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# Work as Total Reason for Being: Heidegger and Jünger's *Der Arbeiter*<sup>1</sup>

*Laurence Paul Hemming*

This article examines Heidegger's reading of Ernst Jünger's 1932 *Der Arbeiter* by making appeal not only to Heidegger's remarks on the work (and its associated text "Die totale Mobilmachung") scattered in various texts, but by concentrating on Heidegger's now-available seminar notes and marginal notes to his actual copy of the text. Heidegger held two seminars on *Der Arbeiter*, one shortly after its publication and one in 1938, which show his close confrontation not only with Jünger's reading of Nietzsche, but also Heidegger's own Nietzsche examination. The article shows how Heidegger distinguishes himself from Jünger by, on the one hand, seeing *Der Arbeiter* as very much a product of its time and, on the other, identifying a prescience in Nietzsche of a Europe and planetary phenomenon (globalisation) yet to come. This is accomplished in the naming of the triad of Bolshevism, fascism (Nazism), and Americanism metaphysically as the singularity of "world democracy", and as an entirely nihilistic phenomenon. The article therefore relates the confrontation of these two thinkers with the third (Nietzsche) to issues of the demand for justice, democracy, and the will to power in contemporary economic and political developments, as well as to wider themes in Heidegger's thought of the end (or consummation) of metaphysics, the will to power, and valuation.

The event, in which a new form has announced itself, the form of the worker, brings to expression a particular mankind, presents itself in relation to a mastering of the world as the emergence of a new principle, which should be defined as *work*. (Jünger 1941, p. 85)<sup>2</sup>

1. This paper was first given for the Research Seminar in the Department of Organisation, Work and Technology of Lancaster University Management School. I must here express my sincere gratitude to Bogdan Costea and Martin Brigham for their generous invitation to offer this paper in January 2008, for their hospitality, and above all for their profound thoughtfulness in provoking enquiry into these research questions.

2. 'Der Vorgang, in dem sich eine neue Gestalt, die Gestalt des Arbeiters, in einem besonderen Menschentum zum Ausdruck bringt, stellt sich in bezug auf die Meisterung der Welt dar als das Auftreten eines neuen Prinzips, das als Arbeit bezeichnet werden soll.' All translations are my own. The first edition of *Der Arbeiter*, as with the earlier text 'Die totale Mobilmachung' (1930), was published in Sütterlin script, which allowed for no italicisation. In later (standard type) editions, Jünger reworked the texts, adding emphases, which I have always indicated in the English, but not always in the German. Wherever there is emphasis in italics, it is Jünger's own (see Jünger 1981).

With these words the German intellectual Ernst Jünger opened the second section of his book *Der Arbeiter: Herrschaft und Gestalt* ("The Worker: Dominion and Form"), published in Hamburg in 1932, the year before Hitler and his Nazi party took overall power in a Germany already for 14 years riven with political and economic strife. The book, at times breathless, but couched in a high literary style, was born directly of the turmoil of the period and sold (and was even read) remarkably widely. The publishers boasted that in six days flat, "and even before publication"<sup>3</sup>, over 5000 copies had left the press. In it, Jünger developed ideas first discussed in a shorter essay of 1930, "Die totale Mobilmachung" ("Total Mobilisation"; Jünger 1930), which advanced an analysis of what we would now recognise under the title of globalisation. Born of reflection on the total mobilisation inherent in waging a world-scale war – at the time there had been only one – it traced those forces of development which transform the wars of "feudal lords, [then] of kings and bourgeois" to succeed them with "wars of *workers* - wars for whose rational structure and of whose highest degree [mercilessness] the first great confrontation of the twentieth century has been a presentiment" (Jünger 1930, p. 16).<sup>4</sup> The forces in play for Jünger in this period immediately before the triumph of Nazism itself are worth noting. These political developments arise from, and transform, the nation-state and the means by which it binds the individual to it:

patriotism comes to be overtaken by a nationalism shot through with new, powerful elements of consciousness. In fascism, in Bolshevism, in Americanism, in Zionism, in the movements of coloured peoples, advance is made into a progress that would have been formerly unthinkable; in effect it performs a somersault, in order to continue its movement on a very simple level after a circle or circular movement of artificial dialectic. (Jünger 1930, p. 27)<sup>5</sup>

If patriotism arises on the basis of a subjectively felt belonging, nationalism could be construed as the assimilation of subjects to the *command* of the state. I would suggest that the whole of this article will dedicate itself to seeking out an understanding of what is indicated here by the meaning of Jünger's use of *sich überschlagen*, as that which somersaults or jumps over itself, as a way of explaining the essence of the age, both then, and indeed now.

We who are accustomed to the political thinking of the post-war period have been taught to interpret all claims made in the name of the *worker* in an essentially

3. Prospectus for *Der Arbeiter* (Hanseatische Verlagsanstalt, 1932): 'In sechs Tagen und noch vor Erscheinen des Buches über 5,000 Stück verkauft!'

4. 'Und so kommt es, daß auf die Kriege der Ritter, der Könige und Bürger die Kriege der Arbeiter folgen - Kriege, von deren rationeller Struktur und deren hohem Grade uns bereits die erste große Auseinandersetzung des 20. Jahrhunderts eine Ahnung gegeben hat.' Jünger later edited 'hohem Grade' to read 'Unbarmherzigkeit' (see Jünger 1965a, p. 133).

5. 'Der Patriotismus wird durch einen modernen, stark mit Bewußtseinsmomenten durchsetzten Nationalismus abgelöst. Im Faschismus, im Bolschewismus, im Amerikanismus, im Zionismus, in den Bewegungen der farbigen Völker setzt der Fortschritt zu Vorstößen an, die man bisher für undenkbar gehalten hätte; er überschlägt sich gleichsam, um nach einem Zirkel der künstlichen Dialektik seine Bewegung auf einer sehr einfachen Ebene fortzusetzen.'

Marxist register: whether that Marxism takes the now-discredited form of Soviet-era dictatorship, or softer, more acceptable forms to be found in the increasingly humanistic pronouncements of figures like Jürgen Habermas or even contemporaneously in the idiosyncratically refurbished demagoguery of Slavoj Žižek and Ernesto Laclau.

Jünger is normally interpreted as a figure of the right in the contrapuntal understanding of politics that defined the post-war period through “left” and “right”, but in this article I want to eschew that differentiation (who, in the midst of the current somersaults of Western social democracy, can tell me what this differentiation still really means?) for the sake of opening the way (and in this brief article we can do no more than that) to a more genuine interpretation of the politics and history of the twentieth, and indeed twenty-first, centuries. What Jünger celebrates and revels in with his *typus* of the worker has a critique, which I also want to raise, for the sake of enabling us to gain a foothold in the understanding of our own contemporary political situation – thoughtful interpretations of which seem to be shadowy and rare, at least in the public spaces of media-driven discourse. I want to emphasise at this point that I speak *not* as a political scientist, nor with any pretensions to be one. I am uninterested in the technique for analytical dissection of the body politic, precisely because it *is* technique. The philosopher is one who seeks to engage with the self-understanding of political being – *ta ethike politike*, as Aristotle calls it – in the being of being human. We get on with the business (and it is a business) of political life with little interest in the self-explanation of that life. We take for granted a certain kind of political being to a higher degree than would be true at any other time in the last 500 years, let alone 5000, where politics is, if it is anything at all, the passion and pursuit of particularities and special interests. What the consequences of this are, are yet to be explored. Every announced political slogan or solution – from contemporary nebulous claims to change for its own sake to the endless requirement for “radical reform” – arrives as a kind of political kitsch.

Jünger was, in the best sense of the words, a literary warmonger. Born in 1895, he died only in 1998, five weeks short of his one-hundred-and-third birthday, and two years after being received into the Catholic Church. Awarded the highest level of military decoration at the age of only 23, the *Pour le Mérite* or “Blue Max”, for his service in the First World War (already holding the Iron Cross First Class), he served again in the second conflagration, though with less distinction. Courted and at the same time despised by the Nazis, he never joined them (he was at one point in 1938 forbidden to write or publish), and was very tangentially involved in the von Stauffenberg plot to murder Hitler. His son Ernst was subsequently murdered at Nazi hands in a penal camp in Italy after accusations of subversion (during service in the German navy), at least possibly in reprisal. Jünger’s literary outpouring is immense, and he lived to see not one but two collected editions of his works (Jünger 1965b, 1983).

By examining one or two aspects of that *typus* which Jünger identifies as the worker, I want to seek out a way of explaining the inner unity of the political

movements of the last 100 years and show its metaphysical character. I want to do this in relation to Jünger's chosen interlocutor, Friedrich Nietzsche, and the critique and questioning that both Jünger and Nietzsche have been put to by the interlocutor who sought Jünger out and befriended him, Martin Heidegger. Perhaps we might thereby gain a glimpse of Heidegger's own political engagement. If Jünger never joined the Nazi Party, Heidegger never left it, joining in 1933 (only once the Nazis had taken power). If Jünger never publicly criticised the Nazi Party, he nevertheless took them on, refusing to contribute to Nazi newspapers, and refusing chairs, honours, and other appointments. He was at least somewhat susceptible to the biological racism of the age, and he is to be found describing Jews as a threat to the unity of the German state in 1930 (cf. Jünger 2001). We are bound to concede his anti-Semitism was different in character to that of the Nazis, however unsavoury we find it now to have to cut such distinctions. Heidegger (not above the odd anti-Semitic aside himself, but not a biological racist) was as much a public critic of the Nazis as he dared to be in his lectures, although in ways that are still difficult to understand and see: Heidegger's supposed "silence" is shrill and prescient if you know where, and how, to cock your ear.

Heidegger became intrigued by Jünger's work after the publication of "Die totale Mobilmachung" and he refers in several places to discussions he organised on Jünger's *Der Arbeiter* both shortly after its publication (with Heidegger's Assistant Werner Brock and a small circle) and again in 1939/1940 (Heidegger 2000a; cf. Heidegger 2000b, p. 375), until, he says, "one was, however, not surprised that an attempt to elucidate 'Der Arbeiter' was watched and finally forbidden" (Heidegger 1996, p. 390).<sup>6</sup> This remark was itself made in the context of Heidegger's final confrontation with Jünger, in the 1956 version of his essay "Zur Seinsfrage" ("On the Question of Being"), which had first appeared in 1955 under the title *Über "die Linie"* ("Concerning 'The Line'"; Heidegger 1955; cf. Heidegger 1996). This was a clever pun and a modification of Jünger's own title for a contribution to a *Festschrift* for Heidegger five years earlier, on the occasion of his sixtieth birthday: "Über die Linie" ("Crossing the Line"; Jünger 1965c). Heidegger's mischievous modification of the title transforms the meaning from "crossing the line", by which Jünger had meant crossing over from nihilism to the thinking of being, to "concerning 'the line'", and indicating that the "crossing" in question can never be a conscious decision, never an act of the willing subject.<sup>7</sup>

Jünger's essay "Über die Linie" begins by citing the very opening of the work that underpins the relation between the two thinkers, the problematic and fictitious *Wille zur Macht* ("Will to Power"), put together by editors appointed by Elizabeth Förster-Nietzsche from her brother's notebooks (Jünger 1965c, p. 247).<sup>8</sup> Heidegger was well aware that the work was bastard scholarship; Jünger seems for a long time to have taken it as a genuine work of Nietzsche's. We must take care here: inasmuch as *Wille zur Macht* is *not* a genuine work of

6. 'Man war aber nicht überrascht, daß ein Versuch, den "Arbeiter" zu erläutern, überwacht und schließlich unterbunden wurde.'

7. For a discussion of this transformation in the titles, see Sheehan (1998, esp. pp. 276-277).

8. Citing Nietzsche 1996, p. 4 (see also Nietzsche 1999, p. 190).

Nietzsche's, it nevertheless contains Nietzsche's genuine work. In 1950, Jünger can only have been aware by report and through conversation of Heidegger's extensive and profound confrontation with Nietzsche, in lectures and seminars stretching from 1937 until he ceased lecturing in 1944, but in notes, discussions, and other engagements right up until 1950.<sup>9</sup> The first fruits of this engagement were published by Heidegger only in 1961, and the full extent has leaked out more slowly in successive volumes of Heidegger's collected works, until the last appeared in 2004. It is worth noting, as we shall be referring to them, that Heidegger's notes on Jünger and his marginal notes to his own copy of *Der Arbeiter* also finally appeared in 2004 (Heidegger 2004b). It is only now, in other words, that we have the scholarly means to understand the relationships in this triad of Nietzsche, Jünger, and Heidegger.

But it is only *now* that the question emerges at all, as we dwell within a triumphant third and final phase, that of "world democracy", first described by both Heidegger and Jünger in various texts as "Americanism". For Heidegger, Americanism is at one and the same time the "dreariest" viewpoint of those who think that "the true is what produces results" (Heidegger 1992a, pp. 54-55)<sup>10</sup>, and metaphysically like the outlook of (Bolshevik) Russia, in the grip of "the same hopeless frenzy of unchained technology and rootless organisation of the average man" (Heidegger 1983, pp. 40-41; cf. pp. 48-49).<sup>11</sup> Heidegger's marginal note to an early part of the discussion in *Der Arbeiter*, dealing with Jünger's description of the essential bourgeois drive for "security" (*Sicherheit*), makes clear that this bourgeois drive is in its essence "Americanism" (Heidegger 2004b, p. 329). Throughout his last public engagement with Jünger in "Zur Seinsfrage", Heidegger names all of this – fascism, Marxism, Americanism or world democracy – as the "movement of nihilism" (*Bewegung des Nihilismus*). And it is a *single* movement of nihilism that is at issue, despite its fragmentation into multiple political forms.

For Jünger, total mobilisation is above all a

measure of organisatory thinking that is only an indication of that higher mobilisation which the time presses in on us. *This* mobilisation lives from its own inner lawfulness with which human law, if it is to be effective, must run parallel to. (Jünger 1930, p. 22)<sup>12</sup>

9. The first fruits of this work appeared in print only in 1954, with the publication of Heidegger's essay 'Wer ist Nietzsche's Zarathustra?' in the essay collection *Vorträge und Aufsätze* (Heidegger 1954, pp. 97-122; cf. Heidegger 2000e, pp. 99-124). The two volumes of extracts from Heidegger's lectures on Nietzsche did not appear until 1961 (cf. Heidegger 1997a, b) and were first published by Günther Neske. The full texts of the lecture courses and discussions on which these were based were published in volumes 43-44, 46-48 and 50 of the Heidegger *Gesamtausgabe* (Heidegger 1985, 1986a, 1986b, 1989, 1990, 2003).

10. 'Wir sind längst in den ödesten Amerikanismus abgerutscht, nach dessen Grundsatz das wahr ist, was Erfolg hat.'

11. 'dieselbe trostlose Raserei der entfesselten Technik und der bodenlosen Organisation des Normalmenschen.'

12. 'Die Totale Mobilmachung als Maßnahme des organisatorischen Denkens ist nur eine Andeutung jener höheren Mobilmachung, die die Zeit an uns vollzieht. Dieser Mobilmachung wohnt eine eigene Gesetzmäßigkeit inne, mit der das menschliche Gesetz, wenn es wirksam sein soll, parallel laufen muß' (see note 2 on emphases).

Jünger saw in the First World War the working out of a transition, from the limited forms of mobilisation of early forms of political organisation, culminating in monarchy and bourgeois democracy, to the total and constant transformation of all political forms in the securing of the will to power.

To understand why Jünger is so far in advance even of that understanding of politics which is essentially revolutionary (even in its most reactionary form, in Stalinism), one must turn to his interlocutor Martin Heidegger. For Heidegger exposes the essential Hegelianism of Marxism quite sharply in a television interview he conducted with Richard Wisser in 1969. Wisser opened the interview by confronting Heidegger with the question of the demands for social change which in 1969 (and so in the wake of 1968) were sweeping through Germany, France, and to a lesser extent Britain. To Wisser's question, Heidegger replied: "We must first ask: 'What is Society?' and we have to consider that today's society is only the absolutising of modern *subjectivity*" (Heidegger 2000c, p. 703).<sup>13</sup> He continued, citing Marx's *Theses on Feuerbach*:

"Philosophers have only *interpreted* the world differently; what matters is to *change* it." When this statement is cited *and* when it is followed, it is overlooked that changing the world presupposes a change in the *representation of the world*. A representation of the world can only be won by adequately *interpreting* the world. (Heidegger 2000c, p. 703)<sup>14</sup>

Heidegger points out that the anticipated revolution has already occurred as a representational thought for those committed to revolution: in this, the Marxist conception of the world is itself overtaken by total mobilisation even before a single revolutionary event has occurred or a shot fired. We may add that the Marxist struggle above all, and its struggle with fissionation on the left and retreat into nationalism on the right (fissionation, in other words, is if you each can claim from each of your national seats to be sole true representative of the international), is to coordinate this transformation to a common, willed horizon (the essentially Hegelian aspect), and the inevitable and constant collapse into failure of that project. What Heidegger meant by this should, I hope, be clearer by the end of this article.

Jünger also delineates the political possibilities of our own connection to the history of the last 100 years as "fascism", "Bolshevism" and "Americanism" (see earlier quote on p. 232). Heidegger later explains the connection between these terms in a manner more familiar to contemporary ears by saying:

13. 'Wenn man diese Frage beantworten will, muß man zuerst fragen: "Was ist Gesellschaft?" und muß darüber nachdenken, daß die heutige Gesellschaft nur die Verabsolutierung der modernen *Subjektivität* ist' (emphasis in original).

14. "'Die Philosophen haben die Welt nur verschieden *interpretiert*; es kommt darauf an, sie zu *verändern*.'" Bei der Zitation dieses Satzes *und* bei der Befolgung dieses Satzes übersieht man, daß eine Weltveränderung eine Änderung der *Weltvorstellung* voraussetzt und daß eine Weltvorstellung nur dadurch zu gewinnen ist, daß man die Welt zureichend *interpretiert*' (emphases in original).



In the winter of 1939/40, I once again discussed parts of Jünger's book *Der Arbeiter* with a circle of colleagues; I learned that these ideas still seemed strange and disconcerting even then, until they were verified by "the facts". What Ernst Jünger means by his idea of the rule and figure of the worker and what he sees in the light of this idea is the universal rule of the will to power within planetary history. Today everything is part of this reality, whether it is called communism, or fascism, or world democracy. (Heidegger 2000b, p. 375)<sup>15</sup>

The discussions he refers to here are precisely those that Heidegger said had been shut down by the Nazis, a foreclosure whose meaning he explained by saying: "For it belongs to the essence of the will to power that the reality which it powers-up and produces is not allowed to appear as that reality which it itself brings to be" (Heidegger 1996, p. 390).<sup>16</sup> To all movement of nihilism belongs an essential hiding and covering up, precisely *in* the manner in which it eventuates what it effects. And here we should remind ourselves of the fourth and fifth of Jünger's list of political forms: Zionism and the movements of coloured peoples. These are names that, once unsurprising, *now* have the power to embarrass us, and as embarrassments, precisely illustrate the capacity and force of the movement of nihilism to render certain kinds of political phenomena only through silence. Add to this the apparent political silence of the young, supposedly "alienated" from traditional politics in the West, but perhaps better explained by nothing other than somnambulism in lands of plenty in which no particular political demands *need* take shape because political aspiration has been exchanged for consumption. We see, perhaps, how the movement of nihilism enforces even now – in the midst of democracy – silence concerning the real character of political being, in the being of being human.

In his seminar group, Heidegger summed up his assessment of *Der Arbeiter*:

It achieves what all Nietzsche literature was not able to achieve so far, namely to communicate an experience of being and as such how it is, in the light of Nietzsche's outline of beings mediated as will to power. (Heidegger 1996, p. 390)<sup>17</sup>

To explain political democracy as arising on the same metaphysical basis as communism and fascism is a bold claim, and an uncomfortable one. This claim can only be understood through Jünger's explication of the metaphysical *typus* of the worker, a type that Heidegger believed had its origins in Nietzsche's thought (cf. Heidegger 1992b, p. 204).

15. 'Im Winter 1939/40 habe ich dann noch einmal mit einem Kreis von Kollegen Jüngers Buch "Der Arbeiter" teilweise durchgesprochen und erfahren, wie damals noch diese Gedanken fremd waren und noch befremdeten, bis sie durch "die Tatsachen" bestätigt werden. Was Ernst Jünger in den Gedanken von Herrschaft und Gestalt des Arbeiters denkt und im Licht dieses Gedanken sieht, ist die universale Herrschaft des Willens zur Macht innerhalb der planetarisch gesehenen Geschichte. In dieser Wirklichkeit steht heute Alles, mag es Kommunismus heißen oder Faschismus oder Weltdemokratie.'

16. 'Denn es gehört zum Wesen des Willens zur Macht, das Wirkliche, das er be-mächtigt, nicht in der Wirklichkeit erscheinen zu lassen, als welche er selber west.'

17. 'Das leistet, was bisher alle Nietzsche-Literatur nicht vermochte, nämlich eine Erfahrung des Seienden und dessen, wie es ist, im Licht von Nietzsches Entwurf des Seienden als Wille zur Macht zu vermitteln.'



How are we to hear Heidegger's claim that "today's society is only the absolutising of modern *subjectivity*"? For if we can understand this, we may be able to understand what is at issue in the claim that there is a *metaphysical* unity to the political forms that occur in the unfolding of the very process and fact of "planetary" globalisation, and therefore we can find out how to read *Der Arbeiter*. We have to hear in Heidegger's use of the term "absolutising" (*Verabsolutierung*) the continual transforming character of Jünger's description of total mobilisation. Jünger himself says "that the worker is to be grasped as the subject of this transforming" – both as the one who *as subject* effects the transforming and as the one who is the subject produced through and by it (Jünger 1941, p. 85).<sup>18</sup> In his notes on *Der Arbeiter*, Heidegger several times indicates that the understanding of representation at work in the notion of the *typus* of the worker is fundamentally described by the seventeenth-century metaphysician Leibniz (cf. Heidegger 2004b, pp. 106, 167). The burden of Heidegger's interpretation turns on the ambiguity in German of the verb *vorstellen*, which means at once "to represent" as in "think" (in the sense of *ego cogito*, and exactly in that sense) and "to place before", *vor-stellen*, "re-present". In his considerations of Jünger, Heidegger notes that for Leibniz

Repræsentatio, however, is re-presentation in the double sense of bringing to the fore, making-present, and thus the brought-forth itself. For example, Leibniz's concept of repræsentatio (he represents, "represents something", *is* somebody). The singular (Monad) 1. point of view, mirror of the universal; 2. thereby *ousia*, substantia. (Heidegger 2004b, p. 167)<sup>19</sup>

To clarify what is at issue we need to make a brief detour into how the subject of subjectivity is established. For Heidegger, all philosophy, as metaphysics, has depended (and especially since Descartes) on the reconciliation of the particular subject with the universal (what establishes it and makes it possible – metaphysically thought, its *cause*). Thus, the question is asked as to how *this being here* indicates *being in general*. The assertion *cogito, ergo sum* does no more or less than this in a particular way (hence why it is infinitely more important to Descartes to demonstrate the cause of the subject than to explicate the subject's being in the world) – it says that each subject, each *individuum*, is nevertheless potentially every other, it is potentially the same as any other. In

18. 'daß der Arbeiter als das Subjekt dieser Veränderung zu begreifen ist'.

19. 'Repræsentatio aber ist Vor-stellen im doppelten Sinne von Vor-bringen, Anwesendmachen und so das Vorgebrachte selbst. Vgl. Leibniz' Begriff der repræsentatio - (er repräsentiert, "stellt etwas vor", *ist* jemand ). Monas 1. point de vue, speculum universi. 2. dadurch *ousia*, substantia' (emphasis in original).

this sense, the *cogito, ergo sum* discloses the universal *id est*, the “all” that manifests in “each” particular case.<sup>20</sup>

The subject is the “mathematical” moment in modern thinking – where *mathesis* means not “dealing with numbers” but rather “in anything that I know, what I can take as *already* known with respect to it”. Jünger says in *Der Arbeiter* that the new “face of the earth” which he seeks to describe is brought about by the worker as the bearer of the coldest, most terrible consciousness, such that “here the lines of the emotional and the mathematical intersect” (Jünger 1941, p. 58).<sup>21</sup> Heidegger’s marginal note to this reads “homo: animal rationale! *Qua subiectum*” (Heidegger 2004b, p. 335; emphasis in original).

Numbers are mathematical because in every instance of a number, what is *numbered* is known only subsequent to my (prior) knowledge of the number itself. In seeing three chairs, I already “know” the three, before I even need know what the three is “of” – i.e. chairs. In this, the “mathematical” being of the *cogito* is always represented *first*, i.e. mathematically – it is what I know *before* I know anything else; it is the prior representation on which every other subsequent thing to be known is at the same time secured and grounded. Thus, the represented is what is thought *in* every thought (Kant calls it the *Inbegriff*, the “inner concept” of every particular concept in both the first and the third *Critiques* – cf. Kant 1990, §79, p. 283; 1974, A572/B600, p. 515).

In subjectivity, representation takes place in some moment prior to being, the (ideal) moment from out of which the subject always retains its absolute being independently of the world. The subject “enters” a world from which it already considers itself to be (mathematically) separate in order to secure whatever it will know from the world. This moment is the moment attained to by Descartes, where the subject retains its being independently of the world – where the *cogito*, having eradicated every trace of the world through the method of doubt, cannot eradicate itself. As the ineradicable self-evidence, it represents itself to itself *as the one thing it can secure itself through*, prior to every occasion of actual being (the very means by which the “ought” and “should be” overtake whatever is). Representation – *Vorstellung* – always places the human subject in advance of actual being, ahead of it, so that everything it knows, it knows through what it *already* knows. Knowledge is reduced to the *mathemata*, the things known by being already known.

A peculiar feature of Descartes’ description of the subjectivity of the subject – the *cogito* – is that he at no point makes any reference to, or shows the slightest interest in, social relations. Descartes takes no interest even in specific

20. The critical issue is not that the *est* and the *sum* are said as an identity, but in what order or taxis the *est* and the *sum* are ordered one to the other. In the ancient ontology, the *est* always precedes the *sum*, such that “world” is always given in advance of the self, and the self is understood only as that which is “taken off” from the unity of the world (this is how Aristotle’s *sophia* as the *arche* of the *hen* is understood); for Descartes and all subjectival thinking following him, the self is always understood as represented *prior to* and in advance of everything that is, such that its prior existence is encountered only subsequently to, and as a mere property of, its actuality.

21. ‘Hier schneiden sich die Linien der Leidenschaft und der Mathematik.’

questions of alterity – that there are, or might be, other subjects. The subjectivity of the subject is secured with reference to no social underpinnings whatsoever. This does not mean that there are no social consequences arising from the assertion *cogito, ergo sum*. It does mean, however, that no social relations are self-consciously *entailed* or *required* for the sake of the demonstration of the self-evidence *cogito, ergo sum*: the assertion takes place on the basis of a self-concealment of the social relations which already make it possible. We can no more than indicate that this is again the very basis for the capacity and in fact activity of nihilism to hide and conceal the very means by which it effects what it eventuates.

Overall, this “problem” of the social relations of subjectivity proceeds in one direction with Husserl, Buber, and Lévinas, in the elucidation of “intersubjectivity” – the constructive securing of the subjectivity of *an* other through the subjectivity of the same. This, however, is only a very dependent and derivative resolution that arises out of the decay of the notion of substance, *substantia, ousia*. Leibniz’s is the more important solution, which also takes for granted, but does not make explicit, that the securing of the subject is only possible on the basis that the subject is already *one among many subjects*. The transformation worked here is difficult to see, but cannot be overestimated in its importance.

Inasmuch as Aristotle speaks of the human being as *zoon politikon*, Aristotle takes for granted that each individual human being both *is* with respect to the whole and *is* “uniquely”. He describes this by understanding the political through the essential differences that disclose the placedness of place. Put simply, in Aristotle’s cosmos, every place is unique – no two places in the cosmos are the same. Thus, every place in the cosmos is both determinable relatively – I am to the left of him and the right of her – and absolutely – I am “up” with regard to the earth or floor, and “down” with respect to the heavens. The fundamental presupposition here is that the cosmos is finite – there is only one world and it is not infinite. Because place (*topos*) is an ontological determination and not a spatial one (Aristotle knew nothing of “space”), social place – my social place in the *polis* – is determined in exactly the same way as (and so not even analogously to) my physical place. Rather, therefore, the *social* and *political* determination of place is the same as what we now call the *spatial* and all of these are *ontological* determinations, at the same time as being absolute. My unique particularity (*ousia*, as substance, but connected with *monas*, as the singular point, the single “place” that “I” “am”) is worked out (by means of the causes, in each case) through uncovering who, and this here means what, I *already* am. My being – social, political, and spatial – is utterly derived from my “where” and “wherein” (*pos*) in the world, and not from any other (ideal, abstracted) place. In this, Aristotle only makes thematic what is already present and operative for the Greeks (although Plato’s understanding of politics is altogether more strange and complex, in ways that do not concern us here). Being, the being of my being, is bound to place. The place wherein I am is

what lets me be seen for *who* I am, and uniquely so. No one else can occupy my place.<sup>22</sup>

By the time of Leibniz, everything is different. The underpinning of *ousia*, "substance", is now no longer what I already am with respect to what I myself have to work out, but rather how God has disposed me to be, what God has *decided* for me. In this, one can see already how *I* am worked out from a willing, though no willing of my own, but the will of God. That who I am is decided from a place willed for me, and prepared in advance, which then "disposes me to be", is already the way in which (my particular) being and being in general are conflated with willing, through no will of my own (what God wills and what *is* are or *ought to be* the same). Inasmuch as I appear, I make present my "with respect to the whole" – but now my physical and social place makes visible what God has disposed for me, willed for me to be. A further transformation has been worked, however – inasmuch as for Aristotle, every social, political, and spatial *place* is unique, it also has a binding character, it cannot be changed (this is Aristotle's philosophical indebtedness to what is "fated" and so disposed for each and every one), and inasmuch as it does change, it is a transformation of the cosmos itself.

For Leibniz, however, the consequence of the *cogito* is that every subject is, if not in actuality then *potentially*, identical. Put simply, for Aristotle, every place, every "point in space" is unique. For Leibniz, every "point" (as a "one"), each monad is "really" the same as and identical with every other. This means that *social* and *political* differentiation are, for Aristotle, established by the place character of place and, for Leibniz, by God. God wills it that I am different to you: my difference to you is not a necessary condition of our being together in the same cosmos.

Aristotle's understanding of place is established through the opposite of mobilisation – in fact, through *absolute* stability. The absolutely stable is at one and the same time the true. Social differentiation appears, therefore, in how the truth is spoken (i.e. "who" speaks the truth). In the sixth book of the *Nicomachean Ethics*, the various modes of "speaking truly" are worked out (*techne*, *episteme*, *phronesis* and *sophia*). But, in each case, the truth that is spoken is spoken by someone (*techne* by the *technetes* or architect; *episteme* by the scientist; *phronesis* by the *dicast* or judge; *sophia* by the philosopher). The way in which you relate to the *one* stable character of the truth of the true will be revealed by what you say and how you say it with respect to what it is you speak of and it will tell me who you are, your "place". Truth *and* place are disclosed by *logos* in each case – not by what you *want* or are driven to say, but by what it is you already "have" to say.

The social consequences of the substantiality of substance are that every (social as much as physical) place is *and remains* absolutely differentiated with respect to every other. Every particular place is *and always is* different and

22. Understood like this, a clone of me exactly reinforces my uniqueness, for an identical copy cannot occupy the same place as mine. Our identity would be precisely visible because the identical would be in two different places at the same time, and we can be identical, but not the same thing.

differentiated from every other. This does not mean I cannot ever change place, but it does mean that insofar as I can and do change place, I will move from one unique place to another *unique* place. Places, even in the plural, always and only indicate the singularity of place. Change of place is not mobilisation: in every change of place, something remains *unmoved* – motion is only visible through a prior (or more basic) stasis. For Leibniz, in that every place is actually different, but potentially the same, the potentiality for mobilisation for its own sake has made itself present: mobilisation is an at least potential possibility, actualised by the will of God, or by God's analogue, the monarch. The static is only visible when there is motion: motion brings the stability of stasis into view.

If God is dead, then the consequences of this are that total mobilisation becomes not just possible, but required, both to make visible the death of God and God's analogue, the monarch (and insofar as an analogue has made itself present, a split has opened up), and to become visible as an individual at all. Moreover, the will to power fulfils the will of God by replacing it. "God" as "being in general" is now understood as, and through, work: the working out and working up of the real. The indeterminate "substance" of the subjectivity of the subject must both actualise and attain its stability through its capacity for mobilisation. It is for this reason that the understanding of total mobilisation precedes the figure of the worker as its condition. Total mobilisation is the social and political manifestation of the will to power. Will to power here must be understood as a condition of being, not as what any individual subject wills. Subjects "will" only because every being (subject) only becomes visible through the will to power, and not the other way around. Jünger says:

work is the tempo of the fist, of the thoughts, of the heart, of life itself by day and night, science, love, art, faith, piety, war; work is the oscillating of atoms and the power by which stars and solar systems move. (Jünger 1941, p. 65)<sup>23</sup>

Heidegger notes in the margin: "work equals the beingness of being in general (metaphysics)" (Heidegger 2004b, p. 341)<sup>24</sup>, which, we should note, is Heidegger's understanding of the metaphysical name of God.<sup>25</sup>

Heidegger's suggestion that this replicates Leibniz's understanding of the *speculum universi*, the "mirror of the universal", the single vantage point that is God, is because God knows all there is to know, so that when anything is known by the subject, the subject only knows *now* what God *knew already*. This essentially monarchical viewpoint is, however, overthrown in the death of God such that the subject does not replicate the social relations proper to monarchy, whereby the individual represents *socially* in each case the stable, permanent

23. 'Arbeit ist das Tempo der Faust, der Gedanken, des Herzens, das Leben bei Tage und Nacht, die Wissenschaft, die Liebe, die Kunst, der Glaube, der Kultus, der Krieg; Arbeit ist die Schwingung des Atoms und die Kraft, die Sterne und Sonnensysteme bewegt.'

24. 'A[rbeit] = Seiendheit des Seienden i. G. (Metaphysik).'

25. For a full discussion of this, see Hemming (2002, pp. 111-117).

presence of the divine mind. Now the subject represents (in the social sphere) what precisely?

Before we answer this question, it should now be clear why the type of the worker is counterposed to the type of the feudal lord, the king, the bourgeois: the worker is that one best able to take command of the means of total mobilisation and, at the same time, the worker is that one produced by the means of total mobilisation. The worker is the "product" of technology and of technique, and work is the making manifest of the will to power. Jünger says that "means and the powers of life become possible", which means "become the same" (Jünger 1941, p. 58).<sup>26</sup> Put this way, the worker does not work, rather work makes of (*wirkt!* – "makes real!") the worker the work that he *is*. Nietzsche speaks of how "*the subject alone is demonstrable: hypothesis, that there is only the subject* – that 'object' is only a manner of subject working upon subject – a *mode of the subject*" (Nietzsche 1996, §569, p. 388).<sup>27</sup>

Jünger's language in *Der Arbeiter* exhibits a sheer energy which itself reflects the drive into power that characterises the age of extreme nihilism. Here we must make a further point. It has become typical of the rhetoric of a certain kind of contemporary social conservative to decry and denounce nihilism as if it were itself something to be striven to overcome. Thus, we can disdain Marxism, or Nazism, or Jünger, the – if not Nazi – political rightist that he undoubtedly was, as mere decline, amorality, and decay. In this critique (of whom Spengler is the apostle), everything is in decline, and goes steadily off to the dogs.<sup>28</sup> Whether things go to the dogs or not is irrelevant and matters not a whit. Our task here is to *describe*, to bring to language, what nihilism *is* and what as a singular movement is constantly moved within it. Nihilism is not the dissipation of everything, nor is it the collapse into the immoral – quite the reverse. In nihilism, the greatest and most vigorous moralising drive appears: we should note that terrorists claim to act from *moral* purposes. Nihilism is never the triviality of mere anarchy, it is not the abolition of power, but the drive into the highest power. Even the anarchist does not seek the destruction of power, but seeks only the destruction of everything that would take power over *him*.

26. 'daß so eine ungeahnte und noch unerprobte gegenseitige Steigerung der Mittel und Mächte des Lebens möglich wird'

27. '*Das Subjekt allein ist beweisbar: Hypothese, daß es nur Subjekte giebt* - daß "Objekt" nur eine Art Wirkung von Subjekt auf Subjekt ist ... ein *modus des Subjekts*' (emphases in original).

28. Heidegger dismisses Spengler with respect to Jünger with the delicious, if haughty, epithet of 'Prussian socialism' (*Preußischer Sozialismus*), a reference to an expression of Spengler's and a work of the same name by Schinkel (1934; cf. Heidegger 2004b, p. 343, as a marginal note to Jünger 1941, p. 66). Heidegger characterises Spengler's understanding of decline as: 'Spengler thinks history, if he thinks at all, in a history-less way. He understands "decline" in the sense of mere coming to an end, i.e. as biologically represented perishing. Animals "decline", inasmuch as they perish. History declines insofar as it falls back into the concealedness of the beginning' ('Spengler denkt, wenn er überhaupt denkt, die Geschichte geschichtslos. Er versteht "Untergang" im Sinne des bloßen Zuendegehens, d. h. als biologisch vorgestellte Verendung. Tiere "gehen unter", indem sie verenden. Geschichte geht unter, sofern sie in die Verborgenheit des Anfangs zurückgeht') (Heidegger 1992b, p. 168).



In the protocols from a seminar session of 1937 on Nietzsche's *Wille zur Macht* entitled "The Biological as Economic Basic-Position", Heidegger notes that "the opposite of what the common herd desire is necessary for the elevating of the *typical man*" (Heidegger 2004a, §53, p. 66).<sup>29</sup> The typical man is in every case the subject *as subject*, who distinguishes himself *in his very self* precisely with respect to, and over against, what he perceives to be what the common lot seek out and seek after. We may note in passing that on this account, the *typical man* is *precisely* a cultural conservative critic, bemoaning where the common lot are driving themselves off to – but even more, that this reads like a manifesto for a television or magazine advertisement for a luxury good, of the kind you would find in the "How To Spend It" section of the weekend edition of the *Financial Times*. The quality, character, and provenance of the luxury item in themselves are of no relevance at all, only that in my possessing it I have something which you could never have, and that it is the very opposite of what you already have. The drive to be highest, best, above the herd is experienced not as the assertion of a present (but yet unseen) state, but as a lack, something missing in the subject which is to be attained and, as willed to be made to appear, thereby *will* be made to appear. Repeatedly, Heidegger speaks of Jünger's descriptions in *Der Arbeiter* as the drive for security, for securing the indeterminate self over against its indeterminacy. This "securing over against" is to be attained, for the worker, by technological means, the absolute drive to put to work "the mechanical and the organic" (cf. Heidegger 2004b, p. 96).<sup>30</sup>

In the notes for the same seminar session, Heidegger makes mention of another fragment of Nietzsche's, which he does not cite in full, but a sentence of which exactly explains what is at issue: "the highest man will have the greatest quantity of drives" (Nietzsche 1996, §966, p. 44). However, the drive-in to power is itself counterposed by the arrival of the moral in a particular form. The disdain of the cultural conservative is, in fact, a mere form of the more general accompanying emotion that characterises all social distinction as it appears in nihilism as such: anger. Inasmuch as I distinguish myself from you, and separate myself out from you (while remaining essentially the same: indeterminate, a worker-subject), I excite the demand for justice – for the levelling-off that can only be resisted by the possession of a stock of power. This stock can be accumulated money (or the power to access it, in the form of credit), but it can also be

29. 'Der Gegensatz aller Herden-Wünschbarkeit ist zur Erhöhung des Typus Mensch notwendig.'

30. 'Jünger sieht nicht, daß das Zeitalter des Arbeiters (das moderne Zeitalter) nur die äußerste Fortsetzung und Vollendung der Neuzeit ist. Er sieht darin daß der "Arbeiter" die Herrschaft antritt, eine neue Ordnung und neue Werte.

Aber "Werte" und "Gestalt" die höchste Form der *Subjektivität*. Allerdings aber eben der Subjektivität mit allem, was sie umschließt: Sicherung, Planung, das Mechanische und das Organische und die "Gestalt" d. h. die "Idea" (emphasis in original). Translated, this reads as follows:

'Jünger does not see that the age of the worker (the modern age) is only the outermost continuation and completion of modernity. He sees only that the "Worker" initiates a new order and new values. But "values" and "form" [are] the highest form of *subjectivity*. In all things, however, even subjectivity, with all that he sets out: securing, planning, the mechanical and the organic and the "form" i.e. the idea.'

the enforcement character of the state, or an appeal to law, and so forth. This levelling-off is also the experience of a lack: of the drive and desire for justice over against stocks of power, themselves posited above all by those who exercise them in the very claim they make not to have them. Thus, the drive for "justice for..." appears so often as a surprise to those deemed to be withholding the justice in question: it seems to me almost all gender politics operates in this way, especially in the processes of "self-identification".

Jünger notes that "the pure will to power ... is not riches, but the feeling of a lack" (Jünger 1941, p. 71).<sup>31</sup> Jünger adds in the text that this lack is countered and overcome by *Anstrengung*, the "striving" of the subject, but Heidegger's marginal note to his copy of the text reads here: "this is a false interpretation of the will to power - indeed the pure will is the highest form of the will, that is justice" (Heidegger 2004b, p. 345).<sup>32</sup> We find in the preparatory notes for Heidegger's seminar on Jünger the remark: "dominion [the subtitle of *Der Arbeiter*] as the metaphysical essence of justice; this as 'truth' of the highest will to power" (Heidegger 2004b, p. 172).<sup>33</sup>

Why is justice a higher form than the brute expression of power, asserted, we might say, as the sheer drive to greed and self-attainment through (the triumph of willed) self-assertion? Except that the essence of political nihilism is social, it is essentially disclosed through the relations between subjects – and therefore is not what I can take *for myself* but always *what I can take with respect to you*. To say I self-identify as X means that in justice, you must accept me as the X that I say I am. To take requires justification – what Jünger himself refers to as "legitimation" (see Jünger 1941, pp. 67-68, *passim*). It is far more powerful to secure the indeterminacy of the subjectivity of the subject through justified differentiation than through the *unjustified*. Any political programme which represents itself as the correcting of injustice will appear as the most powerful (here we can at least hear the "making correct" of the German term for justice, *Gerechtigkeit*).

It is not the essence of nihilism to collapse all to nothing, to establish every thing that appears with merely nugatory value, a value without relativity because universally set at nought. Rather, nihilism is itself the assumption that every thing, already essentially valueless, or whose existing ("essential") value can in no way be justified, deferred to, or legitimated, calls forth and demands devaluation for the sake of a revaluation. Every thing is to be ascribed a value all over again. From where will the ascription of value come – for it cannot come either from the essence or the place of a thing, and it cannot come from the value assigned to it by God? Jünger comments that the contemporary situation, the time of the worker, demands the establishment of a new form of power and rule, which, inasmuch as it is a claim to freedom, is *the* claim of work. Work produces the legitimation of power, of rule, and of freedom: "every claim to

31. 'Der reine Wille zur Macht ... ist nicht die Fülle, sondern ein Gefühl des Mangels.'

32. 'das ist eine Fehlauslegung d[er] W[ille]z[ur]M[acht] gerade der reine W[ille] ist d. höchste Form d[es] W[illens] = Gerechtigkeit.'

33. 'Herrschaft - als das metaphysische Wesen der Gerechtigkeit; diese als "Wahrheit" des höchsten Willens zur Macht.'

freedom within the work-world is therefore only possible insofar as it appears as a claim of work" (Jünger 1941, p. 65).<sup>34</sup> Rule is, however, essentially ordering, it is essentially what orders into hierarchy and distinction, and so difference as such. The appearance of the worker as the form of the age (both the form the age produces, and the form which *is* how the age is to be understood) transforms the way in which hierarchy and distinction are to be understood. Heidegger's marginal comment to this passage about "claims" itself declaims:

Law-laying! Rank-ordering! Nietzsche, where are the "rulers"? The ruler is – the one who has the means to alter the will to power, and knows that it supplies a courage, which requires neither brutality nor "heroism" in the contemporary sense. (Heidegger 2004b, p. 341)<sup>35</sup>

The reference to heroism is without doubt to one of the slogans of the Hitlerists.<sup>36</sup>

Jünger described this fundamental transformation as a shift from bourgeois forms to that of the worker as such: the bourgeois period was incapable of letting the fundamentally determining form of the worker be seen (and so understood) as an ordering form for the whole of "ideas, concepts or mere appearances" (Jünger 1941, p. 36).<sup>37</sup> Heidegger's marginal comments on this passage conclude that the determining and rank-ordering are "to be understood therefore as metaphysical", which brings to the fore that "more decisive even than the worker is rank-ordering itself as the jointure of beings" (Heidegger 2004b, p. 320).<sup>38</sup> The emerging form of the worker, as the decisive way in which all beings (ideas, concepts, appearances, *things*) are set into relation one with another, means not that the (type of the) worker himself is the decisive origin and apex of order, of *arche* as such, but that the type of the worker both conceals (by taking over and assuming the apex of ordering) and lets be seen rank-ordering, setting-into-relation, *arche*, as such.

Heidegger derives this understanding from the *unconditioned* character of the subject. The subject does not so much "value" in terms of assert itself and then impose values on what it finds (thereby "choosing" the values it ascribes, rather like Adam giving names to the subordinate creatures of Eden). Rather, the

34. 'Jeder Freiheitsanspruch innerhalb der Arbeitswelt ist also nur möglich, insofern er als Arbeitsanspruch erscheint.'

35. 'Gesetze-gebend! Rang-setzend! N[ietzsche] wo sind die "Herren"? Herr ist - wer das Wesen der Macht zu wandeln vermag u. wissen kann, daß es eine Tapferkeit gibt, die weder der Brutalität noch des "Heroismus" i. n. z. S. bedarf.'

36. A Nazi Party propaganda poster in the series of 'weekly exhortations' (*Wochensprüche*) aimed at the German public from the week of 29 September to 5 October 1940 proclaimed (as a quotation from Hitler): 'HEROISMUS ist nicht nur auf dem Schlachtfelde notwendig, sondern auch auf dem Boden der Heimat' ('HEROISM is not only necessary on the battlefield, but also on the soil of the homeland') (capitalisation in original).

37. 'Ideen, Begriffen, oder bloßen Erscheinungen.' The key sentence, however, is what precedes this: 'Den Arbeiter in einer durch die Gestalt bestimmten Rangordnung zu sehen'.

38. 'd. h. eben metaphysisch... entschiedener als der Arbeiter ist die Rangordnung selbst als Fügung des Seienden.'

unconditioned subject conditions itself through the values it ascribes – the subject is also subject to (subjected by) the means and manners of valuation.

Here the fundamental difference between Heidegger and Jünger can also be seen, one that even lets us glimpse Heidegger's own political understanding, for if Jünger is interested in bringing to description the *typus* of the worker and relating it to Nietzsche – the essence of the *age* – Heidegger himself is interested in origination and the "jointure" of beings as such, what lets beings be seen both for themselves and in relation to each other – what the Greeks name as *arche*, ordering source, the *essence* of essence (*das Wesen des Wesens*). The difference is in an ordering to time. Jünger is still preoccupied with the metaphysics of the worker, its essence or "whatness" and its causes. When Jünger says of the type of the worker that "one is forced to encounter a society of primitive souls, an originating race, which has not yet discovered its historical task, and is thereby free for new instructions" (Jünger 1941, p. 81)<sup>39</sup>, Heidegger's marginal note adds: "the futural, unconditioned, subject" (Heidegger 2004b, p. 354).<sup>40</sup> What for Jünger is an essence, a conditioning cause, is for Heidegger something yet to come, something coming to presence and even only now arriving. The philosophical question here is: do causes *predetermine* or do they befall us from the future? Depending on how we answer this will determine how we translate Jünger's term *Urrasse* ("primal race", "original breed", "new order", "*typus*?"), emphasised by being underlined in Heidegger's own copy of the text.

Heidegger understood Jünger's *Der Arbeiter* to be of its time – a verdict with which Jünger would not have disagreed. Heidegger cautions that

Jünger does not see that the age of the worker (the modern age) is only the latest continuation and fulfilment of modernity. He sees that the dominion of the "worker" sets out to begin a new order and new values. (Heidegger 2004b, p. 91)<sup>41</sup>

Even more critically, Heidegger says at one point that Jünger proceeds with nothing other than the "implements" (literally, "table cutlery") of Nietzsche's metaphysics (Heidegger 2004b, p. 338).<sup>42</sup>

It is this difference between Jünger and Heidegger which indicates most clearly the different ways in which each interprets Nietzsche himself. Heidegger's question, "Nietzsche, where are the 'rulers'?", refers to the whole discussion in Nietzsche of the character of rulership and command, *Herrschaft*, but reveals it fundamentally to be asked as one not about the "metaphysical", the "what", the essential "whatness character" of "what takes precedence over what" (and so

39. 'Hier wird man auf eine Gesellschaft primitiver Seelen stoßen, auf eine Urrasse, die noch nicht als Subjekt einer historischen Aufgabe aufgetreten und daher frei für neue Aufträge ist.' The underlining indicates words Heidegger underlined in his own copy of the text.

40. 'Das künftige unbedingte Subjekt' (Heidegger's underlining).

41. 'Jünger sieht nicht, daß das Zeitalter des Arbeiters (das moderne Zeitalter) nur die äußerste Fortsetzung und Vollendung der Neuzeit ist. Er sieht darin daß der "Arbeiter" die Herrschaft antritt, eine neue Ordnung und neue Werte.'

42. 'verfährt J. überall so, mit dem "Besteck" der Metaphysik Nietzsches.' ('Jünger generally proceeds in this way, with the "implements" of the metaphysics of Nietzsche.')

what “causes” what) in the order of beings, the Greek manner of asking the question about *arche*, as origination and rank-ordering as such; but about the *non*-metaphysical manner in which there are those *who* make possible the making manifest of beings. Nietzsche himself, in a passage edited into the *Wille zur Macht*, says:

from now on there will be more favourable preconditions for more comprehensive forms of dominion, the like of which has never yet existed ... a master race, the future “rulers of the earth”, a new, uncanny aristocracy ... a manner of higher man who, thanks to his superiority in will, knowledge, riches and influence, employs democratic Europe as the most pliant and supple device for getting hold of the destinies of the earth ... Enough: the time is coming when one will have to be retrained for politics. (Nietzsche 1996, §960, p. 641)<sup>43</sup>

If the worker is typified in the forms of fascism (Nazism), communism (Bolshevism), and Americanism, these are for Heidegger only the means by which the underlying metaphysics of valuation eclipses what Jünger refers to as the latest political forms (after the feudal, monarchial, and others). “World democracy” is not, therefore, either for Heidegger or for Nietzsche, a final form, understood as presence, but the manner of an overcoming, an emerging *presencing*, something on its way and coming from before us. World democracy, as the triumph of something European (of which the American is only a later form) on a planetary scale is attained through the metaphysics of valuation, which itself indicates the arising triumph of the subjectivity of the subject. This emerging is *essentially* “rank-ordering”: it does not cancel difference, it produces it in order to arrive at all. The force of necessity cannot be overestimated: the subject, in order to arrive and be visible, must and does arrive visibly (already) ascribing values.

It is for this reason that Heidegger appears to dismiss the propaganda forms of Nazism, when, in the passage cited earlier, he says “[t]he ruler is – the one who has the means to alter the will to power, and knows that it supplies a courage, which requires neither brutality nor “heroism” in the contemporary sense”.<sup>44</sup> The courage supplied will produce an *aristocracy* of those – of a “race” (we might say “order”) – not yet seen, who will take command over the planet (will globalise themselves), through *the* ever-transforming manner of the capacity to

43. ‘Es wird von nun an günstige Vorbedingungen für umfänglichere Herrschafts-Gebilde geben, deren Gleichen es noch nicht gegeben hat. Und dies ist noch nicht das Wichtigste; es ist die Entstehung von internationalen Geschlechts-Verbänden möglich gemacht, welche sich die Aufgabe setzen, eine Herren-Rasse heraufzuzüchten, die zukünftigen “Herren der Erde”; - eine neue, ungeheure ... Aristokratie ... eine höhere Art Menschen, die sich, dank ihrem Übergewicht von Wollen, Wissen, Reichtum und Einfluß, des demokratischen Europas bedienen als ihres gefügigsten und beweglichsten Werkzeugs, um die Schicksale der Erde in die Hand zu bekommen ... Genug, die Zeit kommt, wo man über Politik umlernen wird.’

44. See note 35. This is a development from Heidegger’s claim in a speech at the annual matriculation ceremony – when for the only time in his 10-month tenure as rector of Freiburg University he received the new students with the kitsch enthusiasm of a new convert – that students are not to be bourgeois but genuine workers, taking their place in the new Germany, because ‘the National Socialist state is the work-state’ (‘der nationalsozialistische Staat ist der Arbeitsstaat’) (Heidegger 2000d, p. 206).

take power over the claim to justice, as the concealment of the metaphysics of valuation. Only something of a truly planetary scale could attain this – something, let us say, like the drive to save the planet itself. Nihilism on a planetary scale could appear exactly as the drive to set a new value on the planet as such and as a whole, with the legitimating force of incriminating everyone who fails to cooperate with the task at hand – a totalitarian goal nevertheless entirely exculpated from all accusations of totalitarian motive because of its sheer urgency and necessity. *Not* to be seen to be saving the planet, even at the most trivial (let alone grandiose) level, is to be guilty of collaborating in the planet's destruction.

In what way is this drive itself part of the metaphysics of subjectivity, as the "jointure of beings" (*Fügung des Seienden*)? Now every *thing* to be valued is at one and the same time devalued – separated from the manner and place of its appearing, from the world and being through being made a thing that can be *valuable* at all, even if its value is devaluation as such – and then ascribed a value which comes from no *beyond*, from no transcendent *one*, even if it is an event of *transcending*. The ascription of value is an event of subjectivity, it is the enactment of the intersubjective: it is not drawn off from the already-given unity of being (as the unity of the nothing which lets the world emerge in its pluriformity), rather it attains to unity constantly, and produces the drive to unity as its constant and ultimate goal. Valuations are in and of themselves relations, *the* relations of rulership, power, and command, even as they mask themselves as claims to justice. They arise from the powering-up of power itself, and in the iron logic of the values and positions they enforce, they do this best as necessities, as claims to the ascription of freedom.

Precisely because every ascription of a value denounces the thing in itself and superimposes on it the value it is to have, nihilism internalises and normalises every deviant claim to value "other than", to value differently. There is no escape from the logic of valuation – yet worse, the more creative and subversive the valuation, the more it is suborned and put to use in the evaluative work and task. Subjectivity is to be secured, therefore, precisely by relations of difference *as* relations of valuation. Every attempt at a more radical revaluation – at resistance, subversion, transformation, more radical change – is itself a necessary part of the very activity of valuation *as* the activity of the self-securing of the security of the subject. The iron necessity that requires the endless production of values appears as the euphoric, triumphant freedom that the will can claim to make them. The *actual* value matters not a whit; that there is value is all that matters.

The securing of the subjectivity of the subject therefore turns out to be, not generalised revolution, but the continued, justified, and legitimised assertion of the subject in its claims to be secured through an overcoming inherent in all social relations as the very establishment and prior possibility of those relations. What begins in the overthrow of God, of feudal lords, of kings and bourgeois alike, continues as a leap-frogging, somersaulting process of the continued distinction of myself from you, and the overcoming of every unjustified claim of



an elite by the securing of the correction of injustice in privileging the underprivileged. Who are the underprivileged? They are precisely those who have yet to *attain* to their new value. (To become a victim – of what, it does not matter – is precisely to assert one’s claim and *right* to superiority and triumph!) What does all this look like, and how does it appear in the contemporary political situation? It is something remarkably like contemporary (world) democracy, in fact. It is something that exactly explains the word “somersault” in its place at the beginning of this article. Heidegger’s judgement on Jünger and Nietzsche is itself uncomfortable, leaving open the question of where Heidegger thought all this would lead. In his seminar preparation, Heidegger notes in relation to Jünger’s glorying in Nietzsche’s revaluation of all values that Jünger contents himself with being “head-over-heels” for these new values which are the instantiation of Nietzsche’s will to power; head-over-heels with an assent which is nothing other than, Heidegger says, a “messing around” with it all (Heidegger 2004b, p. 91).<sup>45</sup> The thinker leaps over his interlocutor with a final, explanatory word.

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45. 'Jünger begnügt sich, die neuen "Werte" zu sehen, d. h. kopf-über in dieses Wirkliche zu stürzen und Ja sagen und mitzumachen.' Translated, this reads: 'Jünger contents himself to see these new "values", that means, fall head-over-heels in this reality, affirming and messing around with it'.

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