

The individual as a part of the "national body", the sick individual as a danger for the "people's health", is reminiscent of an attitude that is intensifying these days, though the individual today does not even need to be sick to be considered a danger to the "public health".

The Destruction of Individual and Collective Healing Knowledge and the Rise of Medicine

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The Destruction of Individual and Collective Healing Knowledge and the Rise of Medicine

Today, medicine is one of the most recognized and unquestioned institutions of all. It is considered the science of healing and enjoys the reputation of being in the service of mankind. Whoever visits a house of medicine promises themselves the healing or prevention of an illness or injury, and in many cases medicine seems to actually more or less fulfill this promise. But medicine has its dark side: greedily it steals its knowledge from communities, elicits the secrets of life from the bodies of humans and animals through brutal and unscrupulous torture. And once this knowledge is gathered in the cathedral of medicine, it is miserly guarded by its high priests, so that it does not fall into the hands of an un consecrated person. For the greatest fear of medicine is that people would take their health into their own hands. Because then their cathedrals would remain empty.

Even the "Oath of Hippocrates", the founder of medicine, so to speak, precludes doctors from passing on their knowledge to unauthorized persons. This is nothing unusual, after all, you will find corresponding oaths for almost every guild if you only look, and yet you will not find many professions today that are as exclusive as that of the doctor. In many countries, doctors are licensed by the state, but before that is even up for debate in Germany, for example, aspiring doctors must complete a medical degree. And to do that, you first have to be admitted. The allocation of places of study is centralized for the Federal Republic, and anyone who cannot show top grades (usually an average of 1.0 to 1.1) is rejected. Only the rich – the children of doctors, for example – can afford to study abroad and thus avoid this strict selection process. And not only is access to medical training denied to the vast majority of peo-

ple, but knowledge about medicine is also one of the best-kept secrets. No wonder. In 2018, pharmaceutical companies generated around 1.2 trillion US dollars worldwide through the sale of medicine. Medicine "in the service of humanity"? Don't make me laugh!

Yet an institution like medicine, which possesses almost all the healing knowledge of a civilization, is not a given of nature. Only the organized destruction of the healing knowledge of mankind many hundreds of years ago made the emergence of such a monster possible, which today manages people and their health in the name of the state/states (or rather in the name of capital?). In the following article, I will take up some milestones of this process in order to present how medicine could emerge as an instrument of the rulers to manage their population – a character that is perhaps more evident today than ever before – and how this management works.

Monastic gardens, witch hunts and colonization

Of course, the authoritarian and socially controlling traces of medicine could be traced back quite a bit further, to ancient Greece and Rome, for example, where physicians who gained new knowledge about the human body, among other things by dissecting living slaves, were available primarily to the wealthy upper class

and the military. But the focus of this exploration will be on modern medicine, which is characterized, among other things, by the fact that it claims a monopoly on the art of healing, and the establishment of that very monopoly began in another, later time.

Even if the millennia of domestication had already separated people from nature, from their own bodies and through the division of labor also largely from their own responsibility for their health, it was also quite common in Europe, especially in the poverty-stricken lower class, which had no access to the medical specialists and scientific medical knowledge that had already developed during antiquity, that people took care of many, if not all essential matters of their own health themselves, or left this task to family members. This task fell to those family members who were otherwise assigned to the domestic, "reproductive" sphere. In other words: mainly women. The healing knowledge used here varied from region to region, depending on the regional flora and fauna, as well as the respective pagan remnants of the spiritual heritage of formerly free communities. What this knowledge has in common, however, is that although it was probably ancient, it was passed on almost exclusively orally. After all, at that time hardly anyone had mastered the writing of their rulers. An essential component of this healing knowledge was the use of medici-

nal herbs, which, although they may have been cultivated in herb gardens, were collected primarily in nature.

But a shadow was cast over the lands, a shadow that in the next centuries would infest much of the world in a very similar way, and that in Europe, as well as on the American and African continents, would put an end to individual and collective healing knowledge: we are talking, of course, about Christian evangelization. No less than the missionary Boniface, who had already distinguished himself by cutting down an ancient oak tree dedicated to the god Donar (Thor), along with numerous other sacred trees, in order to destroy the pagan faith cults of the Germanic tribes, he also caused the gathering of medicinal herbs to be prohibited by the Church at the "Synod of Liftinae" in 743. The purpose of this prohibition was that the "new converts be kept away from all paganism and wish to stay away". However, even though the universally anticipated reaction of the Germanic deities failed to materialize when Boniface tampered with their trees, it took more than a ban by the church to keep people from healing themselves and each other by gathering needed and trusted herbs for this purpose. Probably in order not to suffer too great a loss of authority, various herbs were subsequently ascribed a biblical meaning, which legitimized them as "Christian" in the form of Mar-

ian cults, for example.

But the church's new strategy would eventually succeed. With the spread of the Christian doctrine of faith, the idea was consolidated that diseases were imposed by God and that healing was therefore only possible with his help. This strengthened monastic medicine, which very quickly became the only recognized medical school. As early as between 770 and about 800, only a few decades after the missionary Boniface had attempted to ban herb gathering, Charlemagne, who owed much of his power to the ecclesiastical infrastructure, issued a law (*Capitulare de villis*) which, among other things, prescribed the cultivation of certain medicinal plants in every imperial estate. The so-called St. Gall Monastery Plan (819-826), which describes about 16 medicinal plants and their cultivation, and the doctrinal poem *Hortulus* (ca. 840), which describes about 24 medicinal plants, bear witness to the further institutionalization and simultaneous flattening of herbal medicine around monasteries (ancient writings often list thousands, or at least several hundreds, of medicinal plants; by comparison, 16 or 24 plants must seem downright ridiculous). The plants are often those that do not thrive well in the local climatic conditions, which among other things is due to the fact that priority is given to plants that are described in the Bible (sometimes only allegedly). A pop-

ular strategy to prevent the population from continuing to collect wild medicinal plants is to allow them to pick the plants in the monastery gardens. In this way, it can be ensured that only the medicinal plants "certified" by the church are used and the "pagan" healing knowledge is gradually forgotten.

Not all people let themselves be lured by the monastic herb garden. For several centuries, monastic medicine coexisted with alternative healing knowledge. Practitioners of this ancient healing knowledge were considered witches and sorcerers, which was considered "pagan heresy" and "to be punished by church punishments such as fines or, in severe cases, by expulsion from the community." From the 13th century, however, the church and with it the state, both equally fearing heretics of various forms, began to strike a crushing blow against witches and other heretics. Of course, it is not only a question of destroying non-Christian healing knowledge. The Inquisition was directed against homosexuals, Jews, heretics of all kinds, rebellious elements and other enemies of the order. In the Hexenhammer, published in 1486, which was particularly important for the German Inquisition, abortions and libido-increasing as well as libido-decreasing treatments are described as common crimes of witches that should be punished.

It is no coincidence that the destruction of non-Christian healing knowledge in Europe coincides with the birth of modern science and its medicine. Francis Bacon, one of the founding fathers of modern science, is said to have found in the procedures of the Inquisition the model for wringing secrets from the "witch nature". Incidentally, Francis Bacon, as attorney general under King James I, was also directly involved in one or another witch trial.

Not directly synchronous in time, but both in terms of the manner of progression and at least synchronous with the last phase of the destruction of non-Christian healing knowledge in Europe, a gigantic destruction of indigenous healing knowledge was also taking place outside Europe. Its driving forces: European colonialism and Christian evangelization. Genocides, abduction and enslavement, expulsion from their original territories, cultural extinction and internment in camps, where later, among other things, deadly and humiliating medical experiments were carried out for the development of vaccines and epidemic control strategies, contribute just as much to this as the less outwardly violent conversion to the Christian faith with "book and sword". In the course of this, spiritualities of indigenous cultures and so also the healing knowledge often associated with it has been destroyed almost permanently. On the South American

continent, practitioners of indigenous healing methods were considered heretics. The Catholic conquistadors described spiritual rituals that were part of these methods as ghostly and blasphemous and burned the practitioners at the stake, following the example of the inquisitors in their homeland. The Atlantic slave trade, in the course of which, according to today's estimates, about 12 million people were captured, abducted and enslaved, especially in North America, also caused numerous epidemics (because indigenous people, as well as slaves, were exposed to pathogens they had not previously come into contact with, and moreover, were crammed together in the smallest spaces and under catastrophic hygienic conditions), in which only the authoritarian European medicine, reducing the people to administrative entities, can prove its effectiveness and so prove its apparent superiority over indigenous healing knowledge.

Lazarets, Plague Houses, Mad-houses, Workhouses and Hospitals

To this day, so-called hospitals make up a significant part of medical "care" in this country. But in what context is it even a particularly wise idea to bring all the sick to a single place? This idée fixe could only establish itself in the context of an expert class of medi-

cal professionals and the increasing demand for the management of the sick. In this way, the development of the emergence of the modern hospital seems to me initially worth considering independently of the previously described destruction of individual and collective knowledge of healing, even if these two developments will eventually be interwoven.

Valetudinaria and leprosoria are probably the earliest forms of what is known today as a hospital. Leprosoriums, infirmaries, later plague houses, blatantly served to manage sick people who were considered lepers and were administered there for the protection of the rest of the population until their death or, in exceptions, their recovery. Even if these institutions are probably much older and existed, for example, in the Chinese Empire around 300 BC, while Judaism with its purity laws also knows the segregation of lepers (but probably without administering them in institutions), I will return primarily to the development of these institutions in Christianized Europe, especially on French and German territory. Before that, however, it is worthwhile to take a look at the Roman valetudinaria, which became widespread under Emperor Augustus (around the year 0). Around the year 14, the Roman military established so-called valetudinaria in several garrisons on the disputed Germanic border, hospitals in which injured soldiers who were

likely also sick were treated with the aim of being made fit for battle again. The militarily proven institutions were soon followed by civilian valetudinaries, but characteristically not for Roman citizens (no one cared about the poor, the rich preferred to be cared for in their own chambers), but mainly for the slaves of landlords and the servants (often also slaves) of rich nobles. Thus, they served to maintain the labor power of the expensively acquired "personnel". The doctors working in these civil valetudinaries were mostly medically educated slaves themselves, so-called "servi medici".

Even if medical history prefers not to associate these valetudinaries with the emergence of "public" hospitals in Christianized Europe, this continuity is already evident in the fact that later monasteries maintained very different facilities that served to accommodate the sick and pilgrims: the "Hospitale pauperum" for the poor, the "Hospitium", a guest house for rich pilgrims, and the "Infirmarium", the sick room for the monks themselves. This division is not only evidence of the class-divided medicine of the time, it also continues in the further development: infirmaries outside the monasteries and cities served from the 6th century onwards for the administration of sick people who were considered contagious. Special institutional clothing, as well as the wearing of bells, Lazarus rattles

and horns were prescribed by the church for those imprisoned there, just as the later inmates of the plague houses were imprisoned completely apart from the rest of the population.

Around 1700, the first insane asylums were founded in France and Germany, which were intended, among other things, to discipline the population less inclined to work. Particularly on German territory, these asylums appear as mad-houses and penitentiaries, especially often in combination with prisons. Once built, the internment facilities of the plague and insane asylums frequently changed their purpose. For example, the Charité Berlin, originally built in 1709, was designed as a plague house, but then initially served as a spinning house (a penal institution for women who were impoverished, begged, or did sex work and who were forced to work there as spinners), for the administration of the poor, and as a garrison hospital. Numerous hospital buildings to this day bear more resemblance to jails than to anything else. This is no coincidence. And while today the lattice doors of the cells, pardon patient rooms, have been replaced, with a few exceptions, by low-stimulus, clinical-white doors, at least I still can't avoid a cold shiver that runs down my spine when I visit such an institution.

"Your health does not belong to you!" and the sick person as a defective part of the machine.

While the various types of hospitals, until well into the 19th century, served primarily to socially segregate the poor, the contagious, the "insane," those who refused to work, criminals, and other elements harmful to "public health" (this term, however, comes from a later era), in the 20th century the walls increasingly fell and the bars in front of the windows disappeared. But those who escaped the walls of the hospital now increasingly found that the whole world had become a hospital. Even if one should not call National Socialism a pure "doctors' movement"^[1], the authoritarian doctrines of medicine experienced an enormous increase in importance, especially in this epoch. The term "public health" [Volksgesundheit] is no longer primarily associated with the term "health" in the history of medicine, but this should not obscure the fact that this is exactly what was understood in the tone of conviction and with the help of a methodology that was only branded as pseudoscientific in light of the Holocaust. "Racial hygiene" and "hereditary health" were not merely National Socialist scientific madness; worldwide, eugenic institutions were founded that enjoyed a high reputation. Forced sterilization programs in particular were legislated and carried out in numerous areas around

the world during this period and even after the end of Nazism. The victims: indigenous populations, racialized people, and the disabled. One's health is thereby depersonalized on numerous levels. National Socialist propaganda urges "hardening" and views infection as a weakness of the infected, one with which the infected would harm the nation's community, the "national body".

The individual as a part of the "national body", the sick individual as a danger for the "people's health", is reminiscent of an attitude that is intensifying these days, though the individual today does not even need to be sick to be considered a danger to the "public health". But this is not meant to be a cynical rant, but a serious analysis. Admittedly, these are completely different ways of argumentation, which seem to be similar only in their effect^[2]. And yet, in the sense of the mechanistic world view deprived of the organic, the comparison with another metaphor suggests itself: in such a perspective, is not the sick person equal to a defective part of the machinery of capitalism and civilization? A part that must either be repaired or replaced to keep the machine running?

^[1] Notwithstanding this, most of the party books of the NSDAP were issued to doctors.

^[2] And also I bring them up here mainly to provoke a certain reader that is hypocritical, hypercritical, and always sensing "conspiracy" and "historical revisionism".

If the early forerunners of the hospital served to control and manage "sick people" of various degrees, today it is the spirit of the hospital that haunts the minds of people and urges them to contribute to "public health." A spirit that in one way or another has haunted before, scientifically and medically legitimizing some of the crudest, genocidal campaigns of extermination.

From health registers to the mosquito vaccination

In my opinion, the current health totalitarianism can only be understood against the background that it was never the universal concern of medicine to help the individual by offering healing. While healing the affluent may well have always been one of the concerns of medicine, the goal of universal medicine was primarily to keep labor available. This does not mean that medicine is unable and possibly even unwilling to help me if I have, say, a broken leg – here in Central Europe even despite the fact that I avoid work at all costs, am considered criminal and antisocial, and do not otherwise exactly conform to society's ideal. Rather, it means that the price for this help always lies in the fact that elsewhere in the world – or also in prisons, psychiatric wards, etc. in this country – medical experiments are carried out on other people, people are forcibly vaccinated on the whim of some philanthropists and thereby possi-

bly enter into the statistics as "those who died in connection with the vaccine" and the entire poor population of the world is managed in one way or another with the help of medicine as a labor resource.

The approach used so far in Western countries with regard to direct physical interventions, with few exceptions (forced psychiatry, forced sterilization, forced medication, etc.) to rely on the voluntary will of the patient (if you don't go to the doctor, you don't) seems to be increasingly crumbling. What a neo-colonial alliance of philanthropists, pharmaceutical industry, WHO and states has tested in the past decades through medical studies, vaccination programs that were carried out both forcibly and without sufficient education, and programs for the electronic collection of health data in so-called "developing countries", now seems to be sufficiently tested to be unleashed on the impoverished population in the centers of power. The current discussion about health registers in which relevant data is centrally recorded and stored for authorities to access at any time, the discussion about privileges for those who have been vaccinated, the stigmatization of those who do not want to be vaccinated, they all speak for themselves. In the meantime, research projects that are being carefully brought to public attention are revealing the extent to which this health mania has now reached scientific circles as well: it is no

longer a secret that virologists tend to lock people up, monitor and control them. But the fact that in some places research is being conducted into administering vaccinations with the aid of genetically manipulated mosquitoes that, once released, uncontrollably vaccinate everyone they can get in front of their proboscis, perhaps makes us more aware than many others of the frightening dimensions of this medical madness.

For me it is certain: an institution like medicine is not able to offer me anything that speaks against its destruction. I can do without experts who offer me healing in exchange for my treatment and control in the service of the rulers, while they torture and murder elsewhere. And most especially, I can do without being tortured and murdered myself.

March 2021, Zündlumpen #082.

Inoculated ...

A small collection of somewhat different stories about bacilli, vaccinations and their social contexts.

With great impatience, some people are waiting these days for the redemptive vaccination. Time and again, politicians and pharmaceutical companies have made promises of a vaccine that is about to be "approved", time and again people's expectations have been clouded. Now, once again, the time has come. A company called BioNTech (yes, whoever thinks of genetic engineering is damn right) from Mainz (just in case anyone is interested in the exact address: An der Goldgrube 12, 55131 Mainz - they seem to be big in business there...) is planning to launch an mRNA vaccine against Covid-19. This would be the first mRNA vaccine to be approved in Europe, but it is also the first pandemic to be accompanied by such profound and governmentally mandated social upheaval. Tough times call for tough measures, as they say, don't they?

While some of you may be taking new courage from this promise, for whom the social loneliness of the past months may have robbed you of almost any strength to survive the renewed lockdown, I don't want to be an asshole, so I'll keep my mouth shut for the time being. And to help you kill some time while waiting, I have dared to write down some short stories that show vaccinations in a slightly different light than in that of the great salvation from deadly disease... One may at least tell it, no?

Robert Koch, the Segregation of Blacks and Whites, Sleeping Sickness and Tropical Medicine

The protagonist of my first story is on everyone's lips today, at least in Germany. Robert Koch. He is the name of the very institute from which we will hear quite different stories later on and which has made a name for itself in recent months by recommending and trying to

scientifically substantiate the confinement of people to protect them from corona infections. Robert Koch, the eponym of this institute, raged between 1843 and 1910 not only in Germany, but especially in Kaiser-Wilhelms-Land (A German colony on New Guinea), German East Africa (now includes Tanzania, Burundi and Rwanda, and a small part of Mozambique) and Uganda. While Robert Koch's merit can undoubtedly be described as having tipped the two staining agents methylene blue and vesuvin into the right Petri dish with tuberculosis bacteria, with which he had succeeded in scientifically proving the tuberculosis bacterium, at least some of his other merits are of a nature that one would prefer to keep quiet in medical history.

When in 1899 the colonial administration of Kaiser-Wilhelms-Land feared that "with so many sick people [...] the production of important export goods such as copper and rubber [could] be hindered [...] but above all [...] many Europeans [would] also fall victim to the disease" [1], Robert Koch was sent there to find a medical strategy for this problem. Robert Koch recommended at that time to organize "blood sampling and testing on a broad basis" in order to "locate those who did not show any symptoms of the disease but nevertheless carried the malaria pathogen"^[1]. A procedure that Robert Koch's successors would like to see

perfected these days. And even though malaria can actually only be transmitted from mother to unborn child during birth, except for laboratory accidents and through blood transfusions, Robert Koch probably assumed that infected people posed a threat to uninfected ones. His recommendation to keep people infected with malaria away from those who were not infected with malaria was put into practice through resettlement, which ultimately led primarily to a segregation of blacks and whites, regardless of who was or was not infected.

Shortly after Koch returned to Germany from this expedition, he made a name for himself again in 1890 when he presented tuberculin, an alleged "cure" for tuberculosis. To this day, it is difficult to determine whether Koch's profit motives led him to circulate a drug that, instead of curing the disease, caused damage to the patients and even deaths, or whether he was the victim of his own scientific bungling. Perhaps it is a mixture of both. In any case, on the one hand he seemed to promise himself millions in profits (accordingly, he kept the composition of his remedy secret and later could not quite remember himself what he had poured together) and on the other hand to have known about the (side) effects

^[1] Manuela Bauche. Robert Koch, sleeping sickness, and human experimentation in colonial East Africa.

of his "remedy". "He again called upon my willingness to sacrifice and my idealism by speaking of the value for man-kind," reported his later wife Hedwig Freiberger, whom Koch persuaded at the time as a 17-year-old to allow him to carry out experiments on her with tuberculin, and then continues: "I could possibly become quite ill, but it would probably not be too bad. I would probably not die". Hedwig Freiberger did not die, but numerous patients on whom the drug was subsequently tested did. When Koch was asked to show the guinea pigs he claimed to have cured in experiments with tuberculin, he could not do so either.^[2]

But a few years later, Koch would get another chance to continue his human experiments. Once again, colonial powers feared for their labor force when a sleeping sickness epidemic in the British protectorate of Uganda killed a quarter of a million people in just a few years. For Koch, this seemed to be an ideal testing ground for the use of chemical preparations on humans, after his initial efforts in this regard had been met with considerable criticism in Germany. In 1906, Koch and his comrades-in-arms set up a research camp on one of the Sese Islands, where he would conduct his experiments. Of course, it could not be expected "that the sick would all come voluntarily", he later wrote and concluded "They must be sought out"^[1]. Well, we know that, if the mountain does not

come to the prophet, then the prophet must come to the mountain or, as in this case, the doctor to his subject. In Koch's jargon, this practice is called "visiting" a sick person. Accordingly, one can also imagine the "treatment" of the "sick" in his camp: his assistant Friedrich Karl Kleine explained that they were kept on a list and that for this purpose "a large number written on wood was hung around their necks". Among other things, they were administered Atoxyl, a preparation containing arsenic, which led to severe side effects in the doses administered by Koch. Koch himself remarks: "Quite a few of the patients soon withdrew from this stronger treatment [...] [it was] too painful and [caused] other unpleasant sensations [...], such as nausea, dizziness, colicky pains in the body." But: "Since these complaints were only temporary, the treatment was continued". After Koch had tested a whole series of preparations in this way, which had until then been deliberately avoided in Germany, he returned to Germany and announced his plan for the containment of sleeping sickness, which sheds light on some of his thinking that virologists seem to have adopted today:

Africans, he explained, would have to be relocated from such regions where the tsetse fly was present to

^[2] Josef M. Schmitdt. History of tuberculin therapy. in Pneumology 10.

fly-free places. There, infection among them would become impossible, and: "[T]he infected individuals would then, since mortality without treatment was absolute, perish without exception, so that the epidemic would then be extinguished. The healthy ones could be allowed after a certain time – until the flies had lost their ability to infect – back to their original abode." ("Session": 935). Koch was therefore not primarily concerned with curing the sick, but with keeping them away from the healthy, "isolating" them, as it were, as sources of infection.

The physician was aware that his plan would be unfeasible. He had formulated it merely as a utopia to delineate his objectives. As a more practicable variant, he presented the concept of "concentration camps" ("Session": 936). He had borrowed this term from British practice: in South Africa, the British had introduced so-called "concentration camps" to imprison political opponents, and were now interning sick people in them. Koch recommended that sleeping sick camps be set up in German East Africa, where infected people would be permanently housed far from their homes. Here they were to be treated regularly with Atoxyl. Obviously, however, this plan was not so much aimed at curing the sick as it followed the same idea as Koch's vision of large-scale resettlements: sleeping sick camps were to keep sick people away from their

homes "until it can be assumed that at their place of residence, after removal of all trypanosome carriers [i.e., all infected persons], the glossins have become free of infectious material." (Koch 1907: 1894). And so, sleeping sick camps were designed by Koch not primarily as treatment sites but as isolation sites – a concept that was also adopted in Togo and Cameroon (Bauche 2005: 86-90; Eckart 1997: 345).

According to Koch's will, however, the camps were to fulfill a second function as research sites. The physician was not at all shy about stating this openly: "Since close observation over a longer period of time was possible in the concentration camps, the best way to find out the recommended mode of atoxyl treatment and, for example, to test a therapy in stages could be found here" ("Session": 936). In fact, after Koch's departure in October 1907, three sleeping sick camps were established in German East Africa, and a total of five such institutions were created in Togo and Cameroon. In them, experiments were conducted on the bodies of Africans with over a dozen different chemical preparations, with varying dosages and administrations (Bauche 2005: 84, 90-103; Eckart 1997: 161-74, 346).

Excerpt from Manuela Bauche.
Robert Koch, sleeping sickness,
and human experimentation in
colonial East Africa.^[1]

The Robert Koch Institute, the Search for a Malaria Vaccine, and Human Experimentation in Nazi Concentration Camps.

The protagonist of my next story is a student of Robert Koch, who, after a career as a colonial physician in Togo and German East Africa, hung around from 1905 as director of the tropical medicine department at the Robert Koch Institute (at that time still the Royal Prussian Institute for Infectious Diseases; the RKI did not receive the name Robert Koch Institute until 1942). His name is Claus Karl Schilling. Some people may know this unscrupulous physician as "Blutschilling", as the inmates of the Dachau concentration camp are said to have called him, when he carried out cruel experiments on them between February 1942 and April 1945, resulting in the deaths of between 300 and 400 people. But I want to start from the beginning.

When Claus Schilling was offered the opportunity to conduct research on inmates of psychiatric hospitals in Volterra and San Niccolò di Siena in Mussolini's fascist Italy around 1920, he agreed. There he dealt with questions of immunization by means of serological experiments. Why the Italian state had an interest in this was clear. In the Abyssinian War and other colonial ventures, they feared malaria infections among the troops and hoped for a vaccine or other antidote. The

German National Socialist government also actively funded Claus Schilling's research.

In 1936, Claus Schilling emerged as a professor at what is now the Robert Koch Institute, but resumed his previous experiments in February 1942 at Heinrich Himmler's behest and in the Dachau concentration camp instead of in psychiatric hospitals. There, he infected more than 1,000 prisoners with malaria using infected mosquitoes or the administration of an extract from their salivary glands in order to research a vaccine against malaria. Heinrich Wieland, a chemical weapons researcher of sorts, said of Claus Schilling in 1945 that "as a true researcher, he [Schilling] pursued his scientific goal with all passion. He made no secret to me that for him cooperation with instances of the Party, of which he was an outspoken opponent, meant a difficult sacrifice, which he nevertheless had to make for the sake of the cause." That seems to be the way it is with medicine. It's all about the cause, but which one? To cure people? But then why infect them with deadly diseases? Yes, if only I could understand that...

Claus Schilling's research on vaccines in concentration camps was by no means unique, by the way. Under the direction of the Hygiene Institute of the Waffen SS – whose task was to fight/prevent disease outbreaks in the army – and with

the cooperation of IG Farben, which continues today, for example, in the Bayer company, research was also carried out in the Buchenwald concentration camp, in cooperation with the concentration camp doctor Joseph Mengele in Auschwitz, in the concentration camp Mauthausen, in the concentration camp Natzweiler-Struthof and in the concentration camp Sachsenhausen, research was carried out on vaccines against typhus, dysentery, smallpox, typhus, paratyphus A and B, cholera, diphtheria, yellow fever and tetanus, or already developed preparations were tested for their side effects. In Buchenwald, 1100 people died from these tests; in Mauthausen, 1700 people are said to have been infected with paratyphoid and tetanus. And once again, the RKI was involved. Among others, it was represented by Eugen Gildemeister, its president at the time, who himself helped plan many of these experiments, as well as Niels Eugen Haagen, head of the Department of Experimental Cell and Virus Research at the RKI, who, among other things, was involved in typhus experiments at the Natzweiler-Struthof concentration camp.

Compulsory vaccination in the Great Democratic Republic

"Socialism is the best prophylaxis".

Slogan of the GDR compulsory vaccination program

Compulsory vaccination has been around the world on and off since 1853, when the Vaccination Act in Great Britain mandated smallpox vaccination for all children within the first three months of life. It was not until March of this year (2020) that the Federal Republic of Germany also reintroduced compulsory vaccination. How can anybody see anything positive in compulsory vaccination, which is a glorification of compulsion? And that is presumably also the reason, why those, who support this "obligation" then nevertheless take this ugly word so unwillingly, out of some variety of authoritarian longing. So-called vaccination opponents, who, on the other hand, do not shy away from saying this word because they want to denounce those very compulsions, were and are then always countered: compulsory vaccinations do not exist. But recently this is no longer true even in the FRG.

To carry out propaganda by forcibly injecting people (mostly) with a mixture of (living or dead) pathogens and some kind of poisons, you first have to come up with this idea and it requires enormous preparatory work by scientific propaganda that there is any chance at all that the whole thing will be swallowed by anyone. But if today in medical and political circles one seems to be inclined to agree with the slogan "socialism is the best prophylaxis", this is not surprising, because in those circles

the individual is not exactly the focus of one's considerations and the bodies of the people are rather regarded as a kind of resource, with which one thinks one can do what one wants. As in the GDR, where "public health" ["Volksgesundheit", closely associated with the Nazi regime] was perhaps borrowed from the National Socialist vocabulary less in a strictly eugenic sense and more in the sense of eradicating infectious diseases, and yet the way of looking at human bodies does not seem to be fundamentally different. While one group pursued above all the "hereditary-biological purity" of the people, in which the individual bodies were subordinated to this goal, the other group pursued precisely an epidemiological purity of the people, and in both cases vaccinations administered to the bodies played a prominent role in achieving this goal.

But one can always draw parallels, and National Socialism, whose adherents perhaps not entirely coincidentally came most frequently from the professional group of doctors, is mentioned enough in this collection of stories anyway. So I will confine myself here to the ideas in the GDR, with occasional cross-references to practices in other socialist states, which today seem to be experiencing a revival even beyond socialism.

As a system superior to capitalism in every respect, it was already ob-

vious in the Bolshevik Soviet Union of the early years to simply declare the then globally rampant plague non-existent, according to the motto of Nikolai Smasko, who declared against his better knowledge in 1919 that there was "not a single case" of the plague in the country of the revolution^[3]. And while it is quite plausible that plagues end at the borders of civilization, it is not plausible in any sense that they end at country borders or even at the border of socialism. This is also not the case with the plague: officially, it was denied in the Soviet Union. Internally, statistics were kept only with code words, in this case "form 100", in order to prevent outsiders from understanding them, and in 1938, the plague was declared eradicated, which, of course, did not prevent it from continuing to rage. And because something like the plague is not so easy to keep secret, people occasionally resorted to completely different measures.

The "Council of People's Commissars" in Azerbaijan responded to a plague epidemic in the Nagorno-Karabakh Autonomous Region in early 1931 with rigid instructions. The People's Commissars prohibited "the postal and telegraph authorities from transmitting telegrams from private individuals about the plague." Even more, the council decided to hold accountable the "spreaders of malicious rumors about epidemics." Those who talked about the plague were to

face "measures of social defense" in case of doubt, "up to and including shooting."^[3]

A glaring contradiction in a country that holds the health of its citizens in such high regard? Or does this attitude, certainly not an isolated case, only reveal what all the hygiene mania was actually about? Perhaps it was more about the preservation of the workforce and the pacification of the population than about individual well-being? But let's turn back to the German socialist brother state. Hardly anywhere else was vaccination carried out so diligently. 17 compulsory vaccinations had to be given before the age of 18, and the whole thing was made compulsory for citizens, so that "even the unwilling and indolent would be induced to vaccinate in the interest of the general public"^[4]. Yes, the vaccination communist is not so fond of the indolent and the intransigent... they stand in the way of his progress.

There are certainly thousands and thousands of stories from the GDR about how the poison administered to a person by injection without being asked or against their will caused damage, but I will limit myself here to a story that is perhaps already well-known, the deliberate infection of thousands of pregnant women with hepatitis^[5]. Cause: contaminated anti-D prophylactic vaccines. Admittedly, the body of childbearing persons is also considered in real existing so-

cialism, in some respects perhaps especially there, quite particularly as property of the state. After all, it is not only concerning future soldiers, but also about workers, the most important resource of every state, whereby the states of socialist character are perhaps a little more aware of this than other states. In any case, the anti-D prophylaxis vaccination in the GDR was a mandatory vaccination for subsequent pregnant women with potential rhesus incompatibility.

The production of the vaccine required blood plasma with corresponding D antibodies, which was particularly scarce in 1978. Although the laboratory staff headed by Wolfgang Schubert knew that a plasma donation is contaminated with hepatitis viruses and accordingly may not be used to produce the vaccine, they nevertheless resort to it in view of a shortage of substitutes. Their attempts to dilute this plasma appropriately to kill the viruses did not succeed. However, the vaccines produced were then delivered. At least 2000 vaccine doses are administered to pregnant women, some of whom were then in mortal danger. But that is not enough. An investigation into the incidents reveals that Schubert had delivered the infected vaccines un-

^[3] Matthias Braun. Black death, red hygiene.

^[4] Malte Thiessen. Precaution as an order of the social.

^[5] Just one syringe.

der pressure from his superiors and had deliberately concealed their contamination, but of course such things must not be made public.

Instead, those who have recently been vaccinated are summoned to hospitals, where they are subjected to blood tests without being told what they are being tested for in the first place. Those who are considered infected are put into quarantine, sometimes for more than four months, and again without knowing exactly what is going on. And the only concern of the politicians ultimately responsible: how can it be covered up that around 1400 pregnant women and 30 of their babies have just been knowingly infected with a new form of hepatitis. What light would that also shed on the socialist vaccination mania?

And so it happens that a few months later another 1000 pregnant women are infected with the same hepatitis virus. A product from the originally contaminated serum had been used once again for its production. With "acceptable risk with regard to the danger of transmitting hepatitis".

How the Marburg virus once broke out in the laboratory at Behringwerke

"Vaccinations save lives," claims the WHO. But sometimes vaccinations also cost lives. And I'm not talking about those who fall ill and

eventually die from the wrong dosage of (killed) pathogens and other toxins for their bodies. It is not so rare that vaccines or other drugs spread other pathogens than the ones they are supposed to fight and as one of the next stories will show, this – not surprisingly – did not only happen under real socialism. This story is also about the spread of a new disease through the production of vaccines. Only this time, the disease did not leave the laboratories as a vaccine, but affected the laboratory workers.

It is the story of the Marburg virus, which in 1967 was probably transmitted from Ethiopian green monkeys to laboratory workers in the laboratories of the IG-Farben successor company Behringwerke. The animals abducted from Uganda were used in Marburg for the production of measles and polio vaccines; in Frankfurt, these vaccines were then tested on their dissected kidneys.

However, the monkeys brought to the Behringwerke in Marburg and to the Paul Ehrlich Institute in Frankfurt on July 28, 1967, were infected with a previously unknown, particularly deadly (over 25% of those infected die as a result) virus, now known as the Marburg virus. Both in Frankfurt and in Marburg, laboratory workers and animal caretakers became infected, and a total of 24 people contracted the virus. Seven of them died by the end of the year.

By the way, for more than 600 Ethiopian green monkeys, which were imprisoned and enslaved in laboratories in Frankfurt, Marburg and Belgrade, the whole thing also took a deadly turn. They were murdered by prussic acid.

Deliberate HIV infections by pharmaceutical companies

This story is not about vaccines or vaccinations in the strict sense, but about pharmaceutical blood products in general. In the 1980s, after the HIV virus was discovered, numerous products contaminated with it were knowingly sold to countries where corresponding regulations did not yet apply. Since blood products are often also used to produce vaccines, and the whole thing has taken on proportions that make it impossible to precisely trace all the blood products sold, this story seems to me to be quite appropriate in this context. After all, it can hardly be ruled out that ultimately vaccines from HIV-contaminated blood products also came into circulation.

Of course, there were numerous blood products contaminated with HIV even before it was discovered. And today, of course, every product derived from blood serum and every product that includes other blood products has the possibility of containing previously unknown pathogens. Because what you don't know, you certainly can't test for.

However, the following stories show that even if a pathogen is known, there are still unscrupulous pharmaceutical companies that resell products contaminated with it.

Cutter, for example, a subsidiary of Bayer, replaced HIV-contaminated products on the U.S. market with less infectious alternatives in 1984. But only in the U.S. market and in Europe. To other countries, including Hong Kong and Taiwan, they continued to knowingly export the contaminated product for at least a year. And they didn't just want to get rid of the leftovers quickly. No, the contaminated product continued to be produced for several months. In Hong Kong and Taiwan alone, more than 100 hemophiliacs were infected with HIV. Many died as a result. The "drug" was also sold to Malaysia, Singapore, Indonesia, Japan, and Argentina.^[6]

The Austrian company Albovina GmbH was even more brazen. Between 1993 and 1996, they bought blood preserves contaminated with HIV and hepatitis from Africa – presumably because it was cheap. For research purposes, it was emphasized – after all, what else would contaminated blood be bought for? However, the "research" then consisted of relabeling and reselling the blood. Among other things, this was done for the

^[6] <https://www.nytimes.com/2003/05/22/business/2-paths-of-bayer-drug-in-80-s-riskier-one-steered-overseas.html>

production of medicines, which were sold mainly in India and China as "Albupan".

The sale of contaminated blood by the company Health Management Associates, which sold blood donations from prisons to other countries after a ban on sales in the USA, also became famous. This example also shows where medicine gets its "raw materials" from. Prisoners and poor people are often the ones whose blood makes the profits of pharmaceutical companies possible.

Repeated vaccine field trials on the African continent and in India

What Robert Koch once demonstrated has changed little to this day: the effects of drugs, including vaccines, on the human organism must ultimately be researched before these drugs are approved. And it is not always possible to appeal to the willingness of one's own partner or other patients to make sacrifices. So why not go on a research expedition to this or that colony to test the drug in question on the bodies of the people there. Oh, so the colonies no longer exist? No worries, colonialism has remained with us in one form or another...

And what kind of foundation would the Bill and Melinda Gates Foundation be if it didn't have its fingers in the pie?

And while I am writing down this story, a media debate is proving its explosiveness: shouldn't a possible Corona vaccine perhaps first be tested in "Africa"? And while some proponents of Corona vaccine testing in "Africa" are now trying to get out of the woods after criticism with statements like "Africa should not be forgotten or excluded from research because it is a global pandemic", I think the following story(s) actually say everything that needs to be said on this topic.

There are so many stories that tell of how African populations have been treated like lab rats to test drugs and especially vaccines, and yet few of them are known or particularly scrupulously documented outside the African continent. And it just doesn't stop. WHO, the Gates Foundation, the Rockefeller Foundation, GAVI, and many other players keep leaning on projects to vaccinate the populations of various African countries against all sorts of diseases. The vaccinated people are hardly ever informed about possible side effects – often not even about what and why they are being administered – vaccines are repeatedly tested on humans for the first time (sometimes even despite sufficiently tested and cheaper alternatives) and due to "mistakes", which certainly no doctor would make here, such as the repeated use of cannulas, other diseases are transmitted with many vaccinations, especially HIV (the WHO claims that 2.5 percent of HIV in-

fections in Africa originate from this, other studies estimate this figure to be closer to 40 percent!). In addition, it repeatedly comes to the light that – also with vaccines – research is being done to forcibly sterilize the population. Yes, what is basically dismissed as a conspiracy theory in this country (and yes, I'm deliberately not naming any sources here because I think it's funnier that way), at least leads to the fact that vaccinations have to be guarded by the military again and again because of the great mistrust in the population – well, apparently that will soon be the case in Germany, too.

In India, too, medical tests at the expense of the population have increased dramatically since the government relaxed the regulations for drug tests in order to attract pharmaceutical companies. The pharmaceutical companies are not only pleased that they can carry out approval studies for many drugs in India at a fraction of the cost, but also that many Indians who volunteer to participate in the studies, if at all, have never been treated with drugs before. Optimal conditions for a study – at least from the medical point of view.

And in India, too, the many foundations with a fetish for vaccinations are on a rampage. The Bill Gates Foundation – yes, once again, this time with the front organization Path – for example, had 24,000 girls vaccinated against cer-

vical cancer in schools as recently as 2009. Without their parents' consent. Seven of the vaccinated girls died. Whether it was due to the vaccination, as at least one case in which the cause of death was diagnosed as malaria suggests, could not really be seriously traced once it became known months after their deaths that they had been vaccinated. But the Indian government is just as unconcerned about that as Path and the Gates Foundation. Whoever claims this today, you guessed it, conspiracy theorist. But even if it would be interesting to know how many thousands of people have already died by medical experiments in India and Africa, this is not so much the relevant question, but rather: how is it that some super-rich assholes presume again and again to (forcefully) vaccinate some people and not only do disgusting (social) experiments, but above all give orders worth millions and billions to the pharmaceutical companies, in which they – certainly by chance – have some shares themselves?

And? Already an opponent of vaccination?

Why am I telling all these stories? I think they all show a certain continuity. A continuity in which epidemiology, vaccinations and drugs as their tools reveal their authoritarian character. As is so often the

case in medicine, these stories are not about curing people, but if anything about exploiting their bodies for the purposes of developing cures for the bodies of a privileged few, for the preservation of their labor, for profit interests, or for the pursuit of entirely different social effects. I find it cynical at best to simply ignore these continuities and to regard medicine, or even individual branches such as epidemiology, as authorities that have any solutions to offer to medico-social

problems. Whether a vaccine against Covid-19 will ultimately save lives, cost lives, or merely contribute to a new distribution of deaths within social classes is as much up in the air for me as whether a vaccine will in any way contribute to the lifting of our new captivity.

In this sense: for the destruction of medicine and the civilization that made it necessary.

November 2020, Ziindlumpen #078.

Of human experimentation, genetics and the subjugation of humans: A foray into the world of medicine

When I go to a hospital, the first thing I have to do – at least provided I'm not in acute danger of losing my life – is give my personal details. Name, date of birth, place of residence, health insurance. Later, I am meticulously asked by the treating doctor how my injury/illness came about and, depending on the injuries I have, it can even happen that the hospital staff calls the cops, for example because I have bullet and/or stab wounds, injuries that come from a fight. Depending on the impression I make on the doctors, I may also be forcibly locked up in a psychiatric facility, given psychotropic drugs and tranquilizers without being informed of their effects, placed in a locked care facility because I am deemed to have dementia or insanity, or have a legal guardian appointed on medical recommendation and a court order. If I am infected with a virus that is considered dangerous,

I may be quarantined by order of medical personnel, if I have ambiguous sex characteristics at birth in a hospital, I may be subjected to genital mutilation, etc. The list of what can happen to someone in medical "care" would probably be endless.

Nevertheless, most people trust in medicine, and even those who have a healthy distrust of doctors still find themselves relying on their help on numerous occasions. I am not here to deny that the prevailing medicine(s) do, in many cases, help to cure disease, alleviate pain, and save lives, nor am I here to moralize in any way about a person's decision to rely on medicine. Instead, I am interested in tracing the social conditions under which "modern medicine" has been able to flourish, and in asking to what extent this medicine reproduces the social conditions under which we live.

Experiments on humans

Medicine is a rather empirical science, i.e. it is based on observations, which are then interpreted accordingly by scientists (doctors). As such a science, medicine in its current form is primarily dependent on experiments. The human organism – and alternatively also animal organisms – is usually understood as a kind of machine, the functioning of which is only insufficiently known, but whose reaction to certain inputs can be assumed more or less precisely. Tests are used to confirm or reject these assumptions. For example, in order to test a drug against a certain disease, so-called "test animals" are first infected with this disease in animal experiments and are then administered the drug to be tested. It is then observed whether the disease is cured and also what side effects the drug causes – because in the wrong dose most drugs are poison for the human/animal organism. If the drug then turns out to be suitable, the same tests are carried out again on humans. Here, however, people are chosen today who already have the corresponding disease. Also, these people are supposed to voluntarily agree to be test subjects, which certainly remains a euphemism in many cases. Both financial incentives and promises of the form "you have a disease that will kill you, but I am testing a cure that may defeat it" play a major role in recruiting "voluntary" test subjects today.

What today is regulated more subtly by financial compensation was carried out not so long ago with great coercion. Not only in the concentration camps of the National Socialists, but long before. Early physicians of antiquity sometimes dissected people alive in order to learn more about the anatomy and functioning of the human organism. Later, all kinds of experiments were performed on people who were forcibly taken from prisons, so-called "insane asylums," from orphanages and poorhouses, and from colonial areas to be experimented on. They were infected with diseases in order to test appropriate cures, they were inflicted with injuries so that they would become inflamed in order to better understand the immune reactions of the human organism, they were administered known toxic substances in order to test which dose is lethal to humans, etc. By the way, all this is still done with animals today. At the same time, the medical knowledge gained through experiments on socially marginalized people was available to people of the privileged social classes to a much greater extent than it is today. Sick workers had almost no medical care at their disposal.

Since the beginning/middle of the twentieth century, experiments with psychedelic substances have also gained importance, especially in the field of military medicine. It was hoped that they would give people absolute obedience, while

other substances were tested to increase the concentration and performance of soldiers. At the same time, humans experimented with such substances for psychiatric use, where they were intended to destroy undesirable cognitive traits.

While today, on the one hand, the cruel and brutal experiments that were carried out on humans in the name of medicine are being put aside as a dark chapter of the past, there are now increasing reports of genetic experiments on humans and discussions are taking place as to whether it is morally justifiable to influence a person's genetic makeup before birth in order to supposedly give them a better life.

Absolute control over the human being

Genetics, as well as the (military) experiments with psychotropic drugs point to a certain direction that medicine has taken: it is concerned with nothing less than total control of the human being. Socially undesirable behavior is described as a mental illness and attempts are made to forcibly suppress it with psychotropic drugs. Genetic "defects", also deviations from a certain norm, are to be "eradicated" in the future with the help of genetics. While a change in the genetic makeup of humans is still controversial, it is common practice with plants and animals to adapt living beings to one's own

ideas and in this way to make them more useful for the capitalist system. At the same time, people are trying to carry out a genetic selection similar to eugenics, for example, through prenatal diagnostics, by advising expectant parents to have an abortion if certain "hereditary diseases" are detected.

The goal of such medicine is to direct people to their intended place in society. It is not the individual interest of the health of a single person that drives this medicine, but the ideal of a standardized and perfected superhuman, which according to this idea all people have to approach.

That my interests only play a subordinate role in medicine is something I have experienced all my life when I visit a doctor. I never have the feeling that I am somehow included in the decisions about my (!) body. I have been treated without being informed about what is supposedly wrong with me and what the purpose of the treatment is, let alone without being asked if I want it. I was prescribed medications that were damaging my body without being told, or told that I could do without them – I learned this when I stopped taking them myself. I was reproached for not doing what the doctor had told me, and so on. These are not unusual experiences, but experiences that most people have had to a greater or lesser extent. In my opinion, this is due to the fact that for medicine

we are just either further experiments or customers with whom money can be made.

Expanding the health care system?

What we are witnessing in the name of the fight against coronavirus also reflects this quest of medicine for total control over people. Instead of focusing on helping people who want to be cured, almost the entire medical community is currently indulging in recommending how everyone should behave. And it's not recommending this to people directly. They recommend it to the various states, which they know or assume will then be able to authoritatively enforce their recommendations. So instead of looking for ways to help sick people individually, the medical approach aims to control all people, assuming that this control will enable a cure for the majority of people.

I don't care at all whether medicine will finally be right or whether it will turn out to be a gigantic error, which always depends on the methods of measurement. For me it is decisive that the ideology of medicine in this case, as in all other cases, seems to be an authoritarian idea of the total control of the human. In this context, it seems remarkable to me that medicine tries to protect its "art of healing" at all costs. On the one hand by patents on medicines, the secrecy

of prescriptions, but also by the access requirements of teaching. It seems to me that the ability to heal is not something that anyone can simply acquire. After all, this would also contradict the notion of total control over human beings, because if everyone were able to acquire basic skills of healing and people thereby healed each other (as, of course, has always happened anyway, when people care for each other when they are sick), this whole process would be much less uniform and controllable.

With this in mind, I find it difficult to comprehend criticisms that "demand" or advocate an expansion of the health care system as a reaction to the current Corona pandemic and/or put it forward as a solution. Expanding the health care system means nothing other than wanting to continue this specialization on the one hand and this ideology of total control over the human being on the other. For me, a medicine beyond these ideas cannot lie within this health care system, not even in the tradition of this medicine.

For me, contemporary medicine is an institution that I have to destroy in order to be free. And I don't see why the outbreak of a pandemic should change that.

Quarantine...

Thoughts on incarceration, technology, and real-world relationships.

(Written before the announcement of the current second wave of mass incarceration, I think these thoughts may nevertheless have some current as well as lasting value).

I

While the spectator looked spellbound at exponential curves, not admitting his fear-pleasure for apocalypse, he served power in the realization of its wet dreams, which so far few dictators could fulfill. The exponential curve never came to the climax, the catharsis was delayed and the end of the world was delayed... Can the spectator be so satisfied?

The strict order of absence, lockdown, has provided public proof of the complete erosion of social life, provided in a way that must shock even those who have always noted it.

Looking spellbound at their screens, viewers watched as they cheered themselves on to stay home. The antiquity of the masses, organized social death. When the doors are closed, except those into

the "virtual world", a cold "world" which consists of screens and cables and devices, all dead.

If "society" is based on social human relationships, society no longer exists. True, its nucleus may be welded together again – disgustingly welded together. But nevertheless one says with equal justification, as that humans would live in society, that they live in technology "with each other". This of course not only since yesterday. But also not quite yet.

The utopia of capital, to create a new society from scratch and to destroy, to replace all society that is not capital... before our eyes this project is approaching its realization. "Smart planet"? A realistic proposal...

II

The pessimism is obvious. The acceleration that power has granted itself by this jarring shock is enormous. But it can also be said: the point has been reached where one must speculate less. Power is hostile to every free life. Hostile to life in general. The only units it still accepts are those which are necessary for its reproduction. And also this is probably still a deficiency. The fact that unmediated human relations are still necessary at all, though impractical, still holds it back from the complete leap into the posthuman.

Work, consumption, family and sport... the rest is from now officially "allowed for the time being", that is, on probation. Whereby the probation which is given to the administered mass called the population cannot be kept in compliance by this, in the sense that it does not know what the probation break would be exactly (everything could be one). Even the most complete obedience does not guarantee anything, especially that a next "reason" (and be it the same) could not be created. If we look at the present creation, it is clear that any absurdity, which until recently was considered a normal part of human life, can be used to justify any arrangement, no matter how ridiculous. But this is also nothing new.

III

It is boring to seek advice from the philosophers of the state of exception. Rule of law or not, all this nonsense. Word games about the true and the false state of exception.

Technological development goes on, and mankind, living in this technology, is more and more adapted to it or adapts to it, however which way. The horizon to destroy the totality of this system is inevitable. The situation that power has created, and in which it has exposed itself also not quite harmlessly, makes the ruling totality more visible and tangible than ever. It could not be ignored for a moment. It is not about partial aspects.

To cover this moment, to justify it and to make it forgotten as such is what is necessary for power now. The operation, which has been successful so far, will leave unpleasant feelings. When the anesthesia no longer works, when the peak of enthusiasm has passed, everything stands a bit on shaky legs. The new consensus is not quite stable yet.

Incidentally, it is not a new consensus, but the old one, always crumbling anyway, constantly being recreated. Only that it is added that the power can go so far. Not everyone thinks that's good yet. They have a different opinion. It is suppressed a bit, but it is just as clear

that the provision of a false opposition has already succeeded quite well. The revolt is coming from somewhere else....

IV

Somehow it seems to me, as if I would refresh here partly age-old news. It should not come to the reader's mind here as if "before Corona" somehow the state-technological prison society had not yet been established. The inclination is obvious to conveniently retreat to such a false notion. But it would lead to highly superficial thinking if some statements in this text were presented as surprises and novelties. The lockdown progression is actually a logical part of the technological process, and can only be understood as such. Many earlier analyses (anarchistic ones, but also philosophical ones such as those of Günther Anders) show: what is obviously and all too literally happening today could already be applied as a description of at least the second half of the last century. What does this mean?

While at that time certain theses could be considered as exaggeration, today one stands with some astonishment before the fact that all this actually comes now in such a way. But actually it should be said: it was already like this, only people didn't look deep enough. And just this slipping into the assertion of novelty, of the exclusive descrip-

tion of the new as new instead of as result of the past and continuity leaves room for a superficial thinking and a false criticism, which makes one wish for the previous state of affairs.

Of course it is true that "things were not like this before". But it is at least as true that it "was also like this before".

V

It's hard to see clearly. Perhaps even harder to want to see clearly.

It is perhaps comfortable to be dazzled, and to seek some niche in this intensification of technological reality. And aren't we all in it already? Aren't we all already dizzy?

The process of derealization, as which this can be described (and which could just as well be described as the realization of technology), of human derealization, it is going on and we are not outside of it.

How?

We also live in the technology. And not more or less, depending on how many devices we use or do not use. This is not to say that a certain distance from the world of devices is not helpful for the realization, the realization of one's own rebellion. Because the insurrection, and above all the social revolution, which would be the beginning of the realization of human rela-

tions..., is ultimately nothing that can really be communicated through devices. By the way, also not through a printed paper.

The difficult thing is: how can such human relations be realized within technology? And the answer would be: not at all.

Rather, despite all the rumors and false claims, it is the real human presence and discussion that constitutes every uprising. And the fact that the uprising today takes place in technology, to the extent that technological communication plays a role in it, should not lead to the mistake that the devices that are also used in the process would constitute this uprising. Rather, it is precisely the fact that it moves out of technology that constitutes the uprising. It is still within technology, but in contradiction to technological reality. A contradiction, the awareness of which unfortunately often has to wait, which is why the current social uprisings mostly stops at this question. Practically stops. While the powerful are well aware of the situation, judging by their blather about "critical infrastructure".

VI

Technology is omnipresent. It now realizes almost all the fantastic attributes that used to be attributed to the fiction of gods (all-seeing, flying into space, destroying everything, imaging every fantasy,

telepathy, etc.), and it could be argued that it is the realization of the fantasy of the all-powerful and only Christian God. The fiction of "humanity" thereby serves the possibility of humans identifying with the creation of technology. However, it is not as if it were our servant. Neither is it the product of "mankind", but of specific people and specific relations among them.

It is clear, of course, that there is not only technology. But the expansion of technology, which, to satisfy certain people, can also be described as the expansion of the commodity, is potentially infinite. While it is already everywhere now, going through everybody and into everybody, it can do that even more in the future. That is its expansion. Our permanent dehumanization.

VII

Is there an evasion of the question of destruction? Of course. But in what does it consist? In an intellectual dishonesty and a certain form of cowardice.

Is the existing totality of domination worse than past ones, or even better? The question remains irrelevant. It is the one we have to deal with. Why, everybody knows who is already doing it....

If we live within an artificially created environment, which is controlled by others and built in such a

way that it can only be controlled in this hierarchical way, what remains but to destroy it? Subjugation and acceptance.

The existing cities, the infrastructure, "virtual reality", consumption and work, family and home – they prove to be the foundations of the real prison society. Destroying them, burning them down, demolishing them and leaving them is the only way out that remains. The other paths are closed, or only lead further into the technology.

VIII

Three options have appeared more and more differentiated on the social horizon during the last period:

- a) total obedience, stay at home, etc....
- b) demonstrating and longing for the old rule of law – an illusionary and controllable form of protest, uninteresting, domesticated and boring...
- c) Rioting, looting, individual and collective arson – a timid beginning...

The rest is just the powder keg about to blow.

When, if not now?

Do you want to rot at home forever?

Do you want to be herded like cattle into stability?

Superspreaders

January 2021, Zündlumpen #081.

Corona and the totalitarianism of the technological

Reading time: 13:12 min.

A vision runs through the history of computers and the Internet like a common thread. Mirroring the real world and presenting people with the digital copy of this mirror world (David Gelernter called it Mirror World in the early 1990s, if I'm not mistaken) not only as a convenient alternative, but above all as an enriching perspective on this world that makes it shine "even more vividly" and that above all, allows one to manipulate the modeled real world with a mouse click, a keystroke or a swipe across the screen. Whether we are talking about virtual reality glasses, live-streams, video chats, online 3D maps, or the UNIX motto "Everything is a File" copied from the most bureaucratic institutions, all these developments attempt nothing other than to create such a mirror world in which we no longer enter into a relationship with our environment and other people, but rather our relationships open up

merely through that channel, the monitor, fiber optic lines, wireless networks, etc.

For a long time, such visions of mirror worlds, visions of people no longer even having to leave the house in the morning to go to work (Bill Gates), could be dismissed as more or less absurd mind games or, in view of the obviously charmless images of reality in the realms of the digital, as the lived science fiction fetish of some nerds. But while the fantasies promised by the visionaries of this mirror world future slowly but surely conquered first the scientific world, then the business world and the entertainment world, it might have been possible to recognize that a real danger emanates from these visions, a danger for the world in front of the mirror. And it's not as if no one had recognized this. In 1993, for example, David Gelernter, who not only raved about the mirror world, but also worked on im-

plementing it, received a letter bomb. With greetings from the Freedom Club. And he was not the only one to receive unwelcome mail, nor did everyone who wanted to oppose his vision and that of so many other computer enthusiasts send letter bombs.

But even if there were and still are thousands of sabotage attempts against the establishment of the world-encompassing mirror world called the Internet, realistically one has to acknowledge today that it exists, this mirror world, that we are all prisoners in it and that the mirror image is preparing to abolish its original, or rather to reverse the mode of action of the reflection. For decades, computer technologies have been spreading, capturing one area of life after another and subjecting it to their logic. They have established convenient as well as highly inconvenient methods of communication and have conquered space in people's lives, first imperceptibly, then more and more presently. It is hardly surprising that all this has always been about making individual aspects of life controllable or replacing those that turn out to be uncontrollable through these technologies with other mechanisms.

A simple example is payments, which have changed rapidly in recent decades. Because cash cannot be controlled, at least not to the same extent as digitally captured financial flows, digital payment

methods have been developed and established by various actors who all expect to gain their own share of the control resulting from these developments. From online banking, which at first simply seemed more convenient than going to the bank counter, it was only a small step to the many online payment methods that are now used to pay for orders placed with online businesses. With card payment terminals in just about every store "taking away" the need to go to the bank, it was only a small step to forms of contactless payment and why not pay via ID or smartphone now? What increases convenience for some, those who happily follow the rules because they have always been to their liking in one way or another, has become a problem for those who have always tried to circumvent these rules in various ways. Larger cash payments are now considered something disreputable, indeed it is now even forbidden by the state to make transactions above a certain value in cash. And even if the Corona pandemic here has not yet led to people looking at you strangely even in the supermarket if you want to pay in cash, that may only be a matter of time, considering that there have already been one or two debates about abolishing cash altogether under the pretext of it being a transmission vector of disease.

But that's just one example; there are now thousands of them. For years, there have been offers for

video telephony, but except in certain hipster and business circles, they have enjoyed at most a fleeting curiosity. And yet today everyone is talking about zoom. From zoom coffee meetings, the lonely zoom dinner, zoom classes, zoom coffee breaks, zoom chess, and so on. But again, it is not convenience that has finally led to the acceptance of zoom and other solutions, which will never make it possible to have a conversation that feels real, but above all an initial moment, the lockdown and its apparent lack of alternatives, that has created this acceptance. In my opinion, what could now be explored in countless examples can be reduced to a simple formula: in recent decades, computer technologies have helped to reproduce almost every aspect of life in a digital mirror world. On a level, however, that is hardly capable of doing justice to our deep relationships with each other and with the real world that surrounds us. And even if these mirror worlds have only ever been used in part, the global lockdown has made it possible to spread them across the board in one fell swoop.

And anyone who believes, or at least hopes, that this is a temporary development seems to me to be naive, to say the least. Once you get captured by social media, your inner life flattens out more and more, no matter how many emojis exist. After all, one's own feelings are just as difficult to capture in a

"like" as in a "facepalm". Or maybe it can? Sometimes I have the impression, and I don't think it's particularly far-fetched, that this is just a question of domestication. Sensibilities are very much shaped and determined by a social context, even outside of social networks. There are sensibilities that are recognized and those that are not. And some sensations go beyond any social framework. Not infrequently, they are branded as mental illnesses and suppressed with brute (medicinal) force in psychiatric institutions, and, one cannot conceal it, with some success. For even if there is always some friction here and there, the sensibilities of an overwhelming majority of people seem to conform to social norms, at least most of the time. Why shouldn't the only relatively large complexity of the sensation of a world before Facebook, Whatsapp, Instagram, and whatever these mirror worlds are all called, also flatten out even further with the general replacement of sensations by emojis. And as it is with individual feelings, so it is with social relationships. Who can claim to have any kind of deep social relationship via Whatsapp and the like – and of course this does not exclude any allegedly "secure" alternative? And certainly not if text and voice messages and perhaps an occasional video call are now supposed to be the only means of contact. And yet, in a few months' time – if this is not already the case –

many people will tell themselves that those very relationships that are mediated via some screen are the most profound and important relationships in their lives. After all, there are no others left for them. And just as some may have long ago forgotten (or never experienced) how it is possible to meet each other without a smartphone, or even without a cell phone, so too will the deep relationships one may have had with others before lockdown be forgotten. And people will ask themselves: how did people do that in the past, when there was no zoom? But that's the same question as asking how it might have been done before the age of smartphones, cell phones, landline phones, letters, and so on. And the answer is also the same: you won't understand until you do it yourself.

But is that even possible? Is it even possible to break out of a mirror world once you're completely trapped in it? In any case, it's not easy. And just for the record, by "breaking out" I don't mean some tech-yuppie self-discovery trip like the "digital detox" that's been all the rage for the past few years, especially in places where people are otherwise working flat out to lure more and more people into the realms of some mirror world with more and more new offers. No, by "breaking out" I mean that which is perhaps hinted at where people who, as a result of a blackout or a disruption of their part of the "net", step out of their homes into the

open air, their eyes not fixed on their smartphones but rubbing their eyes in the blinding sunlight that makes even their gray concrete surroundings glow in dazzling colors. Something that finds its completion not in finally working through the piled-up e-mails and messages after a certain number of days, but in the dull firelight of the tech mirror world burning.

I think what you have to understand when you want to break out of a mirror world is that it is not just an illusory world, a dream from which I merely need to wake up. No, even if I refuse to participate in it here and there, it doesn't mean that it won't determine my life. For the problem with all the mirror worlds out there is that they are not computer games, even though the latter may have played a major role in their development. If I shoot another player in a computer game, let's say a first-person shooter, then that player is simply revived at some starting point. In a mirror world, it's not like that. And this is not only true for those who are wiped out in front of a computer screen by drone pilots thousands of miles away. The same is true for the victims of economic crises and "environmental disasters" triggered, for example, by the malfunction of a nuclear power plant. The only difference here is perhaps that the drone pilots can still halfway see the effects of their actions in the mirror world, despite the computer game ambiance. On the other

hand, those who ultimately bet on the famine hidden in some portfolio on the stock markets often haven't even read the fine print of the bet. But it is not always the death of people that is carelessly decided with a mouse click or a keystroke. Rather, it's a matter of all conceivable and unthinkable consequences in the real world.

And it seems striking to me that the mirror worlds are propagated primarily by those who make it impossible for those who are denied access to them to live in the real world. Or should one call the daily drudgery at the assembly line of a company or the drudgery of the delivery of its products to the mirror-worlders, those activities which remain for the time being real-worldly, life? Just as freedom is not waiting inside one of the daily Amazon packages to be unpacked, it neither lies in producing, packing or delivering the packaged substitutes for their orderers.

Those who preach to us about the possibilities that this or that mirror world would offer us know this, of course. Or do you think, for example, Bill Gates, one of the most influential preachers currently, wouldn't understand what kind of world he is raving about? A world in which, because of viruses and the climate crisis and whatever else keeps old Bill awake at night, everyone is locked up, pardon me, locks themselves up if they have their way, and is only allowed out

into the fresh air for those productive purposes that give them and their ilk wealth and power. In their mirror worlds, which regard people as just another cog in the body of that artificial monster, which in the future would subjugate not only the Earth, but also neighboring planets, freedom is not conceivable for anyone other than this monster itself. Even if they understand this perhaps least of all.

In a world in which you can only step out into the open as a mailman, some of you may involuntarily recall the example of the letter bomb for the author of Mirror Worlds mentioned at the beginning of this article. What could be more obvious, since everything else reaches its destination in packages? And even though it might not be freedom that slumbers inside a parcel between the daily Amazon orders, it might be a step in this direction.

But even better than just getting rid of the tyrants of the mirror worlds, we wouldn't hesitate to smash the mirror once and for all, which in this case is made of glass fibers and radio waves instead of glass.

PS: And where one or the other feminist may have noticed that it is the Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation and that I have omitted the female part here in chauvinistic manner, they may like to step up and send Melinda a package for Christmas.

PPS: And where now surely somebody stands ready to stress that I would become a terrible "wingnut" (?) here and not only dear Bill and Melinda would de-

serve Christmas post, then I am completely in agreement. And I am still sure that Santa Claus could use some help in distributing his packages to the right addressees.

PPPS: And for all those who can't easily digest a text of such length, here's also an admittedly reductionist summary as an internet meme:

See also the addendum to this article, "On Tyrannicide and Letter Bombs" (Zündlumpen #081).

November 2021, Zündlumpen #078.

If not now, when?

In recent years, all the devices around us have begun to take on a life of their own. Modern televisions record the conversations of those around them, modern refrigerators do the stock management and even modern ovens are no longer limited to being an electric fire-replace: they have internet interfaces that are supposed to enable them to be switched on from “on the road” and through which they exchange data with their owners and other curious people at will. With smartphones, most people have long since bugged themselves voluntarily and in all their movements. So it’s hardly surprising that more than a few people are also willingly taking Amazon’s Alexa spying program into their homes. And while “technology enthusiasts” are excitedly building their “smart home” cage, the state and a handful of technology companies have even more extensive plans and visions. Voluntary (self-)surveillance within one’s own four walls was yesterday: the “smart city” of today and tomorrow includes an impressive repertoire of sensor technologies to not only meticulously record and monitor who is where and with whom, but also to control the movements and actions

of the city’s inhabitants with subtle and less subtle methods, to direct and manipulate them. On closer inspection, this also seems bitterly necessary, because in the increasingly misanthropic environments of today’s cities, in which the highest priority is given to the transport of human livestock to offices, shops and factories, as well as to the transport of goods to satisfy false needs, any subversive potential must be silenced, or better yet, integrated into this illusion of life before it spreads like an epidemic and causes irreparable damage to this beautiful, perfect world.

But how can an entire city be controlled? Where conventional methods of architecture, police work, psychiatry, prison society, schools, education, etc. reach their limits, information technology opens up new, previously unknown possibilities. And the controlled? They let themselves be sold (literally) as progress (which perhaps it is, but there is nothing inherently positive about progress), as a solution to their problems. Isn’t it convenient that Google Maps always shows you the fastest way to work? Isn’t it pleasant to use that e-scooter for the last bit of the way home, which

is so conveniently on my way? And what about paying? Contactless payment in installments with your smartphone, splitting the bill via Paypal, and it doesn't even occur to you to simply carry your purchases back out to the entrance and take to your heels. Who would think of such an idea with all the cameras?

Most of these “offers” are only possible if data can be exchanged everywhere and at any time. How else would Google know exactly where the traffic is congested, how would the far too many (but ultimately quite few) e-scooters get to where their customers are waiting for them? How should it be ensured that the necessary credit or credit line is available on the account for a payment transaction? That's right: all this only works if the internet is available everywhere. And if I already have access to the Internet, I might as well take advantage of all the other services cyberspace has to offer. Never again do I have to waste my time. When I take the subway to work, it doesn't cost me any more time: I can read the news, stream the latest episode of my favourite series, keep in touch with my friends via Whatsapp, take pictures for Instagram, and so on. And because it's so easy, I never have to feel bored again. Every free minute I can look at my smartphone instead of getting lost in my thoughts. Sometimes, looking at this device even seems more exciting to me than a contact that takes place here, in re-

ality – to touch, so to speak. Let's not let boredom arise. But when I look back at the end of the day and see what remains of all this, it is only the emptiness that this activity leaves behind as an end in itself. I may not have felt boredom, but instead I have led a rather boring life. My life has become the epitome of a controlled existence. My actions have not only become predictable, they are no longer even mine. Is this what I once dreamed of my life to be? Working all day and watching Netflix or porn to unwind? A normality that is only interrupted by the release of dopamine on the occasion of incoming push notifications? But on a regular basis, sometimes even every minute ...

Even the most enthusiastic advocates of the new “always-online” ideology have realised that this way of life cannot be the “real thing”. “Digital Detox” is one of the latest trends from Silicon Valley and refers to a kind of “holiday” from the use of all the consequently toxic devices. For a few days, a week or sometimes even a month, overworked users are supposed to take a break from smartphone and computer use and thus detoxify their bodies and minds from all the technological junk. But why take the poison in the first place? While governments, technology companies and their disciples are still experimenting with the right dose of this digital poison, for all the others the main question is: why should I let this poison be administered?

After all, none of this is my vision. And yet, looking around, I can clearly see the ways in which this vision has determined and will change my life today and in the (near) future. Even if I don't carry around my own bug with the practical touch display, thanks to countless cameras and other sensors I can hardly take a step in this city any more without where I am going being recorded. Even if I haven't welcomed the smartphone-independent private spying program "Alexa" into my home, don't own any "smart" ovens, TVs, fridges, etc., it's enough that my neighbour or my friends own such devices. Anyone who allows such a device to spy on their environment is, of course, also enabling them to monitor not only themselves but others as well. The technocrats' calculation works: once they have managed to get a certain amount of spying devices into circulation, they are able to control all people, regardless of whether they (willingly) share their vision or not. In my eyes, this point has been long since passed. Faster and faster internet connections, better and better wireless networks have in the last few years led to an increase in the number of devices (and objects) spying on us: from street-lights to ovens. Everything seems to have eyes and ears these days. And the whole thing has only just begun. Today, those who want to or are not paying attention can have their heartbeat and other vital pa-

rameters monitored by watches and bracelets. In the future, at least according to the textile industry, our clothes will do it all by themselves. And that is just one example of how the number of things that spy on us will explode. Conventional wireless networks, which today mainly supply people's smartphones with internet, are no longer sufficient. They are too slow and cannot address enough devices simultaneously.

That's the reason for the development of 5G, but also why tech big-wigs like Elon Musk (the nutcase who wants to colonise Mars to make humanity a "transplanetary species" – no joke, that's his motivation!) or Amazon boss Bezos and others are working on launching thousands of satellites into space to provide high-speed global internet coverage – and presumably spy on us in other ways as well. Several hundred of these space peeping toms are already watching us.

What some want to realise with satellites in space, others are planning with a terrestrial radio network on the ground. As a new mobile radio standard, 5G is supposed to bring faster internet for a multitude of devices. For example, 5G should be able to address up to around 100 billion mobile devices at the same time. That is an average of 12.5 devices per person walking the earth. And they should all be able to exchange data at 50 MBit/s to 2 GBit/s. Why? The pretence

that the architects of our technological prison are concerned with bringing us the freedom and possibilities of fast internet and the blessings of technology does not fool us. If the tech industry's masters were so concerned with our well-being, how is it that during the standardisation process of 5G, for example, as well as since the introduction of a nationwide wireless network, all health concerns have simply been pushed aside? Instead, those who have raised and continue to raise health concerns have been and continue to be called conspiracy theorists, even though none of the proponents of wireless networks has yet been able to prove (how could they?!?) that they are not harmful. While many countries have constantly increased the limits for radio wave exposure in order to pave the way for new technologies that have been able to comply with them thanks to these adjustments, one must at the same time ask oneself why such limits exist at all if everyone seems to be so convinced that radio technology does not cause any health hazards. What is actually a minor matter for me (because worse than any health impact of radio waves – for me this is only a minor factor in the context of the harmfulness of civilisation – is the social impacts of their technology), nevertheless seems to be excellent proof of how indifferent the actors who are pushing so hard for 5G expansion and the expansion of the mobile network or a satellite com-

munication network really are to the well-being of people, which they otherwise place so much emphasis on.

The irony of it all – I probably would never have been able to present it so succinctly without the developments of the last few weeks – reveals itself particularly where the 5G expansion is currently being pushed forward under the pretext of a “war” against the pandemic.

While people are being locked up at home in the name of their own or an almost fascist-like “public health”, new radio transmitters are being erected in their neighbourhood, the influence of which on health must at least be considered unknown and which some medical experts warn against as weakening the immune system. With the more or less blatant aim of making the confinement more “bearable”, so to speak, and thus maintainable, because those who are pacified by (free) Netflix and porn offers, who are in this way increasingly alienated from their actual needs and desires and forced into the violent norms of a society of production and reproduction, are much less likely to rebel against curfews, contact bans and quarantines. “The Revolution will not be televised”, unfortunately, remains an all too true statement of an otherwise, in my opinion, far too overrated period. If classic television has now been extended by some ridiculous interaction possibilities through commenting and rating functions,

this only perfects the pacifying function of the whole thing. If social media trollings, angry posting and even “subversive” films and TV shows serve to express one’s displeasure, why should people even take to the streets the anger that we are fed with a ridiculous illusion of freedom? Haven’t we already become part of this illusion?

Well, the good news is that many people seem to be becoming aware of this situation, perhaps they have always been aware of it, but now many seem to no longer want to be silent, no longer want to be pushed around and choose to attack instead of shouting out their disagreement into the infinite spheres of the digital where it eventually dies away (unheard). Almost daily I receive news that somewhere in the world a 5G radio mast, or any radio mast at all, has been torched, blown up, felled or otherwise destroyed. And even if the (democratic) press either tries to keep quiet about these

attacks or to slander them as the work of some nutcase – what does that mean, I’d rather be considered a nutcase or a lunatic than be considered “normal” in this world – it is no longer possible to hide the fact that this is the uncompromising opposition of people who no longer want to let their lives be determined by states, companies or anyone else. Those who are tired of producing and reproducing, who are tired of being tamed, who want to live instead of vegetating.

“Every society [...] will have its fringes, and on the fringes of every society, heroic and restless vagabonds will wander, with their wild and untouched thoughts, only able to live by preparing ever new and terrible outbreaks of rebellion! I shall be among them!”

– Renzo Novatore –

May 2020, Ziindlumpen #064.

Rebellion in times of the curfew

We are in a situation that is absolutely new to us. Our freedoms are reduced to a minimum, similar to wartimes or imprisonment. Only this time the “enemy” is invisible and our prison is our home. Catastrophes, state of emergency, curfew, pandemic, media bombardment, panic, insecurity and isolation ... It's not about minimizing or assessing the deadly consequences of the coronavirus – on a medical level I cannot judge this. But I want to formulate a critique of the authoritarian formation taking place, i.e. the state of war declared by the state and the consequences this has for us and society. While every bill and every restriction is waved through with reference to the relevant experts and no one can predict what the situation might look like in a week, we don't need experts to know that in times of crisis and war the state of emergency becomes the normality way too fast (you remember the “war on terror” or the “refugee crisis”?)

The social misery: lonely, digital and obedient

In the always-on society, the speed and presence of the news has reached a new level. Live updates show us the number of infected people. Our insecurity grows faster ... Fear of being infected, of the sick, of the fellow human being, of the neighbour. Meanwhile, politicians are positioning themselves on the front line in the war against the enemy, assuring us that they know what is best. “Stay home! Stay satisfied” this is all we have to do. Prove unity and follow the orders because after all, now is “the wrong time for critique”. And, lo and behold, we find ourselves in a totalitarian scenario of control. You shouldn't leave the house and should even report anyone who doesn't stick to the orders. The good citizen becomes aware of his responsibility and calls the cops when he suspects that the neighbours are having a party. In the meantime the use of internet is ris-

ing to new heights. As we are no longer allowed to venture out into the world around us, we are being made to believe that there is another world we can escape in: the digital world. Instead of moving and taking care of your social relations, life gets transposed into the digital world. Instead of going out and meeting friends, you can chat, watch series, make your home your office, get delivered everything in front of your door, watch porn, publish your critique and argue about something or just play games on the internet. In the digital intoxication, life becomes artificial and alienated. Ultimately we lose any possibility of changing anything about the reality around us.

Stressed out, underutilized, overwhelmed and with square eyes bumming around within your own four walls – is this the future? Permanently locked in and scared from new horror-news. The number of those who decide themselves to put an end to such a life generally increases. As does the interpersonal and domestic violence which is mostly exercised by men against women.

Towards a permanent open-air prison

While I am writing this text, a police car is driving around in the parallel streets with speakers loudly announcing that one should stay at home. At the same time, some of the leading politicians sit

down together and discuss how the curfew can be adapted nationwide. On the roof of a neighbouring house there is radio mast which collects the movement and contact data of all mobile phones in its radius. The companies Telekom and Vodafone will then pass this on so that can be analysed with whom infected persons have probably had contact and to what extent the exit restrictions are being observed. In a few days, the state will probably turn the curfew into an outright ban and abolish rights such as the secrecy of correspondence and the integrity of the home. All to examine who has contact with whom and where, who lives where and is where. The state subjects get categorized, divided and ordered or separated. Furthermore, under the call for total obedience, a global militarization of society is being achieved that has never existed before like this. Closed borders, soldiers preparing for action on the streets, prohibition of any gathering of people and helicopters searching for them with thermal imaging cameras. The fact that China is used as a model state in the fight against the epidemic shows in which direction the journey goes: drones flying above our heads, giving us orders, barcodes on our smartphones which allow us to go to the supermarket or force us into quarantine based on some incomprehensible algorithms, the lockdown of entire cities and checkpoints on every corner. The

suggestion of one “expert” in Italy that people in quarantine should also be given electronic shackles to ensure that they do not leave the house, illustrates that the city has now been turned increasingly into an open-air prison and that the methods of discipline, control, administration, punishment and monitoring are applied to all citizens. Some are now content to wait for this brief period of restriction to pass and try to find amusement online. They demonstrate not only that freedom is worth nothing to them, but they also don’t understand that this condition will last more than a few days.

Normality is the real crisis

From the perspective of the ruling class it makes no sense to maintain this state of emergency for only two weeks. If you want to freeze society to stop a virus, it has to be for at least one year from a virological point of view. The consequences will be enormous even if the restrictions will afterwards be relaxed or lifted. Once you live lonely, digital and obedient, you will train yourself to behave in this way. Just a few months ago we saw protests and uprisings exploding globally, but the means of counterinsurgency and social stupidity will cause deep scars. Because those who live lonely and digital also let themselves be robbed of their possibilities and tools to discuss, revolt and self-organize with

their friends. The state forbids us any social life while it puts itself in the role of protector of life and limb. But we know that it is the state and its industries that constantly kills, that disseminates wars all over the world, that lets refugees die at the borders and that for hundreds of years has been destroying and exploiting the earth. The state pretends to be the guardian of the common good, but actually it wants us to be work slaves and obedient soldiers – producing profits for its polluting industry and willing to die in its wars. First and foremost the state protects the rich and if in this economic crisis someone thinks of just taking from them what he or she lacks, the public servants will not hesitate to shoot the looters and thieves. Capitalism and the state need crises and states of emergency to increase and strengthen their power over us. The virus is not the reason, but the trigger. The state is calling on us to take our responsibility. But it forbids us to self-organize, to meet and to help each other. We are supposed to sit in front of the screen and say “yes” and “amen”. But when we abandon the role of subject, it declares war on us. If the state wants to control and prevent any of our movements and relations, we have to find ways to move and meet despite all of this. If we lack the essentials of life, we have to take it from where it exists in abundance. When we are separated from each other and locked up, we

shouldn't see ourselves as competitors or enemies, but as people with whom we can relate – as possible carers and accomplices. And as the eyes of the state become more and more omnipresent and the noose of capitalism becomes tighter and tighter around our necks, we must look for ways to cut them out and sever them.

"To be governed is to be watched, inspected, spied upon, directed, law-driven, numbered, regulated, enrolled, indoctrinated, preached at, controlled, checked, estimated, valued, censured, commanded – by creatures who have neither the right nor the wisdom nor the virtue to do so. To be governed is to be at every operation and at every transaction noted, registered, counted, taxed, stamped, measured, numbered, assessed, licensed, authorized, admonished, prevented, forbidden, reformed, corrected, punished.

It means to be exploited, monopolized, extorted, squeezed, deceived, robbed under pretext of public utility and in the name of the general interest; then, at the slightest resistance, by the first word of complaint, to be repressed, fined, vilified, harassed, hunted down, abused, clubbed, disarmed, bound, choked, imprisoned, judged, condemned, shot, deported, sacrificed, sold, betrayed; and to crown all, mocked, ridiculed, derided, offended, dishonoured.

That is government, that is its justice, that is its morality. The government of man by man is slavery. Whoever lays his hand on me to govern me is an usurper and a tyrant. I declare him my enemy."

March 2020, Ziindlumpen #058.

Everything in Perfect Order

The unrestrained I — and this we originally are, and always remain in our secret inner self — is the never-ending criminal in the state. The person who is guided by his courage, his will, his ruthlessness and fearlessness, is surrounded by spies from the state, from the people. I say, from the people! The people — you good-hearted folks consider what you have in it a wonder — the people is full of police attitude through and through. Only the one who denies his I, who practices "self-denial," is agreeable to the people.

Police violence

After George Floyd, a black man, was killed by cops during a police stop on May 25, 2020, a seemingly unusually radical question was discussed in both the mainstream and less mainstream media: wouldn't it be better to abolish the police, or to at least radically dismantle them? "Defund the Police" – this demand is haunting the media, and Minneapolis, the city where George Floyd was killed, is announcing a fundamental overhaul of its police structure. This popularizes a demand that has been propagated for years by various black leftist organizations in the U.S. such as

"Black Lives Matter" or the initiative "A World without Police" as well as other representatives of the abolitionist movement^[1]. Police and prisons must first be "abolished" before they can be reformed, says Mariame Kaba, for example, an abolitionist activist who is, among other things, director of Project NIA, an organization to end juvenile incarceration. Democratic refor-

^[1] Historically, abolitionism was a movement that advocated for the abolition of slavery and was very strong in the United States and elsewhere. With the abolition of slavery, abolitionists in the U.S. continued to fight against the oppression of black people. One focus is on critiquing prison, where slavery is often perpetuated through forced labor at no or minimal pay, especially against black people, who are disproportionately incarcerated in the U.S. and elsewhere.

mists, like Green Youth [Grüne Jugend, the youth organization of the "Die Grünen", the green, ecologist party in Germany] have recently called for more money for social work and psychological crisis support. Police, they say, have too many responsibilities that could be better addressed by other institutions and approaches, such as when it comes to dealing with drugs, homelessness and mental illness.

More radical abolitionists, such as A World without Police – the brochure of the same name from this initiative is distributed by ABC Vienna, for example^[2] – have a larger vision:

The only way to end police violence is through a revolutionary transformation of society, making wealth and resources freely available to all.

The abolition of the police and prison is not viewed in isolation, but expresses the desire for a liberated society in which the abolition of the police is only one aspect of a radically different way of living together. Part of this utopia is always the search for "alternatives" to police and prison in order to guarantee the "safety" and "protection" of people. Whether Green Youth or A World without Police, which want to replace police forces "systems of community safety and conflict resolution," or more concretely, for example, with "community safety teams that are democratically elected and directed by those they pro-

tect," a substitute is needed for what the police currently provide or are supposed to provide.

But what does it mean when I look for "alternatives" to the police? What is it that I want to obtain? What are "the police" anyway? Where does they come from, what are the ideas and concepts behind this institution? Is there really anything there that is worth preserving? Or must the police force be destroyed in its entirety? But what does that mean? In what follows, I would like to try to explore these questions. In doing so, I am not merely interested in critiquing the propagandized reformism of the abolitionist movement; rather, I want to try to go deeper, to trace the essence of the idea of the "police", to ask myself what we are actually referring to when we talk about the "police", and to expose that the "police" – not just as the famous cop in our heads – has so deeply permeated our notions of human interaction that even a world without police will, in the vast majority of cases, be a policed world.

In doing so, I do not want to tell a unified story of the police, a trajectory of development, a narrative of some "progress" or "anti-progress", but rather to collect fragments, discourses and ideas as well as stories about the police and policing.

^[2] [UPDATE] ABC Vienna has since deleted the aforementioned brochure from its website.

Police Stories

The term "police" first appeared in the 15th and 16th centuries in the Holy Roman Empire, France, and England. It was derived from ancient Greek, from the term "politeia," and so is related to the Greek "polis," the ancient city-states, and closely related to the concept of "politics." "Polis" translates simply as "city" or "state," which was identical in ancient Greece. "Politics" in the ancient city-states referring to all those activities and issues that concerned the polity – that is, the polis. It is interesting to consider here the most famous work of the Greek philosopher Plato, the *Politeia*. In the *Politeia*, Plato discusses the extent to which justice can be established in an ideal state. In Plato's ideal state, the population is said to consist of three estates: the peasants and artisans, the warriors or guardians, and the "philosopher kings." Here, the guardians are the ones who are supposed to guard the state. They are supposed to defend the state both externally and internally – in today's terms, the guards are supposed to fulfill military as well as police tasks – although care must be taken that the guards do not act too oppressively against their own population. For Plato, defending the state also means creating an optimized stability of this state – which includes, for example, ensuring that the citizens are always available in an optimal number of people for the state, but also that

cultural "harmful innovations" must be kept away from the citizens. That is to say, intervening in the reproduction of citizenry and keeping everything that distances people from their subjecthood as citizens away from them.

The "police" of the 15th and 16th centuries – although not yet generally defined and sometimes used in different ways, usually encompassed maintaining a state of good, general order of a community as well as a general "welfare" and "supervision of morals", based on the "politics" of the polis. In 1530, for example, an "imperial police code" was passed in Augsburg, which, in addition to what we still find in penal codes today, also regulated such things such as blasphemy, swearing, drinking, the estates' dress code, trumpeters and minstrels, begging and idleness, or the sale of various goods such as ginger, and specified specific penalties for non-compliance. However, there was not yet an institution of "police" to ensure that these rules were observed; instead, there was a plethora of different implementations and responsibilities. For example, the guilds in the cities often had their own competing "police forces", which then came into conflict with the city guards. In many places, mercenaries, often former soldiers, took on the often very lowly task of harassing others, and feudal guards often watched over the observance of such "orders".

The defense of property, especially of traveling merchants and the nobility, was one important component of early police work, the fight against "idleness" and "beggary" another. In Switzerland, though not only there, the fight against non-settled, wandering people such as "gypsies", bands of robbers, vagrants, travelers and beggars played an important role in the development of the early police, since they are much more difficult to control and a danger to property and life, especially of the rich merchants and nobles. Former soldiers were supposed to drive out the "rifraff" as so-called "land hunters." In the 17th century, "Vogte", lower nobles, took over the establishment of "good order" in the Holy Roman Empire. Guards and night

watchmen then took over the tasks of checking, for example, whether someone in the tavern did not observe table manners or did not dress according to his rank. In the United States, the forerunners of the modern police were the slave patrols, which were meant for putting down slave revolts and recapturing escaped slaves.

The modern concept of the police of officials paid and sponsored by the state was developed by German and French jurists and officials in the 17th and early 18th centuries. Nicolas Delamare's *Traité de la Police* of 1705 was influential, as was the police science developed by Philipp von Hörnigk. One of the most important theorists of police

is Johann Heinrich Gottlob von Justi, who in 1756 defined the "Principles of Police Science" [Policey-Wissenschaft] as follows:

"In a broad sense, policing is understood to mean all measures in internal affairs of the country by which the general property of the state can be more permanently established and increased, the powers of the state better used, and in general the happiness of the common people promoted."

The task of the state is to ensure the greatest possible "happiness" for the greatest possible number of its citizens. "Police" or *ius politiae* (police power) grew to be the most important component of the unified absolute power of the state. The police were the most important instrument to guarantee the "glory" of the state. It increased the strength of the state while keeping it in good order. At the same time, it should promote the "happiness" of all citizens. It should not only concern itself with the enforcement of laws, but is also responsible for public health, urban planning and the monitoring of prices – in the spirit of Plato's *Politeia*. All possible aspects of a subject's life were regulated ever more comprehensively. The result of these ideas was the absolutist "welfare state" of the 17th and 18th centuries, better known and discredited today as the "police state."

Toward the end of the 18th century, criticism of the police state emerged. The citizen should "not be for-

ced to be happy." The task of the police, it was argued, lay exclusively in so-called "danger prevention" and the prevention of criminal acts. Welfare police objectives, however, would not have to be abandoned, but merely restricted or outsourced to other institutions or realized differently. The French Revolution completely reorganized the police in this sense and provided the basis for the understanding and organization of police work that still exists today:

"The police are employed to maintain public order, liberty, property, individual security. Their main characteristic is vigilance. Society considered as a mass is the object of their care."

However, this restriction was not implemented for a long time, in neither France or in German-speaking areas. It was not until the Weimar Republic that this was more or less implemented in the German-speaking world. Under Nazism, the powers of the police expanded massively and a new form of absolutist police state, the totalitarian police state, was created for the "protection of the German national community". After their defeat in 1945, the police in the Federal Republic arose again in the form that is known today (by the way, with extensive overlapping of personnel, just as it had already been the case with the transition of the Weimar police to the National Socialist police. But we note this only in passing). In the German

Democratic Republic, on the other hand, the police were now responsible for the "protection of the socialist state and social order," with the well-known police-state consequences.

Police ideas

What can we distill from these stories and fragments? What constitutes the police? Even though the idea of police has been subject to evolution and change, I think certain basic ideas have already emerged.

So, "police" fundamentally includes the idea of a "community" or a "society" – that is, the idea of something collective that stands above the single individual, that wholly and involuntarily encompasses the people located in a place and forms an abstract totality. This totality could be harmed by "harmful" behavior of individuals inside or outside this collective entity, which in turn would be to the detriment of all. Therefore, the individual must be subordinated to this superior collective and a formal structure must be formed, such as a state, to protect this "commonwealth". The defense of this structure against external as well as internal enemies, the "permanent establishment and increase of the assets of the state", the establishment of a stability of this structure is then one, perhaps the primary, goal of police work. This means that col-

lective as well as individual behavior that could endanger this structure must be fought. The individual plays no role in this, only the "mass" is directed, as de-individualized units of the "commonwealth" that must be managed and put in the right place like chess pieces. We can consider the image of this "commonwealth" quite organically. In Leviathan, a highly influential Enlightenment work on state theory, Hobbes describes the state as a giant body acting in unison, composed of numerous people who bring this giant to life with their actions. If we regard the state as such a behemoth – and the modern state is in any case half-accurately described by this – then it must be ensured that its constituent parts, or in the modern variant of the conception of the body its "cells", perform their tasks that bring this giant to life. That is, they cannot have the freedom to do and refrain from what they want. In order to get the "cells" to exercise a discipline necessary for the Leviathan, it is necessary that the state subjects identify with their state. Different methods can be used to achieve this. One is "altruism"; the defamation of individual freedom, of the unbridled ego, as "egoism" and encouraging the abandonment of this individual peculiarity for the benefit of an abstract and arbitrary "community". Another is to promise the "cells" subjected to the state a benefit through participation.

And so, part of the police idea is also that the state or another structure would be able to improve this "community" by "ordering" the relations of people and other living beings in a "good" way and so promoting the "happiness" of most, serving the "common good". How "happiness" or "welfare" should be defined in the process is, of course, determined by those who have the say or influence in this construct, just as they determine who exactly should "benefit" from it and how, and what this "order" should look like. This "order" is contrasted in this narrative with a fearsome "chaos". Hobbes, for example, contrasts his state with a stateless "state of nature" which, according to his idea that man is a wolf to man, is described as the only slaughter among men – an astonishing comparison, as after all, it would be novel that wolves would display such behavior, at least to me. Only a state could tame this "primal urge" of man with the help of the establishment of a monopoly on the use of force and by imposing rules, so-called laws, which are binding for all. Only through the imposed rule of the Leviathan, which everyone fears, can everyone live without fear of his neighbor and so achieve freedom and autonomy. This distortion, which I cannot summarize any other way than with the famous and overused sentence from Orwell's 1984, "Freedom is slavery", continues in the constant scaremongering about the most di-

verse "dangers", such as the well-known ones of murderers, rapists and child molesters, but also those of terrorists, Islamists, or, more recently, of a virus. At the same time, people are being weaned away from, and even forbidden from, resolving their conflicts and other problems directly and on their own. This even goes so far that – at least in Germany – people call the cops when their neighbors are too loud, instead of simply going over themselves to settle the conflict directly. Through this deliberately induced "helplessness" of people and the manufactured, sometimes nevertheless nonexistent, "need for security" which then again only the state can satisfy, the subjugation of the individuals is then justified and even sold as freedom.

Police methods

Somewhere, all of these ideas are simply empty words to legitimize the rule of those who are to be consolidated and maintained with the help of the established structure and to enforce their own ideas of how people should live, as well as to influence or determine the actions of those subjected to this rule in such a way that they serve their own maintenance of power and profit. This is not to say that those who help shape or fundamentally set the design of this "order" do not actually believe in designing a "good order" for all. But whether out of pure lust for power or phil-

anthropy, what both have in common is that they want to bring other people into an "order" that suits their purposes, that is, that influence must be exerted on people. For example, in Plato's case, births must be controlled and censorship must be practiced so that people act in a way that upholds order and conforms to that order. Many critics of the capitalist democratic nation-state accuse this order of not fulfilling the promise of establishing the greatest possible good for all, and oppose it with their own utopia of an order that would supposedly actually benefit all and establish the greatest possible freedom for all.

What we are dealing with in this kind of criticism is a criticism of the methods and the form, but not a fundamental rejection of ideas of order. They are not the only ones, because there has always been a lot of discussion about the methods and means to achieve the above mentioned goals and how much (physical) coercion and punishment should or should not be used. Already Plato did not want his "own population" to be oppressed too much by the guards, but even then still a bit, concealed as the alleged dialectical relationship between "freedom" and "security", between which an optimal balance must be found.

Whereas in feudal times, for example, "police" institutions as well as courts and punishments relied on

the visible and publicly celebrated physical punishment of forbidden behavior, on the spectacle of the destruction of the delinquent's body, and "order" was often enforced with the help of open physical violence. The Enlightenment saw the beginning of a "humanization" and nuancing of these instruments of control, which in the future were to be organized according to scientific, "reasonable" and democratic principles. "Arbitrary" rule and punishments harsher than what the person had committed did not suit the Protestant Enlightened. With the deposition of the aristocracy as the ruling class and the emancipation of the burgher, the bourgeoisie, as the new ruling class, there had to be another ruling relationship, one supposedly based on reason. The police institutions, which are still based on the principles of the Enlightenment today, claim to orient their activities to a certain extent to "objective" criteria, which were developed philosophically and democratically in order to ensure a coexistence that was in the interests of at least the majority or the greatest possible number of people.

The state is supposed to be the instrument to enforce this reason. Apparently everyone becomes equally powerless in the face of written regulations and laws. A cop adheres only to the regulations, a judge to the law. Everyone orients himself to a lifeless thing, which, because it is lifeless, is considered

a higher thing, to which one also only submits. Everyone is only a cog in a system that ostensibly serves the good of all. Quite in the sense of Hobbes' Leviathan. God – the ruling legitimization strategy before the Enlightenment – is now called reason and science.

Moreover, the focus shifts to "prevention" of undesirable behavior instead of the time-honored punishment – "it is better to prevent crimes from taking place in the first place than to punish them," proclaimed utilitarian philosopher Jeremy Bentham, for example. This is accompanied by the "resocialization" aka re-education of people who nevertheless break rules, among other things with the help of punishments that are not physically visible and can be minimized depending on the "degree of improvement". "Punishment, if I may say so, is intended to strike the soul rather than the body" noted the Enlightenment philosopher de Mably in 1789.

In 19th century Britain, the strategy of "policing by consent" was developed. Faced with labor strikes and riots, some of which were exacerbated by cops gunning down scores of protesters, a new strategy was needed. The founder of the London Metropolitan Police Force, a politician named Peel, developed "policing by consent" in 1829. This idea was intended to transform revolutionary movements into reformist ones that saw the police as their

partner rather than their adversary. The idea was that the more people policed themselves, the less brute force would have to be used to enforce state order.

"The police must secure the willing cooperation of the public in voluntarily observance of the law to be able to secure and maintain public respect...The degree of cooperation of the public that can be secured diminishes, proportionately, to the necessity for the use of physical force."

This is how Peel describes his idea. The police, then, must not be perceived as an externally imposed structure of oppression, surveillance, and control, but as an expression of the common will, as "citizens in the service of citizens", bound by laws like everyone else and acting only against those who do not obey laws. In this sense, the motto coined in 1926 in the Weimar Republic, and enthusiastically taken up again by Heinrich Himmler and still in widespread use today, is "The police – your friend and helper". Peel also coined the phrase, "The police are the public and the public are the police", because the most successful police are those who have permeated society to such an extent that they have become one with it, where people abide by the rules on their own accord without reflection, take them for granted, and prevent others from breaking those rules.

Police Society

Humanism: the art of putting lipstick on a monster and getting him to look all dewy eyed, dressing him up in soft hued clothes of compassion; the art of making one's own defence of such inhumanity appear humane.

Good cop bad cop

Since the 18th century, actually since the beginning of the institutionalization of the police, people have been thinking about the ways in which the use of physical force can be minimized without losing control over the population, increasing the acceptance of the existing structures of rule and their laws. Most criticisms of the police state – then and now, for that matter – were limited to the fact that it was not up to an institution using physical force to regulate certain things, that this was "inhumane", but that there were other institutions or approaches better suited to regulating these things. What things? Actions, relationships, and situations that could disrupt "order", for example, because the pacification of the population no longer functions. That is, there is potential for revolt, or that the members of that order do not (or can no longer) fulfill their duties. For example, the "fight" against poverty, drug abuse, or homelessness – examples used by those who call for more social workers for these matters instead of cops – are attempts to conceal or absorb the failure of the state's promise of happiness, as well as to

prevent revolts due to existential need and, on the other hand, with the help of "resocialization" programs of, say, the homeless or drug addicts, to reintegrate them into the body of the Leviathan as useful cells.

"Police" as the establishment and maintenance of an "order" involves the insertion of the Leviathan's subjects into its body. But what does this mean in concrete terms? In German, an old synonym to "police" is "Mannszucht" ["man-breeding"]. Today in Germany, we still know "Zuchthaus" ["breeding house"], an old-fashioned word for "jail" in Germany], "Züchtigung" [chastising] or being "züchtig" [chaste]. At the same time, "chastising" or being "chaste" are things we usually associate with perhaps somewhat outdated methods of education. Outdated or not, however, we can say that education has a lot to do with policing.

Policed, brought into good civil order, established; educated, orderly, civilized.

"Policed", Grimm's dictionary

According to Grimm's dictionary, someone who is policed is "educated, orderly, civilized". So someone unpoliced is uneducated, uncivilized, disorderly. Someone who has had a "bad upbringing" – or, in more modern terms, "has a low standard of education" – is more likely to be "delinquent", that is, to engage in disorderly behavior. Good education and upbringing is

an important concern for the state. The term "education" is also closely related to "breeding". The Middle High German zühter [breeder] and the Old High German zuhtari originally meant "teacher" or "educator". The "Policing" as "man-breeding" serves as a lifelong educational force. Anyone who has ever sat through a trial knows the educational character of the whole event. Education is nothing other than the restriction of the actions of the free, unbridled individual to the desired ones, which in our society are those of the working citizen. Police is also school, educating is policing.

But let us return to the "breeding". In Victor Hugo's novel *Les Misérables* – the story of a bread thief who, after nineteen years of forced labor. He tries to become a morally "better" person, finds an industrial site and becomes mayor, but his attempts to "rehabilitate" himself always fail as soon as people learn about his past. We meet a bishop, the protagonist's pastor, who converts him to morality through his kindness, and who mutters at the sight of peasants tearing nettles out of the field and letting them wither in the sun beside them:

My friends, remember this, there are neither bad herbs nor bad people. There are only bad gardeners.

The bishop knows how useful nettles are and what could be done with them and is saddened by the

stupidity of the farmers. Likewise, the protagonist is "convertible" with the help of care and can become a useful member of society, but his stigma as an ex-convict always ruins such an integration. I find the whole book very indicative of the idea behind the police as well as common critiques of the police, and especially the Nettle scene extremely interesting in this context. The moral of the story: the protagonist, the "Nettle" could be and is such a useful member of society, but by not being forgiven for his past, he cannot live up to that potential. Applied to other "liberal" or "emancipatory" critiques, the argument is that everyone has abilities that could be harnessed for society, and the methods of the institution of police and criminal justice are often not suitable for this, in some cases creating the problems they claim to solve in the first place. The police are often "a bad gardener", but by changing their methods, for example through kindness, the garden of society could blossom much more and its elements could be utilized to their maximum usefulness. Much of what is removed as "weeds" could be very valuable to society.

The garden as opposed to the wild forest or plain is the fitting counterpart of society, opposed to freedom, the wild, untamed, free "state of nature" so demonized by Hobbes. The garden is the ordered, controlled environment in which every plant, every animal is sorted

according to whether it is useful to the purpose of the garden or must be fought. And here, too, the gardener may err, destroy useful things and do harm, and he will be contradicted by others, there will be other theories on how the garden can blossom in all its glory, but the garden itself remains. Just as the gardener pulls out his flowers and useful plants, settles earthworms, creates compost and poisons the snails, the newborn man is educated and cultivated, subjected to a good "breeding" or "education", he is civilized and domesticated, he is policed.

And so, there are many institutions, "departments", associations and academic faculties that deal with the optimal "breeding" of people and argue about which fertilizer produces the best results. What is the most effective way to eliminate undesirable behaviors and produce desirable ones? What is the best way to plant the garden, how do I create the space in which the desired result will be most likely to emerge? Psychology, education, behavioral science and social science, social work, architecture – such as designing "safe" neighborhoods – have done amazing work to increase the production of desired behavior. "Gentler" methods than the cudgel noticeably reduce resistance for many. Research in this area may have provided the insight that policing with the aid of physical force is not always the appropriate means of controlling be-

havior, but should be used, or at least given the appearance of being used, moreso as a "means of last resort". Separating the "incorrigible", those for whom more subtle methods of behavior control do not work, from those susceptible to other means, isolates these "insurgent"/criminal elements and so makes them easier to control.

In an understanding of the police as waging war against the untamed individual to produce the citizen and the worker, the modern distinction between military and police must also be questioned. In countries other than Germany, this distinction may seem ridiculous anyway, where the military is used whenever the classical police and other institutions are no longer able to control the behavior of their citizens – an intervention that would certainly be expected in Germany as well, despite all the "anti-fascist" lip service paid to it, in the event of an uprising. In any case, modern military strategy papers see counterinsurgency as the military field of the 21st century in an increasingly globalized world with increasingly consolidated nations; police and military strategies and technologies cross-fertilize and compliment each other. The military comes into play when a new order is to be established, for example by means of a military occupation, or in order to re-stabilize an order that has noticeably begun to falter, which is to say, to repeat the original occupation. But order

can be better consolidated if the occupation is no longer perceived as such. The military occupation of a territory will be seen by most as a restriction of freedom and will provoke corresponding resistance. The task of a police force is to subdue and establish such an original occupation to the point where it is perceived as desirable by the inhabitants of an area and as a guarantor of their freedom. Whereas the military, at least in previous conflicts, has often waged war between states or other power structures and reoccupied territories, the police, in what is then already a consolidated state structure, wage a social war against the people within those states, who are always potentially resistant .

Police anarchy?

*where everyone wants to live only
for himself*

*give nothing for the common good,
there goes to ruin all police.*

*Georg Rollenhagen (1542-1609),
froschmevseler.*

If we consider police as responsible for establishing a good order, and we assume that such order can be established only by controlling the actions of people (and other living beings) incorporated into that order, then it is also clear, of course, that any attempt to establish an order of any kind must involve conforming people's behavior to the desired order – ordering, that is,

policing it. That the establishment of a polity, a society, will entail the establishment of a police force, no matter what it will be called. All attempts and proposals to reform as well as to abolish the police will establish new police forces.

In certain anarchist circles, many identity-based liberation struggles are positively received as propagating the establishment of "our own security forces" as the solution or alternative to the police. The most glittering current example of this is the "Asayish", the institution for establishing public security in Rojava, which is readily promoted as such a successful example of "autonomous" security. Thus, in 2016, the administrator of the Rojava Asayish Ciwan İbrahim declared that the Asayish is a "security institution that does not locate itself above but within the society". One might think Ciwan İbrahim had read Peel, the inventor of the British "bobbies", but even if that is not so, I find it hard to see any difference from Peel's "The police are the public and the public are the police" or the German "The police – your friend and helper". But they really are different from the security forces of the states, Ciwan İbrahim affirms, because:

First of all, our view on societal problems is not based on 'crime and punishment'. What we want to achieve, in general, is not just to punish an individual in a criminal instance and so employ a temporary solution. Our actual goal is to determine the cause of that pro-

blem and turn it around to make it ineffective and unable to turn into crime. For example, if there is a crime of theft or smuggling, we find the organizers and take down the network.

Revolutionary and new, claims Ciwan İbrahim. I must say that especially with this example, it is not at all clear to me how this method is different from "capitalist-democratic" police tactics. After all, it would be news to me that, for example, Interpol and any police unit dealing with organized crime would not try to track down the organizers and dismantle their networks. However, even if one overlooks this aforementioned example, the Asayish goal of "not only" punishing but also eliminating the basic conditions for committing crimes is absolutely identical to the theories of preventive policing from the 18th and 19th centuries. Ciwan İbrahim's claim that capitalist democracies are only about punishing "crimes" is simply wrong, and as we have seen, the modern understanding of policing is also very much about eliminating the conditions for committing crimes.

Regarding the Women's Asayish, which is propagated as the special element of the Asayish and which surely also pleases those who wish that "safety teams" are provided by those who are "in need of protection" – as, for example, the brochure "A World Without Police" promoted by ABC Vienna suggests – I would like to tell the story of the

Female Criminal Police (Weibliche Kriminalpolizei, WKP) in Germany, quite heretically. Female so-called police welfare officers, who had been enforced by women's rights associations in Germany since 1903, concerned themselves with sex workers and underage offenders, and issued home detentions. The reason given for this was that women were better suited to dealing with these groups (adolescents and adult women) on the basis of specifically "feminine" qualities such as caring and motherliness and the criticism of a specifically "masculine view" of "morally endangered" girls and women. Also at the instigation of feminists, the Female Criminal Police was established in 1926/27. Similarly to the Women's Asayish in Rojava, it was mainly responsible for "vice squad" tasks, such as dealing with victims of sexualized violence, sex workers and underage offenders. The fact that women are not "better" cops or otherwise belonging to such a group does not mean that the police suddenly become a completely different institution, as some of the demands that victims of discrimination make of police forces suggest, is shown by the role of the WKP in National Socialism – even if I actually find it futile to even bother to address such an absurd claim. The WKP took over racial-political tasks in National Socialist Germany, participated in the so-called provision of transports of Jews as well as in

the establishment of National Socialist youth homes in invaded territories. The lesbian detective director Friederike Wiek – active in the Berlin women's movement in the 1920s and the highest-ranking police officer in the Third Reich – was responsible from 1941 for the Moringen Juvenile Protection Camp and from 1942 for the Uckermark Girls' Camp. Both were concentration camps for adolescents and young adults. After the Second World War, the WKP remained as an institution – the prerequisite for employment was to have previously learned a social profession – and was dissolved in the 1970s and integrated into the criminal police. Examples like the Asayish or other security institutions of such "revolutionary and emancipatory liberation movements", which are promoted as a completely new concept and a real better alternative to the police, just remind me of how the Soviet Union promoted the Gulag as a valuable step to get closer to the goal of abolishing prisons and leading people to socialism through work.

Certain concepts of the abolitionist movement, such as Community Accountability or Transformative Justice, are also being discussed as alternatives to the police. The German variant of Community Accountability, the so-called "Awareness-Teams", is especially trendy. At many anarchist events one is suddenly confronted with them, while they are sometimes

even uniformed, for example in pink shirts, high-visibility vests or with purple or otherwise identifying armbands – mmh, maybe it had been buttons – patrolling the grounds. The criticism that they were policing is usually shot down by the fact that an awareness team is not as organized and structured as a police force. Such a view, however, is superficial and ignores the ideas that led to the establishment of a "police force" as we know it today. If we understand policing as actions that serve to bring people's behavior under control to such an extent that, at best, only desired behavior comes to light, then the argument that is often put forward that awareness teams are still necessary until people are finally fully "reflective", until it would do away with itself, shows that apparently awareness teams are seen as part of an infrastructure that works towards the goal of all people becoming "reflective". But what else is this "reflective people" supposed to be other than policing the behavior of individuals, please? Others argue that an awareness team is only there to provide a point of contact, but it is still a part of the behavioral control infrastructure and we know how closely "social" and "welfare" institutions are linked to the police and the practical implementations of such awareness structures have only confirmed this link so far.

Just because I give something a

different name and change the methods does not mean that I have actually destroyed what I pretend or even intend to fight against. And as long as I absolutely want a garden instead of a jungle, I will have to make orderly interventions to get this garden. Therefore I also see all "anarchistic" concepts, which want to establish a society in any form, as problematic, because they will always be confronted with the problem to have to introduce, maintain and defend their order. To educate the untamed born human being with the help of "education" to a reflective human being ready for anarchy, as some "transformation theories" propagate, means the taming of the wild individual and their subjugation. It seems to me also no wonder that especially among advocates of such "anarchist utopias" the borders between grassroots democracy or council democracy and their allegedly anarchist "liberated society" are not clearly drawn, indeed partly treated as synonyms or at least not as contradictions to their own ideas. Anyway, there are the representatives of anarchism who claim that anarchism is the "real" or "radical democracy" in contrast to today's capitalist democracies, in which people could finally "govern themselves". But what can I expect from a self-governing democracy, even a radical one, but to police myself in case of doubt, even if I don't think it will stop there, when I look at the concepts of "anti-fascist protection

groups" ("For a new anarchist synthesis!") or "community safety" ("A world without police"), of Transformative Justice and awareness teams, which are discussed in the context of the present as well as "after the social revolution".

Those who hate domination cannot "replace" the police, but must destroy them. But for this, one must also be willing to give up control. Control over other people as well as over other living beings. We need the courage to live in the jungle instead of retreating to our backyard. I mean that absolutely literally. An untamed, free life can only exist outside walls and fences, outside society, outside civilization. Does that mean freedom can only exist as a hermit alone in a cave? I think not. However, in my opinion, relationships can only remain free of domination as long as it is possible to have them directly with each other and as long as a community is not placed above the individual. But does that mean that I have to put up with everything from others? Counter-question: doesn't one put up with much more when one is subjected to a (self-)governance and laws, is educated and bombarded with propaganda with the help of mass media, and is confronted with an environment that is characterized by its "safe architecture" and an order for the ideal exploitation of so-called "natural resources"? Just as I defend myself against such a restriction of my freedom, I can also clarify my

conflicts myself, can fight those who think they can override or destroy me as an individual in their plans. However, to want to fight the control of others over me by controlling these others first, to want to guarantee freedom by restricting the freedom of all, is certainly not anarchy. Anarchy is after all chaos and not the order that certain anarchists who are afraid of losing control always assure us with.

In the face of such an internalized longing for control over all life and the ever refining technologies and theories for the further nuancing and internalization of this control, things look bleak for the time being. But since a complete determination of all actions of an individual fails, even with all attempts of the most totalitarian methods, because of individuals themselves cannot be reduced to machines, no matter how hard one might try, the net of control can never become so tightly enmeshed that no more resistance will come to light. A garden remains a garden only through the constant intervention of the gardener. So let's not take over the garden and manage it ourselves, but let's kill the gardener in our head and move boldly into the wilderness. Because as Helfrich Sturz already recognized in the 18th century:

the policed man is ... not so satisfied with his condition as the wild one.

Exciting reading at the time of the creation of this text

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I Want to Kill Cops Until I'm Dead

"Nicht Freund, nicht Helfer – Feind!" in: Yegussa

I survived Awareness

The Continuing Appeal of Nationalism

Fragmentarische Notizen gegen die Justiz

Der Einzige und sein Eigentum [The Unique and its Property]

May 2021, Zündlumpen #083.



Fragments for an insurgent struggle against militarism and the world that needs it

After all, the anarchists are against anti-militarism (oh dear, there you have the slip of the tongue, see, a slip of the tongue never happens completely by accident, in fact the anarchists are also against a certain kind of "anti-militarism"). Anyway, to avoid unpleasant misunderstandings, let's try to be clearer. I'll correct myself: the anarchists are against militarism. There is no doubt about that. They are against militarism, and this not in the name of a unanimous pacifist view. They are against militarism first of all because they have a different conception of struggle. That is, they have nothing against weapons, they have nothing against the concept of defense from oppression. But, on the other hand, they have a lot against a certain use of arms, ordered and commanded by the state, and organized by the repressive structures. They have much to object to a militaristic use of arms. While they agree, or at least in their vast majority they agree, with the use of arms against the oppressor, with the use of arms against those who oppress and exploit, with the use of arms in a war of liberation. With the use of weapons against certain people, against certain realizations of exploitation.

So it is wrong with saying "the anarchists are anti-militarists, which is the same as saying that they are pacifists". The anarchists are not against militarism because they would all be pacifists. They do not object to the symbol of the gun, nor can they accept a condemnation of armed struggle in general, to use that strictly technical term which would deserve extended consideration. On the contrary, they are in complete agreement with a certain use of the weapons. Which one? The one in which these objects are used to liberate oneself, since no liberation will be possible in a peaceful way. For those who possess power will never be so polite as to stand aside in peace of mind, without resisting and without trying to obtain power at any cost.

From Alfredo Bonanno. "Like a thief in the night."

What is war? What is militarism?

Over the course of different eras, wars have manifested themselves in different ways. Some (early)

campaigns of conquest, in which a civilizing imperial power annexes territories previously inhabited only by stateless communities, may have been conducted differently, at least on the part of the stateless communities, than those wars in

which the armies of monarchs, aristocrats, merchants, businessmen, churches, or nation-states clash. They may even have more in common with certain modern forms of war, to which I will return. For the time being, however, I will answer the question of what war and militarism are on the basis of those traditional conflicts among rulers in which they set their armies on each other in order to assert any claims to power or even to settle personal disputes.

The prince who commands his own army, for example, may have many reasons for going to war against the army of another. Perhaps he has been humiliated, perhaps he is courting the love of a princess, or rather the recognition and favor of her father, perhaps he does not like the shape of one of his realm borders and wants to expand it a bit, perhaps he wants to conquer a treasure or secure the right to exploit more peasants.

Sometimes he strives for the position of another, higher prince, sometimes he may have had an inspiration from God or taken some myth too seriously. No matter what his reason is: for his subjects and mercenaries this should hardly be reason enough to give their lives and safety for him and his cause. There may even be several subjects who do not go to war for the prince's cause, but consider their own cause (a higher post, a share of the booty, etc.) connected with that of the prince. The number of

such subjects, however, will always be small, and like the prince, they are equally unwilling to stick their necks out when swords clash with shields, arrows pierce armor, and lances shatter what may once have been the unharmed body of a man.

In order to raise an army, the prince must come up with a way to rouse the interest of any of his subjects – not necessarily his own – to take place in the slaughter and to stay there, if necessary, until the bitter end. A simple way to rouse this interest is to pay one's warriors. The lord calls these mercenaries but he is aware of the problem that they will be fickle. After all, he has only been able to persuade them to serve him by paying them or promising them payment – sometimes also by promising them a share of a rich booty, an extremely cunning trick because it also immediately interests the mercenary in being victorious. And the prince knows that not only he has money, but his enemy does as well. It is also not uncommon for mercenaries to desert in the face of an enemy force or during battle with it, along with their pay and the weapons issued to them, to prove unfit for battle, or to refuse to do anything at all for which they feel they have not received sufficient pay. Mercenary armies are therefore not particularly popular with our prince. The so-called feudal system is an attempt to replace this purely monetary bond of the mercenaries with a dependency of the subjects, hence-

forth called vassals. In exchange for the right to be a despot himself and to administer a small part of the lord's lands, to subjugate the peasants living on them and to gain a certain social status, the vassal performs all kinds of services for his lord, the feudal lord, above all he goes to war for him, and also obliges some of his subjects to do so. What the mercenary was not willing to do for the little pay he received, the vassal, this noble knight, now does with glee in exchange for something even dirtier: a fancy suit of armor and a position in the administration of his prince's realm. Militarism is born.

The henceforth armored vassal, unlike the mercenary, will never again be able to plead his own cause, for when he returns to the hearth at home from a long, tiring, and energy-sapping campaign, he will be there to take care of the administration of his liege lord's realm, he will extort taxes from the peasants on the land he administers, he will do the necessary bureaucracy, and he will prepare for the next battle – for him, after the war is before the war. He may believe that it is his cause to defend here, but he will remain at most a deceived egoist all his life.

His liege lord, on the other hand, our prince, rubs his hands together in his castle, his hall or his palace and toasts his clever idea. Not only does he no longer have to worry about managing his lands, he can

now wage wars whenever he wants, and his vassals will follow him almost unconditionally. Quickly these vassals, the so-called sword nobility, will appoint sub-vassals and these in turn will appoint other sub-vassals. The resulting hierarchies not only enables the administration of rapidly growing empires, but also determines the order of the army and ensures a functional chain of command. For it is not only in war that obedience and above all discipline will henceforth be the most important virtue of a subject, but also in times of peace this militaristic virtue will be constantly practiced when the vassals serve their respective lords in civilian state life.

This militaristic order will remain in place, despite numerous power struggles, intrigues and coup attempts, until a new class reaches for power and overthrows this system from the outside: the bourgeoisie. At the latest after the heads of the nobility roll in France, a restructuring of the military is also required. A middle class that has arisen to become the new upper class cannot, of course, claim the military services of the nobility for itself and, in any case, its loyalty would no longer be assured now that we are no longer dealing with petty despots in the favor of a commanding prince. The bourgeoisie continues to use militaristic logic, but now needs new subjects who will fight for their cause. In France and the U.S., and later throughout

the Western world, the first nations will emerge, and it will be nationalism, the myth of national unity, that will henceforth mobilize subjects into war for the cause of the rulers. If the vassals can still be regarded as deceived egoists, because they may have believed that they went into battle for their own cause, i.e. for their power, influence and status, the bourgeoisie succeeds in eradicating all egoism in military affairs. From now on, people go to war for a fictitious nation that they believe to be their own, for the fatherland, and they are prepared to have half their face blown off for the fatherland, to have their limbs blown off or, later, to inhale poison gas. The administrative participation in ruling, which ensured the discipline of the vassals even in peacetime, is eliminated and replaced by something much more terrible: factories. To function to the beat of the machine, they will henceforth cultivate the necessary discipline of marching in step during peacetime. And while the vassals had to ensure in peacetime that they would always have enough war horses at their disposal, the new underclass, the so-called proletariat, is rapidly producing in the factories, even in peacetime, the implements of war that will maim it in wartime.

The organizational civil hierarchies that were formally dissolved in bourgeois democracy, but which guaranteed functioning chains of command in war, are being trained

in the factories, which are not coincidentally organized according to a militaristic logic. Even if most of today's states have a standing professional army, which from this point of view may have more resemblance to the mercenary system, which never completely disappeared anyway – mercenary auxiliaries were often simply necessary to be able to muster enough soldiers – the experience of the world wars, as well as the wars of the recent past, show that mobilization of workers is not only necessary, but works all too well thanks to generalized militaristic discipline and trained obedience.

But the age of the wars of nations seems to be coming to an end, even to be already over, with few exceptions. At the latest with the end of the Cold War, the two remaining military-imperial factions have integrated themselves into an international community of states in which conflicts arise less over conventional territorial control and increasingly over claims to resources and international police disagreements. Of course, this does not mean that wars would no longer exist. But we must update our understanding of war if we are to adequately understand contemporary military operations.

The carcasses of national armies, while continuing to exist for a

number of nostalgic reasons, are being welded together into a new military in military alliances such as NATO and deployed in international intervention units such as the UN blue berets for primarily international policing missions designed to secure raw materials. Although international capital has almost unlimited access to this state-organized military, it is also increasingly deploying its own security forces in various parts of the world (for example, in South America) to oversee the expansion of an extractive infrastructure there and to crush resistance to it. However, where the main purpose of an increasingly international military is to put down insurgencies, intervene in civil wars, and protect the economic interests of the capitalist class, nationalist mobilization strategies are also crumbling. Although there are obviously still plenty of Nazis in the ranks of the military to satisfy their longing to serve their fatherland, the majority of people can no longer be so clumsily deceived. Instead of hostile nations, in times of global understanding and an international community of states, a new enemy is now needed, against whom at least the sympathies of the people can be roused for the strike forces of their country. And in times when the international military is training for deployment in urban areas, when civil war scenarios and counterinsurgency operations are being practiced by the military, it is

also necessary for this enemy to hide among the population.

The enemy has been called international terrorism since at least 2001, but not just since then. And it is probably an ingenious move that this terrorism is so difficult to detect. Previously tested racist motives can be mobilized against it just as much as political fears of an anarchist or otherwise subversive, insurgent conspiracy that will bring chaos to a world which is synchronized and in lockstep. And, of course, revolts in the Third World, in which the enslaved revolt against their exploiters, can be declared terrorism just as easily as the regime of a country that refuses to conform to the oil interests of an empire.

How many Americans can identify with those buried under the two office towers of the world trade center, how few were there compared to the dead of the Afghanistan and Iraq wars? And yet this event and its propagandistic exploitation is enough to mobilize not only US-Americans, but also countless Europeans against something that presumably does not even exist, or that, in retrospect, was only created by these wars in the first place. But the "war on terror" has not only triggered wars against a spectre in the remote regions of the world powers, but has also established a warfare against domestic populations in the metropolises of power. From now on, every citizen is a po-

tential terrorist, to the extent that they look "Arab", practice the Muslim faith, or can be otherwise racialized. The U.S. Transportation Security Administration (TSA), which has been operating in overdrive since 2001, is convinced that terrorists can be identified not only by traditional racial characteristics such as skin color or head shape, but also by a specific terrorist beard trim.

The war against international terrorism has also become the ultimate racist argumentation strategy against migration in Europe. Whoever flees from the war zones of this world in the direction of the wealthier metropolises could be a terrorist. Those who go berserk and run amok in the metropolises, on the other hand, remain the relatively harmless, misguided spree shooters from the neighborhood. I certainly don't have to explain all aspects of the fear of terrorism here, it should be all too present to most readers. Its targeted fomentation and subsequent instrumentalization by politics in the form of the technological armament of the police – who now drive tanks and may count hand grenades in their arsenal – and the military, as well as an expansion of border regimes, especially in Europe, is still in recent memory.

It can be said that the specter of terrorism, as it haunts our brainwashed minds today, is the ideal enemy image, produced at great

expense, to legitimize the military strategies being trained by an increasingly global military to secure a world-spanning empire.

But even this modernized understanding of war needs to be reconsidered these days, as we have been experiencing a new form of war, or more precisely, civil war, for more than a year now. Terrorism, which has become largely obsolete, fills at most the margins of the daily newspapers. Instead, another, even more fictional enemy, fills the headlines: Covid-19. This invisible super-terrorist who haunts people invisibly and insidiously, who lurks behind every touch, every encounter, he is the ultimate enemy and his warfare, it requires a very special form of mass mobilization: mobilization to absence. The modern war hero, he – or she, this modern army has now really overcome any gender differences – lounges at home on the sofa, munches on junk food and anxiously follows the headlines that flicker across all screens every minute. And even though the number of dead has long since been reduced to a meaningless "incidence", the war-loving masses are still cheering. And everyone else? "The best medicine is called discipline", or something like that is the slogan of one of the federal government's latest advertising campaigns urging the nation to "persevere". And discipline is

truly needed to fight as a soldier in this war. The classical war knew from time to time at least a "furlough", just as at least a part of the population did not need to go to war, the modern viral war on the other hand recruits the whole population and knows at most a "relaxation of measures". Even here, the attentive observer asks themselves how it is that an ever more intensified situation of measures (lock-down and contact restrictions have actually remained the whole time and have recently been extended by curfews) can be sold again and again as a "relaxation".

And whoever will now sincerely claim not to have noticed the war rhetoric so far and consequently may be of the opinion that this is not a war at all, may perhaps explain to me how it is that Rheinmetall and other weapons companies produce Corona protective masks, of all things.

But of course it is not just the rhetoric of war, for a so-called good cause (whatever that might be), that we are dealing with here. To anyone for whom it may have escaped, I would like to remind you once again that we are in a global state of emergency. A state of emergency that not only closed the previously existing national borders, but also established entirely new border regimes. Whether global open-air prison (though "open air" has now been debunked as overly optimistic) or the "camp

as nomos of modernity" posited by a philosophizing democrat, which doesn't seem particularly philosophical at all today, the current reality has a bit of both. Even if the quarantine prison (mostly) no longer knows window bars and barbed wire fences, but here and there resorts to more modern instruments of confinement with electronic shackles, and elsewhere tests the even more modern form of self-confinement in a gigantic self-experiment, the risk-area camp. Often, there are certainly exceptions, it knows no excessively fixed boundaries, no fencing and, as far as I know, fugitives have not been shot by guards so far, at least in Germany – incidents in directly neighboring countries and elsewhere in the world make this possible here as well, of course – the Corona mask must have dulled one's senses considerably if one still rejects these analyses. In addition, there are lots of new papers, from a pass in the form of a negative Corona test and a certificate from the employer to the international identification document of an electronic vaccination pass. A greencard is what the war propaganda sometimes uncritically calls it.

But while at all the new borders, at least for the time being, shooting is not too frequent, border crossings are tolerated once in a while depending on the person and the situation, and the pigs at least metaphorically stay at a distance of

1.5 meters, the situation at the nation-state borders, as well as especially at the European external borders, has once again worsened dramatically. The camps off the mainland, that are even more real, lack neither the barbed wire nor the sharp-shooting guards, are getting worse and worse. And the exclusively humanistic help of the left... is in lockdown. Mostly out of conviction. Last year, when the pictures of the burning Moria gave a spark of hope, the leftists demanded a new, more hygienic camp. But what does that have to do with the war? Unfortunately, quite a lot, since it proves that in Germany, for the first time in history, there is a specifically left-wing army. Those who in the past refused "service at arms" and preferred to do "civilian service", have been recruited on their original profession: in hospitals and nursing homes, precisely there, where even in the past people preferred to wipe patients' butts rather than getting weapons and deserting with them. And consequently, today it is not the assault rifle with which the Corona vanguard goes into battle, but the syringe – only for the biggest idiots is this less harmful. The preferred tool of the "angel of death", one would almost like to interject.

So what does this mean for an anarchist understanding of war? One thing is certain: less modern forms of war have not died out with this modern war, just as the war against

terrorism has not made the traditional wars between states and civil wars obsolete. The viral war, even though its war propaganda must be unmistakably obvious, is not perceived by many as a war at all. In the tradition of the war on terror, the "peacekeeping" of blue berets, and the "diplomatic value" of the atomic bomb, viral warfare also promises peace, or worse, health. And it even seems to perfect this narrative by doing so. The militaristic logic of discipline that is currently imposed on all social life, the irrational and arbitrary regimentation of all social relations outside the already eternally institutionalized relations of the family, they serve to recruit an army of moralists and denouncers, who from now on are to discipline and prosecute delinquents more efficiently than any police force.

The modern war, then, is fought only in the peripheries with armed force, it gives only the "incorrigible", the "terrorists", the "criminals", etc. to the destructive force of armies and even prefers to arrest them, to bring them before a court and to lock them up in prison – or in a camp. Meanwhile, however, it increasingly knows less of a distinction between territories of peace and those of war. Is it the police that are increasingly appropriating the strategies of the military, or is it rather the military that is pursuing a police logic even in the territories of war? I think this question alone reveals a huge miscon-

ception: the police and the military are in fact one and the same, and may have always been. The propaganda of the modern rule of law may obviously paint a different picture here, but war has always been seen by some as the continuation of politics by other means, and still others have concluded that, conversely, politics must be the continuation of war by other means. Likewise, the police differ from the military at most in the means employed, and even here the development of modern war technologies and a more recent military armament of the police has increasingly blurred these differences.

False Allies in the Fight Against Militarism

One does not have to go back to the Manifesto of the Sixteen – in which well-known anarchists called for joining the camp of France because of its revolutionary tradition and fighting against the imperial absolutism of Germany – to find examples of the complete loss of orientation and sense of the interests involved on the part of anarchists in the face of the war. Most of today's "anti-fascist" discourse reproduces the same errors in miniature, reflecting the ideas of "anti-imperialism" prevalent in the 1970s: democrats vs. fascists here, Third World states vs. Western states there. More recently, supporters of the fight against "the fascism" of the jihadists in Syria even accept the forces of the U.S. Air Force in their own camp. A position that was already present during that war that led to the disinte-

gration of the former Yugoslavia in the 1990s. Similarly, many defend with wrinkled noses the international interventions to contain the atrocities committed during the "civil wars" in many African countries (preferably the interventions of the Blue Helmets, which provoke less rejection than those of the French Foreign Legion or those of a coalition of NATO). Nowadays, it almost seems that Western armies use volunteer recruits rather than mass recruitment to do their dirty work. Say, the only factor that spares us from seeing libertarians join the armies to fight the "bad guys" who are even more counter-revolutionary than the supporters of commercial democracy.

From Break Ranks. Against War, Against Peace, For Social Revolution

One would think it need not be noted that a state could never be an ally in the struggle against militarism. And yet, past and recent positions of anti-militarists seem to be in urgent need of such clarification. And when I say state in this context, I also mean any militarist effort with the intention of establishing a state or otherwise taking over state functions. What seems at least illogical from an anti-militarist perspective, as I understand it, is totally irreconcilable from an anarchist perspective. In the past, what could be observed in solidarity movements with the Bolshevik regime, Fatah and Hamas, or in the Cuba solidarity movement, finds expression these days, for example, in those who literally wave the flags of YPG and YPJ. They are beautiful anarchists and anti-mili-

tarists who carry the banners of military units, who carry out arrests, run prisons and camps, and demand from their mercenaries the militaristic discipline of killing on command.

It is less interesting to note this fact, but far more interesting to ask, why? How is it that blatantly militaristic and authoritarian organizations end up being defended by who are in fact their opponents as a "lesser evil" – which is still the most honest way of looking at it – or even as a "necessity" in the war against imperialist militarism. That antimilitarism serves here as a mobilization strategy for militarism may seem like a cruel irony, but I assume that these recuperations of antimilitarism try to reinterpret the goal of antimilitarism as the absence of war, the order of social peace and the repressive control over any tendencies disturbing this order. This may perhaps be the goal of a humanist, communist, or democratic antimilitarism, but as the goal of an anarchist antimilitarism it seems to me to be quite inadequate. What I find interesting in the current example of Rojava solidarity, which even among anarchists, if not uncritically adopted, remains largely uncommented upon, is how a certain way of argumentation is reproduced, which conversely is rightly criticized as a statist, capitalist or nationalist legitimization of and propaganda for militarism. It is the narrative of a national defense against an enemy

on the march – even if this national motive may be veiled and partly hidden behind identity-politics with more appealing terms like "women's revolution" (yes, the goal to fill 40% of the posts with women and the targeted presentation of female military personnel by the propaganda seems to be sufficient today) or "ecological revolution". This is a narrative that demands immediate "solutions" that have top priority and to which consequently everything else must and will be subordinated. This narrative not only serves to legitimize a militia, but it is also meant to justify all the rest, which may be otherwise promised by the propaganda of the new administration, but in practice comes across as correspondingly authoritarian. "Haven't had time to take care of it yet." This is exactly the propaganda that established states also use when they call on the working class in a state of war to make personal sacrifices for the sake of the nation's interests, while at the same time presenting military operations at home and abroad as urgent, without alternative, and as a basic prerequisite for dealing with the problem in question in the future.

It may perhaps be surprising that an anti-militarist movement in particular does not recognize this narrative as a classic stylistic device of war propaganda, and pages of reflection could certainly be written on why this may not be so surprising. But I want instead to return to

the topic of this text: what could an insurgent perspective look like that not only attacks the militarism of the Turkish regime, that of NATO and that of IS, but that precisely also opposes the militarism of YPG and YPJ and their social-democratic to Leninist parties, the PYD and the PKK, as well as against any rule in general. Even against that of what is called democratic federalism, which in any case can only be considered anarchist in the sense of the term in the eyes of a Trotskyist who has declared himself an anarchist without further ado?

Horizons of an anti-militarist practice of attack

(i) The production of war

Recent anti-militarist campaigns, operating within the truce of what is sometimes called "Fortress Europe", have identified the production of arms, munitions, and other war equipment as a field of intervention. If the supplies coming from this production stopped reaching the front lines of the war, which are elsewhere in the world, the war would also come to a standstill. And indeed, without an unbroken chain of supplies, the wars of the past and present would (have) been impossible to continue. At least, that's the theory, anyway.

Measured in terms of their practice, however, these interventions must so far be regarded as having

largely failed. Blockades in front of production sites of the arms industry, often announced long in advance and thus integrated into the production schedules of these companies, often lasted only a few hours and are not infrequently dissolved of their own accord after a certain time, when the participants of the blockade felt hungry or wanted to return to the comfort of their night camps, or had to think of their return to work the next day. I don't want to at all minimize the value of such collective efforts of protest with this assessment, but whoever believes that by participating in such a predictable, calculable, and highly symbolic blockade they are actually contributing to blocking war production to the extent that it would have any effect on warfare is simply lying to themselves. But there was not only this form of mass blockades: sabotage of railroad tracks, arson attacks on company vehicles of arms corporations and their suppliers, as well as on the vehicles of logistics companies that shipped their war equipment, etc., as well as a perhaps even larger series of paint attacks on the headquarters of these companies offered and still offer a militant perspective of intervention in war production.

And yet: it would be news to me that supplies to the fronts of the wars ever came to a standstill in the process. The interruption of production was too minor, the sabotage of logistics too insignificant.

Nothing that could not have been made up for by an additional night shift. And the financial damage? Well, let's say the management of these companies make calculations in other dimensions.

It is by no means my intention to talk down these attempts at intervention, to discourage people from attacking even when the enemy seems to be overpowering and one's own room to maneuver seems too small in comparison, one's own resistance too insignificant. None of this is a reason for me to refrain from attacking. Rather, I think it is worthwhile to reconsider established strategies from time to time and, if necessary, to subject them to revision if it becomes apparent that one's own actions within them are largely ineffective or are becoming predictable.

Today's high-tech production, and the production of war material definitely falls into this category, is in itself an extremely unstable affair. It is dependent on numerous expensive and difficult-to-obtain resources – ironically, the same resources the war revolves around in one way or another – and consists of a long production chain of intermediate products and their logistics to the production sites where the final product, be it a tank, a military jet, a drone, a missile launcher or anything else, is assembled from thousands or millions of individual parts. Manufacturing companies themselves often

do not follow from beginning to end who their suppliers' suppliers are, much less who their suppliers in turn supply. Even if there are efforts in the defense industry, more than anywhere else, to trace these production chains and – if they are indispensable for the production process – to secure them accordingly, this also applies at least in part to the manufacturers of tanks, aircraft, drones and the like. In the history of the production of high-tech goods – and also in the defense industry – it is said that production halls have come to a standstill for days because a certain nut, which could not easily be bought in the hardware store, had not been delivered or because a supplier went bankrupt and they first had to find a replacement for the component it had supplied. And when, a few years ago, the world market prices for rare earths skyrocketed because China reduced its exports, the suppliers to the automotive industry – and what is needed for cars is often also needed in one form or another for armored vehicles – experienced considerable supply bottlenecks.

But I don't want to get too specific here. In any case, it seems interesting to me that beyond the direct production sites of the armaments industry, which are often monitored by military technology and are usually located in unappealing areas, the neglected industrial periphery of this sector may sometimes lie dormant in small villages, some-

times on the outskirts of far more appealing industrial areas in large cities, and may offer a great deal of potential for sparking anti-militaristic ideas.

In a similar way, perhaps strategic improvements could be made in the area of logistics. The frequent freight rail connections of the production sites of armament companies and the logistic company names of the trucks passing through the factory gates could reveal starting points here, even though I think that the qualitative gain for an anti-militarist practice of attack could consist primarily in identifying and blocking/destroying actual freight to and from the armament industry, if not outright attacking and sabotaging the entire logistical system in which these are shipped, loaded, transported by rail or truck, rather than limiting itself to attacks on these logistics companies, which in this case are rather symbolic. Such attacks, while certainly causing financial damage, are unlikely to have much of an effective impact on the smooth operation of war production.

It remains to be noted that various insurgent projects in the past have been particularly successful where they identified corresponding weak points in production and supply chains and focused their attacks on them.

(ii) The infrastructure of war

Armies have always feared forests, mountains and wilderness; those environments where their civilization has so far only sparsely penetrated, if at all, and where they lack the necessary infrastructure, as well as often geographic knowledge and experience, to successfully control their environment. It is no wonder that all special divisions of the military send their "elite soldiers" on expeditions – called death marches outside of military training – through the harsh wilderness, and train them, contrary to the usual militaristic logic, to act in a certain way on their own initiative, to make their own decisions and to fight independently of the movements of other units of their armies. These special detachments are the military instrument to penetrate areas that are free of the minimal infrastructure that is necessary for the typical military intervention. But in a sense, these units are a relic of times past. Modern war technology relies primarily on drones, satellites, reconnaissance flights, (infrared) surveillance technology, etc., to penetrate even the most remote areas of this world at any time. And in the few cases in the past where the wilderness proved all too impenetrable, they knew how to help themselves with plant poisons, napalm and other biochemical weapons. The Roman legions cleared forests to create a suitable battlefield for their troops, the US Army sprayed the environ-

mental poison "Agent Orange" to lure their enemies out of cover. These are, of course, only two of the most popular examples of how total control over their environment played a significant role for militaries then and now. Even if the strategic destruction of the environment still plays an important role in this or that military conflict today, it can be argued that war technology is at least looking for ways to avoid environmental destruction on such a scale (in the course of its local deployment, because of course the production of raw materials for military equipment alone destroys the environment on a gigantic scale) if possible, and to instead penetrate every previously "blind spot" with the help of high-tech.

In this context, it is not only the military technologies that play a role, with which until now unknown "enemy territory" is to be opened up during or prior to a military intervention, but especially where wars are primarily directed against individual population groups in an otherwise opened-up area, be they indigenous populations, rebels, foreigners, what is meant today by the term terrorists, or simply impoverished population groups that are not prepared to give way to the construction of a mine, a factory, a road, etc. It is rather the "civilian technologies" that prepare the way for the armies and/or the police or even private security forces. Anything that helps to make

space controllable can, of course, be used militarily for that very purpose. Roads and railways allow the military to quickly penetrate any developed corner, bridges help to overcome natural obstacles such as rivers, gorges and valleys, and agricultural land not only makes it possible to survey large areas from a single vantage point, but also, and more importantly, makes it easier to advance off the roads; so far, you may have heard this before. In fact, these are only the most obvious infrastructures used by the armies. Rivers that have been straightened and deepened for shipping with the help of locks and dams enable reliable transport of war materiel far inland, ports enable the rapid landing of war materiel, just as not only airports can be used for military purposes, but also various dead-straight highway sections serve as runways for fighter planes and are partly designed as such.

Beyond such a logistical infrastructure, a modern army naturally also needs stable and reliable communications infrastructure. Satellite communications used specifically for military purposes, whose ground stations are located on military bases all over the world, and ad hoc radio networks set up by the military on a mobile basis, via which various units can communicate with each other and with their command staff, are just as important as the already established radio and mobile phone networks of the authorities, which are covered by

various radio masts and which can, of course, also be used for military purposes (the radio network of the authorities already enables the police to radio for reinforcements from almost anywhere). In particular, drones and any other form of unmanned vehicle need such radio networks to transmit information and receive commands. The fiber optic network, which is primarily used for the Internet, can also be used for military communications, and a functioning power grid that can supply an almost unlimited amount of energy almost anywhere facilitates any military operation. Not to be neglected is the lighting, which is getting out of hand in cities and makes it possible to see hundreds of meters into alleys, parks, backyards, etc., even at night, and to look into almost every dark corner from close range. And video surveillance, which is also becoming rampant, is already enabling an increasingly tightly meshed network of police control.

We live in a surveilled and mapped world that, as long as its infrastructure is intact, is easier to control militarily than it might appear, if one considers the reports of guerrilla resistance fighters in other parts of the world who are difficult to control militarily. But this requires learning to navigate this world beyond controlled paths, a skill that cannot be learned simply overnight, just as it requires identifying the choke points that cause critical infrastructures to collapse.

And just knowing these, even if in detail, may not be enough, as argued in the text "Fahrtenbuch" (Break Ranks), it also requires the specific knowledge of how to successfully sabotage them, from the production of the necessary "materials" to their proper or improper use.

I think that it is precisely this aspect of knowledge that is often underestimated in countries that are not currently waging an open war against their own population. This knowledge becomes all the more important in the scenario of an insurgency, which, after all, we are not only all eagerly awaiting, but also preparing for. In such a situation, knowing how to render the infrastructure of war harmless could possibly prove crucial.

(iii) The propaganda of war

For the functioning of militarism, and especially for the mobilization not only of soldiers in war, but also of those parts of the population that always support war, propaganda is of crucial importance in the present epoch. Perhaps comparable to the World War propaganda is the viral war propaganda that we have been experiencing for more than a year. For a long time now, all media, from newspapers, to radio and television, to the so-called social media, have been synchronized in a way that I personally would not have thought possible before. And they all go along with it, from the

liberal business daily to the left-wing monthly, from the state broadcaster to tech giants like Google and Facebook, which prominently promote the state's view of the pandemic on their Internet platforms and either algorithmically devalue and so hide critical voices or blatantly censor them. Who would have thought that the companies that once claimed (wrongly, of course) to have made the Arab Spring possible would now, when it is the Western states that are pushing (Internet) censorship, so willingly offer themselves as enforcers. Oh, yes, actually, that was to be expected.

All communications technology, from newspapers to broadcasting to the Internet, has always been the means of choice for propagandistic indoctrination. How else could one reach the masses? The media diversity that is often claimed today does not exist any more than the

Internet is an instrument of freedom of speech. In a state of war, all these technologies prove to be tools of propaganda more than ever before.

Even if one could certainly say a few things about the strategies with which the rulers manage not only to stir up the necessary fear of the virus among a large part of the population, but also to get them in the mood for the necessity of the virus war that has been raging for a long time, in the final analysis this perspective would be unnecessary, and would perhaps only be of use to the rulers, who could thereby refine their mechanisms. Viewed from the necessary distance, I think one must come to the conclusion that it is the sheer existence of mass media that makes this war propaganda possible, and consequently an effective fight against it can only come down to the destruction of this mass media.



"THE WORST VIRUS IS BLIND OBEDIENCE"

— GRAFFITI IN MUNICH (SPRING 2020) —