



Radical Violence and Radical Hope: Toward a New Political Community under Permanent Exception

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Abstract: In investigating how radical violence destroys the moral, the relational, and the imaginative capacities necessary for a political life, one can find in Arendt, Strong and Matusšík the argument that the violence of today effectively operates not so much through direct harm as through the destruction of the conditions of meaningfulness, judgment, and coexistence. When that is eroded, as is the case with radical diversity and the collapse of shared horizons, there is no longer hope. One is left either with a dissolution into nihilism or with authoritarianism. It argues that customary legal and institutional responses are inadequate because they are based on a world that radical violence has already ruptured. An alternative is proposed via radical hope, an ethical and civic orientation based on openness, responsibility and the ability to envisage a future that lacks the sorts of metaphysical guarantees that anchored radical political projects in the past. It argues that the only way to renew political community in the face of fragility and difference is through radical hope.

Keywords: Radical Violence, Scarcity of Hope, Radical Hope, Political Community, Plurality, Political Judgement, Radical Diversity, Post-Metaphysical Politics.

I. INTRODUCTION: THE CONTEMPORARY CONDITION OF VIOLENCE

At the beginning of the twenty-first century, it is no longer the case that violence is experienced as outstanding, something which breaks into the ordinary world, something merely external to everyday life. Violence is now internal to everyday life, part of the fabric of political life, social life, and public and private life. In this sense, violence is not simply structural or spectacular: it is ambient, continuous and often indistinguishable from the ordinary operations of life. As Hannah Arendt (1958) anticipated, the loss of judgment, plurality and public responsibility referred to above can turn violence into an almost naturalized phenomenon that is accepted by the masses. As Giorgio Agamben (1998) elaborates, the modern state has dissolved the frontier between law and lawlessness by proclaiming and extending states of exception, making abandonment a defining structure of political life; a world in which violence no longer represents a break from order but something closer to the order of things themselves.

This implies that we should not remain confined to ontic categories, such as domination, injustice or oppression, which identify systems, structures or institutions of wrong: we should also strive to identify, and deplore, the deeper ontological disfiguration that characterizes our current situation. Today, however, violence does not merely destroy bodies and institutions but also the foundations of the political community, which are moral, relational, and existential. In this sense, violence, and especially systemic violence, can be understood as radical, for it weakens the foundations of human existence and destroys the conditions for pluralism,

responsibility, and judgment. In this sense, Martin Beck Matušík (2008) observes, radical evil is today best understood as an "excess" that outstrips the conceptual, linguistic and moral resources of individuals, societies and communities that are supposed to allow them to cope with the harm done to them, and leaves them in despair, in a sense world devoid of meaning, hope, and with little or no possibility for the relevant, remediable or the reconciliatory.

This article concludes that the crisis of our time is not so much that violence continues to exist, but that we have lost the political imagination to respond to it. For Tracy Strong (2012), this amounts to a crisis of "vision" whereby the metaphysical categories that used to shape modern political space no longer describe human plurality. The political becomes false in offering order, a great unity, a salvation or a redemption in exchange for rendering the conditions of life under permanent precarity invisible. The absence of metaphysical guarantees exposes people to the fear, resentment and nihilism that is the ground for radical violence. Thus, the central question is no longer how violence can be eliminated, but whether human beings, under conditions of irreconcilable difference, can acquire the moral and political abilities which will enable them to live together.

The article supports two linked arguments. The first is that we must think of contemporary violence as radical violence, a kind of violence that exceeds the structural and systemic by threatening the very grounds of human community. Radical violence occurs when the normal means of making sense of things become dysfunctional; when political institutions normalize the exception, and when people can no longer see in the Other that which renders themselves vulnerable. The only adequate response to radical violence is radical hope. Not optimism, not a faith in progress, not a metaphysical redemption, but a civic and ethical orientation to the world in all its difference, responsibility, and uncertainty. According to Matušík (2008), drawing on Lear's (2006) work, radical hope is a fragile but vital resource for the genesis of a renewed political community.

This article, therefore, has both a diagnostic and constructive task, namely describing the nature of radical violence and distinguishing it from other forms of harm, and explaining how it develops as the result of the imbrication of everyday violence, metaphysical illusions of legitimacy and the permanence of the state of exception. It also looks at the normative possibilities of radical hope as a civic capacity out of judgment, plurality and moral imagination. Drawing on Arendt's concepts of the political, Rancière's theorization of equality as a manifestation of potentiality, and Strong's critique of metaphysical politics, it argues for a new conception of political community that can endure without foundational guarantees, metaphysical certainties, or the illusion of harmony.

The first half of the essay models radical violence as a meta level of violence in the ontological, existential, and political dimensions (Section II). The second half discusses the normalization of everyday violence and its corrosive effects on judgment and civil society (Section III). Thus, Section IV examines the permanency of the state of exception, Section V problematizes all metaphysical frameworks which deny the reality of violence, and Sections VI and VII examine radical diversity and radical evil as negatively saturated phenomena, respectively. The second half of the article addresses reconstruction: Section VIII discusses the problems of a lack of hope, Section IX explains radical hope as civic consciousness, and Sections X-XII discuss the reconstruction of a new political community on the premises of plurality and coexistence within radical disagreement. The article argues that radical hope is the only reaction to radical violence in a world where the metaphysical foundations have broken down.

Thus, the article's position can be located within, and contribute to, contemporary debates in political theory; religious philosophy; and phenomenology with its insistence that the future of political community will depend on a transformation in civic consciousness via radical hope. The question is how to resist violence and how to imagine and enact a form of life that carries radical difference without giving in to the despair in which radical violence is grounded.

II. DEFINING RADICAL VIOLENCE: BEYOND STRUCTURAL AND SYSTEMIC ACCOUNTS

Most contemporary theories of violence contrast physical violence with symbolic violence and structural and systemic violence, which can be useful but do not capture the radical, ubiquitous nature of the transformation that defines violence in the contemporary world. Building on Galtung (1969), structural violence refers to social systems that hurt individuals by preventing them from meeting their needs. Žižek (2008) describes systemic violence as invisible and normalized political and economic injury. Biopolitical violence (Foucault 1978) refers to the power to administer and maintain life, whereas necropolitical violence (Mbembe 2019) refers to the power to expose certain groups to death. Each of these concepts is helpful in understanding key dimensions of contemporary violence, but none of them captures the phenomenon to which this study refers as radical violence.

It is thus the case that radical violence is not to be understood merely as an escalation of violence already in existence or as a simple new technique of domination. It is a shift in the nature of violence. Radical

violence is a type of harm that destroys the ontological, moral, and relational conditions of human coexistence. Rather than just destroying individual bodies or institutions, radical violence destroys the basic conditions through which we find meaning, recognizability, judgment, and responsibility. Radical violence shatters the very horizon of intelligibility that allows it to appear as violence: it is the most extreme violence, the saturation point of violent signification, the incomprehensible.

Martin Beck Matušík (2008) interprets this considering Kant's limit on the concept of evil. Kant (1793) believes that human beings cannot evil "for its own sake", only subordinated to some maxim or rationalizable motive. Matušík argues that radical evil exceeds the bounds of rational comprehension and moral categorization; it overflows the limits of language and intention. Matušík describes this negatively saturated phenomenon (where the negative is used in a special sense to indicate a lack of an adequate channel to receive the experience) as borrowed from the phenomenologist Jean-Luc Marion (Marion 2002). Violence becomes radical when its excess overwhelms not just the senses through which we perceive harmful actions, but the ethical and political powers through which we normally respond to harm.

Radical violence is not therefore defined by the amount of violence it involves, but rather by the quality of the violence that dissolves the boundary between the normal and the extraordinary, the political and the non-political, the human and the non-human. A consequence of this logic is to produce conditions in which, as Agamben (1998) has put it, the exception becomes the rule: people are abandoned to a zone where law and life become indistinguishable from one another in the most destructive terms possible. The collapse of the distinctions here is not unintentional but is constitutive of radical violence. The new radical violence is no longer a rupture in the political order but its shadow, its twin, its ever-present underside. This is also instructive in explaining why radical violence cannot be fully understood in terms of perpetrators and victims: the relevant object of inquiry is neither who does violence to whom, but how violence reorganizes the moral and political field in which human beings live. Butler (2004) argues that one way to understand violence is to see it as producing what she has called "ungrievable lives" (i.e., lives that do not count as lives). Radical violence is a type of violence which creates what can be called unthinkable lives. It creates paralysis of the moral imagination, exhaustion of judgment and fears, and destabilization of the bonds of political community.

In contrast to systemic or structural violence, which becomes normalized, and thus ceases to really count as violence, radical violence has another kind of discreteness. Not structural, but in the way, people encounter one another, in the way that political communities imagine themselves, in the way suffering becomes more or less visible to societies and political communities. Violence becomes structural and no longer breaks the social order or established rules. Instead, through normalization, violence becomes the principle by which social relations are created, preserved or destroyed, and it is precisely this normalization that renders radical violence so complete.

And so, radical violence need not be spectacular; it need not take the form of genocidal destruction or some other explicit event. It can be micro-interactions and exclusions; the failure to recognize one another; the indifference of the public; the erasure of civic responsibility. In Arendtian theory, however, these quotidian forms of violence are no less ontologically substantive than spectacular eruptions: they change the conditions of our being together. As a result, the cumulative violence bequeaths, in Arendt's (1958) view, a crisis of judgment: the inability to distinguish between right and wrong, meaningful and meaningless, or human and inhuman. Arguably radical violence is caused by the disintegration of metaphysical models which once provided the political community with stability. Strong (2012) presents this view by highlighting the absence of unity, progress or salvation after the collapse of grand narratives or worldviews. Without these metaphysical guarantees, people have no standards with which to judge the harm done or to imagine the political alternatives. With this lack of alternatives, so does the violence. It is in a meaningless world that violence thrives. Radical violence is violence in a world without metaphysics; there are no higher concepts to exert control over it.

Radical violence [is] violence that does not only express ontological disruption...or moral exhaustion, but violence that renders all forms of resistance, in the typical sense, completely impossible. Law, rights, and institutions cannot contain it because it arises from the very conditions that law and institutions now presuppose. Structural reforms cannot address it because it is not reducible to structural relations. A new approach to radical violence needs to be developed that understands saturation as well as subtlety.

The second section will show that this ethics must be based on radical hope, understood not in terms of optimism and redemption, but as a civic and ethical capacity to respond to the existential devastation that radical violence brings about. But before we can explore how we need to understand the contours of radical hope, we need to examine how the ground for such a hope is prepared in everyday life: the normalization of everyday violence.

III. NORMALIZATION OF EVERYDAY VIOLENCE

If radical violence is the ontological collapse of moral and political frameworks, everyday violence is the means through which ontological collapse is normalized, experienced as unremarkable, and rendered ethically invisible in everyday life. It is not the violence of corporeal assault or interpersonal conflict. Rather, it is the repeated occurrence of how violence saturates many aspects of daily life, shaping perceptions, judgments, and relations. As Arendt (1963, pp. 287, 289) pointed out in her writings about the 'banality of evil', evil does not always have to be monstrous. At times, it emerges from thoughtlessness, routine, and refusal to take responsibility for the world one inhabits. What she termed 'everyday violence' thus becomes the atmosphere of political life in contemporary societies.

We have to learn how such violence has become the grammar of everyday life, the primary instrument through which all social relations, all systems of meaning are organized. Once we recognize that everyday violence is not a kind of violence that simply accompanies others, but is the world in which other acts of violence become possible, normalized, legible, we can see how we have arrived at this murderous moment. A primary mechanism by which everyday violence gets normalized is habituation. When people get used to certain forms of violence and deprivation (poverty, stigmatization, racism, caste, gender, bureaucratic violence, democratic abandonment) and gradual encroachments on basic infrastructures that support civil society, they become desensitized to the situation. Judith Butler (2004) has also described the production of ungrievable lives, lives not marked as worthy of mourning, not made subject to protection, not recognizable at all. Everyday violence extends this concept to include unremarkable harms, forms of suffering so popular and common that they cease to be recognized as morally urgent (Butler, 2004). When the violence is no longer shocking it becomes the condition under which people interact.

The banalization of violence is described by anthropologist Veena Das (2007) as the "descent into the ordinary". This process occurs as violence that is generally thought of as extraordinary becomes built into everyday situations. The violence does not diminish, but instead becomes normalized as part of everyday life in processes that are not obvious or instantaneous. Institutional violence pertaining to policing, immigration affairs, social welfare, or public healthcare does not appear as violence, but instead normalizes itself as part of bureaucratic care. As Arendt (1958) writes, bureaucracies can produce violence without perpetrators, responsibility, or intentionality. Once violence becomes a bureaucratic fact, individuals are not made responsible through conscious wrongdoing; instead, they are complicit through a loss of judgment.

Besides inflicting physical damage, violence of daily life destroys language. According to Elaine Scarry (1985), it substitutes pain, fear, and silence for the dialogue of language. Another form of demoralization is the verbal poverty of not being able to name violence, or injustice. Everyday violence comes to dictate the language as well and thus demoralizes people into recognizing only suffering as the norm, as the only way to describe a condition. This impoverished view thus impoverishes the imagination; once again, owning the name for violence means being able to mobilize against it. This may be why Strong (2012) relies on a collapse of metaphysical 'vision' conjoined with everyday cruelty. A society that can no longer name, let alone conceive of moral or political horizons, will form a difficult target for banal domination.

Everyday violence is also sustained by complacency, indifference to circumstances that do not directly involve them, and civic attitudes that form to protect themselves in a society that has become too large and unwieldy to care. As argued by Arendt (1963) at the trial of Eichmann, the banalization of evil is not that it is trivial, but that it becomes routinized in a social climate that lacks interpretive frameworks and totalizes uncritical acceptance to violent practices. This passive mode of being is not unproblematic however, as it lets radical violence emerge masked within the ordinariness of everyday life.

The immediate point is that everyday violence has more political effect than extraordinary violence. Atrocities shock the conscience. Everyday violence erodes the conscience, but does not shock. Where extraordinary violence produces outrage, protest, and legal reform, everyday violence produces fatigue and resignation. People run out of moral energy to fight back against the harm they are experiencing. Vulnerability becomes privatized and individualized, and violence becomes depoliticized. This results in a phenomenon Berlant describes as "cruel optimism", where individuals remain attached to conditions that actually are not working for them because they cannot imagine that things could be otherwise.

Socio-political normalization of everyday violence creates a zone of indistinction (Agamben 1998). The distinction between violence and legality is blurred. In the same way that policing and surveillance are perceived to be indistinguishable from punishment, everyday violence is seen as a precursor to the use of radical violence. Everyday violence gradually removes taboos against depersonalization, damages the ability for moral discernment, and creates conditions in which extreme violence is justified or inevitable.

Note that everyday violence is not only a social phenomenon but also an epistemic one: it shapes who we are, and what we can see, and believe. Ranciere (1999) described the distribution of the sensible as the rules governing what is visible, sayable, and thinkable. The maintenance of everyday violence is one means

by which certain forms of harm/violence remain invisible and certain forms of subjects remain inaudible, such that the ethical possibility of political community is extinguished where societies misrecognize violence as nonviolence or cannot recognize violence as violence at all. These violations of agency result in moral injury, a defensive life, enclaves of likewise injured persons, and a civic judgment immediately transformed into a reactively partisan military tribunal to reduce risks to dispersed communities. But it is not simply exhaustion. The exhaustion that results mean losing our capacity to be responsive to harm, and, ultimately, to sustain political life itself. So, in this sense, I think our notion of "Human Condition 2.0" is right in a way because the everyday includes a violence that lacks any kind of ethical and political anchor.

So, the presence of normalized everyday violence does not simply precede radical violence, but is the precondition for it. Everyday violence desensitizes, removes language, interrupts judgment, and promotes indifference. These effects, too, make the kind of ontological destruction described in the previous section possible. Thus, we have to recognize that everyday forms of violence make societies vulnerable to radical forms of violence.

It is here that the next political mechanism that doubles this vulnerability comes to the fore: the transformation of the state of exception into a permanent, normalized structure.

IV. THE STATE OF EXCEPTION AS PERMANENT CONDITION

One can say that the progressive transformation of the state of exception from an extraordinary measure into a permanent mode of government is one of the most far-reaching political developments of modernity. Starting from the idea of the extraordinary as a remedy to danger and crisis, it has penetrated the normal workings of political society. This is the sense in which, for Giorgio Agamben (1998), a state of exception that has become the norm has no distinction between legality and illegality, but in which the social and political life of people is abandoned. In such conditions neither the protection of law nor exposure to violence can be distinguished from each other, and radical violence is produced.

The normalized exception is not one of spectacular suspension of rights or declarations of extraordinary states, but of everyday mechanisms whereby political authority increases its discretionary powers in the name of security, welfare or efficiency. Surveillance, detention, policing and border control have been normalized as a technique of governance by the modern state, rather than being reserved for outstanding moments. As Mills (2008) puts it, individuals are increasingly included within the political order only through their exclusion. These zones produce legally present subjects who are rendered politically invisible, potentially creating conditions of exposure and vulnerability to violence.

The relationship to domestic and foreign policy transformations marks a radically new conception of violence: the distinction between the political and the non-political, so characteristic of the liberal democratic state, disappears. The decision on the welfare or immigration status of a civilian, or on distributing medical resources, is the scene of the exposure of life to legalized, morally illegitimate forms of violence. The exception's bureaucratic enactment can often seem value-neutral or procedural, as if the rest of the world of abandonment, precarity, and disposability is not encroaching on the fabric of life. For Arendt (1951), the loss of the political domain in which human beings can appear, speak, and act reduces the human condition to that of the stateless: deprived of rights, stripped of status, and fundamentally, expelled from the political world.

So, normalization of the exception is also about the relationship between sovereignty and the rule of law. As Carl Schmitt (2005) famously put it, it is the one who decides on the exception. As Agamben (1998) suggests, however, the exception is not a single decision but the logic that structures modern societies. The permanent exception divides sovereignty from decision-making, placing it instead within the institutions that over time produce exceptions to the normative order by differentially bestowing rights and responsibilities, protections and vulnerabilities. The result of this diffusion of sovereign power is an increase of precariousness and with it the generalization of violence without accountability.

Zones of indistinction are one effect of the permanent exception, in which the categories of law, violence, life, and death all fold into one another. Borders, refugee camps, detention camps, the slums of the poor, but also the zones of digital networks of surveillance and control have become zones of indistinction, liminal beings, subjects who are dominated yet unprotected, who are visible yet politically ungraspable within the whole of the world. Second, the exception reconfigures political space so that it takes the form of unequal inclusion. In Rancière's (1999) terms, the "part of those who have no part" captures the political logic of the exception: the exception produces a subject who is counted as a body but not as a political being.

The exception has been rendered everyday, no longer confined to temporally bounded declarations of emergency but now dispersed, normalized and routinized across the biosphere, the economy and society itself. Yet its impacts are more indirect in terms of court decisions than they are in terms of bureaucratic forms of control, law enforcement, risk management, data-driven governance, or algorithmic decision-making implemented in zones of exception through opaque mechanisms of control and without accountability.

Esposito (2012) warns that such developments risk turning the modern state into a "machine for producing naked life", stripping subjects of all political meaning and leaving them exposed to violence that is apolitical in form, and deeply political in substance.

Most importantly, the condition of permanent exception restructures the political, moral and epistemic frameworks within which people understand the world and their place within it. When extraordinary measures become the norm, experiences of freedom, security, and justice are fundamentally altered. The normalization of extraordinary powers creates a generalized form of moral desensitization in the sense that the expansion of coercive power could be perceived as normal, even natural. The erosion of judgment Arendt (1978) speaks of is compounded by citizens internalizing the logic of the exception as common sense.

In this political domain, violence comes not as a rupture, but as a mechanism for expanding an administrative rationality. The violence of imprisonment, deportation, surveillance, and the withholding of public goods is rephrased as a technical problem. The logics in which these forms of violence are considered extraordinary are paradoxical, as this violence can be normalized to the point of invisibility, as it is carried out through neutral-seeming procedures, and can be made inevitable to the point of being difficult to contest when legal and moral limits erode.

More generally, the exception's permanence encourages political resignation: if violence simply cannot be separated from the very exercise and legitimacy of state power, then we must resign ourselves to the inevitability of violence. Furthermore, this resignation increases the moral exhaustion of everyday violence (Section III), such that any political hope becomes *prima facie* absurd or counterfactual. When a sense of collective agency or possibility is absent, a community will withdraw into the private domain, rejecting the world of politics described in Arendt's (1958) work. This is not a form of apathy but rather occurs when political structures are slow, opaque, or even hostile to citizen engagement.

It is thus only logical that radical violence is normalized, for it is the permanent exception, the situation that erases the differences on which political life had been predicated, and the ontological and moral conditions of violence. Through the erosion of legal protections, the creation of zones of indistinction, and the dispersal of sovereign power, practices of violence expose people to a constant state of risk. In the absence of political orders that comprise stable frames for judgment, meaning, and recognition, violence becomes the implicit grammar of social relations.

Understanding radical violence thus requires a clear sense of the depth to which the logic of the exception has permeated the everyday. The contemporary human condition is shaped by a political reality in which insecurity, precarity, and abandonment can be understood as structural features rather than extraordinary circumstances. The next chapter focuses on the metaphysical dimensions of this shift, considering how the intellectual struggles to establish unity, certainty, and foundational order have led to the proliferation of political violence.

V. METAPHYSICS AND THE ORIGINS OF POLITICAL VIOLENCE

The birth and the rebirth of violence in contemporary political life cannot be fully understood without considering the metaphysical presuppositions that have supported and shaped Western political theory for centuries. For centuries, theory has been grounded in metaphysical visions that promise unity, coherence, and order to the ever-unstable plurality of human beings. But although these mechanisms have often given us meaning and direction, they've also produced exclusion, domination, and violence. As the scholar Tracy Strong (2012) puts it, political metaphysics, in the name of securing the foundations upon which we can live together, paradoxically generates political violence when it casts human life into the rigid molds of systems.

The metaphysical universals of divine providence, natural law, rational universality of human freedom, and the historical destiny of humanity all share a common presupposition. They all require difference to become sameness, plurality to be subordinated to a superior unity, and political action to be fixed into a constellation of stable categories. For Strong, politics is about an attempt to become in advance the eyes of the world, destined to impose clarity over a pre-existing state of confusion. The problem is that only what can fit within this metaphysical vision is recognized as political in that sense. The rest is unseen, illegitimate, background noise, or threatening. Violence, thus, arises not from metaphysics failing, but rather metaphysics succeeding with its imposition of a single vision onto a plural world.

Hannah Arendt (1958) makes a similar criticism in addition, arguing that metaphysical forms of politics misconstrue the nature of political phenomena themselves. Politics is rooted in the plurality of the human condition, which shows that human beings are unique, unpredictable, and endowed with the capacity for new beginnings. The metaphysical model, for example, sees human plurality as an obstacle to political freedom, which is only possible if political plurality must be subordinated to political unity, political action must be subordinated to politics-as-administration, judgment must be subordinated to obedience, and coexistence must be subordinated to hierarchy. The result is not stability but paralysis and, often, violent

repression of political action. The desire for metaphysical foundations has also affected contemporary political discourse on sovereignty: In the spirit of Carl Schmitt (2005), one could say that this leads political communities to form a sovereign that decides exceptions and thus maintains order and the unity of the political community. In this metaphysical sense sovereignty is a response to the fear of disorder and difference but, as centuries of political experience have shown, the sovereign must eliminate or render marginal all those who threaten the unity of the political body through their difference. Metaphysics thus becomes entwined with the exclusionary politics defining the bounds of political belonging.

This logic can be seen in the emergence of the nation-state, in which an ideal, unitary national subject becomes an agent of political violence against heterogeneity. Efforts to unify the population through cultural, linguistic, or racial homogeneity often result in systemic exclusion, forced assimilation, and ultimately genocide of minority populations. The political project of purifying metaphysical unity is a violent one, as Achille Mbembe (2019) argues: modern states are animated by fantasies of security and purity that justify exposing certain populations to death. Political violence, in other words, is not either an accident of sovereign order, but is tied to specific metaphysical visions of order.

For Strong (2012), violence manifests in the very way politics is to be understood, as predetermined in the case of metaphysics. The politics of a particular order (rational, divine or historical) implies that non-conformity is a matter of obstruction, of imposing a particular vision of the political, in the words of Jacques Rancière (1999), a 'police order': a distribution of the sensible, a partitioning of who counts, who belongs and who is sensible. Although not necessarily appearing coercively, the police order's discursive form is coercive. It naturalizes hierarchies and renders alternative views unintelligible: this produces violence when individuals or groups attempt to disrupt the established order by asserting their equal status.

Impostures on political judgment come from the search for unified truth. Metaphysical ontologies which seek foundational certainty in their results, risk disfiguring politics. They tend to dismiss the unpredictable and contingent nature of politics, and the fact that it is a matter of negotiating differences. Political problems cannot be resolved simply through correct principles or rational processes. As Bonnie Honig (1993) argues, attempts to remove conflict through foundational solutions simply produce new forms of domination by suppressing the contestation that is essential to democratic life. Metaphysics acts with violence therefore both epistemically and politically it distorts the field of importance, and it compels conformity through institutional and cultural means.

Thus, metaphysics scaffolds precarious political identities: those that are built on metaphysical certainty, rather than use disagreement as a resource for building democratic relationships, end up treating dissent as a threat, one that gives rise toward radical violence. It gives rise to defensive and aggressive responses to difference. William Connolly (2002) observes that metaphysical groundings tend to produce an experience of resentment when identities must be constantly defended from alternative ways of being. Political violence has thus to be seen not simply as an exercise of power, but as resulting from metaphysical commitments and attendant insecurity.

However, the fact that metaphysical models no longer dominate contemporary life does not eliminate the violence they produced, but creates something new: if unity, progress, salvation and transformation no longer have any solid bases in reality, society lacks stable interpretive frameworks. It is in this moment of collapse, vulnerability, and disorientation that other violent trajectories emerge which capitalize on the renewed demand for certainty. If metaphysical visions do not have the opportunity to re-emerge, Strong (2012) states, the individual is left to settle for fixed identities, authoritarian politics, or fundamentalist ideologies that provide them with certainty. These reactions fail to resolve the crisis of meaning they extend and strengthen it. These reactions generate new vectors of violence.

Radical violence thus necessarily demands an interrogation of the metaphysical origins of the political. The violence of metaphysics is not simply a violence of history. It is a violence of concepts. It is the belief that political life requires a single vision, stable foundation, or unified order. They homogenize when they exclude, they normalize when they suppress dissent, and they pursue order when they justify harm, obscuring the plurality, fragility, and contestation of human life. This moves away from metaphysics does not mean a return to nihilism or relativism. It means a rethinking of the political community. Political thought takes its cue from the relational, contingent, and plural nature of human existence. Political thought no longer only takes its cue from the search for metaphysical unity. In such a political community, difference cannot overcome but rather exist as the precondition to the possibility for political coexistence.

The next section will address this by examining the problem of radical diversity and the difficulties with coexisting with incommensurable others under contemporary conditions.

VI. RADICAL DIVERSITY AND THE PROBLEM OF INCOMMENSURABILITY

Pluralism in politics is a form that goes beyond multiculturalism. Older forms of pluralism were often a way to reconcile cultural, religious, or ethnical difference within the same political entity, whereas contemporary pluralism has come to terms with radical diversity, or what is also called contingent pluralism. As a broader notion of radical diversity, there are not only differences on a shared horizon, but also differences in worldviews, identities, moralities, and ways of inhabiting the world. In this sense, radical diversity as incommensurability takes place if particular people or groups lack shared metaphysical, moral, and epistemic principles to mediate their differences.

Despite its empirical reality, radical diversity is also to be understood as an ontological condition of late modernity. The collapse of metaphysical frameworks (see Section V) and the fragmentation of cultural and normative horizons produce a situation in which individuals have to relate to people whose ways of life cannot be fitted into familiar frames. This exposure creates new opportunities and new risks, as it expands the range of human experiences as well as the kinds of relationality. On the other hand, it creates vulnerability, anxiety, and conflict, since there are no common means of interpretation and response to difference.

Emmanuel Levinas (1969) rightly speaks of absolute otherness when discussing the Other as that which is irreducibly other, unassimilable to language, incapable of totalization in a concept. The face of the Other, however, demands an ethical responsibility that is prior to any political or ontological understanding of the Other, and this demand becomes adjacent to situations of excessive exposure to radical difference beyond individuals' capacities to confront their responsibilities. The Other is no longer only the occasion for an ethical decision, a demand that will create a new self-understanding.

Butler (2004) takes this understanding further in claiming that, if we are constituted by vulnerabilities and interdependency, our common precariousness opens up the possibility of relationality across differences. In practice, however, recognition under these conditions of radical diversity remains fragile. Lack of recognition of our shared vulnerability in contemporary life, characterized by fragmentation at social and political levels, only reinforces the forces that produce defensiveness, resentment and exclusion. The Other no longer remains a source of moral obligation, rather becoming a source of danger.

At the political level, radical diversity raises questions about the limits of institutional pluralism, as it presupposes a certain shared rationality that can still provide some kind of common normative basis for resolving conflicts. William Connolly (2002) argues that, in the face of deep pluralism, this shared rationality is becoming less tenable. Political conflicts are not only about policy options, but also about questions of identity, moral values, truth, etc. They cannot be resolved through deliberation between people, as the disagreements are based on different ontological and epistemic formations.

Jean-Luc Nancy (2000) rejects this essentialist model. Community cannot find its basis in the sharing of an essence or self-same identity, but is the being-in-common of singular beings, the existence of singular beings in common. In this way radical difference does not stand in the way of community, but creates it. Nancy is alert to the danger of exposure, transparency, knowledge, and truth-telling that is suggested by these thoughts and that is not as easily maintained with fear, ignorance, and the threats posed by political existence. Hence the fragility of community in the face of radical diversity also reflects a human relationality.

This difficulty of cohabitation is compounded when radical difference intersects with political forms that cannot mediate, much less absorb, such difference. As Jacques Ranciere (1999) argues, political equality is not a natural property, but a presupposition that becomes effective through political practices. In a radically diverse society, the condition for the application of any principle of equality is that not everyone in society recognizes one another as political subjects, as entitled to speak in the same way, take part in the same way, and be recognized in the same way. Society, then, is divided into conflicting political groups which cohabit overlapping but heterogeneous manifolds. These attachments are not only cultural or ideological, but affective. Lauren Berlant (2011) argues that the contemporary subject is one of "cruel optimism": the attachments to a way of life, identity, or worldview which block the flourishing of life are strengthened when one sees other attachments to other ways of life as a threat to one's own life. In this way, radical diversity produces affective economies of fear, resentment, and defensive solidarity that reinforce political polarization.

Along with radical diversity, the problem of incommensurability becomes more central. Incommensurability should not be understood as opposition, but as the lack of common evaluative standards to judge rival values. Conflict becomes irreconcilable when there are no common principles or standards of truth, morality or political legitimacy that we can appeal to. This is part of pluralistic democracy for Chantal Mouffe (2005). The challenge is to construct forms of politics that can contain and transform those incommensurabilities without recourse to violence.

Under conditions characterized by ordinary violence (Section III) and the perpetuation of the state of exception as a state of permanent emergency (Section IV), the conditions are no longer met for an agonistic politics of conflict that does not destroy. Incommensurability becomes intolerable when we do not have the

civic and political resources to deal with difference, when an ethics of fear supplants judgment, when the Other is an abstract enemy rather than a relational being. This means that radical diversity is bound up with radical violence: the more difficult it becomes to live together, the more radicalization sets in of exclusion, violence, and dissolution of political community.

The danger is not that there are differences between people, but that differences are perceived without moral imagination, and without thinking from the standpoint of the other. According to Arendt (1978), judgment requires representative thinking or thinking from multiple perspectives. Hence, trying to address radical diversity by means of representative thinking would require not just the understanding of expressly foreign positions, but rather of life worlds entirely. Not only do we overload our judgment, but we also increase the risk of misrecognition, stereotyping and dehumanization.

So, the problem posed by radical diversity is not simply that there are radical differences to be accommodated: the problem is how to sustain the ethical and political capacities required to accommodate these differences. When capacities are diminished in cases of radical violence, radical difference is perceived as intolerable. This cycle develops into radical violence itself, as violence takes place in response to the idea that coexistence with an incomprehensible Other is impossible.

If we take the radical diversity of beings as an ontological and political situation, the task is not to find a metaphysical ground that guarantees our unity under the same banner, but to analyze the existence of incommensurability and think the conditions under which plurality can be lived without falling into the violence of universalism. The next question is thus the question of the negative saturation of the phenomenon of radical evil, in its most extreme form, which overwhelms all ethical and conceptual preconditions of coexistence.

VII. RADICAL EVIL AS A NEGATIVELY SATURATED PHENOMENON?

A feature of radical violence in contemporary life is that it brings with it the phenomenon of radical evil, a form of injury that exceeds the concepts, normative schemes and discursive registers through which human beings can normally perceive and articulate wrongdoing. In contrast to customary moral theories that describe evil as a transgression of the norms, as the harm suffered by egoists from each other, or as the instrumentalization of agents, radical evil transgresses intentionality, cannot be reduced to rationality, and exposes the limits of moral-theoretical approaches. For this reason, radical evil is more than a wrong-making property: it is a qualitatively different phenomenon, which has implications for the whole of the moral and political world.

However, Martin Beck Matušík (2008) considers Kant's (1793) claim that human beings cannot evil "for its own sake" as increasingly implausible in relation to several current forms of violence that have no rationalizable ends. Kant's restriction to morally constructed ends only seem a way to preserve the possibility of moral freedom, but it ignores the fact that some current forms of evil are negatively saturated phenomena, in Jean-Luc Marion's (2002) sense. For Marion the saturated phenomenon overwhelms the capacities of intuition and concept; it gives "too much" and thus exceeds the subject's horizons of understanding. Like this idea is Matušík's notion of radical evil, which overwhelms the moral and linguistic horizons of the subject and makes questions of intention, motivation and justification obsolete. This excess is not quantitative: radical evil is not merely more evil than other evils. It destabilizes the very frameworks through which evil is understood as evil in the first place. However, through the experience of radical evil, language is thrown into confusion, judgment fails, and moral imagination breaks down. The philosopher Elaine Scarry (1985) has discussed how violent evil destroys the very language needed to articulate suffering and thus retells itself through its target. Radical evil extends this model to the social sphere, where whole communities are left unable to comprehend harm, and are rendered voiceless, despondent, and in fragments.

As Derrida (2001) puts it, what makes radical evil unforgivable is not that it cannot be forgiven, but because the horror of what happened cannot be measured, delimited, or fully represented. The unforgivable destroys the conditions of possibility of forgiveness. Radical evil destroys the relational, ethical, and symbolic components of moral life which make forgiveness possible: trust, reciprocity, intelligibility. It is violence not only of bodies, but of worlds.

One consequence of a negatively saturated understanding of radical evil, however, is that it challenges the moral and political framework within which we typically understand such concepts as crime, atrocity, and wrongdoing in terms of agents, responsibility, and causation. Transitional justice, reconciliation, and reparations are concerned with narratives, recognition, and identity, and all presuppose a degree of sameness, recognition, or stability. However, that sameness is precisely what is absent in radical evil, which is itself a saturation of evil and a source of moral confusion, making it impossible to assign responsibility, motive, and reparative means.

Radical evil violates the temporal structures of moral and political life. Ordinary wrongdoing has a temporal location, a beginning, a middle, a duration in time, and an end. Radical evil leaves traces of violence, trauma, suffering, and depreciation of the political, on an individual and collective level. For Ricoeur (1992), evil is what breaks the narrative identity, thus preventing the narration of past actions and their integration into the narrative of identity. Radical evil, however, is so massively imprinted that narrative repair becomes infinitely more difficult, producing fractures in both personal and collective identity that resist integration.

Another aspect of radical evil is its anonymity. In her analysis of the banality of evil (Arendt 1963), Arendt argued that great evils in the world were not the result of demonic evil but thoughtlessness, conformity, and the routinization of harm. In comparison to the ordinariness of the ordinary perpetrator in Arendt's thesis, radical evil does not have to be committed by extraordinary actors and events, but can be seen in bureaucratic and administrative processes as well as in the anonymous machinations of power. This anonymity contributes to its saturation: as there are no clear perpetrators or motives, the harm that is caused is difficult for societies to understand.

Radical evil, too, fits this model. Normalization of ordinary violence (Section III) desensitizes people to violence, corrupts their moral judgment, and makes communities susceptible to the emergence of radical evil. Because the state of exception is permanent (Section IV), there will be zones of indistinction where people will be exposed to violence without the protection of law or politics. Because of radical diversity (Section VI), without the protection of civic capacities, people will be afraid and insecure and will be vulnerable to radical evil. Radical evil is not a single act but the result of many interacting forces, each one eroding human faculties of judgment, recognition, and resistance.

A key feature of radical evil is an assault on moral imagination, or the ability to imagine other ways of living together. Radical evil involves a collapse of trust, hope, and relationality in the communities it affects. So radical evil is not a negation of the future, but a negation of the power of envisioning it: radical evil destroys the domain of hope and hope becomes weak, frail, or impossible (Matušík 2008). One way of describing this scarcity is that it is not pessimistic; it is the existential situation in which the conditions of hope are all weakened: language, recognition, trust, narrative.

Because of the saturation with evil, the moral relationship with the Other is also affected. In Levinas's model, the face of the Other (1969) orders "Thou shalt not kill". Yet radical evil distorts such an encounter. It places the self-Other relation within structures where the Other is not a face to face with, but an abstract, an enemy and an object. In these structures the ethical relation is destroyed and replaced with fear, aggression, violence or indifference. It annihilates the ethical space in which human beings recognize one another as both vulnerable and responsible.

Politically, radical evil destroys the conditions on which democracy is based. Democratic life is based on trust, common space, and the possibility of mutual recognition. When the entire city is saturated with radical evil, these countervailing conditions cannot hold, people are forced back into enclaves, and collectivities dissolve. In summary, as Strong (2012) argues, without shared visions (or at least shared spaces), political life is fragile and susceptible to authoritarian impulses. If radical evil is indeed a negatively saturated phenomenon, that could explain why moral and political attempts to confront contemporary violence have failed so often: because they presuppose capacities and contexts already made inoperable by that violence. And it suggests that our response must have neither metaphysical foundations, fixed narratives, nor total comprehension. Rather, the response is to the collapse of meaning and the scarcity of hope caused by radical evil.

The next section will address the existential and ethical dimensions of this scarcity, laying the groundwork for the constructive turn of the argument: radical hope is a civic and ethical capacity to be mobilized in the face of radical violence and radical evil.

VIII. SCARCITY OF HOPE: MORAL AND EXISTENTIAL DIMENSIONS

The radical violence and radical evil described above, in later sections, can become so extreme that it leads to what Martin Beck Matušík (2008, 115-116) calls the scarcity of hope. In this condition all of the moral, relational, and imaginative resources required to have and sustain hope have been severely limited. Hope on this view is not a matter of optimism, wishful thinking, or faith in progress, but is understood as a form of ethical commitment to the possibility of the stilling of the wound, of reconciliation and the renewal of the world. But when hope is in short supply, it's not that the ends have been taken away from us; the means have been taken away from us to envisage other ends.

To understand the nature and absence of hope, it is first necessary to make sense of the difference between hopes and hope. Jonathan Lear (2006), in his examination of cultural devastation, describes hopes as concrete personal or collective expectations for the future, or attainable goals, or desired outcomes. Such hopes can be disappointed or granted but hope in its deepest sense is an openness towards the possible, an

openness to mean when meaning has grown uncertain. It is in the presence of radical violence or radical evil that specific hopes are shattered, when hope as an ethical stance is more necessary and yet more remote.

Matušík (2008) says radical evil destroys the conditions for hope and the possibility of language, narrative, trust, and a sense of belonging to a world in which the future matters. Hope goes missing when the anticipatory structures of moral and political life-recognition, trust, responsibility, and judgment-are broken apart. Community survives without hope when it has become impossible to imagine, or to usher in, a situation in which it might be possible for individuals to coexist, or to occupy a common space of existence.

In this sense, a world of scarce hope, is not psychological, but is the existential condition, which is culturally, structurally, and politically imprinted, normalizes violence, makes exceptions permanent, radicalizes diversity. Instead, individuals, communities, and groups risk losing their ability to relate past, present, and future through reflective judgment (see Arendt, 1978) and, according to Arendt (1978), to exercise hope, as humans are no longer seen to exert agency and initiate new beginnings.

Hope is absent where the moral imagination is weakened. The moral imagination is the ability to think of other conceivable ways of living together, to envision the future and to see beyond the immediate demands of a situation, to see the humanity of others and to see new opportunities. Radical violence and radical evil constrict moral imagination, creating fear, despair and moral emotional paralysis. When a community is lost in radical evil, humans are placed in a defensive position, only risk-averse in not producing vulnerability, rather than imagining new relational horizons. While it is defensible, this retreat narrows the options available to political actors.

Another aspect of the loss of hope is the loss of shared horizons: in previous centuries communities were given metaphysical systems (religious, moral, cosmological) that indicated their orientation in the cosmos. Despite contestation, such frameworks constituted a backdrop against which to situate oneself. In the absence of metaphysical visions, Strong (2012) argues, we have no shared language of meaning, identity or sense of common destiny. The absence of these frameworks reveals the need for orientation, which is even more pressing because in their absence, one is left with plural and conflicting horizons, with no common point of reference and, in part, deprived of hope. Political structures are complicit in this hope deficit. The perpetual state of exception (Section IV) creates a feeling of being governed without being protected, a kind of inclusion through exclusion. And when this happens, it is not only the institutions that are weakened but also hope. For hope is not just about institutions. Hope takes for granted action, an ability to act and transform things. That is possible, not in a world where the political institutions are non-responsive and also opaque, and worse, antagonistic. Political action is also a precondition for hope.

Thus, cultural and affective modalities deepen the scarcity of hope. As Lauren Berlant (2011) asks, how do contemporary subjects learn to live in crisis, precarity and exhaustion? These are the environments that produce what she calls "slow death", the slow, almost imperceptible processes of erosion through which living capacity is extinguished over time. Associated with slow death is the lack of hope, which arises not only from trauma but from its continual whittling away. People can still function, but without the vitality, creativity, and relational energy needed to imagine and pursue different possible futures.

The affective economies of fear, resentment and defensiveness further constrain the prospects of hope. Where radical diversity (Section VI) finds diminished civic capacities, difference becomes a threat rather than an opportunity. Communities that cling to fixed identities, fortifying them as if they are under a threat, no longer harbor hope, but are locked in mutually hostile forms of relating to each other. A relational soil of hope is needed to grow the trust, empathy, and openness.

But the lack of hope does not mean that hope is impossible. It means rather that new forms or new kinds of hope have to be found. Lear (2006) argues that once the customary referents of hope have collapsed, communities may have to learn the meaning of hope anew, where hope is to survive, in conditions of destruction, hope must be detached from expectations, and instead grounded in ethical and relational capabilities. This transformation requires not metaphysical assurances but civic and moral imagination.

This is the moment when the constructive project of the article begins, the articulation of radical hope as an antidote to radical violence and radical evil. Radical hope is not a return to the structures and solutions that have failed in the past; it is openness to the new forms of coexistence that emerge from an acknowledgment of vulnerability, responsibility, and plurality. It is hope without guarantees, hope that persists without a metaphysical foundation, and hope that despite uncertainty is based in civic consciousness rather than ideological certainty.

Understanding scarcity is central to understanding how radical hope is both necessary and possible. Scarcity, the condition of a lack or unavailability of hope, is the condition in which hope must be reimagined. It shows the limits of this framework and indicates the need for alternative forms of relationality and judgment. This constructive move is taken as the theme of the next chapter of this volume, which explores radical hope as a civic and ethical capacity to respond to radical violence, radical evil, and radical diversity.

IX. Radical Hope as Civic Consciousness

If radical violence overwhelms moral life and the lack of hope can be seen as a sign of a withering away of relational and imaginative capacities, the question becomes how to imagine a radical hope. That hope cannot rest on metaphysical certainties, ideological visions, or guarantees of progress. It rather disposes ethically and politically to enable individuals and communities for responsible living amid fundamental uncertainty, vulnerability, and plurality. It is radical not because it promises to bring about a transformation, but because it deals with uncertainty of which one has no guarantee. Rather, it is hope for a late modernity in which metaphysics has collapsed and violence is no longer considered scandalous.

Jonathan Lear (2006) defines radical hope (as opposed to ordinary hope) as hope when any conception of the good is impossible. Radical hope is not about hoping for something in particular, but rather the hope of being able to re-conceive of how to live a good life in the absence of a prior conception. This image is important for current political theory, because it shifts the locus of hope from external guarantees and resilient structure to internal capacitation and ethical and civic cultivation. Radical hope is not a promise, but a practice.

Martin Beck Matušík (2008) argues that after radical evil, hope must not be understood as optimism, but as responsibility. Hope is then the answer of responsibility to the pervasiveness of radical evil. It is that which allows individuals to witness the horrors of the world, to honor the past they have inherited, and to work for another world in a way that does not drift into despair, cynicism, or withdrawal. Radical hope is moral strength. It is the disposition to believe in the possibility of living together when it no longer seems possible because the community's relations and narrative are broken.

But radical hope is not only an ethical or an existential capacity. It is also civic. Politically, radical hope is the disposition that sustains the practices of judgment, responsibility, and plurality that make democratic life possible. Hannah Arendt (1978) gives a strong philosophical basis for this civic conception of hope. According to Arendt, the condition for the possibility of the political is natality, the faculty for beginning something new, the appearing of individuals to one another, acting and speaking in concert. It depends, in other words, on common spaces of meaning being opened through human interactions. In a world saturated with violence, to procreate affirms hope. To be political is to insist about that the future is open, that plurality matters, and that we remain capable of building our common world.

The civic dimension of radical hope is the ability to judge in the absence of stabilized criteria. According to Arendt's (1978) account of reflective judgment, it is the capacity to think from multiple perspectives: to think representatively, or, in short, to orient oneself in a world without metaphysical guarantees. Where there is no hope, there can be no judgment. And when judgment crumbles, radical hope restores political life because it enables thought to orient itself once more. Judgment becomes radical hope; it betokens the viability of meaning and responsibility.

A radical hope assumes a relational openness to other people based on the acknowledgment of a common vulnerability. For Judith Butler (2004), ethical and political life begins with the recognition that human beings are essentially dependent, exposed, and relational beings. Radical hope recognizes this and draws on it to create conditions that enable peaceful coexistence in radical diversity. Diversity is not in denial; affirm that diversity need not destroy. In this way, radical hope enables relationality when trust erodes, when narratives disrupt, and when violence divides communities.

Furthermore, radical hope as civic consciousness entails the affirmation of all as potentiality, in the sense of Jacques Ranciere (1999): equality is not a fact, it is a presupposition enacted through political practices. Radical hope affirms that, even in a moment of violent rupture, all still have the capacity of agency, of speaking and listening, of being equal together in the establishment of a shared world. To presuppose equality is itself hopeful because it resists the hierarchies and exclusions that violence creates.

Radical hope does not ignore violence or conflict, nor does it promise a world wherein peace and reconciliation prevail. On the contrary, radical hope meets violence with clear-eyed courage. Bonnie Honig (2011) has argued that the virtues that democratic life requires in uncertain conditions are courage, humility, and resilience. Radical hope is one such virtue. It gives people and communities the capacity to be politically activated even when the outcome is uncertain and when there is a precarious political environment.

Radical hope can also challenge the affective economies of fear and resentment produced by radical diversity and the state of exception. It can re-orient affective life away from positions of defense to modes of relationality. Against the closure of despair, the withdrawal of cynicism, and the hostility of fear, hope does not replace them. Hope transforms them by allowing the encounter with the other to be free from the control of suspicion or fear, so that, in this sense, radical hope is an affective, ethical, and political reorientation.

Radical hope is not just about singular individuals, but also consists in taking part in forms of life, such as in public spaces of dialogue or in rituals of collective mourning, in institutions of judgment or in political practices that realize a certain form of equality. Without these, hope becomes fragile. Hope needs to

be institutionalized, not in a way that guarantees its outcome, but rather in the sense that such hope is inextricably built upon the civic capacities to imagine and pursue that outcome.

Radical hope, then, is also creative. It seeks to foster the imagination of new political communities not grounded in a shared metaphysical or ideological vision. Hope makes possible what Strong (2012) calls "thinking without vision": a form of political speculation that sets out from no guarantees. In this way hope makes possible the formation of political communities that are plural, contested, and open to the unpredictable nature of human action.

Radical hope is a responsibility, in the end. It is a responsibility to keep alive the possibility of the political, to promote engagement, not withdraw, to dialogue, not be silent, to relate, not isolate, even under conditions that seem inhospitable. Hope is civic courage. It is a refusal to abandon the possibility of meaning or community in the context of radical violence, radical evil, and radical diversity.

After articulating radical hope as a civic and ethical capacity, this article takes up the question of the political implications of this idea: what are the conditions of possibility for a new political community of coexistence and responsibility in the contemporary world?

X. THE CONDITIONS FOR A NEW POLITICAL COMMUNITY

If radical violence exposes the impossibility of metaphysical foundations, and if the radical exposure of hopelessness exposes the impossibility of ethical and political formations, the task, then, is to think through the conditions for the possibility of a new political community that no longer needs metaphysical foundations, cultural homogeneity, or a shared conception of the good. It is a community that would have to be erected in a world of radical difference and permanent uncertainty, in a world of radical evil. In this respect, we need to think about the form of political community that might sustain coexistence in the absence of the violence-producing certainties or illusions of the past.

A new political community would do well to begin with the ineluctability of pluralism, not just describing but embracing the fact that human beings are irreducibly different from one another and that political life begins with this plurality and not with the attempt to overcome it. According to Hannah Arendt (1958), plurality (the fact that we are all the same yet all different) is a condition of political action. This is because the suppression of plurality in the name of unity, certainty or order produces violence in political communities. The first condition for a new political community is, therefore, to accept plurality as a constitutive value, rather than a problem to be managed.

Pluralism is a non-foundational conception of the political. Customary political theories (Hobbesian sovereignty, liberal constitutionalism) are systematic, seeking to stabilize the political order by reference to a completeness of principles or doctrine. Yet in radical diversity, as Strong (2012) and Connolly (2002) argue, those linking foundations are no longer tenable. The new political community can no longer assume shared metaphysical views or overarching rationalities. To establish a civic order of open, contestable, and revisable civic practices. Rather than relativism, groundless politics, or absence of truth, it establishes civic practices with claims to political legitimacy through a process of engagement and judgment.

Another condition is a presupposition of equality as potentiality (Jacques Rancière 1999). Political equality is not a property that individuals have but rather something that is presupposed and enacted by all sorts of political forms. If the new political community is to be predicated on equality, equality can no longer be understood as a state to be achieved but as an activity, a relational attitude of recognizing others as capable speakers, acting and engaging in political life together to create a common world. This presupposition of equality is itself an expression of radical hope.

The only way to reach equality is by creating spaces of appearance, where people confront and relate to one another as political beings. According to Arendt (1958), the public domain is the space in which people appear in the presence of one another, speaking and acting, and the world becomes meaningful. In the fractured, privatized and digitalized world of today, the new political community requires spaces, comprised in physical, digital and institutional forms, that do not erase plurality but instead manifest it. These spaces must be open to contestation, disagreement and difference; they must not reduce political life to consensus or administrative management.

Another condition is the ability to live with disagreement. For Chantal Mouffe (2005), democratic politics is agonistic rather than harmonious. If conflict is the essence of modern political community, it must be institutionalized in ways that do not permit it to leave the limits of constructive conflict. This can usually only be achieved by formulating norms and practices that transform antagonism into agonism, forms of conflict in which one's opponent is treated as a legitimate opponent and not an enemy to be destroyed. The capacity to sustain agonistic relations is an expression of civic maturity and a manifestation of radical hope. This presupposes relational openness and judgments, such as the practices of what in Arendt's (1978, 242) terms can be called reflective judgment which allows people to take the standpoint of others while avoiding

assumptions of dogmatism and nihilism at the same time. Judgment offers orientation in a world without absolute foundations. It allows interpretation, distinction, and action in the face of complexity. Deprived of the capacity of judgment, political life reverts into reaction, impulse, and resentment, which radical violence can easily exploit.

The new political community must also deal with the legacy of harm and find its own practices of memory and responsibility. For radical evil leaves its mark. As Ricoeur (1992) argues, memory is a source of ethical renewal, if oriented towards responsibility rather than revenge. A political community has no hope of a future without memory. This work of mourning, remembering and acknowledging allows for co-existence, preventing the trauma from becoming erased from memory or used in a politics of exclusion.

Next, institutions of the political community must be established that can act according to plurality, equality, and judgment. Such institutions must be democratic and flexible and should not claim metaphysical grounding. Examples might include deliberative assemblies, participatory budgeting, citizen forums, restorative justice processes, or educative institutions designed to encourage a critical mind or civic-mindedness. Radical hope seeks institutional spaces capable of sustaining ethical and civic capacities, which are contingent on collective democratic dialogue. Perhaps the most fundamental condition of the civic bond is trust. It is not a diffuse faith in institutions but a relational capacity that allows subjects, despite their vulnerability, to be open to others. In societies characterized by radical violence, trust is fragile. But it must be built through transparency, dialogue, accountability, and shared practices, for without it our political community collapses into fear, isolation, and self-protective identity. Trust helps even weak political communities to endure.

A new radical political community cannot, for example, close itself off. To try to construct a homogeneous political community in a situation of radical diversity is to produce exclusionary politics, and violence. It must be non-foundational, willing to be transformed, to hear the voices on its edges, to be affected by those who have yet to speak. Such openness is not weakness, but a hallmark of a strong and resilient democratic community.

Finally, the new political community must be grounded in radical hope. It is the hope that coexistence is possible when the founding frameworks for that coexistence have collapsed. It animates the willingness to engage in political action, the ability to trust other people, the capacity for collective life, and to imagine possible futures that are not yet realized. Radical hope is the ethical and civic orientation by which a political community becomes possible where scarcity, violence, and fragmentation are pervasive. It is again important to notice that the conditions for the emergence of the new city are not metaphysical but ethical, relational and civic: the conditions of judgment, responsibility, openness, plurality and equality. They sketch the outlines of a polity that can resist the violence of the extremists and coexist with the radical other.

The next steps follow this thought further, seeing political equality, not as mainly a founding, but as a potentiality enacted in the institutions and practices of this new political community.

XI.POLITICAL EQUALITY AS POTENTIALITY, NOT FOUNDATION

The biggest conceptual change that would be required for the establishment of a new political community is one in the conception of political equality. Customarily, equality has been the first principle of political theory and political philosophy, in the normative or metaphysical sense. Despite the natural rights, rational universalism, divine creation, or constitutional guarantees that are usually thought to ground equality as a stable and pre-political fact, in situations of radical diversity, in some cases because metaphysics fails and above all, in the era of radical violence, this no longer holds true. And they cannot provide a common ground for political life, because their metaphysical assumptions are neither widely shared nor plausible.

The thinker Jacques Ranciere (1999) expresses another conception of equality that seems especially appropriate given contemporary political demands. According to Ranciere, equality is neither a property nor a state nor a substantive fact about human beings. Rather, equality is a presupposition, a potentiality that is enacted by political practice and political action when individuals claim their equality by making their bodies, voices, and intelligibility visible in spaces of exclusion and marginalization. Equality, in this sense, is not a potential to be discovered but something that will be activated upon the disruption of hierarchy.

If equality is construed as potentiality, the political community would no longer need a foundational basis for its metaphysical beliefs, but instead have to cultivate the civic capacities of its citizens. This, again, ties into the overall argument of this paper: A new political community cannot appeal to any overarching metaphysical unity or universal rationality to uphold its unity, but instead must ground itself in the practices of radical hope, plurality and judgment.

One of the consequences of reconceiving equality as potentiality is that inequality is not a deviation from the norm but rather is the normal default condition of political orders when they do not establish equality. Rancière argues that most forms of politics work on the premise of the "police order" (distribution of the

sensible), which explains how inequality is naturalized in our eyes, language, and institutions and how those same hierarchies decide who matters, who can speak, and even who is granted the opportunity to appear at all. In this way it seems that equality itself is disruptive, weakening the implicit hierarchies within political life. Equality, given the radical diversity, must be affirmed. But it is even more difficult to achieve because mutual recognition cannot be taken for granted when one enters the normative and epistemic worlds of others. Thus, this presumption of equality is already present at the beginning of the dialogue. William Connolly (2002) argues that in deeply pluralistic societies, we cannot presuppose a common basis. Others must be accepted as capable of judgment and action without shared foundations. It must arise from an ethical openness that comes before agreement, but equality must also be a relation, held between those who have the civic capacity to see each other as not the same.

This relational understanding of equality can also be found in Hannah Arendt's (1958) account of political action, in terms of citizens' presence and action in a space of interpersonal plurality, rather than abstract equal rights. Arendt stresses that political equality is based on the possibility of speech and action, the freedom to act, the right to be heard, and the right to respond. This performative dimension of equality corresponds to Rancière's argument that equality is the act of claiming it. The performative aspect of equality is most clear in acts of violence, where its conditions of appearance and recognition are most weakened.

Second, rather than providing institutional guarantees of equality through fixed institutions or universal principles, in terms of potentiality, equality must be realized within political institutions. This does not mean that institutions should abandon common, general laws and rules, but that they should remain open in the face of dissent and change. Deliberative assemblies, participatory forums, and restorative justice processes exemplify institutional mechanisms that allow marginalized groups to perform their equality and sustain the political community from a place of equality rather than presuming the equality of all members.

Understanding equality as potentiality advances the critique of proceduralism in contemporary democratic theory. If, however, equality is seen as a possible foundation for procedural guarantees such as voting, representation, or protection of political rights, political legitimacy can be achieved. Under conditions of radical diversity and radical violence, however, procedures can veil deep inequalities and exclusions. Under these conditions, procedural democracy can be formal without being equal. Rancière's critique thus amounts to saying that democracy is not a procedure, but rather a struggle to disrupt the hierarchies that delimit the space of political belonging. If political equality is understood as potentiality, it requires an attention to the affective and represented dimensions of political life: it is not enough to characterize equality, it has to be enacted in terms of trust, recognition and relational openness. According to Bonnie Honig (2011), an audacity and generosity exceeding procedure is required for democratic action, and the enactment of equality would not be possible without civic dispositions, such as listening, humility, and responsiveness to others. It is in education, culture, and the stories we tell that these affective capacities are cultivated.

However, conceiving equality as potentiality means that conflict does not threaten order, but is instead a means through which equality is realized. Chantal Mouffe (2005) argues that politics is democratic to the degree that antagonism is transformed into agonism, relations among opponents understood as equal adversaries. Agonistic spaces are spaces in which the equality of all parties takes the form of respect for differences, the acceptance of the legitimacy of the other. However, this can only happen when they presuppose the equality of those they disagree with.

But understood in this way, equality as potentiality is the moral dimension to the political community: equality is not simply a political principle but a commitment to recognizing others as capable of agency and judgment. It is in contexts of radical violence and radical evil that this foundational commitment fails. This presupposition of equality becomes difficult to maintain where trust is ruptured, where fear is rampant, and where narratives of exclusion are dominant. That is exactly where the demand for equality is most urgent. It is this radical hope, articulated in the previous section, that allows individuals to affirm equality despite oppressive structures. Political equality as potentiality becomes the founding political principle of a new community. While metaphysics is founded on a foundation, that which founds a principle of political equality is founded on civic action, real relations and collective enactment. By assuring us, then, that equality cannot be a property of political communities to be retrieved and recovered, we return to the initial thesis of this article: that political community must be built on responsibility rather than certainty, on plurality rather than unity, on civic hope rather than fundamental truths.

A closely related question is how political communities can make peace with the fact of disagreement, not in spite of, but through radical diversity.

XII. COEXISTENCE WITH DISAGREEMENT: LIVING UNDER RADICAL DIFFERENCE

If political equality is conceived as a potentiality to be actualized in practice, the question arises as to how political communities can persist without resorting to violence or collapsing due to disagreement. In a world of radical pluralism, with no hegemonic shared understanding of the metaphysical foundations, disagreement is not an exception, but rather a fixture of political life. The question is not whether, but how, we can live with difference in ways that sustain political relations, collective agency, and civic hope.

Chantal Mouffe (2005) has distinguished between an agonistic relationship (characterized by legitimate adversaries) and an antagonistic relationship (characterized by illegitimate foes). The task of democratic politics is to transform antagonism into agonism, attempting to give a productive direction to conflict. If a political community is to nurture the capacity for coexistence under radical difference, it must learn to institutionalize agonism: the capacity to render disagreement expressible, contestable, and negotiable without destroying the bonds of community. But such institutionalization does not merely concern the technical modalities of organizing practices. It calls for an ethic of encounter, based on the presupposition of equality (Rancière 1999), the recognition of vulnerability (Butler 2004), and a civic courage to see things through where no consensus can be reached. This is how living with disagreement extends radical hope. To live with disagreement is to affirm that political life can continue in the face of irreconcilable differences, and that conflict does not preclude the possibility of relationality.

According to the political theorist Hannah Arendt (1958), difference is of political value, as political action is impossible in a homogeneous world. The political takes shape in the fact that the fact of plurality is the ground of dissensus. But it also makes judgment possible: in a plural world, human beings can learn the difficult task of seeing through the eyes of others. Arendt's (Arendt 1978) notion of 'representative thinking' here seems relevant: to judge politically is to imaginatively adopt the perspectives of those who are different from oneself. 'Representative thinking' is not homogeneity or consensus. It is the ability to exercise common world: to know enough about one another and to be in this world together, even if we differ.

Yet representative thinking is untenable where the political structures make fear, resentment or mistrust the predominate affect. As Lauren Berlant (2011: 3) puts it, the public is one of crisis ordinariness: feelings of instability that are taken for granted make forms of collective engagement feel impossible. In these contexts, disagreement is not merely a matter of different beliefs: it is a threat to identity, standing or existence. This presents an affective challenge to political communities: how to develop the emotional and relational capacities that are required to tolerate disagreement and avoid oppositional or withdrawal responses. Acquiring these dispositions involves a turning toward incommensurability, since, as I argue in Section VI, radical diversity engenders forms of difference that cannot be fully mediated through shared norms and standards. The required response to disagreement's unavoidability is therefore the acceptance of incommensurability as part of political life. According to Connolly (2002), deep pluralism requires what he calls "agonistic respect" in which respect is neither reduced to agreement nor predicated on it. Agonistic respect simply acknowledges the Other's legitimate presence, and this respect requires continuous ethical labor as it is a fragile achievement. It is this fragility that, thus paradoxically, makes coexistence a civic achievement, rather than a transcendental reality.

Another dimension of this is that there has to be a public space where disagreement can take place, where people can appear to each other, express their views and disagree. Such spaces of appearance, where citizens can be seen and heard (Arendt, 1958), are essential conditions of political life but often increasingly precarious. Digital technologies favor polarization over deliberation, urban privatization discipline civic space. Authoritarianism increasingly represses dissent. For an agonistic political community, then, the defensive requirement must be to preserve civic space in the physical, institutional, and digital domains as a space of contestation in freedom, never to be erased.

Coexistence with disagreement also prescribes the practices of narrative pluralism. According to Paul Ricoeur (1992), individuals and communities understand themselves through the stories they tell about themselves. So, amid this pluralistic culture, the task is not to harmonize the stories into a single narrative but rather to practice the art of holding them in tension. This narrative pluralism will allow communities to remember past abuse, cultural difference, and different visions for the future without requiring people to abandon their narratives in favor of someone else's. At the institutional level, practical instantiations of living with disagreement include deliberative city forums, participatory budgeting, citizen assemblies, restorative justice processes, decentralized governance structures, and other flexible, participatory, and generally contestable institutional designs that do not resolve disagreement. They provide for a way of dealing with disagreement, a means to make possible equality-in-practice and to achieve a measure of political agency. Mouffe (2005) therefore stresses that democratic institutions must always channel passions and antagonisms into forms of political engagement, rather than suppressing them.

Coexistence with disagreement is not so much a matter of structures or capacities, but a change in political imagination, from an idea of community that aspires to unity or consensus to one that embraces and accepts sustained plurality. As Strong (2012) points out, the crisis of political metaphysics creates societies that lack visions for action. This requires a new political imaginary. It does not require us to eliminate conflict, but rather to enact a new form of politics that creates the conditions in which co-existence becomes possible, non-destructively, through radical hope, the belief that, even in the absence of harmony, co-existence between differences is still possible. A fundamental ethical consideration within coexistence with disagreement is the notion of non-domination, with Philip Pettit (1997) contending that freedom requires the absence of arbitrary power. By contrast, domination in conditions of radical diversity seems most often to take the form of epistemic or cultural domination: of coercing others into a particular way of seeing things, being, or understanding. Positive coexistence requires an ethos of mutual restraint. The ethic is not merely negative, for it secures the conditions of plural participation as an outcome.

Finally, coexistence with disagreement is never simply achieved, but always work in progress, something always vulnerable to the corrosive power of fear, violence, or the decay of the institutions that support it. But it is also renewable: through cultivating civic consciousness, judgment, responsibility, and hope. Understood this way, coexistence with disagreement is a condition, and an expression, of radical hope: a declaration that political life is possible even when there is no agreement.

Thus, coexistence with disagreement is the basic principle of the new political community this article seeks to envision, a community with a new epistemic understanding of difference, one that features conflict as opportunity, plurality as possibility, and radical diversity as a political horizon. At the same time, it offers the relational and institutional conditions for living well with others under conditions of uncertainty, vulnerability, and irreducible difference. The next section examines what happens when we fail to achieve this coexistence, through an investigation into the fate of the political when hope fails.

XIII. THE FATE OF THE POLITICAL WITHOUT HOPE

On this view, radical hope is the ethical and civic orientation that allows political life to continue under conditions of violence, uncertainty, and radical diversity. The exhaustion, corruption, or collapse of radical hope is paradigmatically a crisis of the political: a political community that loses its hope does not simply lose an affective or psychological resource, but rather experiences an alteration of the fundamental space in which political action, judgment, and coexistence can occur. In such cases the political, without courage and without hope, does not burst or fade away, but atrophies, its organs replaced by nihilism, by authoritarianism, or by a mere simulacrum of democratic vitality.

Hannah Arendt (1951) says the political is based on the human capacity for beginning or natality, in the sense that people are capable of spontaneously starting something and bringing something new into the world. This, she argues, is because people have an orientation toward the future, and a belief that action matters and changes the world. When there is no hope, there is no natality. People stop being politically active not because they are forced to do so, but because they no longer believe in what they do anymore. Instead, what emerges is a public sphere that finds no initiative, but only resignation, cynicism, or fear within. A more contemporary elaboration of this view is articulated by political theorist Wendy Brown, who insists in 2015 that neoliberal rationalities hollow out democratic life by rendering political agency as market-based, the future as sealed, and hope as privatized or commodified rather than civic or collective. All politics becomes management, technocracy, or polarized spectacle. Where there is no hope, people give themselves over to enclaves of identity, consumption, and resentment. The political is a space for spectators.

The collapse of hope also leads to structuring conditions for authoritarianism. Hope and fear occupy an inverse relationship in political life, since fear makes individuals vulnerable to ideologies that hold out ideas of certainty, order, and security. Authoritarianism grows from a need to give existential comfort when facing deep uncertainty. As Achille Mbembe (2019) argues, societies without hope often seek to fulfill sovereign fantasies through dehumanizing, isolating, or expelling other people for purity, security, or renewal. Radical evil thus results from disenchanting societies when people no longer believe in a shared humanity or a shared future.

If a political community does not have hope, it is most susceptible to nihilism. Nihilism is more than the absence of meaning beyond; it is the belief that meaning is impossible. Though not strictly a form of nihilism, actors may act out of indifference or sense the futility of all social and political action and also politically violate. Carl Schmitt (2005) warned that without the ethical energies to produce difference, group warfare becomes independent from any objective, or, politics becomes sheer antagonism. In contemporary usage, nihilism may refer to apathy, polarization, or a desire to see institutions collapse.

At the level of social relations, the collapse of hope produces affective fragmentation; as we will argue in Sections III and VI, violence and radical diversity already stretch relational capacities. When hope fails,

the people think of those who are different as enemies, parasites, or challengers. Groups cannot cooperate as members of a political community. Groups are mutually intolerant. Groups split into competing identity groups. Radical violence creates mutual distrust that gets institutionalized into policy, that turns plurality toward animus, and in that context, social bonds break, and everything that connects democratic life disappears. Trust, empathy, mutual recognition, are all gone.

Hope, and thus the power of judgment, is not just absent but impossible. For Arendt (1978), people judge to orient themselves within a plural world. To judge needs imagination, courage, and openness for thoughts from others. Without hope, judgment is impossible: people become dogmatists, conspire, or fall into extremist ideologies. It is this judgment collapse that is exploited in the political domain, particularly in misinformation and the cynical exploitation of fear. Another consequence of a lack of hope is depoliticization, the reduction of structural problems to technical problems, moral problems to administrative problems, and of public government to administration. State of exception (Section IV) accelerates and radicalizes the process of depoliticization because it treats the state of emergency as normal political condition and transfers political decision-making power to specialists. In such a situation, no one has hope anymore; no one sees himself now as an actor of change. Everyone becomes a subject. The political is reduced to an empty set of procedures.

Secondly, the loss of hope has particular implications upon the way communities remember their pasts. The philosopher Paul Ricoeur (1992) argues memory stagnates without hope. Memory gets lost in cycles of trauma, resentment, or nostalgia without hope. These situations can lead communities to use history as an instrument to justify exclusion or revenge, or these situations can retreat into amnesia by refusing confrontation of past harms. Both tendencies weaken any possibility of reconciliation and of building up a sense of responsibility.

Though it is not always recognized, the history of totalitarianism, of civil war, of persecution, of societies where hope collapses has generally been characterized by violence, scapegoating, and the use of authoritarian rule. Radical violence is possible wherever people believe that the future has nothing to offer. Radical evil is even possible where people no longer value human life. If hope is absent, it becomes a political crisis of the highest order.

The collapse of hope is not inevitable. The point of articulating the fate of the political without hope is to make clear what is at stake in cultivating radical hope. Hope is not a luxury. It is civic, holding open hope for judgement, relationality, plurality, and political action. Radical hope resists threats to the political such as nihilism, fear, fragmentation and apathy. It maintains the hope that a world still shared is possible.

The fate of the political without hope exemplifies the central claim of this article: radical hope is the only adequate response to radical violence. Hope makes vulnerable people responsible, fragile people courageous, and a plurality possible. Where hope is extinguished, the political dies; where radical hope is cultivated, the political may be reborn.

I will show in the next section where this argument is at its most straightforward, namely in how radical hope can be the only rational response to radical violence in the conditions of the present.

XIV. RADICAL HOPE AS THE ONLY RESPONSE TO RADICAL VIOLENCE

The examples above have shown how radical violence destroys the ontological, moral, and social foundations of human coexistence, how the radical evil that is beyond all contestation devastates human potential for judgment and language, and how the absence of hope threatens the possibility of political life. It has also shown that legal, institutional, procedural, and even metaphysical forms of dealing with violence have lost their effectiveness. They are articulated by assumptions of meaning eroded by radical violence, capacities eroded by radical evil, and collective energies corroded by the collapse of hope. Only radical hope can respond to these dimensions of violence at a radical depth.

Radical hope is qualitatively different from ordinary hope. It is not a stronger version of hope. Ordinary hope presupposes a stable narrative and a plausible horizon. Radical hope, by contrast, plays in at the moment when those conditions no longer obtain. This hope lacks guarantees, it lacks sure foundations, it lacks the comfort of metaphysical visions. It does not promise restoration but makes possible the construction of meaning in the wake of devastation. As Jonathan Lear (2006) remarks on the situation of the Crow Nation when their culture was collapsing, radical hope remains possible when a cultural framework is rendered incomprehensible to the people in it. Radical hope thus presupposes the possibility of something greater beyond even when one cannot imagine what that something is. Radical hope therefore must involve a certain transformation within the imagination it is a way of imagining that is oriented toward that which cannot yet be imagined. This imaginative openness makes radical hope especially appropriate for moments of radical violence, when existing frameworks of meaning shatter.

In this spirit, Martin Beck Matušík (2008) proposes that radical hope requires people act responsibly: After radical evil occurs, hope can no longer return to optimistic faith that history will progress, and must

instead become a moral and civic commitment to live as if meaning and community are still possible. Radical hope thus defies ethics by refusing to allow violence to define the limits of the possible. Insofar as it acknowledges the extent of harm, it avoids giving in to despair.

Hannah Arendt (1958) provides a political justification for the notion of radical hope with her concept of natality: Each human being is capable of beginning something new and creating the unforeseeable future in the flow of events. Natality is intrinsically hopeful because it presupposes that the world is open to renewal. Political communities can respond to this experience of loss by fostering radical hope. By harnessing the power of natality, they affirm that the world of action remains meaningful no matter how fragmented, violent, or uncertain it becomes. Radical hope is the political project of keeping the future open.

Radical hope is also an antidote to the wide range of affective precursors to radical violence: the fear, resentment, fatigue, and despair that provide the fertile soil for violence. While radical hope does not eliminate these affects, it does change how we experience and express them. However, as Judith Butler (2004) puts it, hope resides in the recognition of our shared vulnerability, the point at which vulnerability is no longer seen as something to be feared but rather the ground of relationality itself. In one sense, radical hope teaches one to be open to others and not to close down one's identity out of defensive need.

On a political level, radical hope can be a civic virtue. Bonnie Honig (2011) writes that to uphold democracy, people must be courageous, generous, and persevere. Radical hope thus justifies the virtues of public engagement, judgment, cross-difference engagement, and challenging injustice throughout. One justifies action as worthwhile even if we cannot know the outcome as radical hope motivates action within uncertainty. Without hope, action can seem pointless. With hope, action is one way of making the world.

Radical hope is also necessary, because violence itself mutates. This article has shown how contemporary violence is diffuse, normalized and ontologically corrosive. It invades institutions, inflects everyday life, and shapes political imagination. The techniques of rights, law, and punishment address only symptoms. Radical hope responds to violence at the level of meaning, relation, and imagination. Radical hope resists violence not with a direct response, but by reconstituting the ethical and political capacities through which communities can imagine and inhabit alternatives.

This is not to romanticize hope. Radical hope is hard. Radical hope is breakable. Radical hope is sometimes backward. It demands action without guarantees from us. It requires that we trust without certitude. It obliges us to imagine without a guarantee that there will be a future. That is why radical hope is our only response to radical violence. Violence breaks meaning; hope gives it back. Violence alienates; hope connects. In contrast, violence arrests people in their roles as victims or enemies, whereas hope reconceives them as political agents with moral responsibility.

Radical hope is also the only attitude that can sustain a political community under conditions of radical diversity, where metaphysical visions are no longer possible, disagreement becomes incommensurable, and plural lines of thought cannot simply be subsumed under one another. It allows communities to tolerate disagreement (Section XII) by cultivating the affective and ethical dispositions that enable relational openness among community members. Radical hope accepts that a shared world is possible, while worldviews differ.

Though it is not without its own danger, radical hope is not within the logic of a permanent state of exception, which is supported by fear and despair. Whereas the logic of exception is premised on the idea that it is impossible to govern the future, radical hope insists that political action is always possible even in precarious circumstances. It refuses the claims that the emergency is permanent, and sovereignty is non-negotiable; thus, the promise of hope becomes a mode of resistance to authoritarianism. Finally, radical hope becomes the ground for new political imaginaries. As Strong (2012) writes, the end of metaphysical visions does not spell the end of political imagination, but its transformation. Radical hope means individuals and collectivities can imagine political futures. These futures do not depend on unity, purity, and foundation. They depend on plurality, humility, contestation, and openness. It allows communities to build political structures that acknowledge fragility rather than deny it, that embrace difference rather than suppress it.

So radical hope is not just one response among many. It is the only adequate response to radical violence, because it answers it at the most radical level of destruction, the destruction of meaning, judgment, relationality, and hope for the future. Only radical hope, as a process of re-opening the future, redistributing meaning, re-establishing relationships, and reconstituting the moral and political capacities of shared life can counteract these effects.

The next section serves to conclude the article with a summary of these arguments and an outline of the political vision emerging from these radical violent tactics, hope scarcity, and radical hope.

XV. CONCLUSION: TOWARD A POST-METAPHYSICAL POLITICAL FUTURE

The paradoxical and urgent challenge of the contemporary human condition is that, even though violence is eminently present in ordinary human relations and embedded in political orders, radical violence, as we have defined it throughout this article, does not cause damage only, but also weakens ontological, moral, and relational conditions that sustain human life. It's overwhelming saturation destabilizes judgment, eating away meaning, and disrupting structures through which individuals and communities orient themselves in the world.

But standard responses to violence that rest on metaphysics, institutional design, or proceduralism are inadequate because the assumptions underlying such responses are no longer self-obvious. This is why Strong (2012) argues that metaphysical images of a unified and ordered world are themselves implicated in exclusion and domination. Rights-based or technocratic approaches assume that the moral and political faculties that radical evil calls into question can be retained. But managing conflict through exception practices consolidates states of exception and increases abandonment. The crisis is not merely political or institutional in character, it is also an existential one.

Framing radical diversity renders these frameworks insufficient: today's pluralistic societies do not function on the basis of shared horizons of meaning. As we are situated in different lifeworlds (*Weltanschauung*), the classical method of achieving consensus does not hold, either. Plurality in this context is not always benign but can be harmful. Yet, as Arendt (1958) reminds us, plurality remains the fundamental condition of political life, even if difficult. It requires rethinking political community that does not presume metaphysical guarantees of its existence.

The argument of this article has been that the convergence between radical violence, radical evil, radical diversity, and the normalization of the state of exception leads to an absence, not of hope, but to an absence of moral imagination, relational trust, and civic capacities that give hope the ability to support political life. Without hope, the political evaporates into the main mode of nihilism and authoritarian desire, or into the depoliticized administrative reality of mere administration and calculation. The future becomes fear.

Thus, in the article, radical hope is proposed as the one adequate response to radical violence, unlike metaphysical certainty, ideological program, or expectation of history to progress. It is thus a civic and ethical disposition that persists in the absence of stable foundations. As summarized by Lear (2006) and Matušík (2008), radical hope is defiant anticipation of a better future in the absence of customary conceptions of meaning and purpose, a readiness to be surprised in unknown directions, a strong commitment to living and acting in the face of vulnerabilities and limitations that cannot be fully articulated.

Radical hope becomes political through civic consciousness. This is the exercise of the capacities or dispositions required for democratic life: judgment, responsibility, relational openness and equality as potentiality (Rancière 1999). It provides the practices of living with disagreement, turning antagonism into agonism (Mouffe 2005) so that communities can live in the same world without demanding sameness from one another. Radical hope does not collapse into the closure of fear and resentment nor the exceptionalism of government. It indirectly counters authoritarianism by confirming that the future is not predetermined but can be shaped.

The new political community envisioned in this article is therefore post-metaphysical, in the sense that it does not rely on foundations, essences, or universal narratives. Instead, it rests on ethical and civic capacities that can be cultivated but can never be fully secured or guaranteed.

- the affirmation of plurality,
- the presupposition of equality as a practice,
- the creation of spaces of appearance,
- the institutionalization of agonistic politics.
- the cultivation of judgment,
- and the commitment to shared vulnerability.

Such a community is necessarily a fragile one, one that is based not on metaphysical grounding but on the durability of the civic capacities. Radical hope will allow communities to rethink how they understand political belonging, how they go about mourning without giving up, how they go about remembering without vengefulness, how they engage in collective struggle without certainty. It is the hope that makes possible a politics after the collapse of foundations.

It is not a utopia, nor a dystopia. It is perhaps post-metaphysical in that it takes the depth of our existential crisis seriously, but does not think it excludes possibility. Radical hope does not deny violence.

Rather, it denies its conditions and strives to reconstitute the terms of coexistence. It is a humble politics that gives up on mastery, chooses responsiveness over domination, and affirms plurality over unity.

By linking radical violence, radical evil, scarcity of hope, and radical hope, this article argues that to renew the political community in our times, we have to develop the capacity for ethical and civic living under conditions of uncertainty and misery. The political community of post metaphysics is not a return to lost foundations. It is an experiment in living with others in conditions of openness, vulnerability, and responsibility.

But radical hope is not a response to violence; radical hope is the condition for the possibility of the political itself. There, in the places of hope, the possibility of political life survives the worst. Where hope collapses, the political withers. The task of contemporary political thought is not solely to deconstruct the conditions that produce radical violence but to cultivate the frail, courageous, and generative practices of hope that make political community possible.

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