



Box 1—Covid 19, the war in Ukraine, the electricity price crisis in the wake of the UN climate report, the war on Gaza all within the precincts of the pandemics, which in Norway was lifted 20th November 2023. The strip version of the dodecahedron is here used to model the mode of isolation and connection of the *subject*. ($V - E + F = 20 - 11 + 12 = 21$)

Can we imagine that the steps of how the **C₁₉** pandemic was managed—at the level of governmentality—would allow us to assess the roots and beginnings of present *alt+R* turn in European politics? Conversely: can we imagine the progress of the *alt right* (*alt + R*) *political parties* in Europe, such that the detail of this progress, will reveal the nature of the *assumptions* underlying the state of exception in the early days of the Covid/**C₁₉** pandemic? This is the point of the *topological model* in **Box 1**. It features **1**) the *point* and *counterpoint* of **2**) a disordered system (**Box 2**).

It is possible to develop a model of a [disordered system](#) from a *point* and a *counterpoint*—**C₁₉** and *alt+R*—featuring the two main tenets of G. Agamben’s critique: that the **C₁₉** epidemic and the state of exception imposed during the *lockdown*, together feature textbook-examples of **a**) Foucault’s [biopolitics](#) and **b**) the [state of exception](#): with the corollary that with the *co-incidence* between **1**) an *epidemic* [a vessel of biopolitics] and **2**) the *lockdown* [the state of exception] features a *two-tiered* definition of a *pandemic*. That is, the movement of the state-apparatus to constraining freedom.

The debate on these main points of Agamben’s later degenerated into accusations of intellectual fraud, and support of the anti-vaccine rebellion, in the wake of March 2020. To those who did take the vaccine and respected the restrictions on contact/movement, but saw the contours of a state-apparatus—with a face we have *not* seen in our lifetime—imposing (though exceptionally) a set of social, economic, domestic and personal restrictions, it appeared that having seen this *face* and complied, joined the contemporary history of the image: an image established by hearing/obeying.

In other words, to people who took this intermediary position it was by *no means* self-evident that the *rationale* for the state of exception—to preserve a set of basic values preventing society from collapse—was warranted: since it is a fact that, in the wake of the pandemic, there was a surge of *alt+R* politics in many European countries. The problem is that we lack good explanations for it. On the other hand, people of the intermediary position will tend to consider it perfectly naive to assume that at the end of the pandemic we simply continue where we left off in March 2020. A long tale/tail.



Box 2. The dodecahedron in orb mode: $20 - 30 + 12 = 2$ (χ). The images can indicate events connected causally in themselves, through the central subject, or simply held by him. Emergent visual model of political subject (centre). A way of viewing political subjectivity.

So, we are in trouble. The source of the trouble appears as soon as we ask the question: *when did the pandemic end?* This year—in 2024—it was noted that KHIO’s MA programme in design, held its first exam with students that had *not* experienced the lockdown, during the period of their 2-year MA. However, according to the Norwegian government portal [regjeringen.no](#) the pandemic was formally lifted Nov. 20th 2023. Thus, there is a discrepancy between 2022 when initiatives aiming at the return “back to normal” multiplied (both at the individual and the institutional levels) and the formal *lifting* of the pandemic by the Norwegian Government, more than one year later.

C₁₉ did not return to the status of an epidemic till late 2023. In the meantime, the UN’s devastating climate report came in 2021 and the shock of electricity prices came October 25th 2021, and demanded extraordinary govern-

ment measures. Next, the war broke out in Ukraine 24th February 2022. And Israel's war on Gaza reasoned from the Hamas pogrom of October 7th 2023. So, all this happened before the Norwegian government lifted the pandemic Nov. 20th 2023. Local biopolitics tangle/tango with world-events.

If the surge *alt+R* inter/nationally is from the *sum* of the factors at play in a variety of different events—all calling on states of exception—it is not the *only* possible sum (since the *left* is winning the elections in some countries). Yet, it is consistent and significant. If we join the surge of the *alt+R* step-by-step to the beginning of the pandemic, at the declaration of the lockdown, there are some characteristics of *biopolitics-cum-lockdown* that correspond to what is set in permanence in *alt+R* governance: that is, the state of exception as the rule of the coming state/governmentality.

Retracing our steps of **C₁₉** back to the beginning in the light of the progress of *alt+R* political parties—Geert Wilders is selected on the ground of his forming a *one-man* party—*does make sense*: it also makes sense to retrace the steps of the *alt+R* surge back to the multiplication and expansion of the states of exception, in the period from 2020 to 2023 (with the fuzzy biopolitical border in 2022-2023). What was shaped and formed in that period? The computer grew into a nexus linking our *workday* (quodidian life), hatching hitherto new work-forms, to the *lined-up* states of exception.

Which means that the *face of the state*—an image materialising as it's voice is heard and obeyed—came alongside the formation of everyone's *political self-image*: the 'political subject' is a hetero-structural output, generated from the push-and-pull in the *point* and *counterpoint* discussed above. It is lodged and seated within the generative process of a disordered systems (which the theory of disordered systems defines in these terms). It is *hetero-structural* in the sense that it is impossible to derive from either of the *two* strings in *point* and *counterpoint* in **Box 1**. We are now at **Box 2**.

It yields a kaleidoscopic image of the *subject* at the centre of 4 selected states of exception: 4 instances *causally* related to one another, 4 relations through the *subject* at the centre and the 4 images, and 4 images as *casual* elements simply held by the subject. It is by this canon that the dodecahedron is *12-in-1* (a multiple, yes, *but* in-one). The point being that this is not a psychological subject, but one politically constructed by exceptional circumstances under which aspects of personhood is defined in relation to *death*: unfit for sacrifice, but also dead without consequence.

That is, *homo sacer* in Agamben's definition: a subject defined by the potential of maintaining the relation between instances that may point to *causal* connections, alternately are connected through the *subject*, alternately are *disparate* images grouped by the subject. The point is not *which one* it is, or whether it is *all at once*, but there are a set of candidate links between these instances and reality. The underlying assumption images have some documentary value/function: alternately an

intended documentary function and an *emergent* communicative value. Based on the face.



Box 3— ($V - E + F = 26 - 10 + 12 = 28$). This is a particular map of the orb. There are 6 different bifloral cuts of the orb, since there are 6 alternative N/S Poles that can be selected from the orb. Here **S₁** and **S₂** (signifier and signifier of signifier) are **C₁₉** the state of exception.

The sum of this alternation features the in/formative impact of the ideas in our time: learning the workings of images in the world we live in, and learning who we are: the *constraints* under which freedom is in/articulated. That is, *no* freedom if reduced to **Box 2**. But freedom under constraints if we move unto **Box 3**. Here, one particular cut and montage is shown (map). However, there are 5 more: depending on how we select the N/S Poles on the orb in **Box 2**. The result is that we have 6 *alternatives* of how the *bifloral* pattern in **Box 3** can be obtained: all following different causal routes, and each of them variable in how the subject develops in navigating the constraints imposed on it. If the relation between these 6 are non-deterministic there is what we may call emergent freedom under constraints. Freedom is not liberty: it is *no one's* to be given, but hatches from living.