less important. However, it is much better researched, thoroughly debated and theoretically developed. This allows me to draw on existing debates to a greater extent when explicating the idea and introducing variations. Furthermore, my general argument is geared towards the appreciation of the intransitive dimension and that, of course, merits the extra attention. Transitive power will make a reappearance in chapter four, where the connection between the two dimensions of power is explored and the development of their relationship in modern times is discussed. I believe this will be a more valuable contribution to the understanding of transitive power than a more circumstantial review of academic debates.

2.1. Transitive and intransitive power

2.1.1 Intuitive Notions and the diversity of power conceptions

According to Baldwin an intuitive understanding of the concept of power can be formulated as "A causing B to do something that B otherwise would not have done" (Baldwin 2002: 177 paraphrasing Dahl). In many ways this captures indeed what most power conceptions include. Power here is a social relationship. And it serves to influence (other's) behaviour. Yet, some conceptions of power are not adequately covered by this 'intuitive notion'. In particular the prominent conception of Arendt[8] – power as the ability to act in concert – falls outside of this realm. The problem could easily be pushed aside by arguing that Arendt's conception differs so considerably from traditional accounts that it might reasonably be called not a power conception at all. However, two important points should be

8 Similarly the prominently considered but also well known conception of Talcott Parsons and the system theory concept of power presented by Niklas Luhmann are not adequately described by the above definition, as they refer to the more consensual aspects of power (Haugaard 2002b: 70).

considered before going down that road. Firstly, Arendt chooses her wording very carefully, particularly in this case. She puts great emphasis on differentiating the concept from other related ones and unless we want to assume that she is purely eccentric, her arguments there must be considered in much detail before being refuted. Secondly, and this one might weigh even heavier than any appreciation of the Arendtian approach itself, she explicits something, which many others writing more traditionally on power also mention. Michael Mann (1984), for example, speaks of infrastructural power, which consequently enables despotic power. He implies, that the power to command rests on another, more distributed kind of power embedded in social structures. Similarly, Schmechtig (2005) refers to social power as the necessary precondition for dispositional power. In both cases the one conception of power is much closer – while by no means the same – to the Arendtian conception than to the aforementioned intuitive notion. Maybe, the Arendtian idea is much less out of line with more traditional conceptions than it may seem. In any case, there is sufficient reason to assume, that power as a phenomenon includes the instances termed power by Arendt even if the intuitive notion does not.

It is precisely this assumption from which Göhler (2000, 2004, 2009) develops his categorization of power concepts[9]. Rather than assuming that power conceptions such as Max Weber's and Hannah Arendt's are incompatible and simply cannot be combined, he aims to demonstrate that "the two conceptions concern different aspects of power which cannot be reduced to one basic concept but must be seen as coexisting in complementary relationship to each other" (Göhler 2000: 42). He differentiates between transitive and intransitive conceptions of power, where transitive is dedicated to other-referential concepts while intransitive concepts are self-referential. The two concepts are differentiated most obviously by their point of reference. Transitive power refers to the "subordination of one person's will by the will of another" (Göhler 2000: 43). In the context of transitive power it is important to think about the role of counter-power, the distribution of power and, indeed, most other things that have been the focus of debates on power. Power here is a commodity, which is available in limited quantities. Political struggles are zero-sum games in the sense that they are fought over the redistribution of this commodity. The power I have, the other cannot have or – put differently – I have power over the other in so far as he has no power over me. Intransitive power is not a commodity in that sense, it emerges from the relationships of actors and exists in their common practices. Power communicatively "constitutes the community as an effective unit in the form of a common space of action" (Göhler 2000: 48). Intransitive power thus focuses on the collectivity of the actors involved, on the ways in which they are through their actions enabling their own spaces of action. Power, then, can be more or less, it can grow or diminish in quantity.

The developed terminology has been taken up by several authors to illuminate power phenomena. Bas Arts and Jan Van Tatenhove for example explicate transitive and intransitive power. Subsequently they conflate the two into a relational "layer of power", containing all forms of power that exist in the

9 An older and more frequently employed distinction is that between power over and power to, introduced by Hannah Pitkin (1967), somewhat in passing. While almost intuitive, it does not provide mutually exclusive categories (Göhler 2009).

joint practices of actors. A dispositional and a structural layer complete their three-layered concept of power (Arts/Van Tatenhove 2005: 350). It thereby remains unclear, in how far the distinction between transitive and intransitive power adds to their analysis of power at all. Torsten Bonacker and Sina Schüssler on the other hand use both transitive and intransitive to explain the power of NGO's in global politics. In their view, transitive power emphasises the instrumental character of power, while intransitive power is the symbolic component of power (Bonacker/Schüssler 2007: 9/10). Their insightful analysis indicates how Göhler's distinction can usefully be employed in empirical analysis and, also, how especially the new role of NGO's can be explained with his framework. Their approach shows, that differentiating between transitive and intransitive aspects of power as a phenomenon is not counter-intuitive and how it adds to analytical clarity. However, they do not develop the theoretical conception itself further.

The relevance of Göhler's idea is not just illustrated by its empirical application. It also resonates with some other insightful theoretical suggestions for the treatment of power. John Allen (1999, 2003) seeks to develop a spatial vocabulary of power, taking into account that power is always exercised through space. He differentiates between instrumental and associational power. The instrumental view sees power as being about "bending the will of others" (Allen 2003: 118) and Max Weber is presented as the classical example. Associational power in Allen's words is "about the power to connect, to bring together but not suppress the interests and differences that commonly divide" (Allen 2003: 123), associational power "acts more like a collective medium enabling things to get done or facilitate some common aim" (Allan 2003: 5). Allen thoughtfully elaborates on the Arendtian conception of power (J. Allen 1999: 210ff., 2003: 52ff.) and critically presents associational power as the second modality of power requiring greater attention.[10] John Agnew's critique of the ways power is conceptualized in international relations theory points in a very similar direction. Current conceptual confusion, he argues, results largely from an implicit territorialization of power, which fails to grasp the "dynamic spatiality of power" (Agnew 1999: 500). Power in a conventional sense as the "ability to control, dominate, co-opt, seduce, and resent" (Agnew 1999: 500) or what he terms 'negative power' and power as "the ability to bind others into networks of assent" (Agnew 1999: 511) termed 'positive power' must be looked at in their dynamic relationship. It is apparent that Allen and Agnew suggest theoretical conceptions that are in fact very similar to Göhler's. However, in terms of terminology I decided to stick with transitive and intransitive power. In contrast to instrumental/negative and associational/positive these terms explicit the most obvious difference between the two dimensions of power, while not implying more about them than can be said in a name. For purposes of analytical distinction that seems to be a major advantage.

Göhler's approach to the diversity of power conceptions highlights some of the more subtle yet consequential inadequacies of the debate so far. Rather than dismissing previous ideas, Göhler draws on them based on the idea that power as a phenomenon contains elements of transitive and intransitive

10 Interestingly, the Foucauldian conception contains elements of both conceptions (Allen 2003: 124). This also mirrors Göhler's argument (Göhler 2002: 46).

power. Essentially transitive and intransitive power here are not different concepts nor different phenomena, but they describe different dimensions of the phenomenon of power in the form of a categorization of power conceptions. However, while Göhler restricts himself to arguing for relating those two dimensions I will try to develop this idea further. If the two dimensions of power are interrelated, their relationship must be explored in order to come to an actual conception of transitive and intransitive power. The basic proposition of my argument is, that their relationship is not fixed but may vary over time and given different circumstances and challenges. This argument will be developed in chapters four and five. The remainder of this chapter and chapter three are devoted to the more detailed theoretical explication of what each dimension entails. They lay out the conceptual framework for the following argument.

2.1.2 Transitive conceptions of power

Max Weber is among the theorists who shaped our understanding of the modern world profoundly. He provided a systematic and very insightful analysis of the modern state and not surprisingly many of the concepts he put forward are still in frequent use today. Weber provides us with basic sociological concepts capturing social interaction on a more general scale.[11] His definition of power[12] represents the ideal starting point for a brief overview of some of the debates surrounding the concept in its transitive variety over the last decades. I will point toward the most significant variations and clarifications of these debates in order to delineate the complexities and limitations of transitive power conceptions. It will become clear, that these conceptions, in fact, share one common essence, namely that they are concerned with the manifold ways in which other's can be controlled. First, I will take a closer look at the Weberian conception itself.

Weber's analysis does not begin with power but rather with action and the acting subjects. Relevant for the social theorist is social action, which is action oriented towards the past, present or expected future actions of others. Moreover, it derives it's meaning from precisely this orientation (Weber 1968: 22ff). A social relationship emerges, where more than one person engages in social action. Power, then, is one possible characteristic of such a relationship and "is the probability that one actor within a social relationship will be in a position to carry out his own will despite resistance regardless of the basis upon which this probability rests" (Weber 1968: 53). This famous definition already carries some of the most important elements present in debates on power.

Firstly, power is the mark of a social relationship, an idea that many others outright share (Baldwin 2002, Crozier/Friedberg 1979: 40). But even those who believe power to reside with a

11 Their applicability in spaces beyond the Western world has been contested (Erdmann/Engel 2006). They have, however, frequently been found helpful (Schlichte 2005).

12 While throughout the rest of the text I have aimed to be quite specific on whether I am talking about "power" as a general term (to be specified through my argument) or the more specific terms "transitive" and "intransitive" power as defined, in this particular section the term power refers to "transitive power" unless otherwise specified. This is done purely to improve readability of the text and seems justified seeing that the intuitive notion of power is a classically transitive one.

certain actor agree, that it must be exerted within a social relationship or at least that any relationship characterised by power may also be referred to as a social relationship. Power, hence, is a fundamentally social phenomenon, occurring within all kinds of social contexts. Common-sensical as this idea may seem it, points towards the most significant precondition of transitive power, namely the existence of a shared social context. Only where action derives its meaning from the (expected) actions of others do we find power.

A second point raised by Weber is of equal importance in the debate, it is the issue of resistance. Being in a position to overcome resistance is at the heart of Weber's definition. And, in fact, we usually do not speak of power in the Weberian sense when someone does something someone else wants simply because he or she wants to do it anyway or because both freely agreed to do things that way. Power is exerted only in so far as there is resistance to be overcome. Weber furthermore insists that we should be able to speak of a more or less clearly articulated command when it comes to power. Since the basis upon which the ability to overcome resistance does not matter the Weberian conception leaves ample room for all kinds of direct and indirect, subtle forms of power. In any case power must be considered instrumental. It can only be understood in terms of the aim to be achieved; it requires the one exerting power to do this based on a more or less clearly articulated intention to influence other's actions (Crozier/Friedberg 1979: 40), whose intentions are not the same.

Following the definition of power, Weber, goes on to define *domination* (Herrschaft) as “the probability that a command with a given specific content will be obeyed by a given group of persons” (Weber 1968: 53). Domination, accordingly, is established where and when power is exerted on a regular and for those concerned predictable basis, i.e. where and when it becomes institutionalised. It is in such institutionalised forms of power that legal (and cultural) norms turn into very common instruments of power (Weber 1968: 212-216). The modern state is the classical institutionalised form of power based on the principle of legality, i.e. where power is exerted to a significant extent through the establishment of rules, that are valid independently of particular persons. Furthermore, the modern state is characterised by a legitimate monopoly of violence (Weber 1968: 54). Historically speaking, the monopolization of violence in a single entity endowed with legitimacy is indeed one of the prominent features of the development of statehood.[13]

Despite his rather specific definition Weber himself emphasizes the amorphousness of the concept of power: Power can exist in almost any social setting and characterise almost any social relationship. Interestingly, although it is by no means arbitrary, the Weberian conception of power accommodates the vast number of subsequent conceptions. In order to map out the manifold ways in which control over others, i.e. transitive power may be exerted it is useful to consider a continuum of mechanisms at play.

One most basic and commonly recounted way in which power is said to be exerted, is through means of physical violence. We find a first instance of that in Weber's notion of the legitimate

13 I will expand on the complexity of the relationship between power and violence in the state in chapter four.

monopoly of violence endowed in the state. Violence is thereby placed in an ambivalent relationship to power. On the one hand, it is an instrument of power, because "regardless of the basis" of successful command-obedience relationships, of course, includes the instrumental use of violence. Power as a singular instance may even have its principal base in violence or the means thereof. However, it is unlikely for rule, i.e. institutionalised power to be based on pure physical violence over long periods of time. At the very least, obedience may after some time be achieved through fear of rather than actual use of physical violence. The state as the holder of a legitimate monopoly of violence on the other hand, must restrict its use as excessively violent action threatens its legitimacy. Here the ambivalence becomes apparent, because it is easy to imagine a number of situations where the frequent or extreme use of violence in fact endangers systems of rule rather than stabilising them. Violence has delegitimising effects (Schlichte 2009: 72-76). Stronger resistance and damage to the belief in the legitimacy of the system are possible consequences. Violence can provoke violent reactions, which counteract the purpose of modern systems of rule, i.e. the state. Violence, thus, can be both – supporting systems of rule and destroying them. In terms of power the use of violence may be helpful or harmful depending on the circumstances.[14]

Clearly, within centralised systems of rule such as the modern state, violence is not the instrument of choice. Accordingly, the larger part of the debates on power within states is concerned with other ways in which power structures the social world. Central issues were discussed in the 1950ies to 1970ies under the heading of the "power debate". Based on Robert Dahl's "Who Governs?" (1961) a pluralist view of power (Lukes 1974: 11) was proposed. This pluralist view understands power as the observable successful assertion of interests, where the interests of those in power are met while the interests of those without power are dismissed. Dahl's strongly behavioural view has been widely criticized, not least by Peter Bachrach and Morton S. Baratz (1962). They proposed to include a second dimension (or face) of power, namely power as the ability to shape agendas and influence which issues are to be decided upon and which remain excluded. In extension of Dahl's view that means, power is not only at play where open political conflicts emerge but also where conflictual issues are – to the advantage of the powerful – kept out of the debate. The debate culminated with Steven Lukes "Power: A radical view" (1974), where he developed a three-dimensional conception of power, which incorporated and expanded upon previous contributions. In addition to the direct forms of rule and the power exerted through agenda-setting Lukes introduced a third dimension. Power should also include those instances, where issues are kept out of the debate, that are not even known to be conflictual but constitute latent conflicts "between the interests of those exercising power and the real interests of those they exclude" (Lukes 1974: 24f.).[15] The presumption was, that power is not just openly invested in actors or institutions but that the underlying structure of society excludes certain

14 This was observed clearly by Niccolo Machiavelli, who was not afraid to advise the use of violence but cautioned against its extensive and inappropriate use (Machiavelli 1986).

15 This, of course, raises all the issues and problems associated with the identification and/or ascription of "real interests". How are interests objectively to be determined and can a grievance, which is not perceived to be one, really be a grievance? Fortunately for me, these problems are not highly relevant with regard to the transitivity of the conception proposed by Lukes and therefore do not have to explored in more detail here.

possibilities to the disadvantage of some. These can be eliminated so thoroughly, that even imagining them becomes unlikely.

Lukes himself, while strongly rejecting the basic propositions, notes the similarity his idea has to the concept of power proposed by Michel Foucault. Foucault, of course, describes in numerous empirically based works[16] the variety of ways in which subjects are produced through power relations and goes so far as to claim that his concern has primarily been the subject and exploring power/knowledge relations is only a necessary step in that endeavour (Foucault 2005a: 240). Lukes claims that it makes no sense, to say "power is 'productive' through the social construction of subjects" (Lukes 2004: 98). Like many other critics Lukes argues, that eliminating the free, autonomous subject is inacceptable[17]. However, Foucault's ideas provide insights beyond a radical and controversial stand on the subject. His detailed description, for example, of how in processes of normalization certain ideas favouring some interests over others are inscribed in society (Foucault 2004a,b) represents an important development in the debate on power over the last decades. Realizing the power of discourse and the ways in which knowledge structures reality, opens up new ways of investigating the reality of power relations and reveals the ubiquity of power. The mechanisms of power described by Foucault show just how subtle control might be exerted and how manifold the ways of ensuring compliance can be.[18] This corresponds to a rather negative reading of Foucault as for example favoured by Mark Haugaard (Haugaard 2002c)[19], which nonetheless adds to our understanding of power by explicating modern mechanisms of power beyond straightforward obedience-command-relationships.

Transitive power, as we have seen, goes further than just violence or direct commands. It includes the ways in which situations, contexts and perceptions are shaped in order to ensure compliance with the interests of the powerful. Transitive power covers a wide variety of mechanisms through which power is exercised, from violence to commanding, manipulating and eventually to the more

16 For some of the most relevant texts see Foucault 2005b.

17 I disagree with Lukes here, as I believe Foucault does not have the elimination of acting subjects as such in mind. However, Foucault refuses to think of subjects as existing without and beyond discourse. For an insightful distinction between autonomy and agency with regard to Foucault's thinking on this point see Bevir 1999. Further interesting arguments along similar lines include Reckwitz (2006: 302-308) and Allen (2003: 65-83). However, for the argument here, Lukes' claim need not be contested.

18 By arguing that subjects cannot be before power and are produced through the power relations themselves Foucault, of course, escapes the problem of Lukes' approach to have to define "real interests". However, how subjects can act and resist in such a scheme is an equally thorny problem (see for some attempts to tackle the problem Arndt/Richter 2009, Höppner 2008, Reckwitz 2006).

19 Foucault's theory of power touches upon many of the ambiguities of the concept of power. Göhler suggests, that Foucault contains both, elements of transitive and elements of intransitive power (Göhler 2000: 46). Personally, I would argue that Foucault's use of the concept of power is somewhat misleading because, yes, it blurs the distinction between transitive and intransitive power but more importantly, because he also includes mechanisms that are better described in different terms. I will return to this question in the third section of chapter five, exploring it tentatively. However, in his own view, his theoretical framework is more focused on mechanisms of subject formation and using the term power is not as central as often presumed (Foucault 2005a). So, difficulties in placing Foucault in the proposed framework might well be because of that particular focus and not because of inherent problems with the distinction.

anonymous forces of discourse. All this is quite in line with Weber's claim, that it does not matter much how people are made to do what one wants, so long as they do it even if it is not what they want. The power debates of the last decades have greatly enriched our understanding of these processes of control in political communities such as the state. The implicit assumption is, of course, that even if power is not centralised or monopolised but remains ubiquitous in society there is one centre of societal organization to which all others can and must relate. This is not true for the international realm, where a formal hierarchy is absent. It is therefore worth considering, which further and maybe different mechanisms of transitive power have been described there.

Classical theories of international relations differentiate strongly between hierarchy within states and anarchy among states. Hierarchy within states, of course, corresponds to the aforementioned understanding of domination and the modern state by Max Weber. Anarchy in the most simple sense refers to a situation where there is no central authority or instance that holds transitive power. Nicholas Onuf and Frank F. Klink argue, that it makes little sense to speak of anarchy in the international system in a substantial sense at all, since "rule" is always present (Onuf/Klink 1989: 150). International relations are always structured by a mixture of implicit and explicit rules and (transitive) power. The definition of anarchy as the absence of one central authority than is very much a formal one, it does not preclude patterns of rule and power differentials.[20] Anarchy among states is either straight anarchy with varying balances of power developing and changing over time as in realist theories of international relations. It can be prescribed as structured anarchy characterized by the polarity of the international system as in neorealism or as regulated anarchy where the transitive power of states is exercised to some part through institutional and ideological structures of all kinds as in institutionalism and more recent constructivist approaches (Schimmelfennig 1998)[21]. International relations theory provides important insights into how transitive power plays out when it is not captured in a hierarchy but occurs in situations where power is not formally structured around a certain centre.

What Weber represents for the sociology of the modern state, Hans Morgenthau is for international relations theory. His classical text on power in international politics "Politics among nations" provides an insightful definition of power that anticipates many later variations. Morgenthau defines power as "man's control over the minds and actions of other men" (Morgenthau 1961: 28) and political power more specifically as the "mutual relations of control among the holders of public authority and between the latter and the people at large" (Morgenthau 1961: 28). Power here too is a social relationship. Morgenthau, in his further argument asserts the importance and central role of military might. However, he seconds Weber in not defining power through the means by which it is achieved. According to Morgenthau, it does not matter, how the control is exerted. Furthermore, power is not just the control over actions but also over minds, i.e. the thoughts and ideas that shape action. And this kind of control clearly might be achieved through other means than military strength. Neither means

20 Interestingly, as a formal criterion anarchy among states accords a very prominent place to the state as the provider of order and stability. For an illuminating reading of the anarchy problem in international relations theory see Ashley 1988.

21 For a further introduction to theories of international relations see Dougherty/Pfaltzgraff 2001.

nor resources of power than are at the heart of his definition, but the ability to control. Power is a "psychological relation" (Morgenthau 1961: 29) more than anything else.

Broad as his definition of power may be, Morgenthau's understanding of politics is rather narrow: all politics is struggle for power and whatever the ultimate aim, power is always the immediate aim (Morgenthau 1961: 27). The underlying assumption is, that whatever you want to achieve, being able to control other's is what you need in order to get it. The historical situation of the 1950ies and 1960ies clearly indicated military might as a superior means of control. In fact it turned out, that military strength was a rather good indicator of in how far a state could achieve its aims, in how far it was powerful. The international system, according to Morgenthau, tended towards a "balance of power" (Morgenthau 1961: 167ff.), i.e. a relative stability resulting from the emergence of almost equally strong groups of states, which keep each other in control without the constant need to resort to violence regularly. His proposition that the struggle for power is universal across time and space results from his understanding of human nature, i.e. man as a power-seeking kind of creature.

This approach, Morgenthau's neorealist critics argue, is a gross simplification. The international system is clearly much more complex. Neorealism puts forward the proposition that the actions of states are strongly influenced by the structure of the international system. The distribution of power in a bipolar system will bring about very different developments compared to a unipolar or multipolar system. States' actions depend on the kind of international system they are set in. That in many ways limits the role of power in international relations. However, there is also more concrete criticisms of Morgenthau's understanding of power. Robert O. Keohane writes: "His definition of power was murky, since he failed to distinguish between power as a resource [...] and power as the ability to influence other's behaviour." (Keohane 1986: 11). He suggests instead, to define power through the resources which enable control. They are much more readily measurable than the ability to control as such, although, admittedly, theories based solely on such an approach have not been able to predict political outcomes too well (Keohane 1986: 11). It seems, however, that the further neorealist argument on the structure of the international system implicitly continues to think of power as the ability to control, either other's behaviour or outcomes of particular processes. It merely asks us to consider in more detail (i) the role of means of power and their distribution and (ii) the structure of the international system. The major problem in terms of analytical investigation, then, remains how to measure power (e.g. Hart 1976) in order to adequately analyse the structure of the international system. Looking at resources is one step in that endeavour, but resources as such do not tell us what power is or why a particular resource becomes a factor in power relations. Resources may be the tools that enable control, but power is the name of that particular ability to control.[22]

Morgenthau's definition it seems, was not altogether inadequate. Although he does say that power is the goal of politics at least in the most immediate sense, he does not claim the essence of power is being a goal. Rather, power is the psychological relationship of control. Those in power mobilise

22 Brian C. Schmidt (2007) offers an overview of the complexities of realist understandings of power and argues for the relevance of a these variations in everyday politics.

adequate resources to change other's behaviour and/or achieve desired outcomes. The recognition of this ability by those not in power is an essential part of power's success and often renders the actual use of power resources unnecessary. The regular use of physical violence is not necessary and might in fact be counter-productive. Therefore, by defining power as a psychological relationship, Morgenthau achieves a similar effect Weber achieves through the phrase "regardless of the basis upon which this ability rests". Power becomes removed from particular resources and techniques and emerges as the generalized ability to control. Getting what one wants is just a resulting effect of the ability to control.

Non-realist theories of international relation now assert, that the ability to control, may not only be vested in particular resources of actors and exerted through their use or threat thereof. Power may also be inscribed in the structures and institutions through which interaction in the international realm takes place and which may systematically favour some positions over others. Hence structural power conceptions engage critically with the formally anarchic yet structured international system. Susan Strange (1996), for example, develops a rather broad definition of power, abstracting from the resources of power and focusing on the effects that are commonly viewed as effects of power: "Power is simply the ability of a person or a group of persons so to affect outcomes that their preferences take precedence over the preferences of others" (Strange 1996: 17). Power here is the power to control outcomes. This definition is not itself all that much inclusive than others and it is at least in part quite compatible with earlier discussed notions (Guzzini 1993: 456f.). However, it is crafted to do two things, both of which represent significant shifts in the debate.

Firstly, following this definition structural power as the ability to shape and control structures, i.e. the institutional settings in which interaction takes place, plays a significant role in the exertion of power. Rather than relying on obedience-command relationships, actors[23] in the international realm often try to influence the structures of communication and decision-making between them in ways favouring their own positions. Negotiations on international treaties, for example, require extensive resources in terms of personnel and expert knowledge, which are much easier achieved by bigger and economically stronger states than by poorer countries. This makes it much easier for larger, resource-rich countries to press their positions. Limited measures are taken to protect the small parties to the negotiations but the general problem remains: Smaller states cannot match the negotiating power of bigger ones and "one state, one vote" ends up being an essentially unequal system.[24] Power here is much harder to attribute to intentionally acting subjects, because structures always emerge out of intentional actions and interactions with unintended results. In the above example, one intention is clearly to provide equality to all states even if that is not the effect. It is therefore not always easy to say, whether an institution is structured a certain way for reasons of efficiency or something similar or because an actor wanted it designed in that way so his interests would be systematically favoured. Or,

23 Most often these will be states but, of course, it can be argued that other collective and individual actors also frequently try to shape the institutional settings of their interaction in their favor.

24 In 2009 negotiations on the Copenhagen Climate Treaty gave reference of this structural advantage. See taz June 10th, 2009: *Alles köchelt auf Sparflamme*. http://www.taz.de/1/zukunft/umwelt/artikel/1/alles-koechelt-auf-sparflamme/ [15.06.2009]

as Strange puts it: "Power can be effectively exercised by 'being there'" (Strange 1996: 26). This kind of "unconscious power" (Strange 1996: 26) lies in the structures and is often, though not always, exerted 'inadvertently'.

This extension of the concept of power is problematic. I agree that power is often so deeply inscribed in structures that all participants perceive the power differentials as "normal" and do not regularly contest or enforce them. Intention thus becomes so far removed from the decisions in question, that it is almost invisible. However, it does not seem helpful to speak of power when not even a minimal intentionality can be assigned. Power would than encompass all kinds of constraints, intentional or not. Essentially, that would mean considering all effects of human action effects of power and conflating human action with power. Stefano Guzzini (1993), insightfully, points out these problems in reference to a number of further concepts of structural power and concludes that little can be gained by removing the exertion of power from intentionally acting agents, that more or less directly control others.[25] The decisive insight is that structural power conceptions, too, equate power with some form of control.

Yet, to think of the ability to control and hence power as always direct and easily attributable to individual or collective agents seems insufficient to capture those elements of control, which cannot rightfully be considered natural or unintended constraints and effects. Even though this thorny problem cannot be resolved here, it is worth illustrating how more indirect power might be conceptualized. Joseph Nye's concept of "soft power" points towards the ways in which power is exerted more indirectly. Nye begins with the traditional, intuitive notion of power as the "ability to control things and control others, to get others to do what they otherwise would not" (Nye 1990: 154). However, he sees an important shift in the way power is exercised, as military power loses importance, interdependence between states and people grows and new technologies[26] foster further the complexity of global relations. Direct forms of power such as coercion seem less attractive and soft power as "the ability of a country to structure a situation so that other countries develop preferences or define their interests in ways consistent with its own" (Nye 1990: 168) emerges as an important supplement. Resources of such power are cultural and ideological attraction as well as the rules and institutions of the international system. Nye recognises the importance of technological developments for the diffusion of soft power from states to other actors, in particular the role of information- and communication technologies which undercut traditional informational monopolies (Nye 2004: 81ff). The idea of soft power extents the concept of power by explicating what Morgenthau and Weber merely implied, when they argued that the ability to get others to do what one wants is analytically

25 Guzzini suggests to differentiate between *power* as agent-centred and conceptualized as "a capacity for effecting, that is, transforming resources, which affects social relationships" and *governance* as the intersubjective referent and "the capacity intersubjective practices to effect" (Guzzini 1993: 471). While he presents an interesting if in his own words 'conventional' distinction, the problem seems to lie with the concept of governance, that is itself not uncontested. For an introduction into the problem of power and governance see e.g. Göhler 2007.

26 These technologies include transportation technologies as well as information and communication technologies , which have significantly contributed to processes of globalization.

independent of the ways in which that is done, even if resources provide one way of measuring power. Persuading others may be the more feasible way to get what one wants. Representing attractive institutions may be the easiest way to get others to shape their institutions according to your ideas. This also poses analytical problems, as soft power has more numerable resources, less reliable results and a greater number of powerful actors is to be expected and, accordingly, a more complex structure of power (Nye 1990: 159). The problem, again, becomes to differentiate power as the ability to control from other causes of changes in behaviour and to attribute changes to powerful actors (e.g. Kay 2004). The distinction between power and social action as such becomes blurred. For the purposes of my argument it suffices to recognise, that the ability to control clearly extents beyond the direct enforcement of a certain behaviour to the ways in which preferences are shaped and actors are made to want what one wants, rather than only forced to do what one wants.

The second important point raised by proponents of a more structural approach to power such as Strange and, if you want, Nye is that they presume power to diffuse from traditional power holders (i.e. states) to several kinds of different actors. Strange (1996) focuses on the power of economic actors and markets. Transnational corporations through their business decisions can force policy makers into making certain moves which they would not otherwise have made and that greatly impact social life beyond economics (Bernhagen/Bräuninger 2005). Typical techniques are lobbying and information, but making business decisions dependent on favourable decisions by policy-makers is also common[27]. Beyond that, corporate policy-making increasingly takes on a "political nature", aiming to ensure long-term corporate survival through the creation of favourable political and social conditions (Strange 1996: 186). This, of course, works both ways. As the ability of corporate actors to shape political decisions increases, their vulnerability to political dynamics increases, also. Other non-state actors such as civil society organizations may through information and other discursive mechanisms inflict serious damage on the ability of corporate actors to set agendas and influence rules (Fuchs 2004: 27f). Civil society actors, such as NGO's or super-empowered individuals[28], are further actors to be considered in global political constellations. They are increasingly considered powerful actors as their ability to influence contexts, ideas and decisions grows.[29] While proponents of structural power in a wider sense were among the first to explicitly point toward other actors as holders of power, contemporary discussions in international relations theory throughout recognise the grown importance

27 And with regard to the rationality of business actors this is perfectly legitimate, even if the consequences are not good for society as a whole. On the problematic conflict between societal and corporal interests see Bakan 2004.

28 *Super-empowered individuals* are "persons who have overcome constraints, conventions, and rules to wield unique political, economic, intellectual, or cultural influence over the course of human events […] this category excludes political office holders (although some super-empowered individuals eventually attain political office), those with hereditary power, or the merely rich or famous." Conference Report by the National Intelligence Council 2007 http://www.dni.gov/nic/confreports_nonstate_actors.html [17.06.2009]

29 The literature on the subject is vast and some of it will be considered in more detail in chapter five. Prominent examples include the "Power Shift" article by Jessica Mathews (1997), "The state and social power in global environmental politics" by Ronnie D. Lipschutz and Ken Conca (1993) as well as "The power of human rights" edited by Thomas Risse, Stephen C. Ropp and Kathryn Sikkink (1999).

of these actors and try to illuminate the ways in which these actors are able to control or at least influence the course of political action (Berenskoetter/Williams 2007).[30] A complex picture of contemporary transitive power relations emerges and while clearly an improvement over any simplifying dismissal of the relevance of non-state actors this is by no means unproblematic. If everyone has a little control, no-one really gets their way and power as the ability to control becomes very difficult to pin down. Power relations as relations of control in the widest sense are complex and manifold to the extent that the analytical clarity of the concept of power – in a transitive sense – itself suffers.

Most commonly used conceptions of power thus are variations of the transitive understanding presented above. They consider of power the ability to control to some extent the actions of others. The concrete conceptions are quite diverse and many add important insights on how transitive power works. Their diversity, however, should not lead us to overlook the structural commonalities of these conceptions. They share the basic idea that power is about controlling or restraining others in ways that further one's interest. Interestingly, the above introduced differentiation between hierarchic and anarchic environments - as a very crude difference - does not matter much in terms of power: In both realms transitive power appears to be dominant. Within states power is supposed to be domination in very much the sense Weber laid out. Between states power is about the ability to change others's actions according to one's own preferences – be it through and within institutional structures or through more traditional 'power politics'. In both realms, power includes the means to violence, but is much more than that. It relies on psychological mechanisms such as fear, the exploitation of self-interest and the structuration of the arenas of interaction - any means, that is to say. Transitive power moreover is other-referential, it is always directed towards others. Essentially, any such power game is a zero-sum game. The more one gets to control, the less control the other has. It is not surprising, therefore, that power analysis has often been about the resources associated with the exercise of power. In a zero-sum game power itself appears in a material manner that invites the interpretation of power as a resource (or at least attributable and measurable through resources, material or other) and backs the intuitive notion, that power is a scarce resource which is divided in a conflictual manner. This particular form of conflictuality is a distinct mark of transitive power.

Two important weaknesses of previous approaches to power, which have been presented here as transitive power conceptions, have been noted. Baldwin, who emphasises power as a relational concept[31], identifies power as a dependent variable as one of the future research areas for international

30 The approach of “soft governing” (weiche Steuerung) can be considered an attempt to systematically capture the diverse ways in which such control can be gained in horizontal relations. For a detailed account see Göhler et al 2010.

31 Baldwin presents relational power as a dominant conception and argues that even many of the structural approaches, among them the ones presented here as transitive approaches to power, are quite compatible with a relational understanding of power. With regard to postmodern power analysis he is more sceptical and states “very little overlap” in so far as human agency and causal concepts are denied (Baldwin 2002: 185). However, Baldwin insists that less tangible resources such as ideas, norms, values etc. have featured prominently among relational power conceptions. As a result his understanding of relational power

relations theory. Rather than just devoting attention to how power is exercised in a certain setting it should also be asked how and why certain actors come to exercise power (Baldwin 2002: 186). This missing element in the debate is, of course, highly significant. So long as power is mainly conceptualized as an independent variable in order to analyse its working, the constitution of power and thereby the ways in which power structures are constituted remains largely out of view. Beyond that, the debate therefore systematically favours conceptualizations of power in which it is either seen as a resource to be used or in which power emerges more or less automatically from the possession of certain resources. Why and how any resources enable actors in which issue areas to exert control to a certain extent mostly remains in the dark.

The second point is made by Alexander Wendt, who criticizes the inability of conventional power theory to understand decentralized authority (Wendt 1999: 308). Globalization diversifies interactions and structures of control and thereby makes transitive power much harder to pin down. Yet there is no lessening of control mechanisms, they seem to merely have become more manifold. The ensuing analytical difficulty has led some scholars to avoid the concept of power altogether (e.g. Rosenau 1997) and replace it with other related ones, which emphasise certain aspects such as authority. They thereby escape some of the analytical problems. The mechanisms of control, however, remain and so does the question, why it is so difficult to capture these decentralized, diversified forms of power, control, authority or whatever else one chooses to call it.

Thinking of power as a two-dimensional concept, i.e. in terms of transitive and intransitive power cannot resolve these two issues entirely. However, looking at power that way enables us to say more about the constitution of transitive power, i.e. how it comes about and consequently gives us a better understanding of why it is so difficult to adequately capture power in a globalizing world. While abstaining from the use of the concept of power altogether undoubtedly helps to avoid analytical problems in some cases, retaining a two-dimensional concept illuminates how power is constituted, what is new in contemporary developments and specific about decentralized forms of power. The following section will give a preliminary overview of the role intransitive power has to play and present my hypothesis on the relationship between transitive and intransitive power.

2.1.3 Transitive and intransitive power – some preliminary thoughts

As opposed to transitive power, intransitive power is not about control over others. Göhler speaks of intransitive power as power that „constitutes the community as an effective unit in the form of a common space of action which is symbolically present“ (Göhler 2000: 48). Intransitive than means, that power need not be directed toward others; it can also refer to the community itself, to founding and maintaining it. Intransitive power is first and foremost self-referential. Furthermore, for Göhler it consists of two main elements – the communicative and the symbolic. The communicative element draws on Hannah Arendt's controversial definition of power as the speaking and acting in concert

conceptions covers very similar approaches to the ones implied in transitive power and his main criticism accordingly also holds true.

(Arendt 1970: 44) that constitutes political community. Power here is not just social in the Weberian sense of being constituted within a social relationship, but constitutes the relationship itself. Power is an end in itself and, as opposed to violence, never instrumental. It is productive in creating the 'space of appearance'. Through communication political community is established and maintained and accordingly power cannot be stored up but is present only in its actualization (Arendt 1958: 199ff.). Power "corresponds to the human ability not just to act but to act in concert" and it "belongs to a group and only remains in existence so long as the group keeps together" (Arendt 1970: 44). Arendt's concept has been coined "communicative power"[32] and although the following sections will show that there is more to it, the term captures an essential element. Through language and the communicative exchange between people, community and the people themselves as human beings in the true sense are constituted. That is power but it is incomplete without its symbolic representation. Symbols here are more than just signs representing certain things or ideas (Göhler 2005). They are ambiguous representations of the shared values of a community. Ambiguity here is a strength, since only with ambiguity comes the ability of symbols to "generate out of a social plurality a social unity without destroying that plurality" (Göhler 2000: 53). Rather than being directive, symbols provide orientation and thus enable the integration of a community. Essentially, it is through symbols, that intransitive power gains stability and continuity in spaces of appearance. The complexities of the concept will have to explored further and, surely, at this point intransitive power remains somewhat abstract and less intuitive than transitive power. It will suffice, however, for presenting the hypothesis on the relationship between transitive and intransitive power.

Some more immediate points shall be made in advance. Firstly, the striking difference between the transitive power conceptions presented above and the preliminary understanding of intransitive power presented here raises the question in what way they are even referring to the same phenomenon. Intransitive power both increases and decreases the options of actors: on one hand it creates a space of action that is enabling, on the other that space of (inter-)action also restricts the actors' choices. Quite like transitive power, intransitive power structures the field of action within which action can take place. At the most abstract level the structuration of fields of action emerges as a commonality of all power concepts[33]. However, while transitive power looks at the ways one actor is restrained by another either directly or indirectly, intransitive power highlights the instances where these limitation and enabling mechanisms are reflected in and through the group itself. I maintain therefore, that despite all differences the concept of power in both dimensions refers to the same phenomenon.

32 This term is used for example by Jürgen Habermas (1986, 1981). The difference between Habermas and Arendt, Zerrilli argues, lies in the presumption of a rationality of language or the better argument, which Arendt fears can introduce an undue notion of necessity into politics. While Habermas sees the exchange of arguments at the heart of his communicative power, Arendt fears the possible reduction of politics to a contest of arguments, which might all to easily turn into mere reasons (Zerilli 2005a:159, 170).

33 This is not, of course, an exclusive *definition* of power. While power always has something to do with the structuration of fields of action, not all such structuration is caused by power. For details see Göhler 2004.

A second problem to be considered relates to the concept and reality of violence. In a stimulating argument on the visibility of power, Münkler differentiates between instrumental and symbolic-expressive visibility of power. The former relies on the symbolic representation of domination, a visualization of power, the latter rests on a dialogical structure through which action of a group of people constitutes and visualizes power at the same time (Münkler 1995: 218). They are related to two components of power as he argues, the lateral, building on Hannah Arendt's concept of power and the reified, objectifying power, making power storable and consumable (Münkler 1995: 216). The similarity to the distinction between the two dimensions of power laid out above is by no means arbitrary and suggests a look at the conclusion Münkler draws with regard to violence[34]. He argues that any power holder forced to reveal all his power by employing all resources in fact looses all power and merely exercises violence (Münkler 1995: 227).

The problem of power almost invariably takes one back to the problem of violence. Both seem to be deeply related. On the one hand violence plays a prominent rule as a potential or realized means of power. It seems to support the ability to control others so significantly, that power and violence become inseparable. Weber implies that, when he argues for a monopolization of violence in order to reduce the overall amount of violence in a community. Morgenthau and others clearly point the same way, when they look at military and economic resources to measure power. On the other hand the exercise of power seems to preclude the use of violence, at least to some extent. Very early someone as open-minded towards the use of violence as Machiavelli, warns against its extensive use beyond necessity as this weakens the position of power (Machiavelli 1986: 73). Weber sees the monopoly of violence backed by legitimacy , i.e. a belief in the acceptability of the system that may be endangered by the excessive use of violence. Schlichte speaks of the delegitimizing effects of violence (Schlichte 2009: 72-76). Power and violence are not natural allies, it seems. Analytically the relationship between the two dimensions of power and violence needs to be clarified further, in order to delineate the limits of power. Violence will therefore be a recurring theme throughout the following chapters. In conclusion I will lay out a preliminary conceptual map delineating power from other, related concepts.

The final and most significant remark builds on the observation that transitive power conceptions lead us to somewhat of a paradox: „when you simply have power – in potentia – nothing happens and you are powerless; when you exert power – in actu – others are performing the action and not you“ (Latour 1986: 264). Transitive power cannot work without the cooperation of others since they perform the action. It remains highly dependent on the faithful transmission of orders through time and space, which cannot be achieved by physical force alone. Latour therefore sarcastically calls power “the illusion people get, when they are obeyed” (Latour 1986: 268) and calls for an abandonment of the concept in sociology in favour of a detailed analysis of all human and non-human elements of

34 One first conclusion is that Arendt equates reified power with violence, a very common interpretation. I believe, Arendts argument is somewhat more complex and less naïve. However, this shall be argued in some detail in 2.2. and need therefore not be explicated here.

social ties. Transitive power draws on an 'energy', namely the existence of a community, that it cannot itself produce. Transitive power, as Latour would say, is composed of the wills of many other's (Latour 1986: 269). Intransitive power, however, refers just to the production of that kind of community.

Following this line of argument, transitive power is always dependent on intransitive power. Neither can both dimensions be reduced to one another nor are they opposing ideas. Intransitive power enables transitive power and while intransitive power may exist independently (with limitations, surely) transitive power needs intransitive power as its base. The implications of this hypothesis are significant, because essentially this is saying that intransitive power is the more fundamental dimension of the two. Yet, a lot is to be said in favour of such a bold stand. In fact, as mentioned earlier, transitive ideas of power are often complemented by the mention of some preconditions that resemble the intransitive dimension of power to some extent. Schmechtig for example argues, that any institutional power (in the sense of an ability to achieve desired effects through institutions) needs to be based on social power, on a preconfigured social field (Schmechtig 2005: 326), reducing resistance and the need to use violence as a means of control. More prominently even, Mann argues for the differentiation between infrastructural/collective and despotic/distributive elements of power, where the latter refers to transitive power in a strict sense and the other to the more subtle mechanisms structuring action engrained in the institutional and cultural setting of society (Mann 1984). A similar notion is contained in Weber's reference to the "Legitimitätsglauben", which differentiates power arrangements from coercion, but also social order maintained through interest or habit. Legitimacy, so he argues, is a much more potent stabiliser (Weber 1968: 31-33). However, legitimacy is nothing but the active or passive belief of the people concerned in the viability and acceptability of the system of rule under which they live. Either way the system of rule based on legitimacy functions through the action or inaction of people in its favour. While habit or interest may change unexpectedly and hence the patterns of action based on them, legitimacy is guaranteed through either convention, i.e. internally through an expected reprobation, or through law, i.e. an external force of some kind. (Weber 1968: 212-216). Power in Weber's prototypical transitive sense, thus, is based on the existence of an order, which is not created nor maintained primarily through power but based on action. Far from being a sufficient treatment of the problem of the basis upon which transitive power rests these examples illustrate, that even transitive conceptions of power recognise, that there is something behind the ability to exert control that cannot be explained by that control itself.

This observation provides the basis for the central hypothesis to be explored in chapter four. If the two dimension are connected, then what needs further explaining is how that connection may best be described. My proposition is, that the relationship between transitive and intransitive is not fixed but may vary over time. Intransitive power may at different times be more or less firmly connected to transitive power and that impacts the way we look at the phenomenon of power. The hypothesis is, that gradually from the 16th century onward a more or less fixed connection between transitive and intransitive power emerged. Intransitive power turned into an implicit yet central precondition for

transitive power engrained in the idea and reality of the state. The modern state provides a prototype for a fixed connection between the intransitive and the transitive dimension of power. The prevalence and stability of states fuelled research and thinking about the transitive dimension of power. For a while the intransitive dimension of power became less visible behind the institutional setting of the state. The problems and challenges of transitive power, its limitation and control as well as its effective exercise become pressing problems of political thinking. Chapter four will develop this argument more systematically and chapter five will serve to explore how the connection between transitive and intransitive power changes through processes of globalization. For now the hypothesis is formulated, that the two dimensions of power, the transitive and the intransitive, found a stable and potent connection in the modern nation state, which is increasingly dissolved as processes of globalization support the development of manifold spaces of intransitive power beyond the state.

The preceding discussion suggests, at the very least, that there is more to be said on the subject of intransitive power and also on its relationship to other related concepts. Two main propositions were laid out, which will guide the ensuing discussion in different ways. Firstly, reviewing previous literature on power raises the question of the relationship between power and violence and I will return to this relationship repeatedly. Arendt delineates her concept of power, which will be treated as the nucleus for a rich description of intransitive power, by differentiating it from other concepts, particularly that of violence. Her understanding of violence is therefore an important point of reference for any treatment of her understanding of power. Furthermore, the role of violence within and between states will be tentatively discussed in chapter four, because this illuminates the peculiar relationship between transitive power and violence. Finally, violence re-emerged as a general political problem beyond the state in recent decades. While for a long time the treatment of violence in political science[35] was concerned mainly with violence between states, by states or against states, increasingly violence is a problem where states are less dominant. Hence, when looking at the emergence of new instances of intransitive power the problem of violence and its delineation from power will come up again and must be treated at least tentatively. Certain implications for the conception of violence, then, emerge as an added value of my analysis. They open new perspectives on the problem of violence. Not all theoretical issues can be resolved here, but recurring references to violence will enable an informed return to this question at the end of chapter five. Secondly, I will argue that intransitive power enables transitive power and while intransitive power may exist without developing a transitive dimension, transitive power always needs an intransitive dimension to build on. This is not to imply, that the analysis of the workings transitive power is of minor importance. In fact, I will seek to show just why it was the predominant concern of modern political theory and why it will stay important as times change. This proposition will be treated first by giving a more detailed account of the elements of intransitive power, then by looking at the state and its connection between the

35 This is not to say that there has been no significant research on violence. Particularly in sociology a large body of literature is concerned with questions of violence. Interestingly, the concept itself remains surprisingly vague. (Schlichte 2009: 57, Nunner-Winkler 2004).

transitive and the intransitive dimension of power and, finally, by considering configurations of power under conditions of globalization.

2.2. Hannah Arendt's concept of power

Hannah Arendt's concept of power deserves special attention because it is prototypical for intransitive conceptions of power. In the attempt to explore the implications of the dual conception of power it has two roles to play. Firstly, of course, the Arendtian conception illuminates the idea of intransitive power itself. It also poses some difficulties. Arendt places her comments on the nature of power within a complex, normatively charged framework of concepts, ideas and criticisms[36]. Therefore, secondly, these normative foundations must be explicated to the extent that they impact the understanding of power itself. It will be my aim to extract the analytical value of the concept of power and I will depart from Arendt on some significant normative presumptions. Of course, the separation of normative and analytical components of her concept of power cannot be complete, both elements remain deeply related. Yet, it is essential to explicate both dimensions, in order to highlight the analytic implications. In short, understanding the Arendtian conception of power is elementary for both, picking up on her insights and explicating my departures from her thought. I will therefore present her concept of power in three steps. In the first, I will place it within the broader context of her work. In the second, I will approach her concept of power by differentiating it from two other central, albeit in different ways opposing concepts, namely violence and the ambiguous "social". In the third step, a critical appreciation of the Arendtian conception of power will be attempted focusing on those elements that appear most relevant to the further argument.

Despite her insistence on not using words indiscriminately and making proper distinctions (Canovan 1985: 617), Hannah Arendt is not in any classical sense a systematic thinker. She does not present us with a coherent set of concepts, which are used in the same way throughout[37] – a trait she shares with many similarly inspiring thinkers. Yet, that is not to imply that the different parts of her work are contradictory or unrelated. The contrary is the case. Arendt's thought, in my view, can best be comprehended as a "Denkgeschichte", a history of thought, where one problem is illuminated and than feeds into later works attending to some (never all) of the questions raised by her previous argument. A new work thereby always responds, even if not systematically, to the earlier ideas and can accordingly not be understood without knowledge of those earlier problems and arguments. Any attempt to extract ideas for a systematic concept of power must abstract from Arendt's original line of argument and connect her ideas into an overall map of her thought. Rather than asking how Arendt

36 The normative impetus of Arendt's ideas is in some areas overrated and to some extent based on readings of her texts that are not fully conclusive. One example is the widely held conviction, that Arendt favoured classical Athens and Rome as ideal types of political communities. While she was clearly inspired by classical thought it has been convincingly argued that her stance toward these political systems is quite differentiated (Tsao 2002).

37 In a 1946 Article on Hobbes for example, Arendt uses the word power in a very conventional way and thus quite contrary to her later use (Arendt 1946). The ideas expressed, however, are early formulations of thoughts which are then further developed in *The Human Condition* and others works.

might most correctly be read, the following section therefore tries to draw such a map and read her ideas in the most adequate way for the purpose outlined above. It does not seek to answer all queries with regard to Arendt's concepts of action, power and violence.

2.2.1 Preconceptions: Totalitarianism and the human condition

The seeds for Hannah Arendt's concept of power are planted in *The Origins of Totalitarianism* (Canovan 1992: 130), even though the text itself does not deal extensively with power. However, it presents initial insights into Arendt's idea of the political. She analyses the totalitarian systems of the 20th century and their origins not in order to provide a strictly causal understanding of their nature. Rather, she seeks to provide a description of the elements that compose this new and terrifying phenomenon (Arendt 1951). Not so much the 'why' as more the 'how' is at the forefront of her treatment of totalitarianism. This is not, of course, because she does not believe that the 'why' is important, but because clearly she implies that only through understanding how totalitarianism worked can it be effectively prevented. As a model, totalitarianism provides the blueprint against which her theory of action and the political develops its positive features (Marchart 2005: 98).

Frequently, totalitarianism is understood to be a coherent socio-political system combining coercion with an all-explaining ideology in which no deviation is tolerated (Canovan 2000: 25). Arendt however, stresses the novelty of the phenomenon as it is not just a new and improved form of tyranny. The terror of and in totalitarianism serves no purpose, it does not seek to repress opposition or anything as obvious as that. Totalitarianism in Arendt's sense is a “chaotic, non-utilitarian, manically dynamic movement of destruction” (Canovan 2000: 26). It is destructive in the sense that it seeks to destroy all diversity and ultimately the human capacity to act. Her concept of action is, of course, only developed more thoroughly in *The Human Condition*, but its basic outline can be discerned already here.

Human beings, according to Arendt, are characterised by two basic features. On the one hand, they can “bring forward something so new that nobody ever foresaw it” (Arendt 1951: 432). This, of course, corresponds to the human condition of natality, in the sense that all men[38] are born into the world with the inextricable ability to bring something unprecedented to it. On the other hand, all human beings come into a world of other human beings, populated by others that are similar in their ability to bring something new but always different from oneself. This corresponds to the condition of plurality. Both will be explored further, but for the moment it suffices to say, that natality and plurality form the basis of the human ability to act which makes a human life possible. Totalitarianism, then, is all the more threatening, because it aims at the destruction of precisely these two features of human life. It is held together by an ideology, which seeks an “explanation of all historical events of the past and […] mapping out the course of all the events of the future” and therefore denies the very

38 Arendt uses the term "men" to designate human beings, a term that contemporary authors may tend to avoid for its gender implication. In recalling her ideas I continue to use the term, assuming that she did in fact intend to speak about men *and* women. Later on I will use the term 'humans', which is more neutral.

unpredictability that springs from natality (Arendt 1951: 432). If all human beings can bring something truly new to the world, then no course of history can plausibly be predicted. Ideology denies this and all deviation from the prescribed historical course of events is punished and suppressed. This, however, eliminates human plurality as human beings can no longer encounter each other as beings capable of engaging with each other in the activity of creating something new. Plurality, thus, is equally denied.

Accordingly, a totalitarian system is one which makes action and subsequently power impossible. It is noteworthy, that Arendt's idea of action in her treatment of totalitarianism is not positively developed, but emerges out of the analysis of action's absence. Arendt develops her idea of what humanity represents and how it may best be realized from the intuition that totalitarianism denies human beings their humanity. Totalitarianism designates a world without action and power; power and action hence are the negatives of totalitarianism. As such both are described by Arendt in most positive terms. Her aim throughout her later works is to recover this "lost treasure" (Arendt 1963: 215) in an effort to prevent the (re-)emergence of totalitarian systems. Naturally, the horrors of Nazism cast a dark shadow hiding the downsides and weaknesses of power and it does not surprise that Arendt subsequently remains relatively uncritical of power and action. She recognizes their problems but considers them much less important than the total destruction of humanity through the elements of totalitarianism.

Another important implication is present in her thoughts on totalitarianism. At the centre of totalitarianism, Arendt argues, are the camps in which social domination finds its most effective expression (Arendt 1951: 378). They are the spaces where the human capability to act is eliminated entirely, where the mechanisms of totalitarian rule consolidate in a space of exception (Marchart 2005: 100f). Human beings, in other words, are turned into things, incapable of the spontaneity and creativity characterizing action. The camps illuminate the forms of destruction of humanity that are at the heart of totalitarianism. Firstly, the juridical subject, the subject of rights has to be eliminated. Secondly, the moral person has to be destroyed. And lastly, individuality itself must disappear (Benhabib 1996: 65). The first two go hand in hand and refer to the basic condition of being recognised as part of human community, the right to have rights (Arendt 1951: 437). The third relates to the emergence of masses, the mob as a new historical actor. Human beings are made superfluous by economic and social changes and then remain deprived of a space in the world[39] in which they can interact as human beings with others, a stable space of reference (Benhabib 1996: 67f., Canovan 2000: 31). Again, we see that the human condition of plurality is crushed in a system aimed at the destruction of humanity as such. Masses emerge, that are no longer meaningful human communities but simply conglomerations of lonely individuals. It is this system of masses that Arendt's later texts respond to.

39 The concept of the world is central to Arendt's idea of the public realm, but cannot be dealt with in much detail here. In short, world refers to the space of things that enables us to interact, that physically constitutes the space of human existence and is fabricated by humans (Marchart 2005: 82f., Canovan 1985: 619).

The Human Condition was written several years after *The Origins of Totalitarianism* and presents a positive answer to the questions raised in the latter. Arendt unfolds her theory of action in terms of the conditions under which life is given to human beings on earth. The first and the most basic condition is that of birth and death, the fact that we are born into the world as mortal beings. The further conditions are related to three fundamental human activities, which in Arendt's thought are designated by the term the *vita activa* (Arendt 1958: 7f): Labor, work and action.

Labor refers to the "burden of biological life" (Arendt 1958: 119), i.e. all those things human beings do in order to ensure bare survival. Here humans remain tied to the necessities of their biological bodies; they are *animal laborans* and as such not part of the world of humans. All laboring activities are unfree, as they result from undeniable biological needs and all reproductive tasks only serve to prolong the period between birth and inevitable death. Yet, these activities provide the basis of all others and are important in their own right. Though they are not the defining condition of human existence in an Arendtian sense (Arendt 1958: 7), they are fundamental because no human existence is possible without attending to biological necessities. Accordingly, labor refers to the human condition of life itself.

Work on the other hand is untinged by pure need: "The work of our hands […] fabricates the sheer unending variety of things whose sum total constitutes the human artifice" (Arendt 1958: 136). It is the mark of *homo faber* and consists in fabrication. And while the products of labor are impermanent, because they are used up in the process of biological reproduction, the products of work remain and form the artifice of human existence (Arendt 1958: 143). Work in other words produces a world of things in which humans can begin to interact; it is the basis of the durability of our world. This world is central to Arendt's thought as it shields humans from the perils of necessity and creates the physical conditions for action. The world separates and connects men through the placement of things in space. It enables commonality and at the same time prevents the aggregation of subjects into meta-subjects (Marchart 2005: 82), i.e. it preserves the plurality of human existence. Work then corresponds to the human condition of worldliness (Arendt 1958: 7).[40]

Semantically Arendt places the human activity of action at the heart of her thought and it is indeed central to her understanding of power and the political realm. However, work and labor function as enabling elements for this activity, they are the pillars on which it is built. Therefore, no clear hierarchy between these activities can be established. Together they form *vita activa*, it cannot be complete without any one of them.[41] The main difference lies in Arendt's insistence that while all three

40 The distinction between work and labor is, in Arendt's own words, "unusual" (Arendt 1958: 79). The borderline between both activities is blurred easily. Arendt argues that this is partly due to the fact that modernity and in particular modern means of production replace the free disposition of tools for a specific end product (characteristic for work) with the rhythmic, cyclical employment of these tools as instruments of labor. As a result, means and ends get indistinguishable and men are adapted to the process of production rather than the other way around (Arendt 1958: 145). This confusion could be a good starting point for a critique of modern means of production and fabrication.

41 Frequently, action is cited as the most important, highly valued or superior of human activities, i.e. labor,

are necessary, action is "the *conditio per quam* - of all political life" (Arendt 1958: 7). In terms of political life, then, action is the most relevant of all human activities, it is that which enables humans to realize their humanity. The system of masses on which totalitarianism is built, eliminates the human ability to act. This, in the most decisive way, is how totalitarianism dehumanises and reduces human beings to bare life (Agamben 2002); only in the absence of the ability (or the will) to act all the atrocities typical for totalitarianism can be committed. Because action is such a complex concept I will explain it in terms of what it is, as well as in terms of its consequences.

Action relates most closely to the human condition of plurality, which entails two complementary dimensions: equality and distinction. Humans are equal in the sense that they are born into the same species with the basic ability of relating to each other. If they were not, they would not be able to understand or consider each other. Humans are also distinct: each human being is distinguished from all others that came before, share the world or will inhabit it in the future. This distinction is more than just being different. It is of a revelatory character, i.e. it emerges as humans express their distinction. Human plurality, in Arendt's words, is "the paradoxical plurality of unique beings" (Arendt 1958: 176). While equality is the element of human plurality constituting both, the ability to relate to other members of the species and the necessity to do so in order to realize one's human potential, it does not itself establish substantive political rights. Hence, the idea of equality here is much less normatively charged than the word implies.[42]

Distinctness and its revelatory character furthermore imply a central role for speech in action. Human beings enter the human world, the world of human plurality through speech acts which reveal them to others as humans. Speechless action is not action, since the "the actor, the doer of deeds, is possible only if he is at the same time the speaker of words" (Arendt 1958: 176). Acting begins with that entrance into the world of plurality; it means, in its most general sense, "to take an initiative, to begin [...], to set something into motion" (Arendt 1958: 177). To bring something truly new to the world lies at the heart of the human activity of action. The new appears in "the guise of a miracle", action means that "the unexpected can be expected" and that humans are "able to perform what is infinitely improbable" (Arendt 1958: 178). Action, Arendt says, in that way refers back to the most general condition of human life, natality (Arendt 1958: 8f.). However, just as we are born into a pre-existing world, action is always inserted into an "already existing web of human relationships, with its innumerable, conflicting wills and intentions" and, consequently, action hardly ever achieves its purpose (Arendt 1958: 184). The new cannot easily transform the world entirely.

work and action are placed in a simplifying hierarchy (e.g. D'Entrèves 1994: 66). However, Arendt's elaborate and well-balanced treatment of all three in *The Human Condition* suggests, that she thought all three labor, work and action were equally important for understanding and living the human condition. Nonetheless, it is quite clear that in terms of the political action is the most relevant of all activities and is quite rightfully treated as such in the literature.

42 Arendt herself derives merely a right to have rights (Arendt 1951: 436f) which according to some critics amounts to missing normative foundations of her thought in general (Benhabib 1996: 193ff).

Two dimensions are present in this understanding of action as bound to plurality and natality, which are not easily reconciled (D'Entrèves 1994: 84f.). In its expressive dimension, action allows human beings to appear before others as human beings and enables individual actors to constitute their political identity in relation to others. It is through the expressiveness of heroic deeds that human history is made, that action forms the course of history (Arendt 1958: 184f.).[43] In its communicative dimension action discloses reality, enables reciprocity and common action (Arendt 1958: 188). Here action takes the form of communication that constitutes the public realm. Both dimensions contribute to the creation of the space of appearance, in which human beings can appear before others and be recognised in their unique plurality. While not incompatible, clearly, these two dimensions of action introduce a certain tension, since expressive-agonal and communicative-participatory action may not be realized equally at the same time. Great men do matter and their deeds may well be described as political action. However, the participation of ordinary citizens is not usually endowed with such greatness. Heroic deeds, then, are the mark of "extraordinary" politics, while a public realm is maintained and shaped through the ordinary communicative practices of citizens (Parekh 1981: 177f).

The Arendtian conception of power relates closely to the communicative dimension of action and underpins the importance of action and speech. Because the space of appearance, which is the public realm, depends on speech and action, it "never altogether loses its potential character" (Arendt 1958: 200). Power remains a potentiality and is actualized where people come together, speak and act in concert: "Power springs up between men when they act together and vanishes the moment they disperse" (Arendt 1958: 200). Power is a momentary event and even if it persists over time it never loses that particular frail character. It is also a collective activity - there can be no power in isolation (Arendt 1958: 188). Any physical or ideational manifestation of power will only remain powerful so long as the power that created it is actualized. However, physical boundaries and the limits imposed by law stabilise and enable power, even if they are not themselves power (Arendt 1958: 198). A space of appearance cannot be kept in existence for longer than the moment of action and speech itself, unless it is supported by adequate physical space and institutional structures. Power is therefore fragile and in need of stabilization, but no means of stabilization can ever substitute power. Political freedom, according to Arendt, may only be achieved through the exercise of power. Arendt distances the concept of power from its traditional normative content, which associates power with restriction and force. Instead she instils the concept with a positive connotation: freedom and the realization of one's humanity.

Furthermore, in *The Human Condition* Arendt establishes a firm connection between the exercise of power and political community. Power creates the space in which political community is situated. It defines a community as political. The active consent of the people legitimises and enables political institutions (D'Entreves 1994: 79), however, these may not guarantee the continued existence of power. The fragility of power remains, as power "predates and precedes all formal constitution of the

43 Arendt goes so far as to argue that "theatre is the political art par excellence" (Arendt 1958: 188) indicating that the expressive appearance before others is indeed an integral part of political action.

public realm and the various forms of government, that is, the various forms in which the public realm can be organized" (Arendt 1958: 199). By derivation, political community therefore is as fragile as power and action, the potentiality of speech and action carries through to its institutions. So, while institutions such as laws and physical manifestations of the political community are important, they can never store up or preserve power. However, they might exist beyond their power basis, even if impotent and decaying (Arendt 1958: 200; Arendt 1970: 41).[44]

Political community needs - as its counterpart - the private realm, in which the activities of necessity, labor and work, can be exercised and which offers "the only reliable hiding place" (Arendt 1958: 71; Canovan 1985: 620) from the publicity of the political community.[45] The exercise of power is essential to being free, but being free is not all there is to being human. Some things need to be hidden from public view in order to enable the deep appearance in the public sphere. However, the private realm is not as dominant modern political thought suggests[46], the primary sphere of human activity. Both realms, the public and the private, are, in Arendt's view, equally valuable and necessary.

Arendt, thus, distinguishes herself from the modern line of thought, which places the private at the centre of human life and portrays the political as a mere necessity, and, instead, draws on classical Greek philosophies in developing her conceptions of the public and the private realms. Yet, her own concepts remain original. In particular, the value she attaches to action is not matched by similar arguments in Greek philosophy (Tsao 2002: 108). What at first glance appears to be an endorsement of classical ideas, is in fact a rather eclective reference and in many ways a critical departure from their basic features (Tsao 2002: 98, Canovan 1992: 140). Arendt's treatment of the human condition characterised by labor, work and action meanders between the classical and the modern and revalidates select ideas in original ways. She uses her interpretation of classical ideas as a tool to illuminate the complexities of the present. Recovering lost treasures in that sense, means extracting from the past features that point toward more universal human abilities and needs. This uneasy placement of her ideas in the history of political thought contributes to enabling their further development into tools for understanding processes of globalization, which depart in significant ways from modern developments. This is not because her ideas are universally applicable in time and space, but because they already carry a distinctive ambiguity that can be productively exploited.

In many ways *The Human Condition* clearly is a first preliminary answer to the questions raised by Arendt's treatment of totalitarianism. The failure of humans to act and the unbearable absence of meaningful interaction and humanity in totalitarianism are the fundamental experiences from which Arendt derives her theory of action. Both elements are important building blocks for her theory of power. Totalitarianism represents a system void of power, indeed, geared toward the elimination of all

44 Consequently, Arendt's treatment of the modern nation state remains ambiguous. Canovan 1999, Blättler 2000, Lemke 2001.

45 Arendt introduces - distinct from the notion of the private - the idea of the social (Arendt 1958: 38ff.). Because the concept marks an essential reference point for the concept of power, it will be treated separately in 2.2.2.

46 For prominent examples see Locke 1977 and Constant 1972.

action and thereby of power. Totalitarianism succeeds by disrupting the flow of history and presenting finite answers in the form of a prescribed, inevitable course of human development (Arendt 1951: 423). It attempts to eliminate the unpredictability of power resulting from the human ability to bring something new to the world. Arendt's delineation of three human activities, labor, work and action, corresponding to different conditions of human existence aims to provide a framework counteracting the conflation of all human activities into one realm. Her analysis of the conflation of action, work and labor into the amorphous "social" (Arendt 1958: 220ff.) so characteristic for modern society, serves to provide insights into the manifold ways in which action may be disabled, hampered and prevented. Her theory of action, then, presents answers to the questions raised by *The Origins of Totalitarianism* and at the same time raises with great urgency the question of power.

One way of delineating power more precisely would be to follow Arendt's own further development, through *On Revolution* (1963) to *On Violence* (1970). However, it seems appropriate to aim for a systematic rather than a chronological approach to her understanding of power, because two central concepts emerge, which help to delineate power. The chronological treatment so far indicated - and this is particularly important in terms of the ensuing analysis in chapter five - that Arendt develops her idea of power from its absence rather than its presence. We will see, that as a result she recognises the weaknesses of power (as a phenomenon, not as a concept) but downplays them in light of the horrors of the alternative. She fails to provide adequate answers to some of the most pressing questions with regard to power, because she keeps to the perspective of someone blinded by the atrocities committed in the absence of power. A systematic concept of intransitive power must, therefore, go beyond a mere reproduction of Arendtian thought. However, Arendt provides preliminary insights and important inspiration for this endeavour and the next two sections are dedicated to retrieving these. Firstly, the concept of power will be delineated by differentiating it from violence and the ominous "social" (2.2.2). Secondly, a critical appreciation of Arendt's concept of power (2.2.3) includes important insights into the elements of intransitive power to be developed further in chapter three.

2.2.2 Dividing lines: violence and "the social"

Making proper distinctions is at the heart of Hannah Arendt's approach to political philosophy (Canovan 1985: 617) and she strongly insists that the inability to take linguistic distinctions seriously results in a "blindness to the realities they correspond to." (Arendt 1970: 43). The way distinctions are made (or not made), then, tells us something about the "realities" that can be captured. Arendt herself defines power in conjunction with a number of related concepts such as authority, force, strength. All of these, she claims, have been associated with rule and all too often been used synonymously. They must be made to reappear in their "authentic diversity" (Arendt 1970: 43f.). My objective here is somewhat different, as I try to extract elements from Arendt's thought which can serve as building blocks for a substantive concept of intransitive power. However, since her concept of power is not developed in isolation, it may in fact be best explained by delineating it from other important concepts in Arendt's thought. Violence and the "social" are of particular interest. The former is central because

contemporary developments are characterised by manifold forms of violence[47] and if these are to be distinct from power, it must be made explicit how. Arendt's concept of violence relates in unusual ways to power, but resembles much closer than the concept of power our intuitive understanding of the term. In other words, understanding how violence and power are related enhances our understanding of power in an Arendtian sense by connecting it to a more intuitive understanding of violence. The "social" on the other hand is important, because Arendt claims herself, that modernity - and in particular the modern organization of politics - is characterised by the rise of the social accompanied by a conflation of the private and the public, i.e. a conflation of the realms in which, labor, work and action respectively reside (Arendt 1958: 38ff.). If this is indeed so, the contemporary pattern of power and the emergence of instances of intransitive power must also be considered in relation to the persistence of the social. Only by distinguishing all three concepts, violence, power and the social, properly, will it be possible to assess the role of power in a globalizing world.

Power and Violence

Power and violence are a - if not the - central conceptual pair in Arendt's theory of the political (Ricoeur 2006: 389). However, this does not mean that the nature of the distinction she offers is entirely clear and undisputed. On the contrary, both concepts remain interwoven, in fact mutually dependent (Frazer/Hutchings 2008: 103). This, of course, leads to some confusion. Yet, explicating power and violence as a central conceptual pair in Arendtian thought, clarifies much about the nature of power. It is instructive to begin with the confusion itself, which is in large part caused by Arendt's purposefully ambiguous formulations. She begins by setting herself apart from those traditions of thought that equate power with domination and subsequently conceive of violence as the "most flagrant manifestation of power" (Arendt 1970: 35). She goes on to delineate the two from each other (and some other concepts) and firmly concludes that far from being the same "power and violence are opposites" (Arendt 1970: 56). This statement is - at best - misleading, because the relationship between the two is both more complex and less antipodal[48].

Power and violence share decisive commonalities. Power is defined as the "human ability not just to act, but act in concert" (Arendt 1970: 44), it is the collective variation of action that is its own purpose. Power is what constitutes the political realm, it keeps "the potential space of appearance between acting and speaking men, [sic] in existence" (Arendt 1958: 200). Power, then, is fundamentally associated with action and the political. And action, in its most general sense is simply "to take an initiative, to begin" (Arendt 1958: 177). Interestingly, Arendt also speaks of the practice of violence as action (Arendt 1970: 80). Her first and foremost intention therewith is, to distinguish her

47 See introduction and 5.3.

48 The German translation of this passage speaks of "Gegensatz" not "Gegenteil", both of which are equally correct translations of "opposite". However, while "Gegenteil" implies a dualistic understanding of opposite, "Gegensatz" is more open and could also be understood to mean opposed in the sense of simply different. While not resolving the confusion in itself, the choice of words implies that Arendt in fact did not wish to imply a dualistic understanding.

understanding of violence from the more naturalistic understandings put forth by authors such as Frantz Fanon and George Sorel with whom *On Violence*[49] deals extensively.

Neither violence nor power, Arendt argues, are natural phenomena or merely biological manifestations: "they belong to the political realm of human affairs whose essentially human quality is guaranteed by man's faculty of action, the ability to begin something new" (Arendt 1970: 82). Violence, however, has a much more ambivalent relationship to that human ability to begin something new, because it puts at risk the very basic condition for action, the being in the world (Arendt 1958: 201). Death in other words is the most anti-political aspect of human life (Frazer/Hutchings 2008: 101), eliminating the existence of the human being as such and hence all opportunity for action. Violence, therefore, endangers action wherever it occurs. Furthermore, violence can never realize the full potential inherent in any beginning, namely, to contribute to the founding of a political realm that is free of violence (Finlay 2009: 36). It is merely capable of reforming institutions, of formative processes which transform institutions but do not found them anew (Arendt 1963: 208, Arendt 1970: 79). It is here that violence discloses its character as fabrication rather than action. Violence does seem to be both: depending on circumstance action or fabrication.

The role violence has to play in politics is, in any case, marginal, because violence forecloses the central element of speech that characterises the political realm (Arendt 1963: 19, Arendt 1958: 179). Violence accordingly differs greatly from the kind of action that is power. However, violence can play a role in and for the political. Founding or revolution, i.e. the beginning of a new order, do not eliminate history. Violence is associated with the acts of liberation that end the old order and it opens up and protects the spaces in which non-violent political action may then occur (Finlay 2009: 37, Frazer/Hutchings 2008: 102). While not an integral part of the political process, violence can be effective in reaching politically relevant ends (Arendt 1970: 79, Finlay 2009: 37). This does not in any strict sense, make it a political phenomenon; violence in wars and revolution occurs outside the political realm (Arendt 1963: 19). But it implies that violence is more than the mere opposite of power.

Power and violence share another important feature associated with action beyond the ability to bring something new to the world, namely the unpredictability and boundlessness of outcomes. Power as bringing something new to the world has boundless consequences (Arendt 1958: 191, 201), it changes the world forever. So does violence. However, violence in Arendt's terms is ruled by means-end-categories (Arendt 1970: 4, Frazer/Hutchings 2008: 100), i.e. it is always employed for a purpose. Boundlessness makes it impossible to say, what the eventual outcome will be and therefore tactics of violence make sense only when employed for short-term goals (Arendt 1970: 80). Violence's ends are always in danger of being overwhelmed by the means through which they are to be achieved.

49 It is noteworthy, that the German translation is entitled *Macht und Gewalt* (power and violence). Although the essay is centred around Arendt's responses to the violent action of the 1960ies, it is in fact an equally thorough treatment of power and violence. While power features frequently in *The Human Condition*, it is here that the concept emerges as a central idea in her political thought.

So, rather than being merely unpredictable, such as all action, violence harbours the additional element of arbitrariness (Arendt 1970: 4). Violence may pay off, but it will do so indiscriminately. The most probable change it brings about is that toward a more violent world, which consequently reduces and corrupts the possibilities for politics (Arendt 1970: 80, Frazer/Hutchings 2008: 100).

The commonalities between power and violence are significant yet ambivalent. Both represent not natural phenomena born out of necessity (Arendt 1963: 64f.) but two possible modes of human action bound by the unpredictability of outcomes. Although we can see clearly that violence and power are not nearly the same - even without taking a more detailed look at their most decisive differences - they are not easily differentiated in terms of what realm of vita activa they belong to. Power is the very essence of action and the central characteristic of the political. Violence on the other hand is - in Arendt's terms - not rightfully to be called a political phenomenon, even though she claims it as a mode of acting (Arendt 1970: 80). However, it is also not simply a form of fabrication but shares important features with the human ability of action. Violence is therefore not a clearcut opposite to power, since it comprises both, elements of action and of fabrication. The complexities of the relation will become clearer when looking at how and where power and violence differ from each other in Arendt's thought.

One important difference lies in the rationality behind the action. Power can pursue ends but it is never a means to an end. It is an end itself, an absolute that needs no justification through any ends (Arendt 1970: 51). Power is acted out for the sake of power, people engage in speaking and acting together in order to speak and act together. To ask for the end or purpose of power will give either tautological answers or "dangerously utopian" ones (Arendt 1970: 51f.). However, power has effects, it is not without discernible results. Arendt understands power as being intimately related to the act of founding, i.e. the creation of the political realm as such. This power structure "precedes and outlasts all aims" (Arendt 1970: 51), so long as the power behind it is actualized. The formal constitution of the political realm is already a product of power (Arendt 1958: 199). Yet, there is no such thing as a purpose or aim of power, even if aims and purposes are pursued by those 'in power'[50]. The rationality of power is power itself, all other consequences a mere by-products. Violence on the other hand is "by nature instrumental" (Arendt 1970: 51, 46). It is primarily governed by means-end reasoning that is only enabled by the existence of a power structure (Arendt 1970: 53)[51]. As an instrumental category, violence is in need of implements. It needs tools to achieve its aims. These tools aim to multiply and eventually substitute natural strength (Arendt 1970: 46). Still, violence is not primarily defined through

50 Semantics here point to the difficulties of the Arendtian approach. 'In power' would have to mean a group of people engaged in the activity of speaking and acting in concert, and not 'in control' of a situation, group of people or similar things. It is important not to confuse the ability of a group to pursue aims with the pursuit of those aims. The aims are emerging properties of the group's power, as is their pursuit.

51 Any human interaction governed by means-end-relationships cannot be meaningful in a political sense according to Arendt. Marx, interestingly, criticizes similar traits of capitalist society in his portrayal of alienation (Marx 2005). Arendt grants that this is the (only) utopian element of Marxian thought (Arendt 1958: 130f, 256). The relationship between Marx and Arendt is ambivalent and full of tension (Pitkin 1998: 134-144) , yet merits further elaboration, albeit in a different context.

its physical character. Violence is characterised through applying the means-end reasoning to political purposes: violence introduces thinking in means-end categories to the political realm to which it is connected as a form of action - and thereby the danger that the practice of violence subverts the body politic (Arendt 1970: 80, Arendt 1953: 378). The means, i.e. the use of certain implements, are likely to overwhelm the ends if goals are not achieved quickly and this in turn creates a more violent world. Violence in the long run cannot serve to decrease the overall violence between people in a group.[52] It is for this reason that Arendt aims to exclude violence from the political realm so far as possible. Violence, then, is distinguished from power primarily through its rationality, but in terms of placement in the vita activa it remains ambivalent, containing both elements of action and fabrication.

Another related difference is equally important: only power can produce legitimacy, violence can at best be justifiable (Arendt 1970: 51). In fact, it needs justification through the aims it pursues (Arendt 1970: 77). While power carries in its origin a moment of legitimacy that cannot be replicated, faked or destroyed, violence, as the end-governed activity it is, can only ever be justified. The implications are great for both concepts. Power becomes normatively charged. It turns into a positive idea, which goes against the critical intuition to deface and even eliminate power. In normative terms power turns into an ideal to be achieved and is no longer the restrictive, oppressive condition of life that needs to be fought. The analytical essence of this normative argument lies in the fact that power will usually work without additional grounding, it is its own reason. Violence on the other hand can never be legitimate, it seeks justification as it puts mean to ends. The ends are what determines the justice of violence.

In *The Human Condition* Arendt stresses the superiority of power and its ability to forego the use of violence even "in the face of materially vastly superior forces" (Arendt 1958: 200/201). However, her portrayal of violence as justifiable suggests, that violence is not as such to be condemned but can indeed be justified, may even have an important role to play. Its political justification lies primarily in the creation or defence of spaces for action and the preservation of solidarities founded on power. It marks the end of an old order and is associated politically with the process of liberation (Finlay 2009: 36ff.). Arendt, despite her negative judgement on violence, does not argue like a pacifist or deny violence. She merely accords that the ends define the need for violence, and that this is not so for power. Fanon's mistake (Fanon 1961/1981), in other words, was not that he insisted on a violent struggle in order to free the colonized but that he assumed from these struggles a new, non-violent order could emerge almost naturally. This further step, the founding of a body politic, the creation of a truly political community, according to Arendt, can never be achieved through violence, but only ever

52 This last idea, of course, is in stark contrast to the idea prominently formulated by Thomas Hobbes (1996) that the centralization of violence in fact decreases the overall amount of violence in a society. According to Arendt this could only be so in the short run. I will, however, in the next section argue, that modern liberal societies more often fall prey to the dangers of the social than to the increase of exerted violence. The social might even be the more effective way of controlling. Degryse (2008) argues, that Hobbes' contract implies the social and that Hobbes is therefore also the 'father' of the social. While I agree that the social is deeply connected to the state in many ways, I will argue that it is the liberal strand of thought which brings the particular aspect about most forcefully (see chapter four).

through power.[53] Violence instils destruction into whatever it seems to create and can therefore usefully be employed in defence and destruction, maybe even reform, but not in creation. The second difference between power and violence, therefore, lies in the ability to found new institutions or spaces of appearance, which power can, but never violence.

A third point of difference is noteworthy. According to Arendt, people relate to each other through their appearance in the common world and this is afforded through speech (Arendt 1958: 176f., Gordon 2002). Hence the intimate connection between power and speech. Violence, however, is incapable of speech (Arendt 1963: 19), it cannot enter that particular space of action. Violence hence forecloses power because it isolates rather then relates people in the world (Arendt 1958: 201). It is this particular feature of violence that appears most prominently in totalitarian systems. Through isolation and the forceful denial of plurality, totalitarianism creates masses incapable of action and eventually makes all men equally superfluous (Arendt 1951: 429ff., Benhabib 1996: 66, Marchart 2005: 100). Violence here acts as physical violence in the destruction of those spaces which could harbour expressions of power *and* through ideologies which effectively limit the ability to speak at all[54]. So, while physical violence is very effective in preventing meaningful communication so are other means, such as ideologies, orders or surveillance. It is, however, speech that is central to power. Violent acts foreclose speech and therefore power. So the third difference lies in their relation to speech, where both are fundamentally opposed.

The relationship between power and violence is highly ambivalent, not only when we try to differentiate these Arendtian terms analytically, but even more so when we look at their interaction. And this is particularly important as they tend to occur together. Depending on how the relationship is portrayed, either power or violence wins out. From one angle, violence is weaker than power. Power is always the "primary and predominant factor" (Arendt 1970: 52). No government can exist for long without power, because it needs the voluntary support of at least some people even to control the rest by violence. Powerful groups with inferior means on the other hand can win out against the seemingly stronger, such as in guerilla wars. Only those exerting violence on the basis of power, not other things, are likely to prevail in a contest of violence (Arendt 1970: 48). Possessing superior means of coercion, then, is not enough but must be matched by a superior organization of power (Arendt 1970: 52). In fact, this observation is rather plausible, as it means nothing more than that the less willing people are to follow a leader voluntarily, the greater the means of violence that he must secure in order to achieve obedience. Taken to the extreme this implies that, when a single person acts on their own and seeks to secure obedience through violence, there is limits to what and how many implements they can handle.

53 Arendt criticizes Machiavelli in this context, not because his approach were unethical or unjustifiable, but because in her view he based the foundation of a body politic primarily on violence (Arendt 1963: 36ff.). A critical reading of Machiavelli reveals a more sophisticated understanding of power and founding, based on a complex concept of virtue. (Machiavelli 1986). Yet, her mention of him in this context points towards the complexities of the interaction between power and violence in founding, which Finlay (2009) notes with regard to Arendt's concepts.

54 It is this particular form of violence that features prominently in George Orwell's (1948) Anti-Utopia *1984*.

As a consequence, the threat they pose may be more hypothetical than real[55]. The implied connection between violence and power is somewhat surprising. Power, once constituted, can be the origin of violence. This is not a contradiction to the Arendtian claim that violence cannot be derived from power. Violence is neither a necessary nor an intended result of power. Powerful groups or institutions may act violently but this is neither their purpose nor does it constitute them.[56]

Once again the relationship between power and violence is obscured rather than clarified by Arendt's wording. However, this seems to be mainly because she looks at the relationship from two different perspectives. From the inside, from power itself, violence is impotent and can never create and begin anew like power does. From the outside, the perspective of those external to power, the connection of violence and power is most potent and can be truly destructive. Where power is coupled with violence it can be ruthless, destructive and dangerous. Yet, power remains the predominant factor, its logic tends to restrain the use of violence as control is never the ultimate purpose. Power, however, cannot be substituted for violence. Such substitution replaces power's very logic and robs the violator of his own power (Arendt 1970: 53). It is precisely a loss of power then, that tends to result in the most severe use violence. The impotence, which lies in not being able to act, creates a great temptation to try and substitute violence for power. Of course, following Arendt such attempts can only fail. It is, at the very least, a risky endeavour, because where violence is not backed by power, arms may change hands quickly and in some cases, the armed uprising itself may not take place at all since the loss of power has become so apparent there is no longer a need for it.[57]

However, looking at the relationship between power and violence from a different angle, it becomes clear that violence is a great danger to power. It can destroy the very basis upon which it rests, namely the interaction in speech and deed between people. I have argued above, that violence is aimed at isolating people and preventing meaningful interaction. In a direct confrontation, therefore, violence tends to prevail (Arendt 1970: 48). Beyond that, violence ensures compliance through its threat toward life itself. As violence carries this ultimate threat, it ensures "most instant and perfect obedience" (Arendt 1970: 53). This, of course, is one of the main reasons why it can be mistaken so

55 However, as Morgenthau (1961) pointed out clearly, such relationships of control are largely psychological, so even if the factual ability to use the implements of violence is not there, obedience will be secured as long as people *believe* it was there (see 2.1.2.).

56 This is not to say, that violent acts do not have identity forming effects or contribute to the prevailing communicative (and, as we shall see, symbolic) processes that constitute political spaces. Such arguments have forcefully been made, e.g in the debate surrounding Thomas More's *Utopia* (e.g. Möbus 1953, Oncken 1922). They only seemingly concern the analytical distinction between power and violence. There is no reason to deny the manifold interactions between violence and power, yet it is clear that in Arendtian terms one cannot derive from the other.

57 It could be argued, that this is what happened to the GDR for example. People leaving the country in the thousands could not have challenged the system nor - as the Chinese example shows - people going to the streets in equally great numbers, unless the system had lost its power. No-one was ready to resort to violence in order to crush the emerging power and therefore it did not have to be very powerful at all to make the system crumble. Arendt hints at that kind of possibility when she claims that the disintegration of power "often becomes manifest only in direct confrontation" (Arendt 1970: 49), when power is in the streets and only needs to be picked up.

easily with the modern expressions of power. The focus on obedience and rule, i.e. the situations under which people comply, which is so typical for modern thinking on politics, obstructs the perspective on the origins of this compliance. Clearly, violence is a major factor in ensuring compliance and often does so quite peacefully. Violence manages to reign through its psychology, the threat of destruction, the spread of mistrust and the atomization of people. Whenever these techniques enable the effective destruction of spaces of and for power (rather than protecting them), violence may provide relatively stable forms of order. Two dangers for such an order remain. Firstly, violence itself tends, as has been shown above, to grow and multiply. In the reign of terror, in the most absolute absence of power, it turns against its own friends and supporters. It destroys life itself, that which it is trying to dominate. When used excessively violence turns against itself. Secondly, power could emerge and reveal the powerlessness of violence. This can result in the very fast dismantling of order, the changing hands of weapons and the demise of those who sought to control through violence. Retaining control by means of violence alone is costly and unlikely to prevail, should power emerge and - beware - arm itself. Again, power is the dominant factor in the long run.

The ambivalence of the relationship between these two, analytically distinct phenomena is part of the explanation for the confusion surrounding their interaction. In her portrayal of the two concepts Arendt herself contributes to the confusion. It is important to note that in particular *On Violence* is more an engagement with contemporary positions on violent struggle than a systematic attempt to develop a conceptual framework. Differentiating concepts here serves to refute approaches to violent struggles that - in Arendtian terms - fail to constitute political spaces and therefore fail to start a new and establish a truly changed world. Power and violence are in constant struggle, they interact and combine, yet also pose a continuous threat to one another. They are not opposites in the sense of opposing poles but rather in the sense of competitors. Both can shape order between men, but they do so in different ways and with different consequences. Power as an end in itself creates political spaces, where order is maintained through the communicative interaction between people, their support for their self-created and maintained institutions and the absence of means-end thinking with regard to the political space itself. Violence ensures order through the very (threat of) ending communicative interaction, it ensures compliance and tends to be overwhelmed by the means as it aims to reach its ends. Both phenomena are frail, not just in their direct confrontation but also when they are present in almost pure form. The fallacies of power will be the focus of my critical appreciation of Arendt's ideas. Violence's greatest weakness can easily be named: it is its lack of power that makes it susceptible to be overcome by power, should it emerge at the right place and time.[58] This, more than any more obviously normative objection, is at the heart of Arendt's critique of violence.

The frailty of power and violence and their competition implies a volatility in human relations. However, that seems to be out of sync with our experience of relative stability, which seems at least possible. Violent orders are quite capable of maintaining themselves and given the low likelihood of

58 The conditions of the emergence of power are hard to prescribe in the abstract. Chapter 5 will aim to indicate some of the limits of power by pointing toward places where it might emerge and stabilise - or not.

power, we can suspect that violent orders may be stable for quite some time. I will say more on the ways in which power might be stabilised in the succeeding chapters. However, it should be noted that order and stability in human relations are often maintained neither by power nor by violence. The sadly under-theorised Arendtian concept of "the social" provides one other possibility for the ordering of human relations (and there may be more). The social opposes power in different ways from violence and a careful delineation can enhance our understanding of what is so specific about the kind of order power enables.

Power and the social

The necessity to treat the concept of violence in its relation to power is easily recognised. Both tend to come up together, even when not conflated as Arendt suggests. Distinguishing between the social and power is less intuitive, not least because the social is often seen as a background condition for the exercise of power.[59] Yet, the distinction is quite instructive because it leads us towards a better understanding of the role of power in the modern world as Arendt understands it. The modern world according to Arendt is characterised by the rise of the social, the flowing into each other of social and political realms (Arendt 1958: 33). This is problematic because the social forecloses action and hence power. The "normalization"[60] of members, that is the consequence of the expectations and rules of the social realm renders them incapable of acting and creates a kind of rule of the potentially "cruellest and most tyrannical" (Arendt 1958: 40) kind. The social, then, is central to approaching Arendt's critique of modernity.

The distinction between power and the social is furthermore important because it forces a critical reading of her ideas and - at the same time - provides insights into how they might be productively enhanced. We are confronted with the insight that despite her insistence on distinctions Arendt fails to develop a *systematic* theory of the political. Rather, she develops an intricate web of related concepts, which implies a theory of the political rather than formally defining it. In particular with regard to her account of the social it is noticeable how her perception of her own time interferes with her theoretical thought in sometimes contradictory ways. Hannah Pitkin goes so far as to call Arendt's concept of the social "confused and [...] radically at odds with her central and most valuable teaching" (Pitkin 1998: 1). Even when confronted with the question directly, Arendt remained "evasive and feeble", claiming that there were genuinely social questions while admitting that what was considered a political question at a given historical time might differ (Bernstein 2006: 247). It will be the purpose of the following argument to show how a systematic reading of the distinction between the social and

59 A case in point here is - once again - Max Weber. He defines power as a social relation which "consists entierly and exclusively in the existence of a probability that there will be a meaningful course of social action - irrespective [...] of the basis for this probability" (Weber 1968: 26f). It refers, in other word, to the formal fact that the action of one actor will with some probability be shaped by his expectations about the actions of others: their action is oriented within the framework of these expectations. Power for Weber is a special form of such orientation (Weber 1968: 53).

60 This is indeed the term Arendt uses, any similarities to the Foucauldian concept are therefore not intended by her.

the political - which has been convincingly attempted by several of Arendt's most potent yet sympathetic critics - reflects back on the political in Arendt's sense and can serve to refine the understanding of power. Only this kind of critical engagement allows for the abstractions from the Arendtian concept of power which are necessary in order to build on her ideas without importing the associated criticisms in full.

The social, being one of the more obscure concepts in Arendt's thought, has been frequently and heavily criticised (D'Entreves 1994: 58ff). Margaret Canovan early on pointed toward the ambiguities of the concept (Canovan 1992: 116ff). Jürgen Habermas goes further and names Arendt's treatment of social issues as one of the most significant weaknesses of her concept of power (Habermas 1977: 14ff). In excluding social issues from the political realm, he argues, her notion of the political becomes inapplicable to modern society. His reading equates Arendt's idea of the social with the economic realm and in accordance with this he concludes that none of the issues of (redistributive) justice, social oppression and administration can be political in Arendt's sense. There is ample evidence in Arendt's own writing to support this interpretation, be it her association of the social with the household and the biological necessities in *The Human Condition,* her critique of the French revolution in *On Revolution*, or her refusal to see the end of social segregation based on race in American schools as a political act in her *Reflections on Little Rock* (1959)[61]. But also her criticisms of Marxist thought, socialism and to some extent the welfare state supports this equation of economics and the social (Pitkin 1998: 14). This interpretation of Arendt's thought marks her as a nostalgic thinker and questions the relevance of much that she says on politics and public life.

The ambiguities in Arendt's thinking, however, allow for more sympathetic readings of her treatment of the social. Firstly, Arendt's thinking on the social can be situated within the development of her thought and systematically related to her thoughts on totalitarianism (Canovan 1992: 117; Benhabib 1993: 101f). Totalitarianism, for Arendt, is deeply related to the masses, which are denied their plurality and made uniform. The social, by establishing utilitarian rationalities in the political realm, purports similar trends (Kateb 1983: 151). Of course, they are not nearly the same, but the vehemence of Arendt's critique of certain trends in modernity, which she terms the "rise of the social", is much better understood when seen in this context. This, secondly, implies that it is worthwhile to look for interpretations, which show her most extreme and emotional remarks on the social to be inconsistent with her overall theoretical framework and attempt to reconstruct the meaning of the social in a more sober manner. I will briefly present such readings before turning towards a discussion of its implication for Arendt's understanding of power.

Seyla Benhabib presents three possible readings of the rise of the social. It could be interpreted as the growth of capitalist commodity exchange economy, an aspect of mass society or as the qualities of life in civil society and civic associations (Benhabib 1996: 23). In the second, most interesting interpretation - the rise of the social as referring to aspects of mass society - she tentatively suggests a

61 For an interesting argument on how the Arendtian conceptual framework maybe employed to display the political nature of the actions at Little Rock see Duran 2009.

differentiation between action and behaviour. Behaviour, then, is the typical activity of individuals in their social roles, while action has an individuating and individualizing quality referring back to the human condition of plurality (Benhabib 1996: 25). So, while behaviour serves to conceal the individual behind a social mask, only action reveals the self to others as is central to power. Amy Allen opts for a similar reading in order to recover Arendt's critique of modernity. She argues, that Arendt's description of the rise of the social merits attention - even if one must not share her alarm over this modern development (A. Allen 1999: 97). Allen speaks of ridding the Arendtian idea of the social of its metaphysical baggage (A. Allen 1999: 95). While I agree that the ambiguity of the concept in connection with the metaphysical notions attached to Arendt's political theory is problematic, I am more interested in the kind of fallacies of power Arendt's depiction of the social reveals and why the concept is important with regard to understanding her concept of power.

The idea of the social (and the political) being modes of activity refuses to divide the two realms categorically but instead focuses on their different rationalities. Tracy Strong (2008) employs a similar approach in treating the question whether the economic or the political realm is more encompassing. He argues that political activities must relate questions of "What am I?" to questions of "What are we?" and as such involve an ongoing interaction between the self as an individual and the individual as a member of a collectivity (Strong 2008: 439-440). All answers to these questions and their relation remain contestable and require continued argument. They can also change over time. It is this quality, which makes them political. Economic activities in contrast constitute answers to the question of what I have to do in order to get what I want, given that others also want it (Strong 2008: 440). They are more instrumental and do not relate to the identity of the collectivity or to the individual within that collectivity.[62] In defining the political and the social realm in terms of the activities that constitute them, Strong circumvents the problem of having to define them in terms of issue areas. Any list would either provide exclusive categories but likely be very controversial in terms of the issue placed in each realm. Or it would contain overlaps, thereby failing to provide a proper distinction at all.

Arendt herself downplays this particular problem with regard to her thought, but it is at the centre of much of the aforementioned criticism. However, how does thinking of economic and political realms in terms of modes of activity avoid the fallacy of excluding fundamental questions of human life from the political? Consider the example of housing. Clearly questions like "(How) can I afford the apartment I want?" or even "How can be ensured that sufficient adequate housing is available?" fall under the category of economic questions in the described sense. They concern immediate needs and their administration. The questions of what constitutes adequate housing, if it should be available for everyone and whether the collectivity should be responsible for ensuring there is sufficient adequate housing, however, are of an entirely different nature. Here issues that are debatable and require judgement are at hand (Bernstein 2006: 248). Moreover, these questions are intimately related to what a community considers common and private responsibilities and thereby very much to the questions

62 The similarities between Strong's portrayal of the economic and Arendt's characterization of violence are recognizable, but cannot be treated in full here.

Strong claims are political. So, the problem of housing can be approached in different ways, which are not necessarily mutually exclusive, may even be mutually supportive and possibly interact and conflict. The issue itself is neither political nor economic, but the way it is dealt with is (Pitkin 1998: 180). Similar dynamics can be shown with regard to discussions on minimum wages, equal opportunity and environmental protection, for example. The one example shall suffice here to illustrate the plausibility of such an approach.

Hannah Pitkin (1998) sets out to systematically understand what it is that Arendt means by the social and how the concept might be reformulated to be less ambiguous and more helpful for understanding Arendt's concepts of power and the political. In a detailed genealogy she traces the concept through Arendt's thought revealing the extent and the consequences of the ambiguity. Decisive in terms of understanding the social is the connection between *The Origins of Totalitarianism* and *The Human Condition*. While the social does not feature prominently in the first, in the conclusion to her treatment of totalitarianism Arendt hints at totalitarian solutions that may emerge beyond the openly totalitarian regimes (Pitkin 1998: 96), a thought that seems to recur as "the rise of the social" in *The Human Condition*. Another bridge is provided by Arendt's treatment of the masses as an important factor in the maintenance of a totalitarian system of governance. Masses homogenize and level out differences eliminating plurality. In effect people cannot relate to each other. They are isolated. This isolation destroys their ability to realize their individuality and act (Pitkin 1998: 87ff.). A similar effect is achieved by the processes of "normalization", which characterize modern mass society and which govern through the imposition of rules and expectations of behaviour (Arendt 1958: 40f.). The vagueness of this construct becomes apparent in *On Revolution*, where Arendt's attempt to apply the concept of the social as a distinctive feature of the French Revolution leads to confusion and serious questions regarding Arendt's political theory (Pitkin 1998: 225).

Pitkin shows how Arendt relates work, labor and action each with a certain "mentalité", an attitude toward what is being done (Pitkin 1998: 179). A laboring society consequently is not characterised by a prevalence of labor defined in terms of certain, predefined activities but rather as a community in which "all members consider whatever they do primarily as a way to sustain their own lives and those of their families" (Arendt 1958: 46). In a second step Pitkin points out that the political, being associated with action calls for a mentalité that does not just produce effects: "Acting together has to mean something like jointly taking intentional charge of those results, effectively taking responsibility for them" (Pitkin 1998: 194f). This, of course, is what the exercise of power is all about. Power in Arendt's sense is not an emergent property of social interaction as such, but a particular and directed way of interacting, which requires a consciousness of one's own ability to make an impact in conjuncture with others. Pitkin rightly asserts, that it is much more difficult to discern what kind of mentalité is associated with the social. Her reading suggests that behaviour - "a kind of uncritical self-subjection to unquestioned rules" (Pitkin 1998: 179) - might be the appropriate concept. Behaviour is "rule-governed, obedient, conventional, uniform and status-oriented" (Pitkin 1998: 181). When people behave, they are not necessarily passive but they act according to the laboring mentalité,

where action is called for (Pitkin 1998: 181). Instead of consciously taking responsibility for the results of their collective endeavours, people follow rules, conform to (statistical) standards and make the sustenance of life their primary and often only objective (Arendt 1958: 41ff). The result is the complete social control of all members of society, social categories that define members entirely and the elimination of individuality as such (Arendt 1958: 41, Pitkin 1998: 184). Pitkin concludes:

> In this sense, the social is a particular mode of interrelationship among people, a form of togetherness in which each thinks himself an isolated atom and behaves accordingly, but they in fact generate collective results that include the continual enforcement of such thinking and behaviour on each other, and thus their 'normalization' into homogeneity. (Pitkin 1998: 194)

The social, in short, is a kind of community in which conformity and self-interest eliminate the possibility for spontaneous action and hence power (Arendt 1958: 40). The laboring mentalité is ill-suited to provoke collective action in a meaningful sense. Convergence of interests is not the same as acting in concert. In fact, the pursuit of isolated interests is itself problematic. The homogenization, which occurs in the social, systematically eliminates the plurality that enables power. It prevents people from relating to each other through action. Bureaucracy is the dominant organizational form of the modern social and serves to bundle and institutionalise, yet not create the mechanisms of control, which are themselves purely anonymous (Arendt 1958: 40).

Nonetheless the social is not a passive attitude, in fact, it is characterized by a distinct busyness. The cycles of life demand ever new activities. The waste economy is one result (Arendt 1958: 134). Another is the necessity to consume in order to sustain the prevalence of labor (Arendt 1958: 99). People's participation in these processes is essential, they are maintained through the practices of individuals. People themselves produce through their practices the conditions under which they live, induce large-scale consequences and recreate the laboring mentalité. However, because the results of their actions are merely the aggregation of isolated acts they fail to give people real influence over what happens. The social understood in this way marks an often felt, yet rarely articulated tension in modern life. Individual actions are consequential yet individuals often feel helpless rather than capable of shaping their world. Arendt implies that our own practices prevent us from redesigning our institutions and changing the world. Pitkin notes the ambiguity in this observation and emphasizes that it is precisely the tension between the "cannot" and the "do not", the inability to act and the unwillingness to act, that characterises modernity (Pitkin 1998: 196). The effectiveness of the social in preventing action, therefore, lies not so much in material as more in cognitive, psychological restrictions. Through our social practices we prevent ourselves from engaging in action.[63]

63 This Arendtian critique of the present contains striking parallels to Michel Foucault's depiction of modernity, which cannot be treated in much detail here. It shall suffice to say that Foucault's genealogical method enables him to provide an even more detailed and compelling analysis of the social (understood as the dominance of the laboring mentalité) and its rise in modernity and consequently a rather compelling critique of modernity (Foucault 2004a, b). I explore some interesting implications with regard to power and resistance in Höppner 2008.

Pitkin shows Arendt's concept of the social to be more than just a reference to the economic realm and the result of a disregard for social questions. While Arendt may have held these attitudes, the concept of the social harbours decisive elements of her critique of modernity. In totalitarianism power is destroyed intentionally, systematically and in an unvarnished way. The rise of the social is in many ways more subtle, yet also leads to the destruction of power. A reconstructed perspective on Arendt reads the social as a mentalité, a certain attitude towards one's being in the world that precludes engaging in power. This mindset is created and maintained through the privileging of bodily concerns and laboring activities in human interaction, the normalizing tendencies induced by the bureaucratic administration of life and not least by the pretence that these activities constitute the true nature of politics (Bernstein 2006: 249). This mindset aimed at the fulfilment of rules and expectations is opposed to the two central characteristics of power. Natality, the ability to bring something new is precluded, since following rules is precisely not about creating anew. Neither is the assertion of interests. The normalization resulting from rule-governed behaviour consequently also precludes plurality, eliminating the difference that is central to interacting in plurality[64].

If the social is understood in this way, new light is shed on feminist critiques of Hannah Arendt, which tend to focus along Arendt's seemingly rigid division between the private and the public (e.g. Honig 1995: 135). So long as the social is understood as simply the invasion of private concerns into the public realm, Arendt's critique of modernity is necessarily also a critique of feminist attempts to politicise gender (and, for this matter, any other attempts to express grievances). Reading Arendt's critique of modernity as a critique of a certain mentality shaping practices, yields very different results. Not the kinds of grievances expressed, but the way they are treated makes them political or social. Political issues require judgement and debate, their resolution is dependent on how the question of "Who am I?" is related to the "Who are we?" (Strong 2008: 441, Bernstein 2006: 248). Social matters require administration, the application of rules and norms and the accommodation of conflicting interests. Feminist claims then are political when they contest the attribution of rights, question gender roles and aim at the reconstitution of the political. Feminists act politically when they move beyond a simple demand for an end to suppression and towards more justice, but begin to question the assumptions upon which this injustice lies. Demanding rights for men and women, then, is not political, if it is based on the presumption that rights should be accorded because they are men or women. The claim that gender should not be a factor, which accords different kinds of rights, however, is political. The difference is not purely semantic but points toward the kind of contestability to expect of political claims.

64 Even if different groups are expressing their interests, this is not the kind of plurality Arendt thinks of when she speaks of power. To her plurality is the curious connection between the uniqueness of each human being and its equality as a human being before others. The formation of groups of some permanence instils a moment of normalization into political processes, a levelling of difference that is not compatible with the uniqueness of human beings. This is how Arendt's idea of plurality differs from concepts of democratic pluralism as, for example, Ernst Fraenkel's (2007). Pluralism features the expression of particularistic interests in a political system that accommodates and moderates these interests furthering the common good.

Arendt's critique of the social as the defining characteristic of the modern world reflects back on her treatment of the modern political form, the nation state. Her treatment of the nation state has been discussed in the literature in particular with regard to its relevance for discourses on rights (e.g. Cohen 1996; Canovan 1999; Blättler 2000). However, Arendt's ambivalent stand on the nation-state is a striking example of the ambivalence of the different modes of interacting represented by power and the social. Margaret Canovan argues, that inherent in Arendt's thinking there are two different lines of argument regarding the nation state, which refer to very different kinds of nationalisms. The first one is the "worldly nationalism" which, through appealing to the responsibilities and solidarities of a people, reinforces political action and thereby provides a barrier against totalitarianism (Canovan 1999: 104). Nationalism here is a symbolic tool to stabilise power. The other, "worldless nationalism" captures masses by appealing to some (biological) commonality effectively normalising them and precluding action and hence power (Canovan 1999: 105f). It is the forerunner and driver of totalitarianism. Insofar as the nation dominates as a naturalizing idea, it carries the danger of waiving the protection of citizens as humans, not nationals (Cohen 1996: 167). This critique of the nation-state also relates very closely to her critique of the social. Arendt herself goes so far as to say that the "social realm [...] found its political form in the nation-state" (Arendt 1958: 28). However, the territorial state is also the protector of the rights of man, since only when these (human) rights are bestowed upon people by a political entity with the means to enforce them, are they of any relevance (Arendt 1951: 288f; Cohen 1996: 168). The conclusion, then, is that the state can be both, a political entity in the Arendtian sense or an expression of the social and hence a harbourer of totalitarian tendencies, depending on how it is enacted, i.e. how people in it act or fail to do so. Arendt's critique of the nation-state is complicated by her failure to distinguish systematically and explicitly between the social and the political in relation to the state.

The Arendtian concept of the social is highly ambiguous and not systematically developed. Yet, the social is central to understanding power, because Arendt's conception of power is not simply a naive transferral of classic ideas onto the modern world. It must be understood as a reaction to her particular perspective on modernity. It is unfortunate that this important part of her critique of modernity is not expressed explicitly and systematically by Arendt herself. Pitkin's genealogy of the social in Arendt's writing therefore is particularly illuminative, as it indicates how the social may be understood and what role it plays in Arendt's thought. Beyond totalitarianism, it is the social that poses the greatest danger to the modern world. By replacing action with the busyness of reproductive activities it eliminates first the willingness and subsequently the ability to act. Power, as an activity that is always inherently collective even when individual acts are at stake (Strong 2008, Benhabib 1996), is opposed to the individualising dynamic inherent in the social.[65] Where power procures a sense of agency, the social

65 In so far Kateb misconstrues Arendt's idea - although not unwarranted by her self-induced ambiguities - when he opposes what he calls "democratic individuality" with Arendt's idea (and idealization) of action (Kateb 1983: 180). If we think of the social as behaviour where action is called for, the absence of power where decisions on collective issues are at hand (and not just the simple application of rules), democratic individuality may well be what Arendt hoped for when she called for a recovery of the lost treasure of power.

reinforces a feeling of surrender to the inescapable processes of necessity. Whenever in political discourse someone adheres to the inevitable necessity of a decision he re-invokes not a sense of power and agency but proliferates the laboring mentalité and disables effective agency (Marti 1992: 522).

The social homogenises and eliminates the plurality power needs to thrive. It creates fixed identities and eliminates the ability of the individual to transcend these. Power in contrast creates common spaces as it relates people to each other, it is the basis of their connection but it does not produce stable identities. Power, moreover, is the ability to (re-)negotiate our identities anew at all times. Arendt's scepticism toward identity politics might well be understood as a general scepticism of predefined and stable identities (Honig 1995: 160). Any political problem contains an element of resistibility (Honig 1991: 108); when "there is no alternative" there is no politics. Furthermore, the preceding argument implies that in Arendt's terms any issue can be social or political, depending on which mode of action is employed. And because different actors may employ different strategies it can be hard to make clear cut distinctions. In fact, as the incidents at Little Rock, with which Arendt herself took issue, show, events are political (and acts are powerful) not independently or absolutely but in the communicative context of those participating (Duran 2009). The very real results of 'political' debates are therefore likely to differ greatly depending on which mode - behaviour or power - is employed.

A final conclusion may be drawn. The social atomises people, it prevents them from meaningful interaction. In this respect it is similar to violence. However, the social is being reproduced in the practices of people themselves, it is not simply imposed upon them. While violence may perpetuate and become everyday practice, the social is only present and induced by everyday practices. Prevalent practices of the social prevent people from taking action at least as effectively and much less costly than does violence. Ruling in that way tends to be anonymous, restricting the governor and the governed alike, and works largely through practices of the self, so is done by the individuals themselves.[66]

2.2.3 Critical appreciation

Hannah Arendt's concept of power cannot be defined in one sentence, but needs to be placed in the overall context of her thought in order to be fully appreciated. The preceding sections presented a reading of Arendt that attempts to take into account the ambiguities and complexities that result. In this sense my reading is sympathetic. However, it circumvents weaknesses in Arendt's account, rather than systematically treating them. Since my purpose is to abstract from the Arendtian conception of power, this approach seems warranted, despite the fact that, were this an argument on Arendt, it would

66 Obviously, Michel Foucault comes to mind (Höppner 2008 and Foucault 1988). His writings are also a reminder, that there is a cost associated with not complying to rules. Diverging from the social rules is not without consequence. However, the argument here is not a normative one, hence, no judgement on failure to act and not behave is intended. The analytic distinction, which I recover, however, will allow to discern to some extent when and how the social may be transcended. In that there there is a critical purpose behind the analytic distinction.

surely be insufficient. My critical appreciation of Arendt's thinking on power will now take a more detached perspective and complement the remarks made above. I will begin by briefly summarising what I believe to be the most important features of Arendt's concept of power. I will then highlight some important criticisms of the Arendtian approach. Their treatment uncovers the limits of Arendt's distinctions and allows me to argue where departures from her ideas will be necessary. Finally, I will analyse three problems inherent in Arendt's conception of power. As she is herself aware of these problems I will present the - mostly rudimentary - solutions she offers. This creates the basis for the next chapter, in which I develop the conception of intransitive power itself.

Arendt's conceptual framework defies simple dichotomies. Instead she spins an intricate web of connected concepts and it is by no means easy to extract one, such as power. Extracting one concept systematises Arendt in ways she (and many Arendt scholars) might disapprove of. Yet, it is necessary in order to make the concept of power workable. Arendt understands power as the speaking and acting together of people. Power is its own purpose. So, while it likely has effects on others, it is self-referential. It is based on the human conditions of natality, the ability to found anew, and plurality, being equal to others in one's uniqueness. Power is a mode of acting where people take intentional charge of the results of their common actions and effectively take responsibility for them (Pitkin 1998: 194/195). Power connects rather than atomises people. It differs from violence, because it is non-instrumental and can found new institutions. It differs from the social as it is based on action and not behaviour. This is the understanding of Arendt's concept of power underlying the ensuing argument.

Two further elements are commonly associated with Arendt's idea of power, legitimacy and the political. Both point toward the more normative implications of Arendt's understanding of power and raise some peculiar difficulties. The way Arendt connects power and the political is a key element of her thought. Power, as has been shown, is argued to be the political activity par excellence and the one human activity that can create and maintain political spaces. Habermas most prominently argues that this underscores the importance of rule and dominance. The employment of power, he argues, cannot be conceived of without the more strategic actions that constitute the political. The use of force has to be considered in its role for the acquisition and maintenance of political power (Habermas 1977: 17f). The first problem here is indeed the close association of power and the political itself. I have shown how Arendt remains somewhat ambivalent with regard to equating power and the political, for example by according a political role for violence. Nonetheless, her understanding of the political strongly emphasises the role of power in the political realm. Habermas accordingly concludes that her concept of power inadequately captures what politics is about. I agree that the close connection of power and the political is unhelpful as it raises more questions than it solves.[67] This therefore marks my first distinct departure from Arendt's thought: power must not by itself define the political. Of course, some propositions implied by my arguments in the following chapters point towards interesting

67 Hans Morgenthau (1961: 27) defines politics as a struggle for power, intricately linking both concepts and hence cannot provide clear limits for the political at all.

insights as to what constitutes the political or how society is organised. But it is my intention to develop a concept of power, not a theory of the political or of society as such, and therefore such implications will not be explored.

A related challenge to Arendt's idea of power is highlighted by Habermas' criticism, namely the lack of specific attention given to the problem of rule. In thinking of power in a fundamentally different way, Arendt invites such questions and fails to treat the issue explicitly. However, there are at least two ways in which Arendt draws attention to forms of rule. The first is in the concept of authority, implying an obedience in which men retain their freedom and potentially vested in people or institutions (Arendt 1968: 106, Canovan 1992: 218ff). She draws on the Roman tradition here and also remarks on the role of authority in the modern world in *On Revolution*, where she speaks of government as consisting of both power and authority (Arendt 1963: 178). Authority here serves to close the gap, at least somewhat, between the fleeting moments of power and the permanence of political institutions. Arendt also provides a second insight into her understanding of rule. More or less in passing she makes some remarkable statements, claiming that a "comparatively small but well-organized group of men can rule almost indefinitely over large and populous empires…" (Arendt 1958: 200, also Arendt 1970: 50). Here, Arendt posits power as something that, in a rather peculiar way, can constitute relationships of rule. Power enables the rulers. It is the basis of their organization and therefore the basis of their rule itself. She does not claim that all rule is based on power, but she implies that power may yield restricting rather than liberating results to those at the outside of the powerful group. Rule, however, is neither a necessary nor a necessarily intended result of power. It is merely a possible side-effect. The conclusion that Arendt is not including rule in her conception of politics may, therefore, be warranted, but she seems quite aware that questions of rule matter. The relationship between transitive and intransitive power that I suggest is compatible with Arendt's views. However, I will seek to be more specific regarding the ways in which the two interact. In that sense I expand upon Arendt's fragmentary remarks on the subject.

The second concept with which power in Arendt's sense is associated, is that of legitimacy. She explicitly claims that power is always legitimate, because of the way it is constituted (Arendt 1970: 52). Considerable normative baggage comes with that claim. In fact, if this is so, Benhabib argues, Arendt's theory of the political needs a much more firm foundation in universalistic human rights, equality and respect (Benhabib 1996: 194). A saturated concept of legitimacy would also have to be more specific on the procedural aspects of power, something Arendt does not provide.[68] She refuses the kinds of ontological claims associated with according specific rights and defining procedures and institutions. These things to her can only be the result of power, never their precondition. However, relying on the minimal concepts of plurality, understood as equality in difference, and the right to have rights, as the right to be recognised in such plurality, provide no adequate normative basis from which to argue why power should be legitimate.

68 This is where Habermas's work provides a much more elaborate picture (Habermas 1981)

If one accepts that only legitimate power can be power in the Arendtian sense, power becomes a much rarer occurrence than even Arendt suggests. Beyond that, one would turn around the Arendtian argument that power creates its own legitimacy, into legitimacy being a defining characteristic of power. In short, the question of legitimacy and power in Arendt's thought raises significant questions. However, since I aim to develop an analytical, not a normative concept of power it seems appropriate to circumvent this problem rather than resolve it. In my treatment of intransitive power, I will therefore not claim that intransitive power is always legitimate or that all its effects are legitimate. The concept of legitimacy is far too important to be reduced in that way. This second departure from her thought is necessary in order to eliminate the significant normative baggage that comes with the claim. As the following argument will show, however, it limits the scope of the concept of power in useful ways. Rather than being the (only) constituting feature of legitimate order, it can now be treated as one possible ordering principle of the common world and put into perspective. Not claiming legitimacy makes intransitive power a more useful concept.[69]

I have already addressed two further criticisms of Arendt's concept of power. The first is the seemingly rigid distinction between private and public affairs. I have shown in my discussion of the idea of "the social" that a somewhat more sympathetic reading of Arendt reveals the potential in that distinction. It is not issues that are to be excluded in one or the other realm, but rather patterns of behaviour. What we believe to be public affairs can be made a public affair, even in Arendt's framework. She merely reminds us, that pursuing private interests or following rules is not what enables us to resolve common issues. This feeds directly into the second criticism of Arendt, namely her supposedly nostalgic attitude toward the classical forms of democracy. While this may seem so at times, she offers a much less idealised picture of the Greek polis and the Roman republic than is often assumed (Tsao 2002). Furthermore, her critique of modernity throughout her work clarifies that it is a particular attitude she is looking for, not a specific political organization or institution. At close inspection, then, neither of these criticisms significantly undermines her insights on power. In contrast to the problem of rule, which I will seek to address through relating transitive and intransitive power, these two criticisms then are not overwhelmingly problematic in light of the reading of Arendt presented here. My analysis, as it departs from Arendt's original suggestions, will also move beyond a nostalgic view of classical democracy and a strict separation of different spheres of human life.

Nonetheless, Hannah Arendt's conception of power leaves us with three main problems – unpredictability, irreversibility and transience of power. In the following section I will briefly address these, indicating why they are so problematic and which tentative hints at possible solutions Arendt offers. While I believe those solutions to be insufficiently developed they tie in with the conception of intransitive power proposed in the next section.

Firstly, human action and therefore power have unpredictable consequences. Action in its pure sense always has repercussions beyond that which was intended or could be foreseen. Moreover, it can

69 Of course, intransitive power may contribute to building legitimacy. However, neither is it the only possible form of legitimacy (Weber 1968: 33-38) nor is legitimate order a necessary result of intransitive power.

change direction at any moment. There is nothing inherent in action that necessitates commitment to a certain course, value or idea. We find that same idea in Rousseau's Social Contract when he emphasises the inability of the sovereign to bind itself to any rule, law or decision (Rousseau 1960). When taken to this extreme, the problems become apparent. There is no possibility to predict, plan or even reasonably guess the future course of action. Neither can we foresee the consequences of our action in a world of plural human beings, nor can we fully rely on ourselves and know what we will do or be tomorrow (Arendt 1958: 244). Anything is possible. And therefore nothing is safe. This unpredictability carries the potential to paralyse human action altogether. For if we do not know what will result, how can we act? In contrast to Rousseau, Arendt limits that unpredictability, but not by providing a universal frame within which action might be permissible. She points instead towards the important faculty of promising. From promises results a limited independence from the incalculability of the future that is restrained only by the ability to make and keep promises. It is not a common will that holds people together, but a common purpose for which the promises made are valid and binding (Arendt 1958: 245). Promising thereby provides "islands of certainty in an ocean of uncertainty" (Arendt 1958: 244). Arendt's reference to sovereignty and contract in this context clarifies further, that she believes the kinds of ideas preserved in constitutions etc. to be just that kind of promise, namely an agreement on the purposes and limits of the common space of action. They are promises and may be broken, but still give orientation and shape expectations. Promising therefore aims at the future.

The second point Arendt emphasises is the irreversibility of power. Each moment of action has unpredictable, grave consequences which cannot be redeemed or made undone (Arendt 1958: 238). Any further action can only be made after what has been done before and in light of it. The consequences of previous action may be “good” or “bad”, but it is their irreversibility that makes them so problematic. As Arendt puts it, this could confine us “to one single deed from which we could never recover” (Arendt 1958: 237). There would be no room for mistakes or changes in opinion. Here Arendt acknowledges the resulting problem, namely that, given the fallibility of human action, the high likelihood of mistakes and the prevalence of conflicting interests and preferences, human interaction would seize to continue after just one deed, as we would remain “the victims of its consequences forever, not unlike the sorcerers apprentice who lacked the magic formula to break the spell” (Arendt 1958: 237). She, consequently, introduces to idea of forgiveness in order to meet the challenge posed by the irreversibility of action. Forgiveness cannot make the action undone, but it can provide the grounds for further actions to follow and allow us to transcend the consequences of our previous action. Forgiveness, then, refers to the human ability to accept the unchangeability of the past and enable the future by moving on. In this sense, it is more than a moral deed to be done towards another person, but indeed an essential human ability that reconciles past and future, enabling the future of the forgiver and the forgiven alike.

The last problem, the transience of power, has often been the focus of critique. Power in the strict Arendtian sense is a momentary event. Since it is only existent when actualized it remains fragile and temporary (Arendt 1958: 200, 244). That, of course, poses problems. Human affairs – political or not

– are in need of some measure of continuity. The idea of a constant fragility of human affairs may appeal to the adventurous but does not fulfil the desire for stability so prevalent in human history (e.g. Machiavelli 1977, 1986). Arendt, however, seems to see a particular quality just in that event-like character of power. Although she seems to think that more permanent structures emerge from power and action (Arendt 1958: 201), she says very little as to what these might be and most importantly how exactly it is that they come about. There remains a profound blank in her thought. However, in reflecting on the polis as a classical place of power, she points out that „the organization of the polis, physically secured by the walls around the city and physiognomically guaranteed by its laws [...] is a kind of organized remembrance“ (Arendt 1958: 198). The world in which the common space is situated and the history in which action is embedded produces a structure that is present as a shared memory (Cohen/Langenhan 2009: 152, Assmann 2006). Permanence is enabled by the positive reference to the plurality of human beings, the fact that we are born into a world that has been inhabited before us and insert our action into a chain of events of which we can ever only be a small part. Memory, history and the physical space of interaction, in other words, provide an important foundation for the stability of power.

These hints at what might be necessary elements for the constitution of power are certainly not sufficient, but they point us in the right direction. My proposition on intransitive power will take account of the mental capabilities implied therein. The preceding section has introduced the Arendtian conception of power in a sympathetic way, yet pointed towards its limitations and the departures I intend to make. It is Arendt's greatest strength and equally her greatest weakness that she draws a complex picture of power and politics. It is a strength because it provides inspiration and manifold insights, it is a weakness because it makes it difficult to discern the validity and appropriateness of her concepts. For the purposes of developing a systematic concept, therefore, complexity needs to be reduced and ambiguities should be minimised. However, I will return to Arendtian arguments were appropriate, as they still hold important inspirations for the concept on intransitive power.

3. Patterns of intransitive power

The concept of intransitive power is not identical to Arendt's understanding of power. Arendt's account is too philosophical and normatively laden to be easily transferred into an analytical category. Many things, such as the role of the social or the nation remain too vague. However, her concept of power captures many facets of the phenomenon of power, which are underrated in other accounts. Although Arendt remains sketchy on many problems resulting from her conception and fails to properly account for its place in the power debate[70], her understanding of power provides many elements out of which the conception of intransitive power will be developed in what follows. The aim of this section is to lay out the three elements that are essential to intransitive power. The first element, communication and action, is most directly derived from Arendt and refers to the speaking and acting in concert, which she puts at the centre. The second element, symbolic representation, is present in Arendt's account, but only fully developed by Göhler, who draws on his arguments on symbolic politics and institutions. The third element, imagination as a skill, connects the two and thereby explicates an idea only implied in Arendt's and Göhler's contributions. I am drawing on a diverse body of literature ranging from Cornelius Castoriadis to Arjun Appadurai in arguing for imagination as social skill. It will become clear, that this third element plays a fundamental role in processes of change in power relations and allows for some preliminary reflections on the conditions of power.

3.1. Communication and Action

Intransitive power begins with speaking and acting concert. I follow Arendt here in her main argument. However, there is no viable, straightforward definition of the communicative component of intransitive power. The implications need to be explored a further. This first complex concerns speaking and action, i.e. the role of action and speech directly. The second evolves around the ideas of plurality, uniqueness and identity. The third complex, finally, centres on the role of intentions and emotions. I will argue, that communication and action exhibiting these characteristics are productive and bring into being spaces, institutional arrangements and communities. These creations, if based on communication and action alone, are flexible and momentary.

3.1.1 Speech and action

Relating power and speech, i.e. relating the ability to exchange ideas through language, to debate and argue so intimately to power (Arendt 1963: 19) marks power as a fundamentally social phenomenon. Language makes sense only where people interact.[71] It is a means of conveying ideas and requires participation on part of the speaker as well as the listener in order to fulfil its purpose. Arendt

70 Her dismissive portrayal of the debates on power in *On Violence* is not very helpful in capturing the relationship between transitive and intransitive power conceptions (Arendt 1970: 35-40). Elsewhere her references to other conceptions of power are marginal.

71 Language and speech theory usually starts from this assumption e.g. Searle 2002.

connects this element of speaking explicitly to the acting that comes from it. Both must be present. Of course, speaking itself may be acting, we already act through speaking (Austin 2002: 63). However, Arendt goes further. The connection between speaking and acting she suggests, explicitly stresses the performative aspects of speaking and the ways in which speaking creates social facts (Wirth 2002: 10). Speaking and acting in concert transcends the boundaries of language use as such and includes all non-verbal aspects of communication. The explicit mention of action, furthermore, clarifies that power is not generated by just any use of language, but that there must be a particular purpose in the exchange. In my previous discussion of the social and the political I pointed out that there was a particular attitude associated with power, namely the intentional taking charge of the consequences of ones actions (Pitkin 1998: 194). Speaking, then, must be linked to conscious and deliberate acting with others for a common purpose, whatever that purpose may be.

There is in fact no restriction on the content or frequency of the communicative action itself, as Arendt implied, no topic, problem or interest can be excluded as such. Rather, any problem becomes an issue of power through the way it is treated. Where the attitude is one of acting in concert with the intention of taking charge of one's own action, we are looking at power. A large number of consumers, creating market prices by buying the products they like, are not powerful. The market situation is not an outcome they (wish to) take intentional charge of. However, a "carrotmob"[72], where lots of people buy in a specific store on a specific day in order to raise revenue, provided the store commits to spending a certain amount of that revenue on measures to lower the energy consumption in store, is political. The act as such is the same - buying - but the attitude it is associated with is entirely different. Market mechanisms are present in both instances, but they are put to a very different use. A group of friends deciding to go to the lake on a Saturday afternoon is not power. A group of friends deciding to turn an urban waste site into a community garden may well be committing to a political act.[73] Doing something together is not enough, it has to be done with the intention of acting and taking charge of one's own life world. Equally, not all arguments, debates and discussions are expressions of power. If their purpose is merely reflection, exchange of viewpoints or entertainment, to name but a few, they are communicative acts but not power.

Speaking and acting in concert also introduces the self-referentiality of intransitive power. Arendt's curious phrase "in concert" implies more than just the correlation of interests and limited engagement in the pursuit of certain goals. "In concert" insinuates agreement and commonality beyond interest-based allegiances. Power understood thus is clearly a social relationship, but it is not defined through control over others. Rather, the kind of community-creating speaking and acting in concert Arendt refers to, is not about the effects it has on others but about the effects it has on the community itself. When actualized in speaking and acting it empowers and thereby creates or develops the community itself. When only potential, power acts self-binding, providing the limits which a community sets upon itself (Göhler 2009: 34f). In creating rules, laws and institutions a community

72 For details of such worldwide actions see http://carrotmob.org [06.08.2010].
73 For examples see http://www.guerrillagardening.org [06.08.2010].

actualizes power and in the compliance of the members of the community, intransitive power finds a more permanent expression, wherein the communicative acts are preserved and affect the future.[74] Intransitive power therefore is directed at and has purposes for the community itself, it is not without goal or interest. However, it cannot be defined through these purposes, but it is what defines them.

3.1.2 Plurality, uniqueness and identity

Communication and action are also intricately connected to the Arendtian idea of plurality. In Arendt's thought both are based on the fact of human uniqueness and build on the "paradoxical plurality of unique beings" (Arendt 1958: 176), which is in turn revealed through speech and action. While this notion contains some element of recognition, it is not a conception that requires a strong concept of equality. Arendt describes equality as a very basic feature of plurality, reduced to the ability to recognize each other as members of the same species and engage in speech (Arendt 1958: 175), but not as normatively charged conception of the equality of men. Furthermore, plurality is only possible as the combination of equality in this basic sense and uniqueness. The tension between the two creates the need for communicative action and power.

Communicative action, thus, is less normatively laden than is often presumed.[75] If freedom is thought of as independently developed decision-making based purely on reason, i.e. considering the individual subject to be autonomous, communicative action is also not free.[76] Plurality signifies contingency, inserting oneself into a world that already is and has been shaped by the actions of others. Communicative action is restricted by the "existing web of human relationships, with its innumerable, conflicting wills and intentions" (Arendt 1958: 184). This implies, that the conversations people engage in are always already structured, they have to relate to what has been and will become part of a process that is then anonymous, where merely individual inputs can be discerned but no author of the final result be assigned (Arendt 1958: 185, 233). The result is a surprising ambivalence in the communicative action that creates power. It is acting upon as well as being acted upon, it is

74 Of course, communicative acts of intransitive power are not without effect on others, those outside the powerful group. But they are not defined through these effects and although they may in some cases be anticipated, they are not the purpose of the communicative acts themselves.

75 Habermas' idea of communicative power (1981) in other words is a decisive extension of Arendt's idea. He argues that Arendt claims "unimpaired subjectivity" and insists on "non-distorted communication" (Habermas 1977: 8f). Arendt supports more normative readings of her thought by remarks such as this one: “Power is actualized only where word and deed have not parted company, where words are not empty and deeds not brutal, where words are not used to veil intentions but to disclose realities, and deeds are not used to violate and destroy but to establish relations and create new realities” (Arendt 1958: 200). While I agree that Arendt's communicative concept of power contains strong normative claims, I think her understanding of plurality and the tension between uniqueness and equality hints at a less extensive understanding of communicative action. The communication must be non-violent and reveal an attitude that assumes responsibility for the action taken. Else, it will not work, i.e. it will fail to develop into power (Arendt 1958: 200). However, a strong set of specific rights or normative equality of the communicative exchange cannot be the precondition of power, because both are only ever guaranteed through power (Arendt 1951: 436f). They are a result of power, not what defines it. This is precisely the missing normative foundation Benhabib (1996: 193ff) points out.

76 For an illuminative treatment of the difference between autonomy and agency see Bevir 1999.

communication and action contingent upon others. Intransitive power is based on the ability to communicate in language and the recognition of others as equally capable of engaging in speech acts. It is thus not intrinsically tied to strong normative ideas of recognition and equality and, hence, of discourse.

Intransitive power and particularly the communicative component relates to identity, yet, plurality as equality and uniqueness implies an ambivalent conception of identity. Plurality, as argued above, precludes the formation of collective identities, as these deny the uniqueness of human beings. In this sense identity is indeed a matter of the private realm (Hammer 1997: 323; Dolan 1995: 335). Yet, it is acting and speaking through which identities are revealed and become real to the individual actor (Arendt 1958: 179). Identity is formed in the process of revealing oneself to others, it is understood as one engages in acting and speaking with others, yet, it is never fully defined and remains incomplete. Arendt opposes the category of identity in the political realm, because any definition in terms of an identity carries with it the danger of reducing the unique individual to a single, 'objective' characteristic. It invites discrimination in denying the uniqueness of each human being (Hammer 1997: 323). This implies that questions of identity are indeed approached through speaking and acting, but such questions are only conducive to power so long as they remain contested. This, to Arendt, is the difference between revealing "who" one is as opposed to "what" one is (Arendt 1958: 179). The continuing process of identity formation and reassertion that acknowledges the inescapable gap between "what" one is, i.e. ones bodily and objective characteristics, and the "who" one is, i.e. the way one's individual identity is revealed in speaking and acting, is integral to power. The contestation of identity, questioning of attributions and categorizations is clearly an issue of intransitive power. Identity as a product, an unquestionable fact is not. Again, it is not the question itself that defines power, but the manner in which it is approached.[77] The communicative component of power, hence, defies stable identities, but not questions of identity as such. Its grounding in plurality and uniqueness creates a tension reinforcing the transient character of intransitive power and dissolving fixed identity constructions.

3.1.3 Intentions and emotions

Intransitive power emerges where people engage in speaking and acting in a manner that is aimed at the pursuit of communal goals, which are themselves products of their interaction. These goals are not pursued against others, but in and of themselves. This is another implication of the self-referentiality of intransitive power. The pursuit of common interests where interests simply converge, in contrast, is not by itself intransitive power. However, power may well be an emergent

77 Ernesto Laclau and Chantal Mouffe accord a similarly important place to identity in their concept of the political. In fact, the inability of the subjects to develop a full identity is one of the driving forces of political conflict (Laclau/Mouffe 2001). In contrast to their conception, however, the Arendtian notion contains an essentialist element, she implies a true self. For the political realm, however, this essential self is a danger, not a precondition (Hammer 1997). The political in Arendt's terms is defined through the dialogic revelation of the political identity of the self as a unique, yet equal being.

property of interaction that began as the pure convergence of interests. In defining the common interests, in organising their pursuit and negotiating common action, power may - not must - come about. The interests will then lose in importance, they will stop to form the basis on which the group itself rests and in the long run turn into results of power as they change. In identifying the communicative component of power, then, one must not look at the issues debated or the commonalities between the participants but at the incentives of each behind the interaction, at the attitude with which the communicating and acting happens. The acting must take intentional charge of the results of that action and be perceived as a conscious contribution to the stream of events that is history, even if only a very small one. Not that all action is of 'historical' dimensions, but that all action has consequences must be recognized and purposefully enacted. The impact may be good or bad, small or big, but it will be identifiable.

Power is concomitant with the feeling of impacting the world, of being able to make a difference. Hence, already the communicative component reveals that there is an important emotional element in the exercise of power.[78] Exerting power is about being in the world, seeing one's effect on the world and having others see one as having an effect. Power in this sense makes it possible to intersubjectively reassert ones own existence. The associated emotions are therefore not the inwardly defined property of a person, but property of the group and/or of the relationships of its members (Emirbayer 2005: 472). What matters to power is not just having an effect, but also being seen as having an effect. Power comes with emotions such as a sense of ownership, participation and efficacy and also the realization of distinctness that comes from being unique among equals. Surely, emotions contribute to the fragility of the communicative component of intransitive power. As we will see, however, they are also integral to the stabilization of intransitive power. Irrespectively of these issues, emotions complement the cognitive and rational connotations of the speaking and acting in concert. Power is not a purely rational or rationalising phenomenon, but one that connects emotional questions of self-efficacy and effecting the world with rational issues of the organization of communal life.

The first conclusion to be drawn is, that intransitive power is largely constituted through the attitude with which communication and action are engaged in. Communication and action must be pursued by intentionally taking charge of the outcomes of the communicative acts. Such action is not based on the convergence of interests, but builds on the intersubjective recognition of the others as equal but unique and the agreement to act in concert. It is self-referential. Communication and action pursue aims, but are not defined through them. Any goals and interests are only ever the outcome of communication and action. This attitude is present not just as a psychological disposition of the group or its individual members. It is reflected in their communication, the kinds of actions taken and the narratives within which their action is embedded. The disposition defining intransitive power, then, is traceable in documents, communications and historical processes in so far as these are documented.

78 Recent years have seen a remarkable increase in literature on emotions across the social sciences, to the extent that some speak of an "affective turn" (Clough/Halley 2007). For an overview see Stets/Turner 2006.

The second noteworthy point is the immense productivity of communication and action in the above described sense. Communication and action create intersubjective spaces, or what Arendt calls the "space of appearance" (Arendt 1958: 199). These spaces are constructed spaces, they are created and maintained by the communicative acts. They maybe physical as in the polis, territorial as in the state, fragmented as in diasporic communities or virtual as in social networks. They are not independent of physical location and artefacts, neither are they constituted by them. The speakers in such communicative acts are bound by their bodies and situated in a physical space. Their exchange is always to some extent mediated by artefacts, be they the physical space in which the exchange happens or the technologies used to enable their communication.[79] Intransitive power emerges mediated through artefacts, but not defined through them, i.e. it can emerge in physical, fragmented or virtual places alike, should people so act.

Finally, communicative acts are the dynamic component of intransitive power. They endow intransitive power with the potential to create institutional systems, to achieve aims and constitute communities. Communicative acts are also momentary and therefore the origin of the fragility and volatility of intransitive power. Any change in opinion by any one individual could – potentially - change historical processes. Everyone engaging in such communicative processes would therefore be faced with an unbearable insecurity about the reliability of the agreed processes, a situation that likely creates fear and distrust so big, it would eventually prevent action altogether. Were we to think of intransitive power as consisting solely in and of such acts, power would fail to play an important role in our empirical realities, simply because we would be afraid to create it. Or, put the other way around, the concept of intransitive power would fall far short of what we intuitively understand to be power.

Communication and action, in short, create intersubjective spaces of action, which are dynamic and productive yet transient and fragile. In and by itself, this makes for a unpredictable and dangerous social world. Intransitive power, however, is not such a volatile phenomenon as it comprises two further aspects: symbolic representation and imagination. Through symbolic representation, stability is introduced and the skill of imagination enables the balance between the dynamic and the stabilising components.

3.2. Symbolic Representation[80]

An important supplement to communication and action is identified by Göhler and leads him to coin the term intransitive power in order to mark his important extension the Arendtian conception of power. Göhler argues forcefully, that the common space of action constituted through the communicative acts of individuals must be symbolically represented in order to maintain the

79 Following Arendt it is clear that the physical world is an essential precondition of and influence on the constitution of power (Arendt 1958, Marchart 2005)

80 In this section, both 'symbols' and 'symbolic representation' are used interchangeably. The latter is predominantly employed in places where I emphasize the act of symbolic representation, 'symbols' is used where the properties of the phenomenon are described. However, a symbol is always the result of a symbolic representation and symbolic representation always finds its expression in symbols.

community as an effective unit (Göhler 2000: 48). Acting in concert, must find a symbolic expression in order to prevail. Göhler derives his conclusion from the debates on the integration of political systems and institutionalism (Göhler 1997). His argument is, that the integration and stability of a (political) community rests not only on rational discourse or force but equally on the feeling of belonging to this community. It is based on the affective as well as the cognitive predispositions of the individuals involved. This can be achieved through direct participation, i.e. communication or symbolic representation (Göhler 2000: 53, Sarcinelli 2009: 139). Most likely it will be a combination of both, the experience of being heard and co-creating the social world *and* finding norms and values symbolically represented. Symbols, then, are the publicly available 'signs' which visibly represent orientations for common action (Göhler 2000: 54). Clearly, symbols here are more than just *mere* signs, they are not stand-ins for unique real-world things, do not just represent. They require interpretation. It is worth considering in more detail what the underlying understanding of symbols is, before turning toward the role of symbolic representation in intransitive power.

3.2.1 A hermeneutic understanding of symbols

Göhler's conception of symbols is based on three important features. Firstly, symbols constitute reality (Göhler 2002: 28ff). Göhler here draws on Cassirer, who describes the symbolic system as the dimension of reality in which human life is situated and calls man an “animal symbolicum” (Cassirer 1953: 43f). The symbolic is constitutive of social reality. As a general idea, this has been a cornerstone of sociology since Durkheim's work on *The Elementary Forms of Religious Life* (1915) and has also been adopted by anthropology (Geertz 1973). Symbols offer shared systems of meaning, structuring the social world and enabling social interaction (Sarcinelli 2009: 133f). Hence, they are more than simple representations of shared meanings, values and institutions of a society but are constitutive of society as such (Hoffmann 2001: 95).

Secondly, the meaning of symbols can never be objectively given, but is only reconstructed in the act of interpretation (Göhler 2002: 30, Göhler 2005: 62, Hoffmann 2001: 105). Symbols, accordingly, are plurivalent phenomena. This is indicative of the hermeneutic understanding of symbols, where symbols have an indicating and a metaphorical meaning (Kurz 2004: 81). Symbols are signifying in designating certain elements of reality and symbolising in referring to alternative interpretations of these realities (Göhler 2002: 34). Whether or not interpretations within a recipient community converge depends on the resonance field of the recipients (Göhler 2002: 38, Göhler et al 2010: 701f). Yet, the interpretations are not arbitrary but shaped by the cognitive and affective pre-conceptions of the interpretors.[81] Symbols acquire their symbolic character only through their interpretation as such,

81 Hoffmann argues that, while symbols are always in need of interpretation, certain rules should be identifiable according to which the meaning of symbols is constructed (Hoffmann 2001: 103). Cohen and Langenhan (2009) have explored the possibilities of fixing the meaning of symbols so that certain interpretations are more likely than others. They have thereby shown that symbols may even be used instrumentally in soft governing (see also Göhler et al 2010). While it seems likely that interpretations of symbols converge under specific circumstances, symbols remain distinguished from signs in that they do not simply represent and therefore are always dependent on adequate interpretation which cannot be guaranteed.

i.e. only where signs are credited with indicative and metaphorical meaning do they become symbols (Kurz 2004: 85). The plurivalence of symbols regularly leads to conflicting interpretations. These may result in symbolic struggles, in which meaning and interpretation of symbols are contested and, possibly, open the way for new, alternative interpretations of reality (Göhler 2002: 31, Bourdieu 1989: 22).

However, symbols as hermeneutic phenomena, and this is the third point, are insufficiently characterized when attributed only a cognitive dimension. Symbols equally draw on the affects and emotions of the interpreters, they exhibit a strong affective dimension (Göhler 2005). Communication through symbols is more immediate than communication through language as it transports sentiments and harmonizes ambivalences. It makes the feeling itself present, rather than just cognitively recalling it and enables the interpreter to simultaneously perceive ambivalent, even contradictory elements of the intersubjective narrative. In a way, communicating through symbols is more sensing than knowing (Schneider 2004: 105ff). Yet, given shared structures of meaning, symbols are predictable communicators, i.e. even though their interpretation by the recipient cannot be controlled, it is not arbitrary but derives from the individual and collective narrative in which it is embedded (Schneider 2004: 104). Such shared structures of meaning relate cognitive and affective elements and are essential to the constitution of any society.[82] Symbols, therefore, are always related to the identities of individuals and groups as well as to individual or collective history. Assmann shows this nicely in his analysis of what he terms cultural memory. He emphasizes the process of remembering as a cultural practice, which creates the myth upon which identity is created and through these foundational memories socially constructed (Assmann 2005: 52f). This process is enabled by representing cultural meaning in rites, festivities and artefacts, i.e. symbols (Assmann 2005: 21). These foundational symbols are effective because they refer to "communities of feeling" (Berezin 2002: 39) and are not primarily based on rationally constructed, cognitively generated meaning.

82 This idea is a recurrent theme in different approaches to symbolism and society and is most prominently associated with the study of religion. Durkheim emphasizes the need for symbolic order in representing "to themselves the society of which they are members and the obscure but intimate relations which they have with it" (Durkheim 1915: 225). The symbolic order that Durkheim situates in religion and religious practices, refers to something transcending the limits of pure reason, i.e. cognition. Shilling shows how Durkheim's account situates emotional experiences at the centre of society and how social facts "represent the common symbolic and emotional processes which *positively integrate* individuals into social and moral orders" (Shilling 2002: 19). Symbolic orders, then, are build around representation of what is sacred to the group in question (Shilling 2002: 19). Similar to the explorations of Durkheim into the nature and role of religion, Cassirer names myth and religion as the emotional basis of symbolic order (Cassirer 1953: 109). They are subsequently complemented by further elements, but the mythical (emotional) basis remains. In his analysis of "Religion As a Cultural System" Geertz argues that "man depends upon symbols and symbol systems so great as to be decisive for his creatural viability" (Geertz 1973: 99). He emphasizes the way symbols reconcile the realities of the world with the abstractions of religion and thereby produce meaning. This is why symbolic orders form the central basis of culture.

What kinds of things, now, can exhibit such characteristics?[83] The most obvious symbols are images and physical objects, for they are closely related to signs. However, a flag is more than a mere sign, it represents the emotional attachments of a group and its members, sometimes to the extent that the group is equated with the flag. Whatever happens to the flag, happens to the community (Shanafelt 2009). Similarly, monuments, landmarks and places can become emotional foundations of identity. Physical locations and objects become associated with ideas or historical events, so that their sight effectively recalls the emotional as well as cognitive facts associated with the event or idea. These kinds of symbols transport in the first instance emotional messages, they work immediately. Their cognitive content usually reveals itself after the affective reaction has already occurred.

Other symbols more openly combine affective and cognitive components. Slogans, such as Obama's 2008 “Yes, we can!” or ideas such as the social market economy, “Soziale Marktwirtschaft” in Germany, combine very effectively interpretability with emotional attachment. In doing so, they provide shared values and meanings and stabilize the political community (Nonhoff 2006). Through narratives and story-telling, each collectivity constructs its own identity in a process of communication and forms collective memories. Collective memories now, are not facts, but socially constructed. The past in these narratives is permanently reconstructed through the progressing frame of reference of the present (Assmann 2005: 42). Rather than the objective relevance of the past, it is the particular representation of this past constructed by the collectivity, which works symbolically to consolidate the identity of a collectivity (Assmann 2005: 53). Founding myths and constitutions often are the expressive forms of such collective memories and narratives.

Rituals often combine elements of the above, but are distinguished from them through their performative character. Furthermore, by arranging them in specific ways, rituals add something more, that is not present in the individual elements, the hole is more than the sum of its parts. Rituals are “socially standardized and repetitive” (Kertzer 1988: 9) performative acts, which serve as “formalized manifestations of emotion” (Berezin 2002: 44) and by extension of the identity of the collectivity. Rituals enable the members of a group to partake in the collective memory and thereby reassert themselves as members of that group (Assmann 2005: 57). Rituals structure time, by elevating festive moments and commemorations, by marking transitions[84] and connecting past and present. They also structure space by staging the coming together of the collectivity and displaying in real space the symbols of belonging (Assmann 2005: 57, Berezin 2002: 45). Rituals also turn memory into an active process, the participation in public rituals can be considered action when done with a conscious attitude toward the reconstruction of the community incremental to power.

Symbols, I conclude, are characterized as (1) constituting reality, i.e. constitutive of the social world, (2) plurivalent, i.e. in need of interpretation and (3) transporting affective as well as cognitive

83 A systematic typology of symbols is not readily available, although some interesting suggestion can be found in (Nullmeier 2005). What I attempt here is merely a brief mapping or clustering of possible symbolic forms around heuristic focal points in order to illustrate, what symbols are.

84 Assmann identifies this as one of the central pillars in the construction of collective memories (Assmann 2005: 60ff)

meaning. They are first and foremost means of communicating cognitive as well as affective messages. This, now, may happen intuitively, without the individuals or groups actively reconstructing the possible interpretations of the symbols. It may also come about in a more reflected manner. Raising flags at a rally usually is a conscious reference to the values and narratives associated with the flag. Using slogans or ideas with symbolic value is used regularly to associate messages with a certain affective dimension. Participation in rituals need not be pure habit, but can be done in a manner that reflects upon the cognitive and emotional messages associated with it. Such reflection is not necessarily deconstructive. It may even serve to enhance the effect of the symbolic message, make it more pronounced. Reflection, of course, also allows for the questioning and even ridiculization of the transported messages, it may invite resistance. But even such outcomes of reflection will reference the symbolic order and therefore contribute at least to some extent to its stabilization.

3.2.2 Symbols and intransitive power

Symbolic representations play a complex role in the constitution of intransitive power, but they are an integral component. Arendt clearly focuses on the communicative dimension of power, yet, she cannot escape the need to make some tentative references to the role of symbolic representation. While the space of appearance she describes is a discursively constructed place, it is "physically secured by the wall around the city" (Arendt 1958: 198). The physical location and its arrangement, in other words, is essential for the permanence of the space of appearance. The arrangement of artefacts in physical space serves as a symbolic representation of the political community as such. So, while artefacts cannot create the space of appearance, they are important in maintaining it.

Furthermore, Arendt emphasizes the importance of history and narrative for action. Action builds on previous action and produces stories, which are then recorded in documents, monuments, art works and story telling. The eventual outcome of history is anonymous, as it is the outcome of many individual acts. Yet, frequently, heroes emerge, who help structure the narrative of history even if he or she cannot be unequivocally considered the author of the historic events. They serve, to make the better story and symbolize the significance of the events. Although Arendt marks these reifications as mere shadows of the original action, she implies that they are instrumental in recalling these events (Arendt 1958: 184f, Arendt 1963: 208, Canovan 1999: 108). Finally, it could be argued that Arendt's portrayal of the constitution also takes account of the symbolic dimension of such documents. As an "enduring objective thing" the American constitution provided an effective protection against the volatile will of the people and related political debates back to the founding ideas of the political community (Arendt 1963: 157).

It seems plausible that intransitive power and symbolic representation should be linked. Even in Arendt's account, different kinds of symbols as described above are integral to power. However, Göhler's more founded understanding of symbols as hermeneutic phenomena makes possible the inference of two explicit functions of symbolic representation.

Firstly, symbols constipate complex realities representing rather than resolving the complexities and contradictions of the social world (Göhler 2002: 38). In doing so, they provide a means to externalize and preserve meaning beyond immediate communicative acts and, furthermore, frameworks within which such meaning may be coded, stored and retrieved (Assmann 2005: 22). Symbolic orders are at the heart of human community, because in their plurivalence they provide means of effective communication as well as the means of containing and sometimes even reconciling the contradictions of the social system.[85] Symbolic representations also structure the narratives of a community by being timeless and historically embedded at the same time, relating past events and actions in specific ways. Symbols refer back to past social events or experiences, but also represent them, make them present and thereby elevate them from the stream of history (Schneider 2004: 108). Symbolic orders therefore are elementary to the coherence of a community as it can be maintained only through symbols, the connecting of affective and cognitive understanding. Göhler, in particular, stresses these integrative effects of symbolic representation (Göhler 2002: 38, Göhler 2005: 67ff).[86]

The second notable function of symbols is their ability to link the individual to the social world. As we have seen in the previous section, there is a tension between the unique individual and the being-among-men or, put in Arendt's words, the human condition of plurality. The difficulty here lies in the fact that there remains a gap between the individual and the collective, which cannot be bridged by cognitive means like rational communication alone. Emotions are essential to reducing the set of likely social actions and they do so practically instantaneous (Barbalet 2002: 2f). Symbols relate individuals to the social world and other individuals by providing orientation and structuring fields of action in an immediate, intuitive way (Göhler et al 2010: 699ff, Geertz 1973: 94ff). It is their emotional message, the way they transport affective information, which makes them invaluable for reducing the complexity inherent in the social world and in countering the in-communicability of feelings in their authenticity through language alone (Schneider 2004: 105). Symbols enable the constitution of collective (and individual) identities in their cognitive *and* affective dimension.[87]

Symbolic representations are 'preserved' coagulated communicative acts, they recall, re-enact and commemorate past communicative acts. From these acts they derive their stabilizing potential, or what Göhler calls the integrative potential of symbols (Göhler 2005). However, the presence of symbols alone, even if the collectivity is stable, is not indicative of power. Intransitive power needs both, a communicative and a symbolic component. Symbols will stabilize a collectivity, even if they power that may have created it is no longer present (Arendt 1970: 41, 49). They also serve as important instruments of governing in systems that are not maintained by power (Cohen/Langenhan 2009). Only when communicative acts are conducted in a manner directed at intentionally taking charge of the

85 This process would be inadequately described by the more negative term “concealing”. In particular symbolic ideas are helpful in integrating societies through conflict, as they provide a reference point along which conflicts may be articulated.

86 In this sense constitutions are identified as important collective symbols (Brodocz 2004: 140ff).

87 Berezin, following Weber, stresses “the emotional dimension of attachment and shared experience” for the constitution of nation-states, which in his view are best understood as “vehicles of political emotion” (Berezin 2002: 41).

results of the action and not defined through their purposes *and* the created space is then symbolically represented can we speak of intransitive power. Symbolic representations may serve as stabilizers as they are reflectively employed in order to recall the communicative acts. This important role of symbolic representation has early been noted by Durkheim for whom "collective symbols represent the outcome of the ritual processes through which collective effervescence becomes conscious of itself" (Shilling 2002: 19). Symbols represent a way of conserving and making present the moment of foundation and the emotions and creativity associated with it.

The plurivalence of symbols implies a certain ambivalence of symbols in terms of stabilising power. Precisely because symbols are plurivalent, symbolic representation may be appropriated and contested. It is, however, just this indeterminateness of their meaning that is so important to their integrative, stabilising function, while also provoking resistance and conflict (Assmann 2005: 83ff, Berezin 2002: 45). Bourdieu puts these symbolic struggles at the centre of his treatment of symbolic power (Bourdieu 1989). Similarly, Laclau and Mouffe develop an agonal model of politics that puts the contestation of hegemonic values represented through empty signifiers at the centre (Laclau/Mouffe 2001). Brodocz also notes the importance of conflict with regard to the establishment of constitutions and argues that integrations results from consensus and conflict alike (Brodocz 2004: 143). Symbolic representations as coagulated communicative acts, in other words, also contain an element of the newness and dynamic of the original communicative acts. In representing their dynamic character they keep the door open to contestations of the meaning of symbols.

Communicative acts and symbolic representation are intricately linked. Communicative acts are instable, but dynamic. Symbolic representations stabilize if never entirely. They provide some measure of predictability and permanence. Neither is a static element of power, but both are consciously conducted practices in so far as there are associated with power. Power is a possible, not a necessary result of their combination. These practices must be employed purposefully and reflected, not habitually and undirected. Clearly, both practices involve the whole person[88] and cannot be reduced to rational, non-emotional interactions. Communicative acts and symbolic representations contain a cognitive and emotional element, even if to different extents. The emotion associated with communication is self-efficacy, a sense of being able to impact the world. It is a collective emotion in the immediate sense, because it is experienced only with others. The emotion most closely associated with symbolic representation is belonging, in the sense of having a place in the world created by people. This emotion is situated at the individual level and defines the individual's relationship to others. It is only through the skill of imagination, though, that such practices become possible and it is therefore essential to explain in more detail, what imagination entails.

88 This is how Barbalet defines emotion - as involvement (Barbalet 2002)

3.3. Imagination

Communicative and symbolic components of power form the core of Göhler's conception of intransitive power. As I have shown, they convey cognitive and affective characteristics. However, both work differently on the phenomenon of power. The communicative elements point toward the dynamic but also indicate the inherent instability of intransitive power. Were intransitive power based solely on communication – as the common reading of Hannah Arendt's concept of power suggests – any interruption in that communication would also mean the disappearance of power. Such volatility is diminished through forms of symbolic representation, which lend stability to power beyond the actualized communicative acts. The symbolic components of intransitive power preserve the communicative acts of the past and the created space for future acts, effectively providing continuity. Symbolic representation and communicative action, then, are not substitutable for one another (Göhler 2000: 42). Their combination is at the core of intransitive power and so is the tension between their stabilising and dynamic effects. In what follows, I will argue that the skill of imagination plays a key role in turning this tension into a productive driving force for the exercise of power. Indeed, the skill of imagination underlies communicative acts and symbolic representations alike and represents, therefore, a decisive and distinct element of intransitive power. Only where and when imagination, communicative acts and symbolic representation come together can we speak of power.

3.3.1 Power and imagination in Arendt's thought

Hannah Arendt presents an ambivalent picture of imagination. In most of her writings the concept plays no decisive role. When used the term usually describes things as "only" in the imagination (e.g. Arendt 1958: 260). Imagination is employed in line with common accounts, where it is largely equated with fantasy. However, in her work on understanding and judgement Arendt presents a much more differentiated, if ambivalent conception of imagination.[89] Understanding in Arendt's terms is the human ability to “make knowledge meaningful” (Arendt 1953: 380) and “to reconcile ourselves to what we do and what we suffer” (Arendt 1953: 378). It is, in other words, the ability by which we construct historical meaning out of the events that acting creates in time. While understanding is an individual process, judging has a distinctly communal component, as it implies the position of a spectator (Dostal 2001: 141). Judging considers events generated by action and reinvents them as examples of human action in a more general sense (Thiele 2005: 710). It does not just apply rules but reflects events individually and serves to “judge the particular without subsuming it under a concept”

89 Her work on judgement remained unfinished at her death. However, Arendt scholars have carefully reconstructed the role of judgement in her political thought from unpublished pieces (e.g. Arendt 1982a,b) and preceding works such as her writings on understanding (e.g. Arendt 1953, see Dostal 2001: 140f.). Notable contributions to this reconstructions include Benhabib's chapter on “The Problem of Judgement and the public sphere” (Benhabib 1996), Beiner's interpretative essay included with the publication of Arendt's lectures on Kant (Beiner 1982), Beiner and Nedelsky's edited volume *Judgement, Imagination and Politics. Themes from Arendt and Kant* (Beiner/Nedelsky 2001) as well as more recent work by Zerilli (2005a,b) and Allen (2002). Despite the methodological problems resulting from the draft character of Arendt's work, the thorough discussion therefore enables a plausible interpretation of the role of judgement (and imagination) in Arendt's thought, at least, to the extent needed in my argument.

(Zerilli 2005b: 133). All judgement must be communicable. Hence, judgement needs to be related to the *sensus communis*, the shared meanings of the community, in order to be validated. It is never independent of the community within which it is made (Arendt 1982a: 67). Judgement is not, however, grounded by concepts or morals. Judging itself is a communicative process in relating actors and spectators in ways that contribute to the construction of political space. (Zerilli 2005a: 179, Arendt 1982a: 63).[90] Both, understanding and judging, are integral to the construction of meaning at the individual and the collective level. Imagination, then, connects the two by providing perspective, allowing the necessary distance to enable understanding (Arendt 1953: 392) and making present examples, which enable us to recognize the general in the particular, i.e. judge.[91]

Thus, Arendt places imagination at the centre of her thinking on understanding and judgement, portraying it as the "condition of all knowledge" (Arendt 1982b: 83) and, consequently, all shared meaning. She most clearly elaborates on imagination as a reproductive faculty, that allows actors to put their actions into perspective and illuminate the present through the past (Arendt 1953: 392). It is in this sense that the political space is an "organized remembrance" (Arendt 1958: 198). Through remembering, the making present of past actions, continuity is provided (Arendt 1958: 208) and a bannister along which future acts may be oriented (Allen 2002: 362, Arendt 1953: 392). "Exemplary narratives" of and from the past provide the basis from which alternative narratives of the future maybe developed (Thiele 2005: 711). The past here emerges as a constructed phenomenon, that is created in light of the present, just as the present emerges out of the narratives of the past. It is constructed by distancing and taking on different perspectives (Zerilli 2005: 179, Dostal 2001), which do not provide an objective point of view but rather allow for a multidimensional impression of the past. Through imagination as a reproductive faculty, understanding and foundation are provided. This corresponds to the symbolic dimension of intransitive power.

However, there is another dimension present in Arendt's thinking on imagination. Imagination is "not merely reproductive of what is already known, but generative of new forms and figures" (Zerilli 2005a: 163). This is not explicit in Arendt's thought, in fact, she argues that purely imaginative endeavours may well contribute to changing the world but can never be events in a political sense (Arendt 1958: 259, Zerilli 2005a: 163). However, in two ways she hints at the importance of a more radical imagination[92]. Firstly, her treatment of judgement implies, that through the process of

90 Arendt's idea of political judgement draws on Kant's concept of aesthetic rather than of moral judgement. Dostal (2001) argues that she misinterprets Kant and even Zerrilli calls her interpretation of Kant "idiosyncratic" (Zerilli 2005a: 179). In some ways this maybe related to an ambivalence in the Kantian argument itself, where imagination and understanding are closely linked (Long 1998). However, the Kantian argument itself, while an important reference point, is not by itself of particular avail for my argument and shall therefore not be elaborated.

91 Arendt here brings the example of bravery and goodness, which we recognize not by applying some abstract concept of those things but by likening actions to earlier actions which we know to portray bravery or goodness (Arendt 1982b: 83f.). The process here is one of remembering, rather than of abstract thinking and has cognitive and affective value.

92 This term is borrowed from Castoriadis and also used by Zerilli (2005a). It will be more explicitly elaborated a little later in this section.

imagining new perspectives are gained that do not just apply rules or reinterpret them but enable genuinely new ways of producing meaning (Zerilli 2005a: 168). The freedom from causality and rule-governed practice inherent in imagination allows judgement from multiple perspectives without providing fixed criteria by which to judge events. While this might be insufficient in terms of providing moral bearing, it enables the expansion of what is communicable and hence the insertion of something truly new into the stream of history (Zerilli 2005a: 179f.). Thus, through imagination we cannot just rearrange facts and ideas, but rearrange them in ways that in effect create a new meaning for them.[93] The second way in which Arendt hints at a more radical imagination is through the concept of natality. Bringing something new to the world clearly requires more than just the application of rules or the continuation of processes that have already begun. It is a miracle, something unexpected and this capability to do the infinitely improbable is given to each human being through birth, i.e. qua existence (Arendt 1958: 246f.). Natality as a concept consequently implies the ability not just to apply pre-given ideas and rules, but the ability to bring in unprecedented, unique perspectives.

Arendt's explicit treatment of imagination remains somewhat ambivalent, as she hints more than explicates the necessities of a radical imagination, while elaborating the reproductive dimensions of imagination. With regard to imagination and power, however, it is instructive to look at the faculties of promising and forgiving, which according to Arendt are essential for the exercise of power. These central ideas illustrate nicely, why the exercise of imagination is not merely reproductive. Promising on the one hand is based on the idea of imagining a world in which certain promises are kept and actions are shaped by the restrictions imposed through them. It imagines the world as it is not yet. If such a world is not imaginable, the promises are unlikely to be given. Imagining it requires thinking beyond the constraints of the present and seeing the world as it could - but not necessarily will - be. Forgiving on the other hand connects the past and the future by imagining a world in which past deeds are no longer determining future action. Forgiving imagines a world as it could be, if we overcame the grave consequences of past action. Both, forgiving and promising, are faculties of the imagination and without such imaginative capabilities action and, hence, power is not possible.

I propose to read Arendt in a way that goes beyond her treatment of the concept of imagination itself and sees the faculty of imagining as the second decisive faculty besides speech for the exercise of power. It is essential in countering the fallacies of power, namely, transience, unpredictability and irreversibility. Through remembering, i.e. recalling past deeds, forming narratives and constructing history, we imagine the world as it was. We stabilize it. Through promising, we imagine the world as it could be. In designing these promises we renew, revolutionize the world. In acting in accordance with these promises, we stabilize it for the future. Through forgiving, finally, we manage to divert from the paths which simply extent past events and narratives. We are enabled to pursue new, different

93 Arendt hints at this, albeit in a negative way, when she describes the role Plato's political philosophy as "revolutionizing" thought by recombining ideas in imaginative ways (Arendt 1958: 222ff.). Surely, this was not a political act, but it is an imaginative one. So, while Arendt does not elaborate on the role of radical imagination in politics, her conception of imagination contains interrelated reproductive and radical dimensions.

trajectories and take charge of the world we want to live in. We can truly begin anew. The systematic idea represented in this reading is not presented by Arendt herself. Yet I believe, this reading does justice to her overall framework. As such, it provides important insights on imagination. However, it is not a sufficient definition of imagination, nor an appropriate treatment of its relevant features in the conception of intransitive power proposed here. I will therefore turn toward some other significant conceptions of imagination before concluding with an explication of my understanding of imagination as a component of intransitive power.

3.3.2 Approaches to imagination

The modern treatment of the concept of imagination is closely associated with the rise of Romanticism in the 18th century. The focus of the ensuing debates has been on the one hand on the relationship between perception and imagination, i.e. the cognitive aspect. The creative aspect on the other hand refers to the role of imagination in the production and consumption of art music and other creative products (Kearney 1988: 15).[94] Consequently, the concept has received continued attention in the literary and musical sciences (Kearney 1988, Klein et al 1983, Reichling 1990). Three things in particular are interesting about these debates. Firstly, no unified definition of the concept has emerged, although there is agreement that imagination encompasses reproductive and creative capabilities (Stevenson 2003, Kearney 1988: 16). Secondly, imagination emerges as a social capability that bridges the void between individual minds and creates shared meaning. Meaning is negotiated between creative producers and the audience and created in a collaborative process.[95] Finally, imagination works on the cognitive as well as the affective level. Imagination builds on all senses and hence regularly also works in immediate ways, which circumvent and supplement cognitive processes.

Recently, imagination has become a popular term in anthropology (Hansen/Stepputat 2001). Popularized by Benedict Anderson's "Imagined Communities" (Anderson 1991) the term has begun to replace culture, marking a shift from static to more dynamic understandings of systems of meaning. Sneath et al criticize such use as merely a rhetorical device to de-essentialize socio-cultural entities and categories (Sneath et al 2009: 7). While this maybe an important function of the concept of imagination, the criticism indicates, that no viable theory of imagination has yet emerged in anthropological literature. Furthermore, imagination itself is mostly viewed as an instrument rather than as an outcome of collective processes and carries an almost romantic, positive connotation (Sneath et al 2009: 6ff). Accordingly, anthropological literature offers a great number of remarkable

94 Often, both aspects are treated and merely analytically differentiated - which speaks to their close connection. Notable authors of modernity on the issue of imagination include Kant, to which Arendt makes reference, but also Hume, Coleridge and Sartre. (Streminger 1980; Klein et al 1983)

95 The role of collaboration and authorship has changed over time, but it has always been socially situated (Jaszi 1994, Woodmannsee 1994).

studies tracing the imagination in empirical terms[96], but the contribution to overall theory building is, as of yet, limited.

In light of this theoretical pluralism with regard to imagination, it is essential to look closer at what may be said about the relationship between imagination and politics before examining the role of imagination in intransitive power. Two conceptions in particular stand out and merit further attention, namely that of Cornelius Castoriadis, a political theorist with a Marxist background and Arjun Appadurai, one of the leading theorists in postcolonial anthropological theory. Both authors stem from explicitly critical backgrounds and this is indicative not so much of an inherently critical nature of the concept itself, as more of the rather marginal importance it has played in political theory so far. However, a treatment of the analytical value of the concepts suggested by both and the further treatment of the relationship between power and imagination will reveal that a lot is to be gained by ending this marginalization.

Castoriadis differentiates between primary and secondary imagination. While secondary imagination refers to the "imitative, reproductive or combinatory imagination" (Castoriadis 1993: 136), primary or radical imagination is characterized through its ability to create ex nihilo (Castoriadis 1993: 138). This corresponds roughly to the strands of thought on imagination identified above, and is present also, for example, in Arendt's thought. However, Castoriadis criticizes his predecessors, in particular Kant, for underestimating the significance of the radical imagination, which remains implicit in Kant's writing (Castoriadis 1993: 139, 144) as it does in Arendt's (Zerilli 2005a). Of course, the distinction between reproductive and radical imagination is analytical and both are deeply connected. It proves useful, however, when Castoriadis goes on to explore imagination not just at the level of the individual but at the social level.

Shared meaning is an expression of the secondary, reproductive imagination at the collective level. Yet, any particular society is the result of the radical instituting imaginary. It is self-creation under constraints, i.e. institutions are created anew but never without historical, physical and social context (Castoriadis 1993: 149ff, Castoriadis 1997: 207). At the individual level radical imagination is a source of the perceptual *quale*[97] and of logical forms instrumental in the creation of an own world within which the individual can posit itself (Castoriadis 1993: 143). At the collective level radical imagination creates the institutions of society. In this process conscious efforts at institutionalization are combined with the underlying systems of meaning, which equally are a result of - previous - radical imagination (Castoriadis 1997: 225). Consequently, "the institutions and social imaginary institutions of each society are free creations of the anonymous collective concerned" (Castoriadis 1993: 149). Imagination, in other words, is a fundamental component in the creation and maintenance of political space comprised by institutions and shared meanings.

96 The 2009 special issue of *Ethnos* edited by Sneath, Holbraad and Pedersen is but one such example, that also attempts to develop a more encompassing theoretical frame work. While the suggestion of technologies of imagination seems valuable in terms of ethnographic research, it is not very instructive in terms of the role of imagination in intransitive power. It is therefore not discussed in any detail here.

97 *Quale* refers to the element of subjective experience present in mental states.

Society according to Castoriadis is a self-creation that is constantly altering and actualising the imaginary. The radical imaginary at the collective level only appears as actual imaginary, once basic meaning has been established (Castoriadis 1997: 251). Ideally, a balance between the conscious contributions to and the more anonymous forces in the alterations in the societal institutions emerges. However, institutions tend to develop a dynamic of their own, which prevents society from recognising its own creation in the imaginary of the institutions (Castoriadis 1997: 226). This means, the balance shifts at the expense of the conscious institution of society. Castoriadis refers to this condition of society as alienation.[98]

More could be said on Castoriadis' outline of a political philosophy, which covers new ground presenting an original and productive rereading and extension of classical Marxism. However, the most important features of the imaginary are already apparent without. Firstly, Castoriadis recognizes imagination in its reproductive and creative dimension. He also describes it as an individual as well as a social faculty. While Arendt stops at defining a social role for the individual faculty of imagination, Castoriadis emphasizes the ways in which the collective imagination is more than just the individual combined. The social instituting imaginary produces those systems of meaning and institutions which in turn shape individual phantasma - effectively becoming the basis of individual imagination. In a more pronounced way than Arendt, he outlines the complex interaction between the individual imagination and the collective imaginary. Secondly, Castoriadis describes very explicit political functions of the imaginary. The imaginary is, in fact, the basis of any institution of society. Imagination for Castoriadis precedes and transcends the political. Arendt on the other hand sees imagination as a faculty to be employed in the political realm rather than as constituting it as such.

However, and this is my third point, with regard to the deliberate employment of radical imagination Castoriadis remains somewhat ambivalent. It is certainly implied in transposing the radical imagination to the collective level, that radically new institutions may emerge and his treatment of the revolution makes clear that he desires such change (Castoriadis 1997: 155-162). He sides with Arendt, however, in considering such radical change exceptional. The possibility of the radical imagination instituting new actual imaginaries is severely limited by the actualized imaginaries of an anonymous collective, which tend to develop a dynamic of their own. At the collective level imagination is only in exceptional circumstances employed in its creative and productive sense by conscious, purposefully acting collectivities. The ability to use imagination in such a way is often hidden and not acknowledged. For Castoriadis, alienation from the institutions of society is first and foremost an alienation from the collective ability to radically re-imagine society's institutions, to recognize in society one's own creation. Or, paraphrasing Pitkin and her interpretation of Arendt, the inability to act where acting is called for (Pitkin 1998: 181).

98 There is a remarkable similarity to the kinds of developments that Arendt describes as the rise of the social. Although by no means synonymous, Arendt's idea of the social and Castoriadis' depiction of alienation could be productively brought into dialogue.

Castoriadis' concept of the imaginary is certainly one of the most sophisticated treatments of the subject in political theory. However, there is some challenges with regard to my intended use of the term imagination. He admirably connects imaginaries as the building blocks of meaning which enable human action with the radical imagination as the ability to transform social institutions, and also the individual and the social aspects of imagination. The latter in particular is very instructive, as imagination is explicitly posited as a social faculty as well as an individual one. The former on the other hand blurs the distinction between the active use of imagination and more passive and subconscious effects of imaginaries. At the collective level Castoriadis, then, stresses these more anonymous effects. Intransitive power, in contrast, is a collective phenomenon, which builds on an attitude of taking intentional charge of the results of one's action. Imagination as an element of intransitive power is consistent with Castoriadis' framework in so far as imagination is best understood as a social phenomenon. However, it stresses the creating potential of imagination at the collective level relating the concept somewhat closer to Arendt's idea of natality, the individual ability to bring something new to the world which at the collective level enables the creation of political space and history. Intransitive power does not create through the anonymous forces of the collective, but through active and intentional collective attempts to act. The unpredictability of action means, that many if not most of the consequences of such action cannot be foreseen, so that results may not be intentional. But the attitude behind the action is active and not passive and intransitive power therefore not just not anonymous, but very deliberately personal and attributable.

Another insightful treatment of imagination and politics may be found in anthropology. Arjun Appadurai in his famous analysis of processes of globalization in *Modernity at Large* puts the work of the imagination at the centre of his treatment of contemporary developments. He, too, sees imagination as extending beyond the confines of aesthetic and artistic endeavours and distinguishes it clearly from the fantasy, which denies rather than challenges reality (Appadurai 1996: 5ff). He furthermore focuses on imagination as “a property of collectives, and not merely as the faculty of a gifted individual” (Appadurai 1996: 8). In contrast to Castoriadis, however, he identifies the role of imagination today as a “staging ground for action” (Appadurai 1996: 7), placing an emphasis on the radical imagination as an everyday social practice (Appadurai 1996: 31). Two characteristics of imagination stand out. Firstly, there is its “projective sense”, the sense of being a prelude to something (Appadurai 1996: 7). Imagination points towards the future. Rather than merely confirming identities and histories it extrapolates possible futures (Appadurai 1996: 145). Because such possible futures are always multiple the imagination is always potentially radical.

The second characteristic is closely related, namely the way imagination makes present alternative imagined worlds and possible lives, which differ from one's own. While imagination has always signified making the absent present, only now, having extended to everyday practices and fuelled by the omnipresence of images of these alternative worlds and lives, does it reveal its productive potential. Disjunctures between realities can and must be brought into perspective. Contradictions, for example between the conditions of production and consumption of consumer goods on a global scale

are presented and re-presented through different kinds of media and consequently negotiated at individual and collective levels (Appadurai 1996: 53f). Previously, finite sets of possible lives were realistically "imaginable", creating predictability and providing stability to social systems. Appadurai shows how this has changed and concludes, that the work of the imagination by which individuals and collectives negotiate the contradictions of reality is central to shaping processes of globalization. Coherent systems of meaning are much harder to come by. As a consequence, the creation of identities and communities has become more recognisable as the work of the imagination rather than as a natural occurrence. Collective imaginings and imagined collectivities have become much closer related (Appadurai 2006: 25) and the processes of identity formation more diverse and accordingly more contradictory.

Appadurai's treatment of imagination in *Modernity at Large* sometimes comes across as somewhat optimistic, situating the possibility of resistance against injustice and inequality at the cracks and contradictions made visible by the work of the imagination. However, such a view of Appadurai's thought and the imagination more generally is too narrow. Though less explicitly so, Appadurai's recent work on violence and globalization reveals a more complex idea of imagination. He analyses the manifold interactions of cultural practices, ideologies and individual decisions fuelling ethnic violence, long-distance hatred and exclusion. Conflicts are ill-described, he argues, in geographical or strictly cultural terms (Appadurai 2006: 116). Rather, they are the result of the ways in which coherence is brought to world views. The nation state is the classic case of such a coherent world view. It induces fear of small numbers as the existence of minorities emerges as a metaphor and reminder of the failure of the classical national project to produce a unified and homogeneous nation (Appadurai 2006: 43). The nation is not whole but always remains contested and – not just at the margins – quite recognisably an imagination.[99] The formation of identities, in short, tends to by connected to the formation of the other. Yet, not all identities become predatory requiring the extinction of the other (Appadurai 2006: 51). What seems to matter for their potential to lead to violence is the way in which they are imagined in relation to the other – exclusively or relatively.

Imagination hence plays a dual role for Appadurai. On the one hand, it enables people to navigate the contradictions of their lives in light of the cultural and economic complexities of globalization. Imagination is an everyday individual and collective practices. On the other hand, imagination makes possible the formation of fragile identities, required by the aforementioned coping strategies, that may or may not be designed in ways that fuel violence. Imagination as such is neither positive nor negative. Predatory identities and the means by which the other is to be extorted are as much a product of imagination as notions of solidarity and democratic institutions. Imagination is morally indeterminate

99 Benedict Anderson coined the term "imagined communities" (Anderson 1991), which has become very popular in anthropology and beyond. For the purposes of developing a substantiated idea of imagination, however, Anderson's argument is of limited usefulness, as he lacks a theoretically founded concept of imagination (Axel 2003). This is not to distract from his achievement, however, to coin a term that is so intuitively understandable, that it has become widely used even without a strong foundation in the philosophical debates on imagination.

and carries a distinctly dystopian potential (Sneath et al 2009: 10). This, of course, prohibits romantic readings of imagination, which are predominant in the application of the concept in literature, aesthetics and philosophy. Where politics is concerned we must acknowledge that good and bad come from the work of the imagination and there is no intrinsic quality of imaginative capabilities, which makes them more prone to one or the other.

3.3.3 The skill of imagination

Debates regarding the concept of imagination are complex, yet, they revolve around recurring features, which serve well as the foundation of my concept of imagination. Firstly, imagination is reproductive, it makes present what is not currently there. It provides the connection between phenomena and concepts, i.e. it allows us to see meaning in the world. By guaranteeing "the belief in the continual existence of phenomena and processes in the world" (Klein et al 1983: 20), it enables us to form world views and identities. In this basic sense it is a foundational ability of the human mind. Imagination also enables the human faculties of remembering and forgiving. These abilities become politically relevant, because the formation of meaning and consequently identities is not an individual process but happens in the presence and in interaction with others. Giving meaning to the world and our perception thereof, providing a sense of continuity and hence predictability is, of course, of great emotional relevance. The reproductive capabilities of imagination enable us to develop feelings of belonging, meaning and identity. Reproductive imagination is essential for ensuring the continuity of human affairs. The reproductive capabilities, then, are the first important feature of imagination.

Secondly, imagination is creative. It gives us the ability to reveal new possibilities and enables us to change our understanding of existing things (Raffel 2004: 216f). Imagination in its creative sense is closely related to ingenuity, the ability to find original solutions to previously unknown problems (Homer-Dixon 2000: 3). It is not just the application of categories and learned procedures. Imagination allows us to rearrange what we know and see it in ways that are not just mere extrapolation but add something that hitherto was not there. Imagination brings something new to the world. And while this new thing is unprecedented it relates back and builds on what is already there. Imagination is contingent, yet original. Or, in the words of Stanley Raffel:

> "One manages to be imaginative only by demonstrating how one's alternative view of some phenomenon could actually be consistent with what deconstruction would call all the signifiers that make the phenomenon in question take on the appearance that makes it look as if it is and even must be what other (less imaginative) interpretations assume it is." (Raffel 2004: 218)

There is a tension here, which is mirrored in Arendt's concepts of plurality and natality. Imagination brings something new and unique to the world, quite as each human being brings something new to the common world qua being born. Each human being is a new beginning. However, this new beginning can only be actualized to its full potential through the plurality of human beings, i.e. by entering the new into the stream of history, the web of existing relationships. It must relate to

what is already there in order to become meaningful. Imagination then, is creative not in producing fantasies, but in producing original arrangements and solutions in light of what is already there. One could liken the difference to that between fantasy literature such as *The Lord of the Rings* and *Harry Potter* and utopian literature such as Morus*'s Utopia or Orwell's 1984.* All of these literary texts convey messages and entertain at the same time. However, utopian literature engages actively not just with human nature on an abstract level, but with the world in which their authors live and transcends the tendencies and developments contained therein. Imagination here is creative and radical in ways, making it politically relevant. This creative and radical use of the imagination is the origin of the feeling of self-efficacy associated with communication and action. The creative imagination facilitates communication and action and makes them meaningful.

The third important feature to be noted is that imagination is a social as well as an individual faculty. The latter has been favoured in most of the debates on imagination, that are concerned with the connection between perception and understanding. Even there, however, social components become apparent. In literary and musical theory the relationship between the artist and the reader/listener is of key importance. And Arendt's idea of judgement, which draws on Kant's thoughts on aesthetic judgement, accords the spectator a crucial role. Imagination here is an individual process, which depends on a social setting in order to create meaning. The social setting works as a facilitator of individual imagination and guarantor for the communicability of world understandings. This hints at the complex processes through which individual and shared understanding shape each other. Castoriadis and Appadurai go further, the former emphasising the social imaginary, the latter placing imagination at the centre of his treatment of negotiated identities under conditions of globalization. Imagination, then, is a social as well as an individual phenomenon. As such it is elementary for any human community.

For the purposes of intransitive power, imagination is most relevant where it is understood as the active ability of a group to recombine and reinvent their shared understandings. The collective here emerges as the location of the exercise of imagination. It turns into a communicative process reinforcing the self-efficacy of the group. This is to some extent implied in Appadurai's understanding of imagination as a social practice and the radical instituting imaginary featuring in Castoriadis' thought. However, Appadurai is mainly concerned with the cultural and only to some extent with the political consequences of these practices of imagination and does not seek to explore their role in power relations explicitly. Castoriadis on the other hand stresses the rarity of the social instituting imaginary and focuses on the more anonymous effects of social imaginaries. My argument expands upon this general idea of imagination as a social phenomenon refocusing imagination for the concept of intransitive power.

My fourth point argues that imagination is best thought of as a skill. Imagination as a skill derives from the variety of skills associated with the creation of meaning and understanding. It begins with speech, which enables the communication of perceptions but also includes the ability to recognize and

apply codes in order to understand speech, action and symbols[100]. Such understanding is not of a purely cognitive nature. As argued above, both, communication and symbolic representation are emotionally as well as cognitively defined. Imagination hence relies on analytic as well as emotional skills (Rosenau 2003: 235) and connects communicative action with symbolic representation. The specific nature of the skill of imagination allows groups or individuals to compare different standpoints, consider and devise alternatives and to create plausible narratives as well as to recognize and tolerate contradictions.

As a skill, imagination is not either there or not there – everyone is capable of these things at least to some extent. Imagination is present *to an extent*. To what extent it is present, depends on the conditions in which the individual or group exists and is in a position to practice imagination. It would seem reasonable to assume, that strong cognitive and and communicative skills, available information and communication technologies, freedom of thought and plurality of opinion facilitate imagination. Since imagination as a skill needs to be practized, these conditions are helpful as they encourage such practice. Ideology, violence, predominant concern with matters of physical survival and very homogeneous social groups should provide less incentive to practice imagination. Very often, this is so. However, chapter five of my argument also presents examples where neither of the aforementioned conditions is present. This suggests that favourable conditions cannot in and by themselves account for the emergence or non-emergence of imagination. People exercise imagination in the face of violence and under conditions of ideological closure of discourses, sometimes to the effect of changing these conditions. Imagination (and hence intransitive power) can and will be found in the most unlikely places (as well as more likely ones), because it is closely linked to what Arendt refers to as natality, namely the ability to bring something new, unprecedented to the world. Through collaboration, this individual ability turns into a social skill which enables collectivities to device new, imaginative arrangements and solutions.

I propose to think of imagination, then, as the collective skill of people to actively recombine and reinvent shared meanings and institutions in ways enabling the active and collaborative formation of their world. The similarity to the communicative component of intransitive power, comprising communication built on a certain attitude and with a specific purpose rather than just any communication, is immediately recognisable. Similarly, not just any form of imagination is indicative of power, but the specific form aimed at shaping the collective world. Imagination thereby builds on and transforms systems of meaning, which are preserved and communicated not just through language but also to a large extent through their symbolic representation. Imagination enables the understanding of symbols and the negotiation of their plurivalence. Instead of being confused by the ambiguities of symbolic representation imagination allows us to construct continuities and tolerate inconsistencies, by conceiving of alternative interpretations and simultaneously considering contradictory possibilities. Surely, we hold opinions and subscribe to world views, but ideally that does not limit us in imagining alternatives, desirable utopias as well as frightening dystopias. It is from the curious combination of

100On the importance of codes in communication see Geertz 1973, Eco 1995 and Hall 2005.

reproductive and creative features that imagination draws its transformative energy and political relevance.

The ability to use imagination is not equally present in all individuals or groups. One can be more or less talented to exercise imagination. Some may do so easily, naturally, others may find it hard to consider alternative readings simultaneously. It depends, in other words, in some ways on the personal predispositions one has. However, imagination can also be learned and needs to be trained. To exercise imagination, one has to practice and can expect to get better over time. How well the skill is mastered, then, depends on the specific mixture between talent and practice of individuals or groups.

I have argued, that the ability to exercise imagination is shaped but not determined by external conditions. There is efficient ways of preventing imagination: ideologies, which restrict the ability to think beyond the present conditions; violence, which makes physical survival the predominant concern; the inhibition of communication, which transforms imagination into a collective endeavour; the destruction of those cognitive and emotional skills that enable imagination etc. All of these strategies aim at eradicating not the imagination as such, which is essential for creating a meaningful and navigable social world, but the active and creative use of it. However, imagination may never be rid of its radical potential. It has the ability to "feed upon itself" or, put differently, grow from very small grains through exercise. The process of meaning creation can never be entirely passive and world views, especially coherent ones, produce contradictions and inconsistencies, which individuals must reconcile. In that process, they may always produce new, unexpected meanings and ideas that fuel change.[101]

The significance of imagination in intransitive power lies in the ways it connects the stabilising and dynamic components of power and reconciles the partly opposing tendencies of communicative action to change and symbolic representation to preserve. Imagination works in two directions. On the one hand, it connects to the past and the systems of meaning which already exists. In its reproductive function imagination makes possible the interpretation of symbols, embeds action in narratives and recalls past events in order to enable judgement. Arendt refers to this function of imagination as "organized remembrance" (Arendt 1958: 198) lending continuity to the political community and Anderson alludes to it in his conception of nations as imagined communities (Anderson 1991: 6). Imagination here serves as tool to understand and navigate the world. On the other hand, imagination makes possible reconsidering the world and developing new unprecedented arrangements, new ideas of what the world can be. Imagination is key in letting the speaking and acting of people transcend the tendencies of the present and invent ingenious solutions to complex problems. Because of the exercise of imagination the world is not just presenting the ever same social arrangements but evolves and changes. Hence, imagination is both a stabilizer of the common world and a tool for radical change. As a social skill it allows the collaborative production of meaning and change, and consequently the transformation of individual perception and fantasy into shared meaning and active world construction.

101 This inherent unpredictability of human imagination is essential to enabling the mushrooming of discourse, which is the cause of change (Foucault 2003: 33).

In that way, imagination is essential to an active engagement with the shared world. It is opposed to thoughtlessness and routine, found in "the social" Arendt describes. Imagination, is not opposed to rationalism or pragmatism, both of which require the active and imaginative engagement with the problem at hand. (Zerilli 2005a). Imagination does not deny reality but transcends it. This makes it an important element of intransitive power.

3.4. Defining intransitive power

Intransitive power is defined through the presence of three elements. As we have seen, all three elements are present in Arendt's thought. However, symbolic representation and imagination are less thoroughly developed than her understanding of communicative acts in power and largely portrayed as facilitating the communicative acts. Göhler emphasizes this equal importance of symbolic representation and his formulation states both elements as integral to intransitive power. I add the notion of imagination as a skill that enables a more harmonious and potentially stable connection between the two former elements of power. Only where all three come together, can we speak of intransitive power.

There is, firstly, a specific form of communicative action based on the plurality of human beings and aimed at the intentional taking charge of the results of that action. This kind of communication and action must, secondly, be symbolically represented in order to be preserved. Intransitive power, thirdly, requires the skill of imagination to be employed by the collective as an active, social skill, which recombines and reinvents the common world. Imagination illuminates more specifically how change and continuity can be reconciled and how each can be achieved through intransitive power. These three elements together create intransitive power and each has its role to play. Communication and action form the basis of the dynamic of change and creation inherent to intransitive power. They are what produces visible change effects and hence induces a feeling of self-efficacy. The symbolic representation of intransitive power keeps it present beyond the fleeting moment of the communicative acts. Through symbolic representation a feeling of belonging persists, that does not have to deny plurality by ascribing characteristics. Both of these elements are enabled by the collective use of the imagination: in making alternatives present, remembering the past without letting it determine the future, in devising original solutions to new and old challenges and in navigating the tensions, contradictions and conflicts of the shared world. The skill of imagination maybe learned and unlearned, it may be stalled by circumstance and through force. But nothing can make it disappear entirely. It is reborn with each human being as the ability to bring something new to the world.

This peculiar resilience of imagination has important consequences for intransitive power. In my subsequent argument I will frequently talk about factors inhibiting the emergence of intransitive power as well as instances where it was partially or temporarily realized and subsequently disappeared. Its emergence, however, can never be ruled out entirely. Even in unlikely situations people may engage in practices of power and this is due to to the role of imagination in power. The forms of these practices

differ widely and instances of power come in very different shapes and forms. Intransitive power remains fragile in any case as it must be realized and enacted. It cannot be stored. Surely, institutionalization is possible, but any such institutions must be backed by the actual presence of intransitive power and its three elements. It is not the institutional setting as such, that makes power possible, but the power that sustains the institutional setting.

So far, I have developed the concept of power in the abstract. I have begun with a brief introduction into power debates and some preliminary remarks on the relationship between intransitive and transitive power. Then, I focused on Hannah Arendt's concept of power and presented a specific reading emphasising the analytic elements of her ideas. This chapter has now laid out my understanding of intransitive power, which underlies the ensuing analysis. In the chapters following now, I will seek to demonstrate the new perspectives gained through applying the dual conception of transitive/intransitive power on a more concrete level. Chapter four traces transitive and intransitive power through modern thought. Drawing on selected yet representative examples of modern thought I can show how the question of intransitive power disappeared from view once the state emerged as the predominant object of political thought and why. Chapter five traces instances of intransitive power in the contemporary world. It exemplifies how the explicit analytic separation of transitive and intransitive power enables us to better grasp (political) orders emerging around the world. Both chapters provide empirical and historical examples, but their purpose is a theoretical one. They help to clarify the changing relationship between transitive and intransitive power and thereby serve to refine the theoretical conception.

4. The modern configuration of power

This chapter looks at modern thinking about political community in light of the proposed two-dimensional conception of power. The purpose is to present a foil against which contemporary developments might be compared, making the claim plausible that differentiating between transitive and intransitive power more deliberately helps us to better understand changing configurations of power. The proposed conception is accordingly used to discern the specific configuration of power characterising the modern state so that chapter five can specify how that configuration has changed. I will concentrate on central elements of modern thought as quasi-prototypes of the modern way of thinking about political community. Such an endeavour, especially given the restricted attention that can be given to the complexity of modern political thought, raises some methodological challenges. The chapter therefore begins with some methodological reflections clarifying the task at hand and how it is to be accomplished (4.1.). The second part of this chapter identifies some significant presumptions about the relationship between transitive and intransitive power by considering the basis of modern thinking on political community (4.2.). The third part of the chapter will engage with the more concrete developments associated with the modern form of political community, the sovereign nation-state (4.3.). In effect, this presents a reading of familiar ideas through the lens of the proposed two-dimensional conception illuminating the specific modern configuration of power represented by the state. The resulting narrative is not intended to replace others. Its limited purpose is to provide a foil for comparison. In the fourth part I will briefly review the position of violence and point toward some of the implications of the modern configuration for the use and effectiveness of violence (4.4.).The final section will summarize what can be concluded for the modern configuration of power (4.5.).

4.1. Methodological reflections

Providing a reading of 'modern political thought' is an exceedingly complex task, as it implies engagement with historical ideas as well as historical processes. Yet, it is necessary in order to illuminate the validity of the two-dimensional concept of power in terms of its added analytical value. The challenge is to do it in a way that is focused on the question at hand, yet, does justice to historical ideas and processes. I will look at selected writers and problems that I believe exhibit typical features of modernity. The task is a paradoxical one because I will seek to show how modern thought tended to render the question of the relationship between transitive and intransitive power largely uninteresting. I will proceed in two distinct steps.

In the first step, I will engage the proposed conception with modern history of ideas.[102] Klaus Roth has proven admirably what kind of meticulous work is needed in order to write a genealogy of the state that at least partially captures the complexity of the phenomenon (Roth 2003). It is not my purpose here to attempt this for the concept of power.[103] Instead, I seek to reveal basic patterns of thinking about transitive and intransitive power in modern thought. The presumption is that enduring structures and underlying logics in political thought can be identified, even if the variations within are large (Chapman 1965). The ideas I present serve as typical and highly influential examples of modern political thought. Such a cursory survey of political ideas cannot rewrite the history of ideas, but provides sufficient material to draw some conclusion on the modern relationship between transitive and intransitive power in modern political thought.

My approach does not fall easily into the two main strands of methodology in the history of ideas. The Cambridge School, on the one hand, focuses on the historical contingency of political ideas and debates and seeks to understand them in their historical context (Skinner 2002). However, I will be applying a predefined concept to canonical texts and this precludes an adequate analysis of their contemporary counterparts and a thorough reflection of their historical circumstances. Neither does this seem helpful with regard to providing a comparative foil for the analysis of changing configurations of power. Conceptual history, on the other hand, aims to identify concepts of enduring relevance and traces their changes in meaning through historical time as an indication of the changes in world views and values. Otto Brunner, Werner Conze and Reinhart Koselleck provide an excellent example of such work with their seminal encyclopedia of historical concepts "Geschichtliche Grundbegriffe" (1972-1997 and 2004). In some ways, my engagement with the history of ideas employs a related perspective, yet, there are some significant differences. I am not tracing changes in the concept of power, but rather investigating how modern conceptions of political community could be read in light of the two-dimensional concept of power. As my conceptual framework is defined beforehand, I will not claim that the distinction was of great importance to the thinkers themselves. Instead, I seek to present a narrative of modern thinking about political community that develops along the lines of the two-dimensional conception of power. This reading reveals the nature of the relationship between transitive and intransitive power that characterizes modern thinking.

Thomas Hobbes and Jean-Jacques Rousseau are presented in some detail, because they highlight the basic pattern of thought most clearly. A brief review of their main texts on the constitution of the body politic reveals such community as being based on intransitive power and producing transitive power. A basic and influential pattern of thought is thus established. Subsequently, political thought focuses on the maintenance and design of the fixed relationship between power, essentially

102 I could start with Machiavelli here, or even earlier. However, Hobbes seems the most obvious starting point, as he explicits many things and represents an important development in thinking about the state. This is not to say that modern times began with him, elements of modern political thought were developed before and many also later.

103 For an excellent historical treatment of the development of the concept of power see the article on power and violence in Geschichtliche Grundbegriffe (Faber et al 2004).

foregrounding questions of the exercise of transitive power. I will trace these debates in an exemplary manner along two lines of thought – liberalism and participation. In conclusion, I will look at definitions of the state developed at the beginning of the 20th century. These represent ideal-typical conceptions of the fully developed state and as such allow me to show how the fixed connection forged between intransitive and transitive power resulted in a focus on the transitive dimension of power. Max Weber' and Georg Jellinek serve as cases in point. This critical, select reading of modern thinking on the state lays the basis for evaluating contemporary ideas and developments in chapter five.

The second distinct step in this chapter focuses on the historical form power took during modernity – namely the sovereign nation-state. I will illustrate how the concrete historical form relates to the two-dimensional concept of power. Therein, I develop the argument along two main characteristics of the modern state – nationhood and sovereignty. I understand these to be evolving concepts as well as dynamic historical realities and therefore my treatment is the analysis of an ideal type. Yet, since debates in political science tend to reference just this ideal type and conceive of deviations as failure to meet the expected standards, it is helpful to consider the ideal-type of the sovereign nation-state, rather than the factual historical development. It is important to keep in mind the purpose of this part of my argument, namely the provision of a comparative foil. Such a foil is necessarily abstract and non-specific with regard to many elements beyond power. Globalization poses a conceptual challenge not primarily because political developments deviate from an ideal-type imagery. They always have. The challenge is that we cannot understand important contemporary developments as simple deviations from our ideal-type political community, which is a very specific configuration of power. By highlighting how power is contained in the ideal-type I can later show how and why that configuration might be dissolving.

The methods employed in what follows, then, are broadly speaking hermeneutic, but with an explicit critical intention. I seek to present a particular interpretation of modern history in order to show which kinds of problems the two-dimensional concept of power attends to. This chapter, in other words, shows how intransitive and transitive power are present in the ideal of the modern state, revealing the ways in which the issues associated with both dimensions have been treated. Chapter five will then relate to the reading presented here by evaluating contemporary change against the backdrop of the modern ideal.

4.2. The bias of the modern configuration of power

4.2.1 Hobbes' minimal conception of intransitive power

Thomas Hobbes (1588-1679) and his writings mark a seminal step in the development of thinking about the state. Although such thought can be traced much further back[104], it is here that modern

104Even critical readers will concede that Jean Bodin (1529/30-1596) and Niccoló Machiavelli (1469-1527) can be considered focal points in thinking on the modern state. And the roots of thinking, as Roth (2003) shows, go back even further. Thomas Hobbes is singled out here, because he most clearly illustrates the way in which the modern state is designed with a particular relationship between transitive and intransitive power

thinking about the state finds its first prominent expression. Hobbes introduces a new construct of legitimacy transforming earlier ideas on contractual agreement into a theory of political legitimacy that no longer depends on God to provide the basis of the body politic.[105] This innovation has become the hallmark of modern thinking about political order and dominant in modern political thought (Roth 2003: 730). I will seek to show how embedded within the prototypical idea of the social contract lies a presumption about the relationship between transitive and intransitive power worth recovering. The contractual idea, I will argue, establishes a fixed connection between transitive and intransitive power putting intransitive power in an *almost* pre-political realm inadvertently foregrounding questions transitive power in focusing on government and belittling the question of the foundation of political community.[106] I will focus mainly on the ideas as presented in the Leviathan, as it represents the most developed account of Hobbes' political theory.[107]

One of Hobbes' most decisive innovations is the recognition of the artificiality of political life.[108] He departs from the Aristotelean understanding of man as a social being and posits the political community as an artificial body created by human action (Kersting 2000: 68, Herb 1999: 21). In many ways this is the central feature of modern political thought, which perceives political community as something created rather than natural. Furthermore, Hobbes reconstructs the body politic from its smallest parts, i.e. individuals and their natural perceptions and inclinations. His method aims to device a logical construct reconciling the idea of a non-natural, artificial nature of political order with the need to establish and legitimate such order.

Hobbes' anthropology is mechanistic concluding from specific anthropological presumptions what the possible forms of interaction between individuals are (Chwaszcza 2001: 217, Ake 1970). Men, he argues, are created equal, differences between them always being outweighed by the ways in which they have comparable abilities. The chance of achieving one's desired ends, therefore, is almost equal

in mind.

105 Contractualism has remained important throughout modernity, including thinkers as prominent as John Rawls and Immanuel Kant. Next to Republicanism it is one of the important modern strains of thought (Hindess 1996). Despite important differences, however, the impact and stringency of Hobbes account makes his formulation prototypical.

106 Therefore, of course, my argument is not about analysing the coherence and critically evaluating the Hobbesian construct itself. It is impossible to even briefly review the complex debates on Hobbes' philosophy here and, overall, not necessary to make my point. I focus on specific elements of Hobbes contractual construct in order to highlight what has become the intuitive presumption about the proper relationship between transitive and intransitive power. For further reading on Hobbes see Fetscher 1966 and Skinner 1996. For the same reasons I will not debate Hobbes' status as a contractual theorist (Hampton 1987, Gauthier 1988), simply taking him as such.

107 Although there is some differences in the construction of the argument compared to Hobbes' earlier writings such as *De Cive* and *The Elements of Law*, the general framework of his thinking does not change profoundly with regard to the point I intend to make. However, for an excellent discussion of the differences see Tönnies 1993/1930: 504f and, more specifically, with regard to his understandings of freedom and sovereignty Herb 1999: 23ff and 100ff respectively.

108 It could be argued, that his method is of equal importance, as he is the first to systematically apply scientific, "geometric" methods to political problems. However, it is neither the most decisive innovation in terms of my argument, nor has it been as consequential in political thought.

in all human beings resulting in the “equality of hope in the attaining of our ends” (Hobbes 1996: 83). The pursuit of these hopes is governed by passions (Hobbes 1996: 33ff) and, consequently, leads to frequent and fierce conflict. This incompatibility of the equal pursuit of hopes induces "a perpetual and restless desire of power after power[109], that ceaseth only in death” (Hobbes 1996: 66). Rational behaviour under these circumstances brings about a general inclination of all men to fight each other. Hobbes concludes from the relative equality of men and the strength of their passions that perpetual war and conflict will arise, should no measure be taken against it.

This assumption of a state of nature is a necessary element of all contractual theories and its description provides the reasoning for the specific shape the contract takes. In Hobbes' case, the fear of death is the paramount result of the state of nature. The permanent threat to life and livelihood makes the “life of man, solitary, poor, nasty, brutish, and short” (Hobbes 1996: 84). The problem according to Hobbes lies the absence of an overarching power enforcing peace between men. Unless forced into compliance, he argues, men will invariably fail to comply with the natural laws instructing them to keep peace and abide by promises made. This, then, is the fundamental task of the sovereign: to enforce the keeping of peace and promises among people by any means necessary thereby ending the state of permanent fear. The commonwealth overcomes the state of nature.[110]

Hobbes differentiates, quite significantly, two forms of commonwealth, namely by institution and by acquisition. Although in effect equally useful, they come about quite differently. The prototypical case – and the one receiving the greatest attention – is the commonwealth by institution. Hobbes' reasoning is straightforward: any multitude is strongest when it is united by one judgement. Common will is fragile when it is based on the temporary convergence of interests or simply a lack of conflicting interests. Such natural agreements are prone to failure, as they fall apart when their initial conditions change (Hobbes 1996: 112f). One will among humans, so Hobbes argues, is best created by conferring all power and strength to one man or assembly of men by a conscious act. The instituted sovereign reduces all their wills to one while they still remain the authors of his judgement (Hobbes 1996: 114). The sovereign, thereby, is not party to the contract and therefore not bound by it. The position of sovereignty is one of authority, where the actions of the sovereign remain tied to the original authorship of the individuals uniting (Hobbes 1996: 107). This transfer of power and strength and its representation in the sovereign lie at the heart of Hobbes' contractual construct[111].

109 Power here refers to present means to attain future ends. Hobbes understanding of the word power is somewhat arbitrary as his discussion of the concept reveals (Hobbes 1996: 58/59). However, his understanding also seems to shift between the natural state and the contractual state (Altini 2010, Dunn 2010, Read 1991) which implies that indeed the entering of the contractual state impacts how power is or can be. I refrain from a detailed discussion of Hobbes's understanding of power here because despite similarities the distinction between transitive and intransitive power holds the greater promise of a systematic understanding.

110 It is somewhat unclear, whether this state of nature should to be thought of as a historical or a hypothetical instance. My argument, however, explores the assumptions implicit in the construct. It matters not whether it is the narrative of a perceived historical development or a hypothetical construct, but merely that it constructs a relationship between transitive and intransitive power that became prototypical for thinking about the state.

111 Another useful way of framing this act is as a transferral of rights, as this is the hallmark of a contract

This unification of many wills under one judgement, now, "is more than consent, or concord; it is a real unity of them all" (Hobbes 1996: 114). It is a genuine act of creating anew in a way that is fundamentally different from the kind of sociability that animals share (Hobbes 1996: 113). Through mutual promise, a conscious communicative act, a new entity is created. It is decisive that Hobbes institutes this entity through a communicative act explicitly stated by him as follows:

> "...made by covenant of every man with every man, in such manner, as if every man should say to every man, *I authorize and give up my right of governing myself, to this man, or to this assembly of men, on this condition, that thou give up thy right to him and authorize all his actions in like manner*." (Hobbes 1996: 114)

The formula unites two distinguishable acts into one – institution and authorization (Forsyth 1981: 196, Kersting 2000: 74f). For Hobbes, both are an integral part of the contractual agreement, since only through the act of authorization can the institution be successful. It needs the authorized strength of the sovereign to enforce the promise given or it will fail: "covenants, without the sword, are but words, and of no strength to secure man at all" (Hobbes 1996: 111). Yet, he does not seem to believe that they are one and the same. While a man simply by entering the congregation sufficiently declares his will to accept a sovereign, he does not have to vote for the (particular) sovereign, i.e. the institution is enabled by the participation in the act, the authorization by agreement of the majority (Hobbes 1996: 117, Hobbes 1889: 109).

I will return to some of the peculiar contradictions resulting from this construction later, but for the moment I would like to emphasize the communicative act that features so prominently and is quite explicitly described by Hobbes as a communicative act and that alone. It is somewhat surprising that Hobbes seeks to remedy a state of unconstrained war through such an utterly non-violent act and, indeed, this particular point invites the question why egoistic and eual human beings should engage in a contract at all.[112] Beyond all these possible difficulties, however, the fact remains that the idea of the commonwealth *logically* rests on an act of communicative agreement brought about by necessity and reason from within people not by the force of armies. Hobbes commonwealth, in other words, rests on an act of intransitive power, a brief moment where people against all odds come together and speak and act in concert. This is the self-transformatory notion contained in the contract, which establishes

(Hobbes 1996: 90). Hobbes himself speaks of a natural right of every man to use his power and strength for his own preservation, which amounts to the right to do anything likely contributing to that aim, since the imminent threat of the state of nature implies limitless dangers (Hobbes 1996: 86). However, reason dictates natural laws, the most important of which is to keep peace. From this fundamental principle Hobbes concludes, that every man shall give up his right to everything only retaining his right to his own life, provided the others do as well (Hobbes 1996: 87). It is on the presumption that the idea of the commonwealth by institution rests.

112 Since natural law carries little weight in the state of nature, it remains unclear why that first law - to keep peace - should be recognized as making contract the most plausible way to ensure security (Hobbes 1996: 87). There is a leap of faith implied here that seems somewhat out of sync with the rest of the argument . It may be reasonable to assume that given the factual existence of government, he did not think the problem paramount (Skinner 2008: 207). This is implied also by the equivalence established between the commonwealth by institution and commonwealth by acquisition to be discussed later.

the people as such by representing their oneness in a person or assembly and only then moves on to the act of authorization (Forsyth 1981: 199, Skinner 2008: 188).

A firm connection is established, between the people as the author of the actions of the sovereign, which they remain beyond the contractual moment, and the sovereign as the actor under whose judgement the many wills are subverted. This introduces a radically democratic element to thinking about political community, while not necessarily establishing a democratic system of government. What stands out, is the realization that a logically consistent model for the constitution of a body politic beginning with the individual needs to be constructed from the wills of these people. In other words, Hobbes concedes that unless some natural or God-given order between people is presupposed, political order requires at least a minimal conscious communicative act on part of the individuals to be established. Therein, I would agree with Forsyth, lies the main historical significance of the Hobbesian construct (Forsyth 1981: 192).

The foundational act amounts to a brief and un-expectable moment of reason. However, this moment contains all the elements of intransitive power. The communicative act is most clearly expressed by Hobbes himself. Furthermore, his theory of representation (Forsyth 1994: 42) points toward the symbolic representation of power in the form of the sovereign. The sovereign represents not just the people, but most importantly their original agreement. The skill of imagination, finally, is instrumental in bringing about the contract itself: The covenant being no less than an act of promising (Arendt 1963: 170) requires the participants to anticipate the world as would be, were a sovereign instituted to ensure their survival. Motivation for engaging in the contract, therefore, lies not purely in fear of death, but moreover in the realization that there is a viable way out of it, namely the establishment of an overarching authority. It is for this reason that Hobbes speaks of the Commonwealth also as a an “arbitrary institution [...] which is like a creation out of nothing by human wit.” (Hobbes 1889: 108). To make a commonwealth is to create anew, it is using the collective imagination to alleviate an unbearable status quo.[113] Hobbes remains highly sceptical with regard to the permanence communicative acts of intransitive power can achieve, emphasizing the foundational and the transient qualities of intransitive power in the contractual moment.

Hobbes is neither a democrat nor a republican[114]. His rather pessimistic outlook on human nature does not allow for trust in the ability of individuals to engage in more than the one act of cooperation

113 It is striking, if surprising, how much Hobbes choice of words with regard to the moment of institution resembles the Arendtian portrayal of power. However, it should be noted that Arendt was highly critical of Hobbes and saw his argument as diametrically opposed to her ideas. She portrays his argument as one that tries to derive the public good from the private and fails. Furthermore, she insists that Hobbes played a significant role in transposing the logics of emerging capitalism to the governance of the political community (Arendt 1951: 139-143, Arendt 1946, Degryse 2008). This is not the place to discuss the stringency of her argument, but I want to make clear that the reading of Hobbes presented here is one Arendt would likely have disagreed with. The arguments Hobbes poses against intransitive power are laid out in the text above.

114 Skinner (2008) argues that Hobbes' understanding of liberty is in fact in stark contrast to republican ideals and that his construction of political obligation must be seen as a refutation of republican discourses of his time.

lest they be forced (Forsyth 1981: 201). The exercise of power by the people is restricted to the constitution of the body politic and consequently to be prevented. Hobbes' argument against the prevalence of intransitive power is twofold. On the one hand, he recognizes the difficulties created by the dual nature of a person as part of the sovereign assembly and subject to its decisions and doubts the ability to reconcile these. On the other, he believes democratic decision-making processes to be less efficient and reliable than other systems of government (Hobbes 1996: 124/125). Although according to Hobbes all systems of government are equally legitimized by contract, it is "convenience" that leads Hobbes to favour monarchy before the others. Hobbes in effect turns his argument around as soon as the founding act is over: the sovereign sword keeps the community together not the power people generated. In a very immediate sense, then, Hobbes indeed replaces power with violence. Legitimacy henceforth is generated by output, i.e. the provision of security and by the myth of an underlying contract.[115] The implications of this twist become even more apparent when we turn to Hobbes second approach to the commonwealth.

The commonwealth by acquisition is achieved through natural force (Hobbes 1996: 114). People succumb to the one "that hath their lives and liberty in his power" (Hobbes 1996: 132) and authorize his actions out of fear, not of each other but of the strength of the sovereign. Rule here results from violence or the threat thereof. It is not instituted by a formal agreement between the individuals but emerges as the consequence of their acceptance of the greatest strength. Hobbes here seems to divert from the contractual argument made earlier and imply legitimate rule as fundamentally based on outcome, i.e. the factual provision of security, not prior agreement. Kersting argues that this acceptance in effect constitutes a fundamental contract (Fundamentalvertrag) transforming the acquired rule from a fragile natural state to a more stable legal relationship carrying with it similar obligations and amounting to the same transferral of rights characteristic of the commonwealth by institution. In Kerstings words, it is the contractual interpretation of contingent, violence-based forms of rule which turns rule by physical force into sovereignty legalising the status quo (Kersting 2000: 83f). The contract here is a founding myth that supports the status quo.[116]

This, of course, minimizes differences between the commonwealth by institution and by acquisition and makes the question of whether the contractual moment is historical or hypothetical quite dispensable. The importance of violence – in acquiring sovereign power and in maintaining sovereignty in a commonwealth by institution – overturns the "democratic" impetus of the Hobbesian construct (Herb 1999: 37). Even in an instituted commonwealth the contractual moment is to be remembered and mystified but not to be continually re-enacted. In other words, Hobbes believes that

115 Hobbes theory of resistance is instructive in this sense. Since, for example, the right to life is inalienable, no-one can be denied the right to defend one's life against violence even by the sovereign – unless the violence serves to provide security (Hobbes 1996: 144/145). Resistance is justified where the intended output of the contract – security – is not delivered (see also Hobbes 1996: 221).

116 It is noteworthy, that Arendt herself disregards the role of contract and differentiates it sharply from the "real" contract making that founded the American constitution (Arendt 1963: 172). My argument here, however, does not seek to show, that contract was the actual foundation of the modern state, but merely that the idea of contract served as the figure of thought that informs thinking about power to the present day.

power can indeed be replaced by violence without any significant losses and goes on to claim that violence is overall the more effective form of governing. Legitimacy in the existing commonwealth is effectively maintained, then, through output, i.e. the provision of security – any orders of the sovereign are legitimate unless they violate the right to life of the subject quite immediately (Hobbes 1996: 115/116).

A tension remains between the idea of individuals voluntarily submitting to the sovereign and their distinct lack of influence on his actions. Not the mere contingency of the sovereign arrangement is problematic. The challenge arises rather from the possibility that sufficiently decided people could establish another system of rule by mutual agreement. Hobbes, of course, takes measure against such action by arguing this kind of revolutionary action returned the individuals to a state war and must therefore lawfully be prevented by the sovereign (Hobbes 1996: 152, 221). Frequently, he refers to varying interpretations of laws and rights, the voicing of different opinions and the questioning of sovereign authority as the greatest danger to the commonwealth. Hobbes recognizes, in other words, that communication between people must be strictly controlled such as to prevent the emergence of intransitive power within the commonwealth if rule by violence is to succeed. He mirrors thereby the ambivalent relationship between power and violence within the Arendtian framework: violence can always destroy power, but power always remains a challenge for violence.

Hobbes recognizes the tension arising between the democratic impetus of the contract and the elimination of intransitive power that follows. In an effort to limit the use of violence not legally but by minimising the need to use it, he turns toward the practice of religion. He argues religion has an important part to play in ensuring the prevalence of generalized values and conventions that uphold public order without the exercise of violence (Wagner 1991, Hobbes 1996: 118, 214). Hobbes invokes the idea of a civil religion in order to ensure the coherence of the commonwealth (Tuck 1993, for a critical reading Beiner 1993). Furthermore, he notes that new ideas may “awake the war”, i.e. lead people to take up arms and reveal that they are not joined in the contractual peace but in fact still at war. For this reason, Hobbes attributes the right to judge which doctrines and opinions may be voiced publicly to the sovereign (Hobbes 1996: 118). He seeks, in other words, to replace the exercise of the communicative and imaginative components of intransitive power beyond the contractual moment by a set of shared believes and practices that are non-debatable. Religion thereby invokes a symbolism that fulfils the needs for identification and belonging while hopefully muting desires for participation and self-efficacy. The symbolic representation ideally superimposes the communicative and stalls the imaginative skills of the people by providing unquestionable frames of reference.[117]

Hobbes' legacy, in summary, is the idea of a contractual moment. His construction limits the exercise of intransitive power to strictly one foundational moment. He establishes a connection

117 This implies that a shift toward the symbolic dimension always carries the risk that intransitive power may degenerate into mere behaviour. While symbolic representation is important in ensuring stability of power, symbolic over-representation suffocates the ability to communicate freely and exercise the imagination in ways that move beyond the immediately recognisable.

between the exercise of intransitive power and rule culminating in the idea of a sovereign state where all authority is aligned along the central authority of the sovereign (Hobbes 1996: 152-156). Introducing the foundational moment, however, opens the box of the pandora. Within the state, intransitive power must be strictly controlled and, wherever possible, limited. Hobbes extensive treatment of problems arising from resistance, unrestrained public communication and communicative challenges to sovereignty bears witness to the fact that he realized this fundamental tension in his construction. If intransitive power takes logical precedence over transitive, as it does in contractual thought, then it can only be kept in check by resorting to severe measures such as violence. Limiting intransitive power to one foundational moment creates tensions, which are not easily resolved. Another theorist draws the logical and radical conclusions from attributing the instituting power to the people, namely Jean-Jacques Rousseau.

4.2.2 Rousseau's radical insight

Thomas Hobbes and Jean-Jacques Rousseau (1712-1778) have been described as diametrically opposed as well as intimately related (Steinberger 2008). As contractual theorists they share the basic premise of political community as artificially created by the actions of people. Furthermore, both refrain from constricting the sovereign and attribute to him (almost) absolute power.[118] They differ, however, in the specific construction of the contract. Where Hobbes begins with the fear of death and insists that the purpose of political community is no more and no less than the provision of security, Rousseau begins his *Social Contract* with the observation that "man is born free, and everywhere he is in chains" (Rousseau 1960: 240). His concern is to construct a form of political association that is not build on slavery and force, but allows each member to remain free. A brief recollection of his argument will reveal that he thereby emphasizes the contingency of power and reveals its inevitable unpredictability.

Rousseau pre-contractual state is – unlike Hobbes' – structured by social relations and characterized by different forms of slavery and domination (Rousseau 1960: 241-253).[119] It is also a state of insecurity where men find themselves at the mercy of natural powers, that they may counter only through cooperation. The need to unite arises (Rousseau 2001: 195ff). The purpose of the contractual state is to provide security, but in a way that each individual remains free:

118 In Hobbes, we find that the sovereign's powers are restricted by the terms of the contract. These, however, are very basic and no systematic right to resistance can be derived. Merely the right to life is maintained by the subject, since it is inalienable (Hobbes 1996: 145/146). The implication is that no-one can be forced to kill himself, but that subjects can be punished or send to war as long as such action serves security within the commonwealth. Rousseau argues more radical, that he "who wills the end wills also the means" (Rousseau 1960: 283). Should safety be achieved by the death of a citizen then he must accept it as he holds his right to life from the state only. Or, he puts himself outside the political community, in which case he can legally be pursued as an enemy and will not prevail against the strength of the sovereign.

119 Rousseau's *Social Contract* remains vague on the exact character of the state of nature. The *Discourse on the Origin and Basis of Inequality Among Men* on the other hand treats the state of nature extensively, but remains vague on the role of contract. The above description of the state of nature focuses on the feature of the state of nature that appears to be common to both, namely that it is in fact a structured social state regulated by conventions and inequalities.

> "Some form of association must be found as a result of which the whole strength of the community will be enlisted for the protection of the person and property of each constituent member, in such a way that each, when united to his fellows, renders obedience to his own will, and remains as free as he was before." (Rousseau 1960: 255)

Where circumstance and dominion restrict the freedom of individuals in the pre-contractual state, the contract enables them to be free, i.e. only to follow their own will. They do this by alienating all their rights to the sovereign body that is constituted by all of them as parts of the body politic:

> "As soon as the act of association becomes a reality, it substitutes for the person of each of the contracting parties a moral and collective body […] which […] receives from this very act of institution its unity, its dispersed self, and its will." (Rousseau 1960: 257)

The act of association creates what Rousseau calls a public person representing the people's one will with regard to their common affairs.[120] This general will is "concerned only with the common interest" (Rousseau 1960: 274). It is more than the mere aggregation of common interests, but what remains once the particular interests have been cancelled out. The general will is an exceedingly complex and abstract notion (Riley 1999: 167). It presupposes that there is in all individuals a convergence on what they believe to be the common interest and assumes that this shared will can be an adequate guide for the construction of laws.[121] Logically, the sovereign can neither bind itself, because one could never agree not to change one's opinion, nor can sovereignty be divided – it is always the one will that is common to all. Rather than specifying concrete aims of the community, the general will "sets the conditions of future interaction among the members of a community" (Ripstein 1999: 223, see also Rousseau 1960: 279). This is how the general will can force an individual member to be free: it is forcing him to act on his most important choice, namely to join into a community with others that is more than a mere convergence of interests. (Ripstein 1999: 231).

What emerges is a peculiar tension between the negative and the positive aspects of freedom (Herb 1999: 54). On the one hand, while there is a private realm, its extend is defined by the sovereign, i.e. the general will (Rousseau 1960: 277). No permanent limits to it can be determined either, as the sovereign cannot bind itself. Negative freedom in this construct is extremely fragile. The principle of sovereignty, on the other hand, demands the participation of all in the creation of law, as the general rules by which the community is governed (Rousseau 1960: 287). Positive freedom therefore is the essence of Rousseau's construct. In effect, it tends to overwhelm the – theoretically and

120 This notion, of course, is quite similar to Hobbes' idea of replacing many wills by one will. However, while Hobbes replaces the many wills by one will of another, Rousseau seeks to generate that one will from that which the particular wills have in common.

121 Which is not, however, to be done directly by the people but to be facilitated through the legislator, a quasi-enlightened individual that "constitute(s) the State, yet in its Constitution has no part to play" (Rousseau 1960: 292). The legislator formulates the law, but only the sovereign will can enact it. The role of the legislator somewhat mirrors the role of the founding prince that Machiavelli describes (Machiavelli 1977: 11, Feinberg 1970).

intentionally – included aspect of negative freedom, the guarantee of property and other rights through the creation of a lawful state (Herb 1999: 55f).[122]

Intransitive power, as shown in the discussion of Hobbes, is an integral component of contractual thought, even if Rousseau does not present us with quite such an explicit treatment of the contractual moment. In fact, Rousseau's treatment of what I call intransitive power is quite thoroughly masked in his curious construction of the contract and his notion of the general will. Yet, it is discernible in at least two respects. Firstly, the sovereign people and their general will have a fundamentally founding quality, radically transforming the relations between people by agreeing on common but unspecified future actions (Ripstein 1999: 223). While holding a common utopia, such as communism, might be coincidence or simple convergence of interest, holding the belief that any future world should be build together does not preclude the unpredictability of action but, on the contrary, reinforces it.[123] Secondly, the power generated and instituted by the sovereign people is fundamentally self-referential: Rousseau derives the contractual state from the search for a system in which one remains as free as he was before. In fact, he takes this latter part to the extreme, arguing that the general will is what all members want with regard to their common interest, assuming a complete congruence between individual and collective interests with regard to the common affairs. The power of the sovereign people, therefore, is primarily aimed at the people themselves.

However, some fundamental objections may be brought against Rousseau as endorsing intransitive power. The most significant is his denial of the need for public debate in order to establish the general will. He argues that, since all enter into the contract in the understanding that each is equally capable of judging what the general will is, they do not need to discursively discern it, but each and everyone must in the vote itself "voice his own opinion and nothing but his own opinion" (Rousseau 1960: 275, see also Ripstein 1999: 227). As in the Hobbesian commonwealth, there is no deliberation. The formation of subsidiary groups is portrayed as harmful, because the more people unite in groups the less general the result of their vote will be. As the general will is something that is always already present in each individual and only needs to be brought to light, deliberation is no more than a distraction. As a consequence, although Rousseau's voluntaristic notion bears resemblance to the communicative component of power, it underscores action – the engagement with and participation in

122 Benjamin Constant bases his critique of Rousseau on that problem (Constant 1972).

123 The imaginative basis of intransitive power, in other words, is empty, it is not concrete. This is why Hannah Arendt seeks to eliminate the private from the public. The point is not that these demands are not important, but that they cannot serve to create a political community. It also relates to the criticism Arendt voices with regard to ideologies. See 2.2. for details on these questions.

the process of bringing out the general will – and mistrusts speaking.[124] The communicative component is strangely truncated.

Rousseau is, of course, aware of the limitations of his logically coherent yet hardly practicable approach to determining the general will. In his essay on the Constitution of Poland, therefore, he devises a much more complex system of government, tailored to the Polish situation (Rousseau 1985). He justifies these adjustments mainly with the need to account for the greater than optimal size of the state. This implies, that, while not endorsing deliberation, Rousseau believes the ability of the members of the commonwealth to recognize each other as distinct individuals in a concrete and not just in an abstract manner is central. As Arendt, he seems to believe that there is a necessary element of revealing oneself as oneself in the communicative act in the creation of power.

The symbolic, however, is quite present, even if Rousseau denies representation of power. Firstly, he insists that sovereignty is maintained through regular meetings (Rousseau 1960: 367). Impractical as that maybe, the ritual reasserts the sovereign power and serves to restrict the actions of government. It represents the unity of the people and symbolizes their continued support for the original contract. Secondly, the laws acquire symbolic strength as they remain unaltered for a long time because "the mere fact of their lasting so long bears witness to the excellence of the will that once brought them into being" (Rousseau 1960: 364). The law hereby is not just in itself a symbol of the continued will, but also of the lasting quality of laws derived from the general will. It reasserts the confidence of the body politic in its ability to set its own laws. Finally, Rousseau devotes an entire chapter to the idea of civil religion. Shared religious practices are explicitly introduced as means of maintaining the cohesion of the body politic (Rousseau 1960: chpt. 8).

The third element of intransitive power, the skill of imagination, is challenged quite considerably be Rousseau's conception. Since the general will is so general that it does not specify purposes or goals as specific instances and, furthermore, cannot bind itself even if it did, anyone engaging in the contract is asked to imagine not just a specific world, where cooperation is ensured for a specific purpose, as in Hobbes' case. Instead a great variety of possible futures is created through the contract and the connecting element is merely the decision to live in a shared and commonly created body politic (Ripstein 1999: 231, Fetscher 1975: 124). The promise to be made is greater and the outcome is much less predictable. The individuals participating in the social contract, then, are asked to agree to a wide variety of possible futures. The emergent results of the social contract are so complex that it is

124 This is precisely Arendt's criticism. In referring to a will, she argues, Rousseau "essentially excludes all processes of exchange of opinion and an eventual agreement between them" (Arendt 1963: 76). As a consequence, 'the people' is formed into a coherent whole which eliminates plurality (Canovan 1983). Arendt might, however, be underestimating the level of abstractness to which Rousseau takes the idea of a general will. The general will must never refer to concrete things and even the task of formulating the laws which are expressions of the general will is mediated through a legislator. The general will itself is not a unified whole, but a variety of overlapping and sometimes conflicting principles, which must be reconciled (Ripstein 1999: 227). The general will works by each individual considering if the proposed law is in accordance with the principles they agreed to. This is why the majority can decide and coerce the minority – the interpretation that most people hold of the agreed principles is most likely to be right (Ripstein 1999).

impossible to fully comprehend all possible repercussions. The skilled exercise of the imagination, however, enables individuals to base their judgement of the viability of agreement on patterns discerned from a small sample of possible futures.[125] These imagined worlds maybe communicated in order to gain a better understanding of the consequences of the agreement. Or, as in the case of Rousseau, they emerge without deliberation out of the shared understandings of the individuals. Either way, only by abstracting from the reality of the world that is and anticipating (a) world(s) that could be, is agreement made possible.

Certainly, there is limits as to how far Rousseau's contract can be claimed as an instance of intransitive power. The truncation of the communicative component, in particular, seems significant. The general will remains an illusive concept, its constitution highly abstract. It remains in the dark how the sovereign should practically enact the laws that are implied by that will. Finally, the notion of being forced to be free might in itself be logical. Being held to the one decision to join the community by any means necessary, however, appears incompatible with republican notions of freedom such as the one Arendt associates with power. Yet, Rousseau's radical insistence on the importance of continued voluntary support for any kind of body politic and the superior power of the sovereign people speaks to the notion of intransitive power as the constitutive force behind political community. This is not the place to explore the many normative and practical problems resulting from Rousseau's formulation. It is worth considering instead, what we may learn about intransitive power and how it connects to transitive power from Rousseau.

Rousseau's portrayal of the inalienable, indivisible sovereignty brings out some aspects of intransitive power eliminated by Hobbes immediate replacement of such power with violence. By introducing the notion that the sovereign cannot bind itself, Rousseau recognizes the fact the intransitive power is in in need of continued actualization. Intransitive power must be the living force behind all law. Its outcome, however, remains unpredictable. There is no inherent limit to how far power reaches. Furthermore, Rousseau emphasizes the need to install government, i.e. transitive power, in order to manage the actual task of governing, of employing the laws and reinforcing them (Rousseau 1960: 315-328). The general will cannot extent to the particulars of administration and where it does it seizes to be (Rousseau 1960: 287f). Rousseau follows the idea of a body politic founded upon the actions of people to the very end and arrives at the conclusion that it will infinitely depend on the will of these people to realize their shared intentions. The sovereignty as such cannot be delegated: “legislative Power belongs to the People, and can belong to nobody else” (Rousseau 1960: 317). In the radical freedom of the sovereign to set his own limits and change them

125It is an almost intuitive technique to make decisions based on imagining outcomes: the desired, the best possible, the worst and possibly more in between, depending on the severity of the decision. This maps out the range of possible outcomes, rather than predicting exactly what will happen. When done collectively, we gain an understanding of the range of reactions others might show. The communicative and emotional processes associated with this technique need not all be communicated, a lot of it may be based on shared understandings. The less shared understandings are present, the more communication is necessary.

at will, Rousseau realizes the full potential of the minimal democratic impetus introduced by Hobbes to thinking about political community.

Rousseau establishes a clear hierarchy between intransitive and transitive power. In the last book of the *Social Contract* Rousseau tackles the problem of how the general will can be translated into the concrete administration of the body politic. To this end he introduces the concept of government as an "intermediate body set up to serve as a means of communication between subjects and sovereign, and […] charged with the execution of the laws and the maintenance of liberty, both civil and political" (Rousseau 1960: 316).[126] Subjects and Sovereign are, of course, identical but government serves as a mediator between these two roles. Put differently, the power that brings the body politic into being and maintains it is different from the one executing and enforcing the laws upon the subjects. It derives its ability to act from the sovereign power. Government is an expression of that power and where it is not, the body politic has dissolved (Rousseau 1960: 361). But the transitive power of government can never replace sovereign, intransitive power. More clearly than Hobbes, who favours violence, Rousseau insists on a close connection between intransitive power as the power founding the body politic and transitive power executing the law. The connection is clear: a body politic as he envisions it must contain both and arrange them in a hierarchical manner.

The historical significance of Rousseau's thought lies in revealing how the founding of the body politic on the actions of people leads to a permanent connection between their intentions and the existence of the political community. Unless one is to replace the momentary instance of intransitive power with violence, as Hobbes does, one has to concede that no matter what the form of government or the nature of the promises made, the sovereignty itself as founding force of the community can neither be divided nor delegated. As a theoretical conclusion, this is indeed a powerful insight. As a guide to political association it raises significant practical problems. Rousseau was well aware of this, discussing the problem of the size of the community as well as practical problems of designing and executing laws.

My purpose here, however, was to illuminate the figures of thought that form the basis of our understanding of political community. Contractual theory, I have argued, provides a particular framework for thinking about political community which is independent of particular attitudes towards specific governmental forms or the hypothetical or historic nature of the contract. Political community is instituted, it is an artificial creation by humans.[127] It does not depend on particular persons or

126The word "communication" in the above quote should not mislead. Rousseau refers to the process of translating the general will into concrete government action which is not the task of the sovereign or the subjects, but of government. Government mediates between the two, but it is not identical to the power of the people. Therefore, this is not a process of communication and action as described in chapter three.

127Of course, as with all such general statements there is notable exceptions, such as Hegel, for whom the state was the realization of reason in the world (Morris 1998: 5). Furthermore, conservative understandings of the state as an organically grown political entity logically contest the notion of the political system as artificially and willfully created (Göhler/Klein 1993: 318). These strands form an integral part of the modern thinking about political community, but I believe it is fair to say that the central position of the individual in the modern perception requires a different sort of justification for political community and the forms of

charismatic leadership, but is impersonal and therefore much more enduring (Skinner 1997). Intransitive power, in other words, is understood as always already present in the original agreement. Clearly, Hobbes and Rousseau form the hallmark modern thinking on political community, connecting transitive and intransitive power in the modern state. The relationship between both dimensions of power is therein fixed in a way that logically describes transitive power as emerging from the exercise of intransitive power, as its result and depending on its continued presence. When the contractual state, the existence of political community turns from the instance to be explained to the basis of further questions, this relationship is turned upside down, the order of importance between the two is reversed. Hobbes concludes, that questions of government may be treated in a different manner once a contractual state has been established. Rousseau on the other hand emphasizes the contingency of the will of the body politic as a whole and subsequently suggests a political community burdened with the full unpredictability of communication and action. Rousseau and Hobbes represent extreme positions in the developing area of thinking about the state. The fixed and directed connection between the intransitive, constituting and the transitive, governing dimension of power, which they both meticulously develop in their theoretical constructions, however, is largely taken for granted in political thought thereafter.

4.2.3 Developing the state

In a very basic sense the contractual framework settled the question of the constitution of political community, not empirically, but theoretically. The result is the idea of the modern state. Hobbes became the central point of reference for subsequent political theories (Roth 2003: 730).[128] I have shown that the modern state is based on a specific understanding of power and the connection of intransitive and transitive power. This modern configuration of power tends to take the presence of intransitive power as given. On the one hand, this encourages a focus on the forms, consequences and problems of the exercise of transitive power. That is the main focus of the liberal tradition of thought. On the other hand, the modern democratic tradition relates to the problem of power by elaborating on the ways in which the presence of intransitive power maybe invoked within the institutional framework of the state.[129] A short survey of these two key lines of argument shall serve to illustrate how a particular understanding of the relationship between intransitive and transitive power impacts modern political thought (see also Roth 2003: 734-761). The state, in both lines of argument, is the given within which problems are discussed and solutions derived. It turns into the prototype of political

subordination that come with it (Morris 1998: 6).

128 Another indication may be that 16th century authors, such as Machiavelli and Bodin, did not think it strictly necessary to provide a theoretical framework that legitimized the factual reality of emerging statehood (Höppner 2010). Later, as argued above, questions of institutional structure, inclusion and efficiency dominated the debate. Only in the past decades has the question of the persistence of the state as the fundamental category of political organization regained in importance. The contractual debates of the 17th and 18th century therefore mark the specific time frame within which the particular question of the constitution of political community was at the forefront of political thought.

129 The tern “democratic tradition” here is to be understood simply as the idea that participation of the governed must form part of the political process. Further assumption on institutions and procedures are not intended.

community and with it a particular configuration of power is turned into the norm.[130] Following my exemplary discussion of the two lines of argument I will conclude this section by turning toward the ideal type modern state as it presents itself in political thought dating to the beginning of the twentieth century. I will briefly review how transitive and intransitive power feature therein.

The first line of argument in modern thinking on the state centres on the limitation of government. In natural or God-given order government should have been guided by (natural or divine) laws. Such soft restrictions do not suffice in an artificially created political community. Where political order needs to be legitimized through the subjects, even if only in the act of foundation, the limits of government re-emerge as a problem for the design of the political institutions themselves. Any restriction needs to be internalized in the design of the political community, it cannot be granted by external norms or values.[131] This is apparent already at the level of the contract itself. In an almost direct response to Thomas Hobbes, John Locke (1632-1704) formulated a theory of the limited transferral of rights to the common political institution, effectively limiting the rights and powers of the sovereign. For Locke, the sovereign is instituted with the specific purpose of securing the property of its subjects, namely life, liberty and estate (Locke 1977: 278). As in Hobbes, the purpose of the political system determines its extent and powers. Locke, however, seeks to design a system in which only those rights necessary to fulfil the set task are transferred to the sovereign institutions and subsequently used strictly under the conditions set forth in the contract. He thereby focuses on more concrete questions of how the institutions should be designed such as to reconcile the inalienable constitutive power of the people and the instituted power of the state. Locke assigns the subjects a right of resistance derived from their natural rights to property and allows subjects to deny obedience, where their natural rights are unlawfully diminished (Locke 1977: 284f).

This represents a significant deviation from the radical Hobbesian argument built on the total alienation of rights. The subjects retain certain rights and these natural rights subsequently restrict the exercise of transitive power. The contract itself, i.e. the way intransitive power is exercised limits the ways transitive power may be exercised. In effect, the connection between intransitive and transitive power is strengthened. Locke more firmly associates the political institutions created through contract with the consent of the subjects (Morris 1998: 7f). Locke seeks to design the state in ways that limit the arbitrariness and unpredictability of intransitive power. He does so by including in the contract itself institutional constraints in the form of individual rights. The contract, therefore, is an expression

130 The implication is, of course, that other configurations are quite possible. This idea will be explored in chapter five.

131 This is not to mean, that the state of nature is without moral laws, but merely that their enforcement is not secured. Both, Hobbes and Locke speak of natural laws, which are expressions of the divine, morally desirable order. They differ in their consideration of natural rights. Hobbes believes there is a natural right to everything, which is rendered useless by the relative equality in strength and the overwhelming incentive to break natural law (Hobbes 1996: 82ff). Locke sees the natural rights as endangered, but not irrelevant in the state of nature (Locke 1977).

of the general principles to which the parties agree and a promise to consider these principles to be universal.[132]

Locke marks the turn toward liberal thinking about the modern state and the beginning of debates on individual rights and their protection within this new political form, the state. The question of foundation seems less pressing than the institutional design of the transitive exercise of power by the government. A distinction emerges between the private interests and rights of people and the government of their common affairs, where the former gradually takes precedence over the latter. Liberal thought portrays the pursuit of private endeavours as a natural need of all individuals and the most valued kind of freedom and separates it from the arrangement of collective affairs as a mere necessity. Benjamin Constant's (1767-1830) critique of Rousseau and Hobbes is indicative of the nature of this shift. While Rousseau argued that freedom consisted in being subject only to one's own will and hence agreeing with the laws set forth within the community, Constant sees freedom as subjecting citizens only to predictable and limited laws and leaving them otherwise free to do as they please (Constant 1972, Campagna 2003: 106). Against the radical notion that the sovereign should be able to change its will without restriction, the tradition of constitutionalism emphasizes the legal constructs, which lend permanence to the developing political form of the state (Roth 2003: 745).[133]

Protected spaces emerge, which are conceptualized as outside the realm of power, that is, the realm created by intransitive power. Since intransitive power is communication and action that is symbolically present and employs imagination in a way that actively takes responsibility for the consequences of such action, it cannot be exercized within a strictly private realm, i.e. one that is not concerned with collective affairs. Politicising issues is essentially the activity of transferring a problem from the private to the realm of intransitive power. Practices of normalization and individualization on the other hand usually seek to provide an issue with a private appearance and transfer its treatment to the private realm. Both kinds of crossovers are frequent and reveal that not the issue itself, but the way it is treated places it in one realm or the other. The liberal tradition, in other words, creates a distinction limiting the arbitrariness of intransitive power but it cannot escape the logic of intransitive power, which cannot restrict itself but by continued agreement of those in power.[134]

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132 This promise in essence turns natural rights into positive rights. The conception of intransitive power implies legal positivism, i.e. that laws are set without a necessary correspondence to moral or ethical norms. Locke, however, starts from natural rights, i.e. he presupposes that there is legal norms that have validity beyond positive law. Obviously, both approaches are in tension. In connecting contractual theory and the natural rights tradition he attempts to resolve this. I cannot focus on a critique of his attempted reconciliation. Locke features in my argument as a contractual theorist, the contestable assumption being that the contractual is of greater relevance in his construct. Since I seek to show that it is possible to develop a contractual state that effectively limits transitive power this seems justified. Hence, it is not central what is the basis is of the norms derived that define the content of these limits.

133 Arendt also believes strongly in the importance of laws in maintaining spaces of appearance and subsequently the political community as such. Laws are based on promises, which lend permanence and predictability to the action of people. For a systematic treatment of the idea of law in Arendt's thought see Volk 2010.

134 The social question and its treatment has been a major driving force of the development of the state. Some form of regulation of social issues is integral to the modern state, even if the extent and kind of their

The second major line of argument in modern thought on the state centres around issues of participation. Early liberalism did not deny the need for political participation, but thought it best as a limited right of some people (Roth 2003: 734, Göhler/Klein 1993: 366). The freedom of the individual, however, gave rise to ever more challenges to notions of limited participation. Starting with the aristocracy in the sixteenth and seventeenth century, continuing with the bourgeois challenge culminating in the French revolution and moving on to the working class and women, the understanding of who should be participating in political decision-making evolved to include more and more major groups of society.[135] Rousseau's radical insight of the contingency of political community, in other words, did not go unheard. It provided the reference for a second strand of thought centring on the maintenance of political community and questions of political participation. This is the strand of thought that modern democratic theory builds on.

It is not possible nor useful to review the complex and diverse debates that characterize modern democratic theory in detail, especially since democracy has proven to be an extremely versatile concept (Buchstein/Jörke 2003). In Rousseau's original formulation democracy has a fundamentally founding and inalienable quality. Subsequent debates, however, turn the question of democracy into a question of the institutional design of the state. Of course, the idea of democracy as a form of government dates back to classical times and is by no means a modern invention. The state, however, elegantly channels all such participatory questions. Following the 17th century, these questions were increasingly detached from matters of the foundation of political community as such (Fenske 2004: 405-413). As the state consolidated as a political form, it became the foundation of democracy, defined its boundaries in terms of territory and population and provided institutions and infrastructure for the participatory needs of the people (Canovan 1999, Näsström 2003). Political community was conceived of as the precondition for democracy and the exercise of intransitive power turned into an internal function of the state.[136]

An example suffices to illustrate the role of intransitive power within the state. Alexis de Tocqueville (1805-1859) encourages the exercise of intransitive power in his reflections on *Democracy in America*, but clearly places it within the confines of an institutional system that is a function of the modern state. He values the American institutions because they encourage the participation of all citizens in matters that concern them most directly and require them to actively maintain the state. His observations are an excellent example of the way participation and individualism become combined under conditions of statehood. Toqueville's concern is how political stability can be ensured under conditions of increasing equality. Individualism, he observes, eliminates the natural bonds between

inclusion vary across time and space. See chapter 2.2.2. for some further discussion of the role of the social.

135 One might well argue, that the process has not come to an end. Current questions include the particpation of minors and non-citizens.

136 Of course, this particular understanding of political community did not go uncontested. Conservatism and socialism began as anti-statist ideas. Conservatism emphasized the organic nature of community and in its early formulation related back to more medieval ideas of political organization along historically grown hierarchies. Socialism on the other hand sought to challenge the state on the grounds that it represented a rule by a particular class, that would eventually be replaced. (Göhker/Klein 1993)

people and endangers the existence of community as such (Tocqueville 1985: 239). Political community cannot rely on tradition any more, but gains an artificial quality.[137] He believes, furthermore, that equality is there to stay, accepting the emerging dominance of liberal thought.[138] Tocqueville identifies the adequate remedy for the dangers of equality and individualism in the newly founded founded participatory institutions of the United States of America. Trust in the political system can be maintained, Tocqueville believes, by encouraging local associations and engaging citizens with decision-making where it concerns them most directly. Mutual responsibility will be recognized and individuals will be more likely to consider the common good as well as their own (Tocqueville 1985: 242-253). Intransitive power contributes to the maintenance of the state, as an improvement of its existing structure not as a founding force.

The state thus becomes the centre of political activity enclosing all social movement and activity, i.e. all emergences of intransitive power, providing these emergences with clearly demarcated borders. The "enclosure of a movement within an established political space allows for the regularization of the relations between the state and the group concerned" (Magnusson 1990: 51). This regularization is an essential ingredient of the state and its institutions and possibly one of its greatest advantages. It provides structures within which conflicts might be resolved without violence and which may centralize the allocation and guarantee of rights (Tilly 1975: 36f). However, the regularization of these relations also excludes from consideration all those collective activities that defy the borders and limits of the state (Magnusson 1990: 52). What Tocqueville describes, therefore, has the effect of potentially excluding those activities that cannot or will not be accommodated by the state.

These examples illustrate an important shift in political thought and the perception of political community. Contractual thought focused on the foundation of political community. The existence of political community is contrasted with undesirable states of nature and war. Intransitive power, the founding power of the people, plays the central role in establishing such community, it produces the institutions that maintain order. The contractual construct, in other words, theoretically establishes a fixed relationship between transitive and intransitive power which subsequently reverses the order of importance between the two dimensions of power. Later thinkers foreground questions of limiting the exercise of transitive power and participation in established political institutions. These questions emerge as a result of the foundational act at the heart of contractual thought. In discussing the limitation of transitive power and mechanisms of participation, the institutional design of the political

137 This falls short of a contractual justification of political community, but empirically describes it as something that forthwith has to be artificially created and maintained.

138 It is his nostalgia for more natural forms of community and his scepticism that mark him as a conservative thinker. His pragmatic and innovative attitude to approaching the new political landscape, however, put him in the liberal-democratic tradition. The interaction between these seemingly contradictory trends makes Tocqueville such an intellectually challenging thinker.

community is put at the forefront. Its foundation is taken as given.[139] Intransitive power, forthwith, is perceived as something that is enabled in and by the institutional mechanisms of the state.

As a consequence of this shift, the status of intransitive power changes from a foundational force to a maintaining condition. The question is no longer how to legitimize the state as such, but how to maintain the legitimacy of particular forms of the state. The difference seems very subtle, yet, it is quite significant. Intransitive power is its own legitimation. Its inbuilt unpredictability, which is only limited by its symbolic representation, does not allow results to determine legitimacy. Intransitive power is legitimate irrespective of the ends that it pursues or achieves.[140] When transitive power and its exercise are seen as the most pressing questions and the underlying legitimacy of the political community is a given, the effects of the exercise of power come into focus. And while transitive power can and must be questioned in terms of its outcomes, it relies on some more basic foundation that transfers legitimacy to the exercise of transitive power. Its exercise would be impossible without minimal cooperation on part of those over whom it is exercised. This is the main difference between transitive power and violence. The latter disregards the need to legitimize itself and relies on pure force or the viable threat of it. In the terms of Münkler, where transitive power relies on the means of violence to gain compliance, i.e. is entirely "visible", it is not power at all but violence (Münkler 1995: 29f).

Undoubtedly, rule can be based on power or violence. An examination of the modern state, however, shows that in its ideal-type description it is not based on mere violence, but is an institutional form connecting intransitive power and transitive power in a way that perceives of intransitive power as a given precondition and encourages a focus on transitive power and its exercise. Max Weber (1864-1920), being a renowned analyst of the modern state, may serve as one example. When talking about rule, he states that obedience may be based on habit, material interest or affection, but neither of these is enough to ensure the continuation of rule. Rule instead relies on a deep-seated belief in its legitimacy in order to ensure continued obedience. Weber then differentiates three types of legitimate rule, each based on a different kind of claim for legitimacy. Traditional rule claims legitimacy based on the every-day belief in the sanctity of the existing traditions and the rulers. Charismatic rule is based on the belief of the followers in the exceptional qualities of their leaders and the orders they created. The modern state, however, is based on rational rule, which derives its legitimacy from a belief in the legality of the instituted order and the contained rule therein (Weber 1968: 36f, 954).

Legitimate rule of any kind cannot be based on the exercise of force alone, even though Weber repeatedly stresses the importance of violence in rule. Obedience that is not pure habit or forced

139 It is essential to keep in mind that the exercise of transitive power is a specific form of rule in a community. Limiting rule has, of course, much longer been an issue. However, if the community is seen as natural order or as organically grown, this issue can be addressed in a different way, for example by advising the ruler on the ethical standards associated with good rule. In a modern state, this would not suffice.

140 Again, that points to the missing normative foundation (Benhabib 1996) and implies that intransitive power is more useful as an analytic category than as a normative guide.

always requires an acceptance of the legality of the order (Weber 1968: 37).[141] Obedience, in other words, is an active act of recognition of the prevailing system of rule and reinforces the belief held in its legitimacy. In this regard, Berthold argues, Arendt and Weber point toward similar problems, despite using a different terminology, namely that the compliance with rules in a political community is not purely based on violence (Berthold 1997: 352ff).[142] Weber's notion of the belief in the legitimacy of the institutions of the modern state conceptualizes intransitive power as a background condition of legitimate rule in the modern state. Legitimacy as such may have other roots, such as habit or admiration, and order may be maintained by force or violence. But the modern state is specific, generating its legitimacy from a belief in the legitimacy of its rules and laws. This is not output legitimacy but legitimacy drawing on the way the political community is created. The reference to legitimacy is quite significantly related to the foundational qualities of political community. Political community is not just a passing community of people with converging interests or common enemies. It is rather a lasting and institutionalized form of the organization of common affairs that is not a priori limited to certain issues or problems and, therefore, a very specific form of human community associated with the emergence of the modern state (Weber 1968: 901).

Weber's definition of the concept of power, surely, differs from the one presented here. His definition does not enable a differentiation between the founding power of the people coming together in a political community and the resulting institutional system that exercises transitive power. Nor does it include intransitive power in any explicit way. On the contrary, in describing the emergence of political community Weber focuses on the historical development rather than the normative foundation and, consequently, emphasizes the role of violence. He is a prime example of the ways in which the focus on transitive power contributes to a better understanding of the workings of the state while turning intransitive power into a precondition for the existence and maintenance of the political community. Weber is, however, quite aware of the need to continually confirm the legitimacy of the system. He considers this belief of legitimacy to be directed at the laws and institutions of the modern state in this rational form of rule. This references back to the foundation of the laws and the institutions of the original founding act.

This latter point is more explicitly present in the prominent definition of the state by Georg Jellinek (1851-1911), which ranks among the standard definitions commonly used.[143] It is worthwhile considering his understanding of the state as an example of the modern configuration bringing together

141 The close relationship established between legitimacy and legality is quite remarkable, as it mirrors in some way the relationship Arendt establishes between power and law (Arendt 2007, for details Volk 2010). The relatedness of the concepts of legitimacy and legality is also emphasized by their treatment within one rather than two chapters in the *Geschichtliche Grundbegriffe* (Würtenberger 2004).

142 Berthold also holds to Habermas' interpretation of Arendt, that views her conception with considerable normative implications. As I have shown in chapter 2.2., I believe a more moderate interpretation of these normative claims is justifiable.

143 The beginning of the 20th century could reasonably be called the hightime of the modern state – when it was fully developed, its non-existence in many parts of the world was largely ignored and it was not yet supplemented by intense international cooperation. However, even then it was neither uncontested nor did empirical reality match idealtypes.

all aforementioned aspects in lieu of a summary of the preceding arguments regarding the presence of intransitive and transitive power within modern political thought. Jellinek defines the state as the organizational form furnished with original power to rule over a collective of sedentary people (Jellinek 1976: 180f)[144]. These elements of the state are usually summarized as people (Staatsvolk), territory (Staatsgebiet) and political authority (Staatsgewalt)[145] (Jellinek 1976: 394-434). The definition has the merit of pointing us towards the importance of intransitive power. It emphasizes that people and political authority are closely related as the collectivity of the people constitutes and maintains the political authority. That is what is meant by "original power" (Staatsgewalt). When considering the idea of sovereignty it becomes quite clear that Jellinek presumes this original power to reside with the people who constitute the state and thereby themselves as the people of the state (Staatsvolk). The definition, furthermore, associates the institutions of the state with a particular territory (Staatsgebiet). In other words, the state is the political form in which intransitive and transitive power find a fixed connection and become associated with a distinct territory.

It can be concluded from the argument presented above that the idea of the state as it evolved in modern thought contains intransitive power, yet effectively masks its foundational relevance. Most approaches perceive the state as expressing a pre-existent political community (Canovan 1999). As long as the relationship between transitive and intransitive power is indeed stable and contained within the state, this simplification enables a focus on technologies of rule, legitimacy and institutional design. Politics turns into a question of how, according to which rules, and by whom the transitive power of the state may be used (Breuilly 1999: 13). Thinking of the intransitive power constituting community as a given, in other words, significantly reduces complexity and enables a focus on more immediately relevant problems of governing. Such reduction does no harm, as long as the underlying presumption is correct, namely that intransitive power and transitive power are firmly connected through the state and no significant deviations are present. However, when confronted with situations where the connection is in part or even completely resolved, it is necessary to reconsider the question of the foundation of political community.

Political thought in this abstract vain, of course, is only ever part of the story. The following section will focus more on the modern state itself, as it shows some further specific characteristics of this form. The outcome is a better understanding how the modern configuration played out historically and impacted political thought in ways that make it difficult to think beyond the basic presumption of this configuration. The first part of the section explores the tendency of the modern state to favour the symbolic constitution of intransitive power over the communicative. The second part will elaborate on

144The original German definition is: "Der Staat ist die mit ursprünglicher Herrschermacht ausgerüstete Verbandseinheit sesshafter Menschen" (Jellinek 1976: 180f).

145"Staatsgewalt", state violence, is not a particular form of violence but the means a state has to govern. As we have seen, these are based on cooperation by the subjects rather than on the permanent exercise of violence in the modern state. This might appear as a misnomer within the framework suggested here, yet, the combination with the state makes the underlying assumption of intransitive power quite clear. That is, of course, why the term has not lead to major confusion.

some of the consequences for thinking about politics that result from the fixed connection between intransitive and transitive power.

4.3. The sovereign nation-state

The previous section engaged with theoretical substantiations of the state as a particular form of connecting intransitive power, the active and imaginative collective communication and action and its symbolic representation, and transitive power, the manifold ways of governing[146], which intransitive power produces. The historical reality of the sovereign nation-state, however, is much more complex.[147] The development of statehood has nowhere been complete, the state as described above remains an ideal-type, even if a very powerful one shaping collective political imagination. I will look at two particular features of the state in order to hint at the realities of the modern configuration of power. Firstly, I will discuss nationhood and the state as a *nation*-state and how it relates to the two-dimensional concept of power. Secondly, I will show how the idea of sovereignty created two realms of order, in which power was viewed very differently. Both features, nationhood and sovereignty, are widely recognized as highly relevant features of the empirical reality of the state. Furthermore, they underscore the idea that transitive and intransitive power are indeed to be firmly connected by the state. The nation is instrumental in symbolically representing intransitive power in its symbolic and communicative components. While certainly not exhausting all the ways in which intransitive power might be present in the state, nationhood in its variations has been dominant.[148] Sovereignty, on the other hand, locates the modern configuration of power territorially with significant consequences for the ways power could be conceptualized. Both ideas grasp the ways in which the modern configuration of power was historically adapted and put into practice. These practices ordered political imaginations and shaped political action. They have, as chapter five will argue, become challenged. It is clearly warranted, before such an argument is made, that they are considered in their basic features. The following two parts, therefore, consider nationhood and sovereignty as ordering principles with the contrasting chapter five in mind.

146Governing implies a reference to intransitive power, which is why it is difficult to think of attaining goals through mere violence as governing. The issue is complicated and I do not wish to resolve it here and use the term in a general, common sense meaning. For a discussion of the conceptual problem revealing some of the complexities of the questions see (Risse/Lehmkuhl 2007)

147Notable approaches to processes of state formation include Charles Tilly, focusing on war and capital accumulation (1985), Norbert Elias, considering the roll of civilising processes at the individual and collective level (2009) and Henrik Spruyt, emphasising processes of institutional selection (1994). These approaches are complementary, rather than alternative. (Spruyt 1994: 33)

148I cannot treat the difficulties associated with communication and action in early modern Europe. However, my description of contemporary developments in chapter five hints at the areas where these might be found.

4.3.1 Political community as national community

The idea of the nation is arguably one of the most discussed in post-war political theory.[149] These debates have established the nation as a (re-)constructed form of identification, that is neither purely imagined nor entirely natural (Wehler 2001: 37). Such, at least mildly constructivist, understandings of nationhood have informed analyses of nationalism as a discursive formation (Calhoun 1997, Greenfeld 1992, Schulze 1994) and a political strategy (Breuilly 1999) indicating that the communicative and symbolic relevance of nationhood rather than the naturalized empirical reality of national community has come into focus. The ensuing analysis follows this dominant line of thinking. It assumes a dialogical relationship between reality and the images thereof. While structures and historical realities certainly matter, blueprints and imaginations of social order are integral to transformations occurring within the detectable patterns of social order (Greenfeld 1992: 22). The reality of the sovereign nation-state is here considered the outcome of changes in the perception of political order as well as more material processes. Nationhood is therefore to be portrayed in its function for the state, not in its ideological manifestations.[150] The purpose is to show how nationhood symbolically represents the communicative as well as the symbolic components of intransitive power.

The peculiar nature of the idea of the nation has made it a formidable vehicle for putting the modern configuration of power into practice. However, it also leads to a symbolic excess in the reality of intransitive power. The symbolic component, in other words, is the dominant feature of intransitive power in the modern state. Of course, communication and action as well as the skill of imagination have their role to play, as we will see. But quite as the modern state has been conceived theoretically to channel and control outbursts of intransitive power, the strong emphasis on the symbolic component is indicative of the search for stability underlying the establishment of the modern state.

In the literature on nationhood, considerable attention has been devoted to comparing different forms and shapes of nationalism, revealing how the role of the nation in the consolidation of the state has varied greatly in different regions (Greenfeld 1992, Breuilly 1999, Anderson 1998). It seems unwarranted, therefore, to consider nationhood as a unified concept. Furthermore, the emergence of nation states was an exceedingly complex process which depended on a wide variety of factors (Tilly 1975: 31-38). Identifying features of nationhood, therefore, is not the equivalent of a historical analysis of nationhood. In a more limited approach, the following section lays out three features commonly – albeit to varying degrees – associated with nationhood: the civic, the ethnic and the

149 Major works include Karl W.Deutsch *Nationalism and social communication* (1953), Ernest Gellner *Nations and nationalism* (1983), Eric Hobsbawm *Nations and nationalism since 1780* (1990) and Liah Greenfeld *Nationalism: five roads to modernity* (1992). For an overview and a critique of these debate so far see Smith (1993, 2010). It should also be noted, that the meaning of the word nation itself has evolved in meaning from pre-modern times (Greenfeld 1992: 4ff, Schulze 1994: 112-8). However, "nation" shall be used here only in relation to the modern state unless otherwise noted.

150 In other words, I will merely refer to nationhood and not treat the issues surrounding the concept of nationalism, that is associated with political movements and strategies. These issues are too important and too complex to be treated in a few paragraphs here, yet, could not illuminate the issue of power as treated here. Nationhood should be read as an analytic not a normative concept.

territorial feature. They indicate how nationhood relates to the modern state as the institutional form connecting intransitive and transitive power. The civic connotation associates the nation with a politically acting people, the ethnic with a natural community and common history. The territorial anchors the nation in space and connects it to the state.

The first notable feature of nationhood is its civic connotation. The nation began as a concept associated with political activity, defined as participation in the political affairs of the early-modern absolutist state. Quentin Skinner argues that the nation-state was born out of the idea of self government emerging in the Italian city-states of the 16th century to counter the corruptibility of government (Skinner 1997: 9). Others identify a major strand of thinking with notions portraying the nation as a community of politically acting individuals pre-dating the French revolution (Schulze 1994: 117). In each instance, the concept of the nation does not oppose communication, political action, and active world building by the people, but evolves as a representation of such activities. The concept became more and more popular, as legitimation through natural or divine forces became less feasible. The emergence of capitalist modes of production revolutionized communication, trade and production. As population grew and migration fuelled by cheap labour and new means of production set in, divinely legitimized absolutist orders came under pressure (Schulze 1994: 166f). A new basis for legitimising state institutions was needed and found in the idea of the nation as the politically acting people, giving the state its constitution and establishing the origin of sovereignty. The nation, in other words, took the place of the people that had been theoretically defined by contractualist arguments on the constitution of political community.[151]

This extent of the civic connotation marks a significant shift in the imagination of political community from pre-modern times. Previously, political unity was effectively established by small elitist groups and their relationships and these were consequently equivalenced with the nation in earlier uses of the word (Greenfeld 1992: 9, Schulze 1994: 168). Now, the people appeared as the driving force of political development. Not elites, but the sovereign people constituted political community. The French revolution in particular contributed to expanding the group of the politically acting to the unprivileged, common people, the Third Estate.[152] The people's nation became the basis of political organization. In this way, the nation-state answered the concerns of a crisis in values and legitimization of the political institutions by providing an overarching idea, namely the nation, under which all mass ideologies could express their grievances and demands (Schulze 1994: 168f). Nationalism, therefore, is unlike other "-isms" not an ideology, but a complex pattern of thought that

151 Schulze explicitly notes the remarkable fact, that this historical development closely mirrored the changes in political thinking about political community (Schulze 1994: 168). Of course, it is almost impossible to plausibly prove influences of political thought on historical development, but when looking at the modern state one is tempted to say that historical developments may be preconceived by political thought. The difficulty for the contemporaries of such thought lies in discerning which idea will become historically relevant and which will seem obscure in retrospect (Höppner 2010).

152 The expression was popularized by a pamphlet circulated in early 1789 and written by Abbé Sieyes, who argued that the Third Estate, constituted by the common people, not aristocracy or clerics, was upholding society through its labor (Schulze 1994: 168).

has been fulfilled in a variety of ways sharing no essence but merely a family resemblance (Calhoun 1997: 5).

Following the French revolution the nation-state became the "only viable political organization worthy of an age of liberalism and enlightened politics" (Mommsen 1990: 211). The civic feature of the nation, however, merged with a second feature of the nation, namely the ethnic. Even before the French revolution the nation became associated with a shared language, culture, history and, frequently, religion. In a dialogic process of political communication, religious conflict, and history construction national consciousness was produced as a cultural product. This consciousness arose out of cultural exchanges, as intellectual circles shared language, literature and and an inclination to unify against the elitist political processes of their time (Schulze 1994: 146, Mommsen 1990: 213). Furthermore, the (re-)construction of a history of the nation, including historical events, national myths and heroes contributed greatly to the constitution of a national consciousness (Schulze 1994: 188). Neither pure fact nor fiction, such myths constitute acts of collective remembrance, which are formative of the community as well as its members (Assmann 2005: 132, 75-86). In consequence, the nation came to represent the naturalized community, which was considered a pre-existing condition of statehood. This notion securely located the individual in an ever more complex globally integrated world, providing orientation and a sense of order (Calhoun 1997: 7).

As an ethnic community, the nation was only in part the result of pre-existing commonalities and rarely the simple expression of a factual historical continuity of the community. More often, it was a political strategy aimed at homogenising the constituency of political administration within a certain territory (Mommsen 1990: 215). The emergence of a shared culture, language, history and identity was, historically, the outcome of deliberate actions aimed at the stabilization of political institutions (Greenfeld 1992: 19f, Breuilly 1999: 22f). In this sense, nations are indeed "imagined communities" (Anderson 1991), not because they are immaterial or do not have a history to support them, but because history and unity emerged out of collaborative imaginative efforts to create order in a complex world (Wehler 2001: 37). The processes of nation-building utilized the social imaginative skills of individuals in order to institute political order.

The third feature of nationhood is its territorial grounding. The association of the nation with a particular, limited geographical area and its administration aligns the forms of the nation and the state. This combination of the nation with the state is a historical development which proceeded unevenly in different regions and only reached its height in the 19th century, i.e. relatively late in the development of the state. The connection was fuelled by a number of similarities in the disposition of the state and the nation. Both aim at constructing borders, defining their limits in relation to other, equally limited units (Schulze 1994: 111). The convergence of these delineating imaginations reduced complexity and shaped a new order, as nation and state were constituted not just as group identities but also with reference to a particular territory, with which the people were to be associated. The nation and the

state complemented each other: where the nation provided stability by offering a pattern of identification, the territorial state offered the institutional and administrative capabilities to govern the population (Mann 1984: 185). Once the connection is forged, the state is considered the adequate expression of the nation (Wehler 2001: 25). The configuration of power inherent in the first two features of nationhood is almost seamlessly brought into harmony with the territorial exclusiveness of the nation.

Nationhood incorporates all three elements of intransitive power: communication and action, symbolic representation and the collective use of the skill of imagination. Their particular arrangement, however, is noteworthy and the symbolic dimension takes the lead. The nation is made present through rituals, flags, heroes, events and places which enable the we-group to identify and transmit a feeling of belonging (Schulze 1994: 111). Beyond national symbols the nation itself is a symbol of the community integrating heterogeneous populations. A nation is not completely defined through but rather actively constructed from common characteristics and memories. Furthermore, the conscious use of skills of imagination is required. Surely, this use may be more creative on the part of the elites narrating the story of the group in terms of the nation than on part of the interpreting subjects (Wehler 2001: 41-44, Greenfeld 1992: 19/20). Nonetheless, any such construction is the product of collaborative, dialogical processes employing imagination not just at the individual level but as a social skill. Therefore, it is by no means accidental that the rise of the nation as a unifying idea began as communication skills, such as reading and writing, and communication media, such as books, letters and pamphlets, became more widespread and accessible to larger parts of the population (Schulze 1994: 162). Symbolic representation and the skill of imagination clearly are an integral part of the reality of nationhood.

The role of communication and action as an element of power in the framework of the nation is, however, more ambivalent. Certainly, the notion of the sovereign nation thriving for self-government contains the idea of the nation as a civic unit. However, the civic dimension is in tension with the naturalising tendencies inherent in the nation as an ethnically defined community. As much as the process of becoming a nation is constructed and adopts real characteristics rather than emerging from them, the inner logic of the idea is that of a natural community, to which one belongs qua specific characteristics and not by choice. The particular tension plays out differently in different nationalisms, as Liah Greenfeld points out. The American model emphasizes the civic-libertarian elements of the idea, by turning the historical fact of founding into the defining myth and symbolising the nation through artefacts relating to just that myth. The German model, on the other hand, focuses on the cultural and historical commonalities and connects the nation to specific forms of cultural production and intellectual debate (Greenfeld 1992: 11, see also Schulze 1994, Wehler 2001: 55-89).[153] Both, however, define national identity in terms of belonging to a specific group with specific characteristics

153 This is not to deny the family resemblance between the two, most clearly expressed by the quasi-religious status of the idea (Schulze 1994: 172-174, Wehler 2001: 56). The role of civil religion would merit more attention in a detailed treatment of the nation-state, which cannot be provided here.

and not as a space in which the individual reveals herself to others. Even in the American case, belonging to the nation is signified by identifying with the idea of it and not by actual participation in the political processes. In other words, between the idea of a civic and an ethnic nation, the reality of nationhood favours the symbolic dimension over the communicative.[154]

The nation works as a legitimising construct mainly through its symbolic representation, which results in symbolic excess consequently transferred to the state. This particular arrangement of the elements of intransitive power turned out to be particularly consequential for the shape of the modern configuration of power. By providing a generalized identity as a symbolic construct rather than as a communicative process, the idea of the nation contributed to fixing the modern configuration of power. The fragility and unpredictability of the power of the sovereign people as described by Rousseau was successfully contained not by violence, but by emphasizing the symbolic rather than the communicative elements of power. The nation to some extent fulfilled the role ascribed to civil religion by Hobbes and Rousseau. In this particular shape the nation-state is a historical particularity[155]. The nation provided the adequate legitimatory construct for a rapidly changing economic and social environment (Tilly 1975, Spruyt 1994), because it successfully symbolically represented the body politic as founded on the people (Wehler 2001: 25).

Interestingly, when the state and the nation joined company and the organization of political life was settled into its modern form, the idea of a civil society as the counterpart to the state emerged (Göhler/Klein 1993: 260f). Civil society refers to the realm in which the citizens of the state follow their private pursuits, be they economic, educational or cultural. The public-private divide, a key liberal thought, emerged in its modern form.[156] These private activities are by no means independent of the state, on the contrary. Schulze emphasizes the decisive role of association, parties, clubs and other forms of civic engagement in the consolidation of the nation-state (Schulze 1994: 203). Similarly, Tilly describes the development of national social movements as specific forms of protest targeting the people who run the states (Tilly 1984: 304). The nation-state strengthened as more and more collaborative endeavours aligned along the organizational and imaginative structures of the state. The nation-state on the other hand provided institutional frameworks and protected spaces within which civil activities could flourish in a controlled environment. Intransitive power emerging from these activities was logically contained by the state and, ideally, institutionally incorporated so that it served to strengthen the centralized organization of political life and did not develop into an alternative space

154 The nation, if it were indeed a natural community, would undercut the Arendtian notion of plurality, as it is an excellent example of a static and non-negotiable identity eliminating differences and obliterating the individual appearances. It is only compatible with the idea of the nation-state as an incorporation of intransitive power because it is communicatively constructed and combined with the notion of a politically acting people.

155 Empirically the close association between the nation and the state has been rarely achieved (Wehler 2001: 90-103). Instead, the idea of nations without states merged as self-determination turned out to be an inadequate tool (e.g. Gottlieb 1994) and in thinking about nationalism varieties of nationalism and their relation to state and territory were considered (Anderson 1998, Shadian 2010).

156 See chapter 4.2.3.

of power to the state.[157] The ability of the state to contain a society in that way is essential to enabling the prevalence of territorially differentiated political units, as it centralizes political activity and establishes the state as the prime mediator of human activities.

The nation-state as a symbolic order (Greenfeld 1992: 20) has proven remarkably stable and influential.[158] Margaret Canovan locates the reason for this pervasiveness in the mediating role of the nation. Through the nation, a collective political subject is constituted "which acts as a reservoir of political power, providing a strikingly effective solution to the most fundamental of political problems" (Canovan 1996: 72). The nation bridges the gap between the contracting individuals and the nation state so effortlessly, providing us with the illusion political community was easy to come by and maintain (Canovan 1996: 74f). The assumption of the existence of nations makes it reasonable to assume political community as a given. The symbolic order, then, pervades the empirical reality of the nation-state but also our thinking about politics as such. Where the object of analysis is the nation-state, the question of political community is effectively masked behind the nation (Canovan 1996: 14). Politics itself becomes an attribute of the state.

States relying on nations for their support are, however, historically and regionally exceptional phenomena. Therefore, where we cannot rely on the nation problems emerge not just empirically in the form of conflict and disorder, but also conceptually at the level of analysing these problems. Sofia Näsström (2003), for example, investigates the ways in which the nation as the prototype of political community creates fundamental conceptual challenges for democratic theory under conditions of globalization. These difficulties, she argues, are not caused by the inherent complexities of globalization, but by a blind spot within democratic theory itself. Democratic theory cannot account for the constitution of political community, but must assume it to be given in some form or another (Näsström 2003: 828). The nation and its implied cultural homogeneity provides just that, empirically but not fundamentally resolving the crucial question of the origin of political community.

In conclusion of these thoughts on nationhood and the modern configuration of power, it can be said that the reality of the modern nation-state is a strangely one-sided expression of intransitive power. The constituting communicative power is largely imaginary, and not so much an empirical reality. Yet, its empirical symbolic representation, the nation, draws on the idea of a constituting power. This ambivalence represents the inherent tension of the nation-state, the partially fulfilled

157 Democratic institutions serve to channel intransitive power and ascertain the grievances of the governed, which is not to deny, that democracy is also more than that. These basic functions have to be fulfilled in order to secure stability, but states have found different ways of doing so associated with varying degrees of freedom for the subjects. The need for some sort of private realm in order for power to work is, of course, quite in sync with Arendt's notion of power. Technically, it is not analytically useful to speak of a state when no space at all for private activities is granted. However, it has proven exceedingly difficult even for the most vicious dictatorships to literally control all aspects of life and not channel emerging intransitive power without resorting to violence. The social has proven more effective, by employing a strategy of colonising the public through the private, i.e. eliminating the distinction from the other side. For details see chapter 5.4. and for further reading the writings of Michel Foucault.

158 This has lead to a specific shape for the inquiry of social relations as well, which has been criticized as methodological nationalism (Chernilo 2006).

promise of constituting political community from the intransitive power of the people. It corresponds to the tension already present in contractual theory, namely that the constituting power of the people cannot lead to stability unless it is restricted and robbed of its unpredictable nature. So, even if the nation-state is not empirically founded on the voluntary association of the people, its symbolic representation is build on the presumption of such communicative action and upheld by the belief of the people in that myth (de Jouvenel 1963: 140). In other words, even if the nation-state is not upheld by the continued communicative action of its members, it is still dependent on the imaginative reconstruction of a significant number of the subjects of the state as symbolically representing their communication and action, i.e. its ability to express intransitive power.[159]

4.3.2 The idea of sovereignty

While the previous section focused on the nation as the visible expression of intransitive power, the limitations of this interpretation and the relationship between the nation and the state, in what follows the state will be discussed as the centre of transitive power considering in more detail how this pushes intransitive power to the background. It is sketched out how the idea of sovereignty resulted in a claim of exclusivity attached to the particular configuration of power described above.

Sovereignty is, in its most general sense, the unlimited authority over a territory and its people. It emerged as a dominant ordering principle of European affairs during the 16th and 17th centuries. As a juridical term it is not equivalent to the theoretical idea of popular sovereignty expressed by contractual thought and revolutionary demands, although, of course, related. Jean Bodin was the first to formulate such a juridical conception of of sovereign authority containing all significant elements of modern sovereignty (Bodin 1981).[160] Politically the institution of sovereignty is most often dated back to the Peace of Westphalia (1648) establishing territorial nation-states as the recognized form of political organization (Murphy 1996: 84f). The modern state and the modern understanding of sovereignty are twin concepts, which, although distinguishable, are historically and theoretically mutually constitutive (Biersteker/Weber 1996: 1f, see also Camilleri 1990: 14). In order to provide a more complete understanding of the modern configuration of power, then, the following section briefly outlines how power relates to sovereignty and explicates what the consequences of this relation are.

Recent approaches to sovereignty recognize the artificial and historically contingent nature of the concept. Three related lines of argument can be distinguished. The first recognizes sovereignty as discourse and a strategy. It focuses on the ways in which the concept of sovereignty has changed over time and associates these changes with changes in interests and perceptions of relevant actors (Bartelson 1995, Krasner 1999). The second takes a more institutional point of view and portrays sovereignty as a social construction build on mutual recognition producing a “normative conception

159 Because of their dual nature as natural and political communities, nations have more than alternative identities been able to function as “a reservoir of power” from which political stability could be derived (Canovan 1996: 73).

160 It is noteworthy, however, that political authority in Bodin's thought is not derived from the sovereignty of the people but from god. His argument does not contain contractual elements such as the later Hobbesian.

that links authority, territory, population (nation, society), and recognition in a unique way and in a particular place (the state)." (Biersteker/Weber 1996: 3). Analysis of the institution of sovereignty consequently focuses on the ways in which it is negotiated and constructed by and between actors (Philpott 2001). A third line of argument goes even further and engages with sovereignty as a normative system of order. The emphasis here is on the constitutive nature of sovereignty and the positive effects of order designed in that way (Jackson 1999a, Sørensen 1999).[161]

There is, however, an interesting convergence among approaches to sovereignty. They agree that the concept of sovereignty expresses the notion that centralized authority is also territorially bound. Sovereignty, in other words, connects the exercise of transitive power with a very specific spatial imagination. In fact, some argue, that the territorialization of power is the main task of sovereignty (Murphy 1996: 82, Agnew 1998: 50).[162] Territorialization is a long-standing and by no means purely modern strategy of establishing different degrees of access to people, things, and relationships by restricting access to a certain geographical area (Sack 1986: 20). When combined with a centralized and absolute[163] authority the strategy of territorialization logically leads to the construction of territorially distinct but internally similar units. The central focus of this territorial ideal is the degree to which the map of individual states is at the same time a map of effective authority (Murphy 1996: 87).

This modern kind of territorial organization differs fundamentally from pre-modern forms such as empires or feudalism, which were characterized by their non-territorial structure allowing for overlapping jurisdictions and functional differentiation not confined to a specific territory (Holzgrefe 1989: 11-14, Spruyt 1994: 55ff, Ruggie 1993: 150). The late Medieval period brought a number of technological and economic changes challenging the complex medieval order: new technologies of warfare, long-distance trade and new modes of production. In a slow and complex process of institutional rearrangement the sovereign-territorial state emerged as the form best suited to stabilize these complex processes (Camilleri 1990: 20). In economic terms the state became the focal point of negotiating between its own subjects and the subjects of other, similar units, essentially a gatekeeper for international transactions. As such it replaced previous attempts by individual actors to find suitable agreements on basic rules of exchange (Spruyt 1994: 179, Holzgrefe 1989: 16-19). In

161 The reference point for most anglophone social science writers on the subject of sovereignty is F.H. Hinsley's 1966 study on *Sovereignty* (2nd edition 1986). For an overview of more recent debates in international relations theory see Robert Jackson (ed.) *Sovereignty at the Millenium* (1999b). Controversies on the relationship between sovereignty and constitutionalism are portrayed in Tine Stein et al (eds.) *Souveränität, Recht, Moral,* (2007), which addresses contemporary challenges to sovereignty. In a similar vain, John Hoffmann's *Sovereignty* (1998) makes an argument on the dissociation of sovereignty from the state attempting to recover the concept for changed contemporary conditions.

162 Among the authors most vehemently questioning this territorial assumption are John Ruggie (1993) and John Agnew (2005, 2009). John Ruggie early on in the debates on the future of statehood and sovereignty under conditions of globalization insisted, that rule need not be territorial at all (Ruggie 1993: 149) and specified the mechanisms underlying the process of modern state-building and the role of recent challenges to statehood. John Agnew questions the modern state from the position of a geographer and with particular emphasis on the spatial imaginations associated with it.

163 In the sense, that the authority is not a priori restricted to certain issues or functions.

political terms the state became an effective container of society and guarantor of security (Agnew 1998: 51, Tilly 1985). The result of these developments was a system of territorially exclusive units that mutually recognized each other as the principal political units.

The juridical element of sovereignty inherent in the notion of mutual recognition has significantly contributed to the spread of statehood. Jackson speaks of negative and positive sovereignty to illuminate the strength of mutual recognition. He argues that many states outside of the European context lack effective authority over their own territory (positive sovereignty), yet participate as recognized actors in international politics (negative sovereignty) (Jackson 1990: 26-31). Grovogui extends this argument by showing how even within Europe, the behaviour and recognition of other states served to create sovereignty rather just being guided by its presence (Grovogui 2001). The principle of mutual recognition was a major driver of the spread of the sovereign territorial ideal. Empirical sovereignty is a socially constructed reality, not a natural or inevitable state.

The territorial presumption inherent in the sovereign state turned into an extremely powerful political imagination, making it hard to imagine order not constituted territorially, similar to the sovereign state system (Walker 1990: 159, Murphy 1996: 82). This kind of "territorial trap" (Agnew 1998: 51) only allows us to perceive a limited number of change scenarios. Walker identifies four consequences of the territorial imagination of the sovereign state. Firstly, any threat to territorial integrity immediately turns into a threat to power and order as such. Secondly, alternatives to the state are evaluated with regard to their potential to turn into state-like units, dismissing them as insignificant or temporary if they do not display such potential. Thirdly, emerging new structures immediately raise questions about outstanding radical transformation – the state system is an all-encompassing structure of political life and therefore incompatible with complementary systems. Fourthly, when universalist forms of organization do not emerge, it is often concluded that things will remain as they are and no significant change is going on (Walker 1993: 136).

Such oscillation, as Walker calls it, between seeing radical change and none at all, is indicative of the tension between the empirical variation of sovereignty, statehood and power and the territorial ideal that underlies modern political concepts and imaginations. The concept of sovereignty, in other words, is build on a spatial imagination that makes it exceedingly difficult to think political order beyond the territorially bound state-based order (Murphy 1996: 103). King called this the "ideology of order", which is leading us to equate order as such with sovereignty (King 1999: xi). In prototypical sovereignty, the stable connection between intransitive and transitive power prescribed by contractual ideas is territorialized and associated with a particular spatial order. The modern configuration of power, therefore, is not just characterized by a particular relationship between the two described dimensions of power but furthermore by an association of power with a particular political map of physical space.

Of course, "there has never been some ideal time during which all, or even most, political entities have conformed with all of the characteristics that have been associated with sovereignty"

(Krasner 1999: 238)[164]. Sovereignty is an ideal shaping our thinking about politics but an empirical reality only to an extent. Empirical deviations from the ideal tend to fall into one of three categories. Firstly, sovereignty is challenged in terms of whether a particular entity is the representation of the right popular sovereign. The common expressions of such grievances are demands for independence or autonomy. Secondly, sovereignty is never complete in terms of reaching all aspects of life, either because of constitutional constructions limiting the reach of state regulation or because the state organization in question does not have the capacities to effectively control its territory with regard to all intended issues. The third deviation is the result of action taken in the international system, i.e. between the sovereign units. On the one hand there are limitations imposed upon sovereign states by entering into mutual agreements and contracts, which could be argued limit their future ability to make autonomous decisions. On the other hand, intervention and war interfere with sovereignty, yet are widely considered expectable, system-conform even if not desirable occurrences in international politics. All of these three deviations can be found throughout modernity, albeit in different combinations. And while questioning the imagination of sovereignty as such has been difficult, the dynamics resulting from sovereignty and different forms of challenging it have featured prominently in the debate.[165]

Just as the nation defines the limits of the population contained in and by the modern state, sovereignty defines the extent of political authority in territorial terms. The nation symbolizes – and sometimes over-symbolizes – the intransitive power of the state. Sovereignty connects the specific fixed configuration of power and its institutional expression to a certain, distinct territory. The ability of the nation to represent intransitive power is limited by its ability to generate cooperation on part of the subjects of the state, i.e. instil a feeling of belonging. Sovereignty is limited by the liberal logic of restricting the transitive power of the state and the factual inability to control all social activities within a given territory. However, in spite of the empirical and theoretical limitations of ideal-typical sovereignty, the sovereignty paradigm as such has proven highly consequential for the power debate. In effect it has created two quite different realms of power. The modern resolution of spatiotemporal relations, as Walker argues, "implies a fundamental distinction between a locus of authentic politics within and a mere space of relations between states" (Walker 1993: 20)[166]. Sovereignty sets the limits

164The concept of sovereignty has been a heavily contested concept in the debates of the past 20 years and it has generally been recognized that the Westphalian model inadequately captures contemporary processes (e.g. Krasner 1999, Grovogui 2002, Agnew 2005, 2009 and many more). However, these recent challenges to sovereignty are not treated in detail here, because the processes underlying them are explored explicitly in chapter 5.1..

165Stephen D. Krasner (1999), John Agnew (2005) and Georg Sørensen (1999) have each developed conceptions of changing patterns of sovereignty that aim at making variations in the regimes/games of sovereignty visible. The two dimensional conception of power suggested here approaches political space in a way that detaches it from territorial sovereignty.

166I do not explore the dynamics of time and space with regard to the two-dimensional conception of power, although recent contributions to globalization theory offer a wide range of texts on the subject (Harvey 1990, Lefebvre 1991, for an overview see Schroer 2006). I believe, a connection might be drawn between the directed nature of transitive power and space and the dynamic nature of intransitive power and time, as contemporary changes are characterized by spatio-tempioral change in particular (Walker 1991: 450,

between hierarchically ordered social relations within states and anarchically structured relations between states (Walker 1993: 171). Power is expressed and exerted differently, so the theory goes, depending on which side of the sovereign divide it is on.

On the one hand, within states intransitive power is institutionalized and largely implicit. It is a given, because it is an integral part of the very idea of a state. The state effectively channels emerging intransitive power through its institutions providing for a centralized exercise of transitive power. This kind of channelling implies a peculiar relationship between intransitive and transitive power. Both are incorporated in the sovereign state, the first – as shown – is its possibility of existence, the second its most obvious appearance.

Max Weber's understanding of political community illustrates nicely how power is perceived as transitive power within the sovereign state.[167] Weber defines political community as "a community whose communal action is aimed at subordinating to orderly domination by the participants a 'territory' and the conduct of the persons within it" (1968: 901). Political community here is defined in terms of transitive power, the intransitive dimension is obliterated. The state is a particular form of such political community. It is defined by the ability to use all means necessary, including physical force, in order to achieve compliance with orders given. The defining characteristic of a state in Weber's terms is the continuously upheld monopoly over the legitimate use of physical force (Weber 1968: 54). The state as a legitimate political community, in other words, represents intransitive power and exerts transitive power by controlling territory and the people within it (Weber 1968: 54). While Weber's definition of the state focuses on the visible effects of transitive power, "it goes without saying" that the use of physical force is neither the usual nor the most desirable instrument for achieving compliance (Weber 1968: 54).[168] The exertion of force and the issue of commands that are obeyed is the most visible expression of a more complex configuration of intransitive and transitive power as described above.[169]

Herfried Münkler makes a similar argument, describing the development of the sovereign state as a restructuring of power along two modes of visualization. He differentiates between the symbolic-expressive visibility of power and its instrumental visualization (Münkler 1995: 219). The former relies on "lateral power", the kind of power that arises from the relationships between people, i.e. intransitive power. The latter is the "reified power", that allows the transfer, storage and use of (transitive) power (Münkler 1995: 216). Both dimensions are always present, he argues, but their specific combination makes for different systems of governing – from civic-democratic to authoritarian (Münkler 1995: 215). The reifications of power, that make the sovereign state visible must rely on the

Walker 1993: 126). This, however, is not the appropriate place to explore this particular issue.

167 Max Weber implies that political community is in many ways a specifically modern institution, finding a most potent connection to the legal-rational organization that comes with the state (Weber 1968: 901-904).

168 I will return to the problem of violence a little later in this section. For the moment, I work on the assumption just assume that physical force can be considered a form of transitive power.

169 How Weber himself incorporates intransitive power in his conception of legitimacy has been shown in section 4.3.1.

presence of lateral power forming a visibility reserve. Where power is entirely reified, where those in power are forced to use all their power ressources, they have used up their visibility reservoir and are merely exerting violence. The complete reification of power, in other words, the actual use of all means necessary to ensure compliance, is the equivalent to loss of power (Münkler 1995: 227).[170] So, similar to Weber's point, the permanent demonstration of superior physical force is not compatible with the exercise of power, as power be it transitive or intransitive requires some element of voluntary compliance with the consequences of its exercise.

Within an idealized state, then, power is arranged neatly in a predictable pattern around a centralized authority. The space between states, in this ideal-type situation, is considered altogether different. The interacting units here are not individuals but states, i.e. collective actors. Consequently, while they may engage in contracts limiting their ability to act, they are not expected to create overarching spaces of power.[171] As has been shown in 2.1., power in international relations theory is most often perceived in its transitive dimension, as the ability to get what one wants. The international system is considered anarchic and the institution of a centralized authority seems unlikely and in many ways undesirable[172]. Yet, intransitive power is not entirely absent. Analysis of the international realm also presupposes the existence of intransitive power, namely intransitive power contained within the state. In his double reading of the anarchy problematique, Ashley shows how the presumption of anarchy in the international system, understood as the absence of a centralized authority, is build on the idea of the state an idealized decision-making subject (Ashley 1988: 238). Now, while the ability to function as a centralized authority mediating between inside and outside is not necessarily based on intransitive power, I have argued above that the notion of the modern state indeed presupposes the existence of such power. In other words, in a system consisting of sovereign states, intransitive power can be conceived of as incorporated by states but hardly as emerging in the spaces in between.[173]

The argument, of course, is not that all states are based on intransitive power nor that scientists are unaware of or unconcerned by these limitations of the sovereign ideal. They are not. The argument

170 Münkler's argument on power comprised from two quite different dimensions all to often undistinguished in social sciences in many ways mirrors the original argument on intransitive and transitive power and my own. His intention in the cited text, though, is a slightly different one, namely the explication of the ways in which power becomes visible in actions and symbols. He concludes especially on the relationship between the fictionality and the reality of power (Münkler 1995: 226).

171 I would argue, with Arendt, that intransitive power can only emerge between individuals. Nonetheless, one might consider supranational spaces, spaces of power if they are expressions of the shared will of individuals and effectively maintained by their communication and action. The European Union is such a remarkable phenomenon because of deliberate attempts to transform it from an international organization into a political space in which Europeans interact. It is also indicative of the challenges and problems associated with such processes.

172 A global state mirroring the nation-state would be an incredibly huge and potentially restrictive institution which could hardly secure a belief in its legitimacy by relying on either identity or intransitive power. Instead, it seems complex patterns of order are emerging which are indicative of global governing but very different from the state (Albert 2007). The concept of power suggested here is one possible tool for understanding these complex structures.

173 Of course, the literature is full of examples and analysis of divergences from this rigid pereception. Such instances will be discussed in detail in chapter five.

made here is merely that on an analytical level sovereignty as an idea constructs two very different spaces: One, potentially containing, channelling and institutionalising intransitive power, and another precluding its emergence and ultimately governed by violence, only ever temporarily contained by fragile balances. Much of international relations theory, of course, has been concerned with the question why the empirical reality of international space is more complex and, in the end, less violent than such a clear division would have us expect. Many insights have been gained on the strength of international organizations, the role of transnational ties, non-state actors and norms (e.g. Jachtenfuchs 2008, Cutler 2002, Risse/Sikking 1999, Keck/Sikkink 1998 etc). International relations theory has moved beyond simplistic ideas of state interaction, yet, these are insightful refinements not radically new conceptualizations. Doing that would mean to develop a framework which abandons the inside-outside distinction in favour of a generalized conception of political action.[174]

4.4. Implications concerning violence and the state

The previous sections reformulated basic features of the modern state in terms of intransitive and transitive power and laid out the specific modern configuration of power. The modern state as an ideal, however, also represents a fundamental relocation and re-evaluation of the role of violence in social relations. I seek to recover some of the merits of Arendt's distinction between the power and violence, without resorting to her rather extreme and generalized accusation political thought would unduly conflate both and pay too little attention to the significant differences. Considering the modern configuration of power shows how the generalized framework of thinking encouraged a close association between power and violence. Therefore, I aim to briefly lay out the complex relationship between power and violence as contained in the idea of the modern state. These thoughts will complement the portrayal of the particular idea of order inherent in modern thinking about the state and provide a further reference point for addressing contemporary changes and challenges in chapter five.[175]

During the middle ages many legitimate uses of violence were available to a variety of actors from war to duelling. Over a period over several centuries, the state replaced these by the monopoly of legitimate violence, which seeks to limit the overall prevalence of violence (Reinhard 1999: 351, Reinhard 2007: 76f). The role of the state in limiting the exercise of violence was central right from

174 That international relations is still concerned with state interaction (with other states or non-state actors) is indicative of the continued importance of the state as an institution. My ensuing argument does not seek to show that the state is withering away or being replaced. In fact, it is not concerned with the state in any immediate sense. Rather it seeks to identify power where its two dimension are not intricately linked. Such spaces of power are not replacing the state but might be indicative of an emerging pattern of order not focused on the state but containing many varied configurations of power.

175 It is noteworthy that the German expression “Staatsgewalt”, which is often used interchangeably with “Staatsmacht” (e.g. Reinhard 1999) is not normally translated into English as violence of the state. More often the word power is employed. The German debate on the state, in other words, has a much stronger tendency to associate state, power and violence semantically because of frequent interchangeability of these terms. For a discussion of the problems in translating violence see (Imbusch 2003: 15-22)

the beginning. Hobbes built the institutional construction of the state on its ability to limit the use of violence by monopolizing it. The purpose of the Leviathan is to restrict the use of violence by serving as a superior force that can – through its ability to exert violence – keep others from doing so. The existence of a superior actor, of course, can be problematic and, therefore, effectively limiting the exercise of violence is an equally elementary feature of statehood. The configuration of power represented in the idea of the sovereign nation- state is therefore intricately linked to a specific role and place assigned to violence.

The sovereign nation-state as the centralized centre of authority requires two distinctions: between "good" and "bad" forms of violence and between uses within and between states. Within the state, legitimate "good" violence is centralized by the state and distinguished from the "bad" violence of criminals and lawbreakers. Max Weber, accordingly, makes the legitimate monopoly of violence the defining characteristic of the state (Weber 1968: 54). The state's ability to resort to physical force is, historically, expressed by the development of a police force, enforcing the law and separate from the personal forces of the rulers and the military (Reinhard 1999: 363f, van Creveld 1999: 189f). Police forces are an expression of the particular role of the controlled use of violence within the modern configuration of power. The ability of the state to govern effectively, i.e. exert transitive power, is linked closely to its ability to force compliance and physically limit its subjects through violent means if necessary.

It is, of course, widely recognized, that the need to gain compliance primarily by physical means is indicative of a loss of power rather than its particular efficiency (Münkler 1995: 227). The "sustained and continued exercise of physical coercion is fundamentally apolitical" (Jackman 1993: 35).[176] Far from being restricted to the exercise of physical violence, policing upholds order by diverse discursive and symbolic means and is most effective when it serves as a gentle reminder that the state could use force but does not need to. Similarly Berthold argues that while (transitive) power may be based on violence, it is more reliable when it does not and rests instead on authority (Berthold 1997: 351). The role of violence by the state within the state, then, is somewhat paradoxical. On the one hand, it is considered a necessary, integral component of rule, a guarantor of stability. On the other, the use of violence may indicate a failure of power and be an expression of its weakness rather than its strength.

One might insist that physical violence is a common feature of all organized forms of human community (Hoffman 1995: 53). In the state it exists in a good form, exerted by the state and backed by legitimacy, and in a bad form, when directed by individuals or groups against each other or the state. This differentiation between acceptable and unacceptable violence, rather than the effective monopolization of violence characterizes the state within. Hence, Weber's formulation of the *legitimate* monopoly of violence implies that, empirically, the monopoly remains contested

176 Jackman distinguishes between power (relational) and force (possessive) and insists that even though force is important, it is ill-suited to generate political capacity. In other words, governing by force alone will not generate political capacity, legitimate institutions are the fundamental ingredient of political capacity (Jackman 1993: 38, 95-121).

(Hoffman 1995: 75). Because of the close link between legitimacy – which in the modern state rests on at least the perception of intransitive power – and violence the permissibility of (violent) resistance against the state has been a recurring question.[177] It is an expression of the tension remaining between power and violence.

The close association of power and violence, which Arendt criticizes as a negligence in political thought, then, is a direct result of the particular configuration of power characteristic for the modern state. Hoffman terms this the dilemma of legitimacy and force, arguing that the modern states renders force legitimate by asserting that power can be exercised in despotic and hierarchical relationships (Hoffman 1995: 85). In other words, by linking the exercise of transitive power through the state to its basis in intransitive power, the exercise of violence as an instrument of such transitive power is (seemingly) legitimized.[178] The state effectively turns some forms of violence into acceptable instruments of power. This causes two problems. Firstly, intransitive power is an end in itself, it is not instrumental. Hence the assertion by Hoffman that "a 'democratic state' is paradoxical since it suggests that universal political rights can co-exist with an institution claiming a monopoly of legitimate force" (Hoffman 1995: 209). Because, how could universal rights coexist with an institutions that reserves the right to legitimately transgress these rights where necessary, e.g. by sending criminals to prison, effectively eliminating their freedom of movement? What he calls a paradox corresponds to the tension between the self-referential quality of intransitive power and the instrumental character of violence. Secondly, violence tends to overwhelm its own ends[179]. When associated with the transitive power of the state, therefore, it becomes paramount to set limits to the use of violence. Particularly the liberal tradition has consequently been concerned with defining and enforcing such limits. As can be seen by debates surrounding clashes between police forces and demonstrators in 2010, for example in Great Britain in the wake of budget cuts or in Stuttgart, Germany, with regard to the new central station, these limits remain contested, sometimes violently and more so in democratic states which explicitly seek to harbour and centralize intransitive power as well as transitive power.[180] It seems warranted to say that this internal paradox is a specific problem of the modern state, resulting from its particular construction of legitimacy through the configuration of power.

177 Right from the beginning of political thinking about the state writers have been ambivalent with regard to a possible right of resistance. Bodin and Hobbes for example, who theoretically defend absolute rule, consider resistance to such a rule a permissible circumstance in extreme situations, which they believe to be so rare, that their general argument stands (Bodin 1981: II/4, Hobbes 1996: 144). Locke, by building more explicitly on the natural rights tradition, arrives at even more extensive rights to resist rule where it fails (Locke 1977: 327). The twentieth century has generated ideas of a duty to resist extreme forms of rule, an idea for example present in the (theological) thought of Dietrich Bonhoeffer (Bonhoeffer 1949).

178 It might well be worth exploring, if the Arendtian distinction between justification and legitimation can prove helpful, for understanding the morally acceptable use of violence. It would mean accepting, that violence is never legitimate but there might be good reasons to use it. These would necessarily be contingent upon situations and value systems. Violence would derive its moral acceptability from reason that are not in themselves part of the violent action. Power, on the other hand, could be said to generate the reasons itself.

179 See Chapter 2.2.2. - Power and violence.

180 In fact, one might argue that this problem is largely alleviated by not claiming legitimacy based on intransitive power but by instead relying on ideology or plain violence. Such attempts to govern, however, raise other functional and normative problems.

The internal tension between power and violence is complemented by a different perception of violence outside the ordered realm of the state. The sovereign distinction also represents a distinction between the acceptable uses of violence. There is a decisive if minimalistic agreement that between states no formalized centre of authority is established. States exist in a state of formal anarchy.[181] Hence, violence is not monopolized but dispersed. Between states, violence is one means among others to prevail as a state and achieve one's ends. This does not mean that the use of violence between states is arbitrary. In fact, organization along the ideal of the state is in itself a significant ordering mechanism, which potentially diminishes violence by creating a structured realm of international relations. Further restrictions are as old as the state itself and concern the right to war, which is attributed to the sovereign states, excluding those only acting in a private interest, hence limiting the number of actors (Bodin 1981: 295, Grotius 1950: 130ff, Luther 1954). Statehood enables a distinction between actors entitled to the use of violence and others that are not, namely all non-state actors. While not decreasing violence as such and at times even increasing its intensity, this principle still provides order and thereby limitations for the use of violence. The second set of restrictions comes from international law specifying and ordering the use of violence between states. Medieval conceptions of just war were adopted to the sovereign state system and subsequently refined. Furthermore, international law evolved to contain not just rules on the right *to* war, but also the right *in* war and recently the right *post* war (Evans 2009). The use of violence, in other words, has by no means been unchecked or unregulated. Yet, while within states the extensive use of violence has been associated with a loss of power, the association of power with the ability to effectively use violence to achieve one's ends has been much closer in the realm between states.

Of course, the exercise of violence has not empirically been restricted to states. Furthermore, some, such as Charles Tilly, argue that the constitution of states was fundamentally achieved by violence and war-making (Tilly 1985). States, then, were established where the superior means to wage war were situated. The ability to use violence towards other like units was a defining condition of statehood not its result. Consequently, civil wars and wars of independence are forms of establishing statehood or at least attempting to do so. They are a transitory state of war to eventually be replaced by more adequate state-like units. Latest challenges to states as principal agents of violence include transnational crime and terrorism. Again, the argument cannot be that the order remained empirically uncontested, but that it shaped political imaginations and established order by defining the rule (interstate war) and the exceptions (e.g. terrorism).[182]

The modern configuration of power masks the role of violence by degrading it to a mere tool, which is controllable and, sometimes, necessary and effective. The legitimacy inferred by the

181 For a more detailed discussion of this issue see 2.1.2.

182 Asymmetrical warfare is one of the characteristics of those exceptions. The contested paradigm of “new wars” attempts to capture these forms (Kaldor 2006, Münkler 2002). they also makes some interesting arguments with regard to the economic incentives which change toward perpetuating rather than minimizing violence. Violence, however, remains instrumental because its perpetuation is geared toward the generation of material and immaterial revenue, which is the ultimate aim.

intransitive power, which is represented by the transitive power of the state, is by implication extended to the use of violence through the state. This is how violence analytically becomes legitimate, rather than justified.[183] Justifying and legitimising violence, where the former means that there may be good reasons to use violence and the latter implies tying it to intransitive power, however, remain two very distinct processes. Justification occurs through reference to universal ideal or moral standards. Legitimacy could only ever be a secondary attribute if, and only if, violent action is the expression of the thoroughly non-violent communication and action of people symbolically representing their collective imaginations and so long as it is not geared towards others who are not part of the legitimacy constituting group. In other words, states may well have the right to exercise violence legitimately where they enforce the law towards their own citizens. This is the kind of force established by the contractual idea. However, towards others, for example in the international realm violence, can only ever be justified, not legitimate in the above sense.

Whether to the outside or to the inside, the modern configuration of power establishes two realms of violence. In each, violence is considered acceptable, even if not desirable, when exerted by the state, i.e. backed by intransitive power. Where it is exerted by non-state actors it is considered a disturbance of order. In both realms, between and within states, violence is not considered an end in itself but instrumental, a means to an end. Transitive power and violence are not usually distinguished, as physical force and the threat thereof are considered instruments of power among others. Hence the common assumption that violence is merely one possible expression of power. The analytic simplification has analytical value and remains without much negative consequence so long as the basic assumption behind it is in fact adequate, namely that the described modern configuration of power is represented by the state. It causes problems, however, wherever and whenever the configuration of power, i.e. the fixed connection intransitive and transitive power itself cannot be assumed or is contested. Furthermore, such a simplified view presumes the ability of power to exercise violence without being overwhelmed by its instrumental nature. The association of the two only works, if effective mechanisms can be found to ensure the prevalence of power over violence. Both aspects deserve more attention than can be given to them here. These brief remarks show nonetheless, that only by recognising power and violence as two distinct and in many ways contrary phenomena, can we even ask the above questions.[184] It also sheds light on the tensions that arise from associating the state with legitimate violence, because the legitimacy implied therein is not of a moral but of an inferred nature.[185] It references back to the specific modern configuration of power.

183 Schlichte (2009) notes the delegitimising effects of violence and devotes considerable attention to the ways in which violence is justified, although he does not follow that particular distinction.

184 Hannah Arendt is, as she herself notes, unusual in distinguishing both (see 2.2.2. also containing a discussion of what I believe to be the merits of the distinction). A major shortcoming of Arendt's view remains that it is so counter-intuitive to other approaches.

185 Of course, powerful normative arguments can be made for the controlled use of violence (e.g. Pattison 2010), but this is not my concern here.

4.5. Transitive and intransitive power in their modern configuration

4.5.1 The modern configuration summarized

Reading the sovereign nation-state through the proposed two-dimensional conception of intransitive and transitive power highlights three presumptions of this particular political form. Firstly, political community is conceptualized as built on intransitive power. The contractual ideal posits this power as communicatively generated, although this moment of generation is more hypothetical than historical.[186] The artificial political community of the state needs to be created and legitimized by the communicative practices of people. Historically, this abstract notion of the communicative component is superimposed by the symbolic representation of political community manifested in the nation. The idea of nationhood combines civic components of self-determination and popular sovereignty with myths of natural community and shared cultural and historical heritage. Together, these two elements form the political imagination which makes the state possible. The skill of imagination is, therefore, geared not just towards the symbolic but also the communicative dimension of power by collectively recreating the foundational myths and enabling promises and commitments.

Secondly, intransitive and transitive power are brought into a fixed relationship in the idea of the sovereign nation-state. Intransitive power, or the ideal of it, is the underlying condition of possibility of the state, while transitive power is exercised by a centralized government over a people in a particular territory. The state is a territorial state. This territorialization of the fixed configuration of power results in the exclusiveness of the state system. Territorially distinct, like units emerge, interacting with each other as the mediators between their respective constituencies. The international system becomes ordered in two ways: within the state order is hierarchical and oriented toward a centre, between states no centralized authority exists and states interact in formal anarchy. The resulting systems of order can take very different forms, for example dictatorial or democratic inside and violent and unpredictable or structured by institutions between states. The sovereign ideal provides a framework for significant changes within the sovereign order. As such, this order has remained relatively stable over the past 500 years.[187]

Thirdly, the state effectively channels and accommodates all social activities within its territory, serving as a focal point for all further emergences of intransitive power. It accommodates social movements and focuses social struggles within its institutional structure (Magnusson 1993: 51ff). Many of the institutional adaptations of the state were triggered when the capability of existing state

186 In a footnote to his definition of state Georg Jellinek emphasizes, in response to Hermann Rehm, that while a state may not be historically based on an original constitution of power, it must still be legally based on the presumption of such original constitution (Jellinek 1976: 180f). In his later treatment of the people as subject and object of the state he explicitly states that the former is often erroneously omitted. Jellinek further argues that a state which is not based on the subjective quality of the people is not a state in the true sense of the word at all (Jellinek 1976: 407-410, for a similar point see Skinner 1997: 14). This reasoning corresponds very closely to the argument advanced here.

187 Of course, the emphasis has to be on "relatively". Sovereignty remains an ideal. However, recent attempts to recover the concept (e.g. Krasner 1999, Shadian 2010) underscore its continuing appeal.

institutions to effectively fulfil this task was contested. Over time the modern state has proven remarkably flexible, starting out as an absolutist construction designed to secure the rule of the king and in its most advanced form turning into a democratic institution representing heterogeneous constituencies and mediating their interests between inside and outside.[188] Although this latter element, as I will discuss in the following chapter, is indicative of important changes in the configuration of power, the adaptation as such is by no means a sign of degeneration. Rather, it shows just how adaptable, effective and in some areas maybe even indispensable, at least for now, the idea of a centralized authority has proven to be. Challenges, however, arise from the claim that such centralized authority serves as the one and decisive gatekeeper between inside and outside. The sovereign-territorial ideal relies on the ability to distinguish clearly between inside and outside and the ability of the state to maintain this divide.

In terms of power my argument implies that transitive power is an emergent property of intransitive power. When intransitive power is maintained over time it tends to produce rules, structures and events which effectively constrain individuals and groups in their ability to act. It produces transitive power. Such transitive power meets resistance when it works towards others, not participating in the production of intransitive power, or when the exercise of the transitive power is institutionally removed very far from the production of intransitive power. The latter instance corresponds for example to the mediation and concretion of the general aims laid out by intransitive power through the work of government. Government action will be met with resentment or even resistance when it is not recognized or accepted as the result of one's own participation in the production of intransitive power. However, resistance or resentment itself is not necessarily and always an expression of cognitive and affective failure on part of the subjects to recognize their own acts. It might also be an indicator for the loss or absence of intransitive and hence transitive power.

This understanding of transitive power differs slightly yet significantly from previous accounts of transitive power as laid out in chapter two. Although most of them were developed against the backdrop of the state and with the state in mind, they do not explicitly associate transitive power with intransitive power in this way. As a result, some instances usually captured by these concepts would not fall under my definition of transitive power as an emergent property of intransitive power. Far from impoverishing our understanding of power and order, this can strengthen our understanding of the complexities of the creation of social and political order by de-centering power and making room for other, related concepts marking forms of creating political order.[189] The claim is that power is a

188 Richard Rosecrance (1996) speaks of a virtual state, Ken Menkhaus (2007) calls it the mediating state while Saksia Sassen (2006) speaks of assemblages of authority and rights, to name but some conceptualizations of this changing state.

189 It is not possible to explore these here or even create an exhaustive list. Two, however, have been previously mentioned and hence come to mind immediately – violence and the social. Both create order in the sense of a structured reality. Political order would tend to contain instances of all three – power, violence and the social – and possibly more forms of order and could be defined as the ways in which order is created deliberately or inadvertently through social practices. It is noteworthy that this opens considerable critical potential by placing emphasis on the individuals and their (un-)reflected engagement in social practices and

specific way of ordering political relations, which theoretically has taken precedence over others during the age of the state and will continue to stand out as long as and where states are dominant. The ideal-type state is the institutionalization of a particular configuration of power. Power, however, is neither the only nor always and everywhere the most common way such order is brought about. I will return to the issues regarding different kinds of order in section 5.3. to treat them more fully. For the moment it shall suffice to note this as an implication of the reading on power and the state presented here.

The important, even if often implicit role of intransitive power in the sovereign nation-state, of course, also imports a number of the problems associated with intransitive power. Hobbes, for example, is clearly concerned about the transience of power. Consequently, he replaces intransitive power with violence or the threat thereof where possible, supplemented by symbolic representation in the form of civil religion where appropriate. Rousseau on the other hand recognizes and applauds the unpredictability of power, also treating the problem of its transience by relying on civil religion as the guiding symbolic representation of power. The challenges arising from the unpredictability and irreversibility of action and hence power re-emerge as normative questions of good order and participation. Modern political thought, in other words, has been deeply concerned with the implications of the modern configuration of power. These implications also underlie the social and ideological struggles of modernity and can be traced for example along the complex logics of liberalism and participation as examples.

4.5.2 Logics of liberalism and participation

The state as an absolute entity effectively controlling all instances of social interaction has, luckily, remained an unfulfilled notion.[190] The modern state has remained contested throughout its development. The state's institutions preserved intransitive power and limited the transience associated with it. Beyond that, what I will term the logics of liberalism and participation played a key role in limiting the transitive power of the state, and attending to the unpredictability and irreversibility of intransitive power.

The logic of liberalism lies in the separation of a private realm from the publicly accessible and regulated realm of the common affairs. Through the construction of inalienable, individual rights it limits the possible future actions of power. In an almost paradoxical move, the state is restricted by the

raising a whole set of normative questions concerning the ways in which individuals and social practices are related.

190 Totalitarianism might be described as an exception, yet, even here minimal spaces were continuously created and to some extent maintained as resistance, even if their overall effect was minimal. It is noteworthy, however, that violence may apparently maintain institutional structures when the supporting power has been destroyed or otherwise vanished. The persistence of similar institutional forms is not indicative of a persistence of the form of order which created them. Transitions from powerful institutions to social or violent institutions are intuitively possible. Creating power in support of an existing structure seems theoretically implausible, but Machiavelli (1986, 1977) prominently argued that it should be possible and the idea of state-building is based on the same premise.

individual rights of its subjects while being assigned the task of protecting these rights.[191] By extension this implies an order based on law, which is minimally a promise made about the extent of future action. Therefore, the liberal logic is not just protecting citizens from arbitrary government action, but also instrumental in countering the unpredictability of intransitive power itself. That is why the liberal logic is opposed to Rousseau's idealization of the general will that can never bind itself. The extent of the rights granted and the protection provided differs greatly across different states and forms of statehood. In extreme cases, the rights may not be granted at all but merely emerge as possible actions from the spaces that are predictably uncontrollable by the state.[192] These are not rights in a positive sense, but spaces of freedom at the limits of control. Total control of all social activities within a territory has, as of yet, proven impossible.

By creating private spaces the state also creates public space – both are integral to statehood as it shapes the modern imagination. The extent of each realm varies, but they are always logically present. The public-private distinction by itself is unproblematic with regard to intransitive power. In fact, following Arendt's line of argument one might well consider it indispensable. Without protected spaces and guaranteed rights, the doors are open to the exercise of violence and the destruction of power. However, if by admitting it actively or through the inability to control spaces of social interaction that are potentially outside the control of the political system, the state creates space from which intransitive power may emerge. The state maintains its central role as long as it is capable of capturing and channelling these new emergences of power. When intransitive power begins to circumvent or ignore alternatives emerge from the spaces at the margins of state control and regulation.[193] The liberal logic of the state, in other words, enables the spaces from which the primacy of the state as a focal point of power can be challenged.

The logic of participation begins as the simple realization that participation attends to the problem of the irreversibility of power. Finding acceptance for the consequences of decisions taken is easier, if they are perceived as one's own. Having someone else to blame for a decision is potentially destabilizing and encourages resistance. Participatory logic does not mean, therefore, that a state is always necessarily democratic. The modern configuration of power, however, implies that subjects should be able to see themselves as the authors of the decisions made and the acts of transitive power which result. The artificial nature of the modern state, enabled by the contractual construct, demands this connection. One way, surely, is the classic representative democracy. Democratic institutions may

191 Locke, for example, builds his contractual construct on first identifying natural rights of individuals, then assigning the state the task of protecting them and subsequently limiting the activities of the state to areas not protected through these rights (Locke 1977). Arendt emphasizes the important role of the state as a protective agency of rights. Natural rights are worthless unless protected (see 2.3.).

192 The dystopian literature of the twentieth century is full of examples of imaginary systems trying to maintain absolute control over their subjects (e.g. Orwell, Huxley, Atwood). However, even there minimal spaces for action remain and are exploited by the subjects. Interestingly, all of these dystopias feature extensive attempts to control and regulate the physical bodies and reproductive activities of the subjects. Such control fails at least partially in hierarchical systems. Absolute control cannot be achieved by violence.

193 The most most convincing proof is the prevalence of alternative polities within the same territory (Walby 2004, Shadian 2010). Alternative spaces of power will be treated in more detail in chapter 5.

make people authors of the decisions or at least serve as a symbol of their underlying intransitive power (Camilleri 1990: 22ff). It is also possible that participation could be organized around direct democratic processes, which more strongly emphasize the direct communication and action of intransitive power. Alternatively, the participatory logic could be strongly symbolized in the sense of belonging to a community of self-governing individuals, as has long been the case in the nation-state. This latter possibility, of course, tends to truncate the communicative component and could easily degenerate into a different form of order, based on habit and tradition.[194]

The participatory logic represents a permanent challenge to the state as the prime incorporation of intransitive power. Its primacy depends on its ability to incorporate and channel intransitive power emerging in the free spaces of society. The history of the state, as has been briefly reviewed above, then, is one of permanent institutional adaptation to further expressions of intransitive power or precursors of those. Ideally, the state harbours intransitive power as a means of maintaining itself. It draws on the reservoir of power of society[195] and at the same time prevents the emergence of alternatives. In channelling intransitive power the state also restricts it, assigning these emergences a certain place and not another. An adaptable system of participation is essential for securing the stability of the modern configuration of power. It resonates with ideas such as democracy and the "self-determination of peoples" which form an integral part of the political imagery of the last centuries. However, the participatory logic represents a permanent challenge to transitive power, reminding it of its dependence on intransitive power and harbouring an endless stream of potentially serious challenges to the primacy of the central authority. In this sense a democratic state is a contradiction in terms – it is always inherently challenged to rethink its own position (Hoffman 1995: 209).

The logics of participation and liberalism come together, in effect producing the spaces and movements from which alternative forms of power emerge. They open up breeding ground for intransitive power beyond the state. Hence, the modern configuration of power represented by the state is characterized by a tension between the claims it makes in terms of dominance resulting from its territorial grounding and the realities it creates. Challenges to the state are not a newly emerging phenomenon but inscribed in its very design. Yet, in the idea of the state the relationship between intransitive and transitive power is conceptualized in a way that puts the spotlight on the exercise of transitive power. The problem of constituting political order is located prior, in a realm before political order and, hence, not a political question. Intransitive power reappears as the need of the state to maintain non-transcendent legitimacy – by harbouring, containing and thriving on the intransitive power emerging in the spaces created by liberal and democratic logics. This assumption, however, is misleading.

194Again, the social comes to mind. For details see 5.4..
195The term is borrowed from Latour 1986.

The state as the dominant organizational form of modernity was never fully achieved and always remained contested (Krasner 1999: 238), even if as a rhetorical tool it has become near universal.[196] So universal, in fact, that it is often difficult to conceptualize political activity beyond the secure confines of the analytical container of the state. The preceding argument does not challenge the basic understandings we have of the state. On the contrary, it reinforces the appropriateness of the theoretical frameworks of modernity for modern times, because it shows that the modern political form instituted a specific configuration of power that has remained relatively stable. By applying the dual conception of intransitive and transitive power, however, my argument highlights some of the frequently omitted presumptions of statehood, in particular its reliance on a fixed, territorial and necessary relationship between intransitive and transitive power.[197]

It is unwarranted to draw conclusions regarding the future of the state at the end of this chapter. I merely argued for the analytical value of the two-dimensional conception of power based on the fact that it is compatible with an analysis of thinking about the state. In terms of power, "state" is the name commonly ascribed to a particular configuration of power. This configuration was so prevalent that it was largely unnecessary to dwell on the complex underlying relationship between intransitive and transitive power. The state, this particular configuration of power, has shown great institutional and ideological adaptability. Thus conclusions about the future of the state cannot be derived from my analytical suggestions. The next chapter, accordingly, does not start from a presumption about the persisting or diminishing viability of the state. The hypothesis is that the two-dimensional conception of power provides an adequate tool to capture forms of order based on power, be they state-like or not. The test is, then, whether or not the concept really allows us to think beyond the state-centred vocabulary of modern political thought.

196 Reinhard points out that the adaptability of the state also extents to its implementation around the world. Although, of course, not exact duplicates of an idealized European model and certainly deficient when compared to the empirical reality of European states, the changed shape of the state in non-European world regions is indicative of yet another transformation of the state rather than its failure (Reinhard 1999: 320f)

197 These omissions have, of course, been noted and criticized in recent literature. In fact, it seems to be part of the rhetoric of literature concerned with contemporary developments to bemoan the inadequacies and omissions of the available conceptual vocabulary. In chapter five I will seek to show how the dual conception might contribute to adjusting our theoretical vocabulary.

5. Changing configurations of power

This last chapter takes on the almost impossible task of exploring what is to be gained from considering power in its two dimensions for an understanding of contemporary developments. Clearly, it would fail if it tried to do justice to all the complexities of a globalizing world. Therefore, this chapter explores the merits of the two-dimensional conception by means of an exemplary survey of instances of power. Two aims are achieved. Firstly, it is established that the modern configuration of power is increasingly supplemented by other instances of power which are no longer aligning along the limits set by the world of sovereign states. Alternative configurations of power are emerging and likely to remain alternatives to the state world. This is, however, by no means a proof of the demise of the state nor is it intended to be. The argument is merely, that alternative configurations of power are not just theoretically possible but empirically observable. Secondly, building on these observations, this chapter will show how the two-dimensional conception of power contributes to a better understanding of the complex processes of globalization. It allows us to capture manifold spaces of power without forcing us to abandon the option of a fixed connection between transitive and intransitive power entirely. By considering alternatives equally possible, it places the state in context. It enables us to think beyond the state without denying its importance. The two dimensional concept of power also makes nascent political forms visible and we can then trace their evolution. Other forms of order, in the sense of structured social reality, draw attention and imply a differentiated range of possible orders. Potentially, this can broaden our horizon and open up new perspectives on understanding as well as action.

The focus of the chapter is on identifying patterns of power. The selected examples reflect the intention to illustrate how the two-dimensional conception of power works with regard to the contemporary world. Empirical examples are drawn from existing literature in the social sciences and analysis' by those engaging in nascent forms of power. Limits between the two kinds of literature are not easily drawn, as they partly coincide and individual texts often drift from one to the other. Both have their merits, however. The social science literature portrays systematically contemporary developments and reveals the conceptual problems that come with analysing them. More action-oriented perspectives provide more intuitive depictions of emerging patterns of power and more radical empirical observations. I limit my survey in this chapter to two particular issue areas concerned with major developments of globalization and which pose particular challenges with regard to power. On the one hand I consider literature concerned with areas of failed or limited statehood. The fixed connection between transitive and intransitive power is most immediately called into question where the state is non-existent and I argue that in some cases our perception is hampered by the powerful imagination of the modern configuration of power. On the other hand I look at the role of social movements and non-governmental institutions, which are said to have gained power over the last decades. The two-dimensional concept of power here provides insights on the nature and problems of

that power. The concepts also helps to resolve the seeming contradiction of the debate, namely that these new "powerful" actors more often than not fail to get others to do what they want. This review of current developments gives an indication of the analytic strength of the presented conception of power. Rigorous empirical testing of the conception developed here, will have to be done elsewhere.

The chapter proceeds in three steps. The first one lays out main features of contemporary globalization. It will discuss the perception of fragmentation and the dissolution of order and point out the integrating tendencies inherent in communication and connectedness, in order to illustrate the contradictory nature of the world we live in. The second part traces power, focusing on intransitive power as the nascent form of any emergent pattern of power. All three elements, communication and action, symbolic representation and the skill of imagination are treated in detail and their presence and coincidence are related through reference to the empirical literature. The third part concludes the chapter with a more detailed description of emerging patterns of power and possible forms of order. It relates power to other thinkable forms of order and outlines emerging questions.

5.1. Dynamics of globalization

Globalization, as has been specified in the introduction, is a complex, multidimensional set of processes touching upon every field of human life. Three tendencies of these processes in particular reflect back upon the changing configuration of power. Firstly, globalization is a contradictory process, it shows integrating, globalizing but also fragmenting, localizing characteristics. Rosenau calls this characteristic "fragmegration" (Rosenau 1997), Robertson termed it "glocalization" (Robertson 1995: 30), to name but two examples. Such neologisms, notwithstanding any criticism of the appropriateness of creating such constructions, attempt to capture the interconnectedness of processes, that homogenize the world globally and contribute to its heterogeneity locally. The underlying hypothesis, namely that globalization is a set of processes which transgresses traditional political spaces and defies dichotomising the global and the local, has become widely recognized and might be called one of the common sense assumptions of current political thought.[198] As a consequences, globalization theory de-centres states, considering them one kind of actor among many others.[199]

An equally important, second tendency of globalization is the way it affects everyone and everywhere, but not in the same way or to the same extent. It is an inherently uneven process. While some people live globally such as managers and artists of a certain calibre, others are leading lives characterized by very local dependencies and identities.[200] This variation in the reality of globalization

198 The concept of multi-level governance, which emerged in the context of European Union research analysis is possibly the most conservative way of acknowledging the close connection between different levels of governing. See Enderlein et al 2011.

199 However, as I argue, the fact that this perspective de-centres a specific configuration of power as well, is rarely reflected. This leads to the somewhat perplexing situation, that actors are intuitively powerful, even though they fail to get their will against resistance. I will return to this in more detail, as it is a key problem.

200 Saskia Sassen (1994, 2006) illustrates the consequences of this uneven participation in global processes in her study of global cities. She is concerned with the challenge of governing these complex urban spaces

under different circumstances implies it as a transformative process. The transformation itself is at the heart of the idea. Globalization changes our world. The third tendency of globalization, then, is the way it irreversibly and fundamentally transforms our social world (Castells 2009, Sassen 2006, Rosenau 2003). This in itself, of course, is neither new nor surprising. The world has always changed and probably always will. However, the perception of globalization as a major transformation of some kind, makes it a focal point for intense emotional and cognitive challenges. The magnitude and speed of the ongoing transformations suggests, that the induced change might be epochal (Laclau 1994: 1, Albrow 1997) and a prevailing sense of complexity is the symptom of this intuitive perception.

Debates on globalization are almost inevitably also about the state. Early considerations of the disappearance of the state, however, have been abandoned in favour of a more moderate approach, focusing on the kinds of transformations of the state and potential other forms of governing (Dürrschmidt 2002: 91ff, Hurrelmann et al 2007, Risse/Lehmkuhl 2007). In other words, the focus has been on the ways in which power, understood as the ability to control and overcome resistance in the process, is exercised under conditions of globalization. It has been recognized that territorially distinct units are no longer dominant. Rather we find overlapping and interconnected forms of rule development and enforcement. Some prominent examples illustrate this vividly. Martin Albrow looks at the modern state and suggests that the global state emerges as an adaptable mediator between different spaces and people, which seeks to transgress not control borders (Albrow 1997). Susan Strange, in a more critical approach, speaks of a retreating state effectively transferring the ability to control to private transnational corporations (Strange 1996). James Rosenau in a theory-driven approach explores changes in governing in terms of emerging “spheres of authority” (Rosenau 1997). Focusing on global flows, Manuel Castells speaks of a “network society” characterized by overlapping spaces with different spatio-temporal configurations (Castells 2009). Thomas Callaghy, Ronald Kassimir and Robert Latham (2001) consider “transboundary formations” developing at the fuzzy borders of the territorial units, blurring any clear distinction between the and demanding different theoretical tools. All these approaches are united in the attempt to capture complex arrangements of government identity and community.

They share with most other approaches to globalization two peculiar and somewhat contradictory observations. On the one hand, the state is seen as less able to control. Its ability to pursue its interests is regularly challenged by constraints imposed upon states by other actors or their own regulations.[201] The state's transitive power, it appears, is permanently decreasing. This is accompanied by challenges to the legitimacy of the political and economic system (Teivainen 2002: 622). Of course, as argued earlier, this implies a loss of intransitive power as well. However, there is an uneasiness about

incorporating different spatio-temporal configurations. The unevenness of globalization will be a recurring theme throughout this chapter.

201 In many ways, this is the result of the liberal logic engrained in the state and discussed in more detail in chapter four. Restrictions on the transitive power of the state, according to this logic, tend to expand rather than decrease, as the liberal logic deliberately counteracts the irreversible and unpredictable consequences of action.

attributing a loss of power to the state, not least because of the second, related observation, namely that "power" is transferred to other actors, such as transnational corporations, international and transnational organizations or non-governmental institutions (e.g. Strange 1996, Mathews 1997). However, their kind of power appears to be not the same as the one states and their governments lost. The influence of transnational corporations on legislation and conduct of people is not usually, even implicitly, backed by legitimacy. The felt power of social movements and NGO's does not readily translate into an effective implementation of their goals and suggestions.

What we are seeing, in other words, is not a transferral but a transformation of power. Focusing on power as control as these new actors appear, then, leads to puzzling results. It is readily agreed that they are important, but exactly how they fit into the scheme of political and social order, which dominates thinking, is not so immediately clear. On the one hand, they are not state-like, because they are neither territorial nor have they established a fixed connection between intransitive and transitive power. The latter being rather more significant, of course. On the other hand, they are not inferior nor superior to the state, nor does the state simply channel their demands. The process of interaction between these different kinds of actors is much more complex. Indeed, that our world has become much more complex and less predictable, seems to be the most commonly drawn and frequently reiterated conclusion. Without denying the validity of this conclusion, I believe, that the perception of overwhelming complexity of the world partly, not entirely, results from the lack of adequate concepts to understand it.

As I argued in the previous chapter, our understanding of political and social order rests on certain fundamental assumptions about the order we live in. I have described these in terms of transitive and intransitive power in order to illustrate why transitive power is such a powerful notion in dominant understandings of order and power, while intransitive power is mostly recognized only through other concepts and ideas. So long as the assumption of a fixed, territorially grounded relationship between the preceding intransitive power and the emergent transitive power generally holds, there is indeed no need to overly ponder on the possible complexities of the relationship. Problems of governing are complex enough all by themselves without permanently questioning their reasonable assumptions.[202]

202 Clearly, there is also an emotional component to the dynamic behind these debates on the growing complexity of the world. Change induces insecurity and growing complexity or the perception thereof does not just inhibit the individual's ability to make sense of the world but also the ability to navigate it successfully. In order to make decisions, one has to be able to make reasonable assumptions about the possible alternatives. Where that cannot be done, decision-making becomes an agonizing task. Many discussions on globalization either overemphasize the determinateness of the processes or simply lament the openness and uncontrollability of it. Abandoning familiar concepts in addition to coping with minimal certainties about the state of the world is clearly expecting a lot, even if that might be something that facilitates a better understanding. It is therefore quite expectable, that most texts on globalisation end with the reassurance that the state is still not gone, that our familiar order is not dissolving completely. The state is there to stay. But that state may not have much to do with the state as we know it. Such change is not unprecedented. The structure of the Church for example, still has many elements that it acquired during a time when worldly and spiritual authority were one and the same. Still, hardly anyone would argue, that the church as an institution which still plays the same role it did in the middle ages or that even that it has not significantly changed. What is emotionally comforting may be analytically misleading.

Globalization challenges these deeply engrained notions of order. The main challenges associated with globalization can be described analytically along three main issues: communication and connectedness, shared worlds and shared concerns and, finally, the challenges for individuals. I will take the time now to explore these in some detail before toward instances of intransitive power in the next section.

5.1.1 Communication and connectedness

Globalization theory has long identified the rise of communication means and opportunities as one of the most significant features of globalization. In the beginning, this was very much perceived as an elite process: means and opportunities were available to active benefactors and participants in the processes of, particularly economic, globalization. They could rely on expensive and rare means of communication, such as transatlantic telephony, which remained financially or technically inaccessible to larger populations. Notwithstanding significant remaining inequalities in access to means of communication, this has changed fundamentally. Global electronic networks have multiplied the possibilities for people to communicate in real time around the globe. Communication between individuals has become less dependent on space and location, a trend which is reinforced by the spread of mobile communication.[203] Increasingly, we live in a condition of permanent connectedness (Moglen 1997). This leads to the emergence of "mass self-communication" (Castells 2007: 246ff), communication between individuals which is no longer actively mediated by actors and institutions such as TV networks, publishers or radio stations.[204] Rather, the communication happens directly between people, enabling them to engage in exchanges which potentially allow them to communicate in ways that make the emergence of meaningful communication and action possible. The technical preconditions for communication and action have changed radically.

Social movements and political activists have, however, profited greatly from improved means of coordination and debate and implemented many different strategies making use of these opportunities, to the extent that movements develop specific practices geared towards the possibilities of network technologies such as using collaborative writing tools to develop their positions, social networks to promote and coordinate their activities (Juris 2004, Della Porta et al 2006: 92-117), crowd-sourcing to

203 The number of internet users is constantly increasing and the global internet usage rate has doubled between 2005 and 2010. Surely, the internet usage rate is still only 30% and the digital divide is particularly apparent in internet usage, with only 9,6% of the population in Africa having access to the internet. However, no less than 90% of the world population now have access to mobile communication, which is increasingly also an avenue for gaining access to the internet (Etzo/Collender 2010). Particularly striking is not, in the end, the state that has been reached but the speed of the development, that as of yet shows no sign of slowing significantly, and the direction of it towards mobile access, making the individuals the actual nodes of the network.
For details of the numbers see http://www.itu.int/ITU-D/ict/material/FactsFigures2010.pdf [13.01.2011].

204 It is, of course, mediated by a technical infrastructure which is heavily controlled, mostly by private companies. The events surrounding the Wikileaks publication of US-embassy-cables in 2010/2011, such as the blocking of the domain wikileaks.org and accounts of the organisation with financial institutions are indicative of the fragility of internet freedom. However, the point to be made here is merely that these technologies potentially enable certain kinds of exchanges in ways that are unprecedented – real-time communication independent of spatial distance and, increasingly, location. They do not necessarily do so.

gather information on local or global events[205] and so on. New forms of collaborative knowledge production have emerged, which utilize the dispersed competencies of people, the most notable project being Wikipedia, the world largest online encyclopedia. The internet as a networked means of communication and both, consequence and driver of globalization, has very rapidly and fundamentally changed the ways people communicate. The latest develop is the rapid rise of different kinds of social networks, such as Facebook, Quora and Twitter, extending existing relationships to the virtual world and expanding social networks by providing new opportunities for social interaction (Boyd/Ellison 2007). Of course, the technical infrastructure as such does not automatically lead to meaningful communication. It merely provides opportunities and what is significant is that these have increased and extended to a potentially and often empirically global scale.[206] Technology, in other words, is a facilitating yet by now means sufficient condition for communication and action (see Castells 2009: 22f).[207]

The current condition of real-time communication represents another stage in the compression of time and space that began with early capitalism, but has acquired a rather greater speed over the last decades (Harvey 1990: 240ff). Distances can be crossed by communication in real-time, essentially eliminating the need to be in a specific place.[208] Yet, place matters: time-space compression does not mean physical location is without consequence. Migration and the development of diasporic and nomadic spheres may serve as an example. Migration as such is not new, of course, but the varieties of it that characterize the globalizing world are significant. There is migration in the sense that people move permanently from one place to another for economic or political reasons. Resulting migrant communities of all sorts exist in most countries and form diasporic spheres, which display specific links with "home countries" as well as "host countries". Regularly communication may be maintained with each, through networks of communication, shared media and economic ties sustained in the form of remittances and business contacts (Nagel/Staeheli 2010, Appadurai 1996, Papastergiadis 2000). However, there is also manifold forms of more temporary migration by students, business people, tourists, season workers and so on, which may or may not be transformed into more permanent forms of migration (Appadurai 1996: 33 and 172, Sassen 1998, Urry 2003: 61[209]). And even networks of terrorism involve elements of migration and communication between cultures, travelling forming an important basis of transnational terrorist activities. Mediating between cultures in order to manipulate

205 e.g. http://www.ushahidi.com/ [13.01.2011]

206 The infrastructure may also be used to control free expression and track down activists, as Evgeny Mozorov (2011) shows. It is, in other words, not the technology itself that creates power.

207 These brief paragraphs hardly scratch the surface of the issue, but should suffice to introduce these issues to the extent needed here. For further reading Manuel Castells's The Information Age (1996-1998) is indispensable and his 2009 book Communication Power a more critical supplement, although I believe his understanding of power to be less helpful then the one developed here. Lawrence Lessig's *Code* and its second edition *Code 2.0* (2006) are incredibly instructive for understanding the workings of communication on the internet as are the contributions of Cass Sunstein, Eben Moglen, Yochai Benkler and many others.

208 Mobile communication reinforces this trend. Phone conversation nowadays tend to begin with the question "Where are you?" rather than "How are you?".

209 To John Urry, these travelling people are part of the global fluids contributing to global complexity and complementing globally integrated networks (Urry 2003: 74)

them is integral part of the way terrorism works (Schäfer-Wünsche 2002). Whether or not migration remains temporary or turns permanent, migrants transport a continuous flow of experience and information from different places of the world to others. Encounters with other life-styles and perspectives, then, travel not just through electronic networks, but also through people. Surely, exchange between certain regions is more likely than between others, but no region of the world is entirely left out.[210] Migration, in other words, is not just a form of dislocating people, but a significant force in the creation of communication networks and transnational spaces.

Such encounters, of course, also increase the opportunities for conflict and provoke counter-forces (Della Porta et al 2006: 16). Encounters between cultures may go smoothly, but can also produce significant disjunctures as for example in processes of (de-)colonisation. Other conflicts result from differences in perspective between people in the same location as we find in "global cities". Global cities represent specific production complexes tying localized service providers to the global economic flows of financial systems and transnational corporations (Sassen 1998: 209). The co-existence of very different life-styles in the same location enforces comparisons and reveals inequalities. Global flows of images and stories through the media contribute further to people's knowledge about other worlds and equally, make comparison possible, revealing injustices and inconsistencies in the dominant narratives of development, individual responsibility and economic growth. They make present the inevitable dilemmas of a complex world in which we must accept the necessity to decide on the very nature of the world we live in (Melucci 1996: 150).

However, connectedness is not only represented by the immaterial communication between people but also in the material processes integral to human life. Economic globalization, the feature of globalization that has often taken the front seat in analyses of globalization, is one important element. Global flows of goods and finances as well as institutional connections through transnational corporations, trade relations and international regulation, have created an unified if still heterogeneous global economy. People in different physical and social locations are affected very differently by these processes. What unites them is merely the sense that their fates are connected. This abstract notion is concreted for example in the decisions of transnational firms to close or open production facilities, the dependency of pension funds on economic development in different economies or the rise and fall of petrol prices. In the everyday experience of people economic globalization is made present through the availability of products and services, acquiring or losing livelihoods and rising and falling prices. And moreover, these phenomena are increasingly, though certainly not by all, understood to be consequences of connectedness even if and where the underlying mechanisms to many remain enigmatic. Workers in Europe know, that their factories are closed because production elsewhere is cheaper and African miners have opportunities to learn that the resources they dig up are part of global cycles of production, the profits of which hardly reach them. It is not necessary to fully

210Even places with a very low inclusion into those global flows, such as North Korea, are not entirely absent from them. Other regions, such as many parts of Africa might be excluded from the global flows of wealth but participate in global flows of migration as regions of origin, transit spaces and so on.

understand these processes in order to gain a sense of the condition of connectedness which underlies them, but clearly the ability to conceptualize connectedness is intimately related to the cognitive and emotional skills of people (Rosenau 1990: 33ff). Of course, such economic connections provide the grounds for further conflict: over the resources at hand, the social and environmental consequences of economic actions and the distribution of profits and damages.

Economic globalization also implies the growing importance of international financial flows, connecting national economies in ways that make them intimately dependent on one another and inhibit the ability of states to control financial flows without international cooperation (Cerny 1994). The frequent financial crises of the last decade and the varied reaction of states to them are an indication of the significance of such financial ties. The need to regulate results from the very real repercussions of the volatile movements of capital around the world. The experience of being subject to the consequences of global financial flows of capital and the inadequacy of the control governments have over them is, therefore, also globally shared, even if the consequences are quite different at each local level.

The condition of connectedness also has significant repercussions for the construction of individual and collective identity. Rather than homogenizing global culture, processes of globalization have contributed to a multiplication of worlds, the increasing prevalence of hybrid, negotiable identities (Appadurai 1996: 90ff). Group membership, consequently, turns into an inadequate measure of identity unless it is recognized as multiple and cumulative (Albrow 1997: 150/151). Identity in a globalizing world becomes a complex process of situating oneself in a complex network of relationships (Della Porta 2006: 116, Eriksen 1999) and more than ever identity construction is an individual endeavour. Processes of identity construction, of course, are by no means a new phenomena, yet the increased opportunities for direct individual interaction decenter the dominance of national identity and give way to more diverse overlapping identities (Appadurai 1996: 195). This plurality of identities in turn is a source of continued tension and resistance, which must be negotiated between individuals.[211] Identity formation furthermore remains a contingent process, which is shaped not just by the intentions of the individuals but also by their status, skills and relationships.[212] Identity formation under conditions of global connectedness, in other word, turns into a complex process of communication between individuals negotiating the tensions and conflicts between overlapping and potentially conflicting identities. These processes also, potentially, enable individuals and groups to develop new forms of agency and action which make them active participants in configuring globalization rather than passive recipients of its consequences.

The availability of means of communication and the increased need for communication between individuals resulting from connectedness challenges the notion of the state as a mediator between

211For an extensive treatment of questions of identity in networked societies see Castells 1997.

212It is reasonable to assume that mechanisms such as the ones Michel Foucault summarizes under headings such as “normalization” and “subjectivation” are also at play here. I will make some more explicit remarks on the issue when treating emerging patterns of order.

separate cultural or social spheres and an effective container of society. Of course, the state has never fully encapsulated identity, but it provided a sophisticated, centralized institutional framework within which identities could develop and express themselves. Connectedness enables and enforces channels of communication which transcend, circumvent or overcome state boundaries and defy the centralisation of political identity. Therefore, the way communication and connectedness have impacted social practices significantly challenges the modern configuration of power.

5.1.2 Shared worlds, shared concerns

Hannah Arendt's introduction to *The Human Condition* begins by pointing towards the symbolic significance of the Sputnik launch (Arendt 1958: 1ff), which she connects to the desire of many to leave the confines of the Earth, like escaping could and would fundamentally change the human condition. However, this event, second to no other in importance if we follow Arendt's point of view, has another symbolic dimension. The portrayal of the earth as a planet in photographs makes the limited space in which humans live much more palpable. Seeing the globe from space complements the experience of a further speeding up of communication and mobility with a visual expression. I have argued in chapter four that the emergence of the modern configuration of power was also accompanied by an intensification and increased speed of communication. Beyond the change in communication patterns, the current change makes present the fundamental spatial restrictions of human life. This symbolic moment has increasingly been supplemented by the perception of shared problems, challenges and consequences. David Held and others have emphasized this particular aspect of globalization, arguing that we live in a world of overlapping communities of fate (Held et al 1999: 81). I will name but three examples of the increased connectedness of fates.

The most obvious, of course, is climate change. More than other environmental problems, this has been a problem fuelling a complex global debate. The issue is not so much, whether or not the problem is perceived as real, but the fact that there is widespread agreement that the debate is not national or regional, but that this global issue affects all people, albeit to different extents and in different ways. Some island states fear their permanent disappearance. Other people are concerned about the impact of possible regulation, which some argue is based on false data, on their economies and/or the difficulties of implied changes in lifestyle. In some parts of the world livelihoods are affected by more extreme weather events, which change conditions for agriculture and housing dramatically. All of these concerns are interconnected and organized around a common issue that is perceived as global even if it effects us in very different ways. Consequently, it is by no means accidental that environmental movements have been a driving force in establishing shared concerns around the world.[213]

213 The most significant event in this respect is the 1992 UN Summit in Rio de Janeiro, that also marked a significant shift in the perception of social movements more generally (Mathews 1997). In recent years environmental issues have received less attention than for example security issues and often been superseded by such concerns (Wapner 2008). Yet, global summits still receive considerable attention. For a detailed history of global environmental movements see Keck/Sikkink 1998.

A second example is the development of a global economy with widely dispersed cycles of production, making production and consumption a wholly global affair. Moreover, products tend to be global as well, or appear so as their brands and logos penetrate public space. Naomi Klein famously undertook the endeavour to travel along these cycles of production and the homogenized "branded world" they bring about. The formal, if not actual availability of branded, globalized products, such as i-devices, GAP clothes and Ikea furniture, creates shared repertoires of symbols and preferences (Klein 2001). The production and consumption of these products is recognisably organized on a global scale connecting individuals and regions but also segregating them, as producers rarely turn consumers.[214] These processes create shared life-worlds as everyday products and consumption practices around the world become more similar. This is also apparent with regard to intangible, cultural products such as movies, music and books. Many examples come to mind, but maybe most surprising is the success of the Harry Potter series, a fantasy story about a wizard boy that has become a world wide success despite its firm foundation in a very British imagery.[215] Interestingly, homogenizing trends appear simultaneously with heterogenising trends. Cultural artefacts are adapted to local contexts, quite as material products. Globalization comes with diversification (Robertson 1995: 28f).

Finally, the transnational terrorism that has become the most prominent concern of governments around the world, shapes and changes the life-worlds of people everywhere on the globe. The violence as such, of the terror itself and the so-called war against it, reaches many people, not just in one location, but in dispersed areas around the globe. Some feel an increased sense of threat and danger. Other lives are changed by the disconcerting balance between freedom and security emerging in many democratic countries. People experience the consequences of terrorism, even if in very different ways, as consequences of terrorism which are not restricted to certain areas or groups but potentially ubiquitous. This is not a purely cognitive process either. The terrorist attacks on New York in 2001 were broadcast live across the world, the pictures of the planes hitting the towers turning into immediately recognisable symbols of the event itself and what came from it. Media representations of violence contribute to creating shared worlds, because they are constitutive of collective imagination (Strathern/Stewart 2006: 10, 27). The violence of terrorism connects lives and produces shared frames of reference both as an event and by symbolically constituting meaning and reference.

Shared worlds and concerns do not lead to a unified life world, on the contrary, each of the above examples illustrates vividly, how the shared reference points lead to very different consequences and reactions depending on not just *that* but *how* individuals and groups are connected in the globalizing world. The aforementioned terrorist attacks, for example, clearly mean many different things to different people, the resonance depends on the predispositions of the people (Göhler et al 2010: 692ff). Consequently, shared reference points unite as much as they separate. They

214 The global economy, of course, is very complex. For introductions into economic globalization see Mosley 2007.

215 The books have been translated officially into more than 60 languages, including Arabic, Welsh and Chinese, making it a truly global phenomenon, despite its firm cultural placement in a very specific European context.

also provide grounds for conflict. However, their global nature makes the local reactions part of the same process, rather than letting them appear as purely local developments. People do not live in one unified shared world in any cognitive or emotional sense, but individuals increasingly share worlds of experience, knowledge and concern with many people beyond the constraints of territory. Sharing worlds rather than living in the same world increases the sense of connectedness and relates to the complex nature of contemporary identity construction.

The development of global media has played an important role in symbolically representing these shared worlds, making them visible, palpable and understandable. Early accounts of globalization focus on the role of television (Rosenau 1990: 337-354). Globally televised events still form an integral part of the way shared worlds are produced (Hepp/Krotz 2008). The soccer world cup, Olympic Games, royal weddings but also events such as the Live Aid concert 1985 in Philadelphia and London and its follow up, the Live8 2005 in Edinburgh, enable the simultaneous percipience of global events by individuals across the globe. Over the last decade, new repertoires have evolved creating opportunities for individuals to participate in their own location in global events, the so far largest being the anti-war demonstration on February 15, 2003 (McFadden 2003). More recent accounts stress the importance of shared images and events in everyday life as such (Appadurai 1996, Klein 2001). Cultural transfers of media products significantly impact the construction collective identities, feelings of belonging, commonality and difference (Tubella 2004). Both trends have been reinforced through network technologies and their increasing multi-medialization.[216] The later has not just changed the kind of literacy needed to partake in global media events, but also more fully made these shared worlds present, not just cognitively but also emotionally.

Shared worlds and concerns create diverse, overlapping spaces of understanding. Common reference points spark solidarity, understanding, conflict and diversification. The experience of the globe as a whole, yet finite space, that is so eloquently expressed by the pictures astronauts took of the earth from moon, does not lead to a unification, a realization of the oneness of humankind in a moral sense. Yet, problems can no longer easily be externalized or portrayed as “somewhere else” (Melucci 1996: 154). Instead the internal differentiation of the finite space is reorganised with respect to shared reference points, creating an overlapping network of shared worlds, with different spatio-temporal configurations, to borrow Castells's term. Alternative means of identification are abundant, possible identities multiply and individuals negotiate different frames of reference not chronologically but simultaneously. In the first instance, this challenges the symbolic order of the modern world as individuals permanently engage in social practices negotiating these challenges, effectively transforming this order, as we will see later. It would be premature to claim the disappearance of affiliation along the lines of the nation, but it is not too early to realize that shared worlds are multiplying and, hence, people's social practices transcend the boundaries set by the

216 The outcomes of these trends blur the distinction between traditional and modern in unexpected ways. Saskia Sassen recalls the example of the traditional Muslim scholar who may be more apt and sophisticated in his use of electronic and network tools than the modern Muslim youth, or at least not less so, although the purposes and contents of the scholar's use may be not modern at all (Sassen: 2006: 348).

modern configuration of power in significant ways. In the second instance these developments challenge the skills of people and this is what I will turn to now.

5.1.3 Challenged individuals

The condition of connectedness challenges individuals in many ways to arrange their lives in light of real and imagined opportunities. More often than not this arrangement must be found between a wide variety of imagined potential and severely restricted achievable possibilities. The flexibilization of work processes through the rise of network cycles of innovation and production (Himanen/Castells 2004), the deterritorialization of social interaction and the increasing unpredictability of life paths might not be universally shared[217]. Yet, they are challenging Chinese migrant workers, African refugees, young urban professionals in financial centres around the world and many more every day. Reconciling perceived options with real opportunities is a cognitive and emotional challenge and, of course, not one that is new at all. What is new, however, is that this challenge is turned into an everyday effort, that must creatively and actively navigated by individuals (Butler 2007). Other opportunities are kept present, change is always imminent and the limits are global.

The flows of images and people around the world increasingly force even those who remain bound to their location to engage in cross-cultural encounters. Someone may live out her whole life in one place, but she is likely to come into contact with migrants, short term or long-term coming to her location, cultural artefacts such as books or TV shows and a world economy that shapes the material conditions of her existence. The need to encounter other worlds offers plenty of opportunity to learn, employ and deliberately train skills enhancing communication between different imagined worlds (Appadurai 1996: 32, Rosenau 2003: 236). On an individual level cross cultural encounters reveal collectively shared understandings, the cultural elements of individual behaviour. The disjunctures arising from cross-cultural encounters furthermore challenge individuals to rethink and question their own worlds (Montouri/Fahim 2004). Navigating between different frames of reference turns into an every day activity. Consequently, the imaginative and communicative skills of people enhance.

These processes are essentially social, driven by social practices of individuals. Yet, technology plays an important if ambivalent role. In addition to facilitating real-time communication independent of physical distance, communication technologies are also information technologies. They impact the way information is distributed, accessed and produced. As a consequence, information is now more readily accessible by many people and in fact abundant, however, not evenly distributed. While many still cannot gain access to important information, the information that is accessed becomes increasingly personalized. Personalization is not just an individual strategy in dealing with the sheer volume of abundant information, it is also a deliberate strategy employed by essential gatekeepers of the internet. Amazon suggests only books that are similar to what other similar customers have been

217Richard Sennett's *The Corrosion of Character* (1998) is still a most impressive description of the flexibilization of life worlds in late capitalism.

interested in. Newspapers show links to related articles and adds based on what has been read and so on. Carefully created “information cocoons” shape the perception of information and hence world views.[218] However, new forms of collaboration emerge and organize information into knowledge. Amazon's recommendations are based on automatically interpreted data matching user profiles to certain products. Travel portals offer customer reviews of locations and destinations. And finally and most prominently, even the creation of an encyclopedia has been put into the hands of the many in Wikipedia, with some surprising results[219]. Technology enables the collaborative organisation of information into knowledge.[220]

The consumption of this kind of collaboratively produced knowledge is different from taking in knowledge produced by experts. The former is not necessarily of lesser quality, but it requires a deliberate process of situating the knowledge in the process of its creation. Of course, this is not new either, but the possible ways the knowledge could have been produced have multiplied severely through the technological possibilities of collaboration. Hence, the process of reflecting the validity of information has become more complex. In analysing the validity of a Wikipedia-article, for example, it is not possible nor useful to look at the individual author, as has proven helpful when looking at books. Instead, the reader must look to the number of edits, the discussions on the development of the article, the linked pages and the given sources. The process of knowledge generation itself is becoming part of the body of knowledge.[221] While potentially making it easier and more likely that knowledge is questioned, deepened and corrected, the individual skills required for participating in the consumption and production of knowledge and information are considerably more complex.

Globalization offers many challenges and opportunities for people, not all (or even most) of which are related to productive, positive interaction. As social interaction happens, conflicts occur, especially because of the complexities of identity construction. In a kind of backlash to the dispersed and complex identities pushed by the diversification and connectedness of the world, particular identities become reaffirmed. These particularistic identities become the basis of new forms of violence, or what Mary Kaldor calls “new wars” (Kaldor 2006). However, the particularity of these identities is not arranged along strict territorial or even national frontiers. Rather, they are particularistic as ethnic or religious identities which are not defined primarily through their territorial designation. Kaldor argues, that these new wars are more about the influence on the cognitions and emotions of people. They play with the logic of contradictions and deliberately fuel differences, fear and hatred. Physical violence is

218 It is the difference between skipping over an article that is not of interest to you and not knowing that it exists.

219 Recent research, for example, has shown the quality of the articles to be relatively high (Rector 2008, Rosenzweig 2006). As a consequence, some printed encyclopaedias, such as the Encyclopedia Britannica have been discontinued and re-established as electronic media. The speed of knowledge adaptation has changed significantly (e.g. after the death of a famous person it usually takes no more than a few hours for the information to be entered into Wikipedia and the article text to be put in past tense).

220 An excellent treatment of these developments is Cass R. Sunstein's (2006) *Infotopia*, which looks at the promises and fallacies of these processes in some detail.

221 I treat these issues in more detail in a paper presented at the PSA Conference in 2010 entitled *Who owns knowledge?* (Höppner 2010b).

but one tool in this endeavour. The way violence is displayed and imagined is just as decisive. Violence becomes intricately linked to the condition of connectedness, as images and stories are transmitted and shape the collective imaginations of people (Strathern/Stewart 2006: 10). The consequences of violent action become visible and increasingly the actual exercise of violence as well. Physical violence is used to instil social uncertainty and mobilize ideological certainty (Appadurai 2006: 90). Fear is turned into the dominant feature of the way terrorist events are judged and understood (Strathern/Stewart 2006: 9, Klein 2007). Dealing with the repercussions of conflict and violence, hence, is a challenge to the emotional and communicative skills of people not just when they experience violence directly but also when confronted with it through media, migration and communication.

Rosenau coined the term "skill revolution" to capture the way individual capabilities are challenged and enhanced through the complex processes of globalization. Skills here do not refer to information or intelligence, but to the working knowledge people employ in order to discern patterns and base future judgements on previous experiences. It is the ability to develop analytical, emotional and imaginative skills on the basis of experience in order to relate oneself to an increasingly complex world. Indigenous people can turn activists, because they pick up on patterns of activism observable in the global flows which may touch them, as governments, media and aid agencies partake in their local realities. These kinds of skills are not primarily based on availability of information or an intimate understanding of complex processes. In fact, they are often based on incomplete information and misconceptions. The need to navigate complex processes and the many small contradictions globalizations produces, pressures individuals to discern workable patterns of dealing with them. (Rosenau 2003: 232-255). Surely, considerable differences in skill level remain. Yet, even at the lower levels skills increase (Rosenau 1990: 366). The skill revolution is a microlevel process, but not one that is restricted to elites only. It does not eliminate or even minimize differences, but improves the overall capabilities of people. In other words, the processes of globalization themselves produce the challenges for people which force them to use and employ their cognitive and emotional skills of imagination. People grow by being challenged.[222]

Throughout modern times, the nation-state provided a structure around which identities, allegiances and grievances could be organized productively. The technological, economic and social developments of the last decades have challenged this structure. Individuals experience a world which is only partially organized along territorial boundaries and characterized by interacting globalizing and localizing developments. The complexities of this current world have challenged individuals to develop diverse, partly contradictory micro-practices allowing them to navigate the world. These practices, however, find the political order of the nation state to be only one reference point and not the dominant focus. The changing nature of the state, therefore, is significant not because the state

222It is very difficult, but not impossible to find statistical evidence of this skill revolution, the main problem being the provision of reliable comparative data across time and regions. For some empirical observations see Rosenau 2003: 251ff.

disappears but because it becomes de-centred, making room for other forms. They emerge from the changed practices of people, which are derived from working knowledge, the practically oriented recognition of patterns that helps to solve problems and make decisions in a complex world. Individuals are put in a position to question existing orders and actively develop alternatives. While throughout modernity the opportunities for most individuals to engage in collective imaginative activities were limited by slow and controlled communications and a segregation of life worlds, now both communication and exposure to different life worlds are much more readily available. The opportunities for the emergence of intransitive power have never been better. But, they remain opportunities only, so long as people do not use them.

5.1.4 Globalization and the modern configuration of power

The modern configuration of power provided order by cognitively and empirically distinguishing two domains of human interaction – inside and outside of states. The fixed connection between transitive and intransitive power served as a focal point, mediating social practices and channelling concerns, grievances and imaginations. Notwithstanding the frequent regional exceptions to this rule and the parallel existence of non-mediated transnational interaction, this was the dominant understanding of human community and other forms were only ever recognized as deviations from the rule. Processes of globalization challenge this modern configuration in a myriad of ways: by increasing connectedness and changing communication, by making symbolically present the fact that we live in shared worlds, by providing ample opportunities to share cultural repertoires and confront differing interpretations and life-styles and, finally, by engaging people in activities challenging their cognitive and imaginative skills and providing technologies that make new forms of cooperation and conflict accessible. Most significantly, however, changes in degree in all of these areas have challenged the dominant imagination of order. The result is a certain confusion, unease and sometimes fear. Those looking for the continued importance of the modern order find evidence, just as those claiming their demise.

The problem lies in the ambivalence of the dynamics of globalization. They unite and divide, restrict and empower, reaffirm inequalities and challenge them, make people more skilled and keep them captured in webs of artificial, commercialized worlds. The use of communication technologies, for example, displays this ambivalence impressively: there is nothing inherent in the process of ever increasing connectedness which implies that action develops or in consequence leads to morally superior ends. Right wing extremists may use the internet to collaborate on the best strategies to purify their societies. Non-governmental organizations may coordinate their activities to push governments to act in accordance with human rights. Organized crime can rely on more anonymous means of communication to cover their tracks. Protesters in authoritarian countries can use social networks to coordinate their activities. Multinational corporations may use the shared life worlds of individuals to replace local products with globalized ones, effectively diminishing diversity. Small actors may publicize previously secret information on misbehaviour of governments. Private corporations may

restrict the kinds of information accessible by internet users. Governments use personal information available on the internet to prosecute dissidents Communication technologies make us more free and enable more effective oppression and exploitation. This ambivalence, at this point, seems the most striking difference to the, maybe seemingly, more predictable and normatively framed modern configuration.

In arguing that the conditions for the emergence of intransitive power have never been better, as connectedness and cognitive and imaginative skills are increasing, it is paramount to emphasize that this is but one possibility. Just because a communication tool can be used to organize protests against injustices does not mean it will. Just because people encounter disjunctures between their life worlds and others, does not mean they will question their own position or change their behaviour. Processes of globalization makes these things possible, but cannot force them. Nothing inherent in the dynamics of globalization necessitates a positive outcome. Opportunities are just that, opportunities. Furthermore, the possibility to use these opportunities is available to many more but by no means all people. Literacy and communication skills are proliferating, accessibility to new media is better than ever before and permanently increasing at a dazzling rate, but neither is universal. In light of these ambivalences it seems prudent to do two things when exploring the adequacy of the two-dimensional concept of power and illustrating the re-emerging importance of intransitive power. The following section will trace emergent patterns of intransitive power, in order to show what is to be gained from the two dimensional concept of power. The final section of this chapter engages with the more complex question which patterns of order might result, i.e. how intransitive power relates to other forms of order in a globalizing world. This will help to put incidents of intransitive power into perspective.

5.2. Tracing emergent patterns of power

Intransitive power may be ellusive, because of its self-referential and transient character, but that does not mean it is undetectable. It is possible to look for instances in which people engage in communication and action and employ their collective skills of imagination in ways which actively seek to shape their world and which are creating symbolically represented spaces of interaction. This sections depicts such instances systematically along the lines of the three elements of intransitive power – communication and action, symbolic representation and the collective employment of skills of imagination – and not in the form of separate case descriptions. The purpose therewith is to trace the more empirical appearances of each of the three elements of intransitive power. This structure is also an appropriate way of reducing the surprising complexity of the globalizing world providing the specific advantage of revealing instances of intransitive power.[223]

I will draw on two issue areas, which intuitively raise the question of a possible emergence of intransitive power. Firstly, my description of the modern configuration of power has shown, that

223It requires, however, a presentation of these instances that brings examples and then returns to them at a later point. A certain amount of "jumping around" is unavoidable.

intransitive power has a essentially founding quality, which is most apparent in the establishment of a fixed connection between intransitive and transitive power, such as in the state. Some of the literature I draw on is therefore concerned with regions where the state is not or only partially present, where the founding, in other words, might be happening. This is interesting for two reasons. On the one hand, it might give some indication of the ways in which, empirically, intransitive power produces transitive power. On the other hand, since most of these areas are characterized by violence, further insights can be gained on the ambivalent relationship between intransitive power and violence. The instances selected here illustrate how intransitive emerges and which shapes it might take in areas not defined by the modern configuration of power. They do not look at spaces where power is entirely absent.[224] Secondly, I will draw on literature focusing on social movements, global resistance to globalization and the new relevance of non-governmental organisations.[225] This is partly because it is here that the emergence of intransitive power has been claimed most often,[226] even if implicitly, in notions of a global civil society etc. It is also because these movements transcend the boundaries of the state yet interact with it frequently. That will enable me to indicate how intransitive and transitive power are related under conditions of globalization. Finally, as my treatment of the ambivalent nature of globalization has reaffirmed, both dimensions of power are intricately related because they entail the fragmenting/localizing and integrating/globalizing tendencies of the world. They are result of the same underlying developments and therefore different symptoms of the same process.

This section is structured around the three elements of intransitive power: communication and action, symbolic representation and the skill of imagination. I will locate instances of each of the three and indicate how their contemporary practice differs from their arrangement in the modern configuration of power. Empirical studies relating to these issues are abundant, even if their analyses are not usually structured around the three elements which are in focus here. Interestingly, the empirical instances that I will present are intricately related and therefore it makes little sense to present them as separate cases. Global social movements draw on the experiences and images of the Zapatistas, local community building practices relate to global networks on social movement communication and the creation of local spaces of power is entangled with the diasporic communities that belong to it. This more systematic approach comes at the expense of more elaborate histories of

224 Intransitive power is not a zero-sum game, therefore, in theory, it is quite possible that there is no power at all, at least theoretically. Totalitarian systems, for example, are characterized by distinct absence of intransitive power. This does obviously not imply that there is no restrictions or structurations. I argue, however, that it is more helpful to think of these as different kinds of order.

225 These elements have often been summarized under the heading of global civil society, under which a large body of literature has emerged over the last years. I avoid the term, although I do reference some of the texts, for two reasons. Firstly, it is normatively charged and invokes certain ideals (Kaldor 2003: 27, Kenny 2003), which go beyond what I argue the concept of intransitive power shall entail. The normative questions deserve a more thorough treatment than could be given to them here. Secondly, the concept of civil society, as has been argued in chapter four, is state-centred in that it opposes civil society to established political institutions. Although one might argue that such a counterpoint indeed exists at the global level, I wish to avoid the implicit definition of politics.

226 The increased power emphasize Mathews 1997, Stammers 1999, Cohen/Rai 2000, Meyer et al 2002, Kaldor 2003. For a critical view see Laxer/Halperin 2003.

each of the instances described. The great merit of this approach, however, lies in the increased importance it places on identifying intransitive power.

5.2.1 Communication and action

Communication and action are the first central element of intransitive power. In the modern configuration of power they were aligned along the territorial boundaries of states. These borders represented technical and cultural obstacles to interpersonal communication. State boundaries generally correlated with language boundaries and borders in communication infrastructures. Surely, these boundaries were neither unbridgeable, nor did state borders represent the only such limits. Yet, communication across state boundaries was largely limited to those who could obtain the intellectual, cultural and technological means to do so. Obtaining these means has become much easier over the last decades. Modern communication technologies enable not just one-to-many communications, such as television or radio, but also many-to-many communications such as in social networks and even the collaborative creation of knowledge such as in wikis. Furthermore, time and cost of travel over great distances have, yet again, decreased considerably over the last decades facilitating personal encounters. The ability to participate in these structures is not bound to a specific place but to a connection to the network and the means to use it. Language barriers persist, but they no longer coincide with state boundaries. The digital divide between those who have the means and abilities to participate in communication based on digital technologies and those that do not participate in these communicative structures begins to replace the distance created by territory and hence territorial boundaries.[227] Enhanced means of transportation make physical relocation available to more people, even if many remain excluded because of the still relatively firm grip of the state on migration issues.[228] Transportation, information and communication technologies, in other words, have yet again fundamentally altered the collective action environment of individuals and collectivities, facilitating faster, more reliable communication and making collective action on different geographical scales easier to achieve (Friedland/Rogerson 2009). Although technologies have not created social movements, global social movements would be unthinkable without these technologies.

In this section I will look at different aspects of communication and action. I begin by focusing on the role and incidence of communication as such, before turning towards the ways in which it is connected to action and local, everyday practices. I will suggest then ways in which these practices create shared collective spaces and will assess the importance of a sense of ownership and self-efficacy in these communicative practices. A complex picture of communicative interaction emerges from these observations, shedding light on the way spaces of power develop. The following sections explore

227 This digital divide is not territorially and only in part economically defined and hence rearranges the relationship between included and excluded to some extent. Who is included depends on access and that is available to those with economic means and those who find imaginative solutions. Innovative uses of communication technologies are only available to those with imaginative skills.

228 The prevalence of illegal immigration and refugee movements reveals, that the control is more porous then states would like, but it is still very decisive (Troulliot 2003: 79f)

thereafter how these communicative practices connect to symbolic representation and the exercise of collective imaginative skills.

It seems warranted to start these observations with the emergence of global social movements. The historical origins of such movements lie in the cooperation of national social movements and emerging transnational NGO's from the 1970ies onward.[229] At this time NGO participation in UN World Conferences on global issues, such as population, environment and women, commenced on a regular basis.[230] The focus of these conferences was on reaching agreements between governments, but NGO's were involved in the preparatory processes as well as the conferences themselves. Over time, both, the number of NGO's involved and their degree of involvement in the debates on the issues at hand increased significantly (Clark et al 1998: 8f). The 1992 Earth Summit in Rio marked an important turning point in this development. NGO's participating in the parallel NGO meeting demanded to be included in the government negotiations and succeeded – the summit ended with a declaration jointly prepared by NGO's and government officials. This "power shift" (Mathews 1997) is indicative of the lobbying strategy which has formed an important part of NGO activity. NGO's hereby seek to influence governments and change policies through information and public pressuring (Clark et al 1998: 13-19). They are attempting to channel their demands through the modern configuration of power. In these activities transnational and international NGO's are interesting variations to the national civil societies but remain bound by the sovereign limits imposed upon them by states (Clark et al 1998: 35). In addition, the overall ability of NGO's to achieve policy changes has remained limited. Following a period of euphoria in the 1990s the outlook on the effective influence of global civil society has become somewhat dimmed (Stammers 1999, Ayres 2003). While their action is important, NGO's cannot "push governments" around (Mathews 1997: 53).[231]

The second strategy associated with the NGO meetings at these UN conferences is pursued in parallel by participants and has quite different goals. Networking, as Clark et al call it, is not aimed at influencing governments but at cooperation between NGO's (Clark et al 1998: 19-21). Especially Southern NGO's used these opportunities to engage in communication with each other, exchange experiences and forge alliances. Rather than achieving common interests, however, these communications contributed first and foremost to a perception of commonality, the development of shared understandings and discourses, that did not rely on shared interests in any immediate sense. NGO's continued to disagree on substantive issues but increasingly did so in a context of intense interaction that placed value on their interrelationship as such (Clark et al 1998: 34).[232]

229 The literature on NGO's and social movements is huge and I will only present a selection here. For an excellent overview see Edelman 2001.

230 The participation of civic associations as such, however, goes back to the foundation of the United Nations (J. Smith 2004: 6).

231 Recent research on Social movements and NGO's hence focuses on their ability to shape the rules and norms under which agreements are negotiated (e.g. Keck/Sikkink 1998, Risse et al 1999)

232 Both strategies, lobbying and networking, are described as "mutually interdependent, though not always harmonious" (Clark et al 1998: 12) and in fact there is some tension between the two. While Southern NGO's tended to use the opportunity to share experience and ideas, it was to a large part the Northern

Communicating with each other, exchanging experiences and getting to know other people's views and problems emerge as important tools of empowerment and their value is not primarily in alliances forged against opponents (Della Porta/Tarrow 2005: 9, Stammers 1999: 83-88). The value of these conferences and other international events with similar accompanying meetings for the networking NGO's, in other words, lay in the opportunity to create spaces for common action and experience intransitive power.

This kind of self-referential activity has become a major element of social movement activity. Social movements are more heavily based on communication between the actors than on material successes achieved. Recent literature on the subject acknowledges this peculiarity by focusing on the role of social movements in communicatively navigating a multiplicity of identities and viewpoints (Edelman 2001: 301, Montagna 2010: 639, Farro 2004, Sassen 2004: 653).[233] Global social movements are not converging into one movement but exist as a "movement of movements" (Della Porta 2005: 180). This kind of communicative network appears incomplete in light of the modern configuration of power, which is based on the centralization of intransitive power in one entity exerting transitive power within a defined territory. The purpose of this communicative network, however, is a different one. By sustaining the differences between actors it enables the articulation of specificity while allowing the formation of common spaces of communication (Farro 2004: 637). Plurality is the key ingredient of contemporary social movements.[234] Social movements, then, are defined and held together not by common goals in a strict sense but by a common interpretation of reality, their ability and willingness to protest and the informal networks on which they are based (Della Porta et al 2006: 18-20).

A limited perception of power as "only" transitive power obstructs the importance of this self-referential dimension of social movement activity. Narrowing the concept of power to transitive

NGO's that focused on 'results', i.e. lobbying. The Lobbyists saw activities among NGO's merely as a means to the end of increasing their lobbying power. Therefore, they considered a sole focus on networking as a potential threat to the role and weight of the NGO's in the negotiating process. The networkers on the other hand "justified these alliances as ends in themselves" (Clark et al 1998: 13). Lobbying remains an important and influential repertoire of social movements. It is, I believe, not central to the emergence of intransitive power. Also, it has been treated prominently elsewhere (e.g. Keck/Sikkink 1998) and will therefore not be explored in more detail.

233I will return to this point in more detail in 5.2.3.

234In social movement literature there is a distinct bias on good movements, which means that the others, such as right wing or fundamentalist movements are under-researched (Edelman 2001: 302). This results, partly, from the specific interests of researchers. However, it may also be indicative of some intuitive differences between different kinds of movements. The rigid ideological structure of such 'other' movements makes it less likely that they develop the kind of communication and action that is indicative of intransitive power. In my argument it is therefore reasonable to leave them out, although their study would enrich social movement literature. It shall be noted, however, that social movements are only one kind of non-state actor and that global politics is also heavily influenced by other sorts of actors such as transnational corporations (Strange 1996) and business associations (Coleman/Wayland 2005). Normally, these pursue interests and are not engaged in world making as the communicative, imaginative practice that is intransitive power. They are, therefore, also not looked at here. It must be concluded that, of course, not all non-state actors are engaged in intransitive power, although none can be excluded on the basis of their institutional structure alone.

power creates a misleading contradiction between the intuitive perception of social movements as powerful actors and their limited ability to "push around" governments (Mathews 1997). Social movements appear powerful because they communicatively (and symbolically) actualize intransitive power, creating spaces of solidarity between people based on communicative interactions. This power begins with a "collective withdrawal of consent to established institutions" (Brecher et al 2000: 21), the understanding, in other words, that the power of the established, criticized institutions relies on the compliance of those subjected to their rules. This in and by itself reveals the powerlessness of these established institutions, but only through the 'Lilliput strategy' is this realization subsequently turned into intransitive power:

> In response to globalization from above, movements are emerging all over the world in social locations that are marginal to dominant power centres. These are linking up by means of networks that cut across national borders. They are beginning to develop a sense of solidarity, a common belief system, and a common program. They are utilizing these networks to impose new norms on corporations, governments and international institutions. (Brecher et al 2000: 26)

The activities of social movements are not primarily about control over the structures from which consent is withdrawn, but about building spaces in which alternative forms may be developed, communicated and transmitted from one place to the other. The strength of social movements is not their agreement on a common course but the way contradictions are handled. The arguments around what the movement should, could or will be are integral to the formation of 'the movement' and keep it growing, despite frequent failure to influence government policy. Social movements exert pressure on other actors by representing lived alternatives and realizing concrete solutions rather than through any coercive means.[235] They have a kind of power that realizes alternatives and creates new spaces, even if they lack the ability to force other to do something they would not otherwise have done.

Global social movements represent a sphere of difference. Their agreements all too often can boiled down to the identification of a common enemy in the form of corporate globalization. But even this rather vague and negative agreement remains fragile. Exactly what constitutes such globalization in a specific instance is contested among activists and so are the strategies that should be employed. Taking power – transitive power that is - is not the central concern of social movement activists, they

235Intransitive power is not identical to the kind of communicative power that deliberative democracy envisions. As as consequence, the distinction between weak and strong publics (Brunkhorst 2002), for example, does not prove helpful in understanding social movements as spaces of intransitive power. Any public requires as a precondition minimal "constitutionalist" features. Intransitive power is based on the more fragile combination of natality and plurality, the being unique in the world with others (see chapter 2.3.). Unlikely as it may seem, intransitive power creates equality between fundamentally unequal unique human beings in the process of its exercise, it does not require rights as a precondition. In the case of the Egyptian revolution of 2011, for example, The common action decreased inequalities between men and women to an extend that was quite unexpected (Bohn/Lynch 2011). While it remains to be seen what becomes of this in the long run, The effect itself, unintended and emotionally transforming as it was, remains quite remarkable and may well be the hardest to explain peculiarity of intransitive power. The presumption, which it must remain for now, that intransitive power is the condition for equal communication and not its precondition could be empirically tested, by looking at radical emergences of intransitive power and evaluating what happened to previously relevant inequalities within the group in the process of power.

do not want to take over government, although questioning structures of oppression and government is at the heart of their activities. Instead, many movements seek change from below, through the imaginative construction of possible lives and liveable alternatives (Della Porta et al 2006: 213-215). It is noteworthy, that this is perceived as a highly emotional kind of activity, instilling a sense of self-efficacy, relevance and meaning. Making society is an "exhilarating" activity (Della Porta et al 2006: 215). Communication here is not deliberation. The development of shared strategies and goals is only one possible by-product of processes of exchange of individual experiences. Rather, communication is a tool for identity construction, not of exclusive, but of "tolerant identities", which emphasize diversity and cross-fertilization and provide limited identification (Della Porta 2005: 186). Through the exchange of individual experiences, problems and solutions, participants compile these particulars into a shared vision of global developments. Global social movements are based, in other words, not on shared but on related understandings and identities and maintained through continuing communication.

Political activism as in social movements is not a precondition for meaningful communication about the future of communities. Such meaningful communication may also emerge from more identity-based discourses. Diasporic communities of migrants, for example, also engage in the kind of communication constituting intransitive power, when they reconstruct not just their identities as migrants but also shared action. Technologies play an important facilitating role here: "Global communications have made it that much easier for a people to sustain its sense of national solidarity while being dispersed across the planet" (Scholte 1996: 588). Again, the negotiated identities are multiple and flexible (Scholte 1996: 597). Online communities, which form an important communicative space for instance for the Eritrean diaspora, are used not just to reaffirm identification with the country of origin, but also to discuss future developments, necessary changes and possible avenues for action. The nation is turned into a communicative space which does not have to coincide with its (symbolic) presence in real space (Bernal 2006). Virtual communities may provide spaces not only in which information is exchanged but also in which individuals debate the future of their national state. Migrants may remain active participants in the public affairs of their nations, as well as turn into active participants in the affairs of their host countries. There is no exclusive space for migrant activism, but it extends to host as well as home countries (Nagel/Staeheli 2010). Members of diasporic communities mediate communicatively between different identities. This happens not just as a private activity, but also in ways that seek to actively shape the shared world. The limits between what once used to be called "virtual space" and "real space", between technology-mediated communication and face-to-face interaction blur, as they grow mutually dependent. Migrant communities illustrate most clearly, that it is the condition of connectedness which matters, more than the media which are used to connect (Nagel/Staeheli 2010: 276). In terms of intransitive power, this implies that communication technologies such as forums, social networks and other platforms do not necessitate particular uses, let alone power. However, in these technologies social practices find useful vehicles along which to express themselves. Similarly, indigenous people have harnessed the opportunities of communication

technologies to organize, inform and act against much stronger actors protecting their rights and traditions (Havemann 2000)

The emergence of intransitive power depends on the ability of individuals to communicate effectively, which involves the transmission of viewpoints, effective debate and also organisational support. The possibilities to engage in that kind of grassroots or mass-one-to-one communication have improved dramatically over the last two decades and social movements of all kinds have capitalized on these opportunities. The first noteworthy use of emerging technologies occurred very early on in the context of the Zapatista uprising in Mexico, that first drew international attention in the context of an armed uprising in January 1994. Indigenous activists in the Mexican region of Chiapas, organized in the Ejército Zapatista de Liberación Nacional (EZLN), which thought to end the marginalization of the indigenous inhabitants of Chiapas. The uprising began as an armed campaign against the Mexican state like many other Latin American uprisings before but was appeased through negotiations after only days. Building on a very particular understanding of political power (Holloway 2002) the EZLN turned to non-violent, discursive means of struggle for indigenous rights and development. They explicitly abandoned the idea of overthrowing the Mexican government and replacing it with one of their own in favour of changing the nature of power itself (Holloway 2002).

The turn toward non-violent action is remarkable all by itself. Even more remarkable is the new strategy in terms of political communication introduced by the Zapatistas.[236] In what some call the "Zapatista effect" (Cleaver 1998), the internet was used right from the beginning in 1994 to engage wider global audiences in the local struggle. Although the indigenous people themselves largely had no access to these means of communication, texts and statements from the jungle were systematically distributed to global outlets via listservs and e-mail and soon received considerable attention in the emerging global social movements. Their specific rhetorical structure, which aimed to situate the local struggle within a global struggle for justice and against neo-liberalism, contributed greatly to this reception. Rather than focusing on a concrete set of demands the Zapatista rhetoric made the activity of world-making their most decisive demand. Consequently, in 1996 global visitors were invited to the Lacondan jungle and participated in "Encuentros of the Zapatistas People with the People of the World", in which the commonalities of the diverse struggles were debated.[237]

Negotiations of the Zapatistas with the Mexican government began in 1994 and continued over a period of several years, repeatedly interrupted by violent but failed attempts of the Mexican army to retake the rebel-controlled territories. Negotiations resulted in some constitutional changes, but no significant improvement of the situation of the indigenous people. Meanwhile, the Zapatistas began to build their own communities, effectively implementing their demands without approval or help from the government. Autonomous municipalities that are essentially self-governed were created, actively

236I will focus on the ideas contained in these political communications in more detail in 5.2.3.

237Two years later, as a result of further meetings, the People's Global Action network was formed, which is build on the principles of decentralization and autonomy (Maiba 2005: 49ff), i.e. which follows similar principles as the World Social Forum, which I will discuss later in this chapter.

seeking to improve the situation of the indigenous people. At the same time global communication still forms an important part of Zapatista activity. It has proven to be one of the most inspiring movements, achieving somewhat of a mythical status. Their ability to blend long-distance communication using new media and face-to-face interaction almost seamlessly has contributed greatly to this impact.[238]

The early use of effective network communication by the Zapatistas has encouraged the use of technology for political activism globally. It has furthermore shown the potential of information and communication technologies to enable "a politics of places on global networks" (Sassen 2004: 650). Local actors contribute to the creation of global spheres, and local struggles are communicatively related to global developments. Even remote communities can participate in the global networks of communication and become part of global movements. The successful application of these technologies is not, however, without preconditions. Firstly, the physical, infrastructural conditions need to be created, which involves making available hard- and software. Many NGO's have focused on the provision of such infrastructure and the spread particularly of mobile technologies has further enlarged the trend toward connectedness even in remote and disadvantaged parts of the world (Etzo/Collender 2010). Secondly, information and communication technologies can help to expand and improve existing social relations, but where no social networks exist technology alone cannot create them (Sassen 2004: 650, Loudon 2010: 1090f). Technology does not make for meaningful communication only practices do, but practices can be made more rewarding, effective and relevant through the availability of technology.

For the global social movement of movements the protests against the G8 meeting 1999 in Seattle were the first event which systematically developed new communication tools as instruments of resistance (Smith 2002: 220). E-mail lists were used extensively in coordinating activities and mobilising activists, but the internet also played an important role in disseminating information and enabling the education of activists and populations in preparation for the protests. These educational efforts were undertaken for the first time by the movement and contributed greatly to the support the movement got during the event and after (Smith 2002: 215). During the meeting itself communication technology enhanced flows of information between the formal negotiations and the popular protests, as activists participating in the official meetings could inform activists and protesters in real time about the goings-on, essentially undermining the secrecy of government negotiations (Scholte 2000: 118).[239] This use of communication as a tool for knowledge production and information dissemination has formed an important part of the repository of social movements ever since. NGO's such as Focus on

238The struggle of the Zapatistas is a much discussed, often idealized and certainly ambivalent example. For a history of the struggle see Alex Khasnabish's *Zapatistas. Rebellion from the Grassroots to the Global* (2010) and for the international repercussions his *Zapatismo Beyond Borders* (2008). Both are based on extensive field research in the region and although not overly critical among the most soundly empirically founded studies on the subject. See also Zimmering 2010.

239The meeting was subsequently ended early, because of the on-going protests and the resulting security risks. However, the failure of the governments to reach agreement on the issues to be discussed cannot be attributed to the protests alone. Disagreements were large and failure of the negotiations was likely before the meeting began (Kaiser/Burgess 1999).

the Global South have deliberately turned towards the provision of knowledge about and scientific research on the Global South to and, most importantly, from the region (Bello 2002: 75). Knowledge production has turned into an essential part of political activist communications.

Communication has become a driver of political activism and is not restricted to the dissemination of viewpoints and interpretations. Surely, communicating, educating and debating within movements has been part of their activities ever since they emerged in national civil societies. Technologies, however, have not just increased the amount of such communication, but brought a qualitative change by enabling communication and exchange at the grass-roots and in real-time. These opportunities, and this is what matters most to intransitive power, are deliberately and continuously used to enable the kind of meaningful debate which is central to developing power (e.g. Ishani 2011). In a similar vain we can understand the Zapatista notion of "Asking, we walk" as a re-iteration of the need to engage in a continuous process of communication. It refers to the notion that the definition and redefinition of where to go and what the goals of the revolution are, is an integral part of the revolutionary process itself. The purpose of the revolution, in other words, is to engage in an ongoing process of debate about the purposes, rules and limits of community. This is the defining property of this kind of revolution (Holloway 2002: 248).

One conclusion from the protests of Seattle was, that global social movements needed to find a way to make their collaboration an on-going project, too. In an almost spontaneous manner the idea of a World Social Forum (WSF) emerged, which would function as a meeting place for the different parts of the emerging movement (Cassen 2003: 49). It was "the right idea at the right time" (P. Smith 2004: 4). Since 2001 Forums have been held in Porto Alegre (Brazil), Mumbai (India), Nairobi (Kenya), Dakar (Senegal) and decentralized around the world, attended by thousands of activists and complemented by regional forums that reach down to the local levels. The forums bring together a variety of actors, including some from established institutions and prominent intellectuals in particular from the Global North. The forums are deliberately created as spaces in which exchange can happen between different activists sharing concerns about developments most often summed up under the buzz-word "neo-liberal globalization". In terms of impact these meetings have certainly raised awareness of the variety of movements, but no meeting has ended with a common declaration, the publication of shared demands or even substantial agreement on the adequate future course of "the" anti-globalization movement. In particular the lack of such agreement has lead to criticisms from more seasoned activists, especially from the Global North, as in their view the movement thus fails to address global power structures directly (Marcuse 2005). Clearly, the World Social Forums are not turning into a movement or a unified effort to overthrow neo-liberal globalization.

Instead, the World Social Forum is deliberately realized as an arena, an open space in which through gatherings and meetings communicative exchange happens despite the manifold conflicts that exist between activists (Bello 2002: 81). The organizers of the forums see the possible transformation into a unified movement as a danger rather than and advantage (Whitaker 2007: 71). The Forum, it is

argued, must not develop the one alternative world, but provide a space in which the variety of alternative worlds, the diversity of needs, beliefs and struggles can be realized. It is an arena, not a movement. Whitaker emphasizes, that, if the Forum took over responsibility for building the new world envisioned, it would take away the responsibility for building it from the people and turn the variety of worlds debated over and struggled for into a specific world – re-making the mistake of past movements (Whitaker 2007: 84). The World Social Forums, in other words, grew from the realization, that communication as such is important, that it is relevant in its own right and that plurality must be preserved in order to realize the full creative potential of the people. This, of course, mirrors the Arendtian claim that power is always and end in itself, not because it does not achieve ends, but because it is not defined through them.[240] Intransitive power does not seek to overthrow the "power structures" of the world, but instead develops as an alternative of its own. The World Social Forum is not simply a pressure group demanding a different world, but rather a glimpse at what that world may be. The strength of the forums lies in living the alternative and not in propagating it. Acknowledging difference and communicating alternative lifestyles and values are its common practices.

Of course, that alternative is not global, but only realized temporarily and locally. It is also far from perfect. Although the meetings are located in the Global South, most participants come from the Global North. The economic inequalities that matter in other areas of the global political sphere favouring the resource rich northern NGO's also work on the WSF (Hardt 2002: 112). This leads to a perpetuation of structures in which the 'disadvantaged' continue to be spoken for, rather than speak for themselves. Mechanisms of involuntary representation emerge and perpetuate inequalities (Naidoo 2010). This imports a problem which was recognized early on for NGO participation in international negotiations and more generally the idea of a Global Civil Society, namely the democratic deficit resulting from the representative nature of these activities (Brunnengräber 1998, Scholte 2000: 119). NGO's claim to represent certain interests, but often those whose interests are represented have little say in how and by whom this representation occurs. Equally, at the WSF there remains a tendency to speak for others, who cannot or will not speak for themselves. The way conflicts over these issues are incorporated into the process itself, however, is quite interesting. The conflicts are raised in the issue centred debates, they are expressed in protests and informal workshops and voiced by activists in-between meetings. Similarly, issues of efficiency of organisation and transparency are debated (Teivainen 2002: 625). These self-reflections, it seems, are an integral part of the forum process itself. Rather than destroying it, they have reaffirmed the WSF as an arena rather than a movement and kept it alive as a space of interchange, debate and learning. Or, as Kaufman (2005) argues, turned the WSF into a continuous networked process of recreation of the shared world and reinvented political activity as the constant remixing and resending of information and experience, letting it be remixed and remixing it again.

The chaotic and pluralist nature of the World Social Forum overshadows the manifold ways in which it allows communication to be turned into action. While it is true that the "no!" to what the

240This is treated in more detail in 2.2.

activists see as neo-liberal globalization provides the starting point, it is not the end of the story. However, action does not take the from of a unified effort to establish a new system, but is expressed through various localized and networked practices. Uniting around the "Yes!'s" (Kaufman 2005, Teivainen 2002) is a motley affair aimed at creating other worlds, rather than a specific utopia. The most immediate of these practices is the practice of horizontal knowledge sharing which is achieved through the communication itself (P. Smith 2004: 17). In sharing experiences with others, activists defy the notion that good ideas must be capitalized on. Essentially, this follows the logic that it is good if other people can learn from my successes and mistakes rather than the logic of marketization, which dictates that the worth of an idea or practice is determined by its exclusivity. Such "free culture practices" are present not just in the realm of NGO-activities, which might be seen as morally charged, but also, for example, in the highly commercialized area of software development (Kaufman 2005). Rather than challenging the systematic logic of the dominant ideology front-on, such practices develop parallel worlds, which thrive on the participation of people and the perpetuation and extension of their logics through action.[241] But knowledge sharing is only the beginning. Social movement activists increasingly realize the importance of local, everyday practices in maintaining and consequently questioning established institutions of any kind - "power is not the command of those at the top, but the acquiescence of those on the bottom" (Brecher et al 2000: 23). Consequently it is the "collective withdrawal of consent" from globalization from above (Brecher et al 2000: 21), which marks the activities of the anti-globalization movement.

This is also apparent in recent reflections on the nature of resistance against neo-liberal globalization. John Holloway, in his radical notion of changing the world without taking power, emphasizes the role of action over speech in changing the world, action always potentially transcending the existing reality (Holloway 2002: 36f).[242] Holloway terms the human ability inherent in the continuous flow of action, which creates our reality, "creative power" (Holloway 2002: 56)[243]. This power to consciously create and shape reality, makes it possible to change the world without taking power. Its strength lies in action that refuses to follow predefined patterns, but seeks to establish such patterns itself. To Holloway the Zapatista practice of "Asking, we walk" is an excellent example of such power. Rather than defining the goals to be achieved, the Zapatistas make the continuous re-evaluation and appropriation of the goals by those who seek to achieve them the anchor point of

241 Such logics are, for example, apparent in open source and free software development (Raymond 2001). Clearly, something like Wikipedia should not exist according to dominant logic of knowledge sharing – neither as a structure nor in content. It is maintained by people employing different logics and values despite the world.

242 Interestingly, he draws on Marx's anthropology, which in his interpretation incorporates the ability to exercise imagination and think beyond the perceived reality (Holloway 2002: 36f). His ensuing analysis engages more deeply with the way Marxist thought can contribute contemporary debates.

243 In this context Holloway references Michael Hardt and Antonio Negri who have contributed to recent debates on globalization the remarkable "trilogy" *Empire* (2001), *Multitude* (2004) and *Commonwealth* (2009). Their ideas resonate not just with John Holloway's depiction, but also with the concept proposed here. The implications are left out, because the analytic purpose pursued here does not require a detailed treatment of their remarkable yet controversial ideas.

their struggle. Rather than demanding indigenous rights, the Zapatista movement seeks to negotiate the identity of the indigenous and the Mexican, blurring their relationship and multiplying the possible identifications for individuals (Martín 2004).

An excellent example is the incorporation of women into the Zapatista movement, which was based on their discursive recognition through the Zapatista's Revolutionary Women's Law announced in 1994. This declaration explicitly stated that women should have equal rights, receive recognition for their contribution to the community and participate in democratic decision-making, as well as suggesting deliberate collective action implementing different practices (Harvey/Halverson 2000: 159ff). However, this in itself did not change the situation of women significantly. Following the declaration, indigenous women in Chiapas began changing their life by slowly engaging in different practices such as the participation in cooperatives, improving their participation in economic processes, and the reorganisation of communities at the local level and within the movement, challenging the male dominance in the political arena. These practices, more so than the pure acknowledgement of women's rights, challenged traditional ideas of gender divisions and the role of women. Indigenous women brought new elements to the discourse through their active practices (Harvey/Halverson 2000: 162f). It is one of the major strengths of Zapatista discourse, that it provides "numerous ways in which indigenous men, women and children are able to appropriate it for their particular and shared struggles against injustice" (Harvey/Halverson 2000: 163). The communicative practices of the Zapatistas, which focus on the process of change rather than the achievement of particular demands, allow people to perceive the communicative process of developing alternatives in a continuum with the everyday practices that bring the alternative about. They are not separate things, but deeply connected.

Alex Khasnabish notes, that the questioning of the communicability of the Zapatista struggle by prominent commentators such as Antonio Negri and Michael Hardt (Khasnabish 2004:10f), fails to appreciate the inspiration resulting from the "hope, creativity, imagination, poetry, dialogue, and space" which their struggle created (Krishna 2004: 12). The new world of the Zapatistas remained communicable, because it was not predefined but open to many and always in the making (Khasnabish 2004: 14). The Zapatista's "historical subject" is the struggle for dignity itself (Krishna 2007: 522). It is, in other words, precisely the lack of specific aims, negotiable demands and identifiable "ordered" means of reforming the system, that mobilizes people for the struggle of the Zapatistas and encourages people around the world to relate their own struggles to the diverse local struggles in other places.[244] While the commonality of goals might have been the strength of social movements throughout modernity, when the world was organized around focal points toward which these goals could be directed, the strength of current movements lies in the ability to provide interconnections between very different kinds of worlds and to find ways of communicating and navigating the contradictions and tensions that arise. Success, if defined by achieved goals, then, is

244 Alex Khasnabish (2010, 2008) focuses his research on the inspiration of the Zapatista movement for the movements in particular in North America.

minimal. Changes in self-perception, everyday practices and the unreflected perpetuation of injustices through everyday practices and effective circumstances of life are quite apparent, though. In localized practices power is expressed through the deliberate incorporation of different logics into everyday practices, a form of resistance which develops alternatives without directly challenging existing structures (Iniguez de Heredia 2010).

Another example of such a local-global practice is provided by Appadurai's (2002) study on the work of the "Alliance", a movement consisting of three partner 'organizations'[245] working to improve the housing situation of poor people in Mumbai. They do so using a great variety of strategies: self-help and community organisation, raising awareness, lobbying at the local level, networking with other similar groups around the world, providing expertise to other groups. But their real power lies "not in its donors, its technical expertise, or its administration, but in the will to federate among poor families and communities" (Appadurai 2002: 33). The strength of the Alliance, in other words, lies in connecting communities and individuals in communicative processes, that allow them to find varied solutions to their diverse problems without falling pray to the "tyranny of emergency", which pressures towards general and universal solutions (Appadurai 2002: 30). Any improvements are achieved by creating spaces of and for different norms, new solidarities and beliefs that offer alternatives to the established system and explicitly *not* by taking over its control. Appadurai labels their work as creating a new "horizon of politics" (Appadurai 2002: 23), a practice that displaces rather than destroys existing mechanisms of injustice. Their relevance is not disputed, but the solution is sought in establishing practices that change not the mechanisms of injustice themselves. That would likely require global structural change. Instead, these activities aim to make them less relevant to the everyday lives of people. Power creates alternative collective spaces that can follow different logics.

Clearly, some daily practices of resistance are just coping strategies and not practices of power. Micro-entrepreneurs in Africa, trying to get by on minimal incomes permanently diminished through the frames set by global and national structures might be defying the logic of the system but they are not part of an anti-globalisation movement (Jones 2005, Iniguez de Heredia 2010). No collectivity emerges which bundles their individual struggles into collective practices establishing alternatives. The major impediment to the emergence of such collectivities in this case is the inability to communicate which prevents people from relating their individual struggles to each other (Jones 2005: 68). However, the ability of dictators and others to prevent such communication may be crumbling as tools for communication spread. Connectedness through communication technologies is neither the cause of revolutions nor does it necessitate them in any way. But their availability may minimize one particular obstacle to the emergence of intransitive power.[246]

245 These three are SPARC, Mahila Milan, and the National Slums Dweller's Federation. Their degree of institutionalization varies greatly, so to call them NGO's would be a gross oversimplification, unless one considered any form of collective action an NGO. For details on the history of these organizations and their cooperation see Appadurai 2002: 27f.

246 More effective in preventing meaningful communication than controlling these tools may be the establishment of social mechanisms that hamper the imaginative skills of people, essentially making it impossible for them to come up with the idea. I will explore some of the implications of this 5.3.2.

Power creates spaces not just parallel to but also in place of established structures, as can be seen in some areas where the state as an overall structure is virtually non-existent. Somaliland is a most prominent example here. While the state of Somalia has been non-existent since 1991, despite repeated international efforts to install interim governments and appease the region, the Northern region of Somaliland has been relatively stable. This has largely baffled researchers and lead to a myriad of attempts to explain this anomaly (e.g. Brons 2001, Sorens/Watchekon 2003, Menkhaus 2007). The conditions in Somaliland in terms of heterogeneity, economic development and territorial integrity are not fundamentally less challenging than in other parts of Africa. Clan structures are important, borders are partly contested and the region is virtually shut out from economic aid and the world economy, since the state of Somaliland is not internationally recognized. Yet, Somaliland has not returned to the state of war and violence that prevails in much of the rest of the Horn of Africa.

Somaliland was reconstructed as a territorial entity through extensive processes of consultation and communication, which built on existing traditional structures as well as state-like democratic procedures (Brons 2001). At the core of the foundation process were local and regional grass-roots peace conferences, which capitalized on the authority of the elders and sought to enable reconciliation after violence. Traditional processes encouraged participation and deliberation. Women as well as elders, which are chosen by virtue of their personal attributes, contributed greatly to intra- and inter-clan communication and conflict resolution (Ahmed/Green 1999: 123f). A constitution was drafted in 1993 and finally put to a referendum in 2001, when it was overwhelmingly endorsed by the Somalilanders. Violence re-emerged on several occasions during the early stages of this bottom-up state-building process, but was in each case resolved through local peace conferences (McConnell 2010: 146f). Somaliland's institutions are characterized by consociational practices and mechanisms, which provide the balance between traditional authorities and democratic procedures. Communication and reconciliation have thus been transformed into continuous and ongoing processes, keeping the foundational quality of the process present and alive (Battera 2003: 228f). The emergent political entity, of course, is not perfect. Problems of legitimacy and misrepresentation remain and the provision of public goods is patchy at best.[247] Yet, Somalilanders managed to create a space in which they can interact largely without violence and mechanisms by which they can decide about their own future together. The stability of this space is primarily based on the commitment of Somalilanders to refrain from violence and resort to the agreed consociational practices in cases of conflict (Battera 2003: 229, McConnell 2010: 147). It is their ability to generate and maintain communication in ways that enable the emergence of intransitive power which enables Somalilanders to determine their own fate. This ability is hampered mainly by the failure of the international community to recognize these efforts officially, which keeps Somaliland cut off aid and trade (Caplin 2009).

247Somaliland is facing difficult times now, as violence temporarily spread and the elections have been postponed several times. It might be, that the achieved stability could fall apart (McConnell 2010). However, that would still mean that it worked for almost 20 years reasonably well.

The communication leading to intransitive power must be engaged in with the intention of negotiating the future and building the shared world and must also connect to action and practices. Intransitive power cannot be implemented by an outside actor, but must be owned by those engaging in it. This might be the most significant conclusion to be drawn from the Somaliland case. And this conclusion is, in fact supported by a variety of other instances. Peace process after peace process failed in Cote d'Ivoire, for example, before local structures were used to arrive at more diverse institutional solutions which addressed the roots of the conflict as the war-faring parties perceived them. At the root of the conflict lay the issue of citizenship, which was by definition not resolvable through electing a government, as the determination of the voting population, i.e. citizenship, logically precedes such democratic processes. When the parties to the civil war began to negotiate directly, they developed a stronger sense of ownership of the process, agreeing on the basic rules for assigning citizenship and implementing mechanisms for future conflict resolution based not on elections but on dialogue[248]. The cause of the conflict was not subjected to majority voting but recognized as in need of continuous communicative engagement (Bah 2010).[249]

Communicative processes must be perceived as emerging from the people themselves, especially in spaces that are in need of reconciliation, after long wars or dictatorships. Power cannot be implemented from the outside. Ownership of the communicative processes is essential. Such ownership can be created through processes of what Subcommandante Marcos of the Zapatistas would call “cultural contamination”, the productive combination, in his case, of leftist Northern discourses with the imagery and narratives of the indigenous Zapatistas. By constructing a language on the basis of the available cultural repertoires, grievances, goals and actions can be expressed in ways that relate to those who make power (Higgins 2005: 92f). For similar reasons reconciliation processes after war are more successful when they engage the people directly and according to their shared life worlds. Enabling a common future is not about abstract notions of revenge, repayment and justice, but about communicative processes which encourage the use of the imagination in ways that lead towards forgiving, the shared wish to not let the past determine the future. Dialogue must be open and listening will be an essential part of the communication leading to power, as it is about the process and not the result (Olesen 2004: 261). State-building literature has begun to appreciate the difficulties this poses. Increasingly the need to build on indigenous institutions, facilitating communication and interaction is recognized (Wunsch 2000: 491f). Most often, however, the emergence of such consociational

248 Séverine Autessere comes to similar conclusions, drawing on the example of Congo, where peace building efforts failed as they ignored local conflict resolution strategies. Interestingly, she also observed the importance of the international actors' commitment to democracy as a means not of resolving conflict or building community, but merely making the decision about who is in control less violent (Autessere 2009: 270). It speaks to the continued dominance of the modern configuration within dominant political discourses, that the dependency of transitive power on intransitive power can be so fundamentally ignored.

249 Recent developments in Cote d'Ivoire suggest that conflict still lurks close to the surface. The election outcome in November 2010, demanding a change in government, lead to violent conflict between the political opponents. With some degree of international intervention, basic order could be restored and now it is up to the elected president Alassane Ouattara to “heal the wounds” (Adebajo 2011).

practices is encouraged as a mediating step in bringing about 'real statehood'. It is seen as a somewhat defective form, the state often remains the ideal type political community behind peace building and peace making efforts.

Clapham points toward another factor, which he terms “culture”and which more specifically refers to the ability of societies and their governments to create “from their own resources, the levels of authority” necessary to maintain a state (Clapham 2004: 88), i.e. a durable connection between intransitive and transitive power. He points out that, rather than being dependent on the output of state institutions, this ability is the precondition for economic development and provision of services. State building that must provide these abilities rather than being able to rely on them is much more difficult to achieve and may hardly be brought about by external actors (Clapham 2004: 91f). While it is true that many regions in Africa are troubled by serious economic, environmental and social problems, looking for the “state” blocks out alternative emergences of much more vulnerable, yet potentially productive intransitive power. The argument is not, that traditional structures in Africa and elsewhere are natural or more efficient expressions of a culturally specific intransitive power. Rather, it should be recognized that intransitive power is not based on ideal-typical rational communication, but based on communication and action that might be characterized by misconceptions, beliefs and emotions as well as by agreement, argument and efficiency. Therefore, existing structures of communication, reconciliation and conflict resolution may, not must, represent grains of emerging intransitive power (Cibian 2010: 10f).

Creating spaces of power through communication and action, however, does not have to be associated with a turn toward transitive power, nor does it have to be opposed to the state. Social movements and initiatives such as the World Social Forum do not deny the role of the state. Nor do ethnic communities thriving for self-determination necessarily. The Arctic Inuit give an interesting example of such a hybrid configuration of power and its communicative construction. It began with the Inuit across national borders developing a common identity, which cut across their national identities. Recovering their national heritage and re-establishing their symbolic relationship with their territory, they began to develop an understanding of the kinds of rights with regard to their heritage and territory that they thought should be associated with being Inuit. However, being Inuit was understood as something quite compatible with being American or being Canadian. The Inuit Circumpolar Conference, founded in 1977, is the visible expression of Inuit “sovereignty”. And while this sovereignty is associated with a particular territory, it does not actively contest the sovereignty of the state, but instead is intertwined with it. One might think of the rights and duties given to the Inuit as autonomy within the state, if it wasn't for the transnational nature of that sovereignty. The Inuit carefully recovered forms of associating themselves with a particular territory that were not reliant on exclusivity, but based on the notion of stewardship, the responsibility to take care of their land. The Inuits's relevance today is enabled by the continuous communicative processes which construct their identity not as identity against others, but as an identity in its own right related to the others (Shadian 2010). This example shows the emotional relevance of communication, which induces

self-efficacy and hence a sense of making a difference to the world. It also indicates, that the emergence of intransitive power is not with any necessity challenging existing structures. Overlapping spaces of intransitive power do not have to lead to conflict, but may well enhance the effectiveness and stability of order.

Communication and action in these instances of intransitive power take diverse forms. Communication must be aimed at constructing the common space of action, but it may do so along the lines of identity, cultural heritage, conflict, knowledge sharing and so on. It may lead to consensus or the expression of difference, so long as it instils a sense of ownership and self-efficacy to the participants. Communication is intricately linked to action, not just because action may result from it or because practices are the object of communication, but also because communication and action flow into each other. The way communication is conducted is not limited to the exchange of rational arguments but may include emotional, poetic narratives, artistic and religious expressions as well as physical interaction. In so far as communication transcends the narrow confines of language, we can begin to see how closely it is linked to symbolic representations.

Communication and action contribute to processes of identity construction and encourage fluid identities rather than fixed ones (Farro 2004). Communication and action are about defining oneself in relation to the others, they centre around the plurality of individuals. The shared space they create is based on the connections between plural beings rather than on shared attributes although, of course, these may facilitate connection. However, so may promising and the kind of solidarity that emerges from identification with other's struggles. Many different kinds of solidarity are possible and many are not based on cosmopolitan attitudes or values, but on being connected if different and consciously relating oneself to others (Calhoun 2002: 170). When the Zapatistas staged their uprising in 1994 a network of solidarity emerged within days (Lane 2003: 135) and their local struggle continues to inspire activists around the world, even if their struggles are quite different (Khasnabish 2008).

Rather than creating a global space of action, communication and action tend to produce globally connected action networks (Montagna 2010). Not all of these are transnational and hardly any truly global. Most, in fact, seem to be very local, closer related to coping practices than grand ideas. In post-conflict societies the generation of such local practices involving people in communities as active participants in the provision of security and governance may be an essential element of achieving long-term stability (Sawyer 2004: 453f). Local, national, transnational, regional and virtual spaces of intransitive power are connected, overlapping and mutually encouraging. Emerging instances of intransitive power increasingly create a complex overlapping network of related practices connecting communication and action. In terms of this first element of intransitive power, than, the structure that emerges defies simple divisions along territorial, demographic or economic lines, but is based on the conflictual, yet complex connection between different viewpoints, individuals and practices. The communicative construction of a homogeneous place and identity is outweighed by the development

of interlinking discourses and practices which are defined in relation to one another rather than in distinction and dissociation.

On a more abstract level, these instances illustrate three characteristics of the communication and action that creates power. Firstly, the communication itself must be considered central. Neither communication nor action are degenerated into tools for a purpose, but they are relevant in their own right. This is why power can persist even in the light of failure to achieve objectives. Power cannot be defined through its aims, even if it seeks to achieve aims. Secondly, communication and action are closely linked, they belong together. Power is not generated through speech alone, but through words and deeds. In this sense, the Arendtian ideas of heroic deeds and communicative agreements are distinct but not separable – both are important. Language and rhetoric are only ever one part of communication and action, allowing for plural forms of expression to contribute to the constitution of power. Thirdly, communication and action are closely related to issues of identity, making the emergence of power dependent on the interaction of individuals. Communication and action that constitute power are always about "who" we are, not what we are. Hence, ownership of communicative processes is an important facilitating factor for the emergence of power.

The portrayal of these instances of intransitive power has touched already on the importance of the other two elements of intransitive power and I will therefore now explore in more detail, which kinds of symbolic representations may be observed and, a little later, which role imaginative skills play in power creation.

5.2.2 Symbolic representation

Communication is dynamic and fuels change, yet it is also transient and unstable. In order to stabilize intransitive power, it must be symbolically represented. In the modern configuration of power that representation was closely linked to the idea of nationhood and the various symbolic practices through which the image of the state was fortified (Migdal/Schlichte 2005: 22-24). The nation provided a large cultural repository from which integrating symbols could be generated. Furthermore, nationhood is based on a specific historical narrative which, in fact, provides a system of symbols, putting forward if not a closed so at least a seemingly coherent framework of meaning. This coherence of the symbolic representation presents a challenge for intransitive power in that it stabilizes, possibly to the extent of eliminating difference or at least reducing it to some specific differences based on attributes rather than relationships. The modern configuration of power therefore maintains an ambivalent relationship to intransitive power, realizing it only ever to an extent. In addition to national symbols, the modern configuration of power thrives on symbolic representations of the sovereignty of the people on which it is logically and, in democratic states, to an extent empirically based. In this sense the constitution is a symbol of intransitive power and state institutions, such as parliaments, also fulfil symbolic functions. All these forms of symbolic representation serve to stabilize the territorial order and the fixed connection between intransitive and transitive power.

These symbolic representations are not disappearing, nor could one argue in any general sense that they are declining. I have argued above, however, that communication and action are increasingly organising across territorial boundaries and forming overlapping patterns which defy not just national distinctions but even their clear location at local, national or transnational levels. The Zapatistas are an indigenous movement developing local practices, yet, at the same time deliberately fuelling global communicative processes. The World Social Forum is a global meeting refusing to turn into a movement and interconnecting local, national and global initiatives. Peace and state-building initiatives drawing on local mechanisms and experiences, work by enabling overlapping communicative spaces to coexist and mutually reinforce each other. They derive strength from abandoning the notion of a unified, territorially grounded space of power.[250] And while this may pose normative problems and prove inefficient in terms of governing, it tends to reduce violence and mirrors the kind of development described at the transnational and global level.

As communicative spaces overlap, symbolic representations are likely to become more patchy as well. Symbolic representation of intransitive power in a globalizing world, in other words, is not likely to present with relatively coherent systems of symbols, but will probably emphasize their plurivalent nature. Fluid identities, which are communicatively constructed by situating oneself in sets of relationships, are likely to be formed around contested symbols rather than shared identifications. I will trace contemporary symbolic representations of intransitive power indicating how they contribute to stabilising power. Going from the traditional to the more original forms of symbolic representation also shows, how practices are reinterpreted and enlarged in imaginative ways opening up new forms of communication and action.

The most basic form of symbolising the concurrence of communication and action is the political meeting and its derivative the political demonstration. It makes intransitive power visible and palpable through the presence of physical bodies in space. These forms are very old and have been established practice wherever intransitive power emerged. The most basic form of symbolising power is, of course, the assembly, which combines communication and action with symbolic representation. The power people generate is made visible through their physical appearance in a specific place. Hence, the polis is the physical place as well as the congregation of people (Arendt 1958: 198). In representative democracy both elements are further removed – the parliament stages communication and action in symbolic representation of the power of the people.[251] The political demonstration is in many ways a variation or derivative of such an assembly, turning the static presence of people in space into a dynamic one, symbolizing the transition from communication to action. The presence of many people in the streets symbolizes the strength of the power and signals the emergence of intransitive power also

250 And indeed shared identity is by no means a guarantee for stability. Somalia fell apart despite largely shared life-worlds and prevalent ethnic homogeneity (Eriksen 1999: 54, Clapham 2004). Unified national or ethnic identities ,hence, are not a sufficient condition for state stability.

251 This ambivalent nature of the representative communication is indicative of the tension that representative democracy has to power and might indicate, why Arendt was reserved with regard to representation. It is also a problem addressed by Tocqueville in his analysis of the American system (Tocqueville 1985). for further details on Arendt's position toward representation see (Kateb 1983: 115ff)

to those at the outside. Because of the strength of the symbol, it is not just used where power emerges, but often also as a show of strength. A march itself, therefore, does not imply the presence of intransitive power. In so far as it is merely a expression of shared interests, it lacks the indeterminate, communicative nature of power, while, of course, remaining symbolic. Similarly, military parades and organized government jubilations in authoritarian regimes or dictatorships are clearly symbolic, yet, of course, not an expression of intransitive power.

Many examples illustrate this kind of symbolic representation of power. The demonstrations against the Second Gulf War, which took place around the world on February 15, 2003, consolidated a global anti-war movement. Staging demonstrations around the world around a singular issue allowed people to express and experience their concerns in unison with others not restricted to their particular location (Chrisafis et al 2003). In a way, it was a global moment. The demands made were not singular and individual either, but distinct expressions of a more general concern about world peace. Its effects on policy were negligible to non-existent, but it reaffirmed the emergence of a global movement. The symbolic reaffirmation of power encouraged the creative use of globally networked protests. Global Action Days, for example, form an integral part of global social protests and the idea has even been adopted to virtual space, where demonstrations are staged through Facebook-pages, signature protests etc. Their main effect is not to achieve particular aims, they fare rather badly on that account. They do, however, mobilize people, create debate around issues and encourage the continuation of communication and action, besides being themselves a form of action. Symbolically they accompany processes of communicating and acting – and if mobilisation fails may also reveal their demise.

People marching can also be the most visible expression of nascent communication and action. Carolyn Nordstrom describes such an event in the aftermath of Mozambique's civil war. When the general elections were to take place in 1994, the Renamo party withdrew at very short notice, a move that could have doomed the process to failure. Still, people came to the polling stations in massive processions, walking for many kilometres, carrying elders and maimed. The collective, symbolic action of voting, more than the actual result of the election, reaffirmed the culture of resisting violence and peace-building that had brought about the negotiations in the first place. Long before, people had begun to resist the reality of violence by discursively constructing an alternative reality, which they defended by making their commitment to that reality symbolically present on election day. This, more than diplomatic efforts, made the Renamo rejoin the elections and accept the result despite defeat (Nordstrom 1997: 226-229). Just walking can, under the right circumstances, become a form of political speech (Solnit 2004: 94).

Such momentary symbolic representations may serve to make communication and action more visible, but they are not enough to lend permanence to intransitive power. Institutionalisation of power begins with the presence of people in space, but it does not end there. The most basic form of institutionalization is repetition. Regular meetings may symbolically as well as communicatively preserve and perpetuate intransitive power. With repetition, rules tend to be established as places,

times, and procedures are reiterated in informal and formal agreements. Their plurivalence lies not in their content – rules must be sufficiently clear in order to work – but in their role for representing power, which may remain contested, even if their content is not. Communication and action are given a space in which to flourish, that is not so much physical as interpersonal. The more they are ritualized, the more they become symbols for the underlying power. On the one hand, this deludes the communicative element of power, on the other it establishes institutions which can turn the process of making power into a continuous endeavour. The tension between the communicative, action-oriented elements of power and the symbolic elements is obvious. If meetings become pure rituals, they cannot maintain dynamics and remain an expression of communication and action that seeks to actively shape the world. If people fail to develop agreements on rule and procedures and common points of identification, power is likely to fall apart as sustained communication and action is hampered by chaos, inefficiency and a distinct lack of reliability.

The World Social Forum has institutionalized by turning its meetings into regular yet dynamic rituals, which follow some very basic rules: the meetings take place in the Global South and happen roughly around the time of the World Economic Forum (Cassen 2003, Bello 2002). Both parameters enforce the symbolic resonance of the forums. The timing relates to the perceived enemy, economic globalisation, presenting an alternative to the meeting of corporate executives and politicians in Davos. The location, on the other hand, defies dominant discourses by placing resistance at the margins rather than the centre and denying the impossibility organising such events in the Global South.[252] As a result, the meetings themselves have become a symbol of the possibility of resistance, which makes the possibility that the process could be discontinued somewhat equivalent to the failure of global resistance, despite the fact the forums themselves were only marginally effective in achieving concrete results. The World Social Forum has maintained much of its communicative character, but not without drawbacks. Since rules are to be kept to a minimum, many participants find the meetings chaotic and inefficient (Marcuse 2005). If communication fails to happen, because no adequate rituals for its conduct can be established, individuals will not be able to generate power.[253]

Tentative symbolic representations in regular meetings and fundamental rules are not enough to produce a coherent narrative around which intransitive power may accumulate. The starting point for these is often provided by symbolic events and their consequences. Sometimes, it is the elections, which mark the introduction of a new system, sometimes the signing of peace accords, which marks the end of violence or the hopes for one. In other cases it might be the death of martyrs or the release

252 This latter point is at least to some extent pretence in light of contrary empirical evidence. While the meetings in Porto Alegre were supported by local and national governments and worked quite well, recent meetings in Asia and Africa have suffered from serious organisational difficulties at least some of which must be attributed to the lack of adequate infrastructure (Jakob 2011). On the other hand one could argue that the staging of such events also contributes to the build up of needed infrastructure.

253 Which is why most forms of self-organisation depend on some adequate infrastructure, such as spaces in which to meet, central points in time and space at which meetings can be announced and agreed etc., and shared rules, which means for example people have to know where to find out about meetings, how to participate etc.

of prisoners. For global social movements one of these major symbolic events is the Earth Summit in Rio de Janeiro in 1992, which established NGO's as a major factor in global politics. It instilled a sense of efficacy in many activists and revealed the importance of expert knowledge from non-governmental sources as well the strength of consultative processes between different kinds of actors. Its most notable effect in terms of power, however, was the symbolic "power shift" as which it was perceived (Mathews 1997). While not significantly displacing states and their role in the international system by itself, it represented a symbolic turning point in the imagination of alternatives to the traditional state system. The events surrounding the G8 meeting in Seattle in 1999 mark another significant symbolic event. Known as the "Battle of Seattle", which is in itself a strong metaphor, it has become known as the moment of emergence of a global movement (Gill 2000: 138f). Although the protest contributed to the abandonment of the meeting, they had little impact on policies. In so far, Seattle is clearly a symbol of the limits of global civil society (Scholte 2000: 116f, Halliday 2000). However, it is also what Mary Kaldor calls the "coming out party of global activism and global civil society" (Kaldor 2000: 105). The protest were seen by activists as a great success, they connected different kinds of struggles and induced motivation for further cooperation and connection (Hardt 2002: 117). The World Social Forums, then, form a logical step in the narrative that began in the early 1990ies, evolved through Chiapas in 1994 and Seattle in 1999 into a foundational myth of a plural social movement, which makes "another world" possible.

While events enable what one might call "narrated symbols" many of the symbolic representations of intransitive power are more visual. This is true, for example for slogans, such as "Another world is possible", the essentially empty motto of the World Social Forum. In the first instance this is only a vague statement of the open aims of the forum. On the other it is both, a contestation of the claim that neo-liberal globalization is a necessity to which one can only adjust and a commitment to the plurality of possible futures. It symbolizes the kind of reinterpretation the the World Social Forums seek to enable. In its openness, it contains the openness of the forum process, providing a positive identification for participants. One can partake in the process without agreeing with the others on the shape of that other world.[254] The chant of the East German demonstrators in the fall of 1989 is very similar. "We are the people" is a positive, yet interpretable statement reiterating the power of the people. One might even argue, it is a most direct expression of what intransitive power is about.[255] The interpretability of these slogans makes them susceptible to playing a symbolic role in the institutionalisation of intransitive power. Symbolic representation, in other words, might be achieved through phrases and concepts, which make diverse forms of identification possible. They instil a feeling of belonging, without defining the individual through specific characteristics.[256]

254 Consequently, the slogan changes its character fundamentally, when it is rephrased as e.g. "a socialist world is possible". The Obama Presidential campaign employed the similarly open yet empty slogan "Yes, we can!", which is essentially a reiteration of the ability to act. Seeing the campaign was very grass-roots oriented, it would be interesting to explore, in how far power here could effectively be generated.

255 When it changed to "We are one people" it turned into a concrete demand, which had significant impact on the further course of events (R. Höppner 2009).

256 Symbols of this kind and what Laclau and Mouffe term "empty signifiers" (Laclau 2002) are closely related

Certain people may also become symbolic representations of communication and action, essentially stabilizing the communicative structure. Nelson Mandela became a symbol for the ongoing struggle against apartheid. Subcommandante Marcos represents the struggle of the Zapatistas. In his case, the symbolic nature of his person is reinforced by the secrecy surrounding his persona. He is portrayed always with the Zapatista ski mask covering his face. Texts originating from him, are not necessarily written by the same person. In fact, for a long time it was unclear whether there even was one person, that was "Subcommandante Marcos". Yet, he is the voice of the Zapatista struggle, a channel for communication and a focal point of identification (Saward 2008: 13). Very recently, Wael Ghonim, a google employee in Egypt, achieved similar status in what is now called the Egyptian Revolution[257]. They all are "un-elected representatives" (Saward 2008) of different kinds, symbolically representing emergences of intransitive power. Elected and unelected representation may in some cases be successfully combined. In Somaliland for example, the elders fulfilled symbolic representative functions as well as communicative ones (Battera 2003: 236). Clearly, not all people who claim representation of others are symbolic representations of intransitive power. It is not the representative claim or perception as such, that makes power, but the connection to communication and action and the active and collaborative use of the imagination. Therefore, it remains a valid criticism that many forms of representation are in fact misrepresentations (Naidoo 2010).[258]

The procedures and representatives of intransitive power enhance the perception of movement as one, even when the members perceive themselves to be very individualistic and networked, rather than part of a collective actor. The perception itself is transformed into a symbolic representation of the intransitive power and enforces a feeling of belonging (Farro 2004). Again, the dangers of over-symbolising are apparent. Perceptions through the eyes of others may easily change into ascriptions denying the plurality of the individuals involved. When the feeling of belonging overwhelms the sense of difference integral to plurality, the very basis for communication and action is in danger. It is by no means accidental, that the Zapatista movement has become a symbol of global struggles around the world (Khasnabish 2007: 510).[259] Their way of relating their own struggles to global struggles draws on similarities and shared problems while maintaining difference. The Zapatista communiques frame individual struggles as related, yet, incommensurable. Global solidarity with the Zapatistas, consequently, enforces a sense of different yet connected struggles. This kind of myth creation is in fact seen as one of the major tasks of Zapatista communication (Khasnabish 2007: 519).

(Göhler et al 2010: 705).

257 A profile of Wael Ghonim and a summary of his role in the Egyptian revolution can be found at: http://www.bbc.co.uk/news/world-middle-east-12400529 [14.02.2011].

258 This is, in some ways, what Arendt tried to capture in her idea of authority (Arendt 1970: 45).

259 Melucci (1985) argues, that it is a particular feature of social movements that they symbolically challenge the existing order by transgressing its limitations. Their fundamentally networked organizational structure challenges the more rigid frameworks of existing political organization. This, he says, makes them relevant beyond any material successes achieved. He also emphasizes that a "society based on information redefines *space* and *time*", essentially altering the way social relations are organized. His reference point are the 1980ies – a time when the internet was still called arpanet and available only to technical and military experts.

Making movements the symbolic reference point for individuals can be an active strategy of achieving a sense of belonging. It is in this sense part of the complexities of identity construction.

When communication turns into action, symbolic representation can begin to take the form of everyday practices, which make symbolically present a world which is not yet. The aforementioned knowledge sharing practices among activists are one example. Another is the development of alternative local means of production, for example by farming communities (Schneider/Niederle 2010). The Zapatista practice of dealing with tourism in Chiapas, which involves activist tourism to the autonomous communities as well as the peaceful occupation of tourist infrastructure by the Zapatistas, is symbolic in creating visible encounters between the indigenous and the Mexicans, revealing the disjunctures in the dominant identity discourses and confronting the invisibility of the indigenous population with their empirical existence (Martín 2004). These kinds of practices may be a symbolic expression of communication and action, as they make visible and palpable the collective action of those who engage in these practices (Iniguez de Heredia 2010).[260] Furthermore, the actual practice of alternatives speaks more clearly to the affective dimension of human interaction, making accomplishments and possibilities felt, not just cognitively received. However, such practices are not by itself intransitive power, they may as well serve to preserve domination (Iniguez de Heredia 2010). Potentially, they are used to supplant strategies employed to eliminate the capacity for meaningful communication and action (Treasure/Gibb 2010).[261] It is essential, therefore, to consider if particular practices are the outcome and representation of communication and action or merely coping strategies of individuals, which are not bound by shared communication and collective action.

Another important, if ambivalent form of symbolic representation is symbolic violence, i.e. the way physical violence can become a symbolic representation of emerging power.[262] Violent acts in addition to physically changing the world also have a symbolic relevance (Aijmer 2000) and, in some cases, this symbolic relevance may relate to the emergence of communication and action. The armed struggle of the Zapatistas, for example, is highly symbolically charged (Olesen 2004: 256). The typical guerilla outfit is an essential part of the Zapatista imagery and the staging of guerilla tactics one of the practices. Yet, the struggle itself is largely discursive. The symbolic reference to guerilla struggle is yet another way to relate the Zapatista movement to other struggles, in this case the earlier Latin American liberation movements.[263] Furthermore, the presence of the imagery contrasts strongly with

260 Iniguez de Heredia (2010) draws on James C. Scott's *Weapons of the Weak*. Another starting point for identifying practices as symbolic expressions of power could be Foucault's notion of the technologies of the self (Foucault 1988a,b), if it were to be reconceptualized as a collective and deliberate endeavour. For obvious reasons I refrain from attempting this here.

261 Treasure and Gibb (2010) speak of subjectivation in this context, alluding to Foucauldian forms of domination.

262 Symbolic violence here does not refer to Bourdieu and his concept of symbolic power (Bourdieu 1989), as I am concerned not with the violence of symbolic power but with the symbolism of physical violence.

263 It is noteworthy, that in its inception the Zapatista uprising was an actual armed uprising. However, physical violence was abandoned within days.

the grass roots mode of operation of the movement, exposing the fundamental disjuntcure between power and violence. Symbolically charged acts of physical violence, for better or worse, are also integral part of the repertoire of the anti-globalization movements. Jose Bové became famous in 1999 when he instigated the destruction of a McDonald's restaurant in southern France protesting trade sanctions by the US government.[264] The aim of this violent act was not the actual destruction of McDonald's or even just that particular restaurant but the symbolic visualisation of the coalition of farmers engaged against the destruction of their livelihoods. The Battle of Seattle was also marked by violence, in particular against symbols of the contested economic order. The violent backlash by the police contributed greatly to the de-legitimisation of the trade round (Scholte 2000: 118). The expression of protest through symbolic violence has become somewhat habitual and serves to integrate the movement as well as to reveal the restraints of the global system (Sullivan 2005: 178). It is, however, also a symbolic expression of the pain felt as a consequence of the circumstances suffered, a way to communicate these deep felt emotions without having to resort to the limited means of language (Sullivan 2005: 182).

Two conclusion can be drawn with regard to the role of violence in symbolically representing power, beyond the obvious one that violent acts can only be representations when they are connected to communication and action. Firstly, just because something is an expression of power, it must not necessarily be morally right. The use of violence remains debatable even when it is the expression of communication and action. Intransitive power is an analytic, not a normative category. Secondly, symbolically representing power through physical violence is an inherently dangerous strategy. Violence is incommensurable with power when turned instrumental in a direct rather than symbolic sense. Symbolical acts of violence against symbols of the system seek to reveal the powerlessness and violence of the system and often they do. However, they might also be interpreted as a revelation of the powerlessness of the movement. Violence tends to grow and overwhelm its purposes (Arendt 1970: 80) and this is true for its symbolic use as well. This particular ambivalence of violent symbols makes them such complex and debatable representations of intransitive power (Sullivan 2005).

Another important way in which intransitive power is symbolically represented is the kind of playful symbolism that reinterprets and subverts symbolic systems in ways that reveal their weaknesses, arbitrariness and possible alternatives. Again, the Zapatistas have proven very imaginative. It begins with their attire, which includes ski masks, that are not supposed to hide the identity of the wearer, but to reveal the universality of the struggle. The ski mask is the "mask that reveals" as Subcommandante Marcos, whose name is itself a playful subversion of military codes, put it (Lane 2003: 136). Although the armed fight was abandoned by the Zapatistas almost immediately, the Zapatista air force attacked federal barracks of the Mexican Army on January 3, 2000. The air

264 Bové is also an example of an unelected representative and has been a prominent figure in global social movements representing the farmers of the global north. Furthermore, as a current member of the European parliament he also serves as an elected representative of a local constituency. For details on his current activities see http://josebove.over-blog.com [12.02.2011]

force consisted of hundreds of paper air planes carrying poems and messages for the soldiers through and over the barbed wire of the encampment. They called it 'breaking the sound barrier' and meant that they were symbolically transcending the failure to communicate between their struggle and the situation of the soldiers. One year later the Electronic Disturbance Theatre transposed this action to the digital realm, releasing software, which allowed users to mount 'attacks' on websites, resulting in parts of a Zapatista poem to appear in the system logs of the 'attacked servers'. Servers would not be damaged but become virtual if invisible monuments to the Zapatista struggle (Lane 2003: 129f). It is the particular futility of this action, which reveals its character as a symbolic representation and a self-referential expression of intransitive power. The purpose is not to convince the soldiers or the system administrators who may or may not read the messages sent to them. It is rather to symbolically make the achieved power present in the heart of the contested system.

Playful symbolism also serves to translate issues and problems into a more emotional kind of language. Street theatre, dress up and the presentation of oversized puppets are integral to protests of global social movements. Activists might stage tribunals against those they consider responsible for global or local problems, reinterpreting the notion of legal justice and symbolically undermining the legitimacy of legal systems that fail to act (Smith 2002: 218). Protest strategies such as “Reclaim The Streets” or Smart Mobs organize festive or theatrical gatherings in an attempt to symbolically retake privatized public spaces and subvert economic practices (Klein 2001: 311-323). Again, the immediate results are negligible, but the symbolic impact, both on visibility and on belonging is remarkable. Deviating from more sober forms of protest does not just gain more attention, such deviation also speaks more immediately to the emotions of the protesters themselves. More artistic forms of symbolism work with prominent corporative symbols, redesigning logos, rephrasing slogans or using art to explore and reveal social problems (Smith 2002: 217, Klein 2001: 279-309, Basualdo/Laddaga 2009). The process of artistically expressing intransitive power has also become somewhat democratized. Within days of the Egyptian Revolution, countless videos were uploaded to YouTube, featuring songs and pictures celebrating the protests in Tahrir square. Full of pathos and simplifications, they represent an intriguing example of the ways in which art contributes to the symbolic representation of communicative acts.[265]

The examples selected here connect communication and action to symbolic representation. Not all forms of symbolism do that, there is nothing inherent in the symbolic representations as such that makes them expressions of power or not.[266] Symbolic representations are indicative of power if – and only if – they are expressions of communication and action. The futility of many of the symbolic expressions described above marks them as relevant for the group itself, rather than as tools for

265I do not wish to single out specific videos. Entering “tahrir song” on www.youtube.com provides some examples as of February 2011.

266Cohen and Langenhan (2009) make a similar point when they trace the use of symbols for soft governing, i.e. the exercise of transitive power, through hierarchical, democratic and hybrid systems of governing. Symbols are a more universal phenomenon, which are not with any necessity linked exclusively to intransitive or transitive power at all.

achieving aims. The simplifications inherent in many of the described symbols are countered by their plurivalence. Symbolic representations, when connected to communication and action, are not ascriptions of characteristics to certain groups or ideas but rallying points for contestations. They invite communicative resistance, reinterpretation and refutation and in doing so unite those that rally around them. In their plurivalence they enable the preservation of the difference and dissonance of communication and action while still emotionally binding people together. Symbols allow for the expression of collective joy, determination, and solidarity as well as anger, frustration, and difference without demanding homogenisation. They also work towards the outside, by creating an external picture of the intransitive power. While the communication and action remains self-referential and hence often inaccessible to outsiders, the symbolic representations remain visible. By representing an image of the communication and action that allows for identification and recognition for outsiders, symbolic representation provides the starting point for stabilising the transience of communication and action.

Symbolic representations become elements of intransitive power not by virtue of being symbolic, but in the first instance through the ways in which they are created and interpreted. Not any communication and action makes an element of intransitive power, but only those engaged in with a certain intention and attitude. Similarly, symbolic representations must express the ambivalence and difference in the communication and action intransitive power not eliminate it. This is indeed a complex and exceptional task, which is achieved by individuals collectively through the skilled use of their imagination.

5.2.3 The force of the imagination

The presented examples give an impression of the diverse expressions, which communication and action as well as symbolic representation may find in intransitive power. Yet, only specific acts of communication and action and symbolic representation are power, namely those that aim at collectively shaping the common world. In order to do that, people must accomplish the feat of creating something new from something old, of drawing on what is there and transforming it into something else, not just by a mere agglomeration of individual decisions, but through a shared effort. Reinventing the world may proceed in very small, iterative steps. Yet, something that is merely a repetition of habits is a social pattern, but not power.[267] Creating the first two elements of intransitive power therefore must rely on the skill of imagination, which enables the recombination and reinvention of shared meanings and institutions enabling the active and collaborative formation of the shared world. This is a very complex process, which may take different forms.

In what follows I will lay out a few of the ways in which collective imaginative skills are employed to facilitate the emergence of intransitive power. In the first instance the collective skill of imagination is essential to the creation and maintenance of communities and the negotiation of identities. This marks the employment of imagination as a continuous process, which requires sustained active

267 5.3. will elaborate further on that important distinction.

participation. In the second instance, the creative use of the imagination is employed in discursive, poetic and artistic techniques which rearrange the world that is and make alternatives visible and emotionally accessible. Imagination is essential to realizing the affective dimensions of intransitive power. In the third instance, imagination provides the cognitive means to maintain difference and conceive of multiple shared futures simultaneously. The ability to construct the shared world in an iterative communicative process is dependent on the ability to accept the relativity of one's own interests and views and imagine manifold ways in which they could be fulfilled. Along all these demands, emerging instances of intransitive power have been remarkably innovative.

Creating and maintaining communities and negotiating identities is the first challenge to be met with imaginative skills. The nation, as Benedict Anderson (1991) argued, is first and foremost an imagined community. The homogeneity, history and reality of the nation are formed into a durable structure by the imaginative skills which instil them with continuity and coherence. This process of imagining is not a one time occurrence, quite like the nation is not static. Rather, imagined communities must be imagined actively and continuously. Thomas Hylland Eriksen describes this process with regard to Mauritian nationhood. While possible identifications, from pre-, post- and colonial times are varied and rely on religion, ethnicity, kinship, language etc. for their distinction, de facto cultural integration is relatively high. In a creative social process, then, Mauritian identity is created from a combination of *pluriculturalisme mauricien* and universal values and institutions shared by all. The symbolic models of ethnic and pluri-cultural identifications are combined in a precarious balance, which imaginatively resolves many of the potential contradictions. This proves more accessible because no prevalent cultural practices must be suppressed and can re-emerge as resentful political practices. It is not, in other words, the homogeneity of the imagined community as such, but the coherence of the imagined community continuously recreated through the imaginative skills of the people, which stabilizes communities (Eriksen 1999: 48-54).

In areas, such as Somalia, that have been characterized by widespread violence, this is a particularly challenging process, despite relative ethnic homogeneity (Eriksen 1999: 54). Violence disrupts the imagined continuity and brings out divisions among people. Power is dependent on the use of imaginative skills to instil forgiving and promising. Forgiving, in Arendt's understanding is the ability to imagine a world in which past deeds do not determine the future. This is different from both forgetting and avenging, since is purpose is firmly oriented toward the future. Reconciliation commissions, independent investigations and rituals of abandoning violence can therefore play and important part in practising such collective imagination. They do not deny the past but bring it out, in order to then bring it to a conclusion. Such processes are emotionally and psychological difficult for violators and violated, but have proven important in many post-conflict societies. Forgiving in such instances is often connected to promising, which translates into a commitment to peace, that is not purely based on forced disarmament or military defeat. Both require individuals to transcend collectively the constraints of the present – without guarantees of a better future. Although quite weak

at first sight, those imaginative processes are important elements of state-building processes (Battera 2003: 233).[268]

Imaginative skills are not merely inventive, but combine reproductive and creative elements. This is particularly important for establishing continuity and identification upon which stable institutions may be build. Local experiences and available cultural repertoires, such as pre-existing reconciliation mechanisms and traditional forms must be incorporated into the narrative that makes the common space of power symbolically present. The stability of Somaliland is to a great extent based on the imaginative combination of old and new mechanisms in locally specific ways (Battera 2003: 228, 236). Institution building, in others words, is an imaginative act. The modern configuration of power sees this act as one necessary, but transitory stage in the establishment of a fixed connection between intransitive and transitive power. Institutional systems are established and henceforth stabilize power. The more radical the institutional change, the more likely it is to be associated with revolution and failure of the existing system. The modern configuration of power is aimed at containing the radical and dynamic logic of communication and action and, at best, channelling it. This very logic, however, implies that the collective imagination of institutions must be considered an ongoing, iterative process, which knows no end point, no final set of suitable institutions. The imaginative recombination of existing elements with new ones in light of the ever changing outcomes of communication and actions needs to be symbolically represented in ever new shapes and forms, e.g. institutions. Imaginative skills, in other words, allow for the dynamic yet coherent representation of communication and action in symbolic form.[269]

Imaginative skills make the creation of institutions and routines at the collective level possible, which connect communication and action with symbolic representation maintaining and facilitating the tension between the two in productive ways. At the individual level this is mirrored increasingly by the way people negotiate their identities as plural identities, defying the homogenizing logic of ethnic nationalism. Clearly, ethnic and national identification remain important and maybe even dominant to many. But migration, cultural globalization and naturally overlapping ethnicities and nationalities challenge any kind of absolutism that might be attached to such identities. Overlapping identities, comprising a mixture and possibly a hierarchy of individual identifications logically lead to two consequences. Firstly, while homogeneous groups may exist, individuals are more and more likely to belong to more than one of these groups. The more capable they are of reconciling these diverse points of identification, the more they get to realize their plurality: rather than defining oneself as a member of a certain group, one may end up defining one's identity through the specific mixture of identifying groups one associates with. Such plural identities may well be unique, even though they are

268 It must be noted that, of course, any method of destruction and war is also a figment born out of the imagination. Furthermore, there is no guarantee that an imaginative solution will be a good one. Imagination is not *per se* good or leads to good results in a normative sense.

269 Potential instabilities result. Another problem, which cannot be explored here, is the founding a new body politique upon the ruins of the old, rather than in an empty space (for this Heé/Schaper 2008, Arendt 1963: 168ff).

connected to the collective endeavour of identity creation. Seeing oneself as a nodal point in a network of shared identities with very specific connections is one way of realizing the condition plurality (Arendt 1958, 1970). It requires, however, the continuous use of imaginative skills. This notion of plural identities, secondly, challenges republicanism in a traditional sense, which insist that clearly demarcated political identities are necessary (Kenny 2003: 134). In other words, truly plural identities make it more difficult to carefully channels demands, develop shared interests and most importantly, define the limits of groups. Through plural identities the tensions and conflicts inherent in the existence of manifold identities are incorporated into the workings of the group itself, as people unite different identifications.

The complexity of these processes of identity formation has significant implication for the collective use of imaginative skills in order to shape the common world. The Zapatistas have made the revelation of the complexity and plurality of identity an integral part of their communicative strategies. On the one hand, the Zapatista invocation of a Mexican unity in which indigenous people have a place is based on "emphasizing the potential *difference* of all Mexicans through various tactics of paradox, alienation, and the transformation of both official state discourse and ostensibly traditional indigenous practices" (Martín 2004: 109, italics in original). It is in other words, the claim that all identities are plural and that the indigenous is merely one way of pluralising identity. Emphasizing the prevalence of difference is also the basis for the association of different struggles with each other. This is expressed in a famous self-description of Subcommandante Marcos:

> Marcos is gay in San Francisco, black in South Africa, an Asian in Europe, a Chicano in San Ysidro, an anarchist in Spain, a Palestinian in Israel, a Mayan Indian in the streets of San Cristobal, a Jew in Germany, a Gypsy in Poland, a Mohawk in Quebec, a pacifist in Bosnia, a single woman on the Metro at 10 p.m., a peasant without land, a gang member in the slums, an unemployed worker, an unhappy student and, of course, a Zapatista in the mountains'. (EZLN 243)[270]

Such notions recognize similarity despite overwhelming difference, they incorporate difference into the very fabric of identity itself. Hence, the Zapatista expression of "everything for everybody, nothing for us" (Martín 2004: 115), does not imply that there is no demands on part of the Zapatistas, but that these demands are understood as part of a plurality of demands, of which the Zapatista position is merely one expression. The imagination here works to embed specific needs and grievances in a broader picture, which simultaneously makes them more relative and more pronounced. Communication and action, that formulate and press demands, are connected to identity, its symbolic representation by imaginatively situating both in relation to others, not through demarcation.

270 The texts of the Zapatistas have penetrated the global space of the anti-globalization quite thoroughly, quotes and text fragments appearing in many different contexts. It is, however, not easy to come by well-sourced reproductions of these texts. One example includes Marcos 2002, a selection of writings by Zapatistas edited by Juana ponce de Leon. However, the citation given here refers to the number of the statement of the EZLN in which the quote appears.

Global social movements work much the same way: “It is precisely through articulating and sustaining the tension between the affirmation of subjective specificity and involvement in the construction of common initiatives that individuals and groups delineate their identities as actors within the movement.” (Farro 2004: 637). Imaginative skills here also serve not just to reconcile contradictions but also to enable the parallel consideration of contradictory identities and possibilities. Identity becomes a singularity that remains open to contestation and struggle. Collective identities are created through the individual articulation and communication of particular experiences in historic specific contexts. In effect this turns any collective goals into “floating signifiers”, whose specific content is continuously shaped by the choice of social agents (Harvey/Halverson 2000: 158f).[271] What matters is not agreement on specific goals that remains constant, but the ability to re-imagine the content of these goals as experiences evolve. Global solidarity with the Zapatistas, then, is not expressed through demanding more rights for the Zapatistas, but through fighting for tolerance, equality and a humane society wherever one is. Global solidarity of this kind mediates between the universal and the particular and thereby blurs the distinction between beneficiaries and providers of solidarity (Olesen 2004: 258f). The imaginative abilities needed to negotiate plural identities feed into the ability to devise goals that are continuously re-evaluated and adapted. Instead of diminishing commitment to common action it seems to be precisely this flexibility, which makes the collective action of global social movements so attractive: in making yourself part of the movement you do not gain influence, but you get to negotiate the very direction, structure and future of the movement.

Imaginative skills are exercised through a wide variety of techniques. Most closely related to the fabrication of plural identities, which are always collective and individual at the same time, are cognitive and emotional techniques of self-reflection (King 2006: 886). For activists in social movements, they begin with associating one's struggles with those of others, extending to the reflection of interactions within the movement, ongoing discussion about its strength and role and each activist's own motivation and contribution (Khasnabish 2008: 163ff). For war torn societies it maybe the complex and enduring processes of reconciliation. Identity construction here is a complex process of discovering and re-inventing identity at the same time, it combines reproductive and creative imaginative skills. It is also a highly social process, as plural, connected identities emerge only in exchange with others. Co-counselling is an example of such a deliberately shared process, employed by social movement activists and seen to enhance participation and motivation (King 2006: 879f). Ideally, such deliberate imaginative processes become an integral part of institutionalized communication and action. They would be useless, if the point was to reach specific goals, but prove indispensable as the process itself takes centre-stage, actively producing the alternatives it seeks.

Imaginative skills also entail the ability to find original solutions to hitherto unknown problems or under significantly changed conditions (Homer-Dixon 2002). This involves social creativity, the active production of society (King 2006: 873). The World Social Forum is an example of such institutional

271 Harvey and Halverson (2000: 156ff) draw on Derrida's notions of secret and promise here, which show some remarkable parallels to Arendt's portrayal of the public/private distinction and the importance of promising.

innovation that combines the belief that alternative forms are possible with the action of implementing such forms. The active refusal to turn the Forum into a unified movement stems from the ability to imagine alternative forms of organisation that avoid the pitfalls of party politics and NGO activism – without denying their importance. The Forums are seen, rather, as solution to a different problem, namely how different kinds of actors and interests can communicate, inspire each other and exchange knowledge. ATTAC, the global network of activists and activist organizations, works on a similar premise (Cassen 2003). The aforementioned Mumbai Alliance devises alternative mechanisms of local housing improvements and, here also, the starting point is a imaginatively changed interpretation of the problem itself, that is made part of the process of improving housing (Appadurai 2002). The strength of these approaches lies in the underlying belief, that innovative ways of interacting, organising and solidarity can be found, that there is a politics beyond the usual. It is also another indicator of the fundamentally self-referential nature of intransitive power. It is not defined through the effects it has on others but through the ways in which it changes the life-worlds of those directly involved.

Processes which challenge the imagination invite the application of creative actions and techniques. Some of those have already been explored as symbolic representations of intransitive power, such as the airplane attack on the Mexican army. Of similar importance are discursive and poetic techniques, employed by the Zapatistas and social movements. Activists collectively reinvent critique as theatre, song and game. And as a consequence, the creative expression itself feeds back into the self-referential process of intransitive power. Any such expression is primarily created for the active participants and not for the enemies, if there are such. It provides imaginative expressions of the common intent to shape the world and emotional experiences that connect people beyond the immediate exchange. Furthermore, art and poetics may bridge boundaries of culture and language, but remain resistant to legalising or rationalising discourses. It is hard to counter a poem with a scientific argument, because the former speaks on so many more levels. By turning rebellion into a creative, playful endeavour it is saved from the totalizing force of dominant discourse. Lyrics maintain rather than eliminate the disjunctures of dominant discourse (Khasnabish 2007: 518, Higgins 2005).

These varied forms of employing imaginative skills underlie the potential of exercising imagination to conceive of radical alternatives to the world that is. The key word is alternatives 8in the plural). Social movements, it has been noted, are very vague in their goals and open to disparate positions, sometimes to the extent that their cohesion is severely challenged. This causes frequent discomfort among activists, because it means association with goals one might not support and the impediment of successfully getting others to alleviate grievances (Marcuse 2005). Yet, precisely the imaginative skill making it possible to conceive of different alternative worlds at the same time makes social movements so vibrant and creative. The slogan “Another world is possible” in its openness, is an expression of that ability to work together without agreeing on the specific shape of the world to be brought about. The skill of imagination hence is also in the ability to stand and productively transform contradictions. Imagination transforms communicative practices into continuous reformulations of the

goals and enables the adjustment and transformation of the adequate symbolic representations. Imagination turns “Another world is possible” into a shared set of alternatives, which remains open to contestation and change, yet provides identification as a symbolic representation.

It is not, therefore, a shared utopia which connects global emerging instances of power. Instead, they share, I believe, important perceptions and interpretations. At the centre is the re-imagining of one's own situation in relation to the global structure in which it is located. The imagination enables a re-interpretation of particular problems through a global framework. On this basis physical and mediated links to other movements and struggles around the globe can be established. The imagination of the Zapatistas is somewhat of a prototype. Its importance lies not in the material achievements of the struggle itself but in the formation of a “globalized field of meaning” (Khasnabish 2004: 6). Their interpretation and portrayal of their struggle allowed many to associated themselves with it by defining their position in relation to it (Khasnabish 2007 508). Locating one's position in a global framework is the basic imaginative act connecting emerging spaces of power. Such is the global solidarity with the Zapatista movement (Olesen 2004: 263, 265). This is not, of course, a universally shared notion. However, it is not a purely individual act either, but “a collective potential and expression, […] the way in which as human beings we are able to envision and build possible futures” (Khasnabish 2008: 168).

This collective imaginative endeavour in itself defies dominant logic by replacing the need to pressure others with the wish to determine a shared collective future. The struggle itself is the alternative in ever changing shapes and forms, in local and diverse interpretation and overlapping spaces of power. The ultimate power of the imagination, at first, appears like pure ignorance. It lies in the ability to act like the world was what one wants it to be. The underlying assumption is, that perpetuated social action creates reality and perpetuated social action driven by the image of another world creates another world. This is the assumption behind activist-researcher's conceptions such as John Holloway's (2002) “taking power without taking power” or Rebecca Solnit's claim that "the revolution that counts is the one taking place in the imagination" (Solnit 2005: 36). It is also in the actions of many people in violence-ridden areas, who actively re-imagine a world that can be in the abyss between the world that has been, the world that is, and the world that should be (Nordstrom 1997: 190ff). The radical and counterfactual application of the imagination, however, is not ignorance or stupidity because it happens in full recognition of what reality is (Solnit 2005: 24). It is instead a powerful strategy of avoiding the pitfalls of confronting intransitive power with the transitive power and/or violence of other actors. And sometimes it is enough just to take official discourse by its words, despite the fact that you know it is wrong. One blow to the GDR government in early 1989 was the comparison of crowd-sourced[272] election results in the local election with the official ones, revealing significant discrepancies. By acting like they were free, people pushed for freedom. Intransitive power must maintain this kind of self-referential impetus, a practice not confronting power with existing orders but transcending them through imagination, in order to remain.

272The word, of course, did not exist then. Essentially, the action involved going to the local electoral stations and compiling the results of these local elections – an activity that would be called crowd-sourcing today.

Imaginative skills deny the unchangeability of the present and any necessity of a certain future. Collective imaginations that are more than mere reproductive imaginations create a myriad of possible futures. And they instil the realization that it depends on which collective acts are taken, what this future will be. The ability to imagine, in other words, by enabling the imagination of different futures reaffirms the responsibility of individuals and collectives as to how that future turns out. The more people use their imagination, the more they will be pushed towards action (Khasnabish 2007: 524).[273] Imagination speaks to the emotions and inserts a sense of potential self-efficacy, which is inherently tempting. This complements the renewed sense of belonging imaginative abilities enable through the construction of plural identities. Imaginative skills are the driving force behind communication and action as well as symbolic representation. They turn the former into a continuous, future oriented activity and encourage the reinterpretation and adaptation of the latter by foregrounding the plurivalence of symbols. Imagination enables people to devise and adjust the institutional arrangements that then give stability to their shared worlds. These may be procedures at the World Social Forums or forms of representation in Somaliland. Furthermore, imagination enables collectives to make something new from something old, extrapolating from the present creative ideas of the future rather than necessary futures and definite goals.

Imagination implies, that there is no inherent teleology of historical processes without denying the historical contingency of the future. It is rather the claim that we make history everyday, by what we do and by what we fail to do (Solnit 2005: 103). In turn this means, that there is no end point to history nor any necessity in the historical stages so far. There might be progress, but it is not linear but determined through the choices we make. We eliminate alternatives routes through our actions, but do not discover the course of history. This is what Arendt meant when she insisted that we needed to consciously begin planning our history without the comfort of a Messianic Age or paradise, a perfect end point of human development.[274] Power is, in other words not a matter of devising a working institutional system to reach societal decisions, but a matter of permanent awareness of the fact that our doing or not doing equally change the future and that it is up to us to decide. This is why power cannot be delegated to process or reason. The responsibility for our future is our own – quite like a child cannot become an adult without realising that neither the childhood nor the the system determine

273 Yet, the imaginations must remain multiple not turn into utopias which soon become dystopias. The processual character of intransitive power is essential.

274 It is worth to consider this passage in detail: “Politically, this means that before drawing up the constitution of a new body politic, we shall have to create - not merely discover - a new foundation for human community as such. In historical terms this would mean not the end of history, but its first consciously planned beginning [...]. Such a consciously planned beginning has obviously never been possible before because mankind was only a concept or an idea, never a reality. No longer separated by space and nature and, consequently, by spiritually insurmountable walls of history and culture, mankind will either find a way to live in and rule together an overcrowded earth or it will perish - an event which will leave the sublime indifference of nature untouched."(Arendt 1951: 436). Whether the process of the destruction of mankind would, indeed, leave nature untouched is debatable, of course.

one's life. Influence, yes, but not determine. We cannot choose our starting point, nor what made us who we are, but where we go from here is entirely up to us.[275]

It is quite clear, that the emotional and collective nature of intransitive power leads to ethical and normative implications. Resulting from the conception of intransitive power responsibility, collective and individual, takes a centre stage. These normative dimensions, however, cannot be explored here. It is important to note that for now they remain logical, functional conclusions from the proposed analytical conception that are normatively empty. No guidelines as to what an adequate fulfilment of the above responsibilities entails can be drawn without relying on other forms of political theoretical argument. Furthermore, intransitive power might appear as an ideal form of cooperation. It is not. Remaining problems, such as the transience and the complexity of intransitive power will be pointed out in the next section. Also, intransitive power is neither the only nor the dominant ordering principle of the world and unlikely to become such. The second part of the next section therefore explores, at least briefly, the role and status of other forms of order in relation to power.

Three points shall be noted in conclusion to the exploration of emergences of intransitive power. Firstly, the three elements of intransitive power are deeply interrelated. One must not be weighed over another. They are all important and what is most relevant in a specific instance depends on the circumstance. In the modern state, the symbolic took centre stage, delegating communication and action to a certain restricted space and limiting imagination. In the Zapatista movement imagination drives communication and action as well as symbolic representation. In the World Social Forum communication and action are most forceful, enhancing imagination and producing particularly plurivalent symbols. In violence-ridden areas, it seems, the continued re-evaluation of the relationship between the three elements is most pronounced. Secondly, intransitive power is a process that has no inherent end point. It is defined through its exercise, not its goals. Hopes at specific goals are frequently disappointed and therefore the exercise of intransitive power requires particular resilience. Thirdly, none of these elements is by itself new, nor is their combination unprecedented. However, technological advancements, global connectedness and increased individual skills have fundamentally altered the way they play out. To what effect, whether change remains quantitative or turns qualitative cannot be explored right here. Some of the more significant changes are noticeable in comparison to the modern configuration of power. The next section therefore makes the implicit consequences of the contemporary emergences of intransitive power with regard to the modern configuration of power more explicit.

5.3. Evolving patterns of power and order

The previous sections presented a perspective on the world based on the proposed two-dimensional conception of power. Interestingly, it was quite possible to rely on various bodies of literature which

275 While these latter points are certainly ethical to an extent, they are logical consequences of the analytical viewpoint developed here. They are analytically relevant, because they logically delineate power from other forms of order. I will explore this in more detail in 5.3.2.

have observed relevant phenomena. This indicates, of course, that it is not the evidence of these instances as such that escapes current theoretical frameworks. Their relationship, however, must remain obscure as long as there is no analytical frameworks to capture the relationship. I have argued, that many seemingly different phenomena, such as state-building, local resistance, and global social movements, are in fact expressions of variations of intransitive power. While this is interesting. By itself it hardly justifies the significant deviation from previous discourses of power implied in the proposed conception. I believe on further value is to be found in the way in which a more refined definition of power frees spaces for other concepts, in particular violence and the social. The combination of these different analytical forms of order indeed allows for a dynamic understanding of the complex processes in the contemporary world and the kind of order that evolves from it. I am aware that this is, in fact, a strong claim to make. Given that I cannot explore it in full detail here, it must remain a hypothesis. However, this chapter will be devoted to making this hypothesis plausible, that processes of dynamic change in social order maybe understood through distinguishing power, violence and the social and explaining their relationship.

I will proceed in two steps. In the first step will sum up the concept of power and will explicate the relationship between intransitive and transitive power. In light of the arguments presented it is necessary to reconsider some of the distinctions drawn in chapter two. Furthermore, the ongoing change in the relationship between intransitive and transitive power will be summarized. In the second step I will delineate power from violence and the social, which, I believe, are two other important ordering principles of human relations. Their significance can only be hinted at but some basic features can be deduced from the conception of power itself. Interestingly, violence and the social have also been explored extensively in the literature albeit sometimes under different names. While I will not review such literature in full detail here, I give ample sources in which to explore the issue further. The task described requires me to leave the relatively safe ground of rereading established discourses in light of the two-dimensional conception of power and to enter the realm of argumentative speculation. However, if the argument so far was convincing, then these conclusions are only consequential.

5.3.1 Relating intransitive and transitive power

This section serves to explicit further the relationship between intransitive and transitive power. While at an abstract level this relationship can be described more easily, the specific configurations of power which result are, of course, more complex. I will therefore briefly consider the main differences between the modern and the potentially emerging configuration of power. Thinking of power in two-dimensions implies a certain narrative of modernity and contemporary change. Intransitive power means communication and action which symbolically constitutes spaces of power between people and requires the active and collective use of imaginative skills. Transitive power is the resulting ability of a collective to set rules that are complied with. The basis of this compliance is the intransitive power which involves an agreement on the necessities to find and apply certain rules subsequently shaping the common world. Hence, any group has such transitive power to the extent that it does not need to exert

means of violence in order to find compliance. Intransitive and transitive power co-occur often but not necessarily. Either way, power is never the only and hardly ever the dominating principle of order. It is usually complemented by some measure of violence and the social.[276] The understanding of power proposed here, therefore, abandons the idea that obedience to rules or following direct orders is indiscriminately caused by – different forms of – power. Power is portrayed as a much more limited phenomenon. This does not mean, however, that previous power debates are beside the point. Rather, as I have shown, they focused on specific configurations of power, such as the state, or expressions of violence or the social which are related to instances of power. Most of theorists of power, even if implicitly, are aware of the two-dimensional nature of power. I merely make explicit what they implied and explore the advantages of that perspective.[277] I will begin with considering the relationship between intransitive and transitive power in some detail.

I have argued, that the sovereign nation-state in terms of power is the prototype of a fixed connection between intransitive and transitive power.[278] The result is the image of a relatively static system, which takes the constitutive consequences of intransitive power as given and tames the maintaining exercise of intransitive power in institutional confines. The radical potential and transformative character of intransitive power are thus minimized. Stability is the predominant concern of such an arrangement. The image of the state, furthermore, comes with a territorial foundation, i.e. sovereignty, and a heavy reliance on symbolic means, i.e. nationhood. Hence, transitive power appears most prominently. The state form of organization thus met the very real demands of emerging capitalism for administration and adequate control of the masses. The emergence of the modern configuration of power is closely related to the emergence of modern capitalism (Schlichte 2005: 81). Its organizational form allowed for a productive channelling of economic activity and some degree of redistribution of the benefits, realizing the positive potentials of this highly dynamic economic system. Hence, the state could also rely on some degree of output legitimacy, based on decreased violence and increased standards of living.[279]

Transitive power in this modern configuration, strictly speaking, would be directed towards the presumed source of intransitive power – the internal side of statehood. Consequently, the interaction between states has been marked by struggle for dominance[280]. It was, to speak in Arendt's terms, a

276 The highly ambivalent and complex relationship between power and violence will be discussed in more detail later in this section and therefore here no further details are warranted.

277 An "intuitive" and often useful understanding of power as "A trying to get B to do X or at least not Y" is still very common, as chapter 2.1. has shown. My proposition is not based on the weaknesses of those debates but on the specific analytic strengths of the conception proposed here with regard to capturing the complex nature of contemporary developments in a coherent framework.

278 The modern state, however, is not only based on power, violence and the social also have a role to play (Schlichte 2005: 106). Again, this will be explored in the next section.

279 It is not presumptuous to ask in how far this particular productivity of the state system was based on extraction from colonies, which emerged alongside the modern state, yet are quite a different organisational form. World system theory builds on this basic notion (Wallerstein 1976: 345). However, such a detailed critical treatment of the relationship between capitalism is beyond the scope of the argument.

280 I use dominance here in place of Morgenthau's "power" (Morgenthau 1961: 28), the latter being obviously misleading in the context of my argument. I avoid domination, because it is closely associated with Weber's

measure of strength. This strength was only partly based on power, e.g. the ability to mobilize internal support. It was also significantly based on access to means of violence to use against other states. This struggle for dominance was over time regulated by conventions, beginning with notions of Just War dating back to the emergence of the state itself to international organisations in more recent decades. Neither emerging norms and agreements nor intergovernmental organizations represent an unresolvable logical challenge to the modern configuration of power. It could be argued, however, that the increased intensity of international cooperation, in place of confrontation was to a significant degree a reaction to challenges to this modern configuration. International cooperation can be seen as an attempt to adjust the modern configuration of power to deal with more and less controllable cross-border connections. The ideal state, effectively controlling all of its territory and population as well as its borders, of course, never existed. Liberal and participatory logics limited the centralization of power within the state. And social and economic exchanges challenged the controllability of borders, populations and territories always to some extent. Globalization, however, has multiplied and amplified these challenges. And degree matters. So long as migration, transnational economic spaces, local autonomy and global social movements were an exception, they could be disregarded or treated on the basis of exceptional rules. The rule could remain intact and that rule was, that territorially distinct spaces of power fixed intransitive power in ways that made the efficient exercise of transitive power possible. The state now is "disappearing" to the extent that it is seen to be the exception to the rule, rather than the rule itself.

The issue of fundamental change is, of course, highly emotional. It is far more than a cognitive question but gets right to the heart of our understanding of stability, predictability and security. Can there be a viable political order beyond the state? Obviously, that question will not be answered with any certainty for some time to come, but quite a few have argued that other forms of political order are thinkable and might be theoretically captured. Ferguson and Mansbach, to name but one example, suggest to look at polities instead of states. Polities are "entities with a significant measure of institutionalization and hierarchy, identity, and capacity to mobilize persons for value satisfaction (or relief from value deprivation)" (Ferguson/Mansbach 1995: 22). This more open definition suggests, that intransitive and transitive power may be in a permanent connection but not associated with a specific territory or clearly demarcated borders. Polities of this kind are never omnipotent and mostly not absolute. The state is one specific form of polity. Polities can nest, i.e. arrange amongst each other in certain ways so that they are complementary rather than conflicting (Ferguson/Mansbach 1995: 32ff). This nesting also is one of the driving forces of change in polities.

Ferguson and Mansbach introduce the notion of authority in order to explain how such specific pockets of order may emerge even in very complex systems. The connection between intransitive and transitive power can be expressed through local governance, forms of self-help and other coping mechanisms. Non-universal polities may hinder the development of a centralized authority rather than enhance it, because their rather open and often fuzzy nature is in tension with the all-encompassing

notion of power (Weber 191968: 53, Schlichte 2005: 65-72, Schlichte 2009: 145).

claims of the state. The mediated state, a state abandoning claims to dominance and focusing on the facilitation of the nesting practices of different polities may be a solution to the messiness of the situation for example in many regions of Africa (Menkhaus 2007: 77). Rosenau uses the term spheres of authority to designate similar pockets of governing (Rosenau 1997)[281]. Here, the term authority designates the connection between intransitive and transitive power in a certain space, even if implicitly. Rosenau associates these spheres of authority with a significant disaggregation of authority and an increased complexity of governing (Rosenau 2007). Overall, the patchiness of polities or spheres of authority is associated with a distinct unease because, despite all, these connections between intransitive and transitive power fall short of an overarching, describable structure of governing[282]. The rule that the world is – on the whole – structured by spaces in which intransitive and transitive power are firmly connected seems to turn into an exception with many variations.

Attempts to recover this modern logic make for example power sharing appear as an adequate solution to violent conflict. If only all those who struggle for control are included, violence will cease. This approach, however, underestimates the significance the two-dimensional nature of power. Resolving conflict is not, in the first instance about arranging the passing and distribution of control. It is about creating the basis for effective governing, i.e. the communities which can invest institutional structures with power (Sawyer 2004: 449). In focusing on power sharing conflict management cannot break the logic of violence, which is an instrument of control, but merely channels it. State building even of a mediated state, in other words, is so difficult because it affords the creation of intransitive power. And since intransitive power is created through active and collective efforts of many, creating it from the outside is somewhat of an oxymoron.[283]

Globalization is a complex, dynamic process producing recurring pockets of order, rather than one unified new system (Urry 2003: 102). A fluid order seems to emerge which is maintained by ongoing social practices and does not frequently lead to the emergence of clearly defined groups and permanent

281 The term authority is quite interesting in this context. Ferguson and Mansbach use it to designate "effective governance, the ability to exercise significant influence or control across space over persons, resources, and issues" (Ferguson/Mansbach 1995: 28). Arendt also uses the term to designate persons or institutions which may expect compliance without coercion or persuasion (Arendt 1970: 45). In both cases, the focus is on the compliance, whereby Ferguson and Mansbach include force in the ways compliance is achieved and Arendt does not. Either way, the concept is somewhat ambivalent, because it puts the observable compliance at the centre and remains somewhat vague with regard to the sources of that compliance. In Arendt's case compliance may be based on the social, in Ferguson and Mansbach's formulation sources of compliance include, once more, power and violence. While authority might be customized to productively engage with the triad suggested here, this would require a thorough treatment of debates on the concept. The added value in this context here would be much lower than the attention required.

282 This could be one of the reasons debates on governance are so focused on mechanisms and structures, yet, rarely agree on recurring overall patterns. For an introduction to these debates see Schuppert 2008.

283 At best, outsiders can create favourable conditions. This, however tentative, might be worth doing. And, it is by no means a new thought. Niccoló Machiavelli (1977, 1986) and Alexis de Tocqueville (1985), to name but two examples, emphasize the importance of institutional structures enabling communication and common action as well as symbolic representation. Both realize that institutional structure may facilitate but cannot guarantee stability. Their well-grounded scepticism is indicative of the complex nature of intransitive power.

connections. I have shown how intransitive power emerges in its own right and only in limited ways translates into transitive power. Instead, social movements, indigenous resistance and local practices of self-organisation thrive on the exercise of intransitive power itself. They live the alternatives they seek to find to the modern order of the world, partly because they criticize it and partly because the modern just cannot cope with the ongoing change. Power and power-based order under these circumstances are maintained through ongoing active engagement of people and this, of course, is a fragile and fleeting foundation. While the modern configuration of power countered the transience of intransitive power by logically and empirically connecting it to transitive power, in the emerging configuration of power the transience may only be countered by multiplying instances of power. The common world is stabilized by relying on more than one space of power, hence making the breakdown of one less threatening. It also makes the world harder to navigate.

Stabilizing intransitive power, then, is an exceedingly difficult process. And it is iterative and ongoing, it cannot reach a final stage. It is therefore difficult to impossible to foresee the shape of emerging institutional orders in any detail. This is due to the dynamic nature of intransitive power as well as the need for intransitive power to express the wills of those generating it, which cannot be prescribed. The fragility of emergent forms of power seems problematic. Yet, a look at social movements, for example, suggests that "countersummits and campaigns have condensed a network of formal organizations and informal groupings that, although very lose, is nonetheless sustained in time." (Della Porta et al 2006: 233). Social movements, in other words, develop alternative social practices, which do not so much confront or overcome the state, but rather transform the very nature of social interaction itself. This is what Alberto Melucci called the "symbolic challenge of social movements", claiming that the political structure of the state "can't even hear the voice of movements and when it does, it is unable to adapt itself to the variability of the actors and issues collective action involves" (Melucci 1985: 815). The state will remain relevant where, in how far and as long as it remains an expression of intransitive power. The state lived as a social practice might not be universal, but it is surely not irrelevant (Migdal/Schlichte 2005). Considering power a two-dimensional phenomenon avoids the pitfall of judging one social practice against the other. They are merely different manifestations of the relationship between intransitive and transitive power.

The immateriality of many of the achievements of the emerging instances on intransitive power is striking and invites questions on their viability. However, if they are recognized as precursors of an emerging order, than we might realize that their sustainability will only show in the longer run. Possibly, they transform the way people interact at a fundamental level, so that the social practice of power remains intact even if individual instances, such as for example the World Social Forum decay and disappear. Because power is produced between individual people acting collectively, it may re-emerge anywhere and the practice of power in one instance may encourage the practice of power in others. What truly stabilizes intransitive power in the long run, then, is the belief of individuals in their ability to recreate it wherever needed. The prevalence of such imaginative skills is the main guarantor of the emergence and persistence of power.

It may seem overly optimistic to rely on such individual and emotionally charged skills, and furthermore, their collective exercise. It does not seem so impossible to those engaged in intransitive power. And their engagement comes with a considerable amount of patience and perseverance. It is not short time successes that mark the emergence of intransitive power but rather long-term, sometimes painfully slow transformation. The Mumbai Housing Alliance practices patience in the face of emergency (Appadurai 2002). The Zapatistas take the long route of redefining "indigenous" and reordering temporality by questioning the pre-modern/modern ordering itself (Khasnabish 2007: 512, Martín 2004: 124). Many African people engage in local practices of community construction, which do not transform the global structures of inequality, yet, create spaces worth living in (Treasure/Gibb 2010, Iniguez de Heredia 2010, Adebajo 2011). All these instances are ways of collectively re-imagining the very basic understandings upon which the shared world is based. The process is not radical, as a common sense understanding of revolution would make us think. It is slow, iterative and full of failure. But it is continuous and for those engaged in it fundamentally transformative.

Possibly, it is a sign of a rather arrogant western attitude to always want to know what the final result of such ordering processes will be (Wunsch 2000: 502). Maybe the continuous reconstruction of spaces of power is "the end" for now and we are entering a phase of permanent small scale transformation. This might be less threatening than it seems. A networked world of spaces of power could prove just as, if not more stable than the state world. Where no centre can be attacked, the overall structure may remain intact if many subsystems fail.[284] The two-dimensional concept of power can make the variations in the forms and shapes of these iterative processes visible. The conception connects them, because it binds both dimensions together in the concept of power but does not fix their relationship, leaving room for the local, specific and particular of each configuration of power. The main virtue of considering intransitive and transitive power as analytically distinct dimensions rather than forms of power then is, that it provides a wide yet not arbitrary framework for understanding contemporary change. It does, however, require us to rethink the instances which have previously been summarized under the heading of power and consider violence and the social analytically related but distinct and equally important forms of order. Their influence on the daily lives of people is just as significant as that of power and in many cases more pronounced.

5.3.2 Delineating power

As argued above, the two-dimensional conception of power makes explicit the intransitive dimension of power, which is largely implicit in most of the power debate. It also excludes, however, two phenomena that are often included in power conceptions, yet, should be analytically distinguished: violence and the social[285]. Although Arendt's contribution has lead to significant misunderstandings

284For an introduction into the specific characteristics of networked systems see Warnke 2011.

285The term "social" is so ubiquitous that it is hard to visibly mark the idea to be explored here as distinctive. I have decided to use it in what follows with the determinate article as *the social* in order to distinguish it from the adjective and to symbolize its material connotation.

and has been the object of heavy critique, I believe, there is important insights to be gained from this particular distinction. In this last section I will seek to show what that is. These thoughts can only be preliminary, since both, violence and the social, merit further attention than can be given to them here. They open a horizon for understanding order, however, which illustrates the potentials of refining the concept of power as suggested. I will begin by considering Arendt's contribution to my understanding of these forms of order and go on from there drawing out where and how violence and the social are to be distinguished from power. The emerging picture gives an idea of the complexity of possible patterns of order as empirical phenomena, while hopefully presenting them in a coherent and plausible conceptual framework.

Violence

Violence is most closely and quite ambivalently associated with power. Despite claiming the concept as important, social sciences have so far not delivered a well-grounded and coherent theory of violence (Schlichte 2009: 57).[286] Where with regard to power one is almost throttled by the sheer amount of literature in political theory, the issue of violence is often treated in passing. Since the end of the Cold War, social scientific interest in violence has been renewed by a perceived increase in the incidence and intensity of violence (e.g. Kaldor 2006, Kaplan 1994). Theories of globalization, however, largely fail to treat the issue at all (McGrew 2007: 15). The messiness of violence and the sense of urgency resulting from violent situations and their humanitarian consequences seem to make a sober engagement with the phenomenon extremely difficult. I shall not provide a theory of violence here, but it is worth considering some insights that can be deduced from the relationship between power and violence. Violence, then, is initially understood as the infliction of harm upon the integrity of a person or persons or the threat thereof. Violence is thus directly related to the actual being in the world of the individual being. Violence threatens the end of all social relations by eliminating the subject from the world, thus diminishing the future through its immediateness (Schlichte 2009: 58). Violence is fundamentally ambivalent in that it is the ultimate destructor of social relations, yet, produces meaning for observers and participants.

The significance of violence in relation to power is explored explicitly by Hannah Arendt (1970) and has been laid out in detail earlier.[287] To Arendt, violence is a mode of acting, but a dangerously flawed one. In contrast to power violence is never an end in itself, but always a means to ends. Violence is defined through its ends, yet, the unpredictability of action frequently leads to situations, where the means of violence overmaster these ends. Violence then multiplies and creates a more violent world. If ever, violence achieves only short term ends, in the long run it loses out against its underlying means-end logic (Arendt 1970: 80). Intransitive power shares with the Arendtian notion of power the particularity of self-reflexivity, which amounts to a tendency to produce more of itself. The ultimate aim of intransitive power is its own reproduction. Any goals of the actors involved are

286For an introduction to sociological treatments of violence see Nunner-Winkler 2004.
287These issues are treated in detail in chapter 2.2.2.

emerging properties of the power itself, not constituting or defining it. Intransitive power is the very practice of the things it seeks to achieve and can therefore not be separated from them. Violence, however, depends on the ends for its justification. Violence has a purpose. That purpose need not be awfully sophisticated, it might be something as immediate as torturing, extracting resources or destroying the enemy. In fact, violence is particularly good at achieving such short term goals.[288] It cannot, however, generate power. Obedience achieved through violent means depends on the constant presence of these means. When the threat of violence is no longer credible, obedience will falter. When exercised continuously, however, violence loses rather than gains credibility. This is why the modern state monopolized violence, but failed where it had to rely on its permanent exercise (Münkler 1995). Securing obedience by violent means alone requires the permanent credible threat and hence a significant amount of resources.

The relationship between the two dimensions of power and violence is incredibly complex. The most visible connection is the destruction of power through violence (e.g. Iniguez de Heredia 2010: 25). The threat of violence alone is an effective instrument of preventing meaningful communication between people. Where everyday violence persists, may it be the prevalence of criminal violence or large scale war, people lack the time and the resources to engage in meaningful communicative exchanges and creative collective action. Physical survival takes precedence, crippling communication and interaction. Dictators in states and "warlords" in stateless societies have used this effect of violence to maintain control. Yet, short of these obvious forms of violent order, any political form remains threatened through violence. In the modern state the ambivalent relationship between power and violence is resolved, at least temporarily, be designing institutions, which control and effectively limit legitimate and illegitimate violence (Schlichte 2005: 129). Overall, violence in the extreme – not matter who exercises it – atomizes people, which inhibits the emergence of intransitive power. It destroys the very plurality upon which power is build. Creating common spaces of action does not, then, appear to be an appropriate solution to problems of outright violence.

However, it is not that easy. In theory, violence should prevent the emergence of intransitive power. Empirically, it does most, but not all of the time. Women in Chiapas, for example, organized resistance even though they were the particular target of government violence before and during the uprising (Harvey/Halverson 2000: 164). Even during the fiercest times of civil war people in Mozambique engaged in complex techniques of world-making, creating linkages between them, aimed at "unmaking violence" (Nordstrom 1997: 216). They defied the logic of destroying plurality by building up relationships, shared beliefs and common narratives across the frontlines of civil war. Recent uprisings in the Arab world began although the credible threat of violence through their governments had by no means disappeared.[289] In each of these instances, the skill of imagination

288 It will become clear later on, that in order to achieve long-term goals without power, the social might be much more effective, even though it is much harder to employ intentionally.

289 Of course, sources on this are largely journalistic. The main change in attitude of the general public in these countries, however, seems to have been a profound loss of fear. See for example Robin Lustig "The Arab

remained intact and eventually allowed people to share their ideas of what the world they live in should be – and make it happen. Or, as one Egyptian observer put it: "Nothing aids the erosion of one's fear more than knowing there are others, somewhere else, who share the same desire for liberation – and have started taking action"[290]. Because imagination thrives at the cracks and contradictions of the world, as these challenge it in particular, the rather crude instrument of violence cannot destroy it entirely. In fact, the excessive use of violence is bound to create disjunctures between the justifying narratives in which violence is embedded and its actual exercise. Fear might cripple the imagination for a time, but the greater the threat to life without resistance, the less people have to lose in exercising their imagination and making a different world. Excessive violence may, but not must, destroy the very fear it seeks to instil.

The modern state monopolized violence and divided it into legitimate and illegitimate forms (von Trotha 2003: 727). This association of the monopoly of violence, however incomplete, with a state that was at the same time, at least in theory, an expression of power contributed greatly to the confusion surrounding the distinction between power and violence. The high visibility of transitive power and the close association with violence made the transition from one to the other easy to do and hard to recognize. To the present day it is difficult to clearly understand when the legitimate monopoly of violence turns into the excessive terror of a dictatorship. When is police violence necessary in order to maintain stability and when does it destroy the freedom and power of the people? The actual judgement of particular instances is open to debate and under the rule of law to legal appeal. Analytically the understanding of power I suggest offers us a way of understanding why that question is so complicated. Violent action of the state may reveal the strength of the intransitive power backing it or the loss of power of its institutions. The presence of intransitive power provides the distinguishing criterion.

Violence as a form of order, then, is fundamentally different from power. It may, however, also be a justifiable tool of power.[291] Unfortunately, violence bears fundamentally de-legitimizing effects (Schlichte 2009: 57), its use erodes the basis of the state or any other political form. Violence as an instrument is therefore highly ambivalent. It may be a tool of intransitive power to exert transitive power, for example where criminals are imprisoned and violence is prevented by organized violence of

uprisings: the end of fear?" 25th of February 2011. http://www.bbc.co.uk/blogs/worldtonight/2011/02/the_arab_uprisings_the_end_of.html [03.03.2011]

290 Hossam el-Hamalawy "Egypt's revolution has been 10 years in the making". 2nd of March 2011 http://www.guardian.co.uk/commentisfree/2011/mar/02/egypt-revolution-mubarak-wall-of-fear [03.03.2011]

291 Such justification relies on embedding violence in shared narratives and moral orders (Schlichte 2009: 65-72). Symbols and symbolic action have a fundamental role to play in this. This implies firstly, that symbolic representations are not exclusive to power. I made this point in chapter 3, when they were introduced. Secondly, the need to symbolically represent the legitimatory constructs of violence is indicative of the complementarity of violence and the social in many instances. While power and the social are incompatible in a given situation and power and violence threaten each other with destruction, violence and the social may be arranged in a mutually reinforcing manner. This is, because they both aim – ultimately – at inhibiting the skill of imagination, which is integral to power.

the state. Ideally, these instances work without actual physical violence and rely on the psychological effects of the threat of violence. Any such violence must keep the basic structure of plurality intact, it must recognize the receiver of the violent act as well as the one committing the act as unique individuals in the world. This idea is at the heart of a criminal system that judges cases individually and punishes the acts of individual people and not the properties of certain groups or the anonymous consequences of systemic effects. Whenever criminal law systematically targets groups pre-emptively putting them under a general suspicion, it begins to undermine the power basis upon which it rests (von Trotha 2003: 731). This is first and foremost an analytic distinction. There is nothing inherent in either the concept of violence or the concept of power which implies that the use of violence is unjustified when it is not an expression of transitive power. Or, that its exercise is necessarily morally acceptable, when it is backed by intransitive power.[292]

Violence can be very effective in preventing power. By reducing the individual to mere survival, it eliminates the ability to act imaginatively and collectively quite effectively. Despite the obvious moral shortcomings of maintaining order through violence, however, there is two structural problems with such attempts. Firstly, violence is a very expensive strategy, so to speak. Unless violence or the threat thereof is continuously maintained, it will fail. That requires resources and time, which can only be secured by continuously countering the delegitimizing effects of violent acts. Or, to speak in Arendt's terms, violence continuously needs to reify ends, most of which it will fail to achieve, because in the long run all that violence produces is more violence. Secondly, and quite related, the delegitimizing effects of violence are all the harder to counter the more vicious and prolonged the violent acts are. It leaves long-term traumatic effects on the individual. Often, the personal experience of violence serves as legitimation for further violence (Schlichte 2009: 59). Occasionally, however, it might lead to a loss of fear and the active reconstruction of the world as non-violent (Nordstrom 1997).[293] Individuals, who have experienced violence, may sometimes conclude from their experience, that other ways must be found. If they find others to agree, power may erupt spontaneously even in violent orders – and these eruptions are almost impossible to predict. Violence's weaknesses, then, are, that it is, firstly, an expensive instrument, which, secondly, cannot by itself guarantee successful control.

Violence is highly emotional and often results from various feelings of inefficacy and dissociation, i.e. the feeling of not being able to impact or belong in the world. Violence is the emotional opposite of power, which is associated with the emotions of efficacy and belonging. Anger and frustration lead to violence, fear, shame and humiliation, as well as injustices, disappointments and loss of power (Schlichte 2009: 76-82, Appadurai 2006, Arendt 1970: 54f). Violence in many places in Africa, for example, might be related to the organisational powerlessness of the African state (von Trotha 2000: 257). The firm and often violent reactions of police forces against

292 It is not possible to explore in more detail the issue of legitimacy and the legitimate use of violence here, as this requires sound normative argument. Violence is merely described as justifiable, which means that formally violent acts must be embedded in accepted narratives which make its use socially acceptable.

293 Hence Machiavelli's ambivalent treatment of violence – it may help rule or hinder it, depending on whether it is employed in the right amounts and situations (Machiavelli 1986).

anti-globalization movements may be provoked by a sense losing power reaching established political institutions (e.g. Gill 2000: 136). Violence seeks to replace the efficacy of actively and collectively shaping the shared world, with the effective and visible destruction of the shared world. It can bring a sense of control, which substitutes for the need to know, that one is not simply the object of hostile forces. This sense of control by some is paid for with the destruction of others. It is in part the highly emotional charge of violence, however, that makes it prone to fail in the face of power. The feeling of control gained through violence is easily overshadowed by the collective sense of efficacy instilled by power. Even a brief, fleeting moment of power arouses more positive emotions of belonging and self-efficacy than long periods of controlling others.[294]

Violence and power, then, may destroy each other. They cannot result from one another. While transitive power may be transformed into violence as the intransitive power producing it fades, there is no such easy transition from violence to power.[295] Violence cannot produce power, because it questions the very basis thereof, namely, plurality. Violence destroys the relations between people and has no tools for rebuilding them. That is the essential paradox facing military intervention in any war torn area of the world (Owens 2004). Violence is used to prevent further violence, to create the space in which other forms of order may emerge. However, the emergence of such order is neither automatic nor easy to achieve for those who came with (superior) violent means. They often come with moral justifications for intervention, which might be flawed, but which still provide a framework, an adequate narrative for justifying violence. When it comes to building sustainable polities these missions, however well they are morally justified, tend to fail. From the theoretical perspective advanced here, this is only consequential. Power, which is the basis of non-violent shared spaces, cannot be created by superior violence or threat thereof, nor from the outside. Power is the innate ability of a group of people. Its self-referentiality means that it cannot be induced. To be fair, this has not gone unnoticed. Humanitarian and military intervention is routinely supplemented by programs and activities aimed at reconciliation as well as community and institution building. And it is being recognized more and more that such strategies must begin by drawing on the existing local mechanisms if there are to succeed (Autessere 2009). All too often, however, these activities of building institutions and strengthening communities are not recognized as activities of making, which merely create conditions under which power may be more likely to emerge, but mistaken for the acting itself (Owens 2004). Holding elections is not enough to create a stable polity, nor is the provision of services to the population. Both meet needs of the people, but institutions will only hold up, when mistakes happen and needs must be negotiated, if they can build on the continued commitment of people to engage in the common shaping of their world.

294 There is, to my knowledge and quite unfortunately, no study comparing the emotional impact of e.g. revolutionary moments with the emotional impact of violent acts on the respective actors (not recipients). Therefore, this stands as an argumentative speculation, built on the theoretically derived properties of violence and power and anecdotal empirical observation.

295 This is the fundamental disagreement between Arendt and Machiavelli. While I agree systematically with Arendt, it is Machiavelli who talks at length about the features of institutions which might manage that transition (Machiavelli 1977).

One final note on the role of imagination in the relationship between power and violence is in order. As Schlichte pointed out, one of the most enigmatic consequences of violence is the trauma it induces (Schlichte 2009: 62f). Violence is traumatic in that it is remembered, often physically, and induces fear for a long time after the actual moment of violence. This long term effect is, what is most effective in destroying communities, social relationships, and, sometimes, even the individual itself. Overcoming this memory without falling prey to new violence is an enormous task, which requires the active and creative use of the imagination. Forgiving, the making of a future that is not determined by the past, is most needed where that past was violent. Cracking coherent narratives of justifying violence is made possible by revealing and reflecting the disjunctures between narratives and realities. The ability to fathom a future without violence and to begin living it in the face of everyday violent acts is an enormous leap of faith only feasible if people consider alternatives possible. Overcoming violence, I conclude, is hugely dependent on the exercise of the imagination, not just individually, but collectively.

The social

Power and violence are highly emotionalized forms of order in stark tension with each other, each in their own way out of the ordinary. If human order were a conglomeration of these two only, it would likely be highly volatile and unstable. I believe, we must consider at least one other form of order, namely the ominous social, to account for the less exceptional ordering mechanisms.[296] It is hardly possible to do justice to the complexity of the idea here. It is still worthwhile exploring at least some features because the social most severely impacts the emergence or non-emergence of power. The social is not to be understood here as a general framework of human relations[297] nor as a stand-in for the economic questions of common life. It shall be understood as a specific way of arranging human relations, which emphasizes the compliance with anonymous rules and the habitual following of rules essentially crippling the active shaping of the world through collective communication and action. While violence seeks to destroy meaningful communication between people about the common shaping of the world by atomising them and reducing them to bare survival, the social goes right to the root of the problem, so to say, and seeks to eliminate not just the ability but for good measure the inclination to use one's imagination creatively. The social creates a world in which alternatives are unthinkable.

The features of the social that could by derived following Hannah Pitkin's reading of Hannah Arendt may serve as a starting point. Arendt's idea of the social, obscure as it may remain, is an important backdrop for her understanding of power, because it is more than violence an actual opposite of power. The social is a condition in which a “collectivity of people who, though they are

296I believe the triad – power, violence, the social – covers major ordering principles. Yet the list might not be exhaustive and I will consider suggestions extending the list productively.

297“The social”, in other words, does not mean any social action as in the definition of Max Weber (Weber 1968: 22-24) but is a specific way of rule-conforming behaviours where active and conscious shaping of the world would be appropriate.

interdependent and active – their doings therefore continually shaping the conditions under which they all live – behave individually in ways that preclude coordinated action, so that they cannot (or at any rate do not) take charge of what they are doing in the world" (Pitkin 1998: 196). The social, in other words, is a way of making a shared world without collectively considering the ways in which that world will be shaped by that action. The social allows people to consider their individual needs and even to unite to achieve their goals. What matters is not the collective actions as such, but the mode of acting it represents. If it is geared solely towards specific ends and defined through them, an activity is social. It is habitual behaviour, that is creative only in the sense that it finds new ways to follow or circumvent rules and limitations. It is therefore reproductive of these rules, because even the circumvention reproduces their validity as rules.

Markets, for example, are such social spaces of interaction – individual decisions accumulate to a common outcome, without any one participant, let alone all of them together, taking charge of the overall result. Traditions and conventions are also mechanisms of the social. Dressing certain ways, observing conventions of politeness, abiding by rules regardless of their usefulness, meeting societal expectations are all different ways of behaving socially. The social is incredibly flexible, conventions and rules differ across cultures, age groups, political systems and educational levels. As markets show, the social is often quite efficient at solving complex allocation problems fast without truly collective decision-making – at least when and where the frameworks are set right.[298] Social ways of behaving lend stability to the shared world much more effortlessly than intransitive power ever could. They are essential, therefore, to reducing complexity and making complexities of social interaction manageable for individuals. Engaging in power, in contrast, is a continuous and straining effort at permanently renegotiating relationships with others. It is tempting, therefore, to resort to following rules and imitating others rather then actively taking charge of the consequences of collective practices (Arendt 1958: 230). It necessary for everyone to cope with the complex problems of everyday life.

The hideous aspect of the social, however, lies in the fact that it makes believe that it, the social, is the only way to do things. The social seeks to eliminate the idea, that actively taking charge of the collective world is really possible insisting the only way to manage the complexity of the world is by aggravated individual acts which, even in resisting the rules, always reproduce them. How, one might wonder, can this be achieved? Interestingly, there is a huge and prominent body of literature centring around that very question, albeit framing it, as I believe somewhat misleading, in terms of power: Discourse theory in the tradition of Michel Foucault and others.[299] Discourse theory of this kind

298 It is one of the unfortunate consequences of the rise of the social (Arendt 1958) that the reach of market mechanisms is stretched well beyond their capabilities. Markets are exceptionally good at solving certain kinds of allocation problems, but they are not good at resolving problems which require judgement, i.e. touch upon questions of justice, sustainability or human dignity. It would be wrong, however, to blame markets for their overextended application.

299 Prominent are Michel Foucault, Ernesto Laclau, Chantal Mouffe and others (Foucault 2005b, Laclau/Mouffe 2001). The above remarks seek to show that my proposed concept of power must be supplemented by other concepts in order to provide deeper insights into the workings of human community. It is clear to me, however, that anyone wishing to explore the workings of the social further would be well

explores the ways in which preconceptions, convention but also perceptions of the normal shape the actions of people and their very self, effectively restricting the choices available to them. And as they are shown to prevent certain forms of action, these mechanisms are termed "power" in accordance with the aforementioned intuitive understanding. This anonymous kind of "power" is at once illusive and ubiquitous. It is restraining and productive, enabling subjects to act and restraining them at the same time. I have argued above that it makes sense to define power in more restrictive terms and have thereby effectively removed this kind of power from the concept. My intention thereby is not to eliminate the phenomena in question from analysis. I believe instead, there is much to be gained from granting the various ways in which habitual, reproductive behaviour shapes the world a special status as analytically separate ordering principle of human relations. By distinguishing the social from power I seek to recover power as an actor-oriented concept and at the same time to accord the anonymous mechanisms of the social a prominent place in the theoretical framework. It is worth considering how the relationship between power and the social works at least in some examples.

Ronnie Lipschutz's (2007) critique of Global Civil Society provides interesting insights into the workings of the social and its relationship to intransitive power on the one hand and the relation to discourse theory on the other. Lipschutz draws on the Foucauldian concept of governmentality in order to argue that Global Civil Society is a product of power relations and hence has serious political limitations. Even when social movements succeed in inducing change, he argues, such change serves to stabilize the overall system and most often fails to address the underlying structural issues. In the terms suggested here, Global Civil Society is slowly absorbed into the confines of the ominous social, the regulated accommodation of interests. A Global Civil Society that is institutionalized in the global system prevents creative and radical change, as its institutions are turned into representations of interests which are to be accommodated. Civil society organizations falling pray to this strategy cease to be communicative spaces in which the imagination can flourish and turn into mere symbols of grievances. These can then be appeased through attending to the grievances by administrating them. As described above, this is the implicit reason why the proponents of the World Social Forum insist on its nature as an arena. As a movement of movements it would loose the radical character that makes it so important.

However, Lipschutz's story does not end there. Recalling Foucault's advice to look at the manifold instances of resistance[300], he identifies agency in the way "anarchistic" practices of resistance combine normative demands with pragmatism, creating ruptures in the web of governmentality. He envisions the possibility that these "zones of agency" could provide the opportunity to spin connections between these ruptures, which end up restructuring the current system. And then, he turns to Arendt (and Mouffe) in order to claim, that only a new, action-oriented and more antagonistic kind of democracy could challenge the reigning governmentality. (Lipschutz 2007: 240/241). These localized and often

advised to take into account the literature provided on discursive power.

300 Foucault remains somewhat vague on the possibility of resistance, insisting that it is always possible but saying little on how and when (Höppner 2008). Only his later works provide some preliminary thoughts, for example on technologies of the self (Foucault 1988a,b).

fragmentary resistances are ways of developing and maintaining alternative practices. They counter the habitual and normalizing tendencies of the social. It is therefore misleading to oppose them to government and politics or to measure them purely by their ability to change dominant structures or systems, to achieve specific aims in any immediate sense. They are ways of "politicizing", that aim at responsible and active participation rather than more efficient administration of individual lives and dutiful submission to official authorities (Pitkin 1998: 282f).

The most striking thing about the social is its subtleness. The social is perpetuated by the people and their practices. It is a highly effective and cost-efficient technique, because people do most of the work themselves. Practices and interpretations shape by practices and interpretations. The creation of reality is caught in a circular movement, which renders only a limited number of things possible. Therefore, in theory, discourse restricts possible change and fixes a specific status quo. By defining the limits of the thinkable, the social effectively restricts the imagination. By defining some things as impossible and building on unspoken truths, a realm of non-negotiable elements is created and maintained (Foucault 1981). Something that cannot be thought, cannot be done. By taking away the idea, that we make the world ourselves and making us believe there is no alternative, the social discourages meaningful communication and action to the extent that it disappears. And there is no-one to blame but ourselves, as we perpetuate the social by participating.

The social requires the participation of many, yet it is not a practice that forces or is imposed in any obvious sense, even if it favours the position of some over others. Techniques of normalization and the government of groups and populations transforms acting into making. By ascribing rather than negotiating identities it destroys the very basis of communication and action, namely plurality. Politics conducted in a social manner becomes concerned with the administration of things and people, rather than with actively taking charge of the common world (Arendt 1958, Foucault 2004a,b). The social, in effect, denies human agency framing the consequences of human action as complex, anonymous and hardly governable effects of natural behaviours (Pitkin 1998: 192). The social manages to detach individual decisions from their collective outcomes eliminating responsibility. Climate change in a world ordered by the social, for example, is the unavoidable consequence of human life, not the effect of some people wasting energy, consuming unsustainable amounts of meat and contributing in various ways to the elimination of various climate stabilizers. The stabilising effect of the social results at least in part from the choice of individuals to believe that, really, they could not do anything even if they wanted. Tocqueville famously demonstrated the dangers of what he calls "individualization" along much the same lines, claiming that overriding concern with private interests would lead to the levelling out of preferences and an inability to maintain democratic political systems through active participation (Tocqueville 1985).

Clearly, the social is a necessary ingredient of human relations. It makes life simpler, releases the pressure of always having to consider all possible (and hence infinitely many) consequences of one's action and enables the routinization of everyday practices. It provides the stable ground upon which

more flexible forms of identity formation may take place and which can then be challenged where needed. Without the social, life would be unbearably complicated and simple interactions would become major tasks. What is problematic, then, is not the social as such. It is the dominance of the social where active taking charge of the consequences of collective action would be required (Pitkin 1998). It turns what should be a conscious act – not doing anything or following routines – into a passive and anonymous non-act. Simply following the rules without question is a much more common cause of persisting injustices than active suppression. Global economic injustices, for example, persist to a large part because most people quite happily accept the notion, that they cannot do anything and that “acting in concert” would be much too difficult and, in the end, futile. Restricting the imagination in such a way effectively prevents the emergence of power.

The challenge for individuals lies in differentiating between situations where power is demanded and those that might reasonably be routinized and administered. However, that in itself requires the active use of one's imagination, the very skill the social so effectively cripples. As a consequence, the social tends to grow and to slowly eliminate power. One docking point for that development is the, indeed necessary, symbolic representation of power. While symbols maybe contested and help to unite plural people in common action, they also hide differences and simplify complex relationships. If the communication and action sustaining power is not routinely engaged with adjusting, challenging and reaffirming its symbolic representations, the stabilising tendencies of symbols can easily gain in importance and might even become dominant. In the nation, for example, the symbolic representation easily overtakes the communicative ground which is contained in the idea, making nationality an ascribed social identity rather than a communicatively negotiated one. It thus contributes to the fixation of identities and the potential for violent conflicts over identity questions (Appadurai 2006). Power, it follows, may degenerate into the social when the institutions turn into unquestioned routines concerned not with the active shaping of the shared world but with the administration of things and people. This is the basis for Arendt's strong criticism of the modern rise of the social and the bureaucratic institutionalization of politics (Arendt 1958: 40). Weber's definition of bureaucracy as the specific form of modern officialdom emphasizes this, when he argues that it is the reduction of office management to rules which is "deeply embedded in its very nature" (Weber 1968: 958). The abiding by abstract rules is the hallmark of modern democracy.[301]

The social is not unconquerable, however. It can be challenged through different circumstances. Some individuals and small groups, for example, obviously differ from the norm, defying

301 Arendt's criticism of bureaucracy also explains, why Arendt was so critical towards social policies. If such policies are designed to administer the unemployed and disadvantaged, so that they are returned to the system as resources, the policies are expressions of social thinking as well as techniques of perpetuating it. However, Arendt often implies that this is a necessary consequence of considering the everyday needs of people in politics and this is by no means the case. Policies for example, that are designed to give everyone the opportunity to receive adequate education, would not be social if they did not focus on particular groups. The social enters the political only, if certain people are defined as in need of support and then accorded this support on the basis of their belonging to that group. Providing every student with a stipend, regardless of status and wealth is potentially liberating. Giving it only to the best, neediest or ambitious is social.

normalization tendencies qua their existence. Their existence must be discursively controlled, but they remain a reminder that there is not just the normal but maybe something else too. Over time this can change discourse and roles, for example of handicapped and homosexual individuals. And even when the social seemingly dominates, small spaces of power are often expressed as self-organisation and difference. Alternative practices and protest remain, expressed through open deviance or secret circumvention of rules. These deviations may not do much to the greater system for a long time, but they keep the possibility of power in existence. Disjunctures may emerge, noticeable discontinuities between the normalization narrative and the experienced reality due to external shocks or historical change, as in the development of new technologies for example.[302] Such disjunctures may lie dormant for a long time and then erupt spontaneously, for example, when communication about them begins to trigger action. The social inhibits and severely limits the ability to use one's imagination, but it can never eliminate it entirely, as the ability to imagine, to bring something new to the world is reborn with every human being (Pitkin 1998: 282). Imagination is an innate ability of each individual as it is born into the world with the ability to do something new and different (Arendt 1958: 247). It may hence erupt spontaneously.

The social is firmly anchored in the contemporary order. For all its flexibilization and increased communication, globalization seems to have been as beneficial to the rise of the social as to the re-emergence of power if not more so. Some examples shall suffice to illustrate this point and indicate some of the interactions of the social with violence and power. One expression of the continuing invasion of the political realm through the social is the notion of prevention, which has become popular in internet governance as well as global security politics. Traditionally penal law was geared at the prevention of deviant behaviour through the threat and implementation of punishment against citizens who displayed such behaviour. In the wake of global terrorism and a perceived 'lawlessness' of cyberspace, there is a tendency to replace these notions with a risk-oriented law (von Trotha 2003: 731). Such law controls and regulates the population through the pre-emptive collection of data, the targeting of specific groups and the definition of specific characteristics associated with risks. Risk-oriented seeks prevention through control and surveillance rather than punishment and deterrence and is born out of the desire to control the future and minimize its unpredictability (Strasser/van den Brink 2005). This unpredictability of power. However is an integral element of action and hence also of power. By providing a clear framework of acceptable behaviour and enforcing pre-emptively through surveillance and control imaginative action is discouraged. The reduction of future options through minimising risk in that way is hence opposed to power, which carries with it an irreducible moment of openness – the whole consequence of action is never revealed until it is done. The prospect of such unpredictability is, of course, discomforting. In the exercise of power promising limits the possible futures. Promises do not regulate action or limit the imagination of what is possible but represent a mutual agreement on the shared responsibility for future action. Promising builds on trust and trust may be betrayed. The preventive techniques of risk governance

302Laclau and Mouffe call this “dislocation” (Laclau/Mouffe 2001: 141/142).

reduce possible futures much more reliably but at the expense of the collective ability to begin something new.

The social is also present in a myriad of techniques regulating the organization of collectivities along the lines of certain economic priorities and paradigms. What began as structural adjustment policies at the national level some decades ago, has since trickled down to the individuals, who are now adjusting their lives to the demands of abstract economic mechanisms (Sennett 1998). Such adjustments tend to atomize people, turning their resistances into coping mechanisms which lack the fundamental ingredient of collectivity and hence rarely bring about power (Jones 2005, Treasure/Gibb 2010). Finding a job and making a living is dependent on the individual fashioning of oneself in appropriate ways, not with others but through individual techniques, which further separate one from the others, who are but competitors. The social thus instils fear, making one believe in order to survive, one would need to follow these anonymous rules and any failure were an individual failure and not a failure of the rule. Such fear stalls the imagination and prevents communication as neither conforms to the rules of the game (Jones 2005: 68). In extreme, the social can threaten the very notion of belonging to the world, by situating people outside human community – as superfluous and invisible (e.g. Bauman 2004, Martín 2004, Arendt 1951: 304f). Its effects can be quite as devastating and traumatizing as those of violence. The social is less recognizable from the inside than violence and therefore more often taken for granted. This peculiar ability of the social makes the current order appear as the only possible order and thus is most dangerous to power.

The contemporary reality of the social, as even these tentative thoughts suggest, is incredibly pervasive and varied. With regard to power and the social the first conclusion must be as illusive and ambivalent as the phenomenon itself. Human life is hardly imaginable without the social. Through following rules without permanently questioning them, daily life is unburdened of the need to permanently consider all possible consequences of the choices we could make. Without that, we could not function. The social is, in fact, an efficient way of organising many parts of human life. Or, as Hannah Arendt would say, making has a place in the *vita activa*. The difficulty lies in the permanent expansion of the habitual following rules and conventions. This expansionist trait is innate to the social, on the one hand because it comes with the comfort of predictability and on the other because it limits the exercise of the imagination and hence minimizes the practice of imagination, effectively preventing the emergence of power. The social helps people pretend they were not responsible for the wider consequences of their action, a moral problem which is then easily ignored. Beyond that, however, social behaviour prevents imaginative new solution to emerging problems and challenges. The social only ever allows us to expand from the existing but not to begin and arrange anew. This might turn into a pressing practical problem, when old ways fail to provide adequate solutions.

There is a second conclusion to be drawn from these tentative thoughts. Clearly, grievances are important and need to be met. There is material, basic needs which need to be fulfilled. Interests are real, should be pursued and any good institutional system must be able to mediate them where they

conflict. There is a time and a place for the social demands, they are not marginal, unimportant or subordinate to intransitive power. But they are of a different nature. In my view, this is the significance of the public-private divide, which also features prominently in Arendt's thought. While the boundaries are not eternally fixed and the contents of each realm cannot be defined universally, it is important to realize that human existence always entails both, the individual and the shared goals. After all, that is not a new idea, as for example my discussion of Rousseau shows. In terms of valuing the social, however, it makes clear, that the social as such is not bad, it is necessary. What we must be wary of is its presence where intransitive power, i.e. the active and collective shaping of the world we live in, is called for (Pitkin 1998).

These remarks on violence and the social are surely sketchy, hardly scratching the surface of the complexity of their role and interaction with power. It should have become clear, however, that by refocusing the concept of power in the suggested way, we might gain access to a whole set of connected modalities of order, which allows us to draw a differentiated picture of the complex change characterizing the globalizing world. In distinguishing power as the active, collective and deliberate shaping of the shared world we gain a perspective that opens up possible avenues of action rather than closing them up. The proposed concept of power hence reveals a critical potential in rearranging contemporary developments along, in the end, three modalities of order namely power, violence and the social. It opens up for judgement the question of which modality should be employed in which situation and to what effect, and hence denies, that there is no alternatives and that the future is largely determined. Other worlds are possible, if only we dare to go there. It would be foolish to assume, that these other worlds are with any necessity less oppressive, more just or even just more fun. But they might be. It is up to us. We make the rules, whether we want to or not, either by reproducing social mechanisms or through power and violence. We only get to decide, whether we want to dare to actively shape them or passively endure them. It is the paradoxical case of an individual choice that can only be made in concert, i.e. with others. Its precondition is the skill of imagination, which enables us to consider the alternatives, feel the anticipation and overcome the unexpected. Our ability to imagine, then, determines the extent of our power.

6. The slow revolution of our time

"The only place to begin is where we are..."
(Pitkin 1998: 283)

From a specific place in time and space, a particular moment in history so to say, it is always difficult to make predictions about the coming future and interpret trends correctly. I have nonetheless tried to argue that understanding the complexity of power may help to better understand contemporary change. The proposed analytical conception of power sheds light on the variety of configurations of power, accounts for change and implies complex patterns of order. This conclusion cannot conclude the development of the conception of power, but it will lay out the advances that have been achieved and the questions that remain. I will begin with a consideration of the two-dimensional concept of power and its implications. On the one hand this provides a summary of the argument. On the other hand these considerations are an opportunity to restate the key thesis of my argument, now that the evidence has been brought forward. In the second part of this conclusion, I will make tentative suggestions as to what trends are implied by considering the complexity of power. These suggestions are neither predictions nor forecasts, but they illustrate how the two-dimensional conception of power provides room for alternative interpretations of the contemporary world. Alternative interpretations, by implication, raise ethical questions and open the floor for critical thinking. My argument shall therefore be concluded with a brief reflection of what those ethical questions and critical potentials may be. Even if no final answers can be given, this discussion will highlight the strengths and limits of the two-dimensional conception of power.

6.1. Considering two dimensions of power

Power is a phenomenon which comprises two dimensions with very different characteristics. Transitive power is the ability to ensure compliance to orders and rules, where those are the expression of intransitive power. Transitive power has been the most visible expression of power in the modern state, so visible in fact that it has been related to the exercise of violence and the obedience to (anonymous) rules to the extent that these mechanisms have become hard to distinguish. Transitive power has been scrutinized intensely and become a seemingly intuitive stand-in for the phenomenon of power as such. Power, however, has another dimension. Intransitive power is the power through which people communicatively enact shared spaces, symbolically represent and imaginatively shape them. All three elements of intransitive power, communication and action, symbolic representation and imagination must be exercised collectively in order to produce the space in which the social world can be actively ordered despite the unpredictable consequences of action. Intransitive power implies that a collectivity is consciously taking charge of the consequences of action taken, bound by promises, commitments and mutual recognition as participants in the process of power. Intransitive power is a particular way of relating individuals to their collective, based on their being equal but

unique. Equality is not procedural equality, which can only ever be established through power, but the very basic realization that all are part of the same species and, in principle, capable of action. This understanding of intransitive power builds upon Hannah Arendt's conception and Gerhard Göhler's ideas on the role of symbolic representation in power. It expands upon them by making explicit the vital role of imaginative capabilities and their collective exercise. Intransitive power, in other words, emerges where three elements come together: Communication and action between equal but unique individuals, the symbolic representation of their shared space and the imaginative skills that enable the active shaping of the future and the productive coming to terms with the past.

Intransitive power emerges only, where all three elements come together, for they are not as such unique. Communication and action exists in many forms and by no means all of these forms constitute power. Power is constituted by communication and action that actually connects communicating with acting and is engaged in under the realization that those engaging in action collectively must take responsibility for the consequences of that action, unpredictable as these may be. Equally, while symbolic representation is a common feature of any social life, intransitive power appears only where the above described communication and action is symbolically represented providing stability and permanence to the transient communicative moments. Imaginative skills play a special role. On the one hand, they are the precondition of communication, action and symbolic representation. The collective exercise of the imagination makes the pursuit of common action possible and instils the symbolic representations with the cognitive and affective meaning that makes them effective stabilisers. On the other hand, the unpredictability of the outcomes of action becomes acceptable and the diversity of futures desired by individuals is reconciled and transformed into common action only through the imagination. Imaginative skills of that kind do not produce utopias but the shared conviction that future challenges can be met collectively by ingenuity, creativity, promising and forgiving. Therefore, where the imagination is stalled power can never emerge even if symbolic representations and communication and action may occur. The ability to imagine is reborn, as a potential, with each human being so that the possibility of intransitive power emerging never disappears entirely – which corresponds, of course, to the Arendtian idea of natality.

I have argued that the ideal of the modern state incorporates the theoretical image of such intransitive power, even if in a form that favours the symbolic over the communicative. The modern state is a particular, modern configuration of power. This modern configuration of power derives the vital concept of sovereignty from the civic, i.e. communicative, and ethnic, i.e. symbolically represented collectivity of the members of the community. Contract theory expresses this relationship. The emerging configuration of power is territorially grounded and results in a world order consisting of territorially distinct, exclusive units. While this remains abstract and the actual empirical reality is both more complex and less ideal, the idea itself has decisively shaped the political imagination of modern thought. Contractual theories of political community represent a particularly important step as they do not just acknowledge the relevance of intransitive power but put such power in a specific relationship to rule and, more implicitly, territory. The modern configuration of power is territorially fixed.

Intransitive power here constitutes rule and rule is expressed through transitive power, the ability to ensure compliance with rules and goals of a political community.

The argument I made implies that the understanding of transitive power in turn must be somewhat modified from what has been presented in chapter two as typical notions of transitive power. Famously, Max Weber stated that it would not matter how compliance was ensured (Weber 1968: 53). This, of course, means that anyone with sufficient means of violence or anyone acting in the absence of opposition or capable of achieving his or her ends and make others behave in desired ways by any means at all, would exercise power. In my argument the how matters. Only if the means by which compliance is achieved are an expression of intransitive power, the act of ensuring compliance would be an act of transitive power. If a community ensured compliance to its agreements on the punishment of deviant individuals, these acts would be transitive power. If someone was forced to do something at gunpoint that would not be power but violence. The close connection between intransitive and transitive power is a peculiarity of the modern configuration of power and I have argued that the consequences in terms of political thinking are quite significant. Firstly, intransitive power is turned into a background condition and pushed to a quasi-prepolitical realm. As that which constitutes political community in theory, intransitive power is always already there or acquires a symbolic, more mythical quality which removes it from the direct action of people. Secondly, intransitive power makes a somewhat truncated reappearance in connection with issues of inclusion and most importantly participation. The modern configuration accommodates the need to maintain stability through the permanent exercise of intransitive power by removing its essential quality of constituting political community from the process of maintenance of such political community. This also limits the unpredictability of action by confining it within more permanent frameworks. These frameworks are most often symbolically represented in the form of constitutions, founding myths, ideas of national unity and political rituals. The two consequences of the modern configuration of power for political thinking combine into a framework which makes the exercise of transitive power the most pressing and visible problem. Seeing intransitive power as either external or internal to the political community but not as constituting it, is the quite peculiar effect that results.

The empirical reality of the state has always been more complex than the ideal-types describe. The idea of the nation, which is closely associated with the state, reflects the tension between the idea of a political community based on a wilful creation of the people on the one and the naturalized community of people related by some biological or cultural criteria on the other hand (Calhoun 1997: 3). While the idea of political community based on a certain configuration of power forms the core of our understanding of the modern political form that is the state, the creation and maintenance of that state has depended on complex processes of economic development (e.g. Tilly 1985) and discursive construction (e.g. Schulze 1994). Hannah Arendt's relationship with the nation-state consequently remained ambivalent. The rights guaranteed by the liberal state served as a bulwark against totalitarianism and provided stability yet, the national community introduced elements of identity into the state which endangered the uninhibited prevalence of plurality and the

bureaucracy of the state enforced normalization (Arendt 1958, Canovan 1999). These complexities notwithstanding, important features of the ideal behind the modern political communities are captured by what I described as the modern configuration of power.

The modern configuration of power has proven both, effective at organising, providing for and institutionalizing large social groups and in limiting the use of violence within communities. It provided relative political stability in times of significant economic and social change. There is two serious limitations, however. Firstly, the stability has come at a price. The modern configuration of power, because of its tendency to symbolize the community in the nation rather than enact the constituting intransitive power and because it co-evolved with modern capitalism has fostered a strong connection to the social and its more anonymous ordering mechanisms (Foucault 2004 a,b, Arendt 1958: 38-49).[303] It is, of course, debatable how far the rise of the social has progressed and to what extent it has eliminated the ability to exert power. But the tendency of behaviour where action would be required to outgrow its set limits has been shown to pose a significant danger. Political debates centring around the further extension of market mechanisms, for example, imply that the social is still expanding. The reduction of collective responsibility for the welfare of all members of the society into scattered individual responsibilities to be fulfilled through market mechanisms fundamentally alters the way the challenge itself is understood. What is happening thereby is not just a numerical division, but a qualitative change of collective responsibility – from a challenge to be met by intransitive power to a problem resolved by individuals according to their interests and within their individual capabilities.[304] While individuals may combine their action in order to create something more than just the sum of their individual strengths, the division of that common power into individual bits eliminates that qualitative "more". The question is not just a moral one, but one concerning the dominant ordering principles of society. Surely, depending on how one judges political debates, one will find the rise of the social associated with the modern configuration of power more or less worrying. The analytical distinction between approaching collective problems with power or the social stands structures the problem in a way, however, that more clearly indicates what the consequences of each ordering principle in a given situation can be.

The second limit to the positive track record of the modern configuration in terms of stability and effectiveness is its geographical confinement to specific areas of the world and its failure to limit violence and provide stability in many others (Schlichte 2005, Risse/Lehmkuhl 2007). The dominance of a particular way of conceiving of political community, prevalent in what is canonical political thought, is not representative of empirical realities. So, even if the presumptions and conclusions made therein are valid they are not relevant everywhere. In order to understand that "elsewhere" other approaches may be needed. My suggestion to disentangle the two dimensions of power, i.e. intransitive

303 In chapter 5.3. I have laid out in more details what is to be understood by the social. It is not social relations as such nor social policies in a more narrow sense, but a form of order.

304 Ulrich Beck's *Risk Society* (1992, German 1986) is the most well-known treatment of the tendency to re-frame collective risks as individual ones. In the terms used here, this is a process of turning issues previously considered public, i.e. treatable through power, into social issues.

and transitive power, and to clarify their relationship and the fundamental significance of intransitive power even in the modern configuration contributes to this endeavour. It provides an analytical framework to look beyond the state without the need to posit essential differences between different spaces and still leaving room for diversity within the conception, a diversity which the empirical realities so clearly display. The two-dimensional conception of power can be used to look at states, as I have done in chapter four, or to consider deviant political structures, as the examples in chapter five illustrate. Furthermore, the proposed conception of power implies other forms of order, in particular violence and the aforementioned social. Power, violence and the social combine into complex and dynamic patterns of order, which maybe much more flexible than the modern configuration of power suggests. The main achievement of my argument is not a general re-evaluation of political order or a particular call for action and change nor was that intended. The here described forms of order – power , violence and the social – build heavily on previous theory and research. However, by placing diverse insights on order in a systematic relationship it becomes possible to capture patterns of change more accurately.

The underlying motivation for engaging in that kind of theory-building activity has been the perception that "we are living at the epicentre of a major historical mutation" (Laclau 1994: 1) but lack the concepts and ideas to understand it. I presented the idea that a more complex understanding of power in its two dimension can contribute to a better understanding of the contemporary world and described in some detail in particular the intransitive dimension as it has specific foundational consequences. In order to make my hypothesis plausible, however, I needed to engage in comparing what I call the modern configuration of power with contemporary developments associated with globalization in its various dimensions and with what I believe to be the emerging configurations of power. Beyond showing how intransitive and transitive power are present in the state, I considered the role of power in a globalizing world. Of course, this could only be done in some examples, but since the basic relationship between intransitive and transitive power, is one where the former produces the latter, I focused on identifying instances of intransitive power as they might indicate emerging spaces of power. My aim was not to provide a conclusive empirical test of a theory, but to establish the plausibility of the proposed conception, which I did by showing its applicability in different contexts.[305]

Without implying the demise of the modern configuration of power I argued that various instances of intransitive power beyond, despite and on occasion instead of the remnants of the modern configuration emerge and shape the globalizing world. They comprise diverse phenomena such as local and transnational social movements, grass-roots initiatives of governing and community organizing, state-building efforts and elections in violence-ridden areas and so on. The diversity of forms is striking, yet they all represent communicative and imaginative collective action that makes shared spaces symbolically present. Power, it seems, comes in many forms and shapes, it is appropriated to

305Concepts, in fact, cannot be tested, they can only be more or less useful for a specific purpose. The purpose here being to gain a better understanding of fast-changing patterns of order, plausibility is established, if the concept indeed makes features of the emerging order visible, that were hitherto hard to crasp. See Oppenheim 1981 and Shapiro 2002 on concepts and their role in theory building.

specific people and situations without losing its essential character as a special collective form of acting. The change we are witnessing lies at least partly in the variability of the observable configurations of power after a period of relative stability and perceived predominance of one particular configuration. I have argued that the changes we are witnessing in and through globalization are at once gradual and radical. They are gradual, because the modern configuration of power as encapsulated in the state is changing but not disappearing nor in any immediate sense losing importance. Contemporary change, however, is also radical in the ways intransitive power re-emerges as a significant empirical phenomenon beyond the state and challenges as well as complements it. These emergences resonate with many of the more conventional ideas on power, which recognize well the importance of securing compliance through means beyond the immediate threat of violence. The conception presented here is original in systematically arranging the two dimensions of power in a specific yet dynamic relationship allowing the observer to relate different configurations of power to each other.

The questions remains, when and under what exact circumstances intransitive power emerges and how it can be transformed into a permanent form. The instances of intransitive power described in chapter five are quite diverse and often it is unclear how permanent they are. It seems evident but remains unsatisfying, that the emergence of intransitive power is indeed a "miracle" (Arendt 1958: 246f). There are conditions, which may be more conducive to the emergence of intransitive power than others, but it cannot be externally created but must grow out of the efforts of people themselves. Intransitive power depends on the active and deliberate exercise of the imagination transforming existing structures and patterns in creative ways. Essentially, it remains unpredictable, when and where, for example, social movements arise and when and where they do not (Hayden 2010: 125, Della Porta et al 2006: 10f). Emerging forms of intransitive power often appear weak and incomplete because they seem to lack influence on the existing structure of the world. However, they can serve to open up ambivalences and realize alternatives (Melucci 1996: 153f), which edge out existing structures rather than destroy them. The dilemma is that this kind of transformation never directly approaches or resolves the contradictions of the world, but rather puts them in a different context. There is, in other words, no guarantee that an emergent structure will be better than the existing one nor even that it resolves the most pressing problems. Power, however, requires the active taking charge of this transformation rather than letting it happen. Power means taking responsibility for the consequences of collective action, even if and where those are grave and unknown. It is hence bound to the belief that we can, indeed, take that responsibility and that our action changes the world that is. This attitude is not and has not been available to all people at all times and might well be most pronounced now, as a consequence of modernity and the increased awareness of human capabilities.

Power is a rare occurrence and by no means the only ordering principle of the world. My argument has lead me to tentatively recognize two other form of order, which are important but differ in some important respects from power. Firstly, there is violence. The extensive focus on the workings of

transitive power has encouraged the conflation of power and violence, although it is not usually claimed that they are one and the same. The proposed two-dimensional conception of power offers a way of analytically distinguishing power and violence moving beyond measures of magnitude or the definition specific tools and features of violence. Violent means may be a tool of power only in so far as they are backed by intransitive power, i.e. an expression of the shared will of the community with regard to its own future. These tools may only be used as tools of power when geared at participants of that very community. Conversely, this means that any violence exerted against outsiders is better termed violence than power. Violence in the classic international realm, which in theories of international relations is often described as a form of power, therefore, is not power but violence. Power is contained in the like units that constitute the realist international space. Equally, the violent means exerted by a dictator are not power but violence, quite as the more immediately recognizable force exerted by the guns of warlords. Violence might be despicable, but it provides order and sometimes more efficiently than other means. That order remains in need of permanent justification and the repeated reassurance that the means of violence are still available. Violence by itself cannot found non-violent order. The logic of the means, i.e. violence, tends to overcome the logic of the ends, e.g. peace. Combining violent means and the exercise of power, therefore, is an exceedingly difficult task as violence tends to overcome its ends and hence destroy power.

The second major form of order which I identified is much more variably, disguising in many different forms of rule-governed behaviour. The social refers to the unreflected compliance to rules by individuals denying their shared responsibility for the eventual outcome. Like violence this kind of behaviour has been around in the form of traditions, habits, conventions and technologies of governing. On the one hand it is a very helpful mechanism of reducing the incredible complexity of social interaction. It is hardly useful to debate traffic rules on a daily basis. However, the social has a tendency to outgrow its original place, to turn from a tool enabling people to concentrate on the important collective decisions to an excuse for not-acting. The social introduces a mindset which understands the individual as merely a participant in processes which are automated, natural or otherwise inevitable. It hence denies the collective responsibility for the outcomes of these processes by attributing them to externally determined mechanisms and equally denies the possibility that it could be otherwise. Essentially, the social stalls the imagination and consequently minimizes the occurrence of power effectively. People simply stop believing power is possible. Distinguishing rather than conflating power, violence and the social makes it possible to describe patterns of order in terms of the particular arrangement of these three forms of order within them. This relieves us from the need to draw normative distinctions, allowing us to ask for the consequences of particular arrangements in analytic terms.

6.2. What might become

My argument has taken a long road from theoretical deduction of the two-dimensional conception of power to its historical reflection and first tentative attempts at an analysis of the present. It is

worthwhile to consider which inferences might be deduced about the world to come, even if only to make clear which kinds of orders become analytically apprehensible. Two characteristics of the suggested way to think of power are particularly important. Firstly, intransitive power may emerge in functionally and socially restricted spaces, it does not have to be all-encompassing. Neither does it have to be territorially based, it could be virtual or connecting different localities that are not physically connected. Hence, transitive power may be exerted in such spaces as well, when and where it is produced. From the perspective of democratic theory John Keane for example has argued that we see the emergence of "a conglomeration of interlocking and overlapping sub-state, state and supra-state institutions and multi-dimensional processes that interact, and have political and social effects on a global scale" (Keane 2005: 37), in other words a very complex pattern of overlapping spaces of power. A complex pattern of interaction between such spaces is the likely consequence. With their at least partly limited reach, they may also pose serious challenges when it comes to resolving large scale problems.

Organizing a world of many powers is likely to be very difficult. It will be paramount to ensure, that adequate spaces of power are available for problems of restraining violence, ensuring welfare of citizens and organizing complex processes of exchange such as trade, environmental degradation and migration. However, the increased complexity and piecemeal character of such order can be of advantage, as many local solutions may be found, that begin meeting challenges when large-scale agreement is still unfathomable. This can amount to complex solutions to complex problems, which hitherto remained unresolvable on the larger scale. We know very little about the ways in which local initiatives, ideas and arrangements can come together to resolve large-scale problems, mainly because efforts over the past centuries have focused on resolving such problems at the national level. The real challenge therefore is, to understand when and where which local, regional, transnational or other common space of power is needed and desired and to then create it.

The second significant implication of the proposed conception of power is the way it seems to be based on very complex patterns of identity. Positively put, the future may be "a new set of democratic identities that are global, but based on diversity and rooted in local conditions, problems, and opportunities" (Gill 2000: 140). One individual may not just occupy different social roles, but the diversity of roles one has could form the core of one's identity. Who we are would be defined through the relationships we have to others and the ways we relate to world views, processes and conflicts of the shared space. While certainly a close approximation of the plurality Arendt posited as the precondition for power, such identity requires the continuous effort of individuals to refashion and redefine themselves according to their place in the world. On the one hand, this is not new. There has always been the need to relate oneself to others and identity has hardly been an absolute value but always been constructed in complex social processes. On the other hand, people previously relied on pre-existing associations such as gender, nationality, ethnic origin and political conviction. Some of these were considered more fundamental than others, essentially dominating and positioning them. This allowed for the formation of groups on the basis of shared characteristics rather than voluntary

association. Group membership was thus often a result of the acceptance of social rules rather than of actively created identity. Quite possibly, this is now changing.

The diversification of possible and available identities might not constitute a qualitative change, but a more flexible understanding of identity and the more deliberate fashioning of identity by more people could still fundamentally alter the processes of interaction between people. Insofar as intransitive power depends on revealing and relating oneself to others its increased exercise could lead to new forms of identity altogether, which theoretically could be considered much to difficult to be mastered on an everyday basis. Yet, migrants, precarious workers, kids with multi-national parents, globally active professionals and online-gamers do just that everyday. Complex identities, full of contradictions and seeming irreconcilabilities are a reality for many people. This reality, of course, is not always resolved constructively, one result can be the return to old-fashioned identities and the "fear of small numbers" Appadurai (2006) so aptly described. To maintain the complexity of identity is an incredibly difficult task, cognitively as well as emotionally. And it requires, what Richard Kearney called an "ethical imagination", namely the ability to take a stand in the face of ever increasing complexity and undecidability (Kearney 1988: 361). Who we are is an active decision we must make. This ethical challenge is continuous and implies that imagination, the skill to conceive of partly contradictory possibilities and the world as it is not yet, not here or not any more, is the key skill in this emerging world.

The need to exercise such ethical imagination is indicative of a change that has in fact been coming on for a long time. Machiavelli prominently noted that human action made history, framed by necessities, opportunities and sheer luck, surely, but nonetheless decisions made the decisive difference (Machiavelli 1986). This sense of the social world as socially constructed and deliberately shaped has grown and now for "the first time societies become radically aware of their contingency, they realize they 'are thrown' in the world, they discover they are not necessary and thus they are irreversibly responsible for their destinies" (Melucci 1985: 814). The tension of the shared world and its development mirrors the one inherent in the plurality of individuals: common worlds are results of historical processes which cannot be changed but their future still depends on the action people take. Decisions must be made based on the contingency of the present but also on the indeterminateness and essential openness of the future. Power is therefore when people make decisions actively, collectively, deliberately and in full awareness of the unpredictability of the full consequences of their action – irrespective of the justice, appropriateness or wisdom of these decisions. The quality of the decisions depends not on the power itself but on the skill level of the imagination upon which they are based.[306]

People do not have the choice not to make the world. But there are different ways of acting which yield fundamentally different results. Violence, for example, is effective at achieving short term

306For details Hannah Arendt's thoughts on judgement provide some insights (see chapter 2.2.) and it seems likely that, following Arendt, a return to Immanuel Kant's arguments on critique and aesthetic judgement is in order.

interests but likely to be destructive to human relations as such in the long run. Power, on the other hand, creates the world as a shared space and accommodates failure, as it is based on the idea that the full consequences of acting in concert are inherently unpredictable but that the promise to meet challenges together may hold. Both, violence and power require action and at least minimal deliberate activity. The third way of acting, the social, is rather one of non-acting. Failing to act also makes the common world, yet, fails to take charge of these results putting them down to anonymous mechanisms, external constraints, rules and inevitabilities. It turns people from active creators of the social and physical world into passive sufferers of its systematic effects. The social denies that there is no system without people re-creating it through their interaction. Obviously, people cannot make the world as they want it, but what people do makes the world the way it is.

Analytically distinguishing between different ways the common world may be ordered in the way I suggested, highlights the effect of different ways of acting or non-acting. The distinction firmly places the decision as to what form of order is appropriate with people themselves. In a world marked by power the decision which form of order reigns in a particular space would be taken deliberately and collectively. Power would mark the limits of other forms of order and hence be dominant. The limits of what is possible in terms of progress, justice and sustainability are thus defined by the (in-)ability to act in concert, to find creative solutions and to defy the temptations of the immediateness of violence and the convenience of the social. The difficulties associated with the exercise of power, of course, can hardly be overstated. Exercising power is exhausting, often frustrating and slow, because it requires the collective action of people, the handling of conflicts and not least the ability to promise and forgive. The more people are involved in these processes, the more difficult they become and the more likely they fail. In the case of problems of particular urgency or magnitude, this may pose a very serious limitation. However, power may also be exhilarating, liberating and uniting. Shaping the world actively and collectively instead of purely enduring it individually instils a strong sense of belonging and self-efficacy. The difficulties and the rewards of power are marked by an intense emotional quality. The emotional effects of the social are quite contrary. Following rules that one does not believe to be able to influence enforces a sense of impotence and separation from others and the world, which is continuously reinforced by the experience of the social in a vicious circle. Violence on the other hand potentially reduces the individual to bare survival and instils fear, pain and trauma. Its effects persist beyond the immediate acts of violence through memory and trauma, destroying trust and interpersonal relations.

The conception presented here is what one might call normatively empty as it does not provide the norms by which to judge which form of order is appropriate in a particular situation. Its underlying implication, however, is normative in that it places trust in the people and their ability to take care of their world. Such trust seems warranted as people around the world reshape their lives everyday, take responsibility and find creative collective solutions to complex problems. It seems foolish in light of humanely committed atrocities, widespread indifference to the consequences of one's actions and a prevalent unwillingness to move beyond the pursuit of individual interests. It seems, these traits are

just as persistent in human behaviour as the need to experience plurality and the ability to bring something new to the world. Any emerging pattern of order will likely contain elements of different forms of order, but it depends on us to determine their particular arrangement. However, we have the opportunity to shape the coming order actively and take charge of the world we live in. Maybe for the first time we also have the technical and cognitive tools needed to achieve this and while the stability of the modern period may be lost, we might well be able to meet the new challenges successfully. It all depends on what we do and on our ability to use our imagination.

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