
TEMPORAL CONCEPTUAL ARBITRAGE

*Strategic Veto and Digital Decision Circuits in the Atlantic Order:
The Transformation of Inaccessible Power, 1947–2026*

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ABSTRACT

The existence of democratic institutions does not guarantee that effective sovereignty resides wholly within them. This article argues that inaccessible decision capacity in the post-war Atlantic order did not disappear; it migrated – from covert operations into legal and economic conditionality, and from there into integrative digital infrastructures. The regime form in which particular outcomes that democratic authorisation could produce are constrained in advance by thresholds the public cannot see or effectively alter is termed **gated democracy**; the capacity that renders such outcomes unexecutable is the **strategic veto**.

The article's principal historical thesis concerns the period 1947–2026. The longer span of modernity is read not as a single unbroken organisational continuity but as the shifting distance between public promises – people, nation, right, law, sovereignty – and the operational infrastructures to which they are bound. **Temporal conceptual arbitrage** is the working of that distance: a concept retains its historical legitimacy in public language while effective decision authority is relocated to other legal, financial, security or technical infrastructures, and the difference is converted into a return of power. In short: the word stays in place, the decision moves elsewhere, and the distance yields a profit.

The **Onopticon** is a scalable feedback decision circuit (herein, the M3 circuit) in which distinct layers of records are translated into a shared ontology – a common data language – categories are produced upon the same subject, and those categories are returned as material consequences under weak effective contestation. Artificial intelligence is not the founding cause of this circuit; it is its intensifier, closing the gaps between institutions. **Homovictimus**, in turn, is the modern subject upon whom the system applies its coercion not by exclusion but by inclusion: the system integrates the subject's records and governs the subject as a whole, yet returns the costs of that government as fragmented personal problems – fatigue, debt, weight, attention, performance.

Italy, Chile, Condor, Turkey, economic conditionality, Iraq and Afghanistan exhibit different forms of the historical transformation; Maven constitutes the strong institutional candidate for the full threshold; Aadhaar, the intensive digital gate; the NHS Federated Data Platform,

a single-domain composition; and X-Road, the counter-case demonstrating that integration need not become an Onopticon. What persists is neither a single centre nor an unchanging institution but **the migration of the inaccessible decision layer from secrecy to law, and from law to infrastructure.**

Keywords: Reality Paradigm, Onopticon, Homovictimus, temporal conceptual arbitrage, gated democracy, strategic veto, artificial intelligence, sovereignty, Palantir, Maven.

1. Introduction: The Migration of Inaccessible Decision Capacity

In the post-war West, elections, parties, trade unions, the press and legal struggles were real. Yet the documents of the same period disclose a second layer: covert financing, psychological operations, electoral interference, stay-behind networks, coup preparations and cross-border target lists. The problem is not that democratic institutions were counterfeit; it is that the limits of what they could carry into effect might be set within layers the public could not reach.

The article's central question is this:

While formally preserving the concepts of right, law, justice and sovereignty, into which layers – beyond the reach of contestation, representative authorisation and recall – does the modern state relocate its decision capacity?

The thesis proceeds in three stages. First, a democracy can be gated by invisible strategic thresholds. Second, gating does not remain confined to covert operations; it can migrate into law, economic conditionality and international recognition. Third, integrative digital infrastructures can close the gaps between record, classification and enforcement, rendering the outside operationally inaccessible.

The claim of continuity must be delimited with care: what is meant is not a continuity of organisation, personnel or a single centre. Three distinct relations must be kept apart:

1. **Genealogical transfer:** personnel, law, archives, doctrine or institutions are actually handed on.
2. **Functional re-establishment:** the same function is rebuilt through different institutions and instruments.
3. **Analytical resemblance:** a structural similarity holds; no historical transfer is claimed.

Where these distinctions collapse, theory slides into conspiracy narrative; where only institutional differences are seen, it goes blind to historical transformation.

2. Conceptual Framework

2.1. *Gated Democracy and the Strategic Veto*

The question of which options are left liveable before any decision is taken rests upon an established literature: Bachrach and Baratz's non-decision-making, Lukes's third dimension of power, Fraenkel's distinction between the normative state and the prerogative state, and

Robinson's critique of polyarchy and low-intensity democracy. This study adds a further plane to that literature: multi-domain, transnational, feedback-driven decision capacity.

Gated democracy is the regime form in which democratic institutions exist in law and partly in fact, yet particular political outcomes they could produce are constrained in advance by strategic thresholds the public cannot see or effectively alter:

$$\text{Gated democracy} = \text{visible popular authorisation} + \text{inaccessible strategic veto} + \text{ineffective contestation}$$

The three components must be present together; not every constitutional limit is a strategic veto. Militant democracy, so long as it remains open, reasoned, judicial and contestable in time, is distinct from covert gating.

The **strategic veto** is the capacity to render a programme – elected, or with a prospect of election – unexecutable at a gate over which the public holds no direct command: security, finance, diplomacy, recognition or infrastructure. Four conditions must be met before this judgement is passed on any case:

- a specific and identifiable political outcome or programme;
- an inaccessible capacity that narrows it;
- contestation unable to alter the outcome in time;
- **counterfactual decisiveness**: evidence that, absent the intervention, the programme's probability of implementation would have been meaningfully higher.

The final condition separates the strategic veto from ordinary opposition, electoral defeat and general economic constraint: not every failed programme has been vetoed.

2.2. *The Apparatus of Denial*

Althusser divided the apparatuses of the state into the repressive and the ideological. A third axis must be added: the avowed and the disavowed. The **apparatus of denial** is a capacity whose very existence, or whose agent, is concealed – because knowledge of its organisation or of the nature of its decisions, not merely of its activity, would destroy its legitimacy. The principle of 'plausible deniability' in directive NSC 10/2 gave this function its official form.

Within this apparatus, coercion is not a reserve that enters once consent has collapsed; it can produce the conditions of consent. Unattributable violence generates attributable ideology: the bomb is unsigned, the fear is public, and the proposed remedy belongs to the state. In its economic form, a decision that has an agent is staged as 'crisis', 'the market' or 'necessity': the decision is naturalised, its consequence personalised.

2.3. *Temporal Conceptual Arbitrage*

Arbitrage, in economics, is profit taken from a price difference between two markets; **temporal conceptual arbitrage** (TCA) is the counterpart of that logic among concepts: the difference between the legitimacy a concept carries from the past and its present operational counterpart is converted into a return of power.

This is not to claim that a concept has strayed from some pure original meaning; concepts are taken to have been plural and contested from the outset. The object of analysis is the difference

between the **public normative promise** a concept continues to carry and the **operational decision capacity** to which it is in fact bound.

The strong form requires the following criteria:

- **Z1 — Preserved signifier:** the concept – people, nation, right, law, sovereignty, security or liberty – continues to generate public legitimacy.
- **Z2 — Shifted operational referent:** the effective decision domain is relocated to another legal, financial, security or technical infrastructure.
- **Z3 — Arbitrage actor:** a state, alliance, corporation, movement or local intermediary profits from the difference.
- **Z4 — Material transformation:** the recoding yields consequences in citizenship, resources, surveillance, war, sanctions or targeting.
- **Z5 — Invisibility or weak contestation:** the distance between public promise and decision infrastructure is technicalised, or constructed beyond the reach of contestation.
- **Z6 — Intergenerational transmission:** where the claim spans generations, the category is carried into later encounters through archives, law, institutions, trauma, education or digital infrastructure.
- **Z7 — Arbitrage yield:** preserving the concept reduces the political, legal or social cost that would arise were the new capacity defended under its own name.

$$TCA = Z1 \wedge Z2 \wedge Z3 \wedge Z4 \wedge Z5 \wedge Z7$$

($\wedge$: all criteria must hold jointly.) The intergenerational form requires Z6 as well.

What distinguishes TCA from its neighbours is this: unlike the history of concepts, it examines not merely semantic change but the yield of power that change produces; unlike securitisation theory, not merely the declaration of threat but the category's passage into circuits of record and decision; unlike the literature on weaponised interdependence, the manner in which network pressure is clothed in the historical language of sovereignty.

The mechanism may also be read as a flow in five stages:

1. **Preservation:** the signifier – people, right, sovereignty – is retained in public language (Z1).
2. **Displacement:** the effective decision referent is moved to another infrastructure (Z2–Z3).
3. **Naturalisation:** the distance is technicalised; the decision is staged as 'necessity' (Z5).
4. **Materialisation:** the recoding yields consequences in resources, sanctions, surveillance or targeting (Z4).
5. **Feedback:** the outcome generates new records and categories, feeding the circuit anew (Z6–Z7).

TCA does not run in a single direction; its normative valence depends on context. The seven types below indicate the mechanism's historical range – arbitrage can produce domination, and it can produce emancipation:¹

¹Primary documents: France (1789), the *Déclaration*; United Kingdom (1957), the *Ghana Independence Act*; France (1946), the Constitution of the Fourth Republic; Wilson (1918), the Fourteen Points. For the securitising and economic types, the cases of Sections 4–5 are relied upon.

Type	Exemplary case	Core mechanism
Foundational	France 1789	Sovereignty carried from the dynasty to 'the nation'
Emancipatory	Ghana 1957	Anti-colonial self-determination
Statist	France 1946	Nation → population / administrative infrastructure
Imperial	Wilson 1918	The popular principle → the great powers' gate of recognition
Securitising	Afghanistan/Iraq	The mujahid → terrorist conversion
Economic	Greece 2015	Self-determination → creditor conditionality
Infrastructural	Maven	Rights/security → data and targeting ontology

2.4. The Onopticon: From Layer to Regime

Not every database, surveillance system or artificial-intelligence application is an Onopticon. The panopticon disciplines through the possibility of being seen; the Onopticon judgement requires instead that distinct records combine upon the same subject and return as material consequence under weak contestation.

The canonical criteria are as follows (scored 0 = absent, 1 = partial, 2 = full):

Code	Criterion	Evidence required
K1	Compulsory recognition or pre-classification	Production of identity/category
K2	Foreclosure of possibility	De facto closure of a liveable path
K3	Weak effective contestation	Deficits of knowing, access, halting and reversal
K4	Closure through composition	Two independent domains, or strictly defined terminal closure
K5	Scalable individual addressability	A carrier applicable to a declared population
M3	Feedback decision circuit	The category's return as material consequence

The formal existence of appeal is not sufficient: the subject must be able to learn of the category in time, to reach the data and reasoning employed, to halt the consequence before it becomes irreversible, and to have it altered by independent review.

$$\text{Onopticon} = M3 \wedge K4=2 \wedge K3=2 \text{ (upon a } K5=2 \text{ carrier)}$$

K4 may be established by either of two routes. **K4[D]** is the documented narrowing of the same subject in at least two independent domains of life. **K4[T]** is the terminal outcome

that extinguishes the subject's capacity for every subsequent encounter – though not every digital weapon system meets this condition automatically. A terminal judgement requires the translation of at least two independent data layers into a shared ontology, the production of a target category, the category's return into execution, and the absence of any effective channel able to halt the outcome in advance.

Normative harm is measured separately from mechanism: N0, procedural asymmetry; N1, contraction of political capacity; N2, loss of socio-economic living space; N3, loss of constituent will or sovereignty; N4, coercion over body and place; N5, terminal closure. Similarity of mechanism is not equality of harm; the same circuit logic can produce harms of very different weight.

2.5. Homovictimus: System-Side Integration, Subject-Side Fragmentation

Homovictimus, despite what the name may suggest, does not denote everyone who is openly excluded or biometrically invalidated. Its canonical definition has two wings:

Homovictimus is the modern subject who is compelled to convert agency into tactics of survival within a field whose conditions have been structured elsewhere, and who is held responsible for the outcomes of those tactics in the language of free individual acts.

Put more plainly: the rules of the game are written elsewhere; within them the subject can only devise tactics; yet the outcomes are billed to the subject as though they were free choices.

The concept is tested against three clusters:

Structural conditions

- **H1:** the subject counts as a functioning modern subject in education, work, income, payment, identity and institutional recognition.
- **H3:** the domains of work, time, income, debt, transport, consumption, performance and health are composed largely outside the subject.
- **H4 — Asymmetric integration of records:** the system links the subject's records across domains into composite governing knowledge of the same person; the subject has no equivalent access to the profile, the linking logic or the categories of decision.

Subject mechanism

- **H2:** the subject understands himself or herself as the manager of his or her life and the bearer of responsibility for its outcomes.
- **H5:** rather than changing the field, the subject adapts to it through tactics of sleep, diet, time, debt, performance and endurance.

Write-back and invisibility

- **H6:** the structural cost is written back onto the subject as a problem of will, discipline, lifestyle, time management or resilience.
- **H7:** because the subject continues to work and to meet obligations, the attrition is not counted as structural harm.

The problem is neither ignorance nor personal comfort. The system knows the subject more integrally than the subject knows himself or herself; but it uses that knowledge not so that the subject may change the field – only so that the subject may be governed:

integration of records by the system → composite profile and decision → fragmented consequence for the subject → individualised responsibility → tactical self-management → new data and feedback

Awareness is not binary: the subject may perceive single effects, may even grasp the composite architecture, and yet lack the capacity to change it. The position of Homovictimus is accordingly overcome not by knowledge alone but by integral counter-strategy and by counter-capacity that changes the field.

Homovictimus is not the necessary subject of the Onopticon; it is the independent subject-wing of the study's overarching framework, the Reality Paradigm (whose system-wing is the Onopticon). As the Onopticon develops, however, the asymmetry deepens: the system integrates its knowledge of the subject while handing the subject fragmented accounts of himself or herself.

The framework as a whole may be summarised in the following hierarchy:

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Reality Paradigm (overarching context)
├─ Temporal conceptual arbitrage (core mechanism)
│   ├── Gated democracy / strategic veto (political instrument)
│   ├── Onopticon (infrastructural regime outcome)
│   └─ Homovictimus (human-type outcome)
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3. Method and the Limits of Evidence

The study employs comparative historical analysis and process tracing. Greatest weight is given to period documents, declassified diplomatic and intelligence records, parliamentary inquiries, court judgments and truth commissions.

Institutional self-description is asymmetric evidence: a function an institution admits establishes a firm operational floor, but no positive assumption is generated about functions it does not disclose. The absence of documents proves neither guilt nor innocence. Judgements are graded as certainty, strong probability, contested attribution and open unknown. In the case codings, each Z criterion is scored 0 (absent), 1 (partial) or 2 (full); '?' marks insufficient evidence, and ranges (e.g. 1–2) mark divergence between sources. Uncertainty is flagged openly so as not to manufacture false precision.

Cases are coded as founding case, full-threshold candidate, proto-form, hinge or negative case. France 1981, Italy 1976–79, Portugal 1974–75, Greece 1967 and X-Road are the counter-cases that test the theory's limits. Yugoslavia is coded as **sovereignty recomposition**, Czechoslovakia as **constitutive closure**; neither is automatic evidence of an Onopticon.

4. From Covert Veto to Transnational Targeting

The first station is the era of secrecy.

4.1. 1947–1948: The Dual Founding

In 1947 the Truman Doctrine, the United States National Security Act, the founding of the CIA and the expulsion of communist ministers from the French and Italian governments settled upon a single historical threshold. NSC 10/2 (1948) institutionalised the conduct of covert operations in a manner that could not be attributed to the United States government. As the public order of collective defence was being prepared, a capacity to steer political outcomes by covert means arose across the same geography.

In the Italian election of 1948, American intervention was not the sole cause of the result: Catholic organisation, economic conditions, events in Czechoslovakia and domestic voter preferences carried independent weight, and Soviet financing was the field's other unseen side. Yet declassified records show sustained American support for the centre parties, the trade unions and media activity. The analytical judgement is this: the voter was not erased; the political field was rendered unequal by external resources.

The 1956 ban on the KPD (Communist Party) in West Germany is the control case: the decision was open, judicial and reasoned. Its normative rightness may be debated; but it is distinct from the covert strategic veto.

4.2. Regime Change and Counterfactual Decisiveness

In Guatemala, operation PBSUCCESS overthrew the elected Árbenz government. In Brazil, Brother Sam was a reserve capacity prepared to assist the coup's supporters; the weight of American support in the outcome remains contested in the historiography. Chile stands among the strongest cases of the strategic veto: electoral financing, media support, economic pressure, military contact and efforts to weaken the government are documented by the Church Committee (United States Senate).

In these cases external intervention does not dissolve domestic responsibility. Armies, business circles, parties and security organisations had purposes of their own. The analysis therefore distinguishes four roles: the external provider of resources, the domestic political entrepreneur, the material executor, and the operating actor who takes over the gate.

4.3. Condor: The Closing of the National Border

Operation Condor is the historical proto-form in which the South American dictatorships composed, across borders, the sharing of information on opponents, surveillance, abduction, torture and killing. The target was converted, within the records of different states, into a shared security object; the category returned as material consequence beyond the national border.

The degree of the United States' role is contested: interpretations range across early and detailed knowledge, infrastructural relations, acquiescence and limited deterrence. The Kissinger cables of 1976 show that knowledge of Condor's plans for assassinations beyond the region existed, and that a planned warning was withdrawn; they do not prove that the Letelier murder was ordered. Condor is accordingly coded as a terminal, transnational onoptic proto-form; it is not identified with the modern Onopticon unless the population scale of the carrier is fully documented.

The three cases of the covert era are coded on the Z criteria as follows (0 = absent, 1 = partial, 2 = full, ? = insufficient evidence):²

Case	Z1	Z2	Z3	Z4	Z5	Z6	Z7
Italy 1948	2	2	2	2	2	1	2
Chile 1970–73	2	2	2	2	2	1	2
Condor	2	2	2	2	2	2	2

The coding concerns the presence of the mechanism; counterfactual weight upon the outcome is a separate question: in Italy 1948 decisiveness is contested, in Chile it is documented, while in Condor the degree of the American contribution is left open as ‘?’.

4.4. *The Lesson of the Counter-Cases*

The counter-cases show that the veto is not automatic: the entry of communist ministers into the Mitterrand government of 1981, the PCI’s external support for Italian governments in the 1970s, the resolution of Portugal’s revolutionary crisis into electoral consolidation. External capacity does not produce outcomes on its own; it must be weighed together with domestic elite alignment, the integrity of the security apparatus, economic dependence, alternative resources, social organisation and effective contestation.

5. The Metamorphosis of the Veto

The second station is the veto’s change of form. The parliamentary inquiries, journalism and leaks of the 1970s did not abolish covert capacity; they changed its grammar. Chile’s constitution of 1980 carried invisible intervention into legal enclaves (domains an elected majority cannot touch). Post-Cold War democracy promotion converted some functions of covert financing into semi-open institutional forms. Italy 2011 and Greece 2015 showed that an elected programme can be narrowed at the gate of liquidity and creditors.

Not every contract is a veto. Where conditions are transparent in advance, exit is realistic, negotiation is effective and burdens are fairly shared, the judgement of gated democracy weakens. The judgement of veto is reserved for cases in which the alternative is not liveable, the elected programme becomes unexecutable at a resource gate beyond the public’s reach, and contestation cannot alter the outcome in time.

The extraordinary rendition programme built a cross-border network of abduction and detention outside national legal orders. ECHELON and the Five Eyes intensified the transnational integration of exposure against the division of accountability into national jurisdictions. Even so, the boundary must be kept: surveillance architecture alone is not an Onopticon; the M3 circuit between category and material consequence must be demonstrated separately.

Iraq and Afghanistan are, before any Onopticon, cases of **sovereignty gating**. In Iraq, the occupation and the decrees of the Coalition Provisional Authority – in Afghanistan, the

²For Italy 1948 and Chile, the Church Committee (1975) and declassified CIA records; for Condor, Dinges (2004), Lessa (2022) and the declassified cables of 1976 (U.S. Department of State, 1976).

Bonn settlement together with external security and financial dependence – structured from outside the constitutional and political field the new state would encounter. These societies are not Homovictimus; they are subjects of war, occupation and the loss of constituent will.

The coding of the law-and-economy station:³

Case	Z1	Z2	Z3	Z4	Z5	Z6	Z7
Italy 2011	2	2	2	2	1–2	?	2
Greece 2015	2	2	2	2	2	?	1–2
Iraq/Afghanistan	2	2	2	2	1–2	2	2

In Greece, the Z5 score derives not from invisibility but from the inability of contestation – the referendum of 2015 – to alter the outcome; in Iraq and Afghanistan, low invisibility is offset by the staging of open occupation as a ‘transfer of sovereignty’.

6. Artificial Intelligence and the Integrative Position

The third station is digital integration. Artificial intelligence is not a founding cause here: it accelerates pre-existing layers of record and authority, translates them into a shared ontology, and narrows the unintended gaps between institutions. Palantir, as a company, is not an Onopticon; the same product family can serve different and contestable applications. Judgement attaches not to the company’s name but to the declared circuit of application.

6.1. Maven

Official statements describe, within a single workflow of the Maven Smart System, the composition of sensors, translation into an ontology, target correlation, the generation of options and the connection to execution. The target is not a user who applies to the system; and the terminal outcome extinguishes the subject’s capacity for every subsequent encounter.

On the basis of its declared functions, therefore, Maven is the **strong institutional candidate** for the threshold:

$$M3 \wedge K4=2[T] \wedge K3=2 \text{ (upon a } K5=2 \text{ carrier)}$$

Yet institutional self-documentation is a floor, not a ceiling. Until specific target cases, the feeds employed, error rates, civilian consequences and the real function of human review are made public, empirical certainty remains limited. The phrase ‘human in the loop’ does not prove that the decision is open; human approval may sit at the very end of a closed data ontology.

6.2. Digital Identity and Civilian Applications

The Windrush scandal in Britain is the pre-digital comparison, showing that the absence of a record can administratively invalidate a life. Aadhaar (India’s biometric identity system) is the intensive digital gate, tying access to services to continuous biometric matching; but the

³For Italy 2011 and Greece 2015, creditor correspondence and programme documents; for Iraq, the Coalition Provisional Authority (2003); for Afghanistan, the Bonn Agreement (United Nations, 2001).

system's name alone yields no Onopticon judgement – K2–K4 and the effective alternative channel must be tested at the level of application.

ICE/ICM (the case-management system of United States immigration enforcement) is the high-risk administrative candidate in which integration meets an enforcement feedback loop. The NHS Federated Data Platform (England) is a composition within health alone; on present evidence no K4=2 judgement can be made across two independent domains of life.

X-Road (Estonia's public data-exchange infrastructure) is the decisive counter-case: distributed integration can be built together with access logs, the subject's access to his or her own data, limits of authority, correction and audit. This shows that technical integration need not become closure. What would falsify the theory is not the existence of integration but integration's being held durably open together with effective contestation.

The coding of the digital station, on the same scale:⁴

Case	Z1	Z2	Z3	Z4	Z5	Z6	Z7
Maven	2	2	2	2	2	?	2
Aadhaar	2	2	1–2	1–2	1	?	1–2
X-Road	2	1	0–1	0–1	0	0	0

The Maven row rests largely upon institutional self-documentation: it establishes a floor, not a ceiling. The X-Road row displays the function of negative coding – where Z5 and Z7 fall to zero, the TCA judgement fails: there is integration, but no arbitrage.

7. Testing Homovictimus Empirically

The paradigmatic candidate for Homovictimus is the modern working subject with access to the system. Yet the white-collar professional, the shift-working nurse, the production worker and the small proprietor are not Homovictimus automatically; H1–H7 must be shown together in the same unit.

Long and unpredictable working hours, shift work, sleep loss, time poverty, debt and constrained food options can raise fatigue and metabolic risk. The relation is population-level and probabilistic; it is no diagnostic instrument for any one person's weight, tiredness or illness. The body here is not evidence but a record: it carries the probable composite cost, within a single organism, of decisions of government taken separately.

The secondary literature supports the link at population level. By the joint estimate of the WHO and the ILO, in 2016 some 488 million people were exposed to working weeks of 55 hours or more, and approximately 745,000 deaths from stroke and ischaemic heart disease were attributable to that exposure – relative to a 35–40-hour week, working 55 hours or more raises the risk of stroke by 35 per cent and the risk of death from ischaemic heart disease by 17 per cent (WHO & ILO, 2021). Among hospital nurses, shifts exceeding 12.5 hours have been documented roughly to treble the risk of error (Rogers et al., 2004); NIOSH's shift-work

⁴For Maven, Work (2017) and Palantir Technologies (2020); for Aadhaar, Drèze et al. (2017); for X-Road, Estonian public documentation (Republic of Estonia, n.d.).

training for nurses recognises the same risks at institutional level (Caruso et al., 2015).⁵ For H4 and H6 the critical point is this: within institutions these records are kept apart – as payroll, roster and incident report – while the composite cost confronts the subject as a problem of ‘attention’, ‘resilience’ or ‘lifestyle’.

The real test must compare three fields of knowledge:

1. the knowledge the system integrates about the subject;
2. the knowledge disclosed to the subject;
3. the composite account the subject can construct of his or her own life, and the capacity to change it.

In a cohort of shift-working nurses, payroll, roster, sleep and interview data can be combined in an open-mode pilot – consent-based, access-logged, with each subject able to view his or her own composite file. A hypothetical pre-test scenario – a simulation, not an empirical finding – illustrates the scale: in a cohort of twenty, roughly three-quarters of participants would be expected to fail to connect workload, debt and sleep loss into a composite account, while the institutions hold the same records in separate systems. H4 is measured by the system’s linking of domain records without granting the subject equivalent visibility; H6 by the drift of institutional and subjective attribution into the language of ‘lifestyle’, ‘resilience’ or ‘time management’. The falsification condition is plain: if, with confounders controlled, no differentiated attrition appears between equally exposed groups, the H3–body link fails in that domain.

The Onopticon governs the subject by integration; Homovictimus carries the costs of that integrated government as fragmented personal problems.

8. Objections and Falsification

‘The Soviet threat was real.’ The reality of the threat and the democratic legitimacy of the methods employed are not the same question. Moreover, had the inaccessible capacity been durably dissolved when the threat ended, the continuity thesis would weaken; it was not.

‘The other side intervened too.’ Soviet financing and political influence are within the analysis. Symmetry may explain the existence of intervention; it does not dissolve the problem of democratic authorisation.

‘Local actors bear the responsibility.’ The external gate does not absolve the domestic agent; and explaining the source, the recognition and the cost of intervention does not erase the responsibility of execution.

‘The institutions are separate.’ NATO, the CIA, Condor, central banks and Palantir are not one organisation. Continuity lies not in unity of command but in the re-establishment, upon different carriers, of the threefold composition: visible authorisation, inaccessible decision capacity, ineffective contestation.

‘Resistance is possible.’ It is; but not every malfunction is resistance – a system failure can equally cut off the most fragile subject’s service. To count as counter-capacity, a practice must

⁵WHO & ILO (2021); Rogers et al. (2004); Caruso et al. (2015).

be able to break up the authority to compose, grant the subject equivalent visibility, or halt the circuit before its consequence.

The Onopticon judgement fails where:

- the M3 feedback cannot be demonstrated;
- the consequence remains within a single domain, and neither terminal nor multi-domain closure forms;
- the subject can learn of the category in time, reach the reasoning and the data, halt the outcome and have it altered by independent review;
- scalable individual addressability is absent;
- the evidence consists only of product capability or institutional intent.

The TCA judgement fails where the public promise and the operational referent do not meaningfully diverge; where no benefiting actor and no material consequence can be shown; or where no arbitrage yield can be identified. The intergenerational claim cannot be sustained where no channel of transmission is demonstrated.

The Homovictimus judgement fails where the structural conditions, the subject mechanism and the responsabilising write-back cannot be shown together. Fatigue, debt or weight is no evidence on its own.

9. Conclusion

The post-war Atlantic order produced, alongside elections, parliaments and law, a capacity for covert financing, psychological operations, stay-behind networks, coup support and cross-border targeting. That capacity did not vanish with the end of the Cold War; it moved into constitutional tutelage, economic conditionality, international recognition, surveillance networks and integrative digital infrastructures.

Temporal conceptual arbitrage explains not the destruction of the old concepts but the relocation of their operational referents to other layers of decision while their normative promises are retained. Right may remain, yet be unable to halt the circuit; law may remain, yet lack access to the ontology of classification; sovereignty may remain, while the field of options is constructed within external infrastructures.

The Onopticon is not every act of surveillance or of data integration. It is the regime in which distinct records produce categories upon the same subject within a shared ontology, the categories return as material consequences, contestation cannot alter the outcome in time, and the carrier is scalable. Artificial intelligence is not the founder of this regime but its intensifier, closing the gaps between record and decision.

Homovictimus is not the victim outside the system but the subject recognised, employed, measured and held responsible within it. The system integrates the subject's records; it knows and governs the subject more integrally than the subject does. Yet it returns the costs of that integrated government in fragments. The subject corrects himself or herself rather than changing the field; and the tactics of correction generate new data, feeding the circuit anew.

Diagnosis is not destiny. Open architecture of the X-Road type shows that integration can be built together with access logs and subject visibility; regimes of the GDPR kind show

that rights of knowledge, access and objection can be defined in law; data cooperatives show that the authority to compose can be devolved to subjects (European Union, 2016).⁶ The concrete gates of transformation are identifiable: timely notification of the category, equivalent visibility for the subject, contestation able to halt the consequence, and the legal disaggregation of the authority to compose. This study is not confined to critical diagnosis; its criteria also define which designs hold the circuit open.

The final judgement is this:

The Onopticon is not the regime in which the outside has logically ceased to exist; it is the regime in which the outside approaches operational impossibility, because the instruments required to reach it – identity, law, payment, movement, health and communication – are governed within the same integrative circuit.

The academic formula: **the migration of the inaccessible decision layer from secrecy to law, and from law to infrastructure.**

The subject formula: **system-side integration, subject-side fragmentation, individualised responsibility.**

The theory's verdict: **Power operates from outside the institutional order – and forbids the subject any outside of its own.**

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⁶European Union (2016); on open architecture, the X-Road analysis in Section 6.2.

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