

Interview with Michael Hardt

Empire, sovereignty and new struggles

Ceren Özselçuk: I have thought we can structure the interview around some of the key concepts and ideas you have been producing and elaborating in a series of books, co-authored with Antonio Negri. In a chronological way, I want to start with *Empire*. It has been quite sometime since *Empire* was published back in 2000 but I have had the impression that in your most recent work, *Declaration*, you in a way come back to it. At least there are arguments which in my view connect with your critique of political sovereignty, or your analysis of the reconfiguration of political sovereignty that you began articulating in *Empire*. So, my first question is, to what extent the processes that you describe in *Declaration*, like the emergence of the indebted, mediatized, securitized and represented subjectivity, build on your rethinking of sovereign power in *Empire*, and to what extent these actually point to new developments, new dimensions of the operations of sovereign power.

Michael Hardt: There are some aspects of the concepts of Empire that perhaps were controversial for some audiences when the book came out but now seem to me common sense. We started the project with the idea that anti-Americanism, meaning anti-U.S., is no longer adequate as a foundation for politics on the left. Not that the U.S. has become any better, but rather that it is no longer capable of imperialist domination, that it is no longer capable unilaterally to rule global affairs. This doesn't mean of course that the U.S. is no longer an important nation state, that its military is no longer powerful; it means that the U.S. is no longer capable of shaping the global environment. That's what Rumsfeld wanted to do. That's what Bush administration imagined. After the failures of the Bush administration, it becomes clear, like I said, common sense that the U.S. as nation state is not the determining factor in global affairs but one among many.

A second and conceptually more difficult way of formulating the problem is that of thinking of the role of nation states and national sovereignty more generally. Part of what we are starting from is also thinking about the left. In the same way that we thought anti-Americanism is no longer an adequate foundation, the goal of the left seems to us not sovereignty. We want an anti sovereign politics. So even the processes of national liberation which have been important frameworks for social movements and formations on the left for decades seems to us not an adequate framework today. So that brings an argument or discussion within the field of international relations. One group will say that we are in an age of globalization; therefore, nation states no longer matter. The other side recognizes state still matters, so they really see there is no globalization. We intended the concept of Empire and tried to work it, but this is a difficult terrain, to say that states, especially dominant states are still important, but there has been a qualitative shift where they now have to function within a larger structure. And that's how we understand Empire: a larger structure in which national sovereignties still play an important role, of course, some more than others, but that the nation state, as a sovereign unit, is conditioned in a way greater than it was before by a global system. I guess there are two arguments with regard to the question regarding sovereignty here. One is that national sovereignties are becoming qualified by a larger structure in which

they have to operate. And the second is that left shouldn't in our view aim towards sovereignty. Sovereignty is not the only terrain of politics. Many have thought this in the past. How to think something like democratic autonomy outside of the framework of sovereignty becomes one way of articulating that project for the left. I still have not come to the actual...

C.Ö: I also had a framing in my mind, in relation to your theses in *Declaration*, like "oh, this is a new phase of neo-liberalism" and that's what I was imposing onto the question.

M.H: That's an interesting question; I sort of felt the need to go back and deal with the bigger things.

C.Ö: I think this gives us another way to connect the arguments in *Empire*, this time, to your talk, "Where Have All the Leaders Gone?" at Boğaziçi University. There, you differentiated the new cycle of struggles of 2011-2012, which you characterize as "rooted in territory," from the previous cycle of what you characterize as the "nomadic events" of 1999 Seattle and 2001 Genoa protests. Following up with this distinction, could we think about this new cycle of struggles also as providing another kind of questioning of the nation state form? That is, in *Empire* nation state has to operate in a larger context, which leads to a crumbling of sovereignty, but can we also say there is the "from the below" crumbling of sovereignty through these struggles? Or, to put it in other words, to what extent are these struggles anti-nation state struggles?

M.H: In some ways I see those two cycles of struggles as complementary, but they have much to learn from each other. Many of the obvious and just critiques of what was called then global justice movement or alter globalization movement involved its nomadic character: moving from one summit protest to another or meeting in Porto Alegre in Brazil, or once a year having the world social forum in different locations. One of the attempts during that movement ten years ago was precisely to recognize the nature of globalization. That was its immediate task. In fact, the movement was great at revealing the new controlling power sources in the global system. I saw it as a kind of experimentation of illuminating nodes in that network, like one week we would recognize the World Trade Organization, and next week we would do the World Bank and the IMF, next week we would do G8 meeting. And travelling from one summit to the next was a kind of pedagogy in the elements of the global system. But everyone recognized at the time that this global project lacked a kind of material engagement with localities.

In that way one should say that the cycle of struggles since 2011, and in some ways the ones in 2013 are firmly located in the local. In fact, each encampment not only has the city as its focus, but even specific neighborhoods. The post Gezi moment is one example of that: neighborhood forms trying to articulate with very specific projects. The risk in this current cycle of struggles seems to me is losing contact with the global view. One of the ways of addressing that is by recognizing the linkages among the different national situations. So, in the very local struggles in İstanbul or Ankara if one can see that in Saõ Paulo and Rio de Janeiro there are fairly similar things going on with resonances that can help articulate the local with a larger structure.

C.Ö: It also seems a different kind of pedagogical approach is required in terms of translating and transferring the experience of locality to other places.

M.H: Right, I think that's true. There are small experiences and small groups within each of these protests that do see and try to expand those connections, but they are relatively small. For instance, a political group, mostly artists from New York collective in the summer of 2011 went to Tunisia, inspired by the revolts against Bin Ali earlier that year, and when they came back from Tunisia that experience was central for the beginning of Occupy Wall Street. So they were already making that kind of connection, but it's not at the level of the entire movement.

C.Ö: So, there is a problem of scale.

M.H: I think there is a problem of scale, right. And if you put the two movements together, it seems that one immediately achieves the recognition of the global level, but doesn't have a local rooting. And the other, almost exactly opposite of it, has the localness and has trouble articulating the global forms. Either the global forms of oppression, like attaching the crisis of housing debt in Spain with the European level, or even the global one. So, being stuck within a national territory, even a city territory seems to me weakness. I think Fredric Jameson would call this an antinomy between the two movements, that they have an apparent opposite formulation. What I am asking for is in some ways to resolve this antinomy.

C.Ö: Could what you characterize as weakness be also seen from a different angle as strength of these movements—that they do not want to immediately rush to use the institutional mechanisms of the nation state when trying to articulate global forms? Yet, global participation seems to be so very rooted in the nation state form that inventing alternative institutions becomes one of the biggest challenges facing the new struggles. Does this make sense?

M.H: It seems to me that there are many possibilities at the European level. I think first, it is important that there is recognition that within Europe one can't really confront the debt crisis in the context of a single nation-state. That doing it at a national level and struggling at a national level in Greece, in Spain or in Italy will not yield results. But if there could be an articulation at the European level of these, of the questions of debt, that would be a much more powerful response and there have been some efforts to do that. It is as you say very difficult to organize at the European level, to have protest movements from Germany attach to ones from Greece. And one of big disappointments of activists in Greece, and activists in Spain is that they feel so little connection and participation from those in the north.

C.Ö: And why is that?

M.H: I think you're right that the national level is an obstacle, it's a stumbling block. For instance, in Germany my perception is that even on the radical left there is a kind of solidarity for those in the south, but I am coming to hate that word solidarity, which I often interpret to mean empathy for those who are suffering. What is needed instead is to recognize that the

problems are intricate, or inseparable. You could say in one sense Greece is all of our future, so there could be a self recognition of that, but I think it has to be more than that.

But there are efforts and they have certain kind of effect, like each June in Frankfurt there is a call for European participation for a protest against the European Central Bank, they call it blockoccupy, like occupation or blocking of the European central bank. Those are the kind of demonstrations it seems very much like the ones that were done ten years ago. It could lead a certain recognition of the European central bank in all of these countries. But an obvious point is that capital is very good at organizing at the European level and at the global level. Capital doesn't find the nation state to be an insuperable stumbling block. It is a much more difficult stumbling block it seems to me for social movements and alternative projects.

C.Ö: There is a reference to the idea of federalism in *Declaration*. It resonates with me because here there is an attempt to rethink federalism as a scale of relationality that's not local, that's not nation state, which is regional, but also harbors a way of thinking about interdependency among regions. I don't know whether this has relevance to how you reclaim federalism, to the way you try to build a new concept out of the various historical meanings or uses of federalism.

M.H: I think that's exactly what we're attempting. Federalism like many other concepts in our political vocabulary has come to have a very limited meaning which really functions all within a national sovereignty model. And so it seems useful to us to return to the history of the concept and transform it to indicate modes of local autonomy that can function together in decision making processes. Outside of the framework of sovereignty is the way we are thinking of it, but it's another in a long line of concepts of modern political thought that we are both attracted to in their core and repulsed by in their current accepted meanings. And so trying to reclaim what federalism could mean, like trying to reclaim what democracy could mean, is part of the project. And you're right it is exactly why federalism appealed to us, because it is a mechanism for an expansive network rooted in local autonomy and decision making.

Politics of multitude, populism and love

C.Ö: I want to move to the idea of multitude at this point as a key idea that you and Negri innovate in order to imagine a new terrain of politics for left. Both in *Commonwealth* as well as in your talk at Boğaziçi University you are careful to distinguish multitude from the people, and similarly distinguish the politics of multitude from the politics of populism. Could I ask once more the way in which you distinguish these two forms of politics and the stakes involved in that differentiation?

M.H: The primary issue is one of multiplicity. The political notion of people is used primarily to represent a unified, if not homogeneous subject. So when one says a national people, the Turkish people for instance, it functions primarily as a representation of the dominant subjectivity and excludes or eclipses subordinated subjectivities from its representation. In other words, it unifies the multiplicity under a single face. The use of the concept of people in republican discourse in Turkey seems to be an excellent example of this. Multitude as a

concept thus seems more appealing to us than people is because it names the reality of the diversities that are eclipsed by the people. So the first thing then might be to say when you say Turkish people, they are really many peoples. For instance, you could do it by religious denomination, or you could do it by ethnic, linguistic denomination, or you could also think about gender, because the national peoples have almost exclusively been under a male face in the representations. Sexuality could be another index. All of these ones you could say, okay there are a lot of different peoples. But even with any each of those it seems to us important to recognize multiplicity. Kurdish people is not one thing either. Multiplicity goes all the way down. So the first thing I suppose is that multiplicity against, or instead of the notion of people, is recognition of plurality. For instance, in the Bolivian struggles of 10 years ago, before the overthrow of the neo-liberal government and the election of the leftist government, those movements used the term multitude, actually completely independent of my and Toni's theorizing about it, in large part to recognize the ethnic plurality of those in struggle: there are 26 indigenous identities in Bolivia plus their non-indigenous populations. They wanted to recognize we are not struggling as the Bolivian people as if that were one thing, we're struggling as a multitude of different identities. That is one aspect of it.

I guess the second question, then, is whether it is possible politically to act as a multitude, or do you have to have a unifying instance. I think the theories of populism assume that unification or centralization is required for political action. I am now thinking of Ernesto Laclau and specifically about his book *On Populist Reason*. Laclau begins, like us, from the notion that the social field is an open multiplicity, meaning that there is no pre-existing unity. But then he insists that political action always requires a process of identification under a hegemonic signifier, unification under a sovereign instance such as a leader or a party. With the notion of multitude Toni and I are starting from the same analysis that the social field is a radically heterogeneous one, but we are projecting, we desire, we want to have a form of political organization that doesn't require a hegemonic instance to allow for politics, but can instead have a plurality of relations among those in struggle that doesn't require the sovereign instance as its point of unification and identification. With Ernesto (and his use of Freud) it seems to me that there is a kind of hypothesis about human nature: we require the father – as leader or party. Personally if that's human nature I want nothing to do with humans. But I don't believe that it is human nature, or, maybe better to say, I don't believe that human nature is fixed. I want a human nature that is able to form bonds – and to act politically -- without the father.

C.Ö: And that connects with your critique of the position of the leaders, a critique which you also observe as an orientation that exists within the new cycle of movements, and you mentioned even as a tendency that predates these movements, as a long time internal critique of the left.

M.H: I think that's true; many small elements of the left have been moving away from forms of authority on the left. And that has become, I would say, a majority position within social movements in many parts of the world. In some ways Tahrir square was a moment of a generalized recognition of this quality of contemporary social movements. That form, or that

ambition in the movements seems to me as widely recognized now. What's not clear is whether that can be a sustained and effective form of political organizing.

C.Ö: Even if, as you have said, you don't want to connect leadership to a certain form of human nature, a certain need of psychology, there is a certain political affectivity that demands the reproduction of a relation to leader. How can we explain the appeal of the leader, without falling into a psychologizing position?

M.H: Maybe you could psychologize in an alternative mode. This is exactly the terrain that Deleuze and Guattari were trying to articulate after 1968: a political anti-familialism. They were against the family, but not just in its little forms of mommy, daddy and me. They were also against the family in all of these extended political formations. Freud says in order to be brothers we need a father in a social formation, or, even extending, in a political group. Deleuze and Guattari not only want to kill the father—they want to ignore the father, rather than kill anybody—but they don't even want to be brothers. I think that the entire imagination of social bonds and political organization that functions on a familial logic is what they're trying to get away from. In some ways it is completely parallel to the way we're trying to think of multitude.

C.Ö: So multitude is also a very fundamental critique of the family.

M.H: It is also a very fundamental critique of the family, yes. And familialism. This was the term that Deleuze and Guattari wanted to use as a wider effect. This is Deleuze and Guattari talking now. They would say something like "isn't it disgusting that the only way people are able to express their bonds to each other is in family terms." Like "I love you like a brother." Or "we sisters struggle together." They wanted to get rid of that entire imagination of familial bonds as the exclusive terrain of bonding. But a concept like multitude, this is one of the things I like about such a concept, is not finished. It is a concept that changes with, or this is the way Toni and I treat it, what happens. And different social movements make certain things now no longer questioned, like they make them obvious, but then other things become problems. I like that kind of concept, that it is not a matter of just all going back to what we said in the first place. But it is rather a concept that changes with the times.

C.Ö: In *Commonwealth*—and I've just recently read your *Procedures of Love*—you say that you are trying to develop a political concept of love as an encounter, and you give references to Deleuze's reference to Proust's *In Search of Lost Time* and Deleuze and Guattari's writing on the encounter of the orchid and the wasp. I am more broadly interested in the question of why you have come to this question of love, but now, more specifically, I wonder whether it is thinking about politics of multitude that has pushed you and Negri toward the idea of love.

Then I have another, related question about the relation between the ontology of labor as you theorize it and politics of love. Does not the discussion of love shift the way we think about immaterial labor? This is what I have in mind: when you talk about immaterial labor you talk about its constitutive affective dimension, but also its feminized dimension. The orchid and wasp story, if we are to remain in the ontology of labor as you theorize it, is more like a

queering of labor rather than feminization of labor. Does not the theme of love add a different dimension to your previous work of connecting multitude with labor?

M.H: Let me start with the analytical component. One beneficial thing that posing love as a political concept does is to recognize, or to make clear something maybe obvious to all of us, which is that political struggle is not about rationality and interest devoid from passions and affects. Posing love on the terrain of politics already forces you to mix the question of affects and passions with any notion of reason and interest. We shouldn't try to exclude the passions or affects from politics and simply focus our energies on interest, class interest, identity interest or even rationality, we have to recognize politics as that. This is the recognition that is obvious in social movements like the Gezi encampment where affects and passions obviously played a very large role, or were at the forefront.

Another analytical advantage of thinking of love as a political concept is it's a useful framework for recognizing the nature of a whole series of right wing political movements. It is useful, for instance, to frame or begin a study of fascism, not as a question of hatred, or scapegoating, or naming the enemy, but really a movement about love. But then you have to recognize a very horrible form of love that is being deployed: love of the same, or even love producing the same. A white supremacy movement is a love of whiteness, for instance, rather than only a fear of darkness or a demonization of darkness.

Also that recognition forces you to say if love is to be a political concept of liberation it would have to be a different kind of love than that love deployed in right wing and racist movements. It would have to be not love of sameness, or love of us as an identity, but rather a love that manages to found itself on multiplicity. A lot of ways of formulating that have been appealing to me. This, for example, is what Nietzsche is after when his Zarathustra preaches love of the farthest. Zarathustra wants to get away from the notion of love with neighbor because it stinks of sameness and identity. It might be more useful to think about love of differences, or love of multiplicity, and if you could think the neighbor as that then love of neighbor still makes sense. Thinking neighbor not as one the most like you or the one nearest you but rather as the stranger with you.

C.Ö: So, love in that sense has an effect of disidentification?

M.H: Yes, right. To go back to what you were saying—the ways that Toni and I have found the queer theory is an important framework for thinking multitude. What you say reminds me of José Muñoz's use of disidentification as a political foundation rather than identification. And I think that is central to the vein of queer theory that interests us most. The anti-identity vein of queer theory functions through disidentification—and even the construction of community through differences and not through sameness or identities.

C.Ö: And then there is the question which you also pose, of how to sustain this type of process of disidentification because, love is in a way a kind of paradox, it is an encounter which is both disruptive and at the same time creative, but how to sustain such a paradoxical affective process? In one instance you bring up Jean Genet's reference to ceremonials. I am

wondering what kind of political inspiration, in terms of instituting love, that ceremonials provide.

M.H: If one were to accomplish a political concept of love based on multiplicity, it would require a different kind of institutionalization, not based on identity. One of the things Toni and I have been pursuing in different places is a notion of institution that is based on antagonism or on conflict. You could say on difference, but normally we think of institution as based on some unified basis. Instead we are interested in creating institutions – that is, stable bonds and stable practices based -- on heterogeneity or even conflict.

You are right that I am inspired by Genet's notion of love encounters. When you have a love experience, the point is not only to appreciate it, but also to make it repeat, or to make it continue. Jean Genet's novels are kind of divine procedures, or creation of habits, they are divine for him because they create something new. Love encounter makes not only new experience for him, it is also even a new being. There is a kind of ontological innovation that one has in a love encounter. And so ceremonials in his novels are a kind of ritualized practices that allow us to continue and repeat.

Let us try to come to Gezi with this. Because many people experienced the encampment at Gezi as an experience of love, as an encounter that transformed them. One of the things that seems to me important about recognizing love as a political concept is love is an experience in which you lose yourself. Love is a transformational experience. It is not just recognizing solidarity with others in which you stay the same but you just form a coalition or something. In love you lose yourself and become something different. In all of the encampments -- and Gezi most of all -- there was a recognition of its transformational nature, but you can't just force that and make it repeat. You can't just say on some other date let's go all down there and make it happen again. One way is to create habits, this is what I mean by rituals or ceremonials, that can prolong and repeat the kinds of encounters that make us more powerful. See now that doesn't sound very sentimental at all.

One of the things that Toni and I are constantly working with, but then realizing we are going to be misunderstood, is when these discourses about love intersect with religious discourses. Because in all of the religious contexts, at least that I know of, love is a central concept of community. And my feeling is one doesn't have to remain secular in the sense of exclusive of these religious traditions and their concepts and theological reasoning, but one can work through the theological traditions without ending up in them. So I think when Toni and I write about love there is one part of the audience that says we become sentimental, but there is another part that says we become religious. In fact, it can and could be useful to develop elements of those theological traditions that can have positive political outcomes. I am much more experienced doing that in Christian theological tradition, but I think that in Islamic theological tradition that could be a way of working through shared political projects. I would imagine—but see I do not know—how easy it is for anti-capitalist Muslims to find scriptural basis and theological traditions that bolster an anti-capitalist position. I would see no reason why not to intersect with those religious logics as part of a way of expanding and articulating political projects.

C.Ö: There is a strong tradition of love within the heterodox Islamic tradition, there is the idea of “journey of love.” But then there is prime minister Erdoğan’s appropriation of this heterodox discourse on love, which he often articulates as “we love the created because of the creator.” That would be more like a populist love. He is the mediary that unites the dead father with the people.

M.H: He is an excellent example of that form of love that is both a reflection and a construction of homogeneity, “I love you because you are like me.” It seems that many of the seemingly outrageous things that Erdoğan says involve the exclusion of those who are not like me, for example, when he says something specifying the Sünni nature of the people he loves. These are that terrible function of love in politics I was talking about earlier. He is a perfect example of it.

This brings up another avenue down the love route: There is a passage in Hannah Arendt’s *Human Condition* where she says that “love is not just an apolitical concept, it is an anti-political concept.” So she wants to completely ban love from politics. An apolitical force for Arendt would be one that ignores differences but love, she says, is actually anti-political in that it destroys the differences that are necessary for politics. She conceives politics as speaking in the presence of others, as the kind of diversity of the social field. I am in complete agreement with Arendt on this if love means bonding with those who are the same, or even a process of becoming one. But if love could function as an often antagonistic engagement of differences that form stable bonds, but bonds that are not based on sameness, but bonds that are based on differences, if love could be that, then it would be political in Arendt’s sense and it would be a different kind of politics than Erdoğan’s love.

Capital, common and temporality

C.Ö: A version of this interview will be published in a history journal, so it is perhaps all the more relevant to turn to the relation between politics and temporality. Temporality seems to be a fundamental aspect of how capitalist domination operates, also significant in your work is the way you connect autonomy and the common to a new temporality. Is this a correct characterization of your work?

M.H: In some ways the left is divided by the two conceptions of time. The first one, maybe the dominant one, is a chronological, or linear conception of building and transformation, which would see the important reforms that we can do in the here and now. By transforming legal structures, bettering the conditions of workers or the poor. Then there is another left, or another temporality on the left that I would call the event temporality, which doesn’t actually foresee, or can’t foresee social transformations, but then somehow all at once something happens, it even seems to come from outside, and there is a transformation. It is possible, for instance, that Gezi was an event in that way. It couldn’t really be foreseen, but it involves a kind of transformation, a transformation of social consciousness, of social practices, etc. In some ways these two visions are divided between a reformist temporality and a revolutionary temporality, thinking of revolution here as an event. And it seems to me that work on the left is often divided between the two. In fact, many who think in terms of the one temporality think of the other not really as leftist. I am sure you have heard many of the young

revolutionary minded leftists who think those who are working for practical reforms are not really leftist. Or also that those practical reformist leftists think those who are counting on, or aiming towards the event-like transformation, they are not really leftist, or they are infantile or something like that. It seems to me that we have to construct, that we have to work across both temporalities. It is also true that the event temporality doesn't involve just waiting. You can't just sit on the couch and wait until the event arrives. Events have to be constructed.

C.Ö: I think you say somewhere in *Declaration* something about being ready. You talk about the Chicago Boys and ...

M.H: That they were ready.

C.Ö: Yes, they were ready.

M.H: Oh, they are totally ready. I was also impressed by the response of one of the Italian autonomous theorists working in the Fiat plant in Turin, Romano Alquati, when asked about one of the first events that opened up the possibility of workers taking control of their own political voice. He was questioned about one of these events that happened in 1962 – a worker revolt against the hierarchy of their own union -- and he said of course we didn't foresee the event, but we prepared it. And I like this idea that events require a constant political activity even if we can't foresee the results. In some ways I want to see that there is a continuum, or a constant intersection, should be, between these two modes of leftist politics, but really two temporalities.

C.Ö: I also meant to ask whether there is a distinction in your work between the temporality of social movements that engage in practices of autonomy and temporality of capital.

M.H: I am thinking of the division of temporality on the left.

C.Ö: Would you say that is different than the temporality of capital, or is there any kind of opposition like that. I know that in your writings there is some sense that there is a capitalist temporality, or there is a certain domination of capitalist temporality.

M.H: I think that is true, there is not several, but *a* capitalist temporality that shifts historically and that part of political engagement has to be work within that temporality to reveal its possibilities. For me a grounding of thinking about this is E. P. Thompson's work about the temporality of industrial capital, in *The Making of the Working Class* but also specifically in the article "Time, Work Discipline and Industrial Capitalism." What he is talking about is how our inner concept of time, or the temporality in which we live was shifted by the industrial era. Previous to industrial era people's inner sense of time was determined either by tasks, i.e., how long it takes to milk the cow, or how long it takes to do some task, or by natural rhythms of the earth, the tides, the moon. Our inner sense of time was tied to these. The industrial era instead defined not only for workers in the factory but for the entire society a regimented, synchronized and infinitely divisible temporality. Time of the factory, the division between work time and non work time, the hours and minutes of the clock, all of these were born from the factory and then came to influence society as a whole. Thompson leaves us there, with factory time.

I think in contemporary era we moved to a new modulation of capitalist temporality. I was interested in a book published last year by Jonathan Crary, called *24/7: Late Capitalism and the Ends of Sleep*. And it is really about a new temporality of capital that is never ending, that blurs the division between work and non work and importantly for him the division between sleep and waking. He in fact thinks that contemporary capital in its modes of consumption and in its modes of work are destroying sleep, like stores never close, communication never stops – any time of night you can check your e- mail, buy something on Amazon. He links this in part to all kinds of sleep disorders today, that people can't sleep anymore because of constant attraction to screens of all sorts. But what is most interesting to me is the way this modifies the fixed industrial temporality that Thompson looked at, and especially the working day, you know, the division between work and non-work. Blurring the division between work and non-work has not led to any sort of liberation but an of expansion of work, a new kind of imprisonment. A recent U.S. newspaper seemed to express outrage that a French company would require its workers not to look at their e-mail from six in the evening until eight in the morning. That would be an outrageous kind of violation of the 24/7 mentality, of consumption and of production.

In each of these temporalities, this is partly Thompson's way of thinking about it too, workers have to take the temporality given to them by capital and find ways to use it as a weapon and struggle over time. I think similarly that would be the test today; how can we on the basis of this amorphous or modulating time, let's call it 24/7, how can we transform that into a weapon? In other words, we have to recognize the nature of capitalist temporality, but then use it, find ways in which it provides us the tools for struggle. This is a classic Marx perspective. Capital not only dominates us, but also gives us weapons for liberation and we have to find them.

C.Ö: That actually ties with the second question which is again about the ways in which you discuss temporality in your work. There is this certain temporality of capital, or rather of productive forces through which you and Negri, in your reading of Marx, explain historical transformation in reference to the transformations of labor power (i.e., the emergence of the new labor power as immaterial, cognitive, communicative, affective). On the other hand, there is the temporality of "doing work" with others in social movements, which you mention in *Declaration*, which refers to a history approached from the perspective of social movements' practices. In what ways are, or could in fact these histories be thinkable in connection? Is not there a tension here since the first history seems more like a meta, a unifying history of the productive forces, whereas the second seems to involve distinct temporalities, in reference to the distinct histories of social practices?

M.H: I definitely see that these two arguments are presented in separate form, but I think partly by investigations of class composition of those in struggle they can be articulated the one with the other. The kind of investigation of class composition I mean is at least begun when people refer to the composition of Gezi in terms of "white collar," and then one should ask further what exactly does white collar mean, what are the kinds of tasks, or what are the nature of the productive forces involved? It is not at all obvious what social classes are involved in these struggles. In the Egypt insurrection in 2011 I think was involved a very

complicated articulation of traditional sectors of the industrial working class with what might be called white collar, that is, well educated urban youth, often precariously employed or unemployed. One step, then, is to do an analysis of the social composition, class composition of those in struggle.

There is an even further and broader task to say, and I think a very difficult task to say, what does class mean today? What is the nature of class composition? Too often there is the assumption of old categories that no longer fit to contemporary work conditions. For many people, then, it doesn't seem like we are talking about productive forces, or class in general, when, in fact, it is just from a misunderstanding, or a lack of clarity about what class means today. When people use the term white collar to name the class position of many involved in Gezi, part of what they're saying is that we're not middle class and we are not industrial workers, but we are still workers. So it was a labor struggle in some ways and there is a class formation involved. That seems to me an important first step, but one should go further.

C.Ö: What you say leads me to think of the question of the ways in which the work-related practices of those white collar workers who participated in Gezi might have been carried into the space of the park. Many have talked about the communicative tools and new forms of communication which are important, but have not connected that to the new class composition and labor. But even apart from those communicative forms of labor that are very quickly attached to the technologies of Twitter and Facebook, I am wondering what other ways can we think about the relations between the practices that characterize these new forms of laboring and the organizational practices at Gezi.

M.H: It reminds me of the work of Paolo Virno who has a linguistic approach to the notion of multitude and his work really has moved in the direction of the philosophy of language. He characterizes the post-Fordist laboring condition of one that is loquacious. He says that the industrial proletariat was fundamentally mute, that it worked in silence or in the noise of the factory whereas the predominant form of labor today is characterized by linguistic performance and creativity. For me that is not all of it, but it is an interesting relation. It might be one way of linking the productive forces—because in a strict Marx and Engels' sense the development of productive forces has had to do in recent years with the development of new linguistic and communicative tools and expressions—link that advancement in the productive forces with the kind of incredible linguistic capacities at Gezi, i.e., the jokes, the banners, the slogans. In some ways that is a way of linking the nature of the capacities we saw in the struggle with the quality of productive forces.

C.Ö: You mention during this interview how you and Negri are moving towards thinking about difference in relation to antagonism. Similarly, in your talk and in *Declaration* as well you describe the relationship between social movements and progressive governments, especially in Latin America, as one of an antagonistic collaboration. I am curious about the nature of this relationship. I also find it very important that you articulate this as a position of its own because often this type of relation—what I also have in mind here is the kind of accusation addressed to the Kurdish movement by segments of the left in Turkey—is

considered as some kind of an opportunistic pragmatism, connoting the sense that pragmatism is necessarily something bad.

M.H: As if it is betraying principle.

C.Ö: Yes, so could you expand on this idea of antagonistic collaboration as a form of politics, and on how it takes place in the context of Latin America.

M.H: Let me start with the historical and very general description. What have been most innovative in Latin America in the last decade are the social movements that have not only identified neo-liberalism as a prime antagonist, but have overthrown neo-liberal governments through wide social formations. After the neo-liberal governments have fallen, progressive governments, anti-neoliberal governments in certain ways, have come to power often from the movements themselves, often from personalities from within the movements themselves. What would be a problem, and I think sometimes is a problem in some of these instances, is for then the movements that had refused logics of representation previously, if they then accept that the government represents them and in some ways demobilize the movement itself and go home. The most positive instances I think are when the social movements remain. They don't trust in the representation, or accept the representation of the government but also they are not dogmatic in their anti-sovereignty positions. They instead maintain a kind of constantly antagonistic engagement with those governments. So they sometimes align with the governments against, for instance, the foreign corporation taking over a mine. But then also equally attack the governments for their ecologically destructive economic practices, or their practices against the indigenous groups. These governments have somehow become anti-neoliberal, but modernizing and extractivist—this is the term they use in Latin America, based on oil and mineral extraction plus what they call monocultural agriculture. This is what characterizes these governments. And the movements, when healthy, maintain a combative relationship with them. That seems to me a pragmatic and useful way of conducting autonomous politics. There is another mode of autonomous politics which is the one that the Zapatistas have become, because for them the engagement with the government proved impossible and they maintained a separation in their autonomy.

C.Ö: And you actually talk about multiple ontologies of politics in *Declaration*, these could be the two modes that are within the realm of constituting an autonomy. I want to finish with a question of writing as a practice of commoning, I have in mind your writing practice with Negri. I also see your writing as an instance of multitude, in the different genres that you bring together (poetic, literary, theological, philosophical, party-manifesto-like and others). I often think it must be intentional, it is something that you actually work on.

M.N: I often think of the opening sentences of Deleuze and Guattari's *A Thousand Plateaus* where they say "two of us wrote this book but each of us was already several so there was quite a crowd." I often think about that together with Toni that in some ways the collaboration with someone else allows even for the expression of those multiple voices within each of you. That then come out in different forms. And sometimes we experiment with writing, I wish we could experiment more and more successfully about allowing different voices to speak. Nietzsche is a great master at that, allowing different voices to speak. But with Toni and me,

in some ways it is really not primarily about the writing, I think that it is really primarily about the friendship. In some ways the book is a byproduct of the friendship. So the friendship continues and the books come out as part of a longer discussion. It is nice to have that as a concretization.

C.Ö: Manifestation of friendship that has diverse dimensions?

M.H: Manifestation of friendship that has diverse dimensions, yes.