The Neurotic Citizen

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Over the last three decades we have witnessed the birth of a subject that has constituted the foundations of a regime change in state societies: the neoliberal subject. As much as neoliberalism came to mean the withdrawal of the state from certain arenas, the decline of social citizenship, privatization, downloading, and so forth, it also meant, if not predicated upon, the production of an image of the subject as sufficient, calculating, responsible, autonomous, and unencumbered. While the latter point has been a topic of debate concerning the rational subject, I wish to argue that the rational subject has itself been predicated upon and accompanied by another subject: the neurotic subject. More recently, it is this neurotic subject that has become the object of various governmental projects whose conduct is based not merely on calculating rationalities but also arises from and responds to fears, anxieties and insecurities, which I consider as 'governing through neurosis'. The rise of the neurotic citizen signals a new type of politics (neuropolitics) and power (neuropower). I suggest a new concept, neuroliberalism—a rationality of government that takes its subject as the neurotic citizen—as an object of analysis.

Why Not Risk?

Considering a cluster of questions under the concept 'the neurotic citizen' and 'governing through neurosis' may imply that such problems may have been taken up on the literature concerning risk, which has become one of the most debated concepts in social and political thought. To differentiate the nature and necessity of the questions I wish to pose, it will be necessary to briefly address that literature. The thesis on 'risk society' joined other theses such as 'market society', 'postindustrial society', and 'network society' in describing the transformations in state societies. (Throughout this paper I use the term 'state societies' to designate Anglophone states, primarily English Canada, the United States, Australia, and England. However, the appropriateness of what I shall describe as 'governing through neurosis' may well be greater than this immediate scope.) The question that concerns me is what facts have been reordered for the declaration of a risk society and how these facts are mobilized to create the image of a society that is governed by risk.

Whether it is Luhmann (1993), Beck and Ritter (1992), Douglas (1992; Douglas and Wildavsky, 1982), or Giddens (1990), for these theorists, state

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societies have become risk societies because subjects govern their conduct through risk and governments primarily constitute themselves as safeguarding their subjects from risks, and these risks transcend the boundaries of the state. For Beck (2000), the paradigmatic case of all this was the environment with the rise of environmental politics, but it has now spread to other fields of government such as health, security and technology. In all these areas, the legitimacy of governments depends on their ability to manage risks on behalf of their citizens. While this literature is diverse, the shared assumption seems to be that however risks come into being, it is impossible to govern state societies without managing those risks. There are two features of these risks that differentiate them from risks that other societies had to confront. First, while we know that these risks carry significant, if not catastrophic, consequences, we are not certain about their realization. Second, these risks, also unlike other risks, are based upon 'manufactured uncertainties' because they are direct results of scientific and technological interventions into nature that disrupt its balance (Žižek, 1999, p. 335). These two features combine to create a situation where more production of knowledge is called upon to manage the risks it has created. This 'reflexive modernization' or the 'second enlightenment' creates a situation where we have to make decisions and we are held responsible for those decisions that we were forced to make without adequate knowledge of the situation (Žižek, 1999, p. 338).

What facts are produced and reordered for this interpretation? The fundamental fact seems that with the increasing complexity of environments in which we live, citizens in state societies are subject to varieties of risk ranging from environmental hazards to health and security dangers. Citizens demand that these risks be managed if not alleviated. We have experienced many risks in the last few years: failing safeguards for water management leading to the deaths of citizens, new epidemics such as AIDS and SARS, food chain contamination such as BSE and risks emanating from intensified global mobility and flows such as terrorism and other security threats such as 'dangerous' refugees. When we put all this together the picture that indeed emerges looks like a risk society where many collective and individual decisions are increasingly governed by the need to reduce these risks to societies. When we compare the current governmental and social discourse with governing mentalities of the 1960s and 1970s and remember such governmental projects as elimination of poverty and unemployment, it certainly makes one convinced that indeed priorities have radically changed and that we must be living in a society that is governed by its aversions to risk.

But the risk society theories are problematic from the point of view that I wish to develop in this paper for two reasons. First, there is hardly any analysis of how various dangers and threats become risks. While there is a concern about reflexivity and manufacturing of risks, just how reflexivity produces those risks and by what mechanisms and practices remain neglected areas. In other words, if one is curious about the social and political practices by which certain dangers and threats have been constituted as risks, risk society theories are rather inadequate about asking such questions. Instead, a society is portrayed in which various groups mobilize their concerns about risks that are already agreed upon and governments attempt to respond to them by enacting policies that are

designed to manage or reduce these risks. That way risk management becomes the primary mode of agreement between citizens and governments. Second, it also appears that risks are determined in a level playing field where various groups make their cases and governments choose amongst them. But these problems are not intractable and perhaps theories of risk society already contains answers to them. In my view, the fundamental weakness remains the subject that mobilizes or lies at the centre of such a society. This is perhaps, as Zizek pointed out, the most important inadequacy of risk society theories, which underestimate the radical anxieties that the changes thus described *both* presuppose *and* produce in affecting the modern subject. As Žižek puts it, risk society theories 'leave intact the subject's fundamental mode of subjectivity: their subject remains the modern subject, able to reason and reflect freely, to decide on and select his/her set of norms, and so on' (Žižek, 1999, p. 342).

This can also be seen in the literature on 'culture of fear'. We are told that heightened concerns about certain dangers that become risks are related to how immanent fears in societies have been exploited by governments, corporations, professions (for example, law, medicine, advertising, accountancy, marketing), and others who have much to gain from producing such risks. Such practices in turn create a 'culture of fear' that makes people vulnerable to overreaction to risks. Furedi (2002) and Glassner (1999) give numerous examples how such a culture of fear has been generated in the past few decades to benefit from commodification of fear. Their examples are underlined by a repetitive and homologous pattern: that by producing a culture of fear, society is asked to invest in practices that, statistically speaking, constitute much lower risks while those genuinely high risks are made trivial, mundane and routine. The culture of fear thesis has in a sense become an explanatory framework for the rise of risk society. The established interests in society benefit from the production of certain risks and fuel a culture of fear, which in turn produces a society governed by risk disproportionate to actual dangers that these risks might constitute. The risk society undergirded by a culture of fear becomes vulnerable to the emergence of panics, gate communities, security industries, and an overall trend toward isolation and insularity (Davis, 1999).

There is much that is intriguing in this literature on fear that is worth taking into account. It does point out many practices that have become prevalent in state societies that directly emanate from what might one call 'accumulation of fear'. It is also salient to emphasize that many fears on which people have come to conduct their lives—from where and how they live to what they do for work or recreation—on the basis of 'perceived' dangers rather than any objectively calculable or measurable 'real' dangers. Yet, from the point of view of under-standing the subject that is at the centre of an ostensible culture of fear, this literature over fear has also serious shortcomings. First, while it is important to point out that people conduct their lives on the basis of perceived dangers, it is problematic to underestimate the importance of affect in how subjects conduct themselves. It is well known that affects and emotions are integral component of everyday conduct. Such states are called affects and emotions precisely because they do not fit into rational categories of calculation and assessment. Yet they are equally important in how subjects assess their probabilities and opportunities. It

is even more problematic to assume that urging governments, corporations and professions to present more truthful scenarios to their citizens, consumers and clients can rectify this 'problem'. This misunderstands the importance of the fact that people not only conduct their lives with affects and emotions but also in the absence of capacities for evaluating full and transparent information. Second, while it is laudable to call upon governments, corporations and professions to address citizens, consumers and clients without 'distortion', this assumption overlooks the fact that governments, corporations and professions also govern through risk rather than aiming to eliminate it altogether. If we genuinely believe that governments, corporations and professions govern conduct by merely deceiving their citizens, consumers, and clients, we are both seriously overestimating their powers and underestimating those of citizens, consumers and clients. These assumptions can easily mislead to proposals that would ostensibly restore public faith in deliberation and democracy: that assessment of risk should be based upon rational cost and benefit analyses to inform citizens, consumers and clients about real and perceived dangers (Sunstein, 2002).

The issue of risk has also been taken up by the literature on governmentality. As O'Malley (1999) suggests, the risk society thesis does not quite agree with the sensibilities of a research programme more inspired by Foucault than contemporary literature. Foucault was deeply sceptical about totalizing generalizations and both 'risk society' and 'culture of fear' literatures easily approximate the kinds of pronouncements he was sceptical about. Moreover, Foucault's primary interest was in the formation of a subject who is not simply an object of or subject to governmental projects but is governed through its freedom (Rose, 1999). What that means is that through technologies of the self, the subject governs its conduct by calculating the advantages and disadvantages of a course of action upon herself and the other within the context and field in which she is embedded. Governing oneself by calculating risks involves using various technologies but also it means that governmental authorities do not simply manipulate the subject but govern it as a free subject by encouraging, inculcating, and suggesting certain ways of conduct that increase the health, wealth, and happiness (O'Malley, 1996, 1998, 1999; Petersen, 1996; Rose, 1996; Turner, 1997; Parton, 1998; Bennett, 1999). 'Governing through risk' therefore means neither exploiting whatever fears subjects may have or deceiving them to distort their sense of balance between perceived and real dangers but inviting them to speak truths about themselves, their conditions, and the assessments by which they conduct their selves. In all these practices, subjects are encouraged to conduct themselves in the most beneficial ways to their health, wealth and happiness in ways that are rational, self-interested and calculating.

There are many great examples of this rational subject in the governmentality studies that I will not reiterate here. But I will briefly mention O'Malley's (2000) concept of 'uncertainty' to illustrate that he too takes a calculating, logical subject at its centre. O'Malley has provided a genealogy of the concept of uncertainty to throw light on the formation of the subject under conditions of risk. His argument essentially hinges on the concept of uncertainty representing a distinctive way of 'governing through the future'. As O'Malley suggests, risk society theories rarely analyse uncertainty 'as a distinctive modality of gover-

nance that is associated with specific ways of problematizing the future, and with associated techniques of the self and technologies of government' (O'Malley, 2000, p. 461). By contrast, he suggests that uncertainty 'is a characteristic modality of liberal governance that relies both on a *creative* constitution of the future with respect to positive and enterprising dispositions of risk taking and on a corresponding stance of reasonable foresight or everyday prudence (distinct from both statistical and expert-based calculation) with respect to potential harms' (O'Malley, 2000, p. 461). The subject that still remains at the centre of attention is the rational subject. Whether through liberal or neoliberal rationalities, the subjects 'practice and sustain their autonomy by assembling information, materials and practices together into a personalized strategy that identifies and minimizes their exposure to harm' (O'Malley, 2000, p. 465). Moreover, 'their liberty exists in the capacity to choose rationally among available options and to assemble from these the risk-minimizing elements of a responsible lifestyle' (O'Malley, 2000, p. 465). It is this rational subject that seems to govern itself without affects or emotions and it is able to responsibilize itself by calculation. There are many practices around us that calls this subject into question (see Watson, 1999). I will shift my focus to these practices, which I shall call 'governing through neurosis' but I will first briefly discuss Foucault's concept of biopolitics as it pertains to this concept.

As is well known, Foucault developed his conception of biopolitics in the late 1970s and articulated it in the last chapter of the first volume of his *History of Sexuality* (1978) and his Collège de France lectures in 1978 and 1979 (Lemke, 2001). Foucault argued that in the nineteenth century a peculiar form of power had emerged that he would call biopower. For centuries during the early modern era, in barracks, hospitals, asylums, schools, prisons a disciplinary power had formed that was specifically focused on the body: taming it, harnessing its energies and training its capacities that formed the backbone of the emerging absolutist state and mercantilist economy (Foucault, 1973, 1979). But by the eighteenth century this form of power was increasingly articulated into a kind of power that was focused on what Foucault called the species-body: that the body was an element of a species-body with its own regularities, rules, laws, properties and attributes. Moreover, new sciences emerged—political arithmetic and then political economy—that claimed to have discovered laws and determined the conditions of a wealthy *economy*, healthy *population* and happy *society*. Such entities as economy, population and society were irreducible to bodies that constituted them but were shaped by them. Foucault called that power which took as its object to calibrate the relationship between the body and the species-body as biopower. What was new about biopower, he argued, was its simultaneously individualizing and totalizing character. In other words, the object of biopower was a peculiar 'calibration'. Governing subjects required a calibration of their conduct to the requirements of species-bodies—economy, population, and society—in a manner that involved fine adjustments to both the body and the species-body. This mutual adjustment required producing knowledge about the workings of both bodies but also about their mutual adjustment processes. Biopolitics mobilized the production of knowledge that was appropri-

ate to biopower precisely because its object was to optimize and enhance the mutual capacities of the body and the species-body.

We can now return to the notion of 'governing through risk' with a little more robustness (Dean, 1995, 1998; Nettleton, 1997; Bennett, 1999). If biopolitics identifies certain dangers and risks to species-bodies such as economy, population or society, it requires adjustment or calibration of conduct of the body that is appropriate to reducing the risk that it poses to the species-body. Again, numerous cases have been studied to illustrate that such policy areas as pregnancy, alcoholism, child abuse, environmental hazards, productivity, addiction, and many others become 'problematized' precisely from the point of view of the calibration that brings together technologies of the self and technologies of power. If technologies of the self incite subjects to govern themselves to become healthy, wealthy and happy, technologies of power ensure that such health, wealth and happiness articulate those attributes of species-bodies, population, economy and society. Thus, reducing risks to the species-body is directly related to reducing risks to bodies and requires that subjects govern themselves to assess, evaluate and reduce such risks.

While subjects would obviously become embedded in certain rationalities to enact such a calibration, it is conceivable that these rationalities would also include affects and emotions. Although Foucault used the concept rationalities of government or power often, there is nothing in his thought that limits including logics of affect into such rationalities. Nonetheless, while Foucault mobilized the metaphor of biopolitics from biological sciences to highlight the difference between knowledge-power that operates on the body and the species-body, biological sciences have significantly changed their character in the last two decades. If biopolitics of the nineteenth century was focused on adjusting conduct appropriate to the species-body, biopolitics of the late twentieth century increasingly focused on biomedical management of the subject (Novas and Rose, 2000). It may well be argued that the focus in the twentieth century was less on the discipline of the subject but its control in the way Deleuze (1990) suggested, which incorporate new ways of governing subjects.

I want to suggest that the metaphor 'biopolitics' does not adequately capture or account for the subject who is governed through its affects. At the centre of biopolitics was what I call the bionic citizen, a subject whose rational and calculating capacities enabled it to calibrate his conduct. The modern, liberal subject as bionic citizen was constituted or interpreted as a competent subject whose conduct and government were crucial for the health, wealth and happiness of species-bodies. The bionic citizen was rational and able to calculate risks remarkably well. In fact, the image that dominated late twentieth century biopolitics that was named as 'neoliberalism' precisely operated with the bionic citizen at its centre. Between liberalism and neoliberalism there is no difference as regards the image of the citizen. I would like to suggest that the bionic citizen was an overcharged and overburdened image of the citizen. By interpreting the liberal and neoliberal subject as the bionic citizen, who was self-sufficient, self-regarding and was governed in and through its freedom, we may have unconsciously participated in the production of a phantasy.

The phantasy of the bionic citizen is still amongst us and I am not announcing its death. But I wish to draw our attention to another figure not so much as competing with the bionic citizen but standing in a tension-filled relationship with it. The proposition I wish to develop in this paper is that the bionic citizen of biopolitics who is able to calculate risks rationally cannot adequately account for the relationship between technologies of the self and technologies of power that are appropriate to the most recent social, medical, cultural and technological transformations of control societies. The figure that also occupies a central role in our times is the neurotic citizen who governs itself through responses to anxieties and uncertainties. The rise of the neurotic citizen signals a new type of politics (neuropolitics) and power (neuropower). I suggest a new concept, neuroliberalism—a rationality of government that takes its subject as the neurotic citizen—as an object of analysis. Governing through neurosis means that the neurotic subject is incited to make two adjustments in its conduct to render itself a citizen. While on the one hand the neurotic citizen is incited to make social and cultural investments to eliminate various dangers by calibrating its conduct on the basis of its anxieties and insecurities rather than rationalities, it is also invited to consider itself as part of a neurological species and understand itself as an affect structure. I primarily focus on the first calibration of the neurotic citizen in this paper.

Why Neurosis?

Neurosis has a complex history and designates the condition that gives rise to many forms of anxiety and insecurity (López Piñero, 1983). While neurosis originated as a descriptor of various 'mental disorders', with Freud (1955, 1964), Lacan (1977, 2002), Fromm (1944), Horney (1937, 1950) and Klein (1952) it became an analytical category for understanding the social and political formation of the subject. For psychoanalytic thought, neurosis was an inescapable condition of existence because the subject, caught up in its identification with an illusory, unattainable imago of wholeness and in its ultimately unfulfillable desire, could never attain a sufficient wholesomeness that is always posited as 'normalcy'. For Freud the subject was a battleground amongst various agencies, which he identified as the id, ego and superego that charged and regulated regions such as preconscious, conscious and unconscious. As these agencies stage their struggles, an original state of anxiety, or actual neurosis, generates other forms of neuroses arising from the specific content of these struggles and the time and space in and through which they take place. For Freudian social and political thought, then, neurosis is not merely a 'mental disorder' but an inescapable condition of being human, which is not only divided from the world but also divided within.

Freud insists that neurosis and psychosis are best understood when staged, compared and contrasted together. To stage them together requires the image of psyche and its mental apparatus composed of conflicting agencies: the id, ego and superego (Freud, 1961a). The id *mobilizes* a web of instincts, impulses, drives and desires that are beyond the control of the ego, which in turn *regulates*, channels and represses certain aspects of the id. But it does so in response to the

severe, harsh and compelling demands placed on it by the superego, which *represents*, presents and orders the external realities in which the psyche is implicated. Freud argues that neurosis is the result of a conflict between the id and its ego, while psychosis is the result of conflict between the ego and the external world (Freud, 1961c). In neurosis, the ego represses a desire from the id. The desire struggles against this repression and in the end creates a substituted representation, a compromise with the ego. This manifests itself as a symptom. The ego continues to struggle against the symptom just as it struggled against the original instinctual impulse. In undertaking this repression, the ego follows the commands from its superego. Thus, the ego comes into conflict with its superego. In psychosis, a similar conflict takes place between the ego and the external world. The result of this conflict is, however, quite different. The conflict forces the ego to create a new external world that becomes internalized, a delusion (Freud, 1961b).

The image that arises from this is a psyche that is always already implicated in conflicting demands of its three conflicting agencies. The demands of the id and superego can never be successfully satisfied by the ego. Thus, psychic conflict is a condition of being human. Neurosis and psychosis are most often latent manifestations of this struggle. In other words, the condition of possibility of both neurosis and psychosis are conditions of being human. Neurosis and psychosis result when these struggles do not find appropriate outlets of expression and thus sublimation. The refusal of the ego of certain demands made by the id, rather than channelling them into appropriate outlets, results in flight from reality with neurotic consequences. Similarly, refusal of the ego to accommodate the demands of the superego results in also flight from reality with both neurotic and psychotic consequences (Freud, 1961c, p. 152). While the flight from reality in neurotic conflicts results in phantasies, in psychotic conflicts it results in delusions. By contrast, a successful negotiation of the ego with the id and superego results in sublimation, which underlies artistic and scientific pursuits.

But what happens when we consider, as Freud does, the fact that the psyche inevitably involves, as a model, as an object, as an opponent, the other, beyond the close circuit of family? The formation of the psyche is not only familial but also social (Horney, 1939; Deleuze and Guattari, 1977). Freud's attention thus will be called upon the formation of the psyche in larger groups such as a race, nation, caste, profession or any institution (Freud, 1955).

His claims involving groups are complex and I cannot deal with them here but Freud makes the most of his hypotheses on neurosis and psychosis when describing what he calls 'the libidinal constitution of groups' (Freud, 1955, p. 116). The constitution of groups are also based upon libidinal energies but unlike the superego the group ideal will not involve directly sexual aims and their satisfaction. But the formation of groups is still libidinal as it involves investment in the other via identification. The process is complex but it involves a multitude of individuals investing in the same object in the place of their ego ideal and consequently identifying themselves with each other in their ego (Freud, 1955, p. 116). What complicates the libidinal constitution of groups is that 'each individual is a component part of numerous groups, he is bound by

ties of identification in many directions, and he has built up his ego ideal upon the most various models. Each individual therefore has a share in numerous group minds—those of his race, of his class, of his creed, of his nationality, etc.—and he can also raise himself above them to the extent of having a scrap of independence and originality' (Freud, 1955, p. 129). Given that neurosis 'makes its appearance wherever the advance from directly sexual instincts to those that are inhibited in their aims has not been wholly successful; and it represents a *conflict* between those portions of the instincts which have been received into the ego after having passed through this development and those portions of them which, springing from the repressed conscious, strive—as do other, completely repressed, instinctual impulses—to attain direct satisfaction' (Freud, 1955, p. 143), it may be thought that 'neurosis should make its victim asocial and should remove him from the usual group formations' (Freud, 1955, p. 142). But Freud implies that indeed neurosis is the essential condition of possibility of group formation. In fact, if the neurotic is left to himself, he would be 'obliged to replace by his own symptom formations the great group formations from which he is excluded' (Freud, 1955, p. 142).

If Freud regarded neurosis as the inescapable condition of being civilized as a historical product, both neurosis and civility are consequences of the sublimation of libidinal energy whose natural object is physical survival and reproductive success. Sexual energy not sublimated in the achievement of economic, artistic or other non-sexual goals must inevitably issue in neurotic conduct. These conclusions have been subjected to considerable criticisms, notably by Karen Horney (1937, 1945, 1950) and Eric Fromm (1944, 1980, 1991), who were critical of Freud's 'biologism' and 'familialism', and it is important to heed their warnings. Nonetheless, as Horney and Fromm recognized, Freud also remains indispensable for social and political thought for decentring the rational subject. I shall attempt to use his social and political account of neurosis supplemented by Horney and Fromm to understand governing through neurosis in state societies and the libidinal constitution of groups.

I shall interpret a few emerging practices in various domains of social life as 'governing through neurosis'. What I mean by that term as opposed to 'governing through risk' is that the subject at the centre of governing practices is less understood as a rational, calculating and competent subject who can evaluate alternatives with relative success to avoid or eliminate risks and more as someone who is anxious, under stress and increasingly insecure and is asked to manage its neurosis. Unlike risk society theories and governmentality studies on risk, the subject at the centre of governing through neurosis is not addressed to mobilize its rational capacities to evaluate truth claims but through affects that manage its anxieties. I shall provide examples below from six different domains but for now suffice to consider that the neurotic subject is one whose anxieties and insecurities are objects of government not in order to *cure* or *eliminate* such states but to *manage* them.

We have witnessed in the last two decades a phenomenal increase in 'scientism' and 'medicalism'. If in the 1930s and 1940s Karen Horney and Eric Fromm thought Freud had given in to biologism and ethnocentrism, I wonder what would they have thought today, an age of neurological explanations with

genetic structures, neurochemical causes of 'fear acquisition', neurocircuitry, neurochemistry and neuroendocrinology of anxiety disorders. In fact, the American Psychiatric Association no longer lists neurosis in its diagnostic manual though the International Classification of Diseases has not yet abandoned it (Mitchell, 1998). Instead, growing number of 'anxiety disorders' are identified with pathogenetic structures with corresponding pharmaceutical inhibitors for treatment that have become a major industrial complex (Stein, 2004). Thus, while on the one hand neurotic subjects are incited to manage their anxieties by adjusting their conduct, they are also incited to administer themselves with pharmaceutical interventions without making adjustments to conduct. To understand this double movement where responsibility is redefined and to reclaim the cultural and social determinants of neuroses become significant tasks for social and political thought today. I am convinced that the concept neurosis as articulated by early psychoanalytical thinkers and now abandoned by medical sciences holds the key to those political tasks.

In what follows I provide illustrations from six domains in and through which neurotic subjects have been increasingly incited to conduct themselves as neurotic citizens. The transformation from neurotic subjecthood to citizenship involves responding to calls to adjust conduct not via calculating habits but soothing, appeasing, tranquillizing, and, above all, managing anxieties and insecurities. I shall tentatively call the type of power that implicates the subject in such conditions as neuropower and the constellations of those relations in a given domain as neuropolitics. I should warn that the following discussions are exemplifications of a concept, the neurotic citizen, rather than comprehensive case studies. As analyses, they are inadequate but are meant to illustrate how I currently think about investigating the formations of the neurotic citizen, neuropower and neuropolitics.

The Economy

Throughout the 1990s governments in state societies addressed their citizens under an imminent threat: citizens were told that unless national debts were reduced to reasonable levels and perhaps eliminated, the very viability of their nations and states was under threat. An entire persuasion industry emerged, transmitting neurotic signs: how much each citizen owed, the increase in individual per minute and so forth. I am reluctant to interpret all that as efforts of governments and corporations to justify the retrenchment of the state from social economy to institute neoliberal principles of economic management. That the citizen was addressed as a neurotic subject should be considered analytically and seriously.

To do that it is worthwhile to compare events roughly a decade later. In the 2000s the concern with national debt almost entirely had shifted to personal debt. In the last few years citizens—again addressed as neurotic subjects—have been told that their personal debt load reached the level where they borrow more than they make. Personal bankruptcies and credit counselling agencies began making the news. Yet this hardly became a cause for concern or even discussion. Why was the concern with national debt so successful in mobilizing new state policies

by *personalizing* debt whereas a decade later the actual rise in *personal* debt hardly caused any concern? The answer would be complex but it would certainly involve the fact that the neurotic subject was addressed as a neurotic citizen in the 1990s to ward off an imminent *public* threat to the economy, which required its consent to reduce *public* services. What interests me here is that, especially in North America, despite various reports arguing against such reduction in public services and illustrating that, first, in the long run costs would run up higher, and, second, that borrowing has always been a method of state financial management, these reports pretty much fell on deaf ears. Instead, citizens were convinced that the threat was imminent not because each citizen had done its calculation and assessment but because 'it made sense'. How is it that falsifiable claims had become common sense? The effectiveness of the transmission of neurotic signs to produce affects that render certain claims believable and common sense and others as discreditable despite the production of reports, accounts and other forms of knowledge against these claims should not be underestimated. As Horney recognized, the attempt to argue a neuroticized subject *out* of his anxiety is useless because neurotic anxiety involves perceptions open to affects (Horney, 1937, p. 44).

To give another example of such an affect, it is worth recalling a much-mentioned act of the US President George W. Bush after the attacks on the Word Trade Centre. As is well known, he urged citizens to continue shopping as an act of patriotism and duty to ostensibly militate against the negative effects of the attacks on markets. This has been often interpreted as the ultimate symbol of capitalism and its product, the consumer. That may well be the case. But what the president (and his advisors) may have figured out is that shopping was a way of soothing and repairing the sense of the American citizen under tremendous anxiety. Consumption in the twentieth century was already transformed from satisfying needs to keeping up with the neighbours as Veblen (1899) had recognized. It may well have been transformed into a disposition to manage neurosis in the twenty-first century.

I will resist the temptation to provide many more examples here to illustrate how governing the economy does not *only* depend on calculating subjects but also on neurotic citizens who will calibrate their conduct to ward off imminent dangers to the economy (species-body) while also managing their anxieties. I fail to see that, in the way in which neurotic energies are managed in our times, subjects are being deceived or made fearful from above. The production of the neurotic citizen in the domain of economy mobilizes a kind of power that impels it to actively seek freedom from anxiety.

The Body

Another domain where there has been a new calibration of conduct harnessing the neurotic energies of subjects is the domain of the body. If the body was trained and disciplined in the nineteenth century and cared for in the twentieth,

in the twenty-first century it has become the site of a strange experiment where it aims for an illusory perfection by various forms of intervention. Whether this is symbolized by massive fitness, health, beauty, wellness and holistic industries or by all sorts of 'disorders' arising from failing to achieve perfection such as anorexia, bulimia, the species-body that is strong, healthy, slender, beautiful, sculpted and efficient is the perfect body that asks and exacts considerable sacrifice from its owner. What interests me here is that the subject whose sacrifice will render the body perfect in the image of the species-body is not the bionic subject who is competent to calculate and assess how it should be achieved. Rather, it is the neurotic subject who responds to the call of the species-body through plethora of signs: images, sounds, sights, idols, and smells that are directly targeted at its anxieties. Moreover, its response to this call is neurotic not because it is a disorder but precisely the subject is addressed as someone who is thrown into dealing with its anxieties, stress and distress. Finally, many practices, where the subject is neurotic, are considered normal. If we call these practices operating within a peculiar regime—neuropolitics—it is neither focused on causes, nor cure nor care but on tranquillization of anxiety understood as a normal way of being.

There has been much problematization about anorexia and bulimia. Given that I am concerned with the rise of the subject whose conduct is caught up with its insecurities and anxieties that do not constitute it as abnormal or deviant but an object of tranquillization, I am more interested about the subject that problematizations of anorexia and bulimia address: not the anorexic or bulimic subjects but those who are in charge of them. In addressing them, discourse generates risk profiles. Consider the following example: 'A study of 1739 Ontario girls aged 12 to 18 found in September that 27% have disordered eating attitudes and behaviours that are early indicators of anorexia and bulimia'. Or: 'Teenage girls in search of the perfect body still make up the majority of cases'. In such relentlessly repetitive problematizations what captures my interest is not how studies of disorder constitute young girls as objects of government but how the discourse on teenage girls is targeted at those who govern them: parents, guardians, families. Remarkably, bodies whose habits are calibrated with the species-body are not necessarily those of teenage girls but their governors addressed as anxious and distressed subjects whose actions will have effect on those for whom they are responsible.

So the problematizations of anorexia and bulimia are caught up in a cycle of three overlapping phases: a condition brought upon achieving a perfect body and hence creating the neurotic subject in the first place; a neurotic problematization of this condition in search of solutions, almost a neurotic response to neurosis, hence creating new neurotic subjects (those who are in charge of anorexic and bulimic subjects); and neuropoliticization and neuromedicalization as responses to the problems thus defined, which transforms the neurotic subject into the neurotic citizen. This last phase is marked by an increasing appeal to neurogenetic science and its associated neurochemical industries, drug production and the pharmaceutical–governmental–industrial complex that is concerned with production of tranquillity.

The Environment

The discourse on the environment since the 1980s has increasingly addressed the citizen as a neurotic subject, cultivating its neurotic energies. While the environmental movement emerged out of and was intertwined with various social movements that dominated politics from the 1970s to 1990s, it has increasingly become professionalized and rationalized and has been incorporated into regimes of governing state societies. Through this incorporation it has passed through a phase that could be called 'governing through risk' where environmental risks and dangers were constituted as the poles around which habits of subjects were calibrated to the species-body, 'the healthy environment'. As subjects settled into various ways of being environmental citizens by reusing, recycling, and reducing their consumption, the environmental discourse increasingly constituted them as neurotic citizens charged with saving the environment by these everyday habits.

First, it increasingly relied on a discourse of crisis; the more focused it became on public attention the more alarmist it became. While a strategy of getting public attention in earlier decades gradually replaced the strategy of alarming the neurotic subjects about the imminent dangers, these dangers also became its *raison d'être*. Second, it has produced the neurotic citizen who responded to the call. Nervously recycling, reducing, reusing, the neurotic citizen went on a mission to save the earth though being unable to judge whether his neurotic energies were any match to what multinational corporations were doing or even whether his neurotic energies were being wiped away in an overseas jet trip for vacation. But what is important here is not only that an environmental citizen is asked to decide what to do on the basis of incomplete information or uncertain knowledge about the situation but that having done so, that is, having decided what to do, that conduct became over a period of time its disposition, which is a reflex-like process that becomes a solution to a problem: anxiety. While there may be inadequate knowledge, a habit has already been incorporated as disposition of the environmental citizen. The problem with this pattern is that it would be impossible to argue or coax the subject out of this disposition. *That means that the problem is not that there is inadequate knowledge but that knowledge has lost its rational subject.*

The Network

The hysteria that was created around Y2K and how it found an already constituted neurotic subject and cultivated its energies can be considered as a paradigmatic example of what I am concerned here. Similarly, how the emergence of virus and anti-virus industries and their exploitation rendered the use of computers as a permanent neurotic practice mobilizing permanent neurotic energies can be seen as an excellent case. I suggest that the network is the paradigmatic example of neuropolitics. The network is a species-body whose healthy functioning requires that each body on the network is also healthy and does not transmit viruses, spams, and other impurities and contamination. To achieve this each computer, each node, each body in the network has to be kept to certain standards. But the users of these nodes can neither understand nor

maintain these standards. The users of the most rational machine ever invented may have become the most neurotic subjects in history. Being unable to address subjects to responsibilize them to maintain these standards in order to maintain the health of the network, neuropolitics addresses them as neurotic subjects: for the tranquillity, safety and security the subjects must undertake certain routines they can neither understand nor explain. A recent advertising campaign by a network company under the banner 'self-defending networks' exemplifies this. One of its ads portrays an innocent young girl, Sarah, who visits her dad's office just before a karate practice. As she waits, she downloads funnybunny.exe. The self-defending network immediately intervenes and 'kills' the programme. Dad takes Sarah to her karate practice. The ad says:

> Sometimes threats don't look like threats. They look like your mobile workers, your sales department or your CFO's daughter. Even the innocent act of downloading a file—one that looks like any other, but is in fact corrupt—can create a costly security breach that can take your business off-line for days. So how do you defend against threats that take the shape of productive employees? ... Networks, with integrated wireless security, can detect and contain potential threats before they become actual ones. Whether they are worms, hackers, or even well-meaning humans.

Then it declares: 'self-defending networks protect against human nature'. It is a long way from innocent Sarah to evil human nature but the addressee of this ad is already neuroticized and is surely not in a position to sift through alternatives in a rational manner. Besides, the threat is human nature itself that can come in various shapes. The network security model provides a mode of transference: displacement of one affect from one domain to another. What transferences take place amongst border security, urban security and home security and what mechanisms realize these references?

The Home

Another domain in which the neurotic citizen is produced is the home, which has become a fortified castle through gated communities, surveillance technologies and security industries that address the vulnerabilities and anxieties associated with 'home security'. In fact, 'homeland security' may have borrowed more from home security discourse than from nationalist imaginaries that it ostensibly reproduces. As the literature on fear have illustrated, in the last few decades the home emerged as a major security concern. The location, structure and design of homes have become much more concerned with repelling potential security threats and keeping intruders out. There have been various studies on the emergence of home as a security object but what interests me here is that subject that emerges from the securitization of home. I am sceptical of claims that the subject concerned with home security has simply emerged in reaction or response to surveillance and security industries. Rather, such industries may have already found a subject who has become increasingly anxious about home

security. The surveillance and security industries may have accelerated such anxieties but to claim that there is a causal relationship neglects various other domains through which the subject has been increasingly governed through its neurosis.

When we investigate various domains together—body, network, environment, economy—it becomes clear that the neuroticization of the subject and its transformation into the neurotic citizen has wider and deeper implications and applications than such a subject being caught in the throes of surveillance and security industries. Being continuously neuroticized in other domains, the home perhaps becomes the last remaining domain in which the subject can manage and stabilize anxieties and insecurities cultivated in them. So the home is caught in a double movement of neuroticization: first, it gets constituted as a domain through which anxieties and insecurities are managed and stabilized; second, that it is constituted as a domain of stability and security generates increased anxieties about its creation and maintenance as such a domain. So, the very home that is constituted as a domain of serenity and stability also produces more anxieties that it was constituted to ameliorate in the first place. Out of this double movement emerges a subject whose conduct is governed through its neurosis: the target of government is not a reasonable and calculating subject but a neurotic citizen who invests itself in the production of a stable home in the service of his homeland (the nation), which is the species-body to which the conduct of the neurotic citizen is calibrated. Thus, the home and the nation become both the same and different—the same because they provide models for each other and different because each provides an evasion or sanctuary from the other.

The Border

What sparked my interest in the emergence of a new kind of politics that I call neuropolitics and a new subject who is at the centre of that politics—the neurotic citizen—was the anxiety about the Other that has been articulating itself through various discourses on the border and which has gathered strength and reassembled itself since the events named after a month and day. It has been repeatedly stressed that these events resulted in securitization of the state, the deployment of massive border controls and surveillance technologies, dividing practices between those who constitute potential risk and those barbarians at the gates, and those legitimate versus illegitimate refugees, immigrants, visitors and even diplomats. I wish to argue that there has been a deeper, wider and longer shift in the way in which the subject is called upon to produce and govern itself in state societies. This subject—the neurotic citizen, neurotic because it governs itself through its anxieties, citizen because the object of government is the conduct that must calibrate itself with the species-body—has been forming through various domains and the border is only one of them. The increased and heightened anxieties about the border have themselves been forming for several decades with problematization about their disappearance, fluidity, malleability, porousness, penetrability and smartness. The question, therefore, that presents

itself for analysis is how the neuroticization of the border is itself part of a larger domain of practices through which the neurotic citizen has formed.

Conclusion

The phantasy of bionic citizen may well have given birth to the neurotic citizen. The subject of liberalism and neoliberalism with its competence, rationality, and capacities for calculation achieving a sufficient and coherent conduct may well have overdetermined such capacities neuroticized itself. When I consider the heroic qualities of the bionic citizen and the kinds of demands that were placed on it whether as regards the body, environment, network, economy, home or border, I am not surprised that its ability to cope with these demands was vastly overestimated. The bionic citizen was perhaps a phantasy to conceal the neurotic citizen. The bionic citizen and the neurotic citizen are not mutually exclusive, independent subjects but produce each other. The neurotic citizen is not a passive, cynical subject but an active subject whose libidinal energies are channelled toward managing its anxieties and insecurities. The neurotic citizen actively mobilizes affects and emotions and governs itself through them. If biopower was focused upon calibrating the conduct of the citizen with the species-body for its health, wealth and happiness, neuropower concentrates on tranquillity, serenity and security. If liberalism and neoliberalism constituted a rational and calculating subject whose freedom was released in response to constraints it faces within the requirements of healthy, wealthy and happy species-bodies, neuroliberalism addresses an anxious and affective subject whose freedom is released in response to insecurities it faces within the requirements of tranquil, serene and secure species-bodies.

What is the political importance of the neurotic citizen? There is no doubt that governing through neurosis is amongst the most dangerous movements in our times. While neurosis has been investigated for more than a century, I am convinced that 'governing through neurosis' is much more recent. As I have stressed, when a subject is governed through neurosis, two conditions hold. First, the subject is always already recognized or recognizes itself under neurotic conditions. Second, the object of government is not cure or care but management of neurosis and the anxieties that are its foundations. When these two conditions hold, the neurotic subject articulates 'neurotic claims': the birth of the neurotic citizen. I borrow the term 'neurotic claims' from Karen Horney (1950, pp. 40–63), who used it to characterize neurosis. I will draw on her concept to argue how the neurotic subject is transformed into the neurotic citizen.

We have seen that what the neurotic subject wants is the impossible. It wants absolute security. It wants absolute safety. It wants the perfect body. It wants tranquillity. It wants serenity. It wants the impossible. Yet, since it has also been promised the impossible, it cannot address its illusions. Thus, the neurotic subject articulates neurotic claims. All its wants are transformed into rights: the right to security, safety, body, health, wealth, and happiness as well as tranquillity, serenity and calm. The neurotic citizen develops an intense aversion to the realization that it should be subject to either necessity or anxiety in seeking these rights. The need to eliminate necessity or anxiety from its existence turns its

wants into claims. In essence, these claims are impossible because they articulate rights that cannot exist.

The crucial foundations for neurotic claims are what we might call 'neurotic justice'. The neurotic citizen develops a highly sensitized sense of entitlement. The neurotic citizen feels that it is just a matter of justice that nothing adverse should happen to it and that it should not suffer from anxiety. While the neurotic citizen may extend its sense of justice to others and it can be just as concerned about injustice towards others as itself, its neurotic justice also operates with a reversed logic. The neurotic citizen responsibilizes others for any adversity that may have overtaken them. The neurotic citizen misrecognizes the misfortune of others as their own making. *Remarkably, for the neurotic citizen the other is the bionic citizen.* The neurotic citizen invests considerable energies in justifying its neurotic claims and asserting them. The neurotic citizen develops intense reactions to its frustrations. The anger becomes a permanent feature of being a neurotic citizen. Because it claims rights that cannot exist, the most fundamental right for the neurotic citizen becomes the right to angst.

Thus, the neurotic citizen is thrown into chronic discontent. The neurotic citizen is an uncertain citizen because it is confused about rights. The neurotic citizen has been promised so much and developed such unrealistic sense of its rights that it becomes confused about its actual and actualizable rights. The formation of neurotic claims reproduces illusions of the neurotic citizen and enables it to shift responsibility to objects outside itself with hostility.

Acknowledgements

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