Under Drone Attacks: Lacan and Trauma in International Politics**

Chyatat Supachalasai*

Abstract

This article is part of an ongoing project seeking to understand global affairs and international politics through the lens of critical philosophical inquiry and reflection. It aims to analyse state-sanctioned violence and the resulting trauma with a focus on the use of drone technology in the context of the war on terror. The analysis is based on the intellectual perspective of Jacques Lacan, a critical French psychoanalyst. Employing three significant Lacanian concepts in the analysis, namely, the mirror stage, the master-signifier, and the sinthome, it offers an alternative understanding of trauma in conjugation with the formation of American subjectivity and the transformation of the subjects traumatised by drone attacks.

----

*Lecturer in International Relations and Political Theory, Faculty of Humanities and Social Science (Political Science Program) Suan Dusit University, Dusit, Bangkok 10300. Email: chyatats@hotmail.com

ภายใต้การโจมตีของอากาศยานไร้คนขับ (โดรน): ลาก็องและแผลใจในการเมืองระหว่างประเทศ**

ชญาน์ทัต ศุภชลาศัย*

บทคัดย่อ

บทความชิ้นนี้เป็นส่วนหนึ่งของโครงการทางความคิดที่พยายามจะเข้าใจสถานการณ์โลกและการเมือง
ระหว่างประเทศผ่านมุมมองแบบการตั้งคำถามเชิงวิพากษ์ทางปรัชญาและการคิดคำนึงเกี่ยวกับปัญหา
บทความประสงค์ที่จะวิเคราะห์ความรุนแรงโดยรัฐและแผลใจที่เกิดขึ้นเป็นผลลัพธ์ด้วยการเพ่งประเด็นไปยัง
การใช้เทคโนโลยีอากาศยานไร้คนขับ (โดรน) ในบริบทของสงครามต่อสู้กับผู้ก่อการร้าย แนวทางการวิเคราะห์
อาศัยมุมมองเชิงภูมิปัญญาของ ฌาคส์ ลาก็อง นักจิตวิเคราะห์แนววิพากษ์ชาวฝรั่งเศส ความคิดสามความคิด
ที่สำคัญของลาก็องเพื่อการวิเคราะห์ อันได้แก่ (1) the mirror-stage (2) the master-signifier (3) the
sinthome นำไปสู่การทำความเข้าใจแผลใจในอีกมุมมองหนึ่งซึ่งสัมพันธ์อยู่กับการประกอบสร้างอัตวิสัยของ
ชาวอเมริกันและการเปลี่ยนแปรในตัวคนผู้ซึ่งได้รับความทรมานใจจากการโจมตีของอากาศยานไร้คนขับ

คำสำคัญ: **อากาศยานไร้คนขับ, แผลใจ, ลาก็อง**, mirror stage, master-signifier, sinthome

----

*อาจารย์ทางด้านความสัมพันธ์ระหว่างประเทศและทฤษฎีการเมือง หลักสูตรรัฐศาสตร์ คณะมนุษยศาสตร์และ
สังคมศาสตร์ มหาวิทยาลัยสวนดุสิต เขตดุสิต กรุงเทพมหานคร อีเมล chyatats@hotmail.com

Introduction

This article adopts Lacanian psychoanalysis in the examination of how military use of drones has produced multiple scenarios of human traumas. Lacanian psychoanalysis is different from traditional psychoanalysis that focuses mainly on the tripartite of id, ego, superego introduced by Sigmund Freud. In his own interpretation of Freud, Jacques Lacan, a French critical psychoanalyst, introduces a new psychoanalytic theory that focuses on the subject encountering violence, the dissolution of the self, and the impossibility of a unified self within the subject. Lacanian psychoanalysis urges one to focus on psychological effects on the subject, which culminates in the breakdown of the worldview the subject reflects to himself. In this article, the Lacanian perspective allows us to articulate the impact that drone attacks have in the psychical dimension and how violence affects the subject. While many social and political theorists rooted in postcolonial theory and liberal democracy have criticized the United States government for its imperialist tendencies and lack of accountability, these perspectives have not provided a sufficient analysis of subjectivity. Instead of relying on liberal democracy and postcolonial theories, this article proposes that the analysis of subjectivity based on the legacy of Lacanian psychoanalysis is necessary. The psychoanalytic approach of Lacan will help shed light on the relation between violence caused by several drone attacks and the psychological effects on a traumatized person. Thus, this psychoanalytic approach will enable us to have a better grasp of the psychical dimension.

How can one begin to understand drone in relation to violence? First, drones have been increasingly used as part of counterterrorism operations, which also must meet the requirements of international law. The use of armed drones raises alarmist public concern about humanitarian crises as well as human rights violations. This has brought drones to the centre of academic debates. Some raise concerns about the difference between domestic law and international law that regulate, govern, and prohibit the use of armed drones (Malsen 2018, 1-7). To meet the requirements of international law, drones are permissible if they can target enemies with precision but will be illegal if the victims or the dead persons are civilians. Second, drones have led to a philosophical debates about its moral implications. Drone technology is reflection of the late modernity evolution of military warfare, and of course human scientific knowledge. Here, the moral implication is that such scientific progress in

human history also has a dark side. Progress in human history, especially drones being comprehended as a machine of war, is a remarkable achievement of a new mode of surveillance and at the same time a new mode of annihilation, resulting in many deaths (Chamayou 2015, 135). It is at this second point which is not only critical not only to morality but also to the question of how drones have affected the lives of the traumatized persons, or, in other words, the subjectivity of those who remain and are continuing their lives following a series of violence encounters.

Thus, the objective of this article is to reflect critically on technology, not as an image of hope but rather on its catastrophic effects in terms of causing trauma in global contexts. It focuses specifically on the use of drone technology in military warfare and the trauma it has caused in multiple dimensions. In this case, trauma is defined as psychological damage that individuals suffer from as a result of drone attacks. Rather than celebrating the virtues of technology, this article seeks to demonstrate how drone technology used in the context of world politics, e.g. the war on terror, has led to the transformation of the self of traumatised persons.

In order to accomplish this goal, three concepts are taken from Lacan. First, the concept of the mirror stage will be discussed in order to elucidate the misidentification of the American self-image abroad. Second, the concept of master-signifier will be employed to bring to light the widespread impact of trauma, and to critically examine the concept of collective trauma. Third, the concept of the sinthome will enable us to understand the transformation of the self of traumatised persons and the subjectivity that emerges as a result of being a victim or perpetrator traumatized by drone attacks.

The Mirror Stage

The first point highlights the tension between American subjectivity with respect to war, which I describe as a "morally warring nation", and what the psychoanalysis of Lacan would term as 'the mirror stage'. To explicate, the mirror stage begins in infancy when the ego is established as essentially dependent on externalized objects and the symbolic order. The symbolic order refers to the world of signs and language that produces, adds something to, or reproduces social meaning. A child attempts to express himself/herself in the symbolic order because it is the only way to let others

know of his/her existence, thoughts, needs, demands, desires, fantasies, and the self in the external world. However, the child is immature and vulnerable. In Lacan's own words (Lacan 2001, 5), "the child at the infant stage, still sunk in his motor incapacity and nursling dependence, would seem to exhibit in an exemplary situation the symbolic matrix in which the I is precipitated in a primordial form." (Lacan 2001, 5)

The child enters the symbolic order, endeavoring to express the self and his/her thoughts in the world despite his/her immaturity and state of dependence. The child, "precipitated [into the symbolic order] in a primordial form" and in relation to the other, eventually faces an objection from the symbolic order, which compels him/her to revise his/her self conception. This engenders suffering due to the incongruity between his/her view of himself/herself and that of the symbolic order. It follows that the formation of the self, according to Lacan (2001), "is objectified in the dialectic of identification with the other, and before language restores to it, in the universal, its function as subject". In the symbolic order, the world of language and signs, the child remedies the misidentification that has occurred and ends the primordial fantasy. The symbolic order shows the child what he/she really needs to come-into-being (le devenir). Lacan points out the role of the symbolic order in resolving the tension produced by the discord between the self and the reality of the world (Lacan 2001, 5).

Lacan uses the term gestalt to discuss the formation of the self in relation to the symbolic order. Gestalt in a Lacanian sense refers to the necessity for the self to embrace its own alienating element, or that which one wishes to deny (Lacan 2001, 6). The self-attempt to move toward completion by projecting its image into the world, but the image that the world mirrors back to the self is different from what the self anticipates. The challenge is for the self to incorporate this alienating element in a gestalt, the ultimate and mature stage of mental development (Lacan 2001, 6).

From this point onwards, I will show how Lacan's mirror stage is applicable to American subjectivity with respect to war. To begin with, former US Attorney General Eric Holder in a speech at Northwestern University School of Law professed that America is a nation at war. He asserted that the US was "facing a nimble and discriminated enemy that cannot be underestimated" (Holder 2012). Security has been moved to the top of the agenda for every US administration since 9/11. It is the responsibility of the US government to protect the country and its citizens with the lawful use of lethal

force. As the use of force is not illegal for a nation at war, the US sees justification for expressing its subjectivity as a warring nation. The justification for this warring subjectivity is largely based on law. First, in relation to the US Constitution, the President can declare war against an imminent enemy with the approval of Congress. Second, any US war in a foreign country must be waged in accordance with international law based upon a principle of self-defense. International law sanctions a state's use of force outside its borders on the grounds that it is necessary to prevent an imminent attack. Despite its subjectivity as a warring nation, the US is in no way exempted from this international framework of the rule of law (Knuckey 2015, 1-12).

In the aforementioned address, Holder maintained that the US must abide by the law, even in wartime. While setting security as the main item on the agenda of the US government is within its rights, it is nonetheless duty bound to respect human rights. Nicholas Rengger discusses the relationship between international law, norms, and American power in terms of moral justification. One way to understand Rengger's argument is to differentiate between the art and technique of war (jus in bello) when considering the question of whether or not a war is just (jus ad bellum) (Rengger 2013). Rengger argues that the question of jus in bello is more important than jus ad bellum. Many related security frameworks such as legal exceptionalism, sovereign decisionism, and the rhetoric of "Right to Protect" are techniques of war that serve as the legal basis for a state's use of force (Rengger 2013; Di Gregorio 2014). Following Rengger, when a state uses force, it must take human rights into consideration and abide by the legal principle of the right to life. Deploying force and the use of military weaponry must be limited to the targeted enemy. Indeed, it is legal only if the targets on the "kill list" are the enemy, and it is ipso facto illegal if extended to civilians.

At this point, a sovereign's decision with respect to whom it wishes to protect comes into play. This relates to Andrew Latham's view that participatory actors in world politics make war conceivable, with all internationally engaged actors producing what he calls 'the structure of war' (Latham 2012). Alexander Wendt's constructivist notion holds that war is what war actors make of it, but at essence, it is a product of the madness of men. This follows the Weberian thesis regarding the state's monopoly of violence and the institutionalisation of war as it relates to order, language, and belief. In Latham's analysis, (Latham 2012; Oosterhoff 2014), the institutionalisation of war not only creates an

international order in which war is acceptable among nations but also a legal and moral basis for war itself, including drone warfare and how states distinguish enemies from civilians. However, it will be subsequently argued that such an international order that deems war to be a moral and legal act reflects the subjectivity of warring nations. In light of this, the killing of civilians such as in drone warfare draws us close to what Lacan calls the Real; the trauma that disturbs the fantasy of the international-symbolic order. From 9/11 until the assassination of Osama Bin Laden, the US faced a moral dilemma; that is to say, it needed to maintain its subjectivity as a belligerent nation, and, at the same time, a moral nation. The tension that this created was not easily resolved. Being a morally warring nation leads to two scenarios. On the one hand, when the enemy is killed in war, trauma is tolerable and violence justifiable. On the other hand, killing innocents generates collective trauma. Jeffrey Alexander, a sociologist at Yale University, reminds us that collective trauma occurs when a group of people suffer from an incident that has negative impacts on their lives (Alexander 2012).

Drones can be understood in some ways as 'humanitarian weapons'. This means that the moral justification of drone is to use it for the sake of humanitarian intervention (Weber 2006, 56). However, in a Lacanian interpretation, it can be said that drone attacks undermine the US's subjectivity as a morally warring nation. The fact that drone attacks kill many innocent civilians raises moral questions about the US's participation in the conflict with al-Qaida. Kenneth Anderson (2013) points out that "the leading objection to drone warfare today is that it supposedly involves large, or "excessive," numbers of civilian casualties."

The Bureau of Investigative Journalism (TBIJ) estimated that out of 344 drone strikes in Pakistan between 2004-2012, between 2,562 and 3,325 people were killed, of whom between 474 and 881 were civilians. Meanwhile, according to the New America Foundation (NAF), between 1,873 and 3,171 people have been killed overall in Pakistan, of whom between 282 and 459 were civilians. Between May 2008 to June 2009, drone attacks killed at least 70 people in Pakistan. The great number of civilian casualties suggests that drone attacks constitute a cause of a collective trauma. According to Jane Mayer (2009), US officials insisted that they would continue with drone attacks in the region until they could be assured that they had eliminated their chief target, Baitullah Mehsud, the leader of the Taliban in Pakistan. Mayer's report allows us to get a sense of the collective trauma.

She writes: "in several Pakistani cities, large protests have been held to decry the drone program. And, in the past year, perpetrators of terrorist bombings in Pakistan have begun presenting their acts as 'revenge for the drone attacks'" (Mayer 2009). However, some reports have also shown local support for drone attacks. Aqil Shah, a professor at Oklahoma University, interviewed 147 people in South Waziristan and found that they believed that drone attacks had led to the deterioration of the Pakistani Taliban and a reduction in the number of civilian casualties (Crilly 2016). Shah reported that 79% of the interviewees supported drone attacks (Crilly 2016). By the same token, the controversial whistleblowing site Wikileaks has released numerous documents showing that the Pakistani military and other bodies of the government secretly agreed with drone attacks despite publicly denouncing such war technology (The British Broadcasting Corporation 2010).

The legal frameworks both at home and abroad are crucial resources for subjectivity formation. The Legislative, Executive, and Judicial branches of the US government all permit the use of force, as long as the threat is imminent. Moreover, the US government maintains that its drone operations are consistent with the core value of the rule of law. This demonstrates its subjectivity as a morally warring nation. However, the world does not view this American subjectivity in the expected way. The US expresses itself in the symbolic order like a child in the immature stage and it necessarily faces objections from the symbolic order, in this case, the TBIJ's and NAF's reports on the number of civilian causalities that have occurred as a result of drone attacks. The symbolic order reflects the true self of American subjectivity, effectively disrupting the fantasy and misidentification of the infant. This may allow for the 'American gestalt' to emerge, but it will require the US to embrace the alienated self, that is, the US as an imperialist aggressor. Only then will the US enter the mature stage of development, that is, becomes both a morally warring nation and at the same time an imperialist aggressor, the latter is the self that the US does not want. According to Lacan, and as described earlier, the child in the immature state shows their desires, fantasies, and thoughts in 'a primordial form'. Once the child entered in the symbolic order, such primordial form is objected and castrated by others, and the child becomes alienated to their own selves in consequence. This Lacanian account is considerable to American subjectivity. By the time that the US views themselves as a moral nation, such state of self-expression is a fantasy and desire in a primordial form, and this is concerned

as similar as a child in the immature state. And when the US started drone attacks, such formation of a moral nation subjectivity is counterproductive because the US is more distinctive as an imperial aggressor, instead of being seen as a moral nation. Based on Lacanian psychoanalysis, it is observed the American identity is alienated. It is estranged from being a moral nation, analogous to a child viewing themselves in the immature (primordial) state, to another crucial state of self-formation in the symbolic order, that is, the US as an imperial aggressor. Thus, according to a paper by the Stimson Center, "the United States was founded upon rule of law principles and historically has sought to ensure that its own actions…are consistent with these principles…However…it would be difficult to conclude that US targeted strikes are consistent with core rule of law norms" (Jensen and Childs 2016, 23).

There Is No Master-Signifier

For the second consideration, it will be argued that drone attacks produce many scenarios of psychological trauma. Looking at this from a Lacanian perspective suggests that trauma has no master-signifier to represent it in its full image. Lacan distinguishes between the Other and the other. The master-signifier aligns with the discourse of the Other whilst the other serves as a function of the lack of a master-signifier. There is no knowledge without a signifier; its function is to instill meaning into a system of knowledge. The signifier that produces and totalises the knowledge is the master-signifier (Lacan 2007, 16). As Lacan emphasises in the seminar, "From an Other to the other", the master-signifier is the Other's **jouissance** (a surplus of enjoyment). However, Lacan views the other as **the object petite a (the object small a)**, which is in opposition to the Other's **jouissance**, and does not signify a completion of knowledge. Thus, the master-signifier is unable to produce a totality of knowledge, leading Lacan to conclude that "something defined as a loss emerges from this trajectory. This is what the letter to be read as **object a** designates" (Lacan 2007, 21). Lacan explains the relationship between the Other and the other as follows:

> This other [the objet petit a informing a lack] signifier is not alone. The stomach of the Other, the big Other, is full of them. This stomach is like some monstrous Trojan horse that provides the foundations for the fantasy of a totality-knowledge. It is, however, clear that its function

entails that something comes and strikes it from without, otherwise nothing will ever emerge from it. And Troy will never be taken.

(Lacan 2007, 20)

In other words, the Other is replete with lack. The Other simply acts as the totality of knowledge. Yet, it is a fantasy that bears with the hole in the master-signifier of knowledge. The ontology of knowledge is the hole, something that is always already inside displacing the system. It is necessary in the beginning for the seeker of knowledge to identify with the master-signifier, which provides the foundation of knowledge. Hence, a paradox emerges sooner or later. It is impossible to acquire knowledge without the master-signifier and the master-signifier is a lack. This is why in the seminar **The Other Side of Psychoanalysis**, Lacan suggests that we must move from the Other to the other. The Other refers to the signifier that serves as the foundation of knowledge whilst the other is a critique of the Other (Lacan 2007, 23). This account differs from a previous seminar in which Lacan holds the Other in relation to **jouissance**. The other is **the objet a** whilst **jouissance** is a surplus and an excess. The master-signifier pertains to a lack of knowledge, yet it is only through this lack that we can expect to acquire a surplus of knowledge beyond the master-signifier. The lack that we realise that the Other, the master-signifier, serves as a means to acquire jouissance; in other words, this process involves moving from loss or lack to surplus (Lacan 2007, 23). Thus, one particular signifier (S1) always suggests meaning that differs from its original signification. Discovering the true meaning of S1 requires looking at the meaning that S1 seeks to suppress, and that is where another signifier, or S2, emerges from S1, causing S1 to retreat (Lacan 2007).

Following Lacan, I argue that there is no master-signifier that can depict trauma in its full spectrum. Trauma influences human life in a multitude of ways. This is one reason why Lacan assumes that the master-signifier is untenable (Lacan 2007, 34). None of the subjects and objects can emerge from the position of language and speech to consolidate a foundation of knowledge. The master-signifier cannot stand as a whole aspect of knowledge. It is incapable of standing for the truth of an incident and is only a function of knowledge or meaning (Klepec 2016, 117). As long as subjects resisting the dominant position of knowledge, the master-signifier cannot sustain itself. This means

that the master-signifier is simultaneously solid and untenable. Essential to this is the absolute negation of the master-signifier, which is central to the idea that nothing entering the symbolic order can fulfill our desire and fantasy (Klepec 2016, 199). Thus, I propose in relation to language and the justification of knowledge that the master-signifier has two primordial functions. On the one hand, it draws us in by way of creating proximity between our understanding of the world and what it represents to us, so as to hold us in the symbolic order. On the other, the master-signifier draws us out, that is, it disillusions us from our presupposed knowledge – an effect of knowledge is that the master-signifier is predominant over us – to envisage what remains unconsciously excessive in relation to that signifier, so as to traverse the fantasy.

By the same token, the Lacanian philosopher Slavoj Žižek explains the master-signifier by tethering to what Lacan calls the 'point de capiton' or the 'quilting point' (Žižek 2006, 36). Žižek sees the master-signifier as crucial in reproducing meaning, making all knowledge comprehensible (Žižek 2006, 36). However, seeking to traverse the fantasy means to turn a wrongdoing order into an optimistic disorder. It requires dissipating a stabilised positivism of meaning in order to anticipate what Jacques Alain-Miller calls "the ruptured images of the pure Real". I adopt Alain-Miller's "pure Real" to refer to the multiplicity unbounded to the master-signifier (Miller 2012). There is no master-signifier that can incorporate all the contents of the Real, which consists of multiple layers, some of them overlapping and supplementing each other. It is crucial to note that for Alain-Miller, the Real adheres to the symbolic order and is something that each individual must deal with differently (Briole 2014). At this point, the master-signifier gives way to the multi-layered Real, which is something largely inherent to the symbolic order, imposing antagonism, overlapping, and supplementing the meaning. This is consonant with what I described earlier. Introducing the Other does not emphasise the positivism of knowledge, but instead raises awareness of the lack, allowing for anticipation of the surplus of knowledge excessive to the master-signifier.

Adopting this theoretical framework to the context of drone attacks, I argue that there is no master-signifier that can represent the entire spectrum of trauma. Trauma is a surplus. Trauma is a multiplicity in the same sense as Alain-Miller's proposition of the Real. Accordingly, we can assume that trauma is a surplus. There is no master-signifier or Other that can depict knowledge about trauma

as a consequence of drone attacks as a whole. I now seek to understand the multiplicity of trauma by way of two scenarios relevant to drone attacks. These scenarios are consistent with the underlying assumption that trauma is a multiplicity. The analysis attempts to place all scenarios of trauma on the same level by not giving more weight to one over the other.

First, drone attacks have had a profound psychological effect on communities in northwest Pakistan. Numerous invisible drone strikes from the sky have hit residents, vehicles, and public spaces, threatening the lives of men, women, and children (Knowdrones 2012). The fact that Pakistani villagers cannot tell whether the hovering sounds are emanating from military drones or from civilian airplanes causes even more anxiety for the people living in areas subject to drone attacks. According to the report "Traumatising Skies: US Drone Operations and Post-Traumatic Stress Disorder (PTSD)" by the human rights organisation Al Karma, civilians living in war zones often suffer from PTSD, psychological symptoms which include "deep emotional distress (94%), constant anxiety and fear (92%), sleep-related issues (83%), as well as clear signs of depression" (Alkarama 2015). The report states that "there is a heavy cost paid by the most vulnerable living under drones in Yemen. These civilians, who are already grappling with extreme poverty and are exposed to insecurities from diverse armed groups, are being further traumatized from the skies by a much more powerful actor. The most vulnerable people in the Yemeni society, namely women and children, are particularly at risk of suffering from severe psychological issues. Filled with anxiety, fear, depression, anger and frustration, both the young and old are craving justice and some for revenge against those operating the drones" (Alkarama 2015).

Living in areas where drone attacks occur causes a constant state of fear. The deaths of relatives leave those that remain in bereavement, while communities are destroyed. A report entitled Living Under Drones details the trauma that follows drone attacks, leading to a disruption of normal life, or the so-called 'jirga system':

One of the most troubling community-wide consequences of the fear of gathering is, in several interviewees' views, the erosion of the jirga system, a community-based conflict resolution process that is fundamental to Pashtun society. Khalil Khan, the son of a community leader

killed in the March 17, 2011 jirga strike, explained that 'everybody after the strike seems to have come to the conclusion that we cannot gather together in large numbers and we cannot hold a jirga to solve our problems.' Noor Khan, whose father Malik Daud Khan presided over that jirga and was killed, confirmed this account: Everybody is scared, especially the elders…They can't get together and discuss problems…If a problem occurs, they can't resolve it, because they are all scared that, if we get together, we will be targeted again...Everybody, all the mothers, all the wives, they have told their people not to congregate together in a jirga…They are pleading to them not to, as they fear they will be targeted.

(Cavallaro, Sonnenberg and Knuckey 2012)

The jirga system is vital to the communal and political life of Pashtun society. The system gives its members an opportunity to participate politically and socially. It allows them to solve political conflicts looming large over the society based on the principle of egalitarianism. It is not incorrect to claim that drone attacks have a catastrophic impact on communities. Some news agencies suspect the Central Intelligence Agency (CIA) of conducting drone attacks that terrorise local civilians. **The British Broadcasting Corporation** (2012) reported that "rescuers treating the casualties are also being killed and wounded by follow-up strikes." Drone attacks not only result in collective trauma, but also generate a desire for revenge against those who order and conduct drone strikes. However, our analysis does not seek to understand the emotional condition of those living in drone attack zones. In other words, our emphasis differs from a psychiatrist who wants to understand the psychological damage to survivors e.g. anger, revenge, guilt, etc. Our analysis assumes the impossibility of cataloging the impacts of trauma. Our core assumption here is that none of the incidents or painful memories of a particular group of people can represent the entire image of trauma following drone attacks. It must be emphasised that trauma is indeterminable and wide-ranging, consisting of multiple layers and images. As none of the groups of traumatised people can signify the whole image of trauma, this analysis follows Lacan's injunction that there is no master-signifier. Since there is no master-signifier, of course we can also say that there is no such thing as collective trauma within the Pashtun community itself. Drone violence may be gendered since men of military age (MAM's) are

especially targeted. Men and women are supposed to have an experience on trauma in a different way. According to this logic, there is no such thing as collective trauma. However, if the existence of collective trauma is assumed, such collective trauma is not coherent but generates multiple layers within it. Therefore, collective trauma can turn into a divided trauma based on the subjects' different experiences of trauma.

It will be shown next that drone attacks not only have psychological effects on the individuals of Pashtun society, but trauma is also implicit in the cultural productions of film and documentary makers in Europe as well as of the drone operators themselves. An example is the film **Good Kill** that displays the traumatic condition and moral concern of a drone pilot whose mission is to drop bomb in Afghanistan from a distance. With respect to the documentary and filmmakers in Europe who look at the subject of drone attacks, the trauma seems to transcend the location where the violence occurs. What is most notable about the work is the filmmakers' refusal to insert their opinions and feelings about trauma. They take great pains to remain as neutral as possible as they go about the process of gathering information through interviews with the survivors and the drone operators. A good example of this is Sonia Kennebeck, whose Wim Wenders-produced film **National Bird** was screened at the Berlin Film Festival. In her film, she interviews three former United States Air Force personnel from the drone division who have been diagnosed with PTSD, namely, Lisa, Daniel, and Heather. Kennebeck is struck by the psychological trauma her interviewees have experienced.

However, the three dealt with their trauma in very different ways. Lisa returned to Afghanistan to meet a family who lost children in an airstrike. Daniel decided to become an anti-war campaigner. Heather, a former drone imagery analyst, eventually became the first veteran from the drone program to receive state support for her treatment. Prior to that, no psychiatric treatment for drone operators or analysts had been available for the combatants in this new type of war (Barnes 2016). Pratap Chatterjee, a writer for **Mother Jones** magazine, points out that "in theory, drone pilots have a cushy life. Unlike soldiers on duty in 'war zones,' they can continue to live with their families here in the United States. No muddy foxholes or sandstorm-swept desert barracks under threat of enemy attack for them. Instead, these new techno-warriors commute to work like any office employees and sit in front of computer screens wielding joysticks, playing what most people would consider a glorified

video game" (Chatterjee 2015). Nonetheless, Chatterjee must realise that such a characterization does not tell the full story. Video games are different than the reality of war in that the former is not sufficient to cause PTSD, in contrast to the latter. As one drone operator states, "in video games you have checkpoints and restarts but in drone war you do not" (Heller 2015).

However, what is most disturbing, and a crucial factor exacerbating the suffering that stems from PTSD, is that the US Air Force often treats drone operators as second-class citizens compared to combatants who see active duty on the ground. Nevertheless, in regard to drone operators, Chatterjee provocatively asks the following: "is it possible that a brand-new form of war—by remote control—is also spawning a brand-new, as yet unlabelled, form of psychological strain?" (Chatterjee 2015). Drone warfare is unlike traditional means of war in which soldiers fight on the battlefield, killing and defeating the enemy by virtue of strategic planning, skill, and strength. In this respect, drone war can be seen as a "coward's war", which may explain why drone operators are regarded as second-class citizens among military officers in the air force. In consequence, using a computer and remote control to attack people from afar leads to a shared feeling of shame and dishonour among drone warriors. Attacking people from a distance creates not only a moral dilemma in terms of the decision whether to kill or not to kill unidentified targets (often it is unclear whether the target is on the kill list or just a civilian), but also a feeling that drone operators are not as revered as combatants on the ground.

Despite being far removed from the battlefield, it is nonetheless evident that PTSD affects many drone operators. A drone instructor named Ryan confessed **to Mother Jones** magazine that "it is tough working night shifts watching your buddies do great things in the field while you are turning circles in the sky" (Chatterjee 2015). Brandon Bryant, a drone camera operator based at Nellis Air Force Base, confessed that "everyone else thinks that the whole program or the people behind it are a joke, that we are video-game warriors, that we are Nintendo warriors" (Chatterjee 2015). He also told **KNPR Radio** in Nevada that "it was horrifying to know how easy it was. I felt like a coward because I was halfway across the world and the guy never even knew I was there" (Schoenmann 2015). Elsewhere, he said that "I felt like I was haunted by a legion of the dead. My physical health was gone, my mental health crumbled. I was in so much pain I was ready to eat a bullet myself" (The

Honor Society 2015). Heather Linebaugh wrote similarly in The Guardian that "when you are exposed to it over and over again it becomes like a small video, embedded in your head, forever on repeat, causing psychological pain and suffering that many people will hopefully never experience" (Linebaugh 2013).

In addition, **GQ** magazine published Matthew Power's article 'Confessions of a Drone Warrior" (2013). Power interviewed Brandon Bryant, a drone operator, whom Power describes as "one of the first recruits for a new kind of warfare in which men and machine merge. He [Bryant] flew multiple missions, but he never left his computer. He hunted top terrorists, saved lives, but always from afar. He stalked and killed countless people, but could not always tell you precisely what he was hitting" (Power 2013). After several missions, Bryant began suffering from PTSD. Although he claimed he had no fear of going to battle, what troubled him was the moral dilemma of being forced to kill others from afar. In his words, "I really have no fear. It's more like I've had a soul-crushing experience, an experience that I thought I'd never have. I was never prepared to take a life" (Power 2013). A German newspaper described him as a "drone operator [who] followed orders to shoot a child…and decided he had to quit." In light of Bryant's confession, Power concluded that "drone operators can suffer from trauma" (Power 2013). And this shows that trauma occurs not only to victims of drone attacks, but also to people who are reluctant to operate drones to kill others.

To reiterate, in Lacanian psychoanalysis, subjects move from the master-signifier – a signal of the incompletion or the lack of knowledge – to the anticipation of **jouissance**, or the meaning that exceeds the master-signifier itself. The master-signifier, from the position of S1 transforms into S2, which highlights the multiple dimensions of the pure Real. According to Alain-Miller, the pure Real has no single discourse capable of sustaining the entire image and meaning. This is applicable to the case of trauma, a psychological catastrophe inflicted upon subjects engaging in drone attacks. Collective trauma serves as a function of the master-signifier as it represents the whole meaning or image of trauma. However, if we reduce our understanding of trauma to collective trauma by believing that the trauma of Pashtun society can represent its entire image, this then becomes fantasy. It was argued earlier that we need to assume a surplus of knowledge exceeding the master-signifier by resorting to the multifarious character of the Real. Connecting to the multiplicity of the Real is the

crucial ground that allows us to traverse a fantasy. Thus, traversing the fantasy of the collective trauma by overemphasising the trauma of Pashtun individuals enables other scenarios of trauma to emerge. That is, the trauma of drone operators and implicitly of the European film and documentary makers whose artworks are influenced by the trauma resulting from drone attacks. This means that it is impractical to identify drone attack trauma by simply encapsulating it as a painful memory specific to one group. Beyond the master-signifier lies the multiplicity of the Real; trauma that supplements, overlaps, and even adding to itself. When social transnational order or symbolic order (e.g. a drone strike in military warfare) is caught in conflict, a chain of multiple dimensions of trauma is already inherent to the symbolic order as well as the multiplicity of the pure Real, which lies inside the symbolic order.

The chain of trauma continues in an infinite cascade not limited to a specific group of people. As such, Slavoj Žižek's view that the pure Real allows us to evade the reality of social antagonism is misconstrued (Žižek 2017). The fact is that apart from the trauma of drone operators, multiple traumas emerge, which are both empirical and valid, such as in the case of Anwar al-Awlaki and Samir Khan. They were American citizens who died as a result of drone attacks authorized by President Obama. In a **New York Times** interview, Baher Azmy claimed that the American government lacked evidence that Mr. Awlaki was a terrorist (Salvage 2014b). Azmy told the **NYT** that "the Constitution cannot permit the killing of US citizens based on the government's untested claim of dangerousness" (Salvage 2014a). President Obama was accused of ordering drone attacks to kill American citizens without a trial (Salvage 2011). The situation was made worse for the relatives of the victims when judges dismissed a suit brought to court by Nasser al-Awlaki, the father of Awlaki with the assistance of the American Civil Liberties Union and the Center for Constitutional Rights. Thus, the Awlaki family not only experienced trauma due to the loss of life, but also from a loss of faith in the institutional framework of the US government. This latter dimension of trauma is reminiscent of what Jenny Edkins describes as the state's betrayal of its fundamental role of providing for the security of its citizens (Edkins 2006, 99-115).

The Sinthome

In this section, it will be shown that the term sinthome is conceptually practical for expressing the subjectivities of both the drone operators and the Pakistanis opposing the US government. For Lacan, the sinthome is the life that lies beyond fantasy (Derbyshire 2007, 95). The sinthome refers to the subject that realises its own fulfilment outside the symbolic order. It is the subject that leaves behind the imaginary function of fantasy. It is the subject that knows itself and can be independent without any social interference. The sinthome is a sublime subjectivity that emerges after the traverse of fantasy. Fantasy is realized to be a symptom, enabling the subject to abandon fantasy for the sake of self-fulfilment. Such subjectivity that exists after the decline of the fantasy function is life that rejects fixation and permanency, an emergence that Gilles Deleuze calls 'becoming' (Zevnik 2016, 15). The sinthome is a becoming and another mode of life that confronts the Real, ceasing to identify its imaginary reflection with the symbolic order. In other words, the sinthome no longer manifests its existence in the symbolic order; it is the subject that realises that the desire of the Other is false. It is a particular mode of being that unleashes itself as extraordinarily sublime where the tripartite Lacanian knot comes together at a single point; the Real (e.g. **jouissance**, trauma), the Symbolic Order (e.g. language, speech, the desire of the Other, fantasy), and the Imaginary (e.g. the body, the senses, and images) (Morel and Vegso 2006, 68). As a consequence of the traverse of fantasy, there is a point at which the subject encounters the Real, and what follows is disillusionment with fantasy. This is not only a symptom of the symbolic function, but also the self-fulfilment, **jouissance**, death drive, etc. of the subjects, allowing for a transformation into a new existence. Yet, it can also be argued that the sinthome is partial and fleeting rather than permanent and enduring since the subject cannot exist outside the boundary of symbolic order all the time.

Placing the sinthome in the context of drone attacks, I propose that the most substantiated form of the Lacanian sinthome pertains to the Pakistanis and drone operators who oppose the US government's drone operations. There are three explanations for why Pakistanis oppose such attacks. First, many Pakistanis consider the US's drone attacks in Fata as a violation of Pakistan's sovereignty and territorial integrity (International, The News 2010). The majority of people in Fata are true Pakistanis who serve in government departments and the armed forces. Thus, Pakistanis consider drone attacks to be disrespectful to Pakistani sovereignty (Masood and Mehsud 2013), although

some news agencies contend that the Pakistani government has in fact consented to drone attacks (The British Broadcasting Corporation 2013). Second, the Pakistanis claim that drone attacks violate their human dignity. They condemn the US attacks for randomly killing innocent people, which is a clear violation of conventions on human rights and international laws (International, The News 2010). Third, Pakistanis claim that US drone attacks engender more counterattacks by terrorists rather than helping to stop them. In other words, drone attacks exacerbate the problem of global terrorism rather than mitigating it (International, The News 2010). Meanwhile, in the US, three former drone operators, namely, Brandon Bryant, Lisa Ling, and Cian Westmoreland, participated in bringing a lawsuit against President Obama over the deaths of innocent Yemenis in drone attacks (Middle East Eye 2016). These former drone operators share in the belief that the Obama administration misinformed the public regarding the negative impacts of drone warfare, specifically the deaths of many innocent people in Pakistan and Yemen (Middle East Eye 2016).

In retrospect, one may view the Pakistanis' and former American drone operators' political opposition to President Obama's decision on drone strikes from the perspective of postcolonialism and liberal democracy. The postcolonial perspective may see this opposition as empowering the voice of the subaltern. To be more specific, the subaltern can refer to the Pakistani protestors who attempt to strike back at the empire and defend the sovereignty of the nation. In an act of political resistance, they aim to speak out about the national loss and trauma resulting from the imperialist drone attacks. Meanwhile, from the perspective of liberal democracy, those who are cynical about the US government may take it to task for a lack of accountability and transparency. The fact that former drone operators brought a lawsuit against President Obama is evidence of his guilt with respect to committing illegal actions abroad that violated the principles of liberal democracy, most notably a failure to act in compliance with the principles of human rights, freedom of expression, freedom of speech, transparency, accountability, and respect the Constitution.

However, I argue that the perspectives of postcolonialism and liberal democracy leave the question of subjectivity unaddressed. These two perspectives do not sufficiently highlight how the subjects confronting trauma have transformed into another mode of life, or, into another mode of existence no longer trusting the symbolic order. Empowering the voice of the subaltern is a

conception that does not afford access to the psychological condition of the subjects facing trauma. Rather than seeking to articulate the subjectivity of traumatised persons, the postcolonial perspective subverts imperial discourse by focusing on a Western country's technology in a colonial-military context. Meanwhile, liberal democrats who advocate for the right to know what actions President Obama executed abroad also leave aside the question of subjectivity. Thus, Lacanian psychoanalysis, with its emphasis on the sinthome – a mode of life following the encounter with the Real, which fulfills its own **jouissance** – differs from the perspectives of postcolonialism and liberal democracy.

Contending that the theoretical accounts of postcolonialism and liberal democracy ignore subjectivity in their analyses, I will outline two major arguments. First, I argue that opposition to US drone attacks shows that the subjects have separated their desire from the desire of the Other. Defending sovereignty as well as safeguarding human dignity for and by themselves suggests that such subjectivity is independent from the object of desire. The object of desire prescribes the subject as the fantasy, that is, the drone as a new technology that enables the killing of specific targets with discretion and discrimination. However, an encounter with the Real, such as devastation, the deaths of many innocent people, and PTSD in drone operators, etc., urges the subjects to lift off the veil of fantasy. It must be noted that an encounter with the traumatic Real may lead to another consequence, that is, the subject's psychic breakdown following the killing of innocent victims, and this means that the veil of fantasy is not lifted off. Second, the subjects who separate from the desire of the Other, or that which Lacan calls the sinthome, pertain to the Pakistanis and former drone operators opposing the US government. They are the sinthome who can decide what to make of their existence. This is evidence of an alteration of their thinking; thus, they fulfil the metaphysical life of becoming. At the point where the Lacanian trinity (the Real, the Symbolic, and the Imaginary) converges, the subjects transform into the sinthome after encountering trauma, that is, the Real. Opposition to the government reflects that the sinthome has sought to fulfil its own **jouissance**. They no longer have faith in the meaning of the symbolic order, in this case, the desire of the Other, such as President Obama's orders and the military effectiveness of drone technology.

Conclusion

In summary, this article employs Lacanian psychoanalysis to produce a critical perspective on drone attacks, which the writer considers as one of the crucial scenarios in international politics. It is part of the writer's ongoing research that endeavours to make sense of global affairs with the aid of critical theory. This article views drone attacks through the prism of Lacan's psychoanalytic concepts of the mirror stage, the master-signifier, and the sinthome. Other concepts such as the desire of the Other, **jouissance**, the Real, the symbolic order, and the Imaginary also come into play. To integrate, the concept of the mirror stage suggests a misidentification of the subject when confronting the symbolic order. The subject faces rejection from the symbolic order, which contradicts the constructed self-mage and compels the subject to embrace the alienating characteristics of the self. As the US views itself as a morally warring nation, this self-imaginary construction collapses when faced with the reality of drone attacks.

There is no master-signifier that can confer absolute meaning to trauma, as trauma is comprised of multiple layers produced out of a single scenario of political violence such as a drone attack. Trauma is something that adds to and overlaps with itself. The assumption is that trauma is ontologically infinite. As trauma is not a painful experience specific to one group of people, the term collective trauma is inaccurate. Instead of resorting to the concept of collective trauma, I assert that trauma is a multiplicity and something that is uncountable. This avoids highlighting the ego-centrism of trauma, or trauma that a specific group of people has to bear and express through activities such as commemoration and mourning. In the case of drone attacks, we can observe how trauma is wide spread and diverse, from Pashtun society to the trauma of American citizens whose family members must endure the pain of losing beloved relatives.

Lastly, the concept of sinthome refers to the subjects who, following the encounter with the Real, emerge as subjects who have shifted their imaginary perceptions toward the world. The sinthome is the existence of the subject that integrates the Lacanian trinity, namely, the Real, the Imaginary, and the Symbolic. The Pakistanis and former US drone operators are marvellous examples of the sinthome. The fear, anxiety, and rage that the subjects experience shatter the symbolic order and reveal it as fantasy, thereby enabling the sinthome embodied with **jouissance** and the death drive to traverse the fantasy by way of protesting the government. Hence, this Lacanian sinthome indicates

the transformative aspect of (the becoming of) the self of the traumatised persons. Crucially, it stages the theoretical collusion of the Lacanian and Deleuzian perspectives, which produces critical thinking revolving around the interrelated issues of violence, trauma, technology, memory, and traumatised subjects in global affairs. This conceptual bloc of Lacan-Deleuze stakes out a theoretical position and which is the cornerstone of my ongoing research related to critical theory and global affairs.

Understanding trauma through the lens of Lacanian psychoanalysis allows us to discuss world politics in relation to political philosophy. This article should make scholars aware of the subjectivity formation that takes place in the context of war and violence. In some of the literature that combines political philosophy and world politics, the debate centers on the interrelationships between violence, the state, and sovereignty e.g. in Rengger and Latham. Consequently, this article endeavours to shed light on the subjectivity and mental condition of traumatised persons, thereby filling some of the lacunae left by the previous literature. The Lacanian perspective on trauma directs us to the psychical condition of the traumatised persons. Bringing this perspective to world politics reveals how those who have suffered from war try to renegotiate power relations. Some of the literature, e.g. the works of Rengger and Latham, strive to study world politics on the basis of political philosophy. This perspective sees the use of legally sanctioned, institutionalized war and violence by sovereign states as crucial for the maintenance of the international order. The analysis in this article, focusing on a Lacanian view of trauma and subjectivity as it relates to power relations, attempts to add some missing elements to this top-down approach.

References

Alexander, Jeffrey. 2012. **Trauma: A Social Theory**. Cambridge: Polity.

Alkarama. 2015. "Yemen: Alkarama's Report 2015 – Traumatising Skies U.S. Drone Operations and Post-Traumatic Stress Disorder (PTSD) among Civilians in Yemen." Accessed May 31, 2017. https://www.alkarama.org/en/documents/yemen-alkaramas-report-2015-traumatising-skies-us-drone-operations-and-post-traumatic.

Anderson, Kenneth. 2013. "The Case for Drones." Accessed June 3, 2017. https://www.commen
    tarymagazine.com/articles/the-case-for-drones.

Barnes, Henry. 2016. "'The PTSD Stems from this Dirty Work': New Film Documents Regretful Drone
    Pilots." Accessed June 18, 2017. https://www.theguardian.com/film/2016/feb/15/sonia-
    kennebeck-us-air-force-drone-war-home-roost.

Briole, Guy. 2014. "A Real for the 21st Century." Accessed May 31, 2017. http://www.congresamp
    2014.com/en/template.php?file=Textos/Un-reel-pour-le-XXIe-siecle_Guy-Briole.html.

The British Broadcasting Corporation. 2012. "Drones in Pakistan Traumatise Civilians, US Report
    Says." Accessed June 5, 2017. http://www.bbc.com/news/world-asia-19704981.

-----. 2013. "Secret Memos 'Show Pakistan Endorsed US Drone Strikes'." Accessed June 5, 2017.
    http://www.bbc.com/news/world-asia-24649840.

-----. 2010. "Wikileaks US Diplomatic Cables: Key Pakistan Issues." Accessed August 2, 2017.
    http://www.bbc.com/news/world-south-asia-11886512.

Chamayou, Gregoire. 2015. **Drone Theory**. Translated by Janet Llyod. London and New York :
    Penguin Books.

Cavallaro, James, Stephan Sonnenberg, and Sarah Knuckey. 2012. **Living under Drones: Death,
    Injury, and Trauma to Civilians from US Drone Practices in Pakistan**. Stanford: International
    Human Rights and Conflict Resolution Clinic, Stanford Law School; New York: NYU School of
    Law, Global Justice Clinic.

Chatterjee, Pratap. 2015. "Drone Pilots Are Quitting in Record Numbers." Accessed June 18, 2017.
    http://www.motherjones.com/politics/2015/03/drone-pilots-are-quitting-record-numbers.

Crilly, Rob. 2016. "Why Many People in Pakistan Support American Drone Strikes." Accessed August
    2, 2017. http://www.telegraph.co.uk/news/2016/05/19/why-many-people-in-pakis
    tan-support-american-drone-strikes/.

Derbyshire, Philip. 2007. "Lacan and Ethics." In **Origins and Ends of the Mind: Philosophical Essays
    on Psychoanalysis**, edited by Christian Kerslake and Ray Brassier. Leuven: Leuven University
    Press.

Di Gregorio, Michael. 2014. "Reviews: Just War and International Order: The Uncivil Condition in
    World Politics." **The Review of Faith & International Affairs** 12(3): 78-79.

Edkins, Jenny. 2006. "Remembering Relationality: Trauma Time and Politics." In **Memory, Trauma and World Politics**, edited by Duncan Bell, 99-115. New York: Palgrave Macmillan.

Heller, Jake. 2015. "Former Drone Pilots Denounce 'Morally Outrageous' Program." Accessed June 19, 2017. http://www.nbcnews.com/news/us-news/former-drone-pilots-denounce-morally-outrageous-program-n472496.

Holder, Eric. 2012. "Speech Delivered at Northwestern University School of Law, Chicago, Illinois." Accessed June 1, 2017. https://www.justice.gov/opa/speech/attorney-general-eric-holder-speaks-northwestern-university-school-law.

The Honor Society. 2015. "Drones: A Blind Intelligence." Accessed June 20, 2017. https://www.Honorsociety.org/articles/drones-blind-intelligence.

International, The News. 2010. "Why Pakistanis Oppose US Drone Attacks." Accessed June 22, 2017. https://www.thenews.com.pk/archive/print/276944-why-pakistanis-oppose-us-drone-attacks.

Jensen, Wollom, and James Childs. 2016. **Moral Warriors, Moral Wounds: The Ministry of the Christian Ethic**. Eugene: Cascade Books.

Klepec, Peter. 2016. "On the Mastery in the Four 'Discourses'." In **Jacques Lacan: Between Psychoanalysis and Politics**, edited by Samo Tomšic and Andreja Zevnik, 115-130. London and New York: Routledge.

Knowdrones. 2012. "Trauma in Drone Attack Zones." Accessed June 1, 2017. https://www.know drones.com/trauma-in-drone-attack-zones.

Knuckey, Sarah. 2015. **Drones and Targeted Killings: Ethics, Law, Politics**. New York: International Debate Education Association.

Lacan, Jacques. 2001. **Écrits: A Selection**. Translated by Alan Sheridan. London and New York: Routledge.

-----. 2007. **The Seminar of Jacques Lacan, Book XVII, The Other Side of Psychoanalysis**, translated by Russell Grigg. New York: W.W. Norton Press.

Latham, Andrew. 2012. **Theorizing Medieval Geopolitics: War and World Order in the Age of the Crusades**. London: Routledge.

Linebaugh, Heather. 2013. "I Worked on the US Drone Program: The Public Should Know What Really Goes On." Accessed June 14, 2017. https://www.theguardian.com/commentisfree/2013/dec/29/drones-us-military.

Malsen-Casey, Stuart, Mazir Homayounnejad, Hilary Stauffer, and Nathalie Weizmann. 2018. **Drones and Other Unmanned Weapons Systems under International Law (International Humanitarian Law)**. Brill: Leden.

Masood, Salman, and Ihsanullah Tipu Mehsud. 2013. "Thousands in Pakistan Protest American Drone Strikes." Accessed June 15, 2017. http://www.nytimes.com/2013/11/24/world/asia/in-pakistan-rally-protests-drone-strikes.html?mcubz=0.

Mayer, Jane. 2009. "The Predator War: What Are the Risks of the C.I.A.'s Covert Drone Program?" Accessed June 1, 2017. http://www.newyorker.com/magazine/2009/10/26/the-predator-war.

Middle East Eye. 2016. "US Drone Operators Join Lawsuit against Obama over Yemen Strike." Accessed June 22, 2017. http://www.middleeasteye.net/news/us-drone-operators-join-lawsuit-against-obama-over-yemen-strike-1795617396.

Miller, Jacques-Alain. 2012. **The Real in the 21st Century: Paper Presented at the Theme of the IXth Congress of the World Association of Psychoanalysis, Buenos Aires, April 27th.** Buenos Aires: The Association.

Morel, Genevieve, and Roland K. Vegso. 2006. "The Sexual Sinthome." **Umbr(a): Incurable** (1): 65-83.

Oosterhoff, Richard. 2014. "Reviews: Theorizing Medieval Geopolitics: War and World Order in the Age of Crusades." **The Review of Faith & International Affairs**. 12(3): 80-82.

Power, Matthew. 2013. "Confessions of a Drone Warrior." Accessed June 20, 2017. http://www.gq.com/story/drone-uav-pilot-assassination.

Rengger, Nicholas. 2013. **Just War and International Order: The Uncivil Condition in World Politics**. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

Salvage, Charlie. 2014a. "Judge Dismisses Suit Against Administration Officials Over Drone Strikes." Accessed June 20, 2017. https://www.nytimes.com/2014/04/05/world/judge-dismisses-suit-against-administration-officials-over-drone-strikes.html?_r=0.

-----. 2014b. "Relatives of Victims of Drone Strikes Drop Appeal." Accessed June 20, 2017. https://www.nytimes.com/2014/06/04/us/relatives-of-victims-of-drone-strikes-drop-appeal.html?_r=0.

-----. 2011. "Secret U.S. Memo Made Legal Case to Kill a Citizen." Accessed June 18, 2017. http://www.nytimes.com/2011/10/09/world/middleeast/secret-us-memo-made-legal-case-to-kill-a-citizen.html.

Schoenmann, Joe. 2015. "Former Nellis AFB Drone Operator On First Kill, PTSD, Being Shunned By Fellow Airmen." Accessed June 18, 2017. https://knpr.org/knpr/2015-01/former-nellis-afb-drone-operator-first-kill-ptsd-being-shunned-fellow-airmen.

Weber, Cynthia. 2006. **Imagining American at War: Morality, Politics, and Film**. London and New York: Routledge.

Zevnik, Andreja. 2016. **Lacan, Deleuze and World Politics: Rethinking the Ontology of the Political Subject**. London and New York: Routledge.

Žižek, Slavoj. 2017. Critiquing J. A. Miller's Real in 21st Century. Accessed June 21, 2017. https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=06uTYhYcoqI.

-----. 2006. **The Parallax View**. Cambridge, MASS: MIT Press.