Intensification of Biopolitical Strategies: Governing Bodies' Treatment of Apocalyptic Zombification in Max Brook's *World War Z*

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Summary

In Max Brook's *World War Z: An Oral History of Zombie War*, the zombie world introduces moments of crisis in the governing system of world powers. Although some have read these moments as being capable of shattering conventional governance systems, the present study sides with the pessimist critics who believe that even in such apocalyptic set of circumstances, governing systems would always regulate their governance through utilising biopolitical strategies. The study divides the novel's narrative progression into pre-apocalyptic, apocalyptic and post-apocalyptic phases so that governing bodies' unique biopolitical strategies could be analysed in each phase. Through utilising Sherryl Vint's conceptualisation on bio-politics and neo-liberalism, the study concludes that a series of militaristic, medical and economic miscalculations and stereotypes – which constitute the biopolitical phase of letting people die/making people live in the novel – regulate the governing bodies' dominance in the pre-apocalyptic phase, while in the apocalyptic and zombie phase, spatial striation and its dependence on safe/unsafe and inside/outside binaries – that comprise the biopolitical phase of making people die/letting people live – become the survival key for the remaining governing bodies. In the post-apocalyptic world, a more tamed and calibrated version of conventional governance and their governing problems would be perpetuated, and no genuine change or acknowledgement of governance complicity in the transpiration of the apocalypse would emerge.

Opsomming

Die zombiewêreld het in Max Brook se roman *World War Z: An Oral History of Zombie War* verskeie krisisse tot gevolg in die stelsels waarvolgens wêreld-moondhede regeer. Ofskoon sommige teoretici oortuig is dat hierdie krisisse konvensionele staatsbestuurstelsels kan laat versplinter, kies hierdie studie die sienswyse van pessimistiese kritici wat van mening is dat regeerstelsels, selfs in apokaliptiese omstandighede, hulleself altyd deur allerlei biopolitieke strategieë sal reguleer. In hierdie studie word die roman se narratiewe progressie in drie fases verdeel, te wete die preapokaliptiese, die apokaliptiese en die postapokaliptiese fase, om regerings se biopolitieke strategieë in elke fase te bestudeer. Aan die hand van Sherryl Vint se konseptualisering van die biopolitiek en die neoliberalisme word tot die gevolgtrekking gekom dat militaristiese, mediese en ekonomiese misvattings en stereotipes regeer-korpse se oorheersing in die preapokaliptiese fase kenmerk. In Brook se roman is dit die biopolitieke fase, die fase waarin beslis word of mense kan leef/moet sterf. In die apokaliptiese of zombiefase word ruimtelike groewe en die afhanklikheid van die

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tweedeling veilig/onveilig en binne/buite grense die belang-rikste manier waarop die oorblywende regeerkorpse nog kan oorleef. In die post-apokaliptiese fase bestaan 'n meer getemperde en gekalibreerde weergawe van konvensionele staatsbestuur en gepaardgaande staatsprobleme steeds voort sonder dat staatsbestuurders hulle aandadigheid aan die apokalips erken.

Introduction

Published in 2006, Max Brooks' *World War Z: An Oral History of Zombie War* is one of the typical apocalyptic zombie novels. The novel's typicality in the zombie fiction genre is in "its [usage] of the apocalyptic moment to imagine a post-apocalypse. It opens to view possibilities contingent on the radical destruction offered by a zombie apocalypse" (Lanzendorfer 2019: 11). Through this "usage" and through representing the futuristic "possibilities" emerged after this "destruction", *World War Z* as a typical zombie novel acquires both its apocalyptic and post-apocalyptic agendas, simultaneously requiring the exposition and dismantling of the old as well as the creation of the new (Lanzendorfer 2019: 11). Like many other texts in the genre, this "creation of the new" is not merely interested in survival after the end of pre-apocalyptic and apocalyptic contemporary social systems, and intends to depict that despite dramatic changes, no true alternative would emerge through this new creation in the post-apocalyptic phase.

After considering this very brief history of zombie fiction, it would be tangible to see that *Word War Z* sets its narrative developments in the pre-apocalyptic, apocalyptic and post-apocalyptic renditions of the world. In the pre-apocalyptic phase, we as readers are informed that the zombie virus originated in China, and gradually swept the world. We are also informed that the pandemic spread of the virus is due to almost all superpowers' denial of accepting the severity of this virus. After failing to cope with the deadly repercussions of the world's zombification comes the apocalyptic phase of the novel. In this phase, the world order as we know it collapses, but there still remains a number of governing bodies which decide to divide the world into safe and contaminated zones. Finally in the post-apocalyptic stage, only a handful of countries with their governing bodies – most of which like Cuba transformed considerably – survive while millions of zombies are still active, mainly on the ocean floor, mountains above, and the arctic areas such as Scandinavia, Siberia, and northern Canada.

The present study believes that in the novel, although apocalyptic threats such as the world's pandemic zombification can introduce serious moments of crisis in the governing mechanism, these moments cannot result in the world's redemption from governance even after they manage to obliterate most of the conventional orders and processes of governance. The study believes that governance's resilient control over biopower and biopolitics – whose crude paraphrase pertains to governing bodies deciding who may live,

who should be left to die, and who should die – continues to rule in all the pre-apocalyptic, apocalyptic and post-apocalyptic phases of the novel. In the novel, the ways with which governing bodies administer biopolitics and biopower in the pre-apocalyptic, apocalyptic and the post-apocalyptic stages of the novel will be analysed in the study to show that although zombification causes points of crisis and some changes in these bodies' administration strategies, these points cannot result in the redemption from governance even when a pandemic such as zombification breaks out. Having said that, the study does not think these points of crises have no significance. Commenting on only one kind of governing system, capitalism, Cadzyn (2012) believes that "capitalism leaves little to be allegorized, so that allegory seems superfluous; however, this situation itself promotes a false idea that capitalism contains no further secrets. The cultural question today is what form (if not allegory) can reveal the current secrets of the system, those repressed internal crises that cannot come to the surface" (202). Dividing the novel into the pre-apocalyptic, apocalyptic and post-apocalyptic phases is the study's way to acknowledge the emergence of "those repressed internal crises" due to the zombification in the governing bodies, and at the same time attest the strategies with which these bodies turn these points and even exposed "internal crises" at the service of perpetuating their governance even in the apocalyptic set of circumstances.

  While arriving at this critical reading of the novel, the study has identified two critical camps. The first camp sees the world's zombification as mankind's ultimate hope for redemption from corrupt and dysfunctional governance systems. G.R. Baldwin is one of the believers in such redemptive reading of zombification. In "*World War Z* and the End of Religion as We Know It", he reads *World War Z* as a warning bell for the citizens of a US society fractured along various lines of difference is in accordance with a number of critics who believe that zombies can have destructive and redemptive impact on the capitalist and consumerist status quo condition of the world.[1]

  Next to such redemptive readings of zombies and zombification, the study has found other critics who present a more pessimistic picture out of zombies' redemptive impact on the governing bodies. Tim Lanzendorfer's "Conservative Armageddon and Liberal Post-Apocalypse" talks about the replacement of a neoconservative capitalist system in Brooks' novel by a more liberal version of capitalism. This reading shows that zombification cannot result in the annihilation of existing governing systems (particularly capitalism), and

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1. The following handful of studies treat the redemptive power of zombie and zombification in the similar manner: Fred Botting and Justin D. Edward's "Theorizing Global Gothic", David McNally's "Ugly Beauty: Monstrous Beauty of Utopia", Simon Orpana's "Spooks of Biopower", and "A Zombie Manifesto: The Nonhuman Condition in the Era of Capitalism" by Sarah Juliet Lauro and Karen Embry.

only results in a more nuanced variation of this governing system. In another study called "The Reanimation of Yellow-Peril Anxieties in Max Brooks' *World War Z*", Timothy R. Fox discusses the stupidity and cruelty of capitalism in the convenient stigmatising of one group in both the pre-apocalyptic and apocalyptic stages. Dubbed as the Eurocentric concept of "Yellow Peril Anxiety" Fox (2017) believes that "while the novel's zombie fiction may provide a sense of catharsis, it does not ultimately encourage the individual consumer of its cultural products toward positive actions that will strengthen their communities" (12). In this sense, the novel creates only this so called sense of "catharsis" at the expense of blaming everything on China as the stigmatised other.[2]

After considering these two critical camps, the present study sides with the pessimistic one through focusing on the ways the governing bodies handle biopolitics/biopower in all three stages of apocalypse in Brooks' novel.

As mentioned earlier, the study divides its academic pursuit into three parts, and for rendering this division possible, it uses Sherryl Vint's "Abject Posthumanism: Neoliberalism, Biopolitics, and Zombies" as the source with theoretical renditions on biopower/biopolitics. Vint makes Michel Fou-cault's views on biopolitics/biopower and Achille Mbembe's conceptual-isations on necropolitics compatible for discussing zombification in science fiction. In her science fictional conceptualisation on biopolitics in zombie fiction, Vint believes that in the pre-apocalyptic phase, subjects were victims of necropolitics. In this stage, they were "kept alive but in a state of injury, in a phantom-like world of horrors and intense cruelty and profanity", which comes from governing bodies' obsession with consumerist and profiteering stupidly and indifference to the developments of the direst of circumstances such as the zombie virus (174). The biopolitical strategy of governance towards its subjects in this stage can be called as letting die/making live strategy.

In the apocalyptic stage, Vint believes that our obsession with "the living-dead speaks also to our epistēmē of biopolitics in which the boundary between the living and the dead would be at stake. While the right of sovereignty was the right to take life or let live, the new right established with the modern security state is the right to make [people] die and let [people] live" (Vint 2017: 173). In this stage, the governing bodies shows that in dire apocalyptic set of circumstances, they have little reservation from turning its necro-political strategies – keeping subjects alive but bereft and injured physically and financially – into what Vint believes to be thanatopolitical strategies. Vint

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2. Such pessimistic readings from zombification are presented in the following studies as well: Peter Skult's "The Role of Place in the Post-Apocalypse: Contrasting *The Road* and *World War Z*", "Some Kind of Virus: The Zombie as Body and as Trope" by Jen Webb and Samuel Byrnand, and Lars Bang Larsen's "Zombies of Immaterial Labor: The Modern Monster and the Consumption of the Self".

argues that thanatopolitics is "a governance of life inevitably producing massive death in a model that finds its ultimate exemplar in the Nazi regime" (Vint 2017: 174). Thantapolitics works on the basis of making die/letting live strategy while its modernised version, biopolitics, functions on the basis of letting die/making live. Although it is important to preserve a distinction between biopolitics and the making die of thantapolitical totalitarianism, it is nonetheless valuable to trace their connections as well. Both letting die/ making live (pre-apocalyptic) and the making die/ letting live (apocalyptic) set of strategies would "fragment human subjects across geographic, ethnic, and class boundaries, and at the same time would refuse to allow one to recognize that in the governance of apocalyptic circumstances, survival is often at a cost for and of others" (Vint 2017: 174). While the letting die/making live strategy looks more humane, and belongs to the necropolitical phase – which governs the pre-apocalyptic world – the making die/letting live strategy is the exposed version of that seemingly humane strategy.

Finally, in the post-apocalyptic phase, Vint believes that the threat of zombification would not subside holistically. She believes that "the biopolitical divisions of the modern state to economic shifts of neoliberalism, which increasingly turned to managing populations and territories rather than disciplining individuals, requiring new regimes of statistical govern-ance in which things such as scarcity, starvation, and unemployment are no longer problems to be solved but rather rates to be calibrated to ensure each occurs in sufficient quantity to preserve the health of the overall system of the governance circulation" (Vint 2017: 175).

Letting People Die/Making People Live: Governing Bodies' Biopolitics in the Pre-Apocalyptic Phase

The narrator of *World War Z* informs readers of the conditions of things in the pre-apocalyptic phase retrospectively. The present time of the novel transpires in the post-apocalyptic phase. He as this omniscient anonymous interviewer informs us of the miscalculations in this phase; the miscalculations which Tim Lanzendorfer (2019) calls "the problems other than the threat of zombification" (4). The doctor who diagnoses the first patient is "incarcerated without formal charges" (Brooks 2006: 11); despite the disease, smuggling people between China and the outside booms due to bribery (Brooks 2006: 13); there are illegal transplantations in Argentina using Chinese organs created by political expediency (Brooks 2006: 23, 27), and helped along by the police (Brooks 2006: 25), and systematic intelli-gence failures at the CIA (Brooks 2006: 45-50). These examples were only a handful of miscalculations of what Lanzendorfer calls the neoconservative capitalist governance in the novel. These miscalculations are mostly militaristic, medical, and economic and are based upon what Sherryl Vint (2017) believes

to be "the right to make live or to let die" exercised by the neoconservative sovereign powers (173). In the make live/let die biopolitics of this phase, "not only are certain kinds of lives fostered and shaped through the disciplinary institutions of power, while others are let expire through neglect or design, but also − and more importantly − this new bio-power establishes a logical connection between the making live and letting die that institutes a paradoxical logic" (Vint 2017: 173). The result of this logic – which will be discussed in the militaristic, medical, and economic miscalculations of the governing bodies in the pre-apocalyptic phase – attests that letting die is integrally bound up with making live, constituting the biopolitics of conservative capitalist governance in this stage.

Militaristically speaking, the novel shows that faced with a serious threat such as the threat of zombification, the U.S. military is not capable of responding to the crisis in a way other than the convenient strategy of letting die/making live. Faced with the crisis, the U.S. administration finds itself unable to do more than surgical strikes using commando units, because the necessary "massive national undertaking […] is no longer thinkable. That kind of effort [which] requires Herculean amounts of national treasure and national support" (Brooks 2006: 52) has become impossible to marshal in the face of American apathy towards military solutions and disenchantment with the treatment of military veterans. It is the economic expediency that compels the U.S. military to adopt the letting die/making live strategy. In this strategy, only a handful of zombified colonies need to be destroyed so that it can create the façade of security for the living.

Apart from the militaristic aspect, medical miscalculation is another aspect of the convenient letting die/making live strategy in the pre-apocalyptic phase of the novel. In order to tackle the threat of zombification, the U.S. government permits the release of a worthless drug claimed to be a vaccine against the zombie disease. The novel's vociferous critique here "becomes systemic, representing big time, prewar [pre-apocalyptic], global capitalism as a cynical game of playing with peoples' fears, and one which implicates an entire politico-industrial complex" (Lanzendorfer 2019: 4). Asked by the interviewer what would have happened if someone had discovered the uselessness of the drug, Breckinridge Scott, the drug's salesman, replies:

> Who was going to blow the whistle? The medical profession? We made sure it was a prescription drug so doctors stood just as much to lose as us. Who else? The FDA who let it pass? The congressmen who all voted for its acceptance? The surgeon general? The White House? (Brooks 2006: 57)

As mentioned earlier, letting people and zombies die is just one part of the governing bodies' biopolitical strategy of letting die/making live, and therefore, the hope or even the bogus hope of making live should remain even through a useless drug so that letting die of zombies can be justified. It is interesting that in the brought excerpt from the novel, one can identify the

complicity of numerous government personnel ranging from the healthcare workers to the members of the congress and the White House officials. They are all complicit in hawking a bogus drug on people since letting die/making live strategy gives them a kind of freedom that, according to Jen Webb and Samuel Byrnand (2017), aims to liberate us from everything, even from truth and justice:

> [Capitalism's] founding principle is the pursuit of self-interest through competition between producers and producers, consumers and consumers. Now, across the world, the profit motive overrules virtually all other motives, including religious, nationalist, and environmental ones, in a system that comprises tentacles of trade and exchange crisscrossing the globe, promising rewards to those who serve the capitalist system and setting in place a blurring of need and desire that turns us all into mindless consumers. (117)

"Truth" and "justice" are overrated issues which can hamper the "pursuit of self-interest" and "profit"; the pursuit that rules the human relationships even during the imminent outbreak of a pandemic. In the novel, the hope of being on the side of making live in the dual strategy of letting die/making live biopolitics turns the majority into committed but "mindless consumers".

Economic miscalculation is another aspect of the letting die/making live strategy of capitalist biopolitics in the pre-apocalyptic stage. Readers are informed about the existence of this particular miscalculation in the apocalyptic stage retrospectively. Pre-apocalyptic society in *World War Z* is "deeply cynical, self-involved, racist, and unconcerned with the world outside each individual's own narrow concerns" (Lanzendorfer 2019: 5). As another interviewee notes of her prewar (pre-apocalyptic) situation:

> Oh yeah, I was worried, I was worried about my car payments and Tim's business loan. […] I was worried about our portfolio, even though my e-broker assured me this was just first-time investor jitters and that it was much more profitable than a standard 401(k). (Brooks 2006: 64)

References to such mundane economic concerns are coupled with references to superficial consumerist issues. "Very wealthy investment bankers" in "rumpled and torn" Armani suits (Brooks 2006: 17) is just one example of the consumerist practices in the novel which are based upon the preferential and dualistic structure of letting die/making live strategy. Being occupied with these concerns, or being the incumbent or owner of some of these consumerist issues (e.g. having an Armani suit) shows a pre-apocalyptic lifestyle from which the novel itself sees no other escape. Ultimately – and as Lanzendorfer (2019) believes – "it is not the systemic problem of capitalism that *World War Z* implicitly identifies as its central issue; rather, it is a whole host of smaller issues, each certainly connected with capitalism" (5). All these "smaller issues" are indicators of the economic aspect of the dualistic and indifferent

letting die/making live strategy. The people concerned with their "car payments", "business loan" "portfolio" and "Armani suits" are victims of "governing bodies" preferential biopolitical strategy in the novel. In the economic aspect of this strategy, although literal decisions on people's life and death are not made, it certainly abides by the preferential and dualistic workings of the letting die/making live strategy, and as a result shows "the division of labor that is accomplished by converting people into living appendages of the [governing] machine" (quoted in Lauro 2017: 399). The retrospective references to these pre-apocalyptic concerns show "subject have already bled into a series of economic and consumerist objects, and therefore, are already dwelling in the zombie's interzone" (Lauro 2017: 399). In this bleeding into consumerism, people become the "appendages" of a governing system aiming to occupy people with quotidian little concerns, and perpetuate the letting die/making live dualism symbolically; this time through creating a petty but effective bifurcation.

The last observation by Lauro (2017), alongside the study's observations on the militaristic and medical aspects of biopolitics, attest that although the zombie apocalypse would and does create moments of crisis in the governance transactions of the novel's society, it cannot certainly upend the overall biopolitics of governing bodies which would have letting die and making live as their key dualistic components even in the pre-apocalyptic stage. While referring himself to Zizek's theoretical formulations, Cadzyn (2012) calls such a zombified and indifferent society an "undead society in which a [zombified] trauma does not curve the psychic space; the already curved psychic space traumatizes a trauma. The curvature comes before the trauma" (177). Even the threat of a zombie pandemic cannot surprise a society which has already been "curved" and burdened.

The indifference and commitment to the cruel letting die/making live strategy would even intensify and become more blatant in the apocalypse phase of the novel, which we are about to discuss in the study's second entry.

Making People Die/Letting People Live: Governing Bodies' Biopolitics in the Apocalyptic Phase

In the novel's apocalyptic phase, zombification melts down lots of pre-viously held norms, regulations and institutions through its abrupt and grotesque eruption into the norms and conventions. As Mikhail Bakhtin reminds us, grotesque figures "elevate the degraded and debased − outcasts, freaks, the simple-minded, and the hideously deformed. And they often do so by celebrating the bizarre, fractured, and oversized human body, deploying a grotesque realism that mocks dreary officialdom and inverts its values and symbolic orders" (McNally 2017: 125). Creating an acute state of emergency is one way this mockery and inversion of "dreary officialdom" occurs in

World War Z. After the full-fledged spread of the zombie pandemic in the novel, zombies start affecting the system to the point that "allows for powers to declare a state of emergency in which it is okay to sedate and remove the sitting president, to suspend normal channels of legislation and to bring about drastic changes" (Brooks 2006: 105). In this reading, zombies' bringing about of "drastic changes" manifests what Lanzendorfer (2019) believes "the fantasy form of the real necessity of creative destruction that precedes radical systemic change. Zombies permit the kinds of interventions into the political system that enable the novel to conceive of alternatives to the existing" (11).

One of these zombified "alternatives" and grotesqueness transpires in the ways spaces are defined and governed in the novel. The process by which this spatial inversion operates can be explained through the oppositional terms of striated (sedentrary) and smooth spaces; the terms formulated by Gilles Deleuze and Felix Guattari in *A Thousand Plateaus*. Commenting on these formulations, Skult (2015) mentions that "striated space is striated, by walls, enclosures, and roads between enclosures, while smooth space is smooth, marked only by traits that are effaced and displaced with the trajectory" (109). In the initial stages of the apocalyptic phase of *World War Z,* zombification promises the emergence of such nomadic and smooth spaces versus striated spaces of governing bodies. Striated spaces belong to the state, while smooth space is the territory of the zombified nomad; in other words, "the civilized versus the barbaric" (Skult 2015: 109). McNally (2017) describes the occupants of these zombified spaces as follows:

> The maimed and disfigured [zombies] seize the streets and invade shopping malls; authority collapses; anarchy is unleashed. Part of the attraction of such displays, and of much of the horror genre generally, resides, of course, in its capacity to gratify as much as to frighten. As readers, we (or at least many of us) derive a deep pleasure from images of fantastic beings wreaking havoc upon polite citizens of well-ordered society. (124-125)

Deriving this "deep pleasure" out of utter chaos, the collapse of "authority", and unleashing of "anarchy" is not exclusive to readers per se. In the novel, one of the characters refers to people's taking pleasure from destructive things through saying, "I'm not going to say the war was a good thing. I'm not that much of a sick fuck, but you've got to admit that it did bring people together" (Brooks 2006: 336). Unlike the smooth and nomadic destruction, these people's taking pleasure from destruction is a part of what Henry Giroux regards as "zombie politics that views competition as a form of social combat, celebrates war as an extension of politics and legitimates a ruthless Social Darwinism in which particular individuals and groups are considered simply redundant and disposable" (Vint 2017: 173). In the apocalyptic phase of *World War Z,* this zombie politics shows its supreme dominance in governing bodies' tendency to control spaces; the control which proves that "one cannot have a modern nation without violence, which is in radical contrast to the

nation's own fundamental narrative that understands its resort to violence as a response to the transgressive acts of others" (Cadzyn 2012: 202). In the novel, zombies and other less privileged and unfortunate ordinary people constitute "others" upon whom the violence of spatial striation should be inflicted so that a disintegrated apocalyptic mass of people could justify their making die/letting live strategies through safe/unsafe inside/outside binaries, and hope for survival in the post-apocalyptic phase.

The remaining governing bodies decide to conclude the zombified and grotesque smoothness of spaces in their own favour by justifying the aforementioned "ruthless Social Darwinism" and the "sick idea of restoring a human community through killing billions, as if the only sense of unity comes at the cost of global disintegration" (Botting & Edwards 2013: 199). Since these bodies did not, do not and would not "have a concept of society or what it means to be a citizen" (Larsen 2017: 161), even zombified smooth spaces and "disintegration" could work in their favour. In *World War Z,* this favouring is mainly facilitated through reclaiming and reconstructing smooth and zombified spaces and turning them into safe striated spaces.

In the novel, re-establishing the old safe/unsafe and inside/outside sets of binaries is the key with which governing bodies regain their dominance over zombified smooth spaces, and consequently justify their "killing [of] billions" of both zombies and ordinary citizens. In *World War Z*, the remaining governing bodies establish that there is no freedom in the zombie-infested space outside the fortress walls, but on the other hand there is the hope of survival and victory if one is lucky enough to have escaped to the inside and safety, "turning uncontrolled space into recognizable, familiar place with every killed zombie" (Skult 2015: 114). The obsession for controlling spaces turns this zombified world into a world which "will always suffer from an autoimmune disorder. In it, the possibility for community is destroyed by a too-vigilant mechanism for detecting and annihilating infection" (Vint 2017: 176). Although this vigilance would be successful in reclaiming the zombified smooth spaces, it would also perpetuate a capitalist and disintegrated rendition of community life.

After re-establishing their striated and disintegrated conceptualisation of space and justifying their making die/letting live logic in the name of safety of inside against the danger of the zombified outside, all homes have to become fortresses or castles that function as a "regulator of movement", a "stumbling block and parry" against the encroaching war machine (Skult 2015: 110). This is as true of the military as of the civilian areas; consider for instance the town of Troy, Montana, which is described as a "New Community" for the "New America", a town built on stilts above ground, surrounded by a twenty-foot-high concrete wall, with wells, solar panels and lookout towers (Brooks 2006: 63-64). In the novel, not only has zombified smoothness failed to hold its dominance over its nomadic spaces, it has also facilitated the striation of those places which were not within the strict

regulation of governing bodies in the pre-apocalyptic world. Apart from homes, even highways – which convey fluidity and smoothness convention-ally – become sedimentary and striated, and offer protection against the dangerous smoothness of zombified outside in *World War Z*. In the novel, Christina's story indicates that "because the highway [in which she was situated] was built several stories above the swamp, this section of the I-10 [the highway code] was the safest place in the whole basin (Brooks 2006: 46). According to Long (2016),

> The highway's value rests not in its ability to take Christina somewhere, but in its defensive position. Like the barricades in city space, the ad hoc use of highways as defensible positions reorganizes a space designed to be passed through quickly into a space designed to be passed through and to be occupied safely if need be. Rather than simply connecting locations in which people are resident (work, home, maybe a shopping mall), highways become secure residences themselves. (196)

Turning highways into "barricades" instead of using them for passing through should be interpreted as the governing bodies' transformation of a formerly smooth space into a striated one in the name of safety and making spaces "secure". In another part of the novel, Brooks utilises the castle doctrine and the necessity of having a symbolic royal family for reconstruct-ing striated, state-controlled spaces amidst of zombified smooth spaces. One such example is Windsor, featuring the Queen Mother. In the novel, the royal family and their striated residing place are described as follows: The British Royal Family "were viewed very much like castles, I suppose: as crumbling, obsolete relics, with no real modern function […] But when the skies darkened and the nation called, both re-awoke to the meaning of their existence. One shielded our bodies, the other, our souls" (Brooks 2006: 194). As Skult (2015) believes, "having a Royal Family or other similar recognizable Heads of State is necessary to build the nascent State around" in the novel's zombified world (110).

  Venerating the value of striation through emphasising the sedimentary nature of highways, homes, barricades, enclosures, castles, formerly zombi-fied regions and their occupants reflects the logic of "[remaining] neoliberal governing bodies that fragments human subjects across geographic, ethnic, and class boundaries and its refusal to allow one to recognize that survival is often at a cost for and of others" (Vint 2017: 177). In order to maintain the boundaries of such fortifications, billions of zombified and healthy people need to be either annihilated or are left to die outside. These fortifications would also promise the governing bodies a more homogenous and compart-mentalised world in the post-apocalyptic phase – the phase we would be discussing in the study's last entry – and perpetuate their safe/unsafe inside/outside binaries.

Making People Live through Calibrating Problems: Governing Bodies' Biopolitics in the Post-Apocalyptic Phase

In the post-apocalyptic phase of *World War Z,* zombification as the main challenge of the world is not totally annihilated, and is only managed alongside other challenges the world is faced with in this phase. Having claimed that, it needs to be mentioned that there are instances of improvement in a world which has just survived a zombie apocalypse. As Lanzandorfer (2019) believes, "each of these [improvement instances] figures as a data point in a larger picture of the results of the zombie war, and each of them implicitly redounds to the victory of liberal ideals" (6-7). For example, free elections in the capital of the People's Republic of Tibet results in the winning of Social Democratic Party (Brooks 2006: 12). Through imagining a free Social Democrat Tibet – instead of conceiving this region to be under the hegemony of a Communist dictatorship as in the People's Republics of China and North Korea) – *World War Z* manages to present a seemingly improved world order. In another example, we are informed that Barbados proves to be successful in establishing a nautical commerce, trimaran-hulled sleek, fuel-celled "infinity ships" (Brooks 2006: 28). In Amarillo, Texas, oil has given way to biofuel plants using cow dung (Brooks 2006: 59). Even in resuscitating the travel network, only keeping the roads in working order − not building something new and shiny − takes pride of place in *World War Z*'s portrait of rebuilding society after the zombie apocalypse (Long 2016: 196). That is why, Sinclair, one of the interviewees in the novel, believes that while "industry was in shambles, transportation and trade had evaporated, and all of this was compounded by the living dead assaulting the Rocky Line and festering within our safe zone", the essential position of highway maintenance should be put on par with ensuring that everyone eats (Brooks 2006: 49). Through emphasising the importance of use-value of roads, one may see the emergence of a new governance order instead of a conventional capitalist governing system. In another instance, the novel emphasises use-value over exchange-value, manual labour over the kinds of work which merely perpetuate the infinite creation of capital:

> The more work you do, the more money you make, the more peons you hire to free you up to make more money. That's the way the world works. But one day it doesn't. No one needs a contract reviewed or a deal brokered. What it does need is toilets fixed. (Brooks 2006: 140)

All these instances only show that a series of problems exist in the political system of governing bodies in pre-apocalyptic and apocalyptic phases of *World War Z.* Theyfail to address critically that the prior problems are the resultants of a capitalist economic system. The recalcitrance of governing

bodies' to change their capitalist governance criteria is symbolically represented through two ways: Regarding capitalist ideals in picturing some formerly backward countries successful, and letting zombies survive even in the post-apocalyptic phase. Both of these facts in the novel, and the previously mentioned instances of seemingly improvements, do not obviate challenges and problems and are only successful in managing and calibrating their severity.

Speaking about the chiasmastic reworking of capitalist ideals, one could argue that while superpowers such as the US seemingly and expediently distances themselves from their capitalist governance, the yardstick of success and regarding newly emerged superpowers such as Cuba remains capitalistic. In the novel, Cuba won the zombie war, as one interviewee says through a combination of military preparedness and communist ruthlessness. This country successfully manages both to keep itself safe (Brooks 2006: 37) as well as to integrate a large number of US refugees. Yet this integration leads to a great change in Cuba. "The island, once the last existing socialist country in the western hemisphere, becomes, almost naturally, a liberal Western capitalist democracy" (Lanzendorfer 2019: 9). As the novel describes it:

> Over the next several years what occurred was not so much a revolution as an evolution, an economic reform here, a legalized, privately owned news-paper there. People began to think more boldly, talk more boldly. Slowly, quietly, the seeds began to take root. […] We had money, lots of it, money that created an overnight middle class, and a thriving, capitalist economy that needed the refined skills and practical experience of the Nortecubanos [as the US immigrants are called]. (Brooks 2006: 232)

Cuba becomes a democracy, a capitalist superpower, and shifts roles ironically compared to the US economic and political system. The Cuban interviewee sums up the Cuban experience with a quote from Churchill: "Democracy is the worst form of government, except for all the others" (Brooks 2006: 138). If Cuba cannot but become a liberal, capitalist democracy, it is small surprise that the US's distancing from its conventional politico-economic governing system and "its creation of a use-value based economy is merely a measure of expediency for the immediate state of emergency. By the time the interviews are conducted, this emergency has passed and the post-apocalyptic society gets back onto its capitalist economic tracks" (Lanzendorfer 2019: 10). As Sinclair states in his final interview: "Getting people away from barter, and to trust the American dollar again … not easy. […] Confidence, it's the fuel that drives the capitalist machine" (Brooks 2006: 337). As Lanzendorfer (2019) believes "both capitalism and globalization are here to stay; whatever critique the novel had lavished at these systems become lost in the impossibility to imagine an "after" to capitalism in this world" (10). Although in the novel, even when alternative governing options (a social democrat government in Tibet, a non-capitalist governance

in the US) work, reverting back to capitalism is the novel's way of reiterating normalcy in the post-apocalyptic phase. Even when the use-value and social democrat governance systems are respectively established in Tibet and the US – transiently and expediently – the novel refrains from addressing the root of the problems which previous governing systems caused.

Managing the population of normal and zombie citizens is another recalcitrant strategy with which governing bodies perpetuate their survival in the post-apocalyptic phase. Annihilating zombies categorically is not an option for these bodies since it is almost impossible to kill every remaining zombie in the world. Seeing this impossibility, the remaining governing bodies turn zombies' obstinate survival in their own favour by turning them as an ideal excuse for propagating their strict striated security measures, and safe/unsafe binaries even in the post-apocalyptic phase. Once most of the zombies have been killed, getting back to something like normal life demands security measures at home, at work, and in the spaces between them (Long 2016: 190). Implementing these measures would be in line with what Vint (2017) believes to be "managing population and territories" (175). Referring herself to Foucault, Vint (2017)

> connects the biopolitical divisions of the modern state to economic shifts of neoliberalism, which increasingly turned to managing populations and territories rather than disciplining individuals, requiring new regimes of statistical governance in which things such as scarcity, starvation, and unemployment are no longer problems to be solved but rather rates to be calibrated to ensure each occurs in sufficient quantity to preserve the health of the overall system of capitalist circulation. (175)

The idea of accepting zombies as a part of people's lives and not annihilating them all is in line with calibrating problems; a kind of calibration which would guarantee "the health of the overall system of capitalist circulation"; the circulation which depends on its striated security measures and various binaries.

The symbolic managing of zombies in the novel's post-apocalyptic phase is twofold. On the one hand, the sense of zombie approximately to the living – what Webb and Byrnand (2017) calls the "nearly me" [sense] about the zombie (112) – would be preserved, and thus perpetuate the dominance of privileged/unprivileged binaries such as safe/unsafe. In other words, the system requires the existence of an outsider unsafe so that its violent preservation strategies for creating and protecting a safe inside could be vindicated. On the other hand, zombies needs to be kept distant from newly established and resuscitated centres of civilisation and normalcy since they "are outcasts and deviants in an institution organized by and for the conservation of the system's life" (Webb & Byrnand 2017: 113). After having the "anticipated mourning", of the apocalypse phase, a phenomenon for preparing "institutional rejection" of zombies, they are puts away in advance

in the dead man's room, which surrounds them with silence" (Webb & Byrnand 2017: 113). By finding a management strategy to calibrate the problem of zombification, the system would protect the survival of its circulation, and reassure the living that their doubtful, self-reflective whisper that says "I am going to die and become like them (zombies)" should be put into oblivion.

In the post-apocalyptic phase of the novel, only an improved version of pre-existing governing systems emerges, and capitalism as the underlying criterion of these systems would survive and would always return to haunt even the alternative governing systems. Any retreat or so-called improvement in the governance would be a transient and expedient political move and would fail to introduce genuine and long-lasting change since as Zizek believes "the maximal goal is the construction of a least worst society possible, thus preventing a greater evil" (Lanzendorfer 2019: 6). In order to construct such a least worst society, calibration of the zombie problem and not annihilating it is the strategy the governing bodies in the novel's post-apocalyptic phase has adopted. Such calibration would perpetuate the trite but easily and conveniently justifiable binaries of safe/unsafe, inside/outside for the dominance of governing bodies in the novel's post-apocalyptic phase.

Conclusion

World War Z turned any hope of even apocalyptic salvation from conventional governing systems impossible since the governing bodies in this novel convert the indefinable zombie terror into a well-defined and containable one. For doing this, biopolitical measures were adapted by them in the pre-apocalyptic, apocalyptic, and post-apocalyptic phases. In the first phase, a series of indifferent militaristic, medical and economic miscalculations maintained the governing bodies' immoral and unjust – but convenient and expedient – strategy of letting people die and making a select group of people live. In the second phase, although faced with the serious threat of zombification and annihilation, the governing bodies survived through reclaiming zombified smooth spaces, and turning them into striated and state-controlled ones. This reclaiming was based upon a series of privileged binaries such as safe/unsafe, inside/outside, and secure/insecure, and would result in callous but seemingly justified making people die and letting people live strategy; making people (both zombies and humans) die outside the remaining outside smooth spaces only for letting a few select in the inside striated ones to survive. After opting out the possibility of the redemptive and absolute annihilation in the apocalyptic phase, the governing bodies became successful in fetishising the most radical instance of opposition, zombification, in their own favour. That is why in the post-apocalyptic phase, they let some zombies to survive in outskirts and mountains for both calibrating the problem of

zombification, and keeping the safe/unsafe binary alive. In this phase, any seemingly change or improvement in such governance would be either expedient or temporary. Such governance system would always shun the question that it was its indifferent economic strategies which resulted in the world's dire challenges, including zombification.

World War Z was the story of governance recalcitrance and unchangeability in unfathomable apocalyptic conditions. This recalcitrance was awarded to the governing bodies through their biopolitical reworking of very cliché but effective binaries of safe/unsafe and inside/outside, and letting or making some die in order to let or make a few survive/live.

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