

ASPECT on Geopolitics 2014 – You Can’t Spell Crisis Without ISIS: Comments on “The Return of Geopolitics?”

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Introduction

The following ‘comments’ brought together here attempt to bring the aforementioned question of “a return to geopolitics?” into a conversation with my current research endeavors of attempting to rethink the concept of “crisis” politically and socially, and not, to be sure economically. The benefits of such an attempt highlight the interaction between crisis discourses and security practices in the production of what I call “crisis thought.” Paraphrasing Michel Foucault, crisis thought is operationally defined as *a modality of knowledge that eludes human consciousness, but provides it with a set of rules and structures in matters of thinking, living, and being in the phenomenal world.*ⁱ My concern with this ongoing research is with the effect of crisis’ on the *ontology* (i.e., individual and collective identity; the basis of reality and knowledge) and *axiology* (i.e., values, morals, decisions, judgments) of political subjectivity in regards to present day domestic and international security concerns.ⁱⁱ Larry George defines political subjectivity as the “collective self-image with which the people of a nation identify the position, status, and role of each subject within that imagined community, and the sense of commonality engendered by the various practices through which that collective self-conception is reproduced.”ⁱⁱⁱ Stated differently, I am concerned with whether political subjects have, so to speak, “gotten used to” living with crises within a global political environment characterized by (among other things) states of emergency (i.e., exception), surveillance, and securitization.^{iv} If so, what might it say about the foundations, arrangement, and quality of political experience – domestically and globally – in the present and towards the future.

There are linkages between the question of geopolitics and the attempt to rethink crisis noted above, but admittedly the transition between them could use a little work. Despite the inclusion of ISIS (Islamic State of Iran and Greater Syria) in the title of this piece, I speak very little about that non-state terrorist group.^v The aforementioned question is timely in light of ongoing and contemporary events, including the Israeli-Palestinian conflict,^{vi} the US-Mexico border crisis,^{vii} Russia’s annexation of the Crimean peninsula,^{viii} and most recently, Ebola.^{ix} Each of these topics directly or indirectly have geopolitical relevance, as they concern in their own way – to rip a title from Foucault’s lecture series – security, territory, and population. The question posed would be: when did geopolitics ever go away and why is this return of geopolitics couched in crisis thought?

Commentary

Geopolitics is a concept that concerns the relationship between geography, space, or territory as a factor in political decision-making, governance, and military strategy. However, as Francois Debrix reminds us, geopolitics in international relations (IR) is about much more: “the way dominant and powerful sovereign nation-states have tried to make sense of and represent their global spatial environment with a view to

facilitating their foreign policy making...geopolitics is closely tied to the idea and practice of territorial and cartographical imagination of modern political forms, starting with the modern state...[and] the belief that power, control, and domination can be spatially pre-determined, territorially engraved and inscribed in texts and, often, in visual forms too.”^x Over the last twenty or so years, many IR theorists have been ringing the death knell of geopolitics. This can be summarized succinctly as deterritorialization, the indistinguishability or blurring of political borders, demarcations, and so forth; alongside a lack of conceptual clarity, examples of which I will get to in a moment. With globalization, non-state terrorism, and an increasingly integrated, and technology dependent world, tried and true notions of time/space, borders, and political “strategy” are said to be in a process of transformation, fluxuation, or gradual erosion. The point to make is that instead of “a return to geopolitics,” what we (as in “we” global subjects) are witnessing is a different kind of geopolitics where the principles of geopolitics appear largely in tact, but are being modulated throughout IR practices, governance, and discourses. For now, I refuse to use the prefix “post” to describe this. Concurring with Timothy Luke, “anything that is post-X, Y, Z often seems to me to be just another articulation of what X, Y, and Z were.”^{xi}

The Novelty of Novelty (A Return of Geopolitics?)

RBJ Walker begins his *Inside/Outside* (1993) warning against the “novelty of novelty.”^{xii} Walker’s statement is in context to notable post-1989 IR theories accounting for the beginning dissolution of the Soviet Union, including Francis Fukuyama’s “end of history” thesis,^{xiii} United States President George H. W. Bush’s “new world order,”^{xiv} and what some scholars like Charles Kegley, Jr. described as the “neoidealist moment” in IR.^{xv} For the first time since, let’s say 1947, neorealism appeared inadequate to account for the changing face of global politics. Instead of Waltzian “self-help,” and “balance of power” relations, globalization and democracy would spur something reminiscent of Kant’s perpetual peace: vibrant trade, creativity, and progress.^{xvi} These theories acknowledged the continued presence of antagonisms recurring from time to time: capitalists boom and bust cycles, small outbreaks of conflict, natural disasters, and the like. While the world would not be perfect, the liberalization of global politics would, it was believed, lead to something like world peace or one world. With the end of history, it seemed also too, to be the end of traditional geopolitics.

Walker’s “novelty” seemed too contrarian at a time when politicians and scholars were basking in the radiant beams of a more peaceful, unified, and democratic world. Rather than everyone holding hands around the neoliberal rainbow, Walker suggests: “we are likely to see the emergence of a new order that looks suspiciously like the old. The players or the polarities may change but the rules of the game are likely to stay more or less the same. This, after all, is the lesson that continues to be taught in so many appeals to a canonical tradition of political realism...re-enforced through claims about the core principles of an international balance of power.”^{xvii} Walker is not suggesting that 1989 did not have an impact on then immediate, practical, or theoretical IR concerns – of course it did. Examples that come to mind are the Persian Gulf Wars (1990-1991) and both Bosnia (1992-1995) and Kosovo (1998-1999). Walker’s

intervention is about certain tendencies we are all susceptible to: assuming that particular events in IR are more significant than they might actually be in the present and future direction of global politics, humankind, ways of life, national security, or more generally, the *status quo*. As Walker notes, “social and political thought and practice has been articulated around powerful claims about change, novelty, and transformation that have been common intellectual currency for at least two hundred years.”^{xxviii}

Yet global happenings during this time, roughly 1989-1995, were already putting claims of a new world order and end of history in doubt. Peter Hough calls this the Cold War “hangover.” For example, North and South Korea: the situation remains as it has been since 1953 (although recent news of Kim Jong-Un’s poor health may alter this, perhaps).^{xxix} Chinese relations with the US and most western states remain rather “cold” (particularly regarding human rights and democracy), even as China is a pivot of global economic stability.^{xxx} Furthermore, US-Russia relations have increasingly taken on a Cold War-esque rivalry, 2007 beginning a new trend in these relations with old tropes of pointing nuclear missiles in such-and-such direction; as the 2014 Ukrainian Revolution and subsequent 2014 Crimean Crisis exacerbating these relations with Russia whom is seemingly trying to restore its nationalism and geopolitical influence. Finally, there is little evidence to suggest that the US/West ever left the core principles of (neo)realism behind, continuing to heed the Waltzian dictum of “self-help,”^{xxxi} never losing sight of looking after number one – that is, its own national security interests.^{xxii}

Political scholars have pointed out other reasons to doubt the significance of geopolitics even in light of the aforementioned examples. Alongside everything else political in late modernity, geopolitics has been said to be in a process of transformation. For Wendy Brown, the traditional constitution of politics and IR is turning into something both strangely new yet familiar; something that has yet to be given a name, something for which it is often said we lack a political language.^{xxiii} Michael Hardt and Antonio Negri, among others, provide an account of global politics in the midst of an “interregnum,” one in which “the modern national paradigm of political bodies is passing toward a new global form...populated by an abundance of new structures of power.”^{xxiv} This period has been revealing of a state of affairs oft-described as “global civil war,” where multiple and potential conflicts can arise any where and at any time taking place within a “permanent [global] state of emergency.”^{xxv} Carlo Galli writes “global war is an aspect...of global politics...it is not an action but a situation; not an exception but a tragic normality. Its full manifestation on September 11 is not a crisis of globalization...but the *globalization of crisis*.”^{xxvi}

In Brown’s *Walled States, Waning Sovereignty* (2010) she argues sovereignty – and thus the core principle from which geopolitics is derived – is “waning” in terms of state borders in the face of non-state terrorism and transnational flows of capital. Sovereignty is gradually being sublimated by neoliberal economics and religious extremism. Brown suggests global politics appears to be turning or entering into a “post-Westphalian order.”^{xxvii} Accounting for these, what we are witnessing are the vicissitudes of a political order in flux, the experience of our political signifiers becoming obsolete and anachronistic to effectively describe as a matter of certainty what is happening politically in the present. Taken together, these assertions have all put the

relevance of geopolitics in doubt even when geopolitics, or what is touted as geopolitics by state leaders and the 24/7 news media, is still relatively visible. Underlining all of this however, and as noted above in quoting Galli, is the subject of crisis. In the following section I want to address the subject of crisis in relation to geopolitics. Rather than a return of geopolitics, perhaps the question might be better phrased: is there a crisis of geopolitics?

The Crisis of Geopolitics

Crisis has been and continues to be used to define a number of unsettling prospects about the political, social, cultural, and economic conditions of late modernity. Cursory definitions of “crisis” describe the term as a time of intense difficulty, trouble, or danger when important (political) decisions must be made. The Oxford English Dictionary (OED) provides the following definitions of crisis: 1) The point in the progress of a disease when an important development or change takes place which is decisive of recovery or death; the turning-point of a disease for better or worse; also applied to any marked or sudden variation occurring in the progress of a disease and to the phenomena accompanying it. 2) A vitally important or decisive stage in the progress of anything; a turning-point; also, a state of affairs in which a decisive change for better or worse is imminent; now applied esp. to times of difficulty, insecurity, and suspense in politics or commerce. 3) Judgment, decision. 4) A point by which to judge; a criterion, token, sign.^{xxviii}

What is intriguing about “crisis” is its ambiguity. By “ambiguity” I mean, first, the often frivolous and arbitrary use of term: the way crisis rolls off the tongue in everyday language, how it fills those gaps in political thinking and discourse where a more appropriate or precise noun could be used to describe or designate moments temporally; and second, how crisis is magnetic, attractive, or malleable to other similarly provocative terms or situations. For example: danger, risk, uncertainty, anxiety, conflict, antagonism, anomie, fear, panic, disorder, genocide, catastrophe, disaster, apocalypse, insecurity, conspiracy, and more common in political texts, war and revolution.^{xxix} Reinhart Koselleck stresses that since its origins in antiquity crisis “never crystallized into a concept sufficiently clear to be used as a basic concept in social, economic, or political language, despite – or perhaps because of – its manifold meanings [this]...led to the...term [being] used essentially as a catchword.”^{xxx}

It is this ambiguity that, in part, Janet Roitman attempts to illuminate in *Anti-Crisis* (2014). Roitman suggests crisis discourses entail a “blind spot,” that is, when “assuming crisis as a point of departure, we remain closed off in a politics of crisis...it obviates accounts of...pragmatic spaces of calculative possibility.”^{xxxi} The point is not to suggest there is or is not a crisis, multiple crises, or that crisis claims are false; rather, crisis as a blind spot is “to apprehend the ways [crisis] regulates narrative constructions.”^{xxxii} Crisis occludes political possibilities by compounding the difficulties and concerted attempts to assess determined crisis events, leaving available solutions or policy recommendations lost in the flurry of contingencies surrounding such-and-such event designated as a crisis, lapsing into a generalized kind of effect that is *not* a matter of paralysis, stasis, bewilderment, fear, or even warning. Rather, the effect of crisis is more closely

associated with terms that convey acceptance, consent, reception, response, affirmation, belief, compliance, normalization, or conformity especially when crisis is associated in discourses regarding security concerns (broadly defined). The salient example are states of emergency (i.e., exception), whereby moving such-and-such crisis from the political sphere and into the securitized realm of decision in order to expedite crisis solutions. This is the power of claiming or invoking crisis in matters of security. What might have been perceived as purely a political crisis resolved through deliberation, mediation, or diplomacy is all too often arbitrarily made into a matter of security.

Crisis works as a discursive formation, defined by Debrix as “a principle or technique of organization, calculation, arrangement, or redistribution of discourse or language...[they] are interventions, directions, or specifications at the level of discourse...with a view to attaining or realizing certain preferred meanings or representations.”^{xxxiii} Crisis attaches itself to a number of other, different types of similar, but often times inaccurate, provocative, and hyperbolic signifiers to describe particular moments, situations, thoughts, or feelings towards what C. Wright Mills calls “troubles and issues” in world politics and everyday life.^{xxxiv} Crisis constitutes a discursive formation that works in conjunction with other similarly provocative signifiers as a temporal boundary-setting or demarcating apparatus that not only propels political modernity linearly, but functions to secure the political foundations or “pillars”, if you will, of modernity: sovereignty, liberalism, and Enlightenment rationality. Put in this way, crisis functions as a *dispositif* (i.e., mechanism, apparatus, technology) of security, and is therefore, partly at least, significant to the possibilities of politics and the formation of political subjectivity specific to the ways crisis and security interact ontologically and axiologically.^{xxxv}

The ambiguity of crisis as a moment, situation, or sensation is implicit in a variety of choice words and phrasing on part of the speaker that are often hyperbolic and efficacious in their invocations by political officials and media elites. Crises are often (but not always) constructed in such a way that subjects receive crisis claims as no less than imperative for such-and-such justification of political action, expediency, *realpolitik*, or geopolitical calculations on the world stage. Crises function to secure the self-evident institutions of political modernity (and thus geopolitical stability), solidifying what Foucault calls a “regime of truth” as the unquestionable grounds of political experience.^{xxxvi} Political modernity is reinforced by the discourses and power relations that constitute such a regime, both of which are essential in the development of human political relations and the formation of political subjectivity.^{xxxvii}

For example, in the summer of 2013, the Obama administration and 24/7 news media abruptly shifted their coverage from the fall out from Edward Snowden’s National Security Administration (NSA) “revelations” regarding the sweeping global surveillance techniques,^{xxxviii} and began to cover in earnest the turmoil in Syria, touting it as a “crisis” demanding international/US intervention (humanitarian, or in the very least, high intensity police action/reprimand) for the use of chemical weapons.^{xxxix} The 24/7 news media headlines and corresponding Internet coverage proclaimed: “crisis in Syria,”^{xl} with President Obama’s national address on September 10, 2013 declaring that US “ideals

and principles, as well as our national security, are at stake in Syria.”^{xli} Yet less than forty-eight hours before the POTUS addressed the world, Russian President Vladimir Putin, ally to the Assad regime, decided to mediate the “crisis.” Afterwards, the “crisis in Syria” evaporated in the White House and 24/7 media narrative as the death and destruction continued in Syria relatively unabated.^{xlii} Almost a year to the day of the 2013 speech, President Obama addressed the world again regarding the threat of ISIS which in turn has led the US to side with the Assad regime in a multifront international coalition against this new terrorist “supervillain.”

The question “a return to geopolitics” might wish to delve deeper into the nature of crisis. It seems to me that many of the crises claimed by elected officials, 24/7 news media, and felt both internally and externally by the subject, are in direct and indirect ways related to geopolitical configurations, arrangements, and practices. If this geopolitical “truth” is called into question, then all political, social, cultural, and economic contingencies, including law, authority, and legitimacy are put in a precarious position. Without the certainty of well defined and demarcated space, a politics of security appears to become a politics of insecurity, followed by incessant crisis claims that continue to be (re)produced in the attempt of clinging on to anachronistic conceptions of geopolitics even as the concept continues to transform.

Digital Geopolitics

One of the more immediate issues regarding the question of geopolitics to everyday life would be the digital geopoliticalization of cyber security. That is, geopolitical paradigms are being transferred to demarcate a realm that is supposedly without boundaries. As implied above, so much of politics is contingent on some demarcated space, territory, or as good Lockean liberals, private property. For example: the prominence of the term “domain” for all sorts of websites. To be “hacked” – which is the cyber security equivalent of being “attacked” – to have people’s private information and credit card numbers stolen is analogous to the most sophisticated of James Bond-style espionage parallel to that of modern intelligence and security practices. No pun intended, but such recent “targets” such as Target and Home Depot, where credit card numbers and personal information were stolen, could be types of ‘collateral damage’ we all might have to deal with in our desires to be online and enjoy the Internet. Even as we speak, cyber wars are being waged – crucial infrastructural systems to our everyday life and private corporate data are being bombarded by attempts to cause disruption for whatever purpose. In a recent article, Zygmunt Bauman, RBJ Walker and others write that “Cyberspace is a battlefield and states must build up their own cyber capabilities in order to defend themselves and/or must engage in international coalitions in order to face the challenges posed by mass surveillance and digital espionage.”^{xliii} The digitization of geopolitics is linked to concerns over NSA surveillance and how such geopoliticalization might generate further cause by the state (i.e., a digitized reason of the state, no doubt) to increase the level of surveillance over the conduct and lives of users of the Internet in the name of cyber security.

Summary

A return of geopolitics is somewhat of a misnomer in terms of “return.” Rather, “transformation,” or “evolution” of geopolitics is perhaps more befitting of the topic in the current interregnum we are going through, if one is to take that as being the case. Or, one could chalk this up to the contradictions and aporias emblematic of modernity itself. Some might say as everything is changing, the more things stay the same, albeit, with some necessary qualifications. Despite changes in geopolitical practices and discourses, it seems we continued to be informed by what came before, and perhaps always will be: more of the same but with new accouterments. Students and scholars of IR should maintain some reservations about political moments and global happenings in the world as they unfold, particularly when these moments are predicated or described as “crisis.” This is not to say that we should not recognize or understand such instances empirically or theoretically in light of larger concerns or questions. Rather, it is to remind ourselves that not every moment or geopolitical event in international relations is a world changing, epoch-making, paradigm altering, crisis that will change the course of international politics. Students and scholars alike should pursue more intriguing questions regarding the productive and affective changes in the formation of new practices and modalities of politics via the transformation of geopolitics into something new, but not entirely unfamiliar. Unfortunately, the ‘unfamiliar,’ inasmuch as ‘political change’ is more often than not predicated by ‘crisis’ which only serves to obviate and occlude those questions, inasmuch as the most prudent path international relations might take for a more peaceful future.

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- i Michel Foucault, *The Order of Things* (New York: Vintage Books, 2010), xi.
- ii Janet Roitman, *Anti-Crisis* (Durham: Duke University Press, 2014), 4. Roitman states: “crisis as an axiological problem, or the questioning of the epistemological or ethical grounds of certain domains of life and thought.”
- iii Larry N. George, “American Insecurities and the Ontopolitics of US Pharmacotic Wars,” in *The Geopolitics of American Insecurity: Terror, Power, and Foreign Policy*, ed. Francois Debrix and Mark J. Lacy (New York: Routledge, 2009), 36.
- iv Alan Collins, *Contemporary Security Studies*. 2nd ed. Alan Collins (New York: Oxford University Press, 2010), 425. Collins states: “a concern is framed as a security issue and moved from the politicized to the securitized.” An issue is effectively securitized “when it requires emergency actions beyond the state’s standard political procedures.”
- v Michael Crowley/JIDDA, “Coalition of the Wary,” *TIME*, September 29, 2014, 25.
- vi Josh Levs, “This Time, Gaza Fighting is ‘proxy war’ for entire Middle East” [cnn.com http://www.cnn.com/2014/07/31/world/meast/israel-gaza-region/](http://www.cnn.com/2014/07/31/world/meast/israel-gaza-region/) (Accessed October 3, 2014).
- vii Robert W. Merry, “Why America’s Immigration Crisis Matters,” [nationalinterest.org http://nationalinterest.org/feature/why-americas-immigration-crisis-matters-10917](http://nationalinterest.org/feature/why-americas-immigration-crisis-matters-10917) (Accessed October 3, 2014).
- viii BBC News Europe, “Ukraine Crisis: Crimea Parliament asks to join Russia,” [bbc.com http://www.bbc.com/news/world-europe-26465962](http://www.bbc.com/news/world-europe-26465962) (Accessed October 3, 2014).

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- ix Benedict Carey, “Experts Offer Steps for Avoiding Public Hysteria, a Different Contagious Threat” *nytimes.com*, http://www.nytimes.com/2014/10/16/health/ebolas-other-contagious-threat-hysteria.html?_r=1 (Accessed October 22, 2014).
- x Francois Debrix, *Tabloid Terror: War, Culture, and Geopolitics* (New York: Routledge, 2008), 9.
- xi Patricia Mooney Nickel, “Timothy W. Luke,” in *North American Critical Theory After Postmodernism: Contemporary Dialogues – Interviews with Ben Agger, Andrew Arato, Robert J. Antonio, Seyla Benhabiv, Craig Calhoun, Nancy Fraser, Douglas Kellner, and Timothy W. Luke*, ed. Patricia Mooney Nickel (New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2012), 24.
- xii R.B.J. Walker, *Inside/Outside: International Relations as Political Theory* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 1993), 2.
- xiii Francis Fukuyama, “The End of History?” *The National Interest* (Summer 1989).
- xiv Timothy W. Luke, “The Discipline of Security Studies and the Codes of Containment: Learning From Kuwait,” *Alternatives: Global, Local, Political*, vol. 16. No. 3 (Summer 1991): 327. Luke states: “In October 1990, President Bush asked the United Nations for its assistance in his crusade against Saddam, because its resolute aid could help ‘bring about a new day. A new world order and long era of peace.’ President Bush would later go on to repeat the phrase “new world order” several times for different symbolic and rhetorical domestic and foreign purposes.
- xv Charles Kegely Jr, “The Neoidealist Moment in International Studies? Realist Myths and the New International Realities,” *International Studies Quarterly*, vol. 37, no. 2 (June 1993).
- xvi Immanuel Kant, “Perpetual Peace: A Philosophical Sketch,” in *Political Writings*, ed. H.S. Reiss (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2009), 93.
- xvii Walker, *Inside/Outside*, 2.
- xviii Walker, *Inside/Outside*, 3.
- xix Colin Freeman, “Kim Jong-un 'so fat he has fractured his ankles'” *telegraph.co.uk*
<http://www.telegraph.co.uk/news/worldnews/asia/northkorea/11131885/Kim-Jong-un-so-fat-he-has-fractured-his-ankles.html> (Accessed October 1, 2014).
- xx Stephen S. Cohen and J. Bradford DeLong, *The End of Influence: What Happens When Other Countries Have The Money* (New York: Basic Books, 2010), 5. Cohen and DeLong state: “The Chinese government holds about 42.5 trillion in foreign reserves, probably 70 percent of that in U.S. obligations. This comes to over \$20,000 per U.S. household; there is no way the United States could readily pay it back. Because it also amounts to about half of China’s GDP, China can’t just write off. Thus, China and the United States are economically co-dependent, the producer and the consumer, the creditor and the debtor.”
- xxi Kenneth Waltz, *Theory of International Relations* (Long Grove: Waveland Press, 1979).
- xxii Peter Hough, *Understanding Global Security*. 2nd ed. (New York: Routledge, 2008), 45-47.

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- xxiii Wendy Brown, "Neoliberalism and The End of Liberal Democracy," in *Edgework: Critical Essays on Knowledge and Politics* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2005), 52.
- xxiv Michael Hardt and Antonio Negri, *Multitude* (New York: Penguin Books, 2004), 162-163.
- xxv Giorgio Agamben, *State of Exception*, trans. Kevin Attell (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2003), 2.
- xxvi Carlo Galli, *Political Spaces and Global War*, trans. Elisabeth Fey, ed. Adam Sitze (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 2010), 182.
- xxvii Wendy Brown, *Walled States, Waning Sovereignty* (New York: Zone Books, 2010), 21.
- xxviii "Crisis," OED Online. June 2014. Oxford University Press. <http://www.oed.com/view/Entry/44539?redirected> (Accessed July 30, 2014).
- xxix Antonio Y. Vazquez-Arroyo, "How Not to Learn From Catastrophe: Habermas, Critical Theory and the 'Catastrophization' of Political Life", *Political Theory*, vol. 41, no. 5 (2013).
- xxx Reinhart Koselleck, "Crisis", trans. Michaela Richter, *Journal of the History of Ideas*, vol. 67, no. 2 (2006): 367.
- xxxi Roitman, *Anti-Crisis*, 12-13.
- xxxii Roitman, *Anti-Crisis*, 94.
- xxxiii Debrix, *Tabloid Terror*, 13.
- xxxiv C. Wright Mills, *The Sociological Imagination*. 40th anniv. ed. (New York: Oxford University Press, 1959): 8-9. Mills states: "Troubles...occur within the character of the individual and within the range of [their] immediate relations with others...within the scope of [their] immediate milieu – the social setting that is directly open to [their] personal experience and to some extent [their] willful activity. A trouble is a private matter: values cherished by an individual [seem] to be threatened...Issues have to do with matters that transcend those local environments of the individual and the range of [their] inner life...An issue is a public matter: some value cherished by publics is felt to be threatened...it cannot very well be defined in terms of the immediate and everyday environments of ordinary men. An issue, in fact, often involves a crisis in institutional arrangements, and often too, it involves what Marxists call contradictions and antagonisms."
- xxxv Roitman, *Anti-Crisis*, 4. Roitman states: "evoking crisis entails reference to a norm because it requires a comparative state for judgment: crisis compared to what? That question evokes the significance of crisis as an axiological problem, or the questioning of the epistemological or ethical grounds of certain domains of life and thought."
- xxxvi Michel Foucault, "Truth and Power" in *Power / Knowledge: Selected Interviews & Other Writings 1972-1977*, ed. Colin Gordon (New York: Vintage Books, 2010), 131-132. Foucault states: "Truth is a thing of this world," Foucault suggests, "it is produced only by virtue of multiple forms of constraint. And it induces regular effects of power. Each society has its regime of truth, its 'general politics' of truth: that is, the types of discourse which it accepts and makes function as true."

xxxvii Zygmunt Bauman, *Liquid Modernity* (Malden: Polity Press, 2000), 55. Bauman states: “Order...means monotony, regularity, repetitiveness and predictability; we call a setting ‘orderly’ if and only if some events are considerably more likely to happen in it than their alternatives, while some other events are highly unlikely to occur or are altogether out of the question.”

xxxviii See: Glen Greenwald and Ewen Macaskill “NSA Prism Program taps in to user data of Apple, Google and others” *theguardian.com*, <http://www.guardian.co.uk/world/2013/jun/06/us-tech-giants-nsa-data> (Accessed June 10th, 2013). Greenwald and Macaskill state: “The NSA access is part of previously undisclosed program called Prism, which allows officials to collect materials including search history, the content of emails, file transfers and live chats;” and Glen Greenwald, “XKeyscore: NSA tool collects ‘nearly everything a user does on the internet’” *theguardian.com*, <http://www.theguardian.com/world/2013/jul/31/nsa-top-secret-program-online-data> (Accessed August 1, 2013).

xxxix UN News Centre, “UN human rights probe panel reports continuing ‘gross’ violations in Syria,” *un.org* <http://www.un.org/apps/news/story.asp?NewsID=42079#.U112a8f6Epk> (Accessed April 27, 2014).

xl CNN Staff, “Syrian crisis: Keeping up with key developments,” *CNN.com* http://www.cnn.com/2013/09/10/world/meast/syria-developments/index.html?hpt=hp_t1 (Accessed November 2, 2013).

xli Tom Cohen, “Obama seeks support for attacking Syria while pursuing diplomacy,” *CNN.com* http://www.cnn.com/2013/09/10/politics/obama-syria/index.html?hpt=hp_t1 (Accessed November 2, 2013).

xlii Notable too are the number of political errors made in the construction of this crisis to achieve whatever US national security objective striking Syria would have provided. This ranges from Secretary of State John Kerry’s poor choice of words, President Obama’s “red line,” an awkward national presidential address, and hence the subsequent disappearance of the issue from the national conversation afterwards.

xliii Zygmunt Bauman, Dider Bigo, Paulo Esteves, Elspeth Guild, Vivienne Jabri, David Lyon, and RBJ Walker “After Snowden: Rethinking the Impact of Surveillance” *International Political Sociology*, vol. 8 (2014): 131-132.