

## 4. "Ice cold". The Way to Totalitarianism

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There have been various attempts to define a totalitarian form of rule. Among the undisputed classics are the studies of Carl Joachim Friedrich and Zbigniew Brzezinski, and those of Hannah Arendt. In their work *Totalitarian Dictatorship and Autocracy*<sup>1</sup>, Friedrich and Brzezinski presented a typology of totalitarianism whose core elements are ideology, a mass party, a terror system, the state monopoly of the means of mass communication and the use of the armed forces, and surveillance and control of the economy. Since then, numerous critiques and additions have addressed the question of whether this approach adequately describes a fascist regime such as that of Mussolini in Italy, or the Soviet Union after Stalin's death, and the GDR – apart from many ideologically motivated attempts to save the idea of socialism by explaining Stalinism as a bureaucratically degenerated system or to relativise the crimes of Nazi Germany by referring to Stalin's totalitarianism.

In her book *The Origins of Totalitarianism*, Arendt starts from a different question: not what characterises a totalitarian regime, but what are the reasons for its emergence in a non-totalitarian society, and how did it become what it eventually was. Or, as Arendt retrospectively describes the emotional impulse of her writing: "It was, at any rate, the first possible moment to articulate and to elaborate the questions with which my generation had been forced to live for the better part of its adult life: What happened? Why did it happen? How could it have happened?"<sup>2</sup>

In her search for answers to these questions, Arendt inevitably enters the territory of several disciplines: historical and cultural studies, individual and social psychology (without explicitly mentioning these fields) and political science. Arendt's questions determine which scientific disciplines are touched upon, not the other way around: the discipline does not determine which questions may be asked. And since for Arendt there is no determinism that determines the course of history, one

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1 Carl J. Friedrich / Zbigniew Brzezinski: *Totalitarian Dictatorship and Autocracy*, Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1956.

2 Hannah Arendt: *The Origins of Totalitarianism*. New Edition, New York: Harcourt, Brace & World 1966, p. viii.

cannot assume an origin that necessarily led to the new form of rule of totalitarianism. "I therefore talk only of 'elements', which eventually crystallise into totalitarianism," she explained in a reply to Eric Voegelin.<sup>3</sup>

The metaphor of crystallising is not used by Arendt by chance. Metaphors have great significance in her work for denoting phenomena and processes for which there are (as yet) no terms, and in this case Arendt is referring to how a perception becomes clearer and develops fixed and definite forms.

Arendt was not content with describing total domination as such but was concerned with deciphering the process of its crystallisation. In doing so, it becomes clear that simple answers are not enough, for example, to explain the Holocaust in terms of 19th century anti-Semitism and racism. It is not enough to trace the Nazis' war of world views back to 19th-century nationalism, to explain the Nazis' ideology with 19th-century world views, the population's receptivity to Nazism with Hitler's seductive power or the mass marches with an extreme politicisation that had already begun in the Weimar Republic. Arendt contradicts all this and develops her own detailed theory on numerous aspects of this crystallisation process. Unfortunately, Arendt rarely provided information about the method of her work. Only once in a manuscript she left behind, "On the Nature of Totalitarianism", Arendt explained:

The task of the social scientist is to find the historical and political background of anti-Semitism, but under no circumstances to conclude that Jews are only stand-ins for the petty bourgeoisie or that anti-Semitism is a surrogate of an Oedipus complex, or whatnot. Cases in which people consciously tell lies and, to remain with our example, pretend to hate Jews while in fact they want to murder the bourgeoisie, are very rare and easily detectable. In all other cases, self-understanding and self-interpretation is the very foundation of all analysis and understanding. ... Yet while our standards of scientific accuracy have constantly grown and are higher today than at any previous time our standards and criteria for true understanding seem to have no less constantly declined.<sup>4</sup>

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3 Hannah Arendt: A Reply to Eric Voegelin, in: *Essays in Understanding, 1930–1954*, New York: Schocken 1994, p. 405.

4 Hannah Arendt: On the Nature of Totalitarianism. An Essay in Understanding, in: *Essays in Understanding*, op. cit., p. 339. – At a conference on totalitarianism in 1953, organised by Carl J. Friedrich, Arendt declared that total rule was a new form of rule. "This conclusion seems inevitable; yet it is extremely daring. For throughout our history there have been few forms of government, all of them already known to and described by the ancients. It seems so unlikely that we of all people should be confronted with a novel form of government. This doubt, which certainly is legitimate, has given rise to certain descriptions of totalitarianism, usually couched in psychological or sociological terms, in which totalitarian government appears as some more radical form of something already known. It is indeed true that the novelty of totalitarian government reveals itself clearly only if one considers its political institutions and modes of action." Carl J. Friedrich: *Totalitarianism. Proceedings of a Conference held at*

Arendt ties this "true understanding" to two phenomena that play a key role in the existential philosophy of the first half of the 20th century: *Experience* and *World*. For Arendt, experience not only means experiencing or suffering something, but also reflecting on and judging these experiences. The basis for such judgement, however, is the relationship to other people, what Arendt calls worldliness or being in the world. People's sense of reality depends on the extent to which they can have experiences and be in the world. Regardless of how close or far they are from reality, their thoughts and actions are always intentionally filled with meaning. It is from this theoretical foundation that Arendt undertook her analysis of the emergence and characteristics of total domination. Understanding total domination means understanding people's meaningful actions and relating them to total domination, and thus understanding how and why the totalitarian movements, especially National Socialism, came to power with great popular support.

In the following, I will outline the changes to the loss of experience and world and their replacement by ideology and terror, as discussed by Arendt in detail. Since Arendt refrains from psychological explanations and seems to look exclusively at the spiritual dimension of ideology and worldlessness, I will then go into the psychological dispositions in the Weimar Republic under the catchword of the "behavioural doctrines of coldness", which gives Arendt's analyses an interesting confirmation.

## The Loss of Experience and the World

The First World War, as a modern, mechanised war operating with poison gas and entirely unheroic, represents a caesura that is representative of far-reaching social changes. In Germany, it is the end of the Empire and the introduction of democracy without majority support. For Arendt, this caesura means a rupture of tradition through loss of authority, which in the 1920s is accompanied by a disintegration of the old class society and the emergence of an anonymous mass society, on a European level by the disintegration of great empires and the emergence of national minorities without their own rights and of refugee flows without citizenship, the stateless. Walter Benjamin described the loss of experience in and after World War I: "For never has experience been contradicted more thoroughly: strategic experience has been contravened by positional warfare; economic experience, by the inflation; physical experience, by hunger; moral experiences, by the ruling powers."<sup>5</sup> This means the dissolution of interpersonal ties, existence as stateless persons and refugees,

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*the American Academy of Arts and Sciences*, March 1953, Boston: Harvard University Press 1954, p. 75f.

5 Walter Benjamin: *Experience and Poverty* (1933), Translated by Rodney Livingstone. <https://www.atlasofplaces.com/index/277ES>. (Accessed 2022/10/18)

and the emergence of the feeling of homelessness and abandonment. “Loneliness,” says Arendt, “in such a world is no longer a psychological matter to be handled with such beautiful and meaningless terms as ‘introvert’ or ‘extrovert’. Loneliness, as the concomitant of homelessness and uprootedness, is, humanly speaking, the very disease of our time.”<sup>6</sup> If, under these conditions, we were to condemn people who take refuge in propaganda promises as stupid or weak, we would be making it too easy for ourselves. “These people are nothing of the sort. They have only escaped the despair of loneliness by becoming addicted to the vice of solitude.”<sup>7</sup> Loneliness and abandonment are not the same thing for Arendt. In solitude there is still the dialogue with oneself, but in abandonment pure “logicality, mere reasoning without regard for facts and experience”,<sup>8</sup> can exert an irresistible attraction.

Such an existence between abandonment and loneliness characterises the modern mass. According to Arendt, the strength of the German Communist Party and Social Democracy in the Weimar Republic, as well as the existence of other major parties, belies the disintegration of class society and the emergence of a large part of the population that was not organised in any party, trade union, professional associations, etc. The slumbering majorities were transformed into “one great unorganised, structureless mass of furious individuals who had nothing in common except their vague apprehension that the hopes of party members were doomed, that, consequently, the most respected, articulate and representative members of the community were fools, ...”<sup>9</sup>. These masses came out of the First World War, according to Arendt, with a “peculiar selflessness ... as a yearning for anonymity, for being just a number and functioning only as a cog”<sup>10</sup>. This selflessness was not an expression of goodness but, on the contrary, of the feeling “that oneself does not matter, the feeling of being expendable”<sup>11</sup>, which, however, did not produce despair but “cynical or bored indifference”<sup>12</sup> even to one’s own death.

What Arendt described here at the end of the 1940s she encountered again in Eichmann at his trial in Jerusalem. Himmler’s mass murderer “clearly bore the features of the philistine rather than of the mob man, and was not driven by passion and ready to sacrifice everything – belief, honor, dignity – on the slightest provocation”.<sup>13</sup>

The moral upheaval of the First World War and the loss of ties led to a division of the masses. For Arendt, “It is as though mankind had divided itself between those

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6 Hannah Arendt: *On the Nature of Totalitarianism*, op. cit., p. 358.

7 Ibid.

8 ibid.

9 Hannah Arendt: *The Origins*, op. cit., p. 315.

10 Ibid., p. 329.

11 Ibid., p. 315.

12 Ibid., p. 316.

13 Ibid., p. 338.

who believe in human omnipotence (who think that everything is possible if one knows how to organize masses for it) and those for whom powerlessness has become the major experience of their lives."<sup>14</sup>

For the organisers of the masses, Nietzsche's insight in *Beyond Good and Evil* applies:

*Proportionateness* is strange to us, let us confess it to ourselves; our itching is really the itching for the infinite, the immeasurable. Like the rider on his forward panting horse, we let the reins fall before the infinite, we modern men, we semi-barbarians—and are only in *our* highest bliss when we *are in most danger*.<sup>15</sup>

For Arendt, there are two border areas that need to be distinguished: those of modernity and those of total domination. The difference between the two, Arendt wrote to her teacher and friend Karl Jaspers, is like "between a man who sets out to murder his old aunt and people who without any direct calculations of utility ... built factories to produce corpses." And she surmised that in the process, "it is not individual human beings who are struck dead for human reasons by other individual human beings, but an organised attempt is made to eradicate the concept of man."<sup>16</sup> To do this, human beings must be made superfluous, which is more than merely using them as a means to an end or violating their human dignity. "All this ... is connected with the delusion of man's omnipotence (not simply addiction to power). If man qua man were omnipotent, then indeed it would be impossible to see why men should exist ... man's omnipotence makes men superfluous."<sup>17</sup> This difference between an addiction to power that wants to control others and omnipotence that wants to dispose of the bodies of others and their lives in a god-like way is the difference between pre-totalitarian and totalitarian society.

The thrill of the infinite, the immeasurable, which Nietzsche observed, also appears in Arendt's description of the elite's lust for evil in the aftermath of the First World War. The "anti-humanist, anti-liberal, anti-individualist and anti-cultural instincts of the *front* generation" in the Weimar Republic with their literarily sophisticated writings propagated violence, striving for power and cruelty as "the supreme capacities of men who had definitely lost their place in the universe."<sup>18</sup> Therefore, according to Arendt, the expressionism of the 1920s was a kind of "bomb" expressionism based on a philosophy of terror. And the bourgeoisie itself rejoiced in the

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14 Hannah Arendt: *The Origins of Totalitarianism*, Preface to the First Edition, op. cit., p. vii.

15 Friedrich Nietzsche: *Beyond Good and Evil*, Aphorism 224. See also chapter 2 in this volume: Phantasies of Omnipotence.

16 Hannah Arendt / Karl Jaspers: *Correspondence, 1926–1969* p. 69 (17 December 1946)

17 Hannah Arendt / Karl Jaspers: *Correspondence*, op. cit., p. 202 (4 March 1951)

18 *Ibid.*, p. 330.

unmasking of bourgeois hypocrisy, which Brecht had actually undertaken with critical intent in his *Threepenny Opera*.

The art of organising this amorphous mass fell to propaganda. Unlike conventional worldviews such as traditional anti-Semitism, it was no longer simply a matter of picking out elements of everyday experience and generalising them in such a way that they became unverifiable. Siegfried Kracauer, in his manuscript *Totalitarian Propaganda*, written in 1938 but only recently published, stated that Hitler was not concerned with representing interests but solely with conquering the masses. Kracauer quotes the propagandist Ernst Kriek: “That is why National Socialism is not party and programme, ... but a fluid and fluidising movement, which will one day flow into a new form, order and *ratio* with victory, but which must remain in flux as a pure movement until it has seized and permeated the whole of our *völkisch* living space.”<sup>19</sup>

Totalitarian propaganda, according to Arendt, was extended to include the “violence of organization”, so that the lies were accompanied by acts of the Nazis, “as though the world was dominated by the Jews and needed a counter-conspiracy to defend itself.”<sup>20</sup>

Moreover, totalitarian propaganda promises a remedy for the feeling of homelessness, anonymity and atomization of the masses. The more trust in the power of common sense and differentiated perceptions of reality dwindled, the more trust in one’s own sensory perception also dwindled and grew a “longing for fiction” a “revolt of the masses against ‘realism’, common sense and all ‘the plausibilities of the world’ (Burke) was the result of their atomization, of their loss of social status along with which they lost the whole sector of communal relationships in whose framework common sense makes sense.”<sup>21</sup>

The great fallacy of the masses is to believe that they had successfully escaped from homelessness and deceptive reality and had taken safe ground with the railing of logical coherence and the power of organisation. What they did not see was the fact that in this way, with the help of propaganda, the totalitarian movement succeeded in dominating the masses not only from the outside but also from the inside. This includes the abolition of the difference between rulers and ruled, the binding of everyone to each other by a kind of co-optation through the Aryan proof, the creation of an organised connivance and therefore also the awareness that no one is innocent anymore. Totalitarian propaganda leaves no room for manoeuvre. It is, as Kracauer writes, about “the total occupation of the zone of spontaneity; that

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19 Ernst Kriek *Nationalpolitische Erziehung*, Leipzig Armanen-Verlag 1937, p. 36. Quoted in Siegfried Kracauer *Totalitäre Propaganda*, Berlin Suhrkamp 2013, p. 38.

20 Hannah Arendt *The Origins*, op. cit., p. 362.

21 Hannah Arendt *The Origins*, op. cit., p. 352.

zone in which opinions are formed. ... In order to block the source of opinion formation, propaganda must therefore make the question disappear, which it seeks to accomplish by deliberately staging the cult of the leader and that of obedience."<sup>22</sup> It is soldierly obedience, war is the starting point and returns as totalitarian war.

With the conquest of power, the whole society can be transformed into a totalitarian organisation. The fictitious world of propaganda is now completely detached from the previous world and reduced to the essential, ideology, and the atomised society is welded together with terror and set in motion to reshape reality in the sense of the ideological assertions. Experience and the world, the two bridges to reality that had become fragile in mass society, are replaced by ideology and terror.

## Ideology and Terror

After completing her book on totalitarianism, Hannah Arendt, in contrast to the social sciences of her time, which disregarded the classics of political theory, found in Montesquieu a theory of government with the help of which total rule can be described as an independent, new form alongside the classical forms such as monarchy, aristocracy and republic. "This conclusion seems inevitable," she declared at the 1953 conference mentioned above, "yet it is extremely daring."<sup>23</sup> Following Montesquieu, Arendt distinguishes the essence and principle of this form of rule, i.e. what characterises and holds it together, and what drives action. The essence, according to Arendt, is terror, which takes the role of law, and ideology is the principle of action, not fear, as in tyranny.

"Ideologies," according to Arendt, "always assume that one idea is sufficient to explain everything in the development from a premise and that no experience can teach anything because everything is comprehended in this consistent process of logical deduction."<sup>24</sup> With the seizure of power, the idea itself recedes into the background and the logical process as such into the foreground. Thus, under Stalin, the question of building socialism takes a back seat to the logic of the class struggle, according to which there continue to be objective class enemies under the dictatorship of the proletariat, regardless of whether they are subjectively aware of it. The purges are set in motion according to this scheme. The novel *Darkness at Noon* by the former communist Arthur Koestler is a startling depiction of this abstract logic to which an innocent senior revolutionary of the first hour submits.

22 Siegfried Kracauer *Totalitäre Propaganda*, op. cit., p. 50f.

23 Carl J. Friedrich: *Totalitarianism*, op. cit., p. 76.

24 Hannah Arendt: *The Origins*, op. cit., p. 470.

One could speak of an ideocracy, a rule of the idea.<sup>25</sup> The idea of the superiority of socialism therefore does not shrink from stating that only in Moscow would there be an underground railway; it implies the call to make the idea a reality and to destroy all subways in the world. Only in world domination, the unlimited domination of the idea over man, can the idea receive its full validity.

Here also returns the metaphor of the crystallised form assumed by the emerging totalitarianism. In accordance with the unemotional logical operation, the laws of nature, in the case of Nazism, or of history, in the case of Stalinism, are described as merciless and Hitler prefers to speak of “ice cold reasoning”.<sup>26</sup> Perpetrators and victims cannot escape this logic. And it is this iciness, together with an unconditional incorporation into the totalitarian movement, that is demanded of the totalitarian personnel. Those who still cling to old ideas of nationalism, like the Röhm group, are eliminated. Those who want to enrich themselves, like the concentration camp commander Koch, are executed. Those who remain “decent” and function diligently, like Eichmann and Himmler, are promoted.

In the process, Arendt notices how the ideological content becomes all the more insignificant the further one looks inside the organisation. Here there are no longer any challenges from an external reality, here the struggle no longer has to be waged in favour of fiction, but “the statement, all Jews are inferior, means all Jews should be killed”.<sup>27</sup> The way into this interior leads through the sluices of the front organisation. This “functions both ways: as the façade of the totalitarian movement to the nontotalitarian world, and as the façade of this world to the inner hierarchy of the movement.”<sup>28</sup>

Finally, terror ensures that interstices between people are eliminated and that everyone moves uniformly. It is, says Arendt in another apt metaphor, like an “iron band which holds them so tightly together that it is as though their plurality had disappeared into One Man off gigantic dimensions.”<sup>29</sup> What remains when terror has welded the whole society together is a whole people as one; people in the plural no longer exist. From here it is only a step to consider the whole of society as a single field of human experimentation: the concentration camps and death camps as places for dehumanising people and making them disappear without memory, and the purges as experiments in how perpetrators can be smoothly transformed into victims.<sup>30</sup>

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25 Carl J. Friedrich: *Totalitarianism*, op. cit., p. 134.

26 Hannah Arendt: *The Origins*, op. cit., p. 471.

27 Ibid., p. 385.

28 Ibid., p. 367.

29 Ibid., p. 465f.

30 Hannah Arendt: *Mankind and Terror*, in: *Essays in Understanding*, op. cit., p. 304f.

## Cool Conduct: the Culture of Distance

Hannah Arendt did not use examples in her remarks on the 'front' generation of literati and the elite of the Weimar Republic, as she otherwise did in her book on the origins of total domination, to reflect experiences, e.g. the encounter of the European colonisers with the African population using Joseph Conrad's novella *Heart of Darkness*.

All the more helpful is the study by cultural scientist Helmut Lethen *Cool Conduct: The Culture of Distance*. It supports Arendt's theses, without referring to them, of the disorientation of the 'front' generation after WWI, of being absorbed by the masses, of de-psychologization and de-moralisation and the search for adequate behaviour that allows survival in the new world. Lethen presents the writings of various philosophers and writers of the 1920s who discuss and establish rules of conduct: Helmut Plessner, Walter Benjamin, Bertolt Brecht, Ernst Jünger, Werner Sermer, and the novelist and resistance activist Werner Kraus. These are not masterminds of National Socialism or Stalinism, but influential thinkers who at the same time reflect the *zeitgeist* of the 1920s.

The prevailing cultural mood in the Weimar Republic is *Neue Sachlichkeit* (*New Objectivity*). It was characterised by a matter-of-fact, documentary style, reportage and functionality. Examples include Brecht's epic theatre and Bauhaus architecture. What sounds seemingly unexcited and peaceful when describing the New Objectivity is, for Lethen, quite the opposite, an emotional reaction to the experience of war and the loss of all traditional values. This reaction led to a withdrawal from all personal revelation, interpersonal encounter and psychological interest. "Having lost the mooring of an external metaphysics, people begin scavenging the ruins of historical systems for an orienting codex of conduct, which is to say, the tools of self-stabilization."<sup>31</sup> This requires a retreat from what Lethen calls the cult of psychologization of the 19th century. According to Lethen, the emotional, expressive human being is replaced by the 'cool persona', the other-directed 'radar type', and the 'creature'.<sup>32</sup> by the physics of human relations à la Hobbes, the psychology of the outside and the depiction of man as a machine of movement. Their feelings are nothing more than motor behaviour and their character is a mere mask. Authenticity is replaced by appearance. The *New Objectivity* polemicised against the culture of conscience: Benjamin wanted to get rid of "the tremendous complication of the indebted person, the complication and binding of his guilt" and "that mythical enslavement of the per-

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31 Helmut Lethen: *Cool Conduct: The Culture of Distance in Weimar Germany*, Berkeley: University of California Press 2002, p. 50.

32 *Ibid.*, p. 26.

son<sup>33</sup> and Helmut Plessner, in his writing *The Limits of Community*, pleaded against the culture of conscience in favour of a culture of shame and against the closeness of community for a distance in society.

Just as Arendt blames social disorganisation for an increasing schematism in thinking and growing influence of worldviews as new stabilisers, Lethen observes an increased tendency towards schematism and classifications from physique to handwriting and race. “When social crisis takes hold, the external voices to which individuals have attended are no longer clearly audible and the interior seat of judgment is no longer credited. In such circumstances, codes of conduct operate as written receptacles for external directives to guide individual behavior.”<sup>34</sup>

Hence the writings of Plessner *The Limits of Community*, Werner Serner *Handbrevier für Hochstapler*, Brecht *Reader for Those Who Live in Cities*, and Jünger’s essays *Der Arbeiter* and *Über den Schmerz*. Turning away from inner guilt to outer shame enables salvation through immersion in the mass where one is free from shame and touch. Society, according to Plessner, is an “open system of traffic among unconnected individuals.”<sup>35</sup> The rapidly increasing public road traffic becomes a place and a metaphor for functional behaviour, for a flow, fulfilled by the circulation of commodity and labour power, in which people no longer have any substance and are always on the alert because of the constant demand to adapt.

“The decade of the new objectivity,” writes Lethen, “introduces a figure with his hat pulled down over eyes that, in their expressive dimension, are no longer of interest.”<sup>36</sup> Thus Brecht, whom Arendt attests a “strange tendency towards anonymity” from the beginning, recommends in his *Reader for Those Who Live in Cities* to pull the hat deep into the face:

If you bump into your parents in the city of Hamburg  
 Or anywhere else (for that matter)  
 Pass them like strangers, turn the corner, don’t acknowledge them  
 Pull the hat, which they gave you, over your face  
 Don’t, oh, don’t show your face  
 Instead  
 Cover your tracks!  
 Eat the meat that’s there! Don’t save anything!  
 Enter any house, when it rains, and sit on any chair that’s there  
 But don’t remain sitting! And don’t forget your hat.  
 I’m telling you:

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33 Walter Benjamin Schicksal und Charakter, in *Gesammelte Schriften* II-1, Frankfurt/M. Suhrkamp 1991, p. 178.

34 Helmut Lethen: *Cool Conduct*, op. cit., p. 17.

35 Ibid., p. 26.

36 Ibid., p. 31.

Cover your tracks

Whatever you say, don't say it twice.

If you find your idea with somebody else: deny it.<sup>37</sup>

In his epic theatre, Brecht is with external gestures, not concerned with the theatrical expression of inner experience. The psychologist Karl Bühler made studies on the physiognomic connection between the gaze, forehead wrinkles, and the crease of the eyelids. Jünger described the new, disciplined face of coldness and closedness, which, in contrast to the "good" and open, changeable face of the liberal world, is "closed", has "a fixed point of view" and is "one-sided, representational and rigid".<sup>38</sup>

The Romanist Werner Kraus, who organised the resistance against Hitler in the *Red Chapel* and was imprisoned, wrote a study on Gracián's *The Art of Worldly Wisdom* and the art of *simulatio* and *dissimulatio* on death row, which he survived. In doing so, he redefined the concept of the political in contrast to a politics in the segregated sphere of statecraft as the art of distinction, of drawing boundaries and dissimulation, which every fighter needs.<sup>39</sup> The political fighter acts in anonymity, refuses confessions out of sincerity, chooses masks and does not complain about alienation.

With verve, the authors advocate closure and coldness. "In nothing is man's freedom demonstrated more purely than in his distance from himself", Plessner declared.<sup>40</sup> He is supported by Nietzsche: "Only masked is man entirely real."<sup>41</sup> The painter George Grosz prided himself on his "pack-ice character".<sup>42</sup> Benjamin declared, "that precise observation becomes possible only when 'the moral personality has been put on ice'".<sup>43</sup> And Jünger wrote: "We saw that man becomes capable of defying the attack of pain to the same extent that he is able to expose himself out of himself. This standing out, this objectification and objectification of life increases uninterrupted."<sup>44</sup> Finally, the cold *persona* is to merge with cold technology. Modern man, Lethen says of Jünger, realises "the dream of synchronization between organism and technical apparatus. Its being is integrated into technology. Enclosed within an armored cell, it is the intelligence of a bullet; an electric machine replaces the functions of a central nervous system." Man is transformed into an "electric human crustacean".<sup>45</sup> Jünger calls this new, armoured machine-being a "worker" – a

37 Bertolt Brecht: Reader for Those Who Live in Cities, in: *Bertolt Brecht Poems*, 1913–1956, ed. John Willett and Ralph Manheim, London Routledge 1976.

38 Ernst Jünger Über den Schmerz, in *Essays I, Sämtliche Werke* Vol. 7, Stuttgart Klett-Cotta 1980, p. 165.

39 Werner Kraus *Gracián's Lebenslehre*, Frankfurt/M. Klostermann 1947, p. 80.

40 Helmut Lethen: *Cool Conduct*, op. cit., p. 58.

41 *Ibid.*, p. 62.

42 *Ibid.*, p. 105.

43 *Ibid.*, p. 147.

44 Ernst Jünger: *On Pain*, op. cit., p. 189.

45 Helmut Lethen: *Cool Conduct*, op. cit., p. 160.

being that comes from a mechanised war of position and – Jünger’s imagination did not yet reach that far – is on its way to factory-like work at the sites of the Holocaust.

It took 20 years after the end of the Second World War and the Holocaust for the second generation, those born during and shortly after that war, to break through the perpetuation of the anonymity and armouring of the cold *persona* and its “inability to mourn” (Mitscherlich) and give the “open, changeable face” back its place in public and private life.

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