

need. A humanitarianism separated from politics cannot fail to reproduce the isolation of sacred life at the basis of sovereignty, and the camp—which is to say, the pure space of exception—is the biopolitical paradigm that it cannot master.

The concept of the refugee (and the figure of life that this concept represents) must be resolutely separated from the concept of the rights of man, and we must seriously consider Arendt's claim that the fates of human rights and the nation-state are bound together such that the decline and crisis of the one necessarily implies the end of the other. The refugee must be considered for what he is: nothing less than a limit concept that radically calls into question the fundamental categories of the nation-state, from the birth-nation to the man-citizen link, and that thereby makes it possible to clear the way for a long-overdue renewal of categories in the service of a politics in which bare life is no longer separated and excepted, either in the state order or in the figure of human rights.

8 The pamphlet *Make More of an Effort, Frenchmen, if You Want to Be Republicans*, read by the libertine Dolmancé in the Marquis de Sade's *Philosophy in the Boudoir*, is the first and perhaps most radical biopolitical manifesto of modernity. At the very moment in which the revolution makes birth—which is to say, bare life—into the foundation of sovereignty and rights, Sade stages (in his entire work, and in particular in *120 Days of Sodom*) the *theatrum politicum* as a theater of bare life, in which the very physiological life of bodies appears, through sexuality, as the pure political element. But the political meaning of Sade's work is nowhere as explicit as it is in this pamphlet, in which the *maisons* in which every citizen can publicly summon any other citizen in order to compel him to satisfy his own needs emerge as the political realm par excellence. Not only philosophy (Lefort, *Écrire*, pp. 100–101) but also and above all politics is sifted through the boudoir. Indeed, in Dolmancé's project, the boudoir fully takes the place of the *cité*, in a dimension in which the public and the private, political existence and bare life change places.

The growing importance of sadomasochism in modernity has its root in this exchange. Sadomasochism is precisely the technique of sexuality by which the bare life of a sexual partner is brought to light. Not only does Sade consciously invoke the analogy with sovereign power ("there is

no man," he writes, "who does not want to be a despot when he has an erection"), but we also find here the symmetry between *homo sacer* and sovereign, in the complicity that ties the masochist to the sadist, the victim to the executioner.

Sade's modernity does not consist in his having foreseen the unpolitical primacy of sexuality in our unpolitical age. On the contrary, Sade is as contemporary as he is because of his incomparable presentation of the absolutely political (that is, "biopolitical") meaning of sexuality and physiological life itself. Like the concentration camps of our century, the totalitarian character of the organization of life in Silling's castle—with its meticulous regulations that do not spare any aspect of physiological life (not even the digestive function, which is obsessively codified and publicized)—has its root in the fact that what is proposed here for the first time is a normal and collective (and hence political) organization of human life founded solely on bare life.