Deconstructing Terrorism
Trauma, perversions and auto-immunities

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Abstract: This short paper intends, since the radical thought of deconstruction, interferes in the reflection on terrorism, seem as a symptom of an auto-immune crisis that cross through the democratic territory. In this sense, in a way that makes it possible to destabilize the discursive structural properties which commonly keep the debate about this subject, it will be necessary to perceive the viral violence caused by the traumatic experience of what is called September 11th (11S). If after the hit of the economic and military order head symbol, we could, far beyond the physiological point of view, perceive the temporality of trauma produced in the future, it will be possible to touch the auto-evident node of the vicious circle of repression. Such auto-immune perversion that sends forth a threaten of the worse to come, on the one hand, seems to have as the exactly target a kind of self-compassion, (arrogant) vulnerability that becomes a perfect alibi for the committing big atrocities, even worse, in an orgy of power, to extreme the deregulation and disorder logic that feeds the speculative logic in a market scale. The foisted idea of a ´major event´ brings together the abolition of any principle and notion of causality, kidnapping and asphyxiating future itself, in a kind non ending war in which prevention – anticipation as if it was a ´non-war´ state –, perpetuated terror and security obsession take in this order the strategic primacy. As a suction bomb, the higher representation, in democracy, of spontaneous suicide of its own defense mechanisms is placated by the perpetual familiarity state with terror, principle of total insecurity that, far from paying attention to the heteronomy came from the other in its irreducible and non-appropriable difference, fortify the control devices and regenerate exactly what is was supposed to disarm, presenting itself as an universal figure of the power incapable of supporting the diversity spectrum.

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Writing based on an extreme thought process such as deconstruction, if such a thing is possible at all, calls less for an analytical method and much more for destabilizing structural properties that bind certain conceptual schemes. It entails strong arguments to suspend hypotheses and assumptions, the diametrically rigid oppositions that identify a conceptual construction. An *intervention*, under homogenous identities, which does not mean to negotiate with its subject-matter in exchange for some meaning or signification but seeks deconstructive *features* that detotalize self-inclusive totalities. Hence, thinking about the so-called "terrorism" to some extent requires thinking about a symptom: an invitation to reflect *deconstructing something which*, beyond the metaphor, *had been torn down*. In such case, we could seek new criteria to make a distinction between "understanding" and "justifying", condemning and never acquiescing to neutralize the unspeakableness of the deaths. However, we can explain and describe a series of associations the topic raises.

1. First, namely speaking "September 11" means plunging into a mechanic and repetitious pronunciation of a date that betrays the powerlessness of not knowing what we are actually talking about. We repeat it as though to exorcise the thing, conjure it away, deny it – a repetition compulsion as the portrait of a terrifying imperative. To that end, there is the *feeling*, to a large extent constructed, conditioned and circulated by the media, of an unprecedented *major event*, an indelible mark erroneously imprinted and which confines any horizons. Regardless of such hermeneutic apparatus, that which had been "threatened" was the *credit* of American power, the ballast of some world order since the end of the cold war, that is, the discourse that comes to be *accredited* in the world's public space. However, it should be noted that such monumentalizing through death contains within it a certain logic that regulates an entire process which we can precisely call *autoimmunitary*: a strange behavior where a living being, in a quasi-*suicidal* fashion, "itself" works to destroy its own protection, to immunize itself *against* its "own" immunity. Protecting itself by shedding its self-protection. In and of itself, such implacable law has been quite highly regarded to the extent that the aggression the country suffered "came from within", carried out by immigrants trained and prepared in the US.

A second and even more relevant self immunity reflex is seen as we examine the traumatic event. Extending beyond the trauma only marked as an event by the memory and linked to presence or to the past by the repetition compulsion, this order of temporalization must be rethought. Questioning its chronology means realizing the mark of mak-

ing the September 11 look like a "major event" exactly in the impression of a wound permanently open in the *future* – worse than anything that has ever taken place, a sign of an *im-presentable to come* (*à venir*) through the lingering threat in which the trauma of aggression is present and effective.

On the other hand, that which leads to the attempt of making such event unique, in addition to the hodgepodge of causes and effects or the barrenness of any explanation of the sort, it is especially a certain liberation from any references that elicits the effect of a *suction pump* that smothers all future events and, in some sense, encloses it in a self-sufficient totality. Additionally, when absolute evil derives from the enemy's anonymous invisibility, all efforts are directed towards neutralizing it, desperate attempts at movements that feed back the very monstrosity they claim they are trying to defeat. With that, we have the third and most important *perverse* reflex of *autoimmunity* per se: *the vicious circle of repression*. Regenerating the causes of that which they claim to eradicate is the logic of the *endless war*. However, this time without a distinction between enemy states, or through the identification of rebellion or liberation movements, furthermore in a setting in which the territorial determination of the conflict is inadequate.

It should be said, albeit without much haste, that when compared to the possibilities of destruction in the future, invisible and silently arranged from an "IT bomb" in store on computerized networks across the world, the September 11 will seem like an archaic theater of violence from a distant past. In other words, while today it is technoscience that blurs the difference between *war* and *terrorism*, figures that are always contaminative and impossible to tell apart, likewise at any point in history the affirming the differences between State and non-State terrorism, terrorism and national liberation movements, national and international terrorism has been and remains not viable. As is the case with other crucial legal notions, it is this concept's ineffable irreducibility that makes it self-evident and able to be opportunistically appropriated. It is precisely for remaining obscure and dogmatic that it lends itself to being used by hegemonic powers in the manner they see fit. In other words, it is in the semantic instability that we recognize the force strategies of a prevailing power that manages to impose itself and legitimize (and even legalize) the interpretation that best suits it in a given situation.

2. In other words, upon denaturalizing the concept of terrorism we manage to see, among other things, the US interest in exposing their own vulnerability by giving the greatest coverage possible to the aggres-

sion from which they wish to protect themselves. Again, the *autoimmunitary perversion* of a virtual threat stated as a possibility (something that announces itself before becoming something) is enough to impose itself, above all, as the *non-eradicable root* of terror. That somehow requires certain massive compassion for oneself, the representation of some solicitude that turns everyone into a victim. Lest we forget: the opposite of compassion is arrogance, and given certain moral notion under which we are Good and those who attacked us can only be Evil – we were so good that we have been attacked, the tragedy has finally come to prove we are happy and that others envy our happiness! –, which gives us the right to be the strongest, a sort of "masochism of the strongest", is the fact that from now on we are victims and can speak from a position of authority. The *logic of victimization* which, instead of snatching the United States from any ideological dreams, is used as a sedative to, besides the ideology returning to its usual state, enable the *perfect alibi*: unhappiness given credit as ballast that in no way prevents us from continuing to do Good, now unscrupulously.

In view of that, some standard reading should be inverted. The WTC collapse, instead of representing the intrusion of the *real* that shattered the *illusory sphere*, was but the destruction of the very *reality* by the image that invaded it. Something that in fact used to merely inhabit a distant virtual social reality numbed by some informative device finally enters the coordinates of that which we feel is actually real. A dramatic experience deeply lending itself as an artifice to reaffirm the temptations and basic hegemonic coordinates, oblivious, for instance, to any sense of responsibility or guilt towards the third world's plights, because obviously "we are the victims".

In this backdrop, we cannot lose sight of the possibility of some objective complicity between the superpower and that which raises against it abroad/in the motherland. While the goal of said terrorist attacks may include inflicting some instability or deep impact on the world order superpowers, its inherent absurd is the risk that such increase in disorder and disarray may strengthen police and security control devices. The crowning of the globalization process? If, as it seems, all enemy violence is finally an accomplice of the existing order, it is because it makes the speculative system typical of the current capitalist logic go back to the extremes of the general uncertainty principle, which terrorism merely translates as full-blown lack of security. While floating capitals, unpredictable flows, forced mobility and acceleration, and speculative non-places translate the suspended ingredients of the effi-

cient hegemonic violence, it is in the extension of a logic of underlying violence and uncertainty that such phenomena paradoxically contribute to a sort of "power orgy."

The state of *endless war* commented on above, in which the security order is a strategy on a planetary scale, denotes exactly the virulence and a certain "victory of terrorism" in which the *obsession for security* is turned into a naturally (not so veiled) manner of perpetual terror under the universal principle of *prevention*. A sort of global-scale prophylaxis to neutralize stigmatized populations and channel bias-laden differences. Maximum anticipation and dissuasion as references in the search for a criminal ghost, albeit a reality which will concretely haunt the usual disrupting signs of the hegemonic order. A *viral violence* specter which, out of a chain reaction and in addition to destroying our immunities and any ability to resist, announces some "end of history", obviously excluding the one related to preventative terror as the only possibility of an event.

3. In further closing, a *full power*, where the disquieting non-war state in which terror is familiar is above all power in its pure state, also carries within it its own weakness, the most extreme of all: its end. It ends up turning on itself to the extent it is no longer able to question itself, given it differs from anything other than its own unveiled totality: however, as an absolute, in its wild state, it also carries the empty bottom of sovereignty – this inescapable inner anguish brought to light by terrorism.

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