

THE PURE POLITICS OF DIRTY HANDS AND PERSONAL ATTACKS: THE PUBLIC SPHERE IN PERSONALYTICAL IMMANENCE

Arnab Chatterjee

How poisonous, how crafty, how bad, does every long war make one, that cannot be waged openly by means of force! How personal does a long fear make one, a long watching of enemies, of possible enemies!

—Friedrich Nietzsche¹

I have argued elsewhere² and have been arguing for quite some time now that the personal is the beyond of private/public binary and ought to be distinguished from the private vis-à-vis the public: the personal and the private are not cute or vexed interchangeable(s) ready to become wet, or, absorbed in ‘the impersonal rain’. Private/privacy is opposed to public/publicity and resists public scrutiny—the stuff by which the public is made. The Personal—the way we don’t know what a person is, what his/her real/final intentions are or whether somebody is genuinely aggrieved or not—makes the personal—largely unpredictable and indeterminate in the final instance—unlike the private. Private/public, being legal juridical categories, have specific indicators. The absence of these indicators makes personal relationships—like love (or hate), friendship (or enmity) remain outside legislation.

This article apparently indexes, singularly though, how I discursively arrived at the above instance. Inspired by Nietzsche’s indictment above, and Immanuel Kant’s immortal, controversial maxim, ‘He who openly declares himself an enemy can be relied upon, but the treachery of secret malice... is more detestable than violence’³, this article looks at some of the ‘wicked’, malicious and dirty everyday ways of experiencing the political where violence and nonviolence could rarely be distinguished, because, as we notice the public/private division is transgressed by the maneuvering person and his cunning of reason. In other words, this article is about something worse than violence. (And because these everyday

binaries are transcended in this form of politics, it is also called 'pure').

Such a pure politics of dirty hands is made up of persons being subjected to negative gossiping, malice, backstabbing, lying, treachery, deception, taking undue advantage, subtle —nearly invisible forms of discrimination, exploitation, etc. These examples recover, one might hazard, *mythical* forms of punishment and in order to reckon with this genuinely real, 'pure' politics of dirty hands with a distinct Machiavellian dig—they also comment on narratives of manipulations, machinations, intrigues and malice—all blossoming in non-violent peace where peace is also a product of leisure.

In the discourse of pure politics, lying is the first personal political act by which persons govern each other; coercion or domination thus comes always in personal forms of brute factuality (being *exploited* in this discourse is a matter of political *feeling*) and, thereby, personal attacks are often its primary raw materials. And personal invectives travel a long way to meet and demonstrate the way the person by his/her personal cunning transcends the public/private divide; personal invectives name the person with the 'dirty hands' and are not necessarily attacks upon the person's privacy—as it has often been argued—to denounce and disparage them without a heightened, livid scrutiny.

We shall notice later that after the classical and the medieval, it is only in the third or modern phase that personal attacks could be seen to have been disapproved in a form that is paradigmatic. This is because the logic of modernity itself, unlike the ancient Greek or medieval predicament, is emphatically moored against the tenor and vehicle of personal attacks, slander or abuse—even that of the personal itself. Let us, briefly, rehearse the motors of this modernity.

*The Personal against and within the impersonal modern:
Weber's disenchantment*

The best description of modernity in terms of politics is available in Max Weber with whom tradition, charisma and affective forms of patrimonial monarchies (*Sultanism* for example) receding to the background, what emerged is, to borrow Owen's brilliant capsule, 'the impersonal rationalization of the social organization [providing] an impetus towards the regulation of all public spheres of life on the basis of formal legal norm[s].'⁴ The maintenance of this regime is ensured by a strict separation of the public and private spheres

where personal is understood as partial and an offspring of the specific, accidental subjectivity of a person. The formulation that it has had in Weber—to repeat its importance—is something like this:

Objective discharge of business primarily means a discharge of business according to *calculable rules and* ‘without regard for persons.’ Without regard for persons’, however, is also the watchword of the market and, in general, of all pursuits of naked economic interests. ...Bureaucracy develops the more perfectly...the more completely it succeeds in eliminating from official business love, hatred, and all purely personal, irrational, and emotional elements which escape calculation. This is appraised as its special virtue by capitalism.⁵

But this operation cannot be limited or short circuited to mean just the response required by a ‘complicated and specialized modern culture’⁶ since as Weber himself charts, it could be traced to that of Roman law, and late Middle Ages. Contractarian Natural Law evolved into rational natural law and this rational law was ‘conceptually systematized on the basis of statutes.’⁷ Pursuing this line of argument, the first signs of the modern bureaucratized impersonality were evident, according to Weber, in legal administration. Rational economic activity originates from the market and is oriented to money ‘the most abstract and most “impersonal” thing in all human life.’⁸ The more rational activity, the more is impersonalization of the economy.⁹ ‘One could regulate the personal relationship of lord and slave in a completely ethical manner, simply because it was personal. This cannot be said of...the relationship between the changing holders of credit notes and to the (to them) unknown and also changing debtors of a mortgage lending institution, between whom no possible personal relationship could exist.’¹⁰

Now, shifting the burden of this tangle to the domain of current discussion, we see how the public and the public sphere come to be invested with this impersonality. The point is, ‘the regulation of all public spheres of life on the basis of formal norms’—is it successful?¹¹ If it fails, then in what form—is it the form of pure politics—where violence is not announced?

*Politics in the Times of Peace: ‘Personal Attacks’¹²
as Itemized within A Pure Political Imaginary*

Pure politics is politics in the times of everyday, ordinarily mundane peace! This is far from defining politics as ‘the way to organize and optimize the technological seizure of beings at the level of the nation.’¹³ It is rather the technological seizure of beings at the level

of the person—the stuff of what some theorists¹⁴ in the West have called it thinly—‘the politics of dirty hands’¹⁵ and that is, perhaps, because it debunks the neat distinction between the public and the private, it is ‘pure politics’ made up of deception, betrayal, treachery, malice, lying and such others. And an impossibility of refusal to accept these—say an affirmative denial—juridically or whatever, projects a recluse only in personal attacks which might end up even in a murder. Given a chance such perpetrators(s) would confess in these words:

‘I’ll lie when I must, and I have contempt for no one. I wasn’t the one who invented lying. ...We shall not abolish lying by refusing to tell lies, but by using every means at hand....’;

[or]

‘For years you will have to cheat, trick and maneuver; we’ll go from compromise to compromise.’¹⁶

Lying is dirty mouth, though trying to deal with every means at *hand*. But what is the phenomenon of ‘dirty hands’ itself? This designation, ‘dirty hands’, might have been a product of a meditative listening to Sartre wherefrom this excerpt would be informative.

‘Hoederer: How afraid you are to soil your hands! All right stays pure! What good will it do?...To do nothing, to remain motionless, arms at your sides, wearing kid gloves. Well, I have dirty hands. Right up to the elbows. I’ve plunged them in filth and blood. But what do you hope? Do you think you can govern innocently?’

Hugo: You’ll see some day that I’m not afraid of blood.

Hoederer: Really! Red gloves, that’s elegant. It’s the rest that scares you....’¹⁷

Now, is it possible to make sense of the politics of dirty hands in a phenomenological manner? This is necessary because we’ve been listening to the politics of dirty hands as far as the manifestation of certain effects are concerned, but what form does it assume before an experiencing consciousness?

While the legal juridical discourse and the bureaucratic-administrative apparatus do administer various applied notions of the person, public or private, the political deployments of such categories would be fluid, strategic and success oriented and that too with the cultural unconscious in action is, perhaps, expected. The question of distant, objective, impersonal reflection on value-

neutral questions and disagreement in both politics and culture are always already delivered to be governed by practical political imperatives—whether it entails instances of political deliberation or cultural expectancy. (And normative deliberation can be practiced only when it is freed from brute empirico-practical and practical-political considerations.) Now, to subject everything to the practical and eternally immediate is to accept:

[t]he philosophical priority of the existent over being, ...it finally makes possible the description of the notion of the immediate. The immediate is the interpellation and, if we may speak thus, the imperative of language. The idea of contact does not represent the primordial mode of the immediate. Contact is already a thematization and a reference to a horizon. The immediate is the face to face.¹⁸

Then, with the immediate, deferred exigencies of ‘dirty’ politics, we approach what we’ll call the appearance of a pure political imaginary of the person whose comportment is towards other persons; (We use pure in the sense where an object’s form and content cannot be distinguished¹⁹ and imaginary in its now established usage as ‘not a set of ideas; rather...what enables, through making sense of, the practices of a society’²⁰).

This we think is a Machiavellian moment.²¹ The moment has approached all politics—slowly but decisively and now it only awaits a fair chance. And to address the question of the Machiavellian ‘pure’²² moment where the content of the experience and the experience cannot be distinguished, we need a political phenomenology—the way we experience the political and within horizons.²³ To exemplify such a phenomenology, to capture this moment and illustrate what is pure politics, here is a slice of an example; better said, here is a narrative and a figuration. We quote parts of a news report which appeared in *The Statesman* on 4 February 2000:

Bhubaneswar, Feb 3

Mr Navin Patnaik today expelled BJD political affairs committee chairman, Mr Bijoy Mohapatra from the party. He also snatched Mr Mohapatra’s Assembly nomination and gave the ticket to a local journalist instead. Mr Mohapatra was *left too stunned* to react. All he could say was he had been *back stabbed*. BJD leaders and workers were outraged. Mr Patnaik’s completely unexpected move was described state wide as ‘treacherous’. ...The move that removed the ground from under Mr Mohapatra’s feet was obviously planned meticulously and *timed brilliantly* by Mr Patnaik. The rebel leader with whom Mr Patnaik had *ostensibly signed a truce*, was

sacked and debarred from the polls at the eleventh hour....too late for Mr Mohapatra to file papers as an Independent, and the outwitted rebel had no choice but to watch helplessly... No one could read the BJD chief's mind. Mr Mohapatra had been the party's key negotiator during the tortuous seat sharing talks with the BJP. He had had a major role in selecting candidates for various seats. Even Congress and BJP circles who consider Mr Mohapatra as the lone political leader of mettle and strategist in the BJD, were taken aback. [Italics mine].

To the readers' surprise and a challenge to surmise, what kind of political science, political sociology would explain this enchantment? All such disciplinary categories as civil society, political society, family and the State just vanish into thin air before this. Because we all have had such moments in our lives but rarely have felt that those narratives would be included in political science textbooks. Those losses were ours and they will remain ours, those secrets will die with us—each separately. *'Too stunned to react'* is an adequate description because reaction could be a meditation on a prior act; here is an action without a reaction. In the disciplinary study of politics and criminal offence, stabbing—being a metonymy of murder and violence—has often been mentioned or studied; where do we get to know what is *'back stabbing'*? The third phrase in italics is *'timed brilliantly'*. What does it stand for? Punctuality is to go according to other's time: Passive timing. Timing in politics is the dominative monitoring of others according to one's own time where s/he himself is the frame of reference: Active timing. I'm waiting for the right moment to teach him a lesson, I know it, he doesn't, I'm waiting for him to enter *my* duration. Here time as a trap and emerging as a 'means of orientation'²⁴ is destructive of other's time—the space in which the victim thrived and swam along his moments. So I *'ostensibly sign.. a truce'*, give him a show of importance to mislead him and then *'remove the ground from under'* his *'feet'*. Notice the word *truce*: a signifier of peace and how it has been deployed. When we were dealing with speech generating violence, this is the point we wanted to argue: let us look at the varieties of peace and how they are being used for what purposes. *Truce* used to *back stab*? —This is the moment.

Here is a classic instance of the politics of dirty hands but with our rider 'pure' because this overwhelms and surpasses the implied notion of individuals of public, political, representative significance indulging in unavoidable, moral wrongdoing for a greater, public good. This is sheer, deeply internal politicking and where the solace of institutional differentiation and decisional segmentation

undercutting the first personal action system of a lone politician does not even arise. Mr Mahapatra is not even allowed to contest and, therefore, the topic of democratic answerability cannot be mooted.²⁵ The standard discourse on dirty hands invokes guilt or shame felt by the perpetrator of dirty hands; some have proposed ‘tragic remorse’²⁶ which is a more unified product than mere guilt, shame or ‘personal anguish’.²⁷ Is there any remorse here or there is a shining, stubborn sense of competitive joy and success in having had one’s way by crushing another rival? ‘The cases of dirty hands’ (‘do good by doing evil’) ‘and imperfect procedures’ (‘to do evil by doing good’), however, are two areas in which not only the normal model but also the relentless, ‘pursuit of justice fails’.²⁸ This is why we have termed this irresolvable and in a sense, pure.

Where do we end then? What is the use of studying this phenomenon called personal attacks which name the persons with dirty hands? Peter Digester thinks we should be unforgiving towards the practice of dirty hands but forgiving towards imperfect procedural (in)justice. Then unforgiving—as it is, we shall be stunned when we are cheated, betrayed, fired, suppressed, deprived, or discriminated against in uncommon silence (and be ‘*too stunned to react*’). Those are the moments when we shall feel the hand of politics on our back, but nothing will save us, no category; they will be moments of pure experience. The politics of dirty hands will cleanse everything, remaining residually and strictly alive on the borderlines of our everyday being. We might *feel* exploited but that will remain only as a moral feeling, because the apparatus required to structure the feeling has been slowly but evenly de-contextualized: the state socialist project was criticized as being one of the most ruthless regime of techno-scientific, objective, impersonal, instrumental rationality where human beings without a personal touch were simply lost in a maze of bureaucratic cleaning. Now, if the death of all the grand narratives, thereby, has been conveniently announced, we need to engage with small and smaller events and listen to the narratives of pure, petty politics. Aren’t we doing this, in this article too? Also to pure politics—the fragment or the micro-local is not a metaphor of place; for it, the fragment is that what we resist from allowing it to coincide with the norms of the public or the private and is limited to the overriding magic of the person.

The rules and rituals of separation that function to maintain the purity of the categories of public and private also support the contemporary legal fiction that public servants act not as concrete individuals but as

articulations of the abstract body of the polity and, accordingly, are neutral, objective, and free from the passions and interests that may plague their private existence. The pragmatic problem here is that everybody knows this to be a fiction. Everybody knows that Bush as public servant cannot be abstracted from Bush as private citizen, that his religious fundamentalism, corporate alliances, and personal affiliations directly impact his conduct as president. The logic operant here is one of cynicism; we know that the idea of a public that is free of private interests and passions is fictional, nonetheless, we demand that all involved act as if this were not the case. We demand that the illusion of a real and substantive public be maintained even though we may not fully believe it.²⁹

Then, bereft of illusions and abandoning grand investigations, we need to undertake studies of the micro politics of dirty hands: and being dirty, the term political pornography, therefore, is improperly apt. 'Power thus relies on an obscene supplement – that is to say, the obscene nightly law (superego) necessarily accompanies, as its shadowy double, the "public law". ...Obscene unwritten rules sustain Power as long as they remain in the shadows; the moment they are publicly recognized, the edifice of Power is thrown into disarray.'³⁰ Pure politics deals with this obscene underside of public and private law and for this, regrettably, personal attacks are its primary raw materials. We need to have then narratives of manipulations, machinations, intrigues and malice—more sinister, more ghostly than violence causing speech or violence itself: here is Kant, 'He who openly declares himself an enemy can be relied upon, but the treachery of secret malice, if it became universal, would mean the end of all confidence. This type of wickedness is more detestable than violence.'³¹

But history cannot be halted simply by condemnation; it has to address events where an open declaration of enmity is absent and such wickedness, so to say, runs riot. Now, it appears as a lesson to be learnt and exists only as a secured item in the inventory. A simple guilty conscience hardly suffices and, therefore, what is required is such a counter-declaration: 'To sell oneself for thirty pieces of silver is an honest transaction; but to sell oneself to one's own conscience is to abandon mankind. History is *apriori* amoral; it has no conscience. To want to conduct history according to the maxims of the Sunday school means to leave everything as it is.'³²

We have returned to Machiavelli and the unspeakable confessions or suggestions of wickedness it entails. We are convinced about the personal nature of this politics, but it might be argued as an objection that in the absence of a private language or a language

that grasps the subject of existence, this genuinely personal would not be, and quite truly, communicated. But still this experience could be narrated as argued above. And that is the stuff of pure politics. After an elaboration, we have arrived at it, finally. But isn't it a straight corollary that the personalized pure politics of dirty hands will be responded to, or answered back in personal terms, too? If it is in the affirmative, then it is necessary to historicize it, immediately.

Responding to the Pure Politics of Dirty Hands:

'Personal attacks' via the Ancient Greek, the Middle Ages to Modernity

If we could discern three broad historical phases of 'personal' invectives or 'uncivil' rhetoric in the western political history of humanity, then the footfalls, as I hazard, could be three. First, the Greek sources with the first pioneers—Cicero or Diogenes, and Aristotle giving us the theory. Second, against the church in the 15th and 16th century, and the third during the 18th century which interestingly turned against the state.

Invectives present in the corpus of assembly speeches delivered in classical Athens portray the master orator—Cicero in his Philipian speeches asserting with fury the following words:

'Surely that is real moderation—to protest about Anthony and refrain from abuse! For what was left of Rome, Antony, owed its final annihilation to yourself. In your home everything had a price...Laws you passed, laws you caused to be put through your interests, had never ever been formally proposed....You were an augur, yet you never took the auspices. You were a consul, yet you blocked the legal right of other officials to exercise the veto. Your armed escort was shocking. You were a drink-sodden, sex ridden wreck. Never a day passes in that ill-reputed house of yours without orgies of the most repulsive kind. In spite of all that, I restricted myself in my speech to solemn complaints concerning the state of our nation. I said nothing personal about the man.'³³

It is perhaps no wonder that Cicero would thus settle for a strategic catch phrase and would utter, 'Men decide far more problems by hate, or love, or fear or illusion, or some other inward emotion, than by reality.'³⁴ But an interesting point in this context is, the ruling templates of the time, did sanction Cicero's venom. Aristotle—if taken in entirety—would be difficultly poised to intervene in this debate since he both approves and disapproves the Ciceroian gesture in the same breath. Firstly, let us consider the way he would censor Cicero: For children being susceptible to imitation or the art of

acquiring ‘a taint of meanness from what they’ [first] ‘hear and see’, the ‘legislator’, Aristotle urges, ‘should be more careful to drive away indecency of speech; for the light utterance of shameful words leads soon to shameful actions.’³⁵ But not only this, he goes so far as to promulgate a sort of indecent representation Act of ours: ‘And since we do not allow improper language, clearly we should also banish pictures or speeches from the stage which are indecent.’³⁶ The second moment—the way Aristotle would endorse Cicero is reflected in the way he reserves a category for ‘speeches of eulogy and attack.’³⁷ ‘All eulogy is based upon the noble deeds—real or imaginary—that stand to the credit of those eulogized. On the same principle, invectives are based on facts of the opposite kind: the orator looks to see what the base deeds—real or imaginary—stand to the discredit of those he is attacking, such as the treachery to the cause of Hellenic freedo[m].’³⁸ Further, in absolute concurrence with Cicero, Aristotle urges the skilled speaker’s ‘power to stir the emotions of his hearers.’³⁹ Cicero, thereby, was then a representative who pushed this thought to extremes.

With this we reach a certain benchmark of the first phase of invectives—and the way to understand them. But Cicero apart there was Diogenes. Hegel, while wanting to address the cynics and talking about Diogenes, remembered him for ‘his biting and often clever hits, and bitter and sarcastic retorts.’⁴⁰ But could Diogenes’s bitter retorts be taken as a precedent for invectives in political modernity? Hardly so; Diogenes’s cynicism was, Hegel points out, ‘more a mode of living than a philosophy.’⁴¹ This ‘mode of living’ (where philosophy itself was a way of life) in Diogenes bore peculiar results: He is said to have been gifted with the habit of masturbating in public. When asked he is reported to have said, he was experimenting whether hunger could be appeased in a similar manner—just by rubbing the stomach.⁴²

In this light, what is so distinctive about Aristotle and which cannot be invoked in justifying today’s deliberative democratic reasoning, or its exceptions is that, political deliberation in Aristotle is framed within an art of rhetoric as a form of skill or technique giving directions to decisions and a particular way of life. While it was to persuade the hearers about a particular action (for instance whether Athens should go to war); today’s political deliberation begins with the vow to settle disagreement. Aristotelian deliberation is not a means to pursue political legitimacy as in today’s governance. It is rather oriented to a form of practical rationality. And perhaps

for this reason he had a place for personal invectives and emotions because they invoke separate kinds of proofs and syllogisms. This supreme rhetorical necessity (not being a rational necessity) is unimaginable in impersonal modernity.

Amidst the medieval imagination of invectives, the most famous legacy has been borne by the anti-clerical writers, ‘in the generation immediately preceding the reformation’⁴³, who were energized by the writings of Luther. A historian studying this lineage mentions, ‘Much of the resulting literature of invective and abuse had been produced by the most learned humanists of the age, but they had generally written in self-consciously demotic style, usually publishing in the vernacular and often presenting their arguments in the form of plays and satires in verse.’⁴⁴ The bulk of its abusive content is its attack on the church who is ‘depicted as Mother Fool’ and who ‘spends her time plotting and machinating with all the fools of the age.’⁴⁵ This results in the expected insistence ‘that all clerics are lecherous, and that all money given by the pious laity for the saying of masses is ‘spent among wanton lasses.’⁴⁶

While this time it is the church, the next turn is marked by invectives turning against the state itself. In the 18th century, we’ve to reckon with the hatching of a political pornography in a descriptive sense—the theorization of which is derivatively based on the so called porno-theorists (Sometimes called low life litterateurs of the French Revolution and excavated by Low Literature Historians like Darnton⁴⁷) and directed against the state. (Though enlightenment heroes like Diderot would—through *Memoirs of a Nun* still explore the sexual corruptions of the church but that critique had become, by then, clearly redundant). These researches reveal that intense personal-political attacks based on pornographic ‘scatological imagery’ in pamphlets performed a historical and revolutionary role⁴⁸ against Marie Antoinette during the late 18th century; while the Bourbon Kings—Louis XV was dubbed as sexually promiscuous—libertine, pornographic pictures of Louis XVI were circulated among the population showing him as impotent. These, according to an author, went on to ‘discredit the monarchy as an institution and to desacralize the King’s body...the aristocracy, and clergy.’⁴⁹ De-sacralizing the royal body finally engendered the birth of the republic.

But the force of a personalized persuasion was not lost, at least historically. It was picked up by the Fascists in the 20th century. One who studied this project in some tenuous but reliable detail is Theodor Adorno who starts with a very helpful, thumbnail observation:

This is one of its most important patterns. People are 'let in', they are supposedly getting the inside dope, taken into confidence, treated as the elite who deserves to know the lurid mysteries hidden from the outsiders. Lust for snooping is both encouraged and satisfied. Scandal stories, mostly fictitious, particularly of sexual excesses and atrocities are constantly told; the indignation of filth and cruelty is but a very thin, purposely transparent rationalization of the pleasure these stories convey to the listener.⁵⁰

Supposedly for Adorno, the fascists thus aim the irrational and can successfully impart their 'mental defects' to the listeners but this they do not do by sheer abuse but by a crafted method of 'personalized' persuasion⁵¹ (previously we had shown in the wake of Cicero how this has had its sources and justifications in Aristotle's *Rhetoric*). It is irrational because Adorno tells us that it is non-argumentative, anti-theoretical and not based on a discursive logic of reasoning footed to convince people. What is its substance then? According to Adorno they are 'oratorical exhibitions, what might be called an organized flight of ideas.'⁵²

If the Greek Ciceroian to the communist or the fascist orator are master politicians of (official) personalistic dirty hands, we've shown and shall talk about more on how the non-violent times of democracy could be more subversive—though in the standard literature, impersonal, formal legal regimes and the separation of powers in the public political arena have been argued to have been stumbling obstacles to the 'overman' to block his authoritarian plot. But how does it feature and operatically exist in the other modernity requires to be viewed.

Personal Attacks in the Colony and the Post Colony: A Prehistory

Therefore, it is necessary to curve out this history as it featured in a colonial and as it still features in a postcolonial polity, or otherwise we shall be missing the diversity and specificity of historical voices and would be assuming, much against our broad intentions, the univocity of just one imperial reason, and a single imperial canon. To do this we shall hatch on to a representative modern icon: Bankimchandra Chatterjee, since in his writings, it is established by now, the discursive foundations of modernity and modernism are supposed to have been most emphatically drawn.

While reviewing Ishwarchandra Gupta—a 19th century Bengali soft satirist's collection of poems, Bankim praises *kabir larai* for staging 'abuse without enmity'⁵³; he seems to hold the view that Gupta, having been brought up in that tradition, has written verses which

are free of *bidwesh* (hate or grudge or indignity).⁵⁴ Having said that, Bankim now emerges with the grand comparison, he is quick to notice that European satire is full of jealousy, bad blood, and indignation that devastates and depresses people. ‘Various European bad commodities (‘kusamagri’) are entering this country; this killing comedy (‘narghatini rasikata’) has also made its entry.’⁵⁵ Iswar Gupta abuses without ‘anger and enmity’; his is a satire without indignation (‘biddeshhin byango’). His only determination is, he has to defeat the Brahmin in the use of corrupt language (*kubhasa*). Bankim does acknowledge that at times, Gupta is obscene but with a qualification: his obscenity is inspired by his genuine anger on artificialness—for instance ‘artificial politics’. ‘Often Iswar Gupta’s obscenity derives from this anger’ [which is] ‘not true obscenity.’⁵⁶ So this is artificial obscenity in responsible response to a false politics. But then, what is real, genuine or true obscenity according to Bankim? One of the architects of the Obscenity Law in India, Bankim, argues that which is aimed at exciting the senses or expresses the nasty robustness of the author⁵⁷ is truly obscene—even if it is written in a ‘pure... language’; but in cases where it is deployed to condemn or parodize sin and only sin, it is far from being obscene—even if it goes against the apparently standard structures of taste and civilization. A significant discursive resonance in Bankim’s oeuvre is the way he captures obscenity as crass sensuality aimed at corrupting the morals of the reader which nearly coincides even unites with the primary and founding definitions of obscenity and pornography in the West.

The denigration and withering of ritual abuses and ‘personal attacks’ through *kheur* and the will to be incorporated within the grand project of modernity in order to civilize⁵⁸ dissent summarizes the state of things with us today—here and now. This question of culture later was translated to become a matter of political culture in the post colony, and the issue of civility soon became a placeholder for democracy. The paradigm was prefaced by the importation of an impersonal principle based politics pitted against personal interest based politics as in the West.

Thus, the ritualistic mooring of personal attacks, resembling the colony, is not altogether lost even in the post colony and it gravitates toward, and contaminates the singularity of an evolving politics. An essay by anthropologist Lawrence Cohen, titled ‘Holi in Banaras and the Mahaland of Modernity’⁵⁹, could be considered in which Cohen documents an interesting cartoon among numerous others showing a man labelled as the *sikhandin janata* (meaning eunuch

or helpless people) having in his mouth the member of a man with a politician's congress cap (labelled as the '*gandu neta*') while being sodomised by a man standing behind in police uniform (with the label '*jhandu police*'). The circulation of these thin booklets particularly during the immensely popular Holi festival in Benares exhibits its incorporation within the ritual paradigm of festivity and the element of obscenity in a nearly carnivalesque manner. But what is remarkable about these are the common motif of condemnation where the victim is the member of the ordinary public, and which overrides all party lines. The narrative of mobilization in postcolonial India inheres in the structural preformation present in the above and is directed against the whole political class. We could briefly reflect on the foregone Section before we move on to the next: the objection of impersonally principled politics against a politics of the personal style was raised only after the colonial, politico-civilizing mission had arrived; what had pre-existed was the realm of personal abuses and attacks within the folk norms of ritualistic more; we could see Bankim—the modernizer striking a balance with a modern poser. This ritualistic remnant of personal invectives, in the post colonial predicament, is absorbed in the festive prolongation of Holi in Benares.

However, all along, the colonizing logic or ruse of colonial governance—which extends to contemporary times—was to bring the native to some kind of deliberative and decisive competence for self ownership. Here, therefore, the deliberative competence that is often asked for is seen with some justifiable and historically evolved suspicion. This is not unfounded. The communicative competence to insert civility into political questions (as we noticed in the Indian phase of invectives) would have to undergo, perhaps, for always a hermeneutics of suspicion. This historically correct caveat would precede any requirement for an impersonal civility to be instituted through impersonation and smuggled to the domain of democracy. Incivility can then feature only as a political question and as a kind of original contamination felt by constitutional questions. *Byaktigat* or personal inscribed within the norms of *bhodrotabidhi* or norms of civility is very differently political here. And this difference was historically recovered the moment we pushed the question of personal attacks to higher degrees: political pornography where the political and the erotic or the uncivil interrupt each other at the moment when power erupted and corrupted even the monarchical absolute.

How the Seduction of Pure Politics Disengaged the Person-Al,

Therefore, we tended to stumble against the impersonal nature of the public sphere in the wake of political modernity after having examined the historical trajectory of the so called personal attacks, where the personal being subjected to the regime of personal attacks, appeared without a mask. The politics of liberal idealism, in this sense, seems to offer ‘a clean glove of legitimacy’⁶⁰ for dirty hands. At a particular site i.e., politics and at the level of rhetoric, we engaged with such a liberal-idealistic, concrete counter discourse which registered complaints such as personal attacks push out the impersonal discourse of ‘principled governance’ and pollutes a democratic political and a growing, albeit good modern, civic culture. This is in genuine consonance with the classical Weberian formulation. Now, in such a context where the personal-particular subverts and transcends the public-universal garb, it is often that personal attacks try, with or without success, in piercing this silencing, civil veil and address the illegitimate. And for the second objection—in this context—it was easily concluded (though it is not central to my argument) that the notion of civility, for instance, in India today is a matter of political sphere and not at all of civil society, therefore an advice of civility has to be politically negotiated than received as ‘unmediated’ discourse on civic virtues. In short, civility and violent disagreement could never go together. How peace and civility could be seen as being complicit with an (un)fairly (we are remembering Rawls here) unjust system⁶¹ was also examined in the wake of the phenomenon of agreement with approved ways of protest. While we do a lot of lip service against violence, let us not forget to examine peace, too. Pure politics or, the politics of dirty hands made up of betrayal, malice, fraud, deception and treachery is politics in the times of peace: this was Machiavelli with a modern turn.

But this ought not to mean we are engaged in that infantile tryst to justify the personal through personal attacks; it would be similar to arguing like Mandeville that private vices necessitate public benefits and exposure of such vices would reap public benefits. A rational choice theory would surmise that if private interests are at stake equally—it may be so—that both will avoid exposure beyond a threshold; further, they can be feigned, they can be staged and they might just be deployed to override the propositional form of public reasoning, or, they can be used as a convenient form of silencing or listening. Our argument is not at all this. We are satisfied having shown that personal attacks did reveal to us the overriding

nature of the personal over the public and the private. It helped us arrive at the examination of the public nature of political modernity itself. And the moment we ventured into the so-called ‘political pornography’, dangerous vistas appeared.

Similarly, our relational and other—even official affinities—suddenly seem to have been tattooed, if we look in this light, by deception, betrayal, malice, backstabbing, envy and other propaganda. And we find it everywhere, from our first orientation to the second person to our last orientation to the third person plural. Examples are rife and always happening. With this we’ve departed from the established, surveyed usage of ‘dirty politics’ in terms of politicians only. Therefore, it is—as if—for public interest that his hands are dirty; we’ve done away with this long lasting explanation and brought the phenomenon down to the floor of our everyday living, which also—in a way—corroborates our argument that it is not always that a just war is being waged, under compulsion, with unjust means and it is with persons, as private or public individuals, who transcend the norms of privacy or publicity to engage in dirty hands. The context of an explicit, open violence is clearly redundant.

If there were a clear line which marked the limit of manoeuvre, then there would finally be no Dirty Hands problem.⁶² But we order or at least license our agents to pursue policies which cannot be translated into action, if honesty and openness are required too. The casualties of urban renewal, for instance, are greater if the plans are known in advance. The resulting blight then has to be remedied by wider destruction of property and community. Yet secrecy demands a firm lie in the face of questions. Thus, the family promised safety today will be Glencoe tomorrow. This too is violence, even if the weapon is not a musket but a clearance order.⁶³

I’ll disagree; I shall argue this clearance order is in the times of peace.

It would not be perfect, or well tailored, to call this violence; since not war, this is politics in the times of peace and why this is worst than violence will be told later. We’ve named them under one rubric: ‘pure politics’. Now, perhaps, we are aware of the problems that this pure in phenomenology has suffered in the hands of—say—deconstructive criticism. But we are not trying to deploy ‘pure’ in the sense of absolute inwardness, solitary, free, etc., we’re using it in the Piercian sense of brute facts (and a few more words will be laid down below). This apart—it may be found in Derrida himself, if we are not wrong, a catalogue of lexemes named as un-deconstructible: hospitality, justice, etc. Now, will it be quite a

sacrilege if undeconstructible is referred to as pure?

Let us grapple with an evident objection to this which could be the following: 'The truth is that, relative to the 'pure' position of transcendent judgment, such political acts are always, one way or another, 'dirty', mixed, impure, compromises or approximations.'⁶⁴ Therefore, if we are to say the status of transcendental, political judgment is pure, the politics expressed or experienced is always already impure, dirty; what does it mean to express, then, pure politics? A neutral, more universal and harmless explanation is offered by the same author here: 'Politics—even political philosophy at its most pure—is 'dirty'. Dirtiness is not a flaw or degradation; rather it names the necessity that politics itself emerges insofar as power is presented in judgment.'⁶⁵ In this view, immanent judgment—in this or that—everydayness—is already a fall and predestined to be dirty. The weight of this argument, turned on itself, surely must make space for a transcendently impure politics; it denies, or it cannot think transcendence in immanence.⁶⁶

However, we did not make it explicit—though we mentioned—that only a phenomenology of the political could make sense or go near as to what could be pure politics, and how one could begin talking about it is well said by Pierce (who remains unsung in this context with Husserl, Schutz and Ricoeur hogging all the light):

A court may issue *injunctions* and *judgments* against me and I not care a snap of my fingers for them. I may think them idle vapour. But when I feel the sheriff's hand on my shoulder, I shall begin to have a sense of actuality. Actuality is Something *brute*. There is no reason in it.⁶⁷

Secondly, what we mean by 'experiencing the political' isn't an ever increasing stock of happenings and events catalogued in a particular cognition; it would rather entail—if we are correct—what we would call a feeling of the political or, a bit more inexactly 'political feeling'. This feeling, again drawing from Pierce, is not subject to psychological laws and is not within the contours of a political psychology. An intimate touch may be likened to a good feeling of fondness or may be revolting or anything else: it is nearly impossible to generalize this at the level of the feeling. 'It is a state...a quality of immediate consciousness.' To foster this sense, we wrote—the experience of the 'pure' political could be narrated or described but a narratology out of it is quite distant and more often than not, an impossibility.

Politics in the times of peace is smeared with fierce politicking and it has destroyed more people than all wars and pogroms added;

so in order to dispel some aura around it, we also proposed a negative theory of peace. This theory does not entail debunking peace—the way Rousseau does it in the text quoted in the Section, rather it would lead, the moment we find its liaison with the politics of dirty hands, to a state of neither war nor peace. But this teleology apart, what could be such a formulation of peace? We think one of the primary theories of peace may be traced back to Aristotle where peace is connected to leisure since ‘leisure which comes with peace’ and also peace is the end of war and leisure is the end of toil. Peace is a kind of virtue that is derived from leisure.⁶⁸

Now, the state of political pornography which we try to articulate as a collection of statements on the politics of dirty hands, can be had, derivatively from the above. Peace with its alliance with leisure gives truth also its power of governance. Truth is tied to leisure and comfort and such a liaison can take un-assumable forms—even that of lying. When its alliance is harangued or broken, it tends to become obscene and thus pornographic. In the main text we talked about it but in a sweeping mode. Here let us do some tinkering: ‘[w]hat we need to see does not involve any interior secret or the discovery of a more nocturnal world.’⁶⁹ Rather, it feeds, parasitically perhaps, on the fact-sheet spread before us like bones under non-violent light. So long as this mission is maintained, in order not to sacrifice one’s own nature, even lying is comfortable, (in Bengali there goes a saying: ‘It is better not to speak than utter *‘opriyo satyi katha*’ [uncomfortable truths]; this endorses that what establishes truth as truth is its kinship with comfort than any substantive nuance). And as we tried to designate pornography by saying, it is ‘giving names to persons or things beyond a threshold’ we meant just this. Related to the (un)speakable experience of the political: the scream after being backstabbed or betrayed; here we are dealing with its felicity conditions; ‘nothing that Machiavelli said...was really novel to his readers. They knew—everyone had always known—that politics is a dirty business’⁷⁰; (given my argument and reiterated time and again—this phenomenon has to be stretched to all departments of existence and not only limited to the affairs of the State as Machiavelli and Kristol or Walzer does, at least that is the only way to reckon with Bengali novels where the middleclass *bhadralok*, will inevitably scream at least for once, ‘*sala, sab jaigay politics*’ [damn it, everywhere there is politics]).

Here, let us anticipate another possible question and try to answer it: If we are saying that lying, deception, betrayal, backstabbing—these are techniques, one might wonder ...for

instance—whether they are at all political or not! Is lying or deception innately political? Or there are conditions when lying or deception become political? It won't be quite right to think lying or deceiving are innately political categories, I think they are phenomenological ones and in this sense they are pre-political (the sense in which Althusser connects Machiavelli with 'primitive political accumulation'): they provide the conditions by which the experience of the political becomes possible. And because they are a sort of a priori and are, in this sense, pure, they cannot themselves be subjected to the contingency of facts. A proof of this? We know what lying is but still we are cheated everyday. And with a vulgar but tempting variation of Levinas⁷¹—we might argue or designate the way in which the liar presents himself, exceeding the idea of lie in me, is *the face*, of the liar. And Machiavelli is obscene when, as one will have found in the article, he wants to regulate facts as value-ideals to be adopted to be successful; he is best when he says there are no fixed rules and he does say so.⁷² And Kant is bang on the point when he discusses malice in this regard: 'Men prone to this vice will seek, for instance, to make mischief between husband and wife, or between friends, and then enjoy the misery they have produced. ... The defence against such mischief makers is upright conduct. Not by words but by our lives we should confute them.'⁷³

Conclusion

The undeconstructible, pure nature of this experience—becomes explicit by now. With this it would be possible to close up by following up once again how this whole discussion is relevant to our subject: personal as beyond private and public and how this could be related to divergent but related discussion on the same subject. First, politics in the times of peace! This is to rehearse for the first time, far from defining politics as 'the way to organize and optimize the technological seizure of beings at the level of the nation.'⁷⁴ It is rather the technological seizure of beings at the level of the person. We may begin or end with this vision. But as we had noticed: the personal was required to have been expelled from the public sphere for its incalculable, irrational emotional, deceptive signification. There are several ways, which have been tested throughout, to normalize this consequence: Aristotle expounds virtues for the political speakers and the moment we understand that these virtues can be feigned, we are into the scandal proposed by Nietzsche and Machiavelli. This deception at the level of the person forms a

cornerstone of this paper. Finally, where does this discussion might lead to in more worthy hands, could be well pointed out by the help of Althusser, who was, it seems to me, positively stumped by the presence of Machiavelli:

[w]e can say: there are not two ways of governing men—by laws' [I'll say—by consent] 'and by force—but three—by laws, force and fraud. But as soon as this statement has been made, we realize that fraud is not a mode of government like the others; it is not on the same level. Laws exist—let us say as human institutions, recognized rules and opinions; force exists—let us say as the army. In contrast, however, fraud possesses no objective existence: it does not exist. If fraud is a way of governing, given that it has no objective existence, it can be employed only when it is based on laws or force. Fraud, then, is not a third form of government; *it is government to the second degree, a manner of governing the other two forms of government: force and laws.* When it utilizes the army, fraud is stratagem; when it utilizes law, it is political guile. Fraud thus opens up a space, beyond force and laws, for diverting their existence—a space in which force and laws are substituted for, feigned, deformed, and circumvented. Mastery of fraud in the Prince [and all of us] is the distance that allows him [and us] to play at will on the existence of force and laws, to exploit and, in the strongest sense of the word, feign them.⁷⁵

The personal then opens us up to a third invisible form of governance, and our beginner's argument as to how the personal overflows the public and the private and can play with them by fraud, deception and treachery—or dirty hands, we believe, now comes full circle.

How do we conclude then? The personal to impersonal transit in modernity proposed by Weber undergoes an abortion because of an illegitimate marriage between Nietzsche and Machiavelli? Or to put more sharply, Weber destroyed by Nietzsche? Does the text comment on the theory of modernity which harps again and again on the private/public division wanting to forget that the person and the personal are capable of playing with both? But Weber was not so naïve; in the wake of the scientificization of the public sphere, he did see a withering away of the value-ideals with rational scientific activity failing to fill the lack of what it has destroyed. What Nietzsche showed was that these values, considered genealogically, could be shown to have been inconsistent: altruism for weakness, honeyed words for wickedness etc., Machiavelli's counter work was to restate these facts as values: For instance this was formulated by Machiavelli way back in 1513, 'Everyone sees what you seem to be, few know what you really are and those few do not dare take a stand

against the general opinion. The masses are always impressed by the superficial appearance of things.....'⁷⁶

This was unnecessary since we already live in the world of these facts. People misunderstand Machiavelli by alleging that he had documented anti-values wanting to regulate them as 'virtues'; but this is mistaken; he was involved in an impossible project where facts and values suffer a reversal: he restated facts as values and scandalized everybody. But this is unnecessary and excessive, in brief—giving names to things and persons beyond the (empirical) threshold and, thus, an act which is pornographic. Irving Kristol sensed it quite well but touched the wrong chord when he called Machiavelli a political pornographer.⁷⁷ Kristol may have intended a discourse—which while stating facts in this way avoids a figurative language that could have hid much of its sting. In this sense also, the description is apt: what is pornography if not the absence of figures or figuration. But this also, considered at a higher level, goes against the primary description of the political as pertaining to the problem of identity as a founding fiction masquerading as the essence of the political. In recent attempts to isolate the 'poetic or figural (figurative, even) essence of politics'⁷⁸ and therefore hit at the institutional root of western political thought, it would not be too fanciful to find its beginning in these Machiavellian insights. Meaning when takes figure becomes totalitarian truth or truth in itself is totalitarian in as much as it 'effaces transcendence'⁷⁹; but the Machiavellian in his affirmation to open up, always, to the unstable play and ploy of figural identification in politics, denies to settle at a particular site of identification and, therefore, the recent interrogation, marked by questions like 'is there something which would allow the political to be thought outside of the will to figure? can the political be thought, finally, in a way which does not stem from the will to realize its essence as figure?'⁸⁰ has to be acknowledged as having been originally, though differently, formulated by Machiavelli. (Machiavelli having not had access to our modernity addressed himself to the person of the sovereign—this should be remembered well and all the time. The deeply debated distinction between facticity and validity or between facts and norms was not available to Machiavelli in the contemporary sense. Nevertheless, one finds even Althusser in his book on Machiavelli rightly celebrating him for reasons that we have already tabled above).

Finally, back to Weber again. While he was charting the disenchantment of the personal world of informal communities in

modernity, couldn't he sense this? He did but offered no solution. Through the structure of 'probity' the person in an act of self-legislation has to choose or abandon value-ideals within a particular life-sphere: henceforth, virtue or sin nothing comes with a warranty any more, which means that the person will speak to Aristotle to end preaching his catalogue of virtues; s/he will tell Machiavelli or De Sade not to display their table of brute 'facts' to be adopted as value-ideals too. No general option can be regulated because, and this is what is interesting in Weber, in as much as what he tried to show was that modernity has entailed the differentiation of life-spheres into irreconcilable compartments: political, aesthetic, religious, economic etc. Irreconcilable, because as Weber and Habermas have reminded us that they have emerged with their own criteria of validity. But there is a twist here; Weber has an interesting item to add: the erotic. (Habermas has a list too: Science, Morality and Art but the erotic is missing). Now this is interesting. The erotic is then not reconcilable with the political. (Hannah Arendt and Habermas would insist much against the feminist fury that 'take the private to the public' for redressal is finally problematic in the face of their own distinctive validity claims.) What happens then to political pornography, pure politics, etc., of which we've talked considerably?

We could now end up by posing this question so that we can help bring our own text to a crisis, but as a resolution promise how this will be dealt with in the future. Let us just dramatize this energy of irreconcilability by recalling how in the modern times or even contemporaneously a singer, a writer or an academician embedded in the worlds of music, social science or literature would complain of *politics* again and again happening to them? Consider this from Weber himself while he was considering people who choose science as their vocation:

But we also have to ask all the others to examine their conscience and answer the question: 'Do you believe you could bear to see mediocrities getting ahead of you year after year without feeling inwardly embittered and crushed?'⁸¹

Or consider this from Geoffrey Boycott, the legendary batsman cricketer, talking about Fred Trueman, another great:

Of course it is me. It's my character. But it's their character, too. Take Fred Trueman. He started it... when the club decided to dispense with my services he slagged me off. He couldn't even bring himself to say I were a good player. He said, 'If I get back on the committee I still won't give

Boycott a contract.’ Well that was tantamount to saying, ‘Fuck you , then.’...He had to belittle me. I was hurt.... It was dirty tactics, that. ... If he walked through the door now I’d say, ‘ what have I ever done to you?’⁸²

Politics within the academia and ‘dirty tactics’ related to cricket. How is this possible? But while such complaints could be made and even entertained, they definitely cannot be resolved within these life spheres—and that is the reason why such complainants, could feel aghast and helpless; helpless being challenged by the internal norms of validation of these departments of existence. What are we to do? Shall we call for integrity of the public and the private? Or shall we invoke a strict separation?⁸³

The answers to these questions must come, or emerge, *from* (yes, from) the future—since the future is the ‘supreme anachronism’: ‘For the future is the time in which we may not be, and yet we must imagine we will have been.’⁸⁴

NOTES

1. Friedrich Nietzsche, ‘On the Genealogy of Morals’ in *Basic Writings of Nietzsche*, transl. & ed. Walter Kaufmann (New York: The Modern Library, 2000), p. 226.
2. For those—among others—which are available on SSRN [Social Science Research Network] or other web consortiums especially see ‘Beyond Private And Public: New Perspectives on Personal and Personalist Social Work’, *The Indian Journal of Social Work*, Vol. 67, No. 3 (2006); ‘Response to “From Ambedkar to Thakkar and Beyond”’, *Economic And Political Weekly*, Vol. XLIII, No. 51 (Dec. 20-26, 2008), pp. 73-75; and ‘Corporate Social Work or “Being” Empowered and ‘Doing’ Empowerment: Preface to a Discourse Ethical Monitoring of the Capability Approach’, *Journal of Human Values*, Vol. 17, No. 2 (2011), pp. 161-170.
3. Immanuel Kant, *Lectures on Ethics*, trans. Louis Infield (New York: Harper and Row, 1963), p. 215.
4. David Owen, *Maturity And Modernity: Nietzsche, Weber, Foucault and the Ambivalence of Reason* (New York: Routledge, 1994), p. 117.
5. Max Weber, *Economy And Society: An Outline of Interpretive Sociology*, Vol. II, eds. Guenther Roth and Claus Wittich [1968] (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1978), p. 975.
6. Ibid.
7. Ibid.
8. Max Weber, ‘Intermediate Reflections on the Economic Ethics of the World Religions: Theory of the Stages and Directions of Religious Rejection of the World’ in Sam Whimster (ed.), *The Essential Weber: A Reader* (London: Routledge, 2004), p. 222.
9. But Weber’s critics, particularly Karl Fischer invokes John Stuart Mill in order to explain the emerging capitalist attitude, and argues, how money being an impersonal means to achieving things, becomes by a sleight of transference, the loved object-end itself. See Karl Fischer, ‘Karl Fischer’s Review of *The Protestant Ethic, 1907*’, trans. Austin Harrington and Mary Shields, in David J. Chalcraft and Austin Harrington (eds.), *The Protestant Ethic Debate: Max Weber’s Replies to his Critics*

- 1907-1910 (Liverpool: Liverpool University Press, 2001), pp. 28-29. Does this personalize the impersonal medium of money? Hardly so. Simmel elaborately shows how the money economy mediates and carpets the hiatus between possession and personality unlike the ancient Germanic law, thereby personality becoming increasingly impotent to possess (the medium) that dispossesses. We shall return to this historical point later. See Georg Simmel, *The Philosophy of Money*, trans. Tom Bottomore and David Frisby (London: Routledge, 1990), p. 334.
10. But Weber does note the exception in the attempt to personalize the nearly impossible credit machine in China, which resulted in the two way emergence of formal and material rationality, often, in conflict with each other. See Whimster (ed.), *The Essential Weber*, p. 222.
 11. The revision in Weber was evident in some of his later formulations where he seemed to have been stressing on the power of informal networks and personal warranties for the purposes of credit lending imminent in particular sect societies. For a richer discussion see Benjamin Cornwell, 'The Protestant Sect Credit Machine: Social Capital and the Rise of Capitalism', *Journal of Classical Sociology*, Vol. 7, No. 3 (2007), pp. 267-290.
 12. Throughout I've taken 'personal attacks' as they have been projected (within quotation marks) without distinguishing it from assaultive speech, libel, abuse, insinuation, invective and insult in terms of rhetoric and oratory. This specific legal-judicial exercise is beyond the scope of this article.
 13. Miguel de Beistegui, *Heidegger and the Political* (London: Routledge, 1998), p. 71.
 14. An early statement of this is Michael Walzer, 'Political Action: The Problem of Dirty Hands', *Philosophy and Public Affairs*, Vol. 2, No. 2 (1973), pp. 160-180. Evidently though—the limitation of Walzer is in limiting the problem of dirty hands to governmental or public outcomes only.
 15. '...[t]he problem of dirty hands is thought to be situated somewhere in between public and private. In this view, it is understood as a kind of discontinuity between the two spheres': J. Van Oosterhout, *The Quest for Legitimacy: On Authority and Responsibility in Governance*, (Rotterdam: Erasmus Research Institute of Management [ERIM], Erasmus University, 2000), p. 73.
 16. Excerpts from 'The Problem of Choice' in Philip Green and Michael Walzer (eds.), *The Political Imagination in Literature: A Reader* (New York: The Free Press, 1969), pp. 208-210.
 17. Jean Paul Sartre, excerpts from *Dirty Hands* in Philip Green and Michael Walzer (eds.), *The Political Imagination in Literature: A Reader* (New York: The Free Press, 1969), p. 210.
 18. Emmanuel Levinas, *Totality and Infinity: An Essay on Exteriority*, trans. Alphonso Lingis (Pittsburgh: Duquesne University Press, 2000), pp. 51-52.
 19. 'Egoistic and professional forces may become conflated in reality and indistinguishable in practice. Machiavelli's advice illuminates this difficult problem': Laurie Calhoun, 'The Problem of 'dirty Hands' and Corrupt Leadership', *The Independent Review*, Vol. 8, No. 3 (2004), p. 384.
 20. Charles Taylor, 'Modern Social Imaginaries', *Public Culture*, Vol. 14, No. 1 (2002), p. 91.
 21. And Machiavellism with all its moral pessimism and secular empiricism 'can be applied with the same force not only to the work of Kautilya but to the entire range of Hindu economic, legal and political literature': Benoy Kumar Sarkar,

- The Positive Background of Hindu Sociology: Introduction to Hindu Positivism* (Delhi: Motilal Banarasidas, 1985), p. 640.
22. 'Pure violence 'shows' itself precisely in the fact that it never appears *as such*'. For instance, lying or deception in order to be successful resembles a truth structure. This is the figurative essence of politics as I understand it and agree that they have the force to foreground identities. But I do not use it in the sense that it is the condition of every performative act (like saying 'all truths are fictions' or falsity is the phantasmatic base on which truth, indispensably, operates) entailing an unmediated immediacy or 'pure mediacy' so much so that 'that would mean, then, the death of the subject because the duality subject/object would have been entirely eliminated': Ernesto Laclau and Lilian Zac, 'Minding the Gap: The Subject of Politics' in Ernesto Laclau (ed.) *The Making of Political Identities* (London: Verso, 1994), pp. 26-27. In this sense we retain the Kantian use of 'malice' as something more than violence (and therefore different from violence as such) and we use the rubric 'politics' to refer to all of these.
 23. 'Whatever else a phenomenology of the political may offer, it should begin as a reflection on the first-person experience of the political.. to begin with a reflection on political experience': Steven Galt Crowell, ' Who is the Political Actor? An Existential Phenomenological Approach' in Kevin Thompson and Lester Embree (eds.), *Phenomenology of the Political* (Boston: Kluwer Academic Publishers, 2000), p. 11.
 24. We borrow this phrase and use it to our purpose from Norbert Elias, 'Time and Timing' in *On Civilization, Power and Knowledge: Selected Writings*, eds. Stephen Mennell and Johan Goudsblom (Chicago: The University of Chicago Press, 1998), pp. 253-259.
 25. Though this is in refutation of Sutherland's forceful thesis that the 'The dirty hands leader, by definition, operates quite alone in a supra ethical realm of elitist thinking' which is at odds in a democratic milieu, his other modification is largely acceptable where he raises doubts about such lone actions: 'The meaning of a particular politically intended action, rather, is not a pure philosophical concept, but can be puzzling even to the actors, who may have had confused motives, and is ultimately lost to the protagonist, being negotiated in society': S. L. Sutherland, 'The Problem of Dirty Hands in Politics: Peace in the Vegetable Trade', *Canadian Journal of Political Science*, Vol. 28, No. 3 (1995), pp. 506-507.
 26. 'Tragic remorse is the sentiment we feel when we are moved by moral concerns to commit moral violations and in so doing suffer anguish, ... and a sense of moral pollution in addition to the usual feelings of guilt and shame that ordinarily accompany moral violations': Stephen De Wijze, 'Tragic Remorse—The Anguish of Dirty Hands', *Ethical Theory and Moral Practice*, Vol. 7, No. 5 (2005), p. 470.
 27. Michael Walzer, 'Political Action: The Problem of Dirty Hands', *Philosophy and Public Affairs*, Vol. 2, No. 2 (1973), p. 176.
 28. Peter Digester, 'Forgiveness and Politics: Dirty Hands and Imperfect Procedures', *Political Theory*, Vol. 26, No. 5 (1998), p. 717; the bracketed elaborations are from p. 708.
 29. Peter Bratsis, 'The Construction of Corruption, or Rules of Separation and Illusions of Purity in Bourgeois Societies', *Social Text* 77, Vol. 21, No. 4 (Winter 2003), pp. 27-28.
 30. Slavoj Žižek, *The Plague of Fantasies* (London: Verso, 1997), p. 73.
 31. Kant, *Lectures on Ethics*, p. 215.

32. Arthur Koestler, excerpts from *Darkness at Noon* in Philip Green and Michael Walzer (eds.), *The Political Imagination in Literature* (New York: The Free Press, 1969), p. 199.
33. Cicero, 'Attack on an enemy of Freedom: *The Second Philippic Against Antony*' in his *Selected Works*, trans. M. Grant (London: Penguin Books, 1971).
34. Ibid.
35. Aristotle, *Politics* in *The Basic Works of Aristotle*, ed. Richard McKeon (New York: The Modern Library, 2001), p. 1304.
36. '...except in the temples of those gods at whose festivals the law permits even ribaldry...'; within the realm of his permission, Aristotle tends to include mature people also. Ibid.
37. Aristotle, *Rhetorica* in *The Basic Works of Aristotle*, ed. Richard McKeon (New York: The Modern Library, 2001), p. 1409.
38. Ibid., p. 1418.
39. Ibid., p. 1318.
40. G. W. F. Hegel, *Hegel's Lectures on the History of Philosophy*, Vol. 1, trans. E. S. Haldane [1892] (London: Routledge & Kegan Paul, 1955), p. 484.
41. Ibid.
42. David Sacks, *Encyclopedia of the Ancient Greek World* (New York: Facts on File Inc., 1995), p. 83.
43. Quentin Skinner, *The Foundations of Modern Political Thought*, Vol. Two: The Age of Reformation [1978] (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1992), p. 27.
44. Ibid.
45. Ibid., p. 28.
46. Ibid., p.29.
47. Especially Robert Darnton, *The Forbidden Best-Sellers of Pre-revolutionary France* (New York: Norton, 1996).
48. But how such radicalism could degenerate into underground commercial pornography as well, see Iain McCalman, *Radical Underworld: Prophets, Revolutionaries and Pornographers in London, 1795-1840* [1988] (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1993).
49. Mary L. Bellhouse, 'Erotic "Remedy" Prints and the Fall of the Aristocracy in Eighteenth century France', *Political Theory*, Vol. 25, No. 5 (October 1997), pp. 680-715.
50. Theodor Adorno, 'Anti-Semitism and Fascist Propaganda' in *The Stars Down to Earth and Other Essays on the Irrational in Culture*, ed. Stephen Crook (London: Routledge, 2002), p. 220.
51. 'The relation between premises and inferences is replaced by a linking up of ideas resting on mere similarity, often through association by employing the same characteristic word in two propositions which are logically quite unrelated. This method not only evades the control mechanisms of rational examination, but also makes it psychologically easier for the listener to 'follow.' He has no exacting thinking to do, but can give himself up passively to a stream of words in which he swims': Ibid., p. 223.
52. Ibid., pp. 222-23.
53. *Kabir larai* or the mock fight of poets in 'lewd' verses was an immensely popular cultural form which continued to remain popular till the middle of the nineteenth century in Bengal. The *larai* or fight would be staged mostly around the instantly created extempore 'obscene' parodies of Gods and goddesses orally presented in a running dialogue. Among several structural phases, the third part of the *larai*

- named *lahar* or *khessa* would include what a historian calls 'personal attacks'. Absolutely 'vulgar' attacks involving the opponents' parents, lovers or girls in the families, affairs, habits would be called names through rhymes and the audience would applaud being absolutely delighted: Asit Kumar Bandyopadhyay, *Bangla Sahityer Itivritta*, Vol. IV [1973] (Calcutta: Modern Book Agency Pvt. Ltd., 1981), pp. 86-88.
54. Bankimchandra Chattopadhyay, 'Review of *Hindudharmer Sreshтата* by Rajnarayan Basu', in *Bankim Rachanabali*, Vol.II (Calcutta : Sahitya Samsad, 6th reprint, [B.S 1384]), p. 851. [Translation mine]
 55. Ibid.
 56. Ibid.
 57. Adopting Meaghan Morris we can identify this obscene as that which makes anything 'more visible than the visible' and deals with the secret in a way that exposes its identity as 'more hidden than the hidden': Meaghan Morris, *The Pirates's Fiancée* (London: Verso, 1988), p. 188.
 58. This should not of course blind us to the fact that there was always another discourse on civility in the western narrative too: Consider for instance Norbert Elias when he quotes Erasmus of the sixteenth century, '(Fools who value civility more than health repress natural sounds.) Do not be afraid of vomiting if you must; for it is not vomiting but holding the vomit in your throat that is foul.' See Norbert Elias, *The Civilizing Process: The History of Manners*, trans. E. Jephcott (Oxford: Basil Blackwell, 1978), p. 58.
 59. Lawrence Cohen, 'Holi in Banaras and the Mahaland of Modernity', *GLQ: A Journal of Gay and Lesbian Studies*, Vol. 2, No. 4 (1999), pp. 399-424. Nearly all the issues like communal peace etc. and all the national leaders have been 'picturesquely addressed' in these books. I am grateful to Prof. Pradip Bose for suggesting and providing me with this reference.
 60. Richard Bellamy, 'Dirty Hands and Clean Gloves: Liberal Ideals and Real Politics', *European Journal of Political Theory*, Vol. 9, No. 4 (2010), p. 427.
 61. 'The principle of cooperation ['with evil'] and double effect are accessible to private individuals, as well as public representatives, and thus there cannot be two moralities': Leslie Griffin, 'The Problem of Dirty Hands', *The Journal of Religious Ethics*, Vol. 17, No. 1 (1989), p. 53.
 62. Martin Hollis, 'Dirty Hands', *British Journal of Political Science*, Vol. 12, No. 4 (1982), p. 397.
 63. Ibid., p. 396.
 64. Douglas Burnham, 'Heidegger, Kant and "Dirty" Politics', *European Journal of Political Theory*, Vol. 6, No. 1 (2007), p. 73.
 65. Ibid., p. 84.
 66. A much more promising and provoking line of objection to my way of arguing the politics of dirty hands expressed as immanent transcendence is this: 'Accordingly, politics is again a dirty game, in the additional sense that a critical analysis will always find its metaphysical grounds to be impurely taken up, riddled with contradictions or simply an expedient hotchpotch. To the extent that politics always involves ethical action, because of the primacy of the practical, then the 'dirtiness' of the metaphysical grounds of politics must raise ethical problems. As we have seen, ethical action cannot be grounded in or understood through the resources available to metaphysical thought'. Ibid., p. 85.
 67. Charles Sanders Pierce, 'The Principles of Phenomenology' in Justus Buchler (ed.), *Philosophical Writings of Pierce* (New York: Dover Publications, 1955), pp. 75-

- 76.
68. Aristotle, *Politics* in *The Basic Works of Aristotle*, pp. 1299-1300. We shall reiterate this in the article which thematizes Gandhi's nonviolence.
 69. Michel Foucault, 'A Preface to Transgression', in *Essential Works, Vol. 2: Aesthetics, Method, and Epistemology*, ed. James Daniel Faubion (London: Penguin Books, 2000), p. 82.
 70. Irving Kristol, 'Machiavelli and the Profanation of Politics' in *Reflections of a Neo Conservative: Looking Back, Looking Beyond*, Indian imprint (New Delhi: Allied Publishers, 1986), p. 127.
 71. Levinas, *Totality and Infinity*, p. 50.
 72. Niccolo Machiavelli, *The Prince*, trans. & ed. Robert M. Adams (New York: W. W. Norton & Company, 1992), p. 29.
 73. Kant, *Lectures on Ethics*, p. 219.
 74. Beistegui, *Heidegger and the Political*, p. 71.
 75. Louis Althusser, *Machiavelli and Us*, trans. Gregory Elliott (London: Verso, 1999).
 76. Machiavelli, *The Prince*, p. 49.
 77. Kristol, 'Machiavelli and the Profanation of Politics', p. 127.
 78. Simon Sparks, 'Editor's Introduction: Politica Ficta' in Philippe Lacoue-Labarthe and Jean-Luc Nancy, *Retreating the Political*, ed. Simon Sparks (London: Routledge, 1997), p. xxi.
 79. *Ibid.*, p. xxv.
 80. *Ibid.*
 81. Max Weber, 'Science as a Vocation' in *Max Weber's Complete Writings on Academics and Political Vocations*, ed. John Dreijmanis, trans. Gordon C. Wells (New York: Algora Publishing, 2008), p. 30.
 82. Nigel Farndale, 'Geoffrey Boycott' in *Flirtation, Seduction, Betrayal: Interviews with the Famous and the Infamous*, (London: Constable & Robinson Ltd., 2002), pp. 35-39.
 83. This question has been provocatively dealt with in Arnab Chatterjee 'Is Personal the terrorised Unity of private and Public? Rethinking Gandhi, Integrationism, and the Politics of Pure Means'—originally published in *Sociological Bulletin: Journal of the Indian Sociological Society*, Vol. 59, No. 3 (2010), pp. 407-422.
 84. Gillian Rose, *Mourning Becomes the Law: Philosophy and Representation* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1997), p. 126.