

# Introduction

More often than not, homelessness is studied as a sociological problem and the dynamics of power on the part of the homeless on the one hand, and policy makers and full citizens on the other, are not examined. It is tempting to engage this subject at the policy level in order to respond to homeless studies, recommendations, and policies. However, the politics of homelessness is a larger problem that reflects upon our society and the status of democracy rather than being a mere policy issue. The forces that homeless people deal with are disenfranchisement and social “death”:<sup>1</sup> degrading myths and stereotypes, punitive treatment by case-workers, deficient school systems that perpetuate illiteracy and joblessness, and most importantly, the loss of rights as a citizen, and thus, as a human that these individuals suffer. Perhaps some people are responsible for their homelessness, but in this milieu, it is difficult to tell. And why should they suffer such dire consequences?

When one can no longer inhabit public space, have one’s possessions and shanty towns (home, by some definitions) burned or bulldozed, be arrested for one’s status rather than a crime (hence signaling a loss of civil rights), and only exercise political power with extreme difficulty, one cannot be said to be a citizen.<sup>2</sup> This is exacerbated by the disappearance of truly public space.<sup>3</sup> Decisions are no longer the prerogative of the individual; rather, they are made for the homeless by communities in the form of NIMBYism (Not In My Back Yard), by the police in the form of sweeps, and by local officials in outlawing panhandling or busing the homeless to other towns, for example. Whether full citizens or politicians decide to help the homeless or not, their freedom to make choices exists in a very narrow manner. Moreover, the help received by the homeless can be authoritarian and punitive in nature. Homeless individuals are to

believe that they have become so through their moral failings and every day are reminded of this. Many shelters and agencies go beyond simple admonitions, however, and issue ultimatums. Some are contradictory and put the homeless in a double bind. Indeed, the system that helps them can often be erratic, disorganized, and pathological. Of course, these terms are often reserved for the homeless, not “us.”

The fact that the homeless have less agency than full citizens in the modern nation-state is a political and not an individual problem. When certain individuals cannot occupy public space (or many private commercial spaces) because of their status and when decisions are made for them under the guise of protection (thus, protection as coercion), it is evident that homelessness is not a matter of bad luck or personal problems. Rather, it is an issue that affects hundreds of thousands of people, and yet it has been treated academically, culturally, and politically as an individual problem. Hence, although sociological or psychological studies, for example, may have value, it is worthwhile to explore the broader political and economic ramifications of homelessness. Homelessness, I will demonstrate, needs to be viewed in terms of economic identity on the one hand and national identity, on the other. It is a politicoeconomic problem that undermines the notion of universal citizenship domestically and challenges the adequacy of citizenship as an identity on an international level, given the permanent character of statelessness (refugees, exiles, and immigrants who are in camps, detainment, or other sites of legal limbo for example). In sum, I am questioning the notion of a unified subject in the political identity of citizenship and, correspondingly, the idea of a unified location for citizenship.

In the first place, just as race and gender are ideological constructs built on political, economic and cultural norms, economic class can also be deconstructed as an identity that has been viewed as fixed and unitary. The notion of economic identity as a conceptual category has been questioned for several reasons. In Supreme Court decisions, it has been ruled that while gender and race are suspect classifications (to different degrees), class is not suspect because it is malleable (see chapter 2). Indeed, poverty is often viewed as a problem of individual responsibility and so wealth discrimination appears to be conceptually different from racism or sexism, for example. Alternatively, in policies such as affirmative action, economic class has been a secondary consideration. On the other hand, progressive theorists also hold (albeit for different reasons) that economic class is different from race, for example, because it

is real where race is not (see Edna Bonacich, for example). Nevertheless, regardless of whether poverty is real, the poor and especially the homeless are subject to ideological constructs of their identity that make them Other in ways both similar to and different from race and gender (not to mention the intersection of race, gender, and class). Homelessness represents the extreme case of this economic marginalization and thus is worth exploring for what it tells us about political economic norms, the status of democracy, and the deployment of prerogative power in the modern nation-state.

The second category under which the homeless should be considered is that of national identity and the logic of the modern nation-state. I contend that rather than simply being a problem of poverty, homelessness is symptomatic of the uprootedness (in the words of Simone Weil<sup>4</sup>) of the nation-state. The formation of national identity does not merely entail the construction of an ideal citizen, but normative criteria based on economic, gender, and racial status, allowing some to be “at home” and politically uprooting others. In this way, homelessness is analogous to international “homelessness” and both groups are subject to disenfranchisement, the exercise of prerogative power, and processes that either demand assimilation or attempt to extinguish their presence.

The home represents the synthesis of the two rubrics of normative criteria defining citizenship: it signifies economic independence and is the precondition for any degree of citizenship and further, it symbolizes political identity. In an increasingly uprooted world, home and homeland are constructed as sites of retreat from anxiety and tension. Difference, political struggle, and economic problems are displaced onto the homeless and immigrants. The lack of a home signals an asymmetrical power dynamic: homeless individuals are not merely inconvenienced by their homelessness but culturally stigmatized and politically disenfranchised. In this way, those who have become homeless also experience exclusion from the modern nation-state. On the other hand, this is not to say that lack of a stable home should lead to disenfranchisement. Indeed, no home is truly stable. Rather, the politicization of home and homelessness signals a political splitting between normal/abnormal, rational/irrational, economically independent/dependent, and so on that is radically signified in the perception of home as the repository for positive attributes and homelessness, that of negative characteristics.

It follows that while many studies focus on the homeless themselves, what also needs to be explored is the political self in the self-Other

relationship. This sort of exploration is not common in countries whose membership is defined by *jus soli*. As Colette Guillaumin notes, the tendency is to focus solely on the Other: there is an “occultation of the Self, of which people have no spontaneous awareness; there is no sense of belonging to a specific group, so the group itself always remains outside the frame of reference, is never referred to as a group.”<sup>5</sup> In contrast, in countries that have based membership on *jus sanguinis* such as apartheid South Africa or Nazi Germany, the “self” part of the self-Other equation was firmly established. That is, national identity was a function of identifying and defining who was included as much as excluded. In the context of an analysis of homelessness, examining the political significance of home and homelessness in the modern nation-state illuminates facets of citizenship and political norms that have implications for us all that have not been sufficiently explored.

In general, the present work could be viewed as a response to more conservative, empirical work and policies about the homeless (and some immigrants) that position the homeless as Other and fail to consider the concept of home sufficiently. This book explores the notion of home as a critique of political freedom in the modern nation-state. The home both represents and transcends the concept of citizenship and signifies autonomy, the ability to pursue long-term goals, maintain a social network, and have some privacy. Politically, it symbolizes a unitary subject, free of conflict and tension. Homelessness, in contrast, can signify a focus on short-term pursuits, the absence of privacy, the breakdown of social networks and the loss of autonomy in both private and political realms, where, in the latter case even occupying public space becomes illegal. The basis of this space of otherness or political homelessness is poverty; poverty and dislocation are the nexuses around which political difference has been created in the modern nation-state. However, it is paradoxically citizenship as an idealized home that institutionalizes these politically polarized identities and thus, the political homelessness of certain groups. Accordingly, the homeless experience dislocation on the levels of both domicile and political community. In fact, citizenship as a status has taken precedence over humanity in the modern nation-state as one is only considered human and can occupy space when a citizen. If citizenship were indeed universal (and thus, “homeless”) in the modern nation-state, this rigid distinction would be the exception and not the rule.

Accordingly, within this paradigm of home as a fundamental element of enfranchisement, I critique contemporary conceptions of citizenship.

Although political equality in the liberal capitalist state has been guaranteed regardless of economic status, an examination of the power dynamics regarding the homeless demonstrates that this has not been achieved. Rather, citizenship is configured under the rubrics of national identity and economic independence. Regarding national identity, the development of nationalism in the modern nation-state has led to the construction of a homogeneous ideal that renders the seemingly universal quality of citizenship exclusive. The importance of national identity and nationalism in considerations of citizenship is at least threefold: there is an emphasis on identity over interest or practical utility,<sup>6</sup> a consequent emotive element to national identity and citizenship, and the growth of state power and bureaucracy in which the primary values are stability and order. Although I want to avoid “conceptual inflation,”<sup>7</sup> the deployment of national identities brings to the forefront the complex interweaving of gender, race, and class with regard to citizenship. Thus, although each of these rubrics is conceptually separate and has its own history of exclusion, their point of commonality lies in the construction of a natural separation of peoples along gender, race, and class lines just as the nation-state is conceived of as a naturally bounded linguistic and political community.

Consequently, although conceptually distinct, the naturalization of the above categories works in ways that have an “elective affinity” (Max Weber’s term<sup>8</sup>) with nationalism. Moreover, I will argue that there has often been a material basis for the hierarchy created by national identity in its present manifestations. (Nevertheless, this is not always the case, as is evident in the treatment of Arab Americans). Second, citizenship is also defined by employment and economic independence and there are varying degrees of citizenship based on these unexpressed norms. The exclusive character of the latter norm can be tied to certain presuppositions of capitalism: that from its inception, there has been equality of conditions; differences in class will be mitigated by the money or help that “trickles down”; and the poor receive help and subsidies whereas the rich are self-made. These presuppositions not only inform legislation regarding the poor and homeless but also create a norm of economic independence, autonomy, and self-sufficiency. If the home is the precondition for and symbol of this economic self-sufficiency, then homelessness and dislocation indicate partial or full disenfranchisement. This would mean that the poor have only a partial citizenship and the homeless and some immigrants lose their citizenship

entirely. Hence, I will demonstrate, there is little tolerance for economic difference—and the other categories of identity that intersect with poverty—on political economic levels. The normative criteria that form the ideal type of citizen do not allow for difference; rather, difference is displaced onto noncitizens. For this reason, the homeless are subject to the deployment of prerogative (that is, nondemocratic) power.

Related to this political disaffiliation, immigrants, too, are homeless, in ways both similar to and different from the “real” homeless. Immigrants can be conceived of in two ways: in an abstract sense, they are politically homeless and often treated as such by the “native” population and second, on an empirical level, poorer immigrants share certain problems and situations with the homeless.<sup>9</sup> While prerogative power is often manifest in international relations, the study of immigration evidences that state power is not clearly distinct from the exercise of liberal power at the domestic level. Rather, prerogative power in modernity is defined by the common good, whether national or international. Prerogative power is the “legitimate arbitrary power in policy making and legitimate monopolies of internal and external violence in the police and military. As the overt power-political dimension of the state, prerogative includes expressions of national purpose and national security as well as the whole range of legitimate arbitrary state action from fiscal regulation to incarceration procedures.”<sup>10</sup> Indeed, it springs from the same conceptual well in the writings of the early liberals and those who helped build modern nation-states. For example, it is evident in the work of Machiavelli, Hobbes, the prerogative power of Locke, and later, Carl Schmitt, that prerogative power, on the one hand, and liberal or liberal-capitalist power, on the other, have been significant in building the modern nation-state. In fact, in times of crisis, these thinkers believed that absolute (prerogative) power supersedes democratic power. In contemporary terms, sovereign power is conceived of as the precondition for liberal or democratic power; stability and order are the primary values of the state in order to achieve the secondary values of liberalism and democracy. Michel Foucault’s notion of biopower—a normative power that has historically developed as populations and territories have grown larger—captures the dual notion of these power dynamics in the liberal capitalist nation-state. He argues that through attempts to manage and discipline populations, “biological existence” is “reflected in political existence” and “law operates more as a norm; less a show of naked power than molding, redistribution. . . .”<sup>11</sup> In considering the dual nature of power

in the liberal capitalist state, a comparison of immigrants with the actual homeless allows for a more profound study of political inclusion and national identity.

Regarding the homeless, it is often heard that welfare has created an “ethic that subsidizes idleness,” (Newt Gingrich); that all homeless must be mentally ill, drug addicts, or alcoholics; that staying in a welfare hotel is like a paid vacation; that poor unwed mothers want to be pregnant and on welfare and are solely responsible for their “condition”; and that if these people just tried harder, they would somehow succeed. In other words, the homeless are often seen as untrustworthy, dirty, lazy, pathological, and dangerous. Their condition is viewed as natural rather than political or economic. These attitudes, as manifested in various sites of political power, take the individual as the unit of analysis and structural factors are ignored. Consequently, the problem is depoliticized and reduced to a binary mode of self/other, clean/dirty, responsible/irresponsible, and independent/dependent. This binary mode exposes an authoritarian power structure that has created an asymmetrical relation between the mainstream and the homeless and thus, citizen and noncitizen. In effect, they are a familiar Other: a dirty, uncontrollable, broken-down phantasm of the average mainstream citizen.

Poor immigrants could be described as a more radical Other, because of cultural and religious differences, among other things. Indigent, darker-skinned immigrants are often viewed as taking jobs away from other Americans, usurping welfare benefits that they do not deserve, and dividing society by creating linguistically and culturally separate enclaves. The public response to this is to try to enforce English only policies in schools and on road signs, for example, or to create citizens’ watch groups in California and Texas that will harass anyone who appears to be foreign and non-European. Immigrants are often viewed as a threat to our cultural and racial integrity and the concept of multiculturalism is interpreted as encouraging these divisions. This threat is perceived as one to both national security and domestic unity, exacerbated after the events of September 11, 2001.

As these political Others fail to embody political economic norms of identity, they face two similar reactions: either demands for assimilation or criminalization. In the case of the homeless, they are either integrated into the welfare system in order to become rehabilitated (an attempt to subsume the Other into the Same) or subjected to arrests or police harassment. When this does not work, they are bused to another city, forced

out to urban campgrounds or simply compelled to move on. Similarly, immigrants are expected to assimilate or become the object of suspicion. Deportation looms behind either choice. Thus, the power matrix that these homeless people fall into is no longer democratic. Rather, it reflects the exercise of prerogative power in that it is punitive and disciplinary and ultimately treats these people not as citizens (the political recognition of an individual as a human being) but as subhumans deprived of political status. A narrow political identity and a conception of justice as order are the motivating factors behind these punitive reactions and manifestations of power. In this way, the state of exception—the exercise of prerogative power only in times of a national emergency—becomes the rule.<sup>12</sup> Capitalist logic and norms of identity determine these power relations and exclusions. As Samuel Weber notes, “Capitalism, like the Hegelian Dialectic, depends on the horizon of appropriability, and hence, on the proper, the propriable (the realization of surplus-value as profit). Hence, there is built-into Capitalism, and to Liberalism insofar as it is tied to Capitalism . . . a tendency to reduce or construe the Other in terms of the Same or the Identical. But this argument works only if one realizes that the other is not necessarily human: the realization of profit involves the reduction of exchange and substitution to a circulation with a determinate goal. . . . The reduction of the other to the same is implied in the capitalist-economical logic of profitability, hence of efficiency, and the treatment of others . . . whether as immigrants or homeless is inseparable from this historically predominant (empirical) context.”<sup>13</sup>

In this way, both types of homelessness suggest an undecidability in the political realm that cannot be accounted for in empirical studies. My approach, which looks at homelessness as a political and economic circumstance, is founded on a political-theoretical treatment that allows for the unmasking of these power relations. Given this critique and the economic context described, I explore the link between political identity (varying degrees of citizenship) and certain contemporary philosophical approaches to identity. In ways that are similar to this critique of capitalism (in that they developed together), the rise of the modern nation-state has involved the consolidation of disperse areas of land, peoples, and languages and thus, fundamental notions of national homogeneity, a bounded territory, and the supreme importance of national sovereignty. The establishment of these much more permanent boundaries separating and defining nation-states (especially since WWI) presupposes a notion of the proper, property, and a constitution of the political self.



In these processes, as nations become more exclusive about who crosses their borders and who is considered a citizen, a fundamental violence is revealed. Rather than being an outside incursion, this violence is instead a constitutive element. In this way, nationalism and capitalism (within the nation-state) are complementary forces that construct the paradigms of self and other (even as economic globalization and nationalism are antagonistic forces).

The first four chapters of this book outline the development of citizenship as a political identity and the political Other, the substantialized nature of both identities that illuminates an emotional dynamic to political relations, and the failure of many people to conform to either norm. Thus, the ideal of a truly universal (empty) citizenship is just that—an ideal. The final chapters locate the homeless in this idealized citizenry and examine the potential for acceptance of heterogeneity of the Other. Grounded in the notion of home as both a tangible and political entity, this analysis provides new perspectives on homelessness, revealing the intricacies of the unique political status of the homeless.

The second chapter sets out the political problems to be discussed. In this chapter, I will critically examine what citizenship is *de facto* and *de jure*. I demonstrate that citizenship is not merely a political status from which one can withdraw; rather, if one allows for an expanded notion of citizenship, it is evident that political membership affects daily life from questions of bodily integrity to the occupation of public space. Those who are excluded have not merely slipped through the cracks but are subject to prerogative power. This is due to the fact that individuals who do not meet national and economic criteria are posited as enemies, potential threats to domestic unity and national security. In this way, citizenship in the modern nation-state is not only externally exclusive, creating the foreign Other, but also (more covertly) internally exclusive, creating domestic Others. This political exclusion has been set against a homogeneous ideal shaped by the economic criteria of the past and nationalistic policies in more recent times. With the broadening of the franchise in the past century, the concepts of race and gender have rendered political exclusion even more complex. That exclusions are based on status undermines the goal of early liberals to have political equality in spite of economic difference.

Nevertheless, the economic criterion has its origins in the works of the early liberals, who believed that those who labor and contribute to the economy are rational and capable of handling political power.

Accordingly, these individuals are not only the passive recipients of rights but can also be active politically. Later, the political significance of work, not to mention individualism, was reinforced with the development of capitalism. In this context, a relatively stable home (discussed below) has provided the possibility of making an economic contribution and is a symbol of this contribution. Home both allows for and represents an individual's ability for self-preservation and thus, capacity for reason. In contrast, the homeless are considered to be at the other end of the political spectrum. The second principle derives from conceptualizing the national family in such a way that it does not reflect the complexity and diversity of the nation. Here, the immigrant suggests a type of homelessness (or radical Otherness) against which inclusion in the national family is conceived. As the national community has largely replaced the functions of smaller communities from the past, the political power invested in citizenship is crucial to survival.

With regard to political homelessness, the loss of political power and protection in the modern nation-state is quite serious in that one is only considered human if a citizen. Thus, current citizenship as an identity is inadequate and establishes a norm that leads to internal exclusion. This analysis will illuminate the degree to which citizenship as an identity is substantialized and essentialized and in this process, represses alterity. Accordingly, the homeless are not simply an Other, cast aside, but rather a return of the repressed. In this way, only a truly universal political membership will allow all individuals to be "at home." However, this is not a call to reform contemporary citizenship but to radically reconceptualize and change it.

I will argue that political equality will only have meaning when the notion of political universalism is truly "empty," in a Kantian sense. My use of the word "universal" is not the quality ascribed to liberal capitalism, which as Marx demonstrated in "On the Jewish Question,"<sup>14</sup> ultimately reinforces particularity and difference. As Marx shows, in contemporary times, the primacy of the individual as historically developed has necessitated the denigration of an Other in constructing political identity in the liberal capitalist state. Rather, the qualification of universal would be "empty": a positive transcendence of difference, particularity, and individualism. This would necessitate allowing others to be Other.

In the third chapter, I explore the meaning of home. As it is, the home is conceived of as a site unmarked by difference, tension, or struggle. In

contrast, homelessness represents the problems outside of the home: broken marriages, tension, poverty and squalor. It is as if one group is problem free and moral and the other epitomizes social problems and immorality. In challenging this polarized vision of home and homelessness, I suggest that a more fluid notion of home would unsettle fixed and bounded notions of home while allowing the homeless greater autonomy in certain respects. For example, a broader definition of home allows for the recognition that personal belongings and certain key relationships (such as family) are also part of home. Given this expanded definition, burning a homeless individual's possessions would be no more acceptable than incinerating the belongings of a housed person. Nor would the advocacy by certain conservatives to open more orphanages for the children of noncompliant welfare recipients be viewed as a viable solution to any problem involving economic status. Furthermore, as will be discussed in chapter 4, it should be recognized that burning or bulldozing people's possessions is not only removing cherished articles but could be taking away the means of someone's survival. In essence, a reconceptualized or homeless notion of home will allow more people to be at home.

Accordingly, even with a more fluid conception of the home, the homeless still need homes. What this means specifically is a relatively stable residence; that is, a home that is not idealized or free from tension or struggle but that is stable enough to live there for a decent amount of time. Those who live in abusive or violent situations or substandard housing, pay more than one third of their monthly income for rent, or are subject to the arbitrary whims of an unfair landlord are rightly described by housing advocates as "at risk" for homelessness. Further, temporary solutions such as fiberglass domes, tent cities and even cubicle or cage hotels do not fit the definition of relative stability. The latter solutions emanate from biopolitical norms that treat the homeless as objects to be filed away. Rather, the idea that a home must be relatively stable has the following minimum requirements: that it is affordable (one quarter to one third of one's monthly income), has a fair landlord, and is located in an area with access to grocery stores and transportation, and no one residing under that roof is violent or abusive. Additionally, Iris Marion Young's criteria for home<sup>15</sup>—safety, individuation, privacy,<sup>16</sup> and preservation—provide not only for stability but individual development and intimacy. These norms of home would undermine the assumption that a welfare hotel or cubicles are sufficient solutions to homelessness. Instead, they suggest the importance of

personal space, which while a culturally relative notion, helps to conceive of home beyond biological needs.

While this is a rather loose definition, the point is that relative stability is the necessary precondition for home. When the home is relatively stable, it can represent self-identity while homelessness entails a loss of the network of relations that makes up an individual's identity. A stable home involves the relationships and sites that comprise one's social life and work and thereby constitutes an identity that may overlap with citizenship but ultimately transcends it. Significantly, home can be the freedom to pursue one's life. Homelessness, in contrast, is the disruption of these relationships, the loss of certain or all sites, and it involves short-term rather than long-term needs and goals. Homelessness is thus permanent precariousness.

Second, I explore the reaction of the housed to the homeless. That gated communities have become increasingly popular demonstrates the physical manifestation of the division between Self and Others. Alternatively, the fact that the homeless often cannot occupy public space is another example of this division. Stark oppositions have made up the political horizon that separates housed and homeless, responsible and irresponsible, citizen and noncitizen, and good and bad. This situation can be interpreted differently by referring to Freud's "The Uncanny,"<sup>17</sup> where it can be seen that tension between these opposites is uncanny and the homeless or political Other is the token of societal repression. Derrida uses this reading of Freud to deconstruct the simplicity of these oppositions and to suggest a more complex notion of difference that allows for both inner and exterior alterity. This notion does not replace one type of subjectivity for another, but rather calls into question the logic of the subject itself. Home is *unheimlich*/uncanny unless there is political freedom for all in the modern nation-state. On the other hand, a more abstract type of homelessness will allow for the possibility of home; that is, the type of homelessness that frees modern nation-states from territoriality, political exclusion, and the creation of political Others.

In the fourth chapter, I will argue that most policy, research, and public attitudes towards the homeless have been based on a paradigm that does not account for the complexity of the situation nor the diversity of the homeless population. This construction of the Other invokes binary modes of operation (deserving/undeserving; responsible/irresponsible) and focuses on individual pathologies, which serve to classify individuals and turn them into bureaucratic cases. Furthermore, it could be

argued that this constructed identity has been naturalized by drawing upon social Darwinian notions of a natural order. In other words, the dominant homeless paradigm is necessarily tied to portrayals of weakness, sloth, and insanity to convey a natural, rather than political or economic, failure to conform to the norm of citizenship.

Related to this, I will explore the degree to which the excluded Other experiences nondemocratic power in the form of panopticism. Jeremy Bentham proposed the Panopticon as a new architectural form that could reform prisoners, inhabitants of the poorhouse, and schoolchildren alike. Michel Foucault notes that the power wielded in panoptic institutions would be productive, economic, and disciplinary: it would improve morals, ease the costs of social welfare, and produce industrious workers.<sup>18</sup> Significantly, it would create a self-sustaining network of power, relying on a host of experts and documentation. The deployment of panoptic power is twofold. First, in its architectural form, it serves to enclose and subject to surveillance. Second, it is the exercise of disciplinary power that is subtle, coercive, and based on the establishment of norms. Panoptic power is based on hierarchy, assessment, control, and the molding of individuals.<sup>19</sup> To paraphrase Foucault, while the contract was regarded as the foundation of political power, panopticism was the technique of coercion, ensuring the effective functioning of power in opposition to the formal framework. Thus, it may serve the needs of producing industrious workers for liberalism or capitalism, in addition to ensuring the docile citizens required by dictates of the nation-state, but it is certainly not democratic.

Accordingly, the power exercised in the panoptic treatment of the homeless is, as discussed above, an exercise of state power that poses a challenge to the early liberals' notion of justice and democracy, even as they accounted for its existence. In examining modern-day treatment of the poor and the unfreedom that the homeless experience, I conclude that the two reactions towards the political Other are demands for assimilation or criminalization. Specifically for the homeless, assimilation means entry into the welfare system, where they are treated in a punitive fashion in order to correct their moral lapses and become better citizens. I compare the homeless shelter to Michel Foucault's conception of the panopticon and discipline in *Discipline and Punish*<sup>20</sup> and refer to this in order to critique the welfare system, public policy, and conservative literature. The latter sites of power are "disciplines," in Foucault's words, that create an authoritative and punitive power structure. The institutions that mediate

homelessness and poverty are shaped by prerogative power and thus the political power that many homeless confront is bureaucratic rather than democratic. Alternatively, the homeless on the street, who are not necessarily welfare recipients, are treated as unassimilable and accordingly as criminals to be driven away or otherwise erased from the public view. This chapter highlights the degree to which unfreedom can exist in liberal democracies and challenges the liberal notion that there is political equality in spite of economic inequalities.

In the fifth chapter, I explore philosophical approaches to the Other in order to develop the most adequate for contemporary identity politics. The attempt to impose allegedly universal values in a world of increasing travel and migration has really been hierarchical, thereby leading to exclusion and marginalization of difference. To have any type of political grouping, some type of universal values must be necessary but they must also allow for difference. The language of multiculturalism has been limited and has resulted in two related developments. The first is the ethno-pluralist argument that stresses the right to difference. In this, identity is rigid and essential: inner alterity is not provided for and external alterity becomes substantial. This tension is thus manifested in a conception of self that is entirely divorced from political Others and can lead to anti-immigration sentiment or policy and other exclusions. The Heideggerian strain of poststructuralism found in the work of Derrida is the second alternative and takes up multiculturalism in a more complex way, allowing for both inner and exterior alterity. I conclude that this second alternative is a more appropriate way to view the political Other. In exploring these philosophical approaches to Otherness, I will argue that the homeless and stateless are subjected to similar political and economic processes, even if their situations are not precisely equivalent. This is, in part, because the modern nation-state treats home and homeland as extensions of national identity. In this way, the homeless and stateless defy the logic of the nation-state, on the one hand, and capitalism on the other.

Last, a cosmopolitanism rooted in the city would reflect the values implied by poststructuralism and would challenge the essentialized identities and rigid boundaries issuing from the abstract grounding of the nation-state. The centrality of the nation-state could be displaced in favor of the more complex and realistic urban landscape. More specifically, I will argue for an agonistic notion of patriotism that is not a suspension from attachments but permits a multiplicity of attachments. The urban area provides a model of the coexistence of diversity as well as serving as the

“real” basis of most citizens’ loyalties. In this way, the nation-state will no longer serve as the sole object of devotion. Further, I will argue for a more agonistic notion of democracy that will displace the pervasive and normative exercise of prerogative power and allow for political processes to function broadly. Bonnie Honig’s notion of “taking” is an example of demanding equality or the greater possibility of political agency and thus, agonistic democracy. Alternatively, proportional representation is one example of a policy that would deterritorialize the voting process, increase voter turnout, and allow for minority representation. More abstractly, agonistic patriotism and an agonistic conception of democracy would allow for difference, tension, and uncertainty. This is not only valuable in establishing a basis for truly democratic practices but also avoiding displacing difference onto others. Additionally, while the notion of work should be expanded, neither work nor the home should serve as the basis for citizenship. Rather, adopting the goal of an empty universal would eradicate racial, gendered, and class-based differences (among other), which have long been institutionalized and made normative.

Finally, the question of borders must be addressed. First, allowing for dual nationality will help to decenter the nation-state. It will not only foster greater tolerance of difference within national boundaries but also acknowledge that there is some degree of responsibility in the bridges or linkages<sup>21</sup> that highly developed nation-states have established in poorer countries. Second, this decentering of the nation-state could also occur with a more federated conception of cities as the loci of political activity. Alternatively, human rights accords and institutions should be given more power as a check on national power and to address the political void that has been created by the modern nation-state and the globalization of the economy. Third, as Étienne Balibar advocates,<sup>22</sup> borders themselves must be democratized, thus displacing prerogative power through democratic action. In sum, I will argue for a politics of homelessness that allows for contingency and uncertainty while undermining the will to home that privileges the existence of some over others.

In the sixth chapter, in order to sketch out the dynamics of a solution, I explore the idea of responsibility, given the moral claim of the early liberals. This moral claim was once thought to be constitutive of liberalism: that providing for all is a right and not a privilege. The modern welfare state has made this provision limited, exclusive, and punitive. The German word *Schuld*,<sup>23</sup> meaning both debt and guilt, is indicative of the ethical dimensions of this problem. The modern bureaucratic structure has

made what we owe the homeless a business transaction. Moreover, we have even reversed this relationship, positing the homeless as the debtors, parasites on the system and thus, as undeserving. However, if one insists on this moral claim and the desire for equal political power for all, it is the state, a collective “we” who owe the homeless their existence and their dignity. The guilt we feel can be so overwhelming that it is either neutralized or turned back onto the homeless as contempt and rage. Whether this is the *Schuld* of guilt or debt, the hatred is the same.

However *Schuld* is manifested, it does not erase the fact that through capitalism we have divided political space into debtors and collectors, thus privileging the survival of some and not all. There is no right to welfare, food, housing, medical care, or even an equal education in the United States, for example. Moreover, when these things are provided, they are not done so in a dignified manner. By virtue of a combination of factors, there is an asymmetry of power. The notion of responsibility has been foisted onto the individual despite the fact that so many important elements of life are societal or global in nature. In the meantime, collective responsibility and humanity have been forgotten. A return to the early liberals’ moral claims based on self-preservation and the preservation of all would not be contradictory to traditional definitions of democracy. However, these moral claims and a politics of homelessness where the polity becomes less rigidly bounded cannot coexist when market values determine the criteria for citizenship and thus for existence. Second, a political Other will perhaps always be created but this should not lead to demands for assimilation or annihilation. Rather, the Other should be allowed to exist as Other. This acceptance of heterogeneity and simultaneous call for community is suggested in a cosmopolitan politics and economics rooted in the urban area.