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THE "HONOR OF LABOR"

Industrial workers and the power of symbols under National Socialism

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In the following article Alf Lüdtke demonstrates the importance of "symbolic practice" in the Third Reich, an aspect of Nazism that earlier social historians were inclined to dismiss as superficial and meaningless rhetoric meant to disguise the "real" economic and political interests that Nazism served. Walter Benjamin had drawn attention, in the mid–1930s, to the Nazis' "aesthetization of politics" in the form of huge meetings and marches, or mass sporting events. But Lüdtke suggests that these mass spectacles should not obscure the power of the less dramatic, everyday use of symbols by the Nazis. Lüdtke focusses in particular upon the rich symbolism surrounding and representing manual work. He contends that even workers who had supported the Social Democrats or Communists during the Weimar Republic displayed ambivalent attitudes toward the Nazi regime after 1933. The Nazis attempted to exploit this "sceptical acquiescence" with a "symbolic offering" in the form, for example, of Nazi insistence on the importance of "German quality work" and "the honor of labor," enduring "cultural icons" in German society that could engage the sympathies of a wide range of ordinary Germans, from factory engineers to skilled workers, regardless of their former political persuasions.

In support of this argument, Lüdtke digs deeply into the many, sometimes ambiguous and contradictory, layers of meaning that German workers themselves attached to industrial work. He shows that the identities of male German workers were intimately connected with the sights, sounds, smells, textures, symbols and images that surrounded and represented industrial work. Lüdtke suggests that the Nazi language of labor expressed meanings attached by ordinary workers to work that the Marxist language of class did not. German socialists recognized that

manual labor was a source of pride and dignity for the German labor movement. But in Marxist theory, "alienated" manual labor was the undeniable sign of the oppression and exploitation of the German working class under capitalism, which only a socialist revolution could abolish. National Socialism was the first political regime to commit itself publicly to promoting the "honor of labor" within the framework of the existing economic system. The Nazis praised "German quality work" and "national labor;" they promised "joy in work," a "factory community" (Werksgemeinschaft) *and a "national community." Yet these ideas and images were by no means the unique invention of the Nazis; well before 1933, an array of nationalist conservatives, efficiency experts and industrial managers had already developed a language of labor that incorporated these central terms of the Nazi regime.*

What the Nazis said about industrial work thus appears to have been more a particular expression of a long tradition than a hypocritical attempt to camouflage the real political and economic losses inflicted upon German workers by Hitler's seizure of power in 1933. The Nazi regime did not remove class barriers but it did offer German workers new forms of recognition, new status, new opportunities and new hopes which facilitated workers' acceptance of and participation in the construction of the murderous Nazi regime. At the very least, the Nazis' commitment to the "honor of labor" improved workers' survival chances and allowed workers the physical and symbolic space within which they could engage in small acts of daily self-assertion (Eigen-Sinn).

The Nazis frequently used the written or spoken word to communicate their image of the "honor of labor", but they also mobilized non-verbal, sensual, visual images – for example, photographs of laboring bodies – which, as Walter Benjamin recognized, could be infinitely replicated and circulated to a mass audience. The "readers" for whom these words and images were intended were, however, primarily men. As Lüdtke points out, the labor which the Nazis attempted to dignify and through which industrial workers constructed their own identities and self-esteem was paid wage-labor performed by the skilled, strong bodies of German men, and not the unpaid housework of German women.

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LEY: "I GAVE THEM MY HAND"

The German Labor Front (DAF) was supposed, once and for all, to put an end to conflicts of interest and thus to "class conflict" in manufacturing and industrial enterprises. This Nazi organization was founded on 10 May 1933, a few days after the acts of violence and the spectacular staging of 1 and 2 May: the "Day of National Labor" and the dissolution of the trade unions. . . . This occupation of the free labor movement's forms of organization and expression marked one of the first high points of massive Nazi terror which raged, at all levels, against "black" as well as against "red" workers, against the "commune" (KPD) and the "proles."[1] The "Reich organization leader" of the Nazi party, Robert Ley, was installed as "Führer" (from 1934, director) of the DAF.[2] In November 1933, as the preparations for the reconstruction of labor law proceeded under great pressure, the DAF managed to have itself declared the single organization of *all* employees in industry and commerce. And in the corresponding "Law for the Protection of National Labor," the so-called "Law for the Organization of Labor" (AOG) of 20 January 1934, the "factory leader" and his "retinue" were obliged to construct and to cultivate the "community of the enterprise."[3] But the law also required that "social honor" be safeguarded – henceforth the "malicious exploitation of labor power" could be prosecuted in a court of honor, although not upon the direct petition of the plaintiff.[4]

The assertions of the National Socialist leaders, that they were the first in German history to appreciate "the dignity of labor" and energetically to promote its recognition, characterized the high point of the Nazi "seizure of power," the celebration of the "Day of National Labour" on 1 May 1933. Nazi efforts went beyond demonstrative performances and the taking of ritual oaths to the "people's community" (*Volksgemeinschaft*), which was supposed already to have begun to overcome class division. In a less inflated manner, gestures and ceremonies were meant to demonstrate that the Nazis intended to be serious about the "honor of labour." This included a practice about which Robert Ley, above all, repeatedly boasted, "I gave my hand to the men."[5]

Ley referred to numerous (but not precisely enumerated) factory visits, which he claimed to have undertaken since the summer of 1933. Admittedly, "giving his hand" could have

been "a great danger" since he might easily have made himself a laughing stock! In the "old days" it would have been quite unthinkable to "go into the factories, without offering the men any sort of material advantage." And what could he have brought them? He could "only give them . . . his hand." He claimed to have gone "from work bench to work bench," asking the men "how things were going, whether they had worries and concerns." His goal, he claimed, was to speak with "people," "to be able to engage them in conversation, to forge a connection with them." And, once more: "I assembled all my energies, I focussed on every single individual, I grasped his hand, I did not relent." Even later, looking back on it, the effect seemed astonishing to him. He claimed that at first (only a few) individuals gave him their hands, although not without some hesitation; but then others gathered around him, finally he was encircled, "and eventually they raised me up on their shoulders." Looking back on it, what counted as the real victory was the fact that "The battle was joined."

This story of "I gave the men my hand" had already been part of a speech by Ley on 1 May 1934, which he delivered at a reception given for the diplomatic corps by Alfred Rosenberg. There, Ley described the "giving of hands" as his "new method."[6] After the phase of mass parades . . . it became a question of "winning these people's hearts". . . . "It was wonderful to observe how timidity, downheartedness, yes, even to some extent oppositional hatred and rage, were overcome." The medium of this purported miracle was a physical gesture (body-language), a demonstration of respect between equals: a hand-shake, or rather, a "simple hand-shake of two *men*."

The repeated, insistent reference suggests that this was meant to appear and to be valued, as a unique gesture. The story played insistently upon conversion experiences. Seeking out, greeting and addressing – as if in no time at all skeptics became enthusiastic believers. But a second theme was also addressed here: Ley presented himself as a member of the inner circle of power in a "movement" that would bring a completely new beginning in politics and society, through the impetus of the "national revolution" to which the Nazis laid claim.[7] Rituals of popular homage-giving formed a part of the coronation ritual of new rulers, asserting a connection between "investiture" and

mass approval.[8] The "masses" thereby moved toward the center of power, passing in review before the leaders. The (people) gave evidence of their obedience and approval there, where the new rulers specified their center of power.

Ley claimed to have reversed such rituals; he had not waited, but had gone instead to the workers themselves. He claimed to have sought out the people he wanted to win over, there, in the workplace, one of the centers of their lives. Rather than summoning others to his presence, Ley had gone out and asked the nameless workers, who lacked the necessary confidence or simply thought it impossible to speak directly to a "leader," about their hopes and fears. He claimed thereby to have renounced all hierarchical distance, even to have overcome it. Indeed this important figure of the Third Reich went without hesitation to the ordinary people. And even when he talked with women, the claim to a free exchange of thought . . . necessiated the formula that he had spoken "man to man." This was complemented by the "simple hand-shake," which he had offered to as many as possible. Ley presented himself as a "Führer," who at the same time claimed to be one among many "soldiers of (manual) labor. . . ."

SYMBOLS AND THE PRACTICE OF DOMINATION

In the following section, Lüdtke argues that "symbolic practice" is an integral part of normal, everyday life, even in advanced industrial societies. "Symbolic practices" are the activities and social interactions through which workers construct and express the meanings they attach to the "real world" of industrial work. These "symbolic practices" may assume an exceptional, ritualistic form, such as the celebration of a birthday or a company anniversary; but they can also be quite prosaic, such as the daily handling of tools. Following a more general, theoretical discussion, Lüdtke examines in detail how symbolic practices operated in a variety of circumstances. He shows that the meanings of industrial work produced and expressed by German workers were multi-layered and often contradictory, making it difficult for the Nazis to impose a single, desired meaning "from above" by their own "symbolic practices." Unable simply to manipulate workers with their appeals to the "honor of labour," the Nazis had to find points of contact with the meanings that workers themselves attached to industrial work and to employ

symbols which had the power to draw workers into active participation in the Nazi regime.

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In the informal catalogue of epithets with which the behavior of many Nazi power-brokers was caricatured – but to a certain extent also made cosy and familiar – Ley counted as the Reich drunk.[9] But quite independent of his habits (and addictions) as well as his political poses, Ley did not manage in the long run to assume a strategic position in the "polycratic" [fragmented, multi-centred] field of power exercised by the Nazi ruling groups. From about 1938 onward, he was no longer able to expand the beginnings of his general political influence.[10]

Yet references to the dominating personalities and structures of power do not really get at the effects of the Nazi movement upon the masses, which can also be detected among male and female industrial workers and their families. So far as mass acceptance of and participation in the regime in the years after the Nazi accession to power is concerned, it was German fascism's *practice* of domination that was decisive. But what were the forms and the effects of the forms in which the "will" and the "commands" of the leading functionaries of the party and the state were supposed to be put into practice?[11] In this context, what was the significance of references to the "honor of labor?" What do symbolic practices, such as seeking the workers out in the workplace, which in his presentation Ley tried to make "significant," really show us?[12] Or to put it another way: by what symbols and everyday practices did (industrial) workers allow themselves to be addressed; which ones did they share, whether in agreement or rejection?

Symbols by no means refer to mythical worlds, withdrawn from the historical context and process. Rather, symbols relate to meanings that are always multi-layered. This multiplicity of meanings is, however, bound up with the way in which the symbols are presented and used, hence reinterpreted. Their actual attraction, and thus their power to have an effect, lies in the fact that symbols simultaneously invite what appear to be incompatible constructions of meaning; indeed they "entice" and accentuate these (different meanings). A variety of hopes and also fears become quite concrete and "real," at least for the moment.

Victor Turner has made us aware that symbols bring together "normative" with "emotive" polarities.[13] The latter are distinguished especially by their "sensory" qualities. They speak directly to the senses, through, for example, sounds, pictures, smells. We can think here of the photographs or statues, aimed at the visual sense, that were supposed to (re)present the "quality worker." Such icons simultaneously evoked a self-portrait and (cultural) representations of the good, the valuable quality worker.

Symbols were experienced in ritual practices, in interactions, which were laden, in specific ways, with the representations and expectations of all involved. For the participants, they were "heavy with meaning." So for machine-building workers the handling of tools was joined with the experience of their own manual skill. Simultaneously, the expectations and the prodding of their overseers and their colleagues – as well as their own individual "self-assertion" (*Eigen-Sinn*)[14] – shaped their interaction with each other as well as with the tools; so the work tools became everyday symbols of this mixture of opportunities for and limits to action, symbols of satisfactions and failures, which "colored" survival in the work-place.[15] In male workteams looking after the tools was connected with valuing an indispensable aid. . . . With this were bound together pictures of a practice, which, because it dealt predominantly with metal raw materials and machines, counted as (particularly) "manly."

Symbolic practice also revealed itself in transgressions of labor discipline in the workshop and at the machines which were both purposeful and tolerated. The connection of collegiality with the factory hierarchy became physically "tangible" in the rituals with which birthdays and company jubilees were celebrated;[16] here hierarchy was relativized (if not suspended) at least for a short period of time. In the longer view, however, the momentary experience of "being together" only served once again to renew the inequalities between the members of a work team and lead-hands, on the one side, masters, or even engineers and company directors, on the other. In this demonstrative conviviality – expressed in stopping work, eating and in drinking (of alcohol) – on the actual site where these activities normally were forbidden, everyone thronged around the celebrant. For the participants and those who came after them, this was immortalized in the jubilee

photograph. In the presence of overseers a reduction of hierarchical distance became clear. At the same time, the person honored by the celebration might appear especially cherished and respected. But on the next shift this earlier loosening of the hierarchy actually made it possible to intone even more strongly the distance between the overseers and their subordinates, where possible to demand it with even less restraint. These kinds of celebrations had an additional significance. They drew a line dividing the participants from "all the others," other colleagues as well as the "higher ranks" in the factory, the members of other work-teams and workshops, and, indeed, all outsiders, whether they were or were not workers. . . .

HITLER: "THERE IS NO DISHONOR IN MANUAL LABOR"

The "honor of labour" was one of the key points in Hitler's speech at the 1933 May Day celebrations, an appeal to the *Volksgemeinschaft* (transmitted by radio all over Germany); "Spirit, brain and fist, worker, farmer and citizen,"[17] all belonged together. Each had his own honor; each should respect that of the other. But the highest measure was manual labor. According to Hitler, the "labor service" would teach everyone that "manual labor neither pollutes, nor dishonors." Manual labor would be dignified, above all, when "it was filled with loyal and honest meaning." Loud applause can be heard on the tape-recording when Hitler added that "we want to lead everyone at least once in his life to manual labor." The voices of workers on the "Day of National Labor" which were transmitted earlier by the radio had already emphasized that the true voice of the people should be that of the working men; their hearts were in the right place and they (knew how to) roll up their sleeves and get the job done.

In a speech a few days later, in which he celebrated the foundation of the DAF, Hitler presented himself as a worker: he claimed to have worked on a building site and "earned his own keep."[18] And as an ordinary soldier he knew the life of the "broad masses" much better than many who were born into "those classes." Likewise, an "ABC of National Socialism", that appeared in six editions totaling 40,000 copies between January and the

summer of 1933, depicted Hitler as someone who knew precisely what he was talking about: in Vienna before 1914 he had survived "by means of heavy physical labor" as a "concrete mixer and building worker," before he became a draftsman and "artistic painter for architects."[19]

Leading National Socialists frequently talked about the "honor of (manual) labor." This way of talking had at least three aims. It harnessed (popular) animosity toward the party-political business of the Republic; by deriding the allegedly lazy "(party) bosses" it was able to exploit a widespread distrust of professional politicians and functionaries.[20] Second, despite all the rhetorical-ritual estimation of manual labor (also in the metaphor of the "hand" or the "fist"), a strict subordination in the work-relationship itself appeared indispensable. It was taken for granted that the manual worker was supposed to "obey" not only the contract, but also the overseers. Similarly, it was his own knowledge of manual labor that permitted the overseer "more easily to command." "Work" was depicted as the "battle of labor," a struggle requiring obedience.[21] The "competition" inside the factory, among the workers and the work-teams, and even the "struggle" between factories was one form of this battle. But productive labor would also allow the economic independence which would bring victory to the Nazi state in the (international) "struggle" of peoples and races.[22]

But it went beyond this exhortation to obey and to fight. Connected, but none the less still distinct, was a third aspect – the reverence for diligence and for "doing one's duty," a reference to the internal dimension of labor-"discipline." "Diligence" and "duty" were invoked in many different forms – as the obverse of the middle-class "thriftiness" which served to maintain the individual, but also as a consequence of those preconceptions of "progress" and growth, shared by "right" and "left" alike, which aimed at the expansion of industrial production. Orderliness and deftness of hand were the distinguishing characteristics; order must reign in the work-place; deft hands ensured that at the very point of production itself, the job orders and technical drawings would become the desired, "precise," good product.

"DIGNITY OF LABOR": THE HORIZONS OF MEANING

In the following section, Lüdtke traces the development before 1933, and particularly during the Weimar Republic, of the central terms, "German quality work," "joy in work" and the "factory community," which the Nazis later incorporated into their own language of labor. But Lüdtke does more than simply examine the ways in which the dominant groups in German society constructed notions of the "honor of labor." He also attempts to show how workers themselves gave this central concept their own particular meanings. To signal the difference between these two levels and types of meaning, a different translation of the central German term (Ehre der Arbeit) *is employed in the following section; whereas the "honor of labor" refers to the first level and type of meaning, produced "from above," "dignity of labor" refers to the ways in which workers themselves appropriated, negotiated, or otherwise gave their own meanings to the concept of* Ehre der Arbeit.

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Here we need to excavate in a number of stages. Only a reconstruction of the longer-term configurations in which the "honor of labor" was invoked and alluded to will make it possible, more precisely, to sketch out the extent of the symbols connected with this image.

1 Orderliness and physical dexterity had class-specific as well as cross-class meanings and horizons. Within the working class, "orderliness" was the cardinal division separating those who aspired to be seen as the "respectable working class" (i.e. "honorable" workers) from the – not inconsiderable – remainder. In spectacular but also in daily interactions the signs were eloquent; clear divisions in the neighborhoods, as well as in the work-place, between the unskilled laborers on the one side, the semi-skilled and skilled workers on the other.

To the outside observer, from other classes and milieux, orderliness at work remained invisible. That made forms of (re)presentation to the outside world all the more important. So, for example, "orderly" processions in May Day demonstrations, counted as more than just a tactical concession to the middle classes. In the *Kaiserreich*, when workers appeared in military-

style formation, they won praise in the social-democratic papers as well as in the bourgeois press.[23]

Year after year, before 1914, Social Democratic May Day posters called for their followers to understand that emancipation "from their chains," overcoming need, drudgery and want, required not the abolition but the expansion of industrial labor.[24] Pictures of orderliness dominated, linked in part with stereotyped visions of an emancipated world; allegorical maidens that admittedly resembled the agile "Marianne" more than the full-bodied "Germania." By their side stood proletarians whose bodies exuded strength. These muscular young men leaned upon hammers and anvils: craftwork and manual labor, but not the domination of machinery, was on display.[25] And even though the female figure clearly represented no real person, this was less apparent with the male symbols. In any case, it was certainly only men that functioned as icons of work.

2 The suggestiveness of the symbol remained undisturbed by changes in life situation, by social ascent and descent; on this point the semi-skilled met on common ground with many outside the working class and its political "camp." In the work process, manual dexterity combined with sharp eyes, physical strength and "toughness' with "hard labor." This "work" was essential for daily survival. Housework was, to be sure, omitted from this representation – work with tools, at machines and in workshops, was suffused with ideals of "male" appropriation of "the world." This work was more than just a means to an end. Instrumental orientations were mixed together with meanings, in which work showed itself to be an exhausting but fascinating "metabolism with nature."[26] Especially dangerous, resistant work situations could only be endured by demonstrating "self-assertiveness" (*Eigen-Sinn*), even if that meant no more than not having the starch knocked out of you, for example, in the "fiery-workshops" of heavy industry, or in cleaning the salt pans in a refinery, in roadworks or at the pit-face in mining.

"Good work" meant the successful product of wage-labor. Housework was not included. Order and performance dominated in the workplace, in the work-team. Even in specialized, subdivided jobs, for example, the (relatively few) work-places on the assembly line, it was stimulating to be able to get a grip ("*ein Griff herauszuholen*"). There were two possibilities: building up an

extra buffer of time and demonstrating your superiority over the machinery and over the engineers who organized the work process.

Proper work meant the capacity for organization; it signaled and demanded unceasing application to a given task.[27] Such men would master the present and secure the future! The other side – individual suffering under the pressures of work, but also the fate of being unemployed (likewise crossing class and political lines) – was experienced either as personal failure or blamed upon the political "system." But in either case the basic valuation of "work," whether manual or machine, remained undisturbed. And in either of these two forms, "work" was indispensable for daily survival. This experience, which did not need to be stated in explicit terms, shaped the expectations of colleagues, of neighbors, of relatives.

3 A horizon of meaning may have been suggested in the "dignity of labor" which was marginalized by the labor movement and also in the public discourse of the parties and Parliament during both the Wilhelmine Empire and the Weimar Republic. Demands for the "full' or "just" return of labor, for "justice" had been a fundamental canon of belief in the producers' co-operatives of the 1860s and 1870s.[28] But in the political program which, at least rhetorically, from the 1870s onwards oriented itself increasingly toward the Marxist critique of capitalism, "justice" became thinkable only after the complete revolutionary upheaval.[29]

In the mass organizations which after the end of the century turned to individual reforms of society, there was likewise no reawakening or renewal of interest in "dignity" and "justice." The "dignity of labor" counted for no more than an empty formula in the trade unions, if it did not produce the organization of interest group representation. According to this view, it was only the collective (and collective legal) guarantees and the improvement of wages that could create the material preconditions, which would permit an adequate standard of living – and thereby restore "dignity." Experience of changing employment cycles . . . sharpened distrust of references to one's own significance that could not be grasped in terms of marks and pennies. If manual labor was so decorative, why, then, did not everyone apply themselves to it? How could one

explain that, even with so many improvements,[30] manual work still paid so little, so that living and surviving continued to be such a struggle?[31]

In only a few regions or branches of industry did the working-class organizations manage to retain as members a majority of those they seriously sought to reach.[32] Outside the Socialist Party congresses or the columns of the party press, among the ordinary members, demands for "just" treatment could none the less be heard. Adolf Levenstein, who in 1910 surveyed the opinions of approximately 6,000 mine, textile and machine-building workers who were trade union members in several different regions, published a list of these kinds of statements.[33] "I will not be degraded to the status of a machine," protested one metal presser (*Metalldrucker*), or, from a coal-cutter: "humanity is becoming disgraceful." Certainly, these statements were not uniform; to some degree, machine work was felt to be a relief from the burden of labor, even a type of emancipation (not least, because then one was "more equally exploited"). But there were clearly numerous complaints about not being treated as a "human being"; respect for the "worth" of the individual was demanded, even when the precise words were not explicitly pronounced.

4 Appeals for the "honor of labor" and of the worker increased under other headings as well. Parallel with the tones of cultural pessimism, in which simple manual labor became an emblem of anti-industrial Utopia – as in the writings of Wilhelm Heinrich Riehl or Gustav Freytag from the 1850s and 1860s – there developed a rhetoric of "national labor."[34] Alongside the class-specific models in which the "honor of labor" was represented, there developed a specifically *national* (and *völkisch*) pattern. "National Labor" harmonized especially in literary middle-class circles with a previously unknown estimation of the "man of work". This did not mean, however, real workers; quite the opposite – the proletarians appeared, by contrast, as the "all too many," if not quite as "beasts" (K.-M. Bogdal).[35] What was being applauded here was an abstraction.

However, "national labor" did not remain the exclusive preserve of bourgeois groups or authors. It was to be found again in the poems with which authors, such as Paul Lersch and Karl Broger, who had both been manual workers, sang the praises of the soldier's sacrifice after 1914. Broger's dictum, that "in

Germany's greatest danger her poorest sons (had shown themselves to be) the most loyal" fell upon receptive ears. "National labor" promoted and confirmed understanding between the classes and the political camps.[36] In the war propaganda of 1914–18, the representation of "national labor" was emphatically connected with the image of "quality work." In books and in (illustrated) magazines and newspapers one could find, for example, such statements as:

> Is there a more diligent, more apt, more dexterous, better trained, more reliable, more productive but also better paid worker than the German? Who keeps his workplace, his machine and his tools cleaner than the German? I state explicitly *his* workplace, *his* machine, because the German worker loves his labor and takes good care of his equipment, as if it were his own personal property. In no way does he feel himself to be a slave to mechanized production, no, he is the master of his machine.[37]

Certainly the social democratic press generally commented sceptically and critically about the party's (SPD) support of the war;[38] but there were doubtless many who were supporters of the SPD or had voted for the party among the soldiers, who nevertheless "participated" at the front as in the armaments industry.

Naturally during the war years, male and female workers learned each day what real drudgery meant, especially in the war industries, and increased exertion by no means led to corresponding wage increases or even secure earnings. Above all, prices for the basic foodstuffs exploded; everyday life was characterized by hunger, misery and the death of close relatives.[39] Nevertheless, the self-understanding of workers complied in many respects with the picture of "national labor" that also served the purposes of war propaganda. The complaints of the "nameless" (like the Pohlands in Bremen) about the extensive "participation" of even organized workers reflected only the considerable extent of this conformity. The strikes in January 1917 or those of 1918 remained confined to the centers of war production, where a predominantly "young" workforce was concentrated. But for the most part, factory work could clearly not be reduced just to wages, products or their appropriation by

others. The worsening living and working conditions did not get rid of industrial work as a way of life, as self-assertion and "everyday culture," the actual execution of the work, the direct interaction with the raw materials and machines, with male and female colleagues. Quite the opposite: the appropriation of work became even more important as the fixed point of attempts to survive.

5 The national hue of the representations and pictures of "labor" by no means disappeared in the 1920s. The predominantly social-democratic orientated trade union confederation (ADGB) differed in this respect very little from the industrial interest groups. Indeed in both their rhetoric and in their industrial practices the trade unions combined class-specific "quality work" with "national labor." In "German quality work," both sides clearly saw an acceptable standard of measurement.[40] The national impulse belonged once again – or, perhaps, still – to the essence of at least the leading functionaries' political perspective in the General German Trade Union (ADGB). The mass strike movement of 1919 permanently terminated neither the co-operation with the employers in the Central Working Partnership (*Zentralarbeitsgemeinschaft*) of November 1918, nor the domestic political truce (*Burgfriedenspolitik*) of the war years. The trade unions were just as much concerned as most of the local workers' councils (*Arbeiterräte*) with securing workers' survival needs. After the end of the mass movement, it was above all in the "Ruhr Struggle" of 1923 [against the French and Belgian occupation] that national identity once again cut through class divisions, probably even within the factory itself. The heads of the trade unions clearly saw only the opportunity for a new foothold provided by a national intonation, not least because not a few such voices were to be found in the ranks of their own members.[41]

But within the factories in the post-war period, the cultivation of "skill" and "dexterity" dominated; they became bench-marks for the "rationalizers" in both the company boardrooms and the factory councils.[42] The factory practitioners saw this as an explicit alternative to Taylorism, the kernel of "American mass production." But the rhetorical as well as the financial-organizational efforts concerning "adroitness" were not just

anchored in the interests of the ruling class. At the same time, they followed, probably above all, the demands of industrial management calculations. Because, despite all of the rage for "rationalization," a survey undertaken by trade union representatives in 1931 reported that in 84 per cent of the large and mid-sized enterprises there was no "flow production" and in 95 per cent of the cases, no "assembly line." But in three-quarters of the factories, new machines had been installed.[43] Workers had to master the running of several machines at the same time and at a faster pace much more often than a few years before: the old transport problems remained, compounded, perhaps, by new ones. As a safety net within the factory "a feel for the work" therefore increased considerably in importance. Thus the production increases from "rationalization, which not only the managers and engineers but also the workers themselves hoped for, were made possible not by re-tooling the machines, or by the preparation of the work, but by the worker's day-to-day "adaptation" of work methods and tools. Moreover, new functional elites were being trained and cultivated within the factory. In the 1920s and then once again during the armaments boom from the middle of the 1930s, the segregation of the unskilled and the de-qualification of skilled craftworkers gave the "semi-skilled" (*Angelernten*) wholly unexpected chances which corresponded with the beginnings of a new hierarchy within the workforce.[44]

The safeguarding of "quality work" became the motif and justification for considerable scientific activity and publicity funded by both public and private industrial money.[45] One field was work physiology and "fatigue studies" (Edgar Atzler);[46] another was concerned with psychological formation (*Formierung*) or "psycho-physics" (Freitz Giese),[47] "job training" and, beyond this, the promotion of the "factory community" (*Werksgemeinschaft*). In 1929, Albert Vogler, the general director of the United Steelworks (*Vereinigte Stahlwerke*), wrote in a greeting for the "German Institute for Technical Job Training" (DINTA, founded 1925; after 1933 taken over by the Nazi German Labor Front), which was financed by industry, that the goal must be to teach and to learn "work through work."[48]

6 The "dignity of labor" advertised a claim. In its light the reality of work appeared to many observers as "alienation from work" (Goetz Briefs). That made it all the more important to awaken a

sense of "joy in work and a feeling of responsibility" which would set free the worker's purportedly "original direct emotional involvement with his work."[49] Along with the purely instrumental proposals we can also recognize considerations which sought – at least from the perspective of the drawing board – not simply to increase the usefulness of the male worker (and the female worker who was clearly always implicitly included). One of these concepts was "team production." With this form of the organization of work, the individual workers were supposed to experience their own worth in an expanded work-group which was dependent upon each individual.

The psychologist Willy Hellpach was involved in this scheme, along with Richard Lang, one of the directors of the Daimler Automobile Company.[50] At Daimler, Lang had set up such a production group, for the construction of (motor) housings. Various groups of workers were brought together – turners, drill operators, fitters; on a co-operative basis, they were supposed to prepare the various parts that fit together. Admittedly, the authors did not try to hide how difficult it was to discern whether they had been successful. Because "in the expressions, the posture, indeed, the entire behavior, of those in the factory who participated there was no sign of enthusiasm"; the "peculiar dullness in the average physiognomy of our skilled worker" did not recede. But the practitioner knew that this could just as well be "a conscious disguise." It therefore continued to be indispensable to "approach the worker with esteem, to respect the 'human' in him. . . ."[51]

More important than the details of this proposal was the fact that monotony and deadening in the work-place did not appear as just the expression of group-specific deficits or technical failures, of "psycho-physical fatigue."[52] An altered organization of work would, more importantly, permit recognition of the workers and, at the same time, the profitable productivity of their activity. In contrast to a primarily instrumental orientation, here respect for the "personality" of the worker was called for; it should receive recognition for its own "value."

The demand for proper treatment is a decisive element in the study, "The Struggle for Joy in Work," which the lecturer at the Frankfurt Academy of Work, Hendrik de Man, submitted in 1927.[53] The study is shaped by great skepticism concerning the class perspective. De Man interviewed seventy-eight manual and

white-collar workers who visited the Academy in 1925–6. According to this survey, the organization of work, work experiences, but also wage conditions were shaped by a basic perception of subordination: "The worker is normally dominated by the feeling that he is under the control of a superior, enemy force."

This subordination was not just experienced "in general"; it was felt not only in the multiple uncertainties, experienced, in particular, by workers on piece-rates, but was also revealed in daily confrontations with overseers. De Man confirmed a series of (earlier) results by Levenstein, when he came to the conclusion that "The worker feels that the overseer, and not just the machine is his worst enemy." This meant not so much the factory director or even the owner. Dislike, even feelings of hatred, were directed above all at the immediate overseers, against the "masters," the "minders," the "drivers," the "intriguers," the "time-keepers": in sum, all those "who bowed down to those above them and stepped on those beneath them." According to De Man, workers felt they were subjected to excessive claims to control and subordination, which went beyond the generally accepted normal discipline required in industrial production.

The same tone characterizes a study which an American work psychologist made of three railway repair shops between the fall of 1932 and the summer of 1933.[54] The author, Rex Hersey, investigated the labor process, or, more precisely, the reactions and emotions of several dozen workers. From interviews and participant observation (the results of which were compared with an earlier study in an American workshop), Hersey showed how unfairness "produced not only a decline in production and depression of feelings" but might also "generate a crisis in the relationship of the worker to his family." Above all, being goaded by a lead-hand or a master enraged the person affected: "When you are yelled at, it does not matter whether you are lucky and you get the job done quickly, or you have to work against all the odds. . . ." The feeling of being treated arbitrarily and unjustly, can clearly be traced back to these oftrepeated disappointments and injuries; being driven by others, having to endure yells and loud rebukes. Mersey's study appeared in German in 1935. It was prefaced with a short, but emphatic word of praise from Robert Ley.

7 The concepts of "group manufacture" and "joy in work" as a means of "overcoming the distance" between workers and the "objectified factory" (Ernst Michel)[55] found only a limited scientific resonance. These ideas remained without any real effect as instructions for behavior in the everyday life of the factory. The works councils and trade unionists also saw no chance of exercising any real influence over the extent or the tempo of "rationalization."[56]

In contrast, proposals for the promotion of the "factory community" (*Werksgemeinschaft*) did meet with some interest (although only among entrepreneurs and "employers" or the business directors of industrial interest groups (syndici)). The development of an *esprit de corps*, parallel to and in tune with measures for the development and cultivation of a "core workforce," was also a central element of the company paternalism of Krupp or Stumm-Halberg [leading German industrialists]. But now it was a question not only of creating an atmosphere, which would do everything possible to avoid "frictions" in individual plants, but also engaging in a comprehensive, concerted campaign, across whole regions and branches of industry. The "factory community" had a twofold thrust. Above all, the community of interests of everyone who participated at the factory level as well as in the macro-economic "working partnership" of industrial production, was supposed to bring back to life, in a new form, the anti-strike politics of the economically peaceful "company unions.". . . . Second, the idea of an industrial community of interests was aimed at all of those fellow employers who, for example, sought to evade expanded legal wage controls and thereby weaken their own trade associations.

The "factory community" was thus meant to reach considerably beyond the individual work-place. In contrast with the ideas of Lang and Hellpach, the actual labor process itself was left completely out of the picture. Much more attention was paid to forming a comprehensive connection with the workers and their families, at the "edge" of the factory, in their "free time." In this respect, *Kindergarten* places and household and sewing courses for the wives and daughters were just as important as financial support for gardening clubs, convalescent homes and rest cures. Reinforcing these material benefits was a verifying publicity: a company magazine which, not

infrequently, was technically advanced as well as "modern" in design and layout. Its photographs utilized the stylistic suggestions of a "documentary" presentation of a many-sided and "successful" organism. By setting individual workers into visual relief – as celebrants of an anniversary with the company or in reports about individual sections of the factory or workshop – the individual was always brought into a direct relationship with the "whole."

This ensemble of allowances and inspections, of monetary benefits and binding symbols which excluded third parties, naturally exceeded the resources of small and mid-sized enterprises. Here everything revolved around the leadership style of the employer or manager and his middle-men; flanking measures were absent. But here as well the critical question in the workplace addressed itself, above all, to the issue of how far at least a certain measure of "fairness" for male and female workers could be made evident.

8 Pride in "quality work" was not reserved for directors and engineers alone. When the magazine for works councils published by the German Metalworkers' Union wrote that in the USA every detail had to be "foolproof," then both the editor and the reader could think contentedly about the fact that in German factories, successful products depended upon the knowledge and ability of experienced workers, that among one's colleagues the assortment of head-scratching and testing counted not as a burdensome evil, but rather as an indication of qualified work.

Here we can detect a peculiar fixation, especially within the labor movement: the motifs and symbols which presented "work" revolved around the image of a competence saturated with experience. This "feel for the work" was admittedly reserved for those who engaged in "trained" activities (even when they were actually only semi-skilled). So, for example, a photograph of a (repair) turner was printed as the cover picture for the communist-oriented but also commercially successful *Workers' Illustrated Newspaper* (*Arbeiter-Illustrierte Zeitung*). This manly worker radiated a controlled calm; the perspective and the way the picture is framed emphasized his concentratio on the tools, on the materials and on the task at hand; both orderliness and deftness were signaled.[57] The picture of the confident, experienced machine tender was *a* citation of the ideal skilled worker. . . .[58]

A typical example of this "picture" of the worker is the turner Melmster in Willi Bredel's autobiographical novel *Maschinenfabrik N & K*.[59] Bredel, himself a lathe operator, then a "worker-author," described how his mastery of a bank of lathes, drawing on knowledge derived from experience, allowed him to foil the attempt of a time-study man and his foreman, to prove that it was possible to achieve a faster cutting speed (and thus establish new piece-rates). The direct producer triumphed because *he* alone had insight into the nuances of the raw materials and the tools, *he* alone controlled the labor process at the individual machine, or should we rather say, at *his* machine. "Capital's junior officers" (Marx) were powerless in doubtful cases; they ran the risk of making themselves figures of fun. The figure of the lathe operator Melmster also shows that class-conscious proletarians were at the same time knowledgeable masters of the machines.

Knowledge of raw materials, of the characteristics of machines, of various tricks – for instance, the preparations for the removal of metal chips – were not only indispensable in order to achieve recognition by one's colleagues: these qualities went much beyond everyday life inside the factory; being experienced at work counted as the basis upon which colleagues could become "comrades." Certainly, the social composition of the Communist Party (KPD) conformed much less to this picture of qualified work (skilled or semi-skilled) than the membership of the Social Democrats (SPD). But this text by a communist author showed how much the image of industrial work was shaped by conceptions of "manual dexterity" saturated with experience among the workers themselves.

It was politically consequential that factory practitioners, such as industrial engineers and directors, had a more precise picture of industrial labor processes than many labor movement functionaries whose images and symbols of work were oriented more toward the presentation of a political fighter. For the labor movement, it was precisely the "careless" expedients and numerous ways of "getting-by" which were incompatible with the image of the class-conscious proletarian. The labor process was at best a burdensome preparation for actual politics. By contrast, in order to promote the flow of work and labor productivity, the authorities within the factory had at least to tolerate, perhaps even to encourage, such expedients which at the

same time transmitted to individual workers an increased sense of their own capabilities.

9 Forms of communication and domination played the decisive role in these proposals for the organization of work and the "factory community." But the material side of industrial work scarcely figured in these ideas even though it could hardly be ignored in the work-place itself. It began with the plethora of sensual impressions and influences, the noises but also the smells. It included, above all, the constant struggle with tools and raw materials, the metal handles, the cloth or wood parts and implements. Moulding, stretching, hammering and smithing, stamping and drilling, turning on a lathe and milling – hard and soft, often uncommonly heavy objects, but also splinters, chips and fibers, which could only too easily cause injuries – all these determined everyday life in the factory. There was a connectedness of experience learned by doing and of physical activity, in which the resistance of the materials, the tools, but also of the colleagues, continued to be felt permanently and everywhere.

But the tool was more than just an instrument of work. Everyone had to have the appropriate tools immediately ready at hand and ready for use. Therefore, careful handling of one's own tools, but also respect for other workers' tools, was one of the fundamental expectations between colleagues in the workplace. De Man observed that it was essential not only to skilled workers, such as fitters or carpenters, but even to warehouse workers or window-dressers that "the objects used . . . always be seen as one's property."[60] And it was not really important whether the tools were actually one's own or had been provided by the factory; however, what was important was a work situation in which the execution of the work should be respected by colleagues as well as overseers and not be experienced by the worker himself as unusually burdensome. Parallel to this "desire for ownership," a certain "desire for power" might also be recognized; "Frequently one had to deal with a feeling (towards tools or machines) that was colored with lust." Workers talked about their "love" of their tools; cigarette sorting machines were said to possess a "soul," a locomotive was patted verbally like a "horse."[61] The use and misuse of tools, of pet-names and swearwords showed that the individual, almost always emphatic, claims of the owners and users were taken seriously.

Knowing what was what in the use of raw materials and tools, the ability to get along with, but also keep one's distance from, fellow workers was, of course, not confined in industrial everyday life to a certain circle of "qualified" tasks or male workers (or the much fewer female workers). Workers' remembrances show that a wide-ranging ability to improvise and test was required on a day-to-day basis even when it came to highly subdivided, carefully defined tasks on the assembly line; one could "squeeze out a few handholds."[62] The attraction of "being tested and testing oneself" is evident.

At the same time, such memories also show that as "quality work" factory labor always had a material equivalent. One's experiences were not just "incorporated" in one's eyes and hands. They were also imprinted in a variety of forms; they showed themselves in one's demeanor and gestures; they were preserved, for example, in one's own discrete notes. Such secretive drawings, concerning, for example, the degree of adjustment for sheet metal shears, mirrored conflicts with overseers. But they also showed how expertise and ability nourished one's own sense of esteem (or the estimation of colleagues). And, finally, because such (impermissible) aids to memory were indispensable for building up reserves of time, they could conserve or even increase one's own labor power.

Such drawings demonstrate, moreover, that alongside or "beneath" the official nomenclature of "quality work" there was also a significant unofficial one which needs attention. Whereas in the official rhetoric the successfully finished product supplied the crucial gauge to which other measurable quantities – such as the "time required" or the "waste produced" – might be added, the unofficial discourse took as its measure the amount of effort the job had required and the burden felt by the worker. Nevertheless these two meanings overlaid one another: they found a common ground in the focus upon ability, a knowledge dense with experience and dexterity in the work-place.

THE DRIVE FOR RATIONALIZATION AFTER 1935–6 – A MYTH?

In the section which follows, Lüdtke contends that the apparently dramatic changes in the organization of the labor process, promoted by

the Nazis to build up their war machine (which Rüdiger Hachtmann has described as a new phase of "modernization" and "rationalization" in German industry), did not qualitatively change many workers' daily experiences of work. Lüdtke argues that even during the armaments boom it is difficult to discern a uniform, thoroughgoing transition to mass production which would have deprived the notion of German "quality work" of any real significance, making Nazi appeals to the "honor of labor" meaningless.

* * *

Demands for the "rationalization" of industrial labor were certainly no discovery of Nazi industrial managers, bureaucrats in the Four-year Plan or work-science specialists serving the German Labor Front (DAF), especially as the debate about rationalization or the failure to rationalize had met with a serious reception in both the industrial interest associations and the trade unions, from 1924, at the latest. None the less, even trade union investigations, which were certainly not interested in downplaying the extent of rationalization showed that up to 1931, flow production, subdivision of work tasks, multiple machine tending as well as increasing the running speed of machines were utilized in only a small number of factories or only in specific sections of factories.

It continues to be difficult to decide whether there actually was a "modernization of productive facilities . . . in large parts" of the manufacturing industries after 1935–6 and whether "from about 1935–6 a "drive for rationalization" began to have an effect.[63] But there is, in any case, some evidence that differences between industrial branches and regions became deeper. Workers who were employed in completely new enterprises (the aircraft industry, for example) experienced more intensely the changes which were felt in all industries connected with rearmament; "new" work-places in new factory buildings and also at new machines. They worked on a product which could not just function when it left the factory halls, all polished and shining. Airplanes stood as unparalleled symbols of that "modernity" which would overcome space and time.[64] Motor buses opened up (new) possibilities and cars mobilized desires to undertake excursions, to free oneself from the daily grind and go on a trip. Every airplane combined together a variety of

hopes to overcome earthly bottlenecks and confinements. But aspirations for national strength and military superiority may also have become particularly audible and visual in the roar of the airplane's motor.

In the many older industrial sectors and factories, the situation was quite different. Many of the products did not mobilize a similar degree of "pride in the products," nor was it possible to organize production and labor processes "all of a piece." Old and new machines and buildings were and frequently remained closely juxtaposed. But even here there was an increased, new investment of capital. After the years of the depression, there was a considerably increased need for machines to be repaired, replaced and renewed.

However, the decisive factor was that the rubric under which the labor requirements were defined had not fundamentally changed. Regardless of the branch of industry, preference continued to be given to a "suitably exact" (*passgenau*) way of working (G. Schlesinger). The considerable increase in sales achieved by producers of machine tools, after the mid-1930s should not obscure the fact that the standards applied to the production of each item remained the same. Indeed these standards blocked a transition to a thoroughgoing mass production. This was true even in the technically most modern forms of production, such as airplane construction, a pillar of the armaments industry, which developed at a furious rate after 1933. It is not surprising that, with the slogan "Junkers Work – Quality Work," the Junkers Aircraft Company in Dessau made a direct reference to the standards of "manual capability and dexterity" needed to tend, to "run" and to look after their tool machines.[65]

Even in war production, at least in the manufacturing industries, the mode of performing on the job remained unchanged.[66] Every increase in the speed of running the machines, every effort to ease the input and output of semi-finished and final products, did not alter the standard of "proper work" among factory economists or factory engineers, or among masters, lead-hands and workers; "the sensibility located in their hands, the capacity for judgement and experience."[67] This reflected two things; first, the unevenness of the changes in the organization of work and production made it necessary to be able to build up a "cushion" in the event of breakdowns. Second, one's

own value continued to be mediated through a conception of "German quality work." Both of these aspects dictated extreme exactness in setting up the machine, in clamping the piece to be worked on, in testing the way the machine was running, in checking the alterations in the form of the part caused by cutting and forming techniques, such as cutting on a lathe or milling, drilling or polishing as well as hammering or pressing. This orientation was shaped by the security of experience, preserved in the eye's ability to measure and the fingers' ability to feel.

WORKER AND QUALITY WORK – SOCIAL STATUS AND SURVIVAL CHANCES

> The National Socialist German Workers' Party – that is just about the same as over there (the former East Germany), the worker is the highest aristocracy that you could achieve. . . . It was possible for me as a worker's child to be troop leader (*Fahnleinführer*). And my underling, so you might say, was a graduate of the classical highschool (*Gymnasium*).[68]

The man who remembers things this way was born in 1925. His father, a trained fitter, then master with the navy, was for a long time unemployed, finally got a job in 1925 in bridge building and worked on temporary jobs in the Soviet Union. The son was an enthusiastic Hitler Youth and began an apprenticeship as a fitter in 1940. He lived in a heavily Catholic working-class district in the Ruhr. He was "a convinced Nazi" and "I would have denounced anyone." In the contemporary perception or in the memory of this (at that time, young) man, something had become possible under the Nazis that had "actually" been quite inconceivable. Someone from the "upper classes" had to obey a worker or a worker's son. The basis of the social hierarchy was no longer quite as fixed as one had previously been led to expect.

Others had experiences that signaled more an improvement of their survival chances than the overcoming of the barriers separating them from "those up there." Being a skilled worker, especially if your productivity was "above average," could "pay off" in a number of ways. For one thing, the chances were greater of doing well in a wage system based on increasing wage differentials. At the same time one

could take personally the official testimonials of respect concerning quality work and quality workers. In concrete terms, that meant that you were spared constant supervision or advice. If the product was satisfactory, then one could develop one's own rhythm of work – maintain one's *Eigen-Sinn*. And it was possible, not least, that from this a life-protecting, even life-saving benefit might emerge. As a worker born in 1923 reported, it was "to his advantage" that he was, respectively, a qualified skilled worker and a precision engineer "when I was in the army." Occasionally, the younger men got positions as mechanics, and stayed, in part, on the periphery of the main combat zones. For the somewhat older men it was sometimes possible to be designated "uk," that is unsuitable for military service, and thus to remain at home. According to a worker born in 1910:

> I was a diligent worker, never stayed away from work . . . was always punctual, and they needed people here, to do the work here, and we could do many things, we had to do everything here in the foundry. . . . We also had the foreigners [forced laborers] here, we had to train them as well and there were a lot of women among them.[69]

In war production, "German quality work" was often guaranteed by the prisoners who counted as "community aliens" or "sub-humans" in the eyes of the National Socialists and who were supposed to be "destroyed by labor."[70] But their products, just like those of the male and female "Aryan" Germans, had to achieve the "quality" which counted as a precondition for the "Final Victory" being striven for. In a speech which was part of the propagandistic mobilization for "total war" in the summer of 1943, the Armaments Minister Speer brought the collective projection shortly and sharply into focus: "Quality will [triumph] over the mass." The message was clear: "German work" would always be superior to the merely "quantitative" (output) "of the West"; it would triumph this time as well.

THE SYMBOLISM OF WORK AND THE LOGIC OF ACQUIESCENCE

In this final section, Lüdtke attempts to establish the lines of continuity connecting the "normality" of everyday life during the years before 1933

with popular experiences during the Third Reich. Lüdtke supports Walter Benjamin's observations concerning the importance of the grand symbolic displays, such as the Nuremberg party rally, with which the Nazis attempted to forge a new, racial mass consciousness. But Lüdtke argues that it was really the less dramatic, more "normal," well-established, everyday forms of symbolic practice associated with the world of manual work that gave the Nazis one of their most effective instruments for gaining the loyalties of many Germans. In its symbolic practices, which revolved around the central image of "the honor of labor," the Third Reich addressed working-class identities and gave expression to working-class needs that the trade unions and the labor parties of the Weimar era had all too often neglected. Nazism was thus able to occupy an important symbolic space largely ignored or abandoned by its enemies. And for some workers, Nazism provided more than simply symbolic satisfactions; Nazi insistence upon the "honor of labor" and the importance of "German quality work" could increase skilled workers' survival chances, although at the cost of making them de facto, *if unwitting, accomplices of a murderous regime.*

* * *

Heinz-Dieter Schäfer's thesis that the forms of mass acceptance of and participation in the Nazi regime after 1933 demonstrate a "split consciousness" has met with great approval. The world of experience, especially that of the "Final Solution of the Jewish Question," was perceived only "fragmentarily." Under the impression of actual terror and the (more widespread) threat of terror, an automatic mechanism of "making things disappear" was set in motion, which filtered out all unbearable perceptions. The offerings of order and "greatness," for individuals as for the simulated "community," were always permeated with mechanisms of anxiety, of "a hostile posture" toward the dictatorship which perpetually stimulated feelings of anxiety and helplessness that in turn produced "apathy, paralysis and an uncontrolled letting oneself drift along."[71]

By contrast, the argument presented here is that such observations by no means reflect the exceptional situation of a dictatorship. Rather, a site of contradictions, formed over the long term, where acquiescence and self-assertive (*eigen-sinnige*) distancing, agreement, but also the (very infrequent) setting of oneself in opposition were used in the daily practices of life

and survival was now simultaneously stimulated and repeatedly pushed forward. The forms of acceptance were not restricted only to an "aestheticization of politics" staged "from above." This thesis of Walter Benjamin, formulated in 1935–6 in the very face of fascism, grasps only the one, spectacular side of symbolic practice.[72] Benjamin insistently drew attention to the "enormous festive processions," "monster meetings; mass sports events," and, above all, the war. According to Benjamin, these mass movements made it possible for the participants "to express themselves" but "certainly not to exercise their own rights." In two respects Benjamin fell victim here to the exaggeration of the isolation imposed upon the persecuted exile. On the one hand, he failed to see the continuation of previous ways of constructing meaning (*Deutungsweisen*). At the same time, the variety of unspectacular everyday practices eluded him, in which in the work-place, in the neighborhood, in the family, but also in the "mass organizations," the participants themselves produced and experienced the fascination with and the utilization of the "new times."

The National Socialist leaders and offices certainly did include the "great" gestures and scenes. Marches and mass performances were not just staged on 1 May 1933. Ley's attempt from the autumn of 1933, in countless "Houses of German Labor" to give permanent significance to his organization, the German Labor Front, can be understood as an attempt to "eternalize" the mass movement.[73] Here it stayed at the level of the gigantic; yet at the same time vague plans, starting in 1934, with the opening of the annual Reich Professional Contest (*Reichsberufswettkampf*), brought the appearance of leading Nazi "big-wigs" on to a large stage with considerable media effect.[74] And in 1937 the Reich Party conference of the NSDAP took place under the motto "The Party Day of Labor." The usual marches and speeches, the usual fanfare and flag dedication were supposed to embody "the triumph of labor"; so too was a "monumental well installation" which the city of Nuremberg provided as a gift at the opening of the party meeting. More precisely, the Lord Mayor presented "a model of this wonderful sculpture" (which was never actually built).[75] In an opening address, Hitler once again accentuated the factor of hard work; the construction of the new Germany could "only [be] the result of ceaseless industry." In this respect, his

representative, Rudolf Hess, went a step too far because he proclaimed, "that, through work, Germany [had already become] strong and free again." At the same time he gave a vivid example of the word-pictures with which the "everydayness" of industrial experiences should, so to speak, be summoned up and recalled "by everyone":

> Once dead workshops are filled with life, with eating and smoking. Wheels turn once again, forging presses move again, rollers roll again, train after train runs from one economic center to another, ship after ship comes and goes in once desolate harbors.

It was a cascade of trusted clichés and icons; clearly they were supposed to present (industrial) work to the participants in the mass marches, but also to the listeners and readers as an intoxicating, as a marvelous experience.

The mass rituals were, however, not everything by a long shot. The everyday connection of material achievements with sensual, tangible symbols became decisive, even when they remained limited to certain occasions. In every instance, experiences, anxieties and hopes could be seen to be addressed, which the labor movement of the Weimar Republic had scarcely even noticed. The recognition of the materiality of the work-place, with its hardships and unwholesomeness during work, made reference to key points of proletarian life and survival experiences. Brighter lighting or bigger windows, more spacious machine placement, the expansion of washing facilities or cloak-rooms, or, indeed, their provision for the first time, places to sit during breaks set apart from the machines – such symbolic announcements promised a new quality of recognition and practical welfare. And individual examples produced a striking reinforcement (of the message). Above all, who previously had publicly even conceded the importance of this side of everyday reality or even made an attempt at change? In this context of experience the symbolic references meant real improvements.

Among the hopes raised was also the hope for recognition. Outside the factory that meant, primarily, paid holidays (from Christmas 1937) as well as an actual right to a vacation. Inside the factory that could likewise have considerable, although also double-edged consequences – for example, in the case of worker's

"self-supervision" in the motor and tractor factory Klockner-Humboldt-Deutz. The "factory leader", Dipl.-Ing. H. Stein, selected 300 to 400 workers (probably "quality workers") and after 1937 and 1938 installed them among their colleagues as continuously present "self-supervisors." They got a lot of applause from the DAF and the Nazi Party. For the "*Völkischer Beobachter*" this counted as undeniable proof of the "triumph of the German worker" who no longer needed the supervision of others. In any case, the factory won the "Golden Banner" of the DAF in 1940.[76]

The "honor of labor" alluded to "community" (*Gemeinschaft*), but at the same time turned to the individual. The picture language makes this concrete. Picture icons of muscular labor, toil and sweat reflected real-life experiences. They were intensively deployed in the Nazi picture press. However, photographs in illustrated newspapers, mainly in the factory newspapers of the 1930s, increasingly displayed bodies and faces that, despite all of the stylization of steeled corporality, not infrequently bore traces of the individual.[77] This, too, was not a complete novelty. The working-class press of the 1920s had, however, projected personal goals much more emphatically upon the symbols of the masses and the collective. By contrast, the individualizing work-symbols of the 1930s carried multiple meanings in a special way; they cited the picture of the worker, secure in his experience, who controlled the tool and the machine and thus referred to pride in work and the pride of the worker. But at the same time – and this was new – the half-length portraits and pictures of the worker's naked chest placed individual faces at their center-point. These pictures of individuals and of small groups seldom emphasized demonstratively heroicizing gestures. Much more often they carried a restrained documentary signature. To this extent it was perhaps possible for the first time to see openly addressed that "unhappy consciousness" about the worker's existence, that only a few workers put on display, but which certainly worried many more.

The life and survival of male and female industrial workers was fed from diverse sources. The calculation of interest connected itself with intense longings for the "good life." These longings not infrequently remained unspoken, but expressed themselves in moments of "self-assertion" (*Eigen-Sinn*) that involved the body – they were conserved and recalled in symbols.

In self-assertive (*eigen-sinnige*) practice, the "many" were able anew to produce distance from the repeated daily expectations and compulsions. Moments of individual release, but also of individual fulfilment, were possible in and through *Eigen-Sinn*. Symbols certainly continued to have multiple meanings. They were able not only to incite *Eigen-Sinn*, but also to support agreement with the rulers; they could make a recognition which crossed class and political lines both visible and emotive. Above all, self-assertive (*eigen-sinnige*) demarcation and the sense of community delivered via symbols could easily expand itself. The capacity for submission as well as the pleasure of being involved were stimulated simultaneously. In case of doubt, one could make one's own worth visible in the form of a perfect product – just as easily in tank-treads as in locomotive wheels.

The field of force in which men and women workers and working-class wives found themselves in Nazi Germany was transformed. Silent as well as open violence increased perceptibly. But at the same time, a multitude of symbolic practices and presentations facilitated an altered self-perception. Equally decisive were concrete, sensual, as well as general-rhetorical, reinforcements of the "honor of labor." The diffuse rhetoric of the sense of "community" in the factories gave individual survival interests in the work-places – and in fact the self-assertiveness of the "quality worker" – increased legitimacy and opportunities. In this way, in an unprecedented fashion, hopes for a "good life" could be sensually experienced and felt to be justifiable. Naturally in the process a certain ambivalence was unavoidable; individual survival, especially the exploitation of the new chances, required continuous acquiescence and, not infrequently, active participation in the fascist mobilization of the economy for war. Survival and enjoyment of the "honor of labor" thus also meant becoming an accomplice to criminal policies.

NOTES

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1 For the planning and above all the arrangements and sequence of rituals celebrating the "Day of National Labor" on 1 May, see Eberhard Heuel, *Der umworbene Stand. Die ideologische Integration der Arbeiter im Nationalsozialismus 1933–1935* (Frankfurt/New York, 1989), pp. 42–187; for a transcript of the recording of Hitler's speech as well as a part of the radio programme for the chorus, see ibid, pp. 577–623. The declaration of 1 May 1919 as an official holiday celebrating labor remained a one-time gesture; the labor movement did not manage in the following years to make the proletarian day of struggle officially "acceptable" or to have it sanctioned by the state. On the occupation of the trade union houses and expropriation of their funds on 2 May 1933, see Heinrich August Winkler, *Der Weg in die Katastrophe. Arbeiter und Arbeiterbewegung in der Weimarer Republik 1930–1933* (Berlin/Bonn 1987), p. 867ff.; on an industrial center see Gerhard Hetzer, "Die Industriestadt Augsburg. Eine Sozialgeschichte der Arbeiteropposition" in Martin Broszat *et al.* (ed.), *Bayern in der NS-Zeit*, Vol. 3 (München/Wien, 1981), pp. 1–233, 93ff.

2 Ronald Smelser, *Robert Ley. Hitlers Mann an der "Arbeitsfront"* (Paderborn, 1989), p. 135ff.; see also Heuel, *Der umworbene Stand*, Chapters 4 and 5.

3 Heuel, *Der umworbene Stand*, p. 539ff., 505ff; on the following p. 531ff.

4 The numbers were very small. Between 1934 and 1942 proceedings were taken against 11,264 people (the numbers are missing for 1938); in 496 cases there was no verdict. After 1937 there was an unmistakable decline of actual prosecutions of "factory leaders" for neglecting their obligations, which had, in any case, been infrequent from the beginning; see Andreas Kranig, *Lockung und Zwang. Zur Arbeitsverfassung im Dritten Reich* (Stuttgart, 1983), p. 235ff.

5 R. Ley, "Ich gab die Menschen die Hand" in R. Ley, *Soldaten der Arbeit*, 2nd edn (München, 1939), pp. 69–79, p. 69f. (speech on 2 June 1937 in the Leuna Works); see also R. Ley, "Sechs aktuelle Fragen" in R. Ley, *Wir alle helfen dem Führer* (München, 1937), pp. 209–13, p. 209 as well as the picture caption "Nicht den Maschinen, den Menschen gilt das Interesse bei den Betriebsbesuchen Dr. Leys," ibid., between pp. 48 and 49; see also "W.K.," "Der deutsche Arbeiter zieht mit" in *Der Vierjahresplan*, Vol. 1, 1937, p. 24f.; Ley claimed to have had "innumerable conversations, man-to-man" during his factory visits "since the beginning of the new 4 year plan", in other words, since autumn 1936; ibid., p. 24.

6 R. Ley, *Die Deutsche Arbeitsfront, ihr Werden und ihre Aufgaben* (München, 1934), p. 11.

7 See Gerhard Paul, "Der Sturm auf die Republik und der Mythos vom 'Dritten Reich.' Die Nationalsozialisten" in Detlev Lehnert and Klaus Megerle (eds), *Politische Identität und nationale Gedenktage. Zur politischen Kultur in der Weimarer Republik* (Opladen, 1989), pp. 255–79.

8 The representational forms of "royalty" have recently become a theme of research; see David Cannadine and Simon Price (eds), *Rituals of Royalty. Power and Ceremonial in Traditional Societies* (Cambridge, 1987); the corresponding practices in Napoleonic France (and its satellites) but also under Napoleon III deserve closer consideration (for the appeal to a revolutionary icon see Maurice Agulhon, *Marianne au combat* (Paris, 1980); for the nomenclature and the – overwhelmingly – verbal symbolization of organized political groups in the Weimar Republic; Lehnert and Megerle (eds), *Politische Identität und nationale Gedenktage*; a discussion of rituals is also included but only for the SPD and the KPD; see the contributions by Manfred Gailus and Lehnert, ibid., pp. 61ff. and 89ff.; on visual and theatrical forms of representation see Dietmar Petzina (ed.), *Fahnen, Fäuste, Körper. Symbolik und Kultur der Arbeiterbewegung* (Essen, 1986) especially Gottfried Korff and Gerhard Hauk, ibid., pp. 27ff. and 69ff. For revolutionary-republican investiture ritual (i.e. the celebration of the ratification of the United States constitution 1788–9), see Jürgen Heideking, *Die Verfassung vor dem Richterstuhl. Vorgeschichte und Ratifizierung der amerikanischen Verfassung 1787–1791* (Berlin/New York, 1988), p. 709ff.

9 See, for example, Klaus Behnken (ed.), *Deutschland-Berichte der Sozialdemokratischen Partei Deutschlands (SOPADE) 1934–1940*, Vol. 4: 1937 (Frankfurt, 1980), p. 1290; Smelser, *Ley*, p. 300.

10 In general, see Peter Hüttenberger, "Nationalsozialistische Polykratie" in *Geschichte und Gesellschaft* (henceforth, GG) Vol. 2, 1976, pp. 417–42; on Ley, Smelser, *Ley, passim* and, in conclusion, p. 296 – with an important reference to the "new form of power" which the DAF was supposed to have exercised; this "diffuse power" depended upon "unceasingly collected pieces of individual information, upon service and upon wealth," ibid., p. 297.

11 The allusion to Max Weber's definition of power and domination should remind us of the connection between legitimation and the threat of force; certainly Weber either left open or simply did not acknowledge the question of the production and generation of "*belief* in legitimation" (my emphasis); see Max Weber, *Wirtschaft und Gesellschaft*, 5th edn (Tübingen, 1964), p. 38ff., as well as p. 157ff. but also p. 27.

12 In the NSBO and DAF press there are numerous factory reports in 1934 and 1935 which assume a similar posture; the otherwise nameless are given a voice or else step forward as "real" people in the (photographic) picture; see Heuel, *Der umworbene Stand*, p. 561ff.; for the effect of individual testimony see Michael Zimmermann, "Ausbruchshoffnung" in Lutz Niethammer (ed.) *"Die Jahre weiss man nicht, wo man die heute hinsetzen soll"* (Berlin/Bonn, 1983), pp. 97–132, especially p. 116.

13 For this interpretation of "symbols" see Victor Turner, *The Forest of Symbols. Aspects of Ndembu Ritual* (Ithaca/London, 1973), p. 27ff.,

especially p. 48ff.; see also V. Turner, "Symbols in African Rituals" in Janet L. Dolgin *et al.* (eds), *Symbolic Anthropology* New York, 1977), pp. 183–94 as well as Raymond Firth, *Symbols. Public and Private* (London, 1973), p. 193ff.

14 On the unique characteristics of this individual self-distancing from *all* forms of expectation, which at the same time momentarily ignores cost-benefit calculations, see my article, "Cash, coffee-breaks, horseplay: *Eigensinn* and politics among factory workers in Germany circa 1900" in Michael Hanagan and Charles Stephenson (eds), *Class, Confrontation and the Labor Process* (New York, 1989), pp. 65–95, 78ff.

15 On this theme, in greater detail, see my attempt at a "thick description"; "Wo blieb die 'rote Glut'? Arbeitererfahrungen und deutscher Faschismus" in Alf Lüdtke (ed.), *Alltagsgeschichte, Zur Rekonstruktion historischer Erfahrungen und Lebensweisen* (Frankfurt/ New York, 1989), pp. 224–82. This uncommonly "real" significance of symbols eludes Klaus Wisozky in his, in many respects, trenchant work; see K. Wisozky, *Der Ruhrbergbau im Dritten Reich. Studien zur Sozialpolitik im Ruhrbergbau und zum sozialen Verhalten der Bergleute 1933 bis 1939* (Düsseldorf, 1983), p. 99.

16 The example of the St Eligius festival, to honour the patron saint of, above all, metalworkers in a forge at the Renault company in the late 1920s, is also very stimulating on this theme; Noëlle Gérôme, "Das Sankt-Eligius-Fest in den Schmieden der Renault-Betriebe von Billancourt" in Friedhelm Boll (ed.), *Arbeiterkulturen zwischen Alltag und Politik* (Wien, 1986), pp. 143–54.

17 Heuel, *Der umworbene Stand*, p. 616; for the following, p. 618; for the text of the "eyewitness account," with the voices of the workers, which was transmitted at 10 o'clock, see ibid., p. 583ff.; Hitler spoke in the context of the main assembly after 8 p.m.

18 Adolf Hitler, "Rede auf dem Kongress der Deutschen Arbeitsfront in Berlin am 10. Mai 1933" in *Reden des Reichskanzler Adolf Hitler, des neuen Deutschlands Führer* (Berlin [1933]), pp. 50–6, here p. 55.

19 Curt Rosten, *Das ABC des Nationalsozialismus*, 6th, expanded, edn. (Berlin, 1933), p. 11; see Heuel, *Der umworbene Stand*, p. 311f.

20 Mason, "Bändigung der Arbeiterklasse in Deutschland. Eine Einleitung" in Carola Sachse, Tilla Siegel, Hasso Spode, and Wolfgang Spohn, *Angst, Belohnung, Zucht und Ordnung. Herrschaftsmechanismen im Nationalsozialismus* (Opladen, 1982), p. 37; Gerd Stein (ed.), *Lumpenproletarier-Bonze-Held der Arbeit. Kulturfiguren und Sozialcharaktere des 19. und 20. Jahrhunderts* (Frankfurt, 1985), p. 114ff. 149–209.

21 Heuel, *Der umworbene Stand*, pp. 386ff., 390ff.

22 Gisela Bock has shown the extent to which the racial-political guidelines of National Socialism were based upon the insistence on the differences between the genders (i.e. were based upon the "cult of the father" and upon "the cult of the male and the

masculine"); see G. Bock, *Zwangssterilisation im Nationalsozialismus Studien zur Rassenpolitik und Frauenpolitik* (Opladen, 1986), p. 462. The homage to "the worker," in which Ernst Jünger put the crisis mentality of counter-revolutionaries fixated upon the war into words in 1932 differed in both intention and argumentation from the tracts of leading National Socialists concerning "workers," despite several similarities. If factory work was to him and to his not inconsiderable circle of readers the example *par excellence* from the real world of the everyday nature of the global "friend-enemy" situation and of the necessity of "energy" and "order," then it made sense to perceive in "the worker" a wholly new world-historical "form." For Jünger that meant, "the only possible heir of Prussianism is the working class"(Jünger, *Der Arbeiter, Herrschaft und Gestalt* (1932) (Stuttgart, 1981), p. 69; for the following, p. 67. Naturally the "real existing" worker was for Jünger only the "manifestation" of a diffuse transformation toward a new world. Only in this future world could "work" be comprehended "as its inner necessity".

23 Mary Nolan, *Social Democracy and Society. Working-Class Radicalism in Düsseldorf, 1890–1920* (Cambridge, 1981), p. 138; Peter Friedemann, "Feste und Feiern im rheinisch-westfälischen Industriegebiet. 1890–1914" in Gerhard Hauck (ed.), *Sozialgeschichte der Freizeit*, 2nd edn (Wuppertal, 1982), pp. 165–85, p. 167.

24 Individual examples in Gottfried Korff, "Rote Fahnen und Tableaux Vivants. Zum Symbolverständnis der deutschen Arbeiterbewegung im 19. Jahrhundert" in Albrecht Lehmann (ed.), *Studien zur Arbeiterkultur* (Münster, 1984), pp. 103–40; see also Gerhard Hauk, "Armeekorps auf dem Weg zur Sonne." Einige Bemerkungen zur kulturellen Selbstdarstellung der Arbeiterbewegung" in Petzina (ed.), *Fahnen, Fäuste, Körper*, pp. 69–89.

25 See the collection of May Day placards and postcards in the Archiv der sozialen Demokratie, Bonn-Bad Godesberg; see also individual references, for example, to the Hamburg trade union house in 1906 and 1912–13 respectively in Roland Jaeger, "Von Merkur bis Bebel. Die Ikonographie der Industriekultur" in Volker Plagemann (ed.), *Industriekultur in Hamburg* (München, 1984), pp. 343–7, esp. 346f.

26 Karl Marx, *Das Kapital*, Vol. 1 [MEW 23] (Berlin/DDR, 1965), p. 192. This is paid too little attention in Detlef Stender's important reconstruction of the life histories of a worker in the fitting shop and another in the rolling mill of an aluminium factory, which is otherwise notable for its sensitivity to the many facets of and, at the same time, the interconnections between, experiences inside and outside the factory; see D. Stender, "Lebensgeschichten zweier Metallarbeiter" in Gert Zang (ed.), *Arbeiterleben in einer Randregion* (Konstanz, 1987), pp. 159–76, 160ff., 173ff.

27 See Carl Sonnenschein, one of the leading organizers of the "Volksverein für das katholische Deutschland" speaking in front of

"Christian" metalworkers in 1911; *Der sittliche Wert der gewerkschaftlichen Arbeit*, 3rd edn (Duisburg [c. 1912]), p. 11f.

28 On this theme, with many instructive examples, Ulrich Engelhardt, *"Nur vereinigt sind wir stark" . . . Die Anfänge der deutschen Gewerkschaftsbewegung 1862/63 bis 1869/70* (Stuttgart, 1977); see also the collection of strike demands from the early 1870s in Lothar Machtan, *Streiks und Aussperrungen im Deutschen Kaiserreich* (Berlin, 1984); for specific references to miners, see Klaus Tenfelde and Helmut Trischler (eds), *Bis vor die Stufen des Throns. Bittschriften und Beschwerden von Bergleuten im Zeitalter der Industrialisierung* (München, 1986); also interesting for the 1880s; Hans-Josef Steinberg (ed.), *Mahnruf einer deutschen Mutter . . . sowie anderer Gedichte, die Arbeiterinnen und Arbeiter an die Redaktion des illegal vertriebenen "Sozialdemokrat" geschickt haben und die nicht abgedruckt wurden* (Bremen, 1983).

29 See on this question Cora Stephen, *"Genossen, wir dürfen uns nicht von der Geduld hinreissen lassen!" Aus der Urgeschichte der Sozialdemokratie* (Frankfurt, 1977), pp. 192ff., 212ff.

30 The discussion of real wage income is certainly still an open question; for a concise synthesis of the present state of the discussion, see Gerhard Hohorst, *et al., Sozialgeschichtliches Arbeitsbuch II: Materialien zur Statistik des Kaiserreichs 1879–1914* (München, 1975), pp. 97ff.; on the differences between strata within the working class, and, where possible, for a discussion of stratum-specific patterns of changing standards of consumption in individual households at the beginning of the twentieth century, see Reinhard Spree, "Klassen- und Schichtbildung im Spiegel des Konsumverhaltens individueller Haushalte zu Beginn des 20. Jahrhunderts" in Toni Pierenkemper (ed.), *Haushalt und Verbrauch in historischer Perspektive. Zum Wandel des privaten Verbrauchs in Deutschland im 19. und 20. Jahrhundert* (St Katharinen, 1987), pp. 56–80, and also Herman van Laer, "Die Haushaltsführung von maschinenbauarbeiter- und Textilarbeiterfamilien in der Zeit bis zum Ersten Weltkrieg," ibid., pp. 152–84.

31 On the reflection of such experiences in attempts to carry on through the "great crisis" after 1929, see my article "Hunger in der Grossen Depression. Hungererfahrungen und Hungerpolitik am Ende der Weimarer Republik," *Archiv für Sozialgeschichte*, Vol. 27, 1987, pp. 147–76.

32 Even among the organized, the numbers can be deceptive; not a few of those who joined and paid contributions as relatively young people, then left the organizations after one or two years. Only a minority were engaged on a steady, enduring basis in the party or trade union, or even in the numerous organizations which attempted to accompany and to organize the various aspects of working-class life. For the social democratic trade unions in the *Kaiserreich*, this is shown by Klaus Schönhoven, *Expansion und Konzentration. Studien zur Entwicklung der Freien Gewerkschaften im Wilhelminischen*

Deutschland 1890 bis 1914 (Stuttgart, 1989), Part III; on organizational "conjunctures," see Irmgard Steinisch, "Die gewerkschaftliche Organisation der rheinisch-westfälischen Arbeiterschaft in der eisen- und stahlerzeugenden Industrie 1918 bis 1924" in Hans Mommsen (ed.) *Arbeiterbewegung und industrieller Wandel* (Wuppertal, 1980), pp. 117–39 and also Elisabeth Domansky, "Arbeitskampf und Arbeitsrecht in der Weimarer Republik" in Dieter Dowe (ed.), *Reprint: Gewerkschafts-Zeitung* Vol. 34, 1924, Introduction, pp. 31–80, 47ff., 58ff.

33 Adolf Levenstein, *Die Arbeiterfrage. Mit besonderer Berücksichtigung der sozialpsychologischen Seite des modernen Grossbetriebs und der psychophysischen Einwirkungen auf die Arbeiter* (München 1912); for the following, p. 51; for Levenstein in general, W. Bonss, "Kritische Theorie und empirische Sozialforschung" in Ernst Fromm, *Arbeiter und Angestellte am Vorabend des Dritten Reiches* (ed. W. Bonss) (Stuttgart, 1980), p. 19ff. Barrington Moore has quite rightly supported his thesis about the importance for Germany of demands for "fairness/justice" with references to Levenstein; see Barrington Moore, *Injustice. The Social Bases of Obedience and Revolt* (White Plains, N.Y., 1978) especially Chapter VI.

34 Very instructive on this question is Frank Trommler, "Die Nationalisierung der Arbeit" in Reinhold Grimm and Jost Hermand (eds), *Arbeit als Thema in der deutschen Literatur vom Mittelalter bis zur Gegenwart* (Königstein/Ts., 1979), pp. 102–25. For the Christian trade union movement, see also Sonnenschein, *Der sittlichen Wert*, p. 13ff.

35 K.-M. Bogdal, *Schaurige Bilder, Der Arbeiter im Blick des Bürgers* (Frankfurt, 1978), pp. 47ff., 117ff.

36 Trommler, "Nationalisierung," p. 112.

37 Johannes Reichert, *Aus Deutschlands Waffenschmiede*, 2nd edn (Berlin, 1918), p. 75; emphasis in the original.

38 Friedhelm Boll, *Frieden ohne Revolution? Friedensstrategien der deutschen Sozialdemokratie vom Erfurter Programm 1891 bis zur Revolution 1918* (Bonn, 1980), p. 104ff.

39 Jürgen Kocka, *Klassengesellschaft im Krieg. Deutsche Sozialgeschichte 1914–1918* (Göttingen, 1973), pp. 12ff, 43ff; Volker Ullrich, *Kriegsalltag. Hamburg im Ersten Weltkrieg* (Köln, 1982); Doris Kachulle (ed.), *Die Pohlands im Krieg* (Köln, 1982); Merith Niehuss, *Arbeiter in Krieg und Inflation* (Berlin/New York, 1985); Ute Daniel, *Arbeiterfrauen in der Kriegsgesellschaft* (Göttingen, 1989).

40 On the ADGB see my article "'Deutsche Qualitätsarbeit', 'Spielereien' am Arbeitsplatz und 'Fliehen' aus der Fabrik" in Boll (ed.), *Arbeiterkulturen*, pp. 155–97, 182f.

41 See Michael Ruck, *Bollwerk gegen Hitler? Arbeiterschaft, Arbeiterbewegung und die Anfänge des Nationalsozialismus* (Köln, 1988), pp. 56–73.

42 See my article '"Deutsche Qualitatsärbeit,' 'Spielereien' am Arbeitsplatz und 'Fliehen' aus der Fabrik" in F. Boll (ed.), *Arbeiterkulturen*, especially pp. 156ff, 174ff. For the "shopfloor"

level, see Peter Schirmbeck (ed.), *"Morgen kommst Du nach Amerika." Erinnerungen an die Arbeit bei Opel 1917–1927* (Bonn, 1988), p. 58ff.: "On piece work" – it was here that the variety and the continuous nature of the interventions with which workers made the "production flow" possible could be recognized.

43 Vorstand des DMV (ed.), *Die Rationalisierung in der Metallindustrie* (Berlin [1932]), pp. 86f., 94f.

44 Unfortunately studies are lacking which would allow us to calculate distributions according, in particular, to region and industrial branch and which did not subsume the "strategic" groups of semi-skilled under the category of the unskilled. For the metal industry, see, however, the survey by the German Metalworkers' Union in 1931 (published as *Die Rationalisierung in der Metallindustrie*). Here, trade union representatives reported that skilled specialists had been "pushed out" of their jobs by semi- and unskilled workers in 10.5 per cent of the cases reported as rationalization from all of the individual branches; see ibid., p. 89. It is, however, impossible to reconstruct from the number of these "cases" either the number or the proportion of the people who were involved or affected in the metal industry in general (not to mention other branches of industry). Nevertheless, individual interviews show that new hirings of, above all, unskilled or semi-skilled workers provided opportunities to get work that was probably "qualified" as a "semi-skilled" lathe operator making component parts, a milling machine operator, a drilling machine operator or a tin shear worker, especially after 1934–5; see interviews with, respectively, five and thirteen retired workers, from the firms of Hanomag-Hannover and Henschel-Kassel in 1984 and 1985 (the transcript can be consulted in the Max-Planck-Institut für Geschichte). See also references from the United States automobile industry to the significance for the trade unions of new or "semi-skilled" specialists; see Babson, "Class, craft, and culture: tool and die makers and the organization of the UAW," *Michigan Historical Review*, Vol. 14, 1988, pp. 33–56. That workers were increasingly trained on the job ("Anlernen") is suggested by references from individual (large) enterprises; see on the Wernerwerk (Berlin, Siemens & Halske AG), Hachtmann, *Industriearbeit*, p. 87; see also the practice which can be observed in new wage agreements from 1937 onward of paying "non-specialist" workers as "trained specialists"; ibid., p. 59; see also F. Fendt, *Der ungelernte Industriearbeiter* (München/Leipzig, 1934), p. 18ff. (on the "new unskilled"), p. 27ff. (work tasks in specific industrial branches) p. 65ff. (wages), p. 75ff. (numbers). The references in Josef Mooser, *Arbeiterleben in Deutschland 1900–1970* (Frankfurt, 1984), p. 58ff., are very general.

45 On this topic generally, see Peter Hinrichs, *Um die Seele des Arbeiters. Arbeitspsychologie, Industrie- und Betriebssoziologie in Deutschland* (Köln, 1981).

46 Edgar Atzler, *Körper und Arbeit* (Leipzig, 1927).

47 Isolde Dietrich, "Massenproduktion und Massenkultur. Bürgerliche Arbeitswissenschaft als Kulturwissenschaft" in *Freizeit als Lebensraum: Arbeitende Menschen im Sozialismus – ihr Platz in der Freizeitkultur* vom Wissenschaftsbereich Kultur der Humboldt-Universität Berlin (Berlin/DDR, 1987), pp. 45–59.

48 Albert Vogler, 17 November 1929, facsimile of a letter to C. Arnold (!recte: Arnhold), in *Arbeitsschulung* Vol. 1, 1929, p. 1. See also Heuel, *Der umworbene Stand*, p. 413ff.

49 Goetz Briefs, *Betriebsführung und Betriebsleben in der Industrie* (Stuttgart, 1934), pp. 23ff., 35, 51. Briefs, whose Institut für Betriebssoziologie was, moreover, installed at the Technische Hochschule Charlottenburg in 1928, complied explicitly and positively with the National Socialist design for the complete reorganization of industrial work relationships, ibid., pp. 131–42.

50 See Richard Lang and Willy Hellpach, *Gruppenfabrikation* (Berlin, 1922), especially p. 65ff. On Hellpach, who was elected president of the federal state of Baden 1924–5, and after 1933 came to the fore as a compliant supporter of the Nazis, who probably had an eye on keeping his position as an honorary professor and then as institute head, see H. Gundlach, "Willy Hellpach. Attributionen" in C. F. Graumann (ed.), *Psychologie im Nationalsozialismus* (Berlin, 1985), pp. 165–93.

51 Eugen Rosenstock certainly must have known about the experiment with group production; in any case, he was connected for a short time with Daimler and had run the company magazine there for a year in 1919. He proceeded from the assumption that for the workers, the motive for wage-labor was "Work and bread for everyone! . . . (not) the rational exploitation of human labour power." Attention had to be paid, in the first instance, to the "being" of the worker; only after this had been done could one begin "to speak . . . of increasing productivity and wages"; see Eugen Rosenstock, *Werkstattaussiedlung. Untersuchungen über den Lebensraum des Industriearbeiters* (Berlin, 1922), p. 89ff; for the following see also p. 79. This "existence" required, however, a "living relationship to the time and the place" of one's own "doing and working". His proposal admittedly tended towards a romantic utopianism; he wanted literally to give each of the individual workers their workplace; the "workshop settlement" was supposed to reconstruct the unity of living and working that would permit the [worker's] "being." Only then would work become "a piece of one's own life [and] life course."

52 On contemporary discussions and stereotypes, in the context of a European comparison, see Anson Rabinbach, "The European Science of Work. The Economy of the Body at the End of the Nineteenth Century" in Stephen L. Kaplan/Cynthia J. Koepp (editors), *Work in France. Representations, Meanings, Organization, and Practice* (Ithaca, London, 1986), pp. 475–513. On the design of contemporary investigations see Marie Bernays, "Untersuchungen

über die Schwankungen der Arbeitsintensität während der Arbeitswoche und während des Arbeitstages. Ein Beitrag zur Psychophysik der Textilarbeit" in *Auslese und Auspassung der Arbeiterschaft in der Lederwaren-, Steinzeug-, und Textilindustrie* (Leipzig, 1912) *[Schriften des Vereins für Socialpolitik*, Bd. 135], pp. 183–389f., 382ff.

53 Hendrik de Man, *Der Kampf um die Arbeitsfreude* (Jena, 1927); for the following, p. 256f., p. 276.

54 Rex Hersey, *Seele und Gefühl des Arbeiters. Psychologie der Menschenführung* (Leipzig, 1935); for the following pp. 74 and 78, respectively.

55 Cited in Hinrichs, *Um die Seele des Arbeiters*, p. 155.

56 On the positions taken by the ADGB trade unions in the "rationalization" debates see Gunnar Stolberg, *Die Rationalisierungsdebatte 1908–1933. Freie Gewerkschaften zwischen Mitwirkung und Gegenwehr* (Frankfurt/New York 1981).

57 *Arbeiter-Illustrierte Zeitung* (= AIZ), No. 6, 1928; for another case, see also Heinz Willmann, *Geschichte der Arbeiter-Illustrierten Zeitung 1921–1928* (Berlin 1974); the title picture No. 8, 1926 which also depicts a lathe operator.

58 For this reference to Theo Gaudig Essen I want to thank A. von Plato (Hagen) and R. Kania (Essen); see also my interview with Theo Gaudig in Essen on 4.9.1985.

59 Willi Bredel, *Maschinenfabrik N&K* [manuscript 1930] (Berlin/DDR, 3rd edn, Weimar, 1982), pp. 67ff., 74, 99ff.

60 De Man, *Arbeitsfreude*, p. 160.

61 De Man, *Arbeitsfreude*, pp. 158ff., 164. Cases on the theft of tools are particularly important and revealing; on this, see the memories of the *Gutehoffnungshütte* (GHH), which were recorded in 1939 and reflect the situation in the 1880s and 1890s; Historisches Archiv Haniel/GHH, Nr. 40016/91

62 Schirmbeck (ed.). *"Morgen kommst Du nach Amerika,"* p. 83

63 See Hachtmann, *Industriearbeit im "Dritten Reich." Untersuchungen zu den Lohn- und Arbeitsbedingungen in Deutschland 1933–1945*, p. 75, and also Reinhard Berthold (ed.), *Produktivkräfte in Deutschland 1917/18 bis 1945* (Berlin/DDR, 1988), pp. 64–94. In both of these studies, few (large) factories are named, and in the contributions to the volume *Produktivkräfte* aggregate statements concerning technical developments or improvements dominate, concerning, for example, the parallel development of universal- and automatic special-purpose machines, or hardened metal tools and fast running equipment.

64 Inge Marssolek and René Ott, *Bremen im Dritten Reich. Anpassung-Widerstand–Verfolgung* (Bremen, 1986), p. 153f. (on Focke-Wulf and also Borgward, as well as on concentration camp labor); Dieter Pfliegensdörfer, "'Ich war mit Herz und Seele dabei, und so, dass mir das gar nichts ausmachte.' Bremer Flugzeugbauer im Nationalsozialismus," 1999, Vol. 3, 1988, pp. 44–103, p. 60ff., p. 64ff., see p. 49ff.

65 Hans Kern, "Innenwerbung für Wirtschaftlichkeit und Qualität. Zwei Werbeaktionen der Junkers Flugzeug- und Motorenwerke AG, Dessau" in *Zeitschrift für Organisation*, Vol. 12, 1938, pp. 275–85, p. 281ff., p. 285.

66 See Richard J. Overy, "Hitler's war and the German economy: A reinterpretation," *Economic History Review*, Vol. 32, 1985, pp. 272–91 291, p. 286.

67 Georg Schlesinger, *Psychotechnik und Betriebswissenschaft* (Leipzig, 1920), p. 15f, p. 51ff.

68 Life history of Gisbert Pohl in Alexander V. Plato, *"Der Verlierer geht nicht leer aus." Betriebsräte geben zu Protokoll* (Berlin/Bonn, 1984), p. 52; for the following, p. 54.

69 Reminiscence of Jan Wesel in Plato, "*Der Verlierer*," p. 25. From 1943 the chances of being designated "uk" were significantly reduced.

70 For example, at Daimler-Benz, in airplane engine construction, in truck construction and in the production of tank parts; Hamburger Stiftung für Sozialgeschichte des 20. Jahrhunderts, *Das Daimler-Benz Buch. Ein Rüstungskonzern im "Tausendjährigen Reich"* (Nördlingen, 1987), Part II.

71 Heinz-Dieter Schäfer, *Das gespaltene Bewusstsein. Deutsche Kultur und deutsche Lebenswirklichkeit 1933–1945* (München, 1981), p. 146, p. 159.

72 Walter Benjamin, "Das Kunstwerk im Zeitalter seiner technischen Reproduzierbarkeit," *Gesammelte Schriften*, Vol. I, No. 2. (Frankfurt, 1974), pp. 471–509, p. 506.

73 On this theme, see Rainer Stommer, *Die inszenierte Volksgemeinschaft. Die "Thing-Bewegung" im Dritten Reich* (Marburg, 1985), p. 91, p. 93f.

74 Heuel, *Der umworbene Stand*, p. 409ff.; see also Artur Axmann, *Der Reichsberufswettkampf* (Berlin, 1938).

75 *Der Parteitag der Arbeit, vom 6. bis 13. September 1937. Offizieller Bericht über den Verlauf des Reichsparteitages mit sämtlichen Kongressreden* (München, 1938), p. 13ff., See also the cinematic representation of all "Party Days" after 1934, the effects of which can scarcely be overestimated; Martin Loiperdinger, *Der Parteitagsfilm. "Der Triumph des Willens" von Leni Riefenstahl. Rituale der Mobilmachung* (Opladen, 1987).

76 Martin Rüther. "Zur Sozialpolitik bei Klöckner-Humboldt-Deutz während des Nationalsozialismus: "Die Masse der Arbeiterschaft muss ausgespalten werden," in *Zeitschrift für Unternehmensgeschichte*, Vol. 33, 1988, pp. 81–117, p. 98ff. In November 1940, the "factory cell ombudsman" of the machine building shop 21 at Krupp used the reference to "self-calculation and self-checking" at Deutz to protest against the introduction of a stamping system at the beginning and the end of a particular piece-work job. He was nevertheless unsuccessful; see Historisches Archiv Krupp WA 41 / 6–10.

77 See Josef Winschuh, *Industrievolk an der Ruhr* (Oldenburg/Berlin, 1935); Peter Schirmbeck, *Adel der Arbeit. Der Arbeiter in der Kunst der NS-Zeit* (Marburg, 1984); see Krupp, *Zeitschrift der Kruppschen Betriebsgemeinschaft*, from issue 26 (1933/4); for example, issue 30

(1938/9), p. 161ff., p. 273; see also the text and picture book by Heinrich Hauser, *Opel, ein deutsches Tor zur Welt* (Frankfurt, 1937) and Hauser, *Im Kraftfeld von Rüsselsheim* (München, 1940); see also Thomas Lange, "Literatur des technokratischen Bewusstseins," *Lili. Zeitschrift für Literaturwissenschaft und Linguistik*, No. 40, 1989, pp. 52–81, p. 61ff; see the photographic illustrations in Axmann, *Reichsberufswettkampf*, after pp. 168, 232, 321, 344; only word-pictures, which attempt to be all the more "poetic," can be found in Heinz Kindermann (ed.), *Ruf der Arbeit* (Berlin, 1942).