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The willingness of the executioners

A Foucauldian critique of Goldhagen

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ABSTRACT This article criticizes the explanatory model of Daniel Goldhagen's study *Hitler's Willing Executioners*. Goldhagen's argument of a German eliminationist anti-Semitism as the central cause of the Holocaust is refuted as amounting to an extreme methodological individualism. His more limited claim to have analysed the motivational cause of the Holocaust is criticized by comparing it with Hannah Arendt's study on totalitarianism and a Foucauldian point of view. It is argued that Goldhagen has described in an almost Foucauldian way how the behaviour of the perpetrators was moulded on a micro-level, which is the merit of his book, but that his explanation of behaviour in terms of choice and meaning comes close to the – flawed – theory of the early Sartre. A socially more sensitive approach allows us to see the complicated way in which Hitler's willing executioners were formed. An important factor was the disciplinary power which was all-pervasive in the totalitarian Nazi-state, but which is present as well in a less obtrusive manner in modern western societies.. To counter the influence of panoptical power we have to turn to the ethical self-practices in the sense of the final Foucault.

KEYWORDS *anti-Semitism, Arendt, Browning, Foucault, Goldhagen, Habermas, Holocaust, methodological individualism, perpetrators, Weber*

Since its publication, Daniel Goldhagen's *Hitler's Willing Executioners* (1996a)¹ has generated a world-wide debate, of which it is an understatement to say that it has not always been conducted according to civilized academic traditions.² This is due primarily to the book's provocative thesis and its attack on all current historical Holocaust research, which Goldhagen says provides only 'patchwork explanations'. As a political scientist, Goldhagen's aim is to prove beyond any doubt that the Holocaust was only possible through the willing cooperation of hundreds of thousands of ordinary Germans. His thesis is that it was a cultural tradition that created this willingness in the German people, in

particular the tradition of a specific German form of eliminationist anti-Semitism. This is what he considers the crucial factor in the coming about of the Holocaust.

Not only has his book upset many historians, but a growing controversy has risen between historians, on the one hand, and social theorists specializing in social explanation, on the other. Is the Holocaust only to be studied by historians, or can the social sciences contribute to its understanding? Many historians dismiss the study of the political scientist Goldhagen as a non-historical and therefore nonsensical one. Goldhagen is accused of merely applying a theoretical, abstract model. On the other hand, the German social philosopher Jürgen Habermas praises the book for its value to contemporary Germany.³ Other social theorists have welcomed the book, convinced as they are that the Holocaust should not be the exclusive domain of historians. We agree with their stance that, besides historical reconstruction, social explanation should be applied as well, with the added remark that its later outcomes have to be developed and formulated in terms of historiography again (Hartmans, 1995; Schreurs, 1997), and a reconciliation of social theory and historiography thus has to take place.⁴ This article deals only with the first step, and does not pretend to combine it with historical research. A comparison is made between Goldhagen's explanatory model and that of other authors, and the heuristic value of one of these models is proposed for historical research which may contribute to understanding the way in which the Nazi regime related to its subjects. On the basis of this proposal, additional conclusions are drawn with respect to the topics of subjectivity, morality and integrity in modern-day western civilization.

Controversy

Hitler's Willing Executioners is composed primarily of three case studies, contained within a (theoretically founded) history of German anti-Semitism and an explanatory conclusion on the causes of the Holocaust. The first and most significant of the case studies is that of the infamous Police Battalion 101. Based on eye-witness accounts stored in the central judicial archives in Ludwigsburg, Goldhagen provides detailed accounts of how ordinary police officers emerged as willing, 'unnecessarily' cruel perpetrators. The second case covers the so-called work camps whose only purpose was, according to Goldhagen, to murder Jews after a brief respite – if forced labour can be called that. Finally, the third case analyses one of the many death marches to which victims were subjected at the very end of the war, while civil populations looked on. What emerges from these three case studies is that the perpetrators of the Holocaust (at least 100,000 and, according to Goldhagen, probably five times that number (HWE 167)) were not only following orders, but developed their own –

terrible – initiatives, especially against their Jewish victims, often voluntarily and even against orders from direct superiors.

In his study, Goldhagen dismisses all current explanations of the perpetrators' behaviour. In particular, he rejects philosopher Hannah Arendt's explanation in terms of totalitarianism, and the view of historian Christopher Browning, who in his own study of Police Battalion 101 (Browning, 1992a) suggests peer pressure as an explanation of the extremely cruel actions of these 'ordinary men'. 'The perpetrators acted neither under compulsion nor out of submission to higher, neither because of social pressure nor out of self-interest, further not out of bureaucratic short-sightedness. A decisive factor was that they all partook in the virulent anti-Semitism which pervaded the whole of German society', Goldhagen summarizes.⁵

If there were hundreds and hundreds of thousands of perpetrators, Goldhagen concludes that millions of Germans must have known of the gruesome mass murders of Jews and must have approved of these. In his view, there must have been a deeply rooted, so-called eliminationist anti-Semitism with a German character; a deep-seated hatred in German culture which brought forth a passionate desire to wipe out the Jewish people. This can be the only explanation for 'the fact that the Holocaust could have come to pass': 'the Holocaust finds its roots in Germany' (Goldhagen, 1996b; our trans.).

Goldhagen's book has found both extreme proponents and opponents.⁶ Survivors of concentration camps perceive him as the first historian to represent their point of view, after a period in which the reliability of victims as a historic source had been questioned. In the *Observer* (31 March 1996) author Elie Wiesel advocates introducing the book as part of the compulsory German school curriculum. Richard Bernstein speaks of a 'pioneering study' in *The New York Times* (27 March 1996). In *The Sunday Times* (24 March 1996), Robert Harris calls it a great work. Historian Josef Joffe in *The New York Review of Books* (28 November 1996) applauds *Hitler's Willing Executioners* as 'an original, indeed, brilliant contribution to the mountain of literature on the Holocaust that has been produced over the last fifty years'. With the exception of a few methodological errors, this book contains 'first-rate history that has transformed the way we look at the Holocaust', he again concludes some weeks later in the same publication (6 February 1997).

However, the book evokes a great deal of resistance from most historians. The Germans Eberhard Jäckel and Hans Mommsen both consider it to be a miserably bad book (*Die Zeit*, 30 August 1996; 17 May 1996 respectively). The Israeli historians Robert Wistrich and Moshe Zimmermann wipe the floor with Goldhagen's study. The first calls it 'a very one-sided and in academic terms unacceptably over-generalization of German culture, history and the character of the German people' (*De Volkskrant*, 30 Nov. 1996). Zimmermann accuses Goldhagen of racism

because his point of departure is an inherent distinction between Germans of gentile and of Jewish origins (*Neue Zürcher Zeitung*, 29 April 1996). The American historian Christopher Browning, who had earlier studied the reserve Police Battalion 101 (Browning, 1992a), calls Goldhagen's book 'keyhole' history: 'he views events through a single narrow vantage point that blocks out context and perspective'; the result is 'a kind of methodological determinism' (Browning, 1996: 97, 99). Goldhagen merely demonstrates what was built into his approach.

The Canadian historian Ruth Bettina Birn attacks Goldhagen for dealing with the material at the institute in Ludwigsburg in a highly inaccurate and selective way. A closer look at the material contradicts his conclusions with respect to a specific cruelty against Jewish victims. Other Nazi victims were tortured and brutalized just as much. Birn thus refutes the findings of Goldhagen's case studies, from which he deduced his thesis of a German so-called 'eliminationist anti-Semitism' as the central cause of the Holocaust (Birn, 1997). The American political scientist and historian Norman Finkelstein attacks Goldhagen's 'crazy' thesis as well, in particular his method of eliminating each fact that proves the ambiguous attitude of many Germans, including many of the perpetrators (Finkelstein, 1997).

While Birn and Finkelstein explicitly attack Goldhagen for his perceived inaccurate use of sources, for most historians it is Goldhagen's 'monocausal' explanation of the Holocaust from a so-called German eliminationist anti-Semitism which is the primary bone of contention. However, Goldhagen himself, supported by some of his defenders (Gilcher-Holtey, 1996; Schreurs, 1997; Vries, 1996), has argued that this is not his main thesis at all. Rather, it is the motivation of the perpetrators of the Holocaust which is Goldhagen's main concern.

It must be said that Goldhagen's own methodological reflections are highly ambivalent. On the one hand, he repeatedly claims that virulent anti-Semitism explains the Holocaust as such (Thesis I);⁷ on the other hand, he claims that it only explains the subjective world of the perpetrators of the Holocaust (Thesis II).⁸ It is the first claim which thus far has been the focus of most criticism – and of confusion as well. 'Extreme determinism', 'voluntarism', 'structuralism', these are only a few of the – contradictory – qualifications applied to Goldhagen's approach. First we shall deal with these criticisms, and clarify why Goldhagen's Thesis I is tantamount to an extreme methodological individualism.

Methodological individualism

Every self-respecting textbook on social sciences explores the question which is known as the individualism versus holism (or: structuralism) debate (Hollis, 1994; James, 1984; Layder, 1994). The bone of contention
150 here is whether social phenomena should be explained by intentional

acts of individuals, or whether the acts of individuals should be clarified by social wholes (hence 'holism'). In this latter version, individuals are no more than the agents of social structures; they do not determine them. Methodological individualism – its most prominent representative being Max Weber – on the contrary, is based on the premiss that social explanation should take place in terms of the intentional actions of individuals. It is the task of sociology to reduce social phenomena to 'understandable' actions, which invariably means to the actions of the individual persons involved (Weber, 1913, referred to by Franssen, 1998: 60). Where individualists look for convictions, actions and intentions of individuals as decisive causal factors, the others consider social structures to be crucial for social explanation. It can be argued that the holism–individualism debate in its purest form occurred only in the social sciences (Blom and Nijhuis, 1998: 22). Among historians, the controversy emerged exclusively at the level of concrete cases, such as the so-called Fischer controversy (Lorenz, 1997). These days, however, practically all historians are convinced that these approaches are not mutually exclusive but instead complement each other. In practice, we find concrete social scientific and historical research taking into account both human and social factors. We can see this trend in the discussion on the Holocaust among German historians. From the mid-1960s until the mid-1980s, interpretations of National Socialism and the Holocaust were still divided into two schools: that of the 'intentionalists' and that of the 'functionalists'. The former held that Hitler and his supporters had conceived the Final Solution from the very beginning and had purposefully engineered it. The latter's point of departure was that the Holocaust was a product of the Nazi regime's own dynamic which had emerged in a process of 'cumulative radicalisation' (Hans Mommsen), Hitler being only a weak figurehead. In later years, the boundaries between the two faded. Moderate functionalists and their counterparts among intentionalists found common ground in the perspective that aspects of both approaches should be integrated in a single synthesis (Browning, 1992b: ch. 5; Schoeps, 1996: 84, 90).

The political scientist Goldhagen, however, again wants to demonstrate that human choice and intentions are at the core of everything.⁹ In doing so, he reverts to the question of which kind of factors are decisive for social development: 'human or circumstantial', as Jürgen Habermas succinctly summarizes (1997). Goldhagen wants to take up the gauntlet against what he sees as the dominant functionalist or structuralist approach, and he forces historians to reopen the intentionalism–functionalism debate. In an interview, he evokes the methodology of Max Weber:¹⁰

I concur with sociologist Max Weber who stated: to explain an action, we must first understand which motives played a role and how the actors

perceived their action. ... This is why I concentrated on the question of which thoughts and emotions moved these murderers. (Goldhagen, 1996c)

Yet, in his methodology Weber did take into account social wholes such as the 'state', because people orient their actions to them as if they existed as real supra-individual entities (referred to in Franssen, 1998: 61). He thus operated with a model of choice in a social context. And Goldhagen's approach, referring to German culture and tradition all the time, seems to be in agreement with this – this is what some commentators label as his structuralist or determinist approach: how could individuals act or think otherwise? However, when looking closer we find that his real position is more extreme. Speaking of German culture and of the German people, Goldhagen always has in mind the conscious and free choices of each and every German, all the time. For him, German culture only consists of actual individuals, 'responsible actors [who] were capable of making choices and were ultimately the authors of their own actions' (*HWE* 482). With respect to the perpetrators he repeats time after time that they were fully aware of their actions and consciously chose them. They killed 'because they wanted to do it' (*HWE* 279); 'they chose to say "yes"' (381, cf. 12, 14). One could say that he attributes to them a degree of intention comparable to that found in the social theory of Alfred Schütz, who radicalized the views of Max Weber, by integrating them with the subjectivist phenomenology of Husserl. Schütz, who was heavily inspired by the early Sartre, considered every human action as the result of a radical freedom of choice. Most phenomenologists nowadays have a place for context and situatedness of choices (as even the later Sartre did!), as well as for social structures. In the social sciences, the debate has largely been transferred to the question of the role of autonomy in social contexts and how large that role is. But as we have seen, Goldhagen sticks to an extreme Weberianism. For his approach to the Holocaust, the label extreme intentionalism, or rather extreme methodological individualism, is the most appropriate one.

Habermas quotes Goldhagen's own words to defend him against accusations of monocausality in his methodology.¹¹ After all, Goldhagen emphasizes the fact that other factors should be brought in to the explanatory equation alongside anti-Semitism. But as soon as the author introduces one or another factor, he always immediately adds that in naming German 'eliminationist' anti-Semitism he is revealing the crucial factor.¹² Thus he actually adheres – and continues to do so in his later articles – to what we have labelled his extreme intentionalism. In the current debate on the Holocaust the discussion between functionalists and intentionalists only concerns differences in emphasis, in particular with respect to the role of choice in the actions of Hitler and his accomplices.¹³ We can conclude that Goldhagen has enlarged the role

of intention enormously, arguing that the whole of the German people intended the Holocaust, individually as well as collectively. His Thesis I amounts to a super-intentionalism!¹⁴

We have seen that the criticism of most historians of Goldhagen's study concentrated on Thesis I. We can conclude that, since it amounts to an enormous enlargement of the role of intention, it is rightly criticized by historians as a monocausal approach. Goldhagen himself repeatedly states that 'no adequate explanation for the Holocaust can be monocausal'.¹⁵ His work, indeed, does not explain the Holocaust at all.

But let us now turn to the second, more limited claim (Thesis II) made by Goldhagen, that his book deals with the subjective lives of the perpetrators.¹⁶ One could ask: is his approach fruitful here? At this point we can already remark that a similar critique can be directed against his 'intentionalism' with respect to the perpetrators' motivation. However, in our view, it would be more useful if the methodology debate around Goldhagen could shift from the question of intention to his description of the subjective lives of the perpetrators, and focus on the concepts of subjectivity which he applies.

German historian Ingrid Gilcher-Holthey argues that the methodological debate around Goldhagen should concern his 'history of mentality' approach to the perpetrators. What is original in his thinking is his treatment of anti-Semitism not only at the level of ideas but also at the level of the behaviours structured by this anti-Semitism. 'Like many historians of mentalities, he attempts ... to derive collective patterns of thought and observation from the behaviour of individuals and groups.' Because ideas result in behaviour, she adds, Goldhagen is justified in deriving ideas from individual and group behaviour (Gilcher-Holthey, 1996: 212; our trans.).

In our perspective, this is closer to the approach used by Goldhagen, whose methodological reflection does not keep pace with what he actually is doing in his work. We have noted that, notwithstanding Goldhagen's ambivalent position, his book in fact does not explain the Holocaust. Instead it concentrates on the lives and experiences of the perpetrators. With Gilcher-Holthey, we can now further argue that he is not so much studying their ideas – or intentions – but primarily their behaviour. What is interesting here is that, through his very focus on detailed descriptions of the perpetrators' behaviour – an approach he qualifies as 'the microphysics of the Holocaust' (*HWE* 24) – his approach comes very close to what we would call the non-intentionalist theory of subjectivity of Michel Foucault,¹⁷ which we believe can contribute to a better understanding of the subjective world of Holocaust perpetrators and of the way the Nazi regime related to its subjects in general. According to Birn, Goldhagen's study does not deal with subjectivity at all. He describes timetables, etc., she says, but this does not say anything about the mood, the emotions, the state of mind of the perpetrators

(Birn, 1997: 212).¹⁸ We believe in fact that the opposite is the case and that in this respect Goldhagen's study has an adequate Foucauldian background. In order to clarify this premiss, let us first examine Foucault's thought more closely.

Panoptic power

One of the most important themes in contemporary French thought is the attack on the central notion of man in our culture: a creature who is gifted with a will, desires and a consciousness of his own – the so-called subject. Many contemporary French thinkers, including Michel Foucault, have argued that this subject does not exist, and for this reason attacked hermeneutic and phenomenological approaches to society. In Foucault's perception, the subject does not exist prior to the roles in social practices and discourses which have a subject-form. There is no original subject, no essential agency. We are addressed and articulated differently in different discourses. All that remains are different subject positions:¹⁹ the subject itself is fragmented. So, to understand who we are, people in contemporary western society, we should look for the dominant discourses which construct our subject positions. Foucault has stated that so-called panoptic 'dispositives' are a major constituent in this respect and have been so since approximately 1800. They create a type of subjectivity that he characterizes as the modern 'soul' or the 'deep self'. He conceives this as a temporary product of western history which in turn will be eradicated by that very same history.²⁰ Now, Foucault has an aversion of the 'deep self'. According to him, it is the interior order of a disciplining society. He argues that this disciplining has yet to be seen clearly because all attention up to now has been focused on power practices on the juridico-political level, that is to say, the history of 'great men', kings and presidents. But while everyone looked at the sovereign, a much more dominant type of power developed on the social level: a disciplining power controlling human beings, which originated in 'monasteries, armies, and workshops' (Foucault, 1977: 137) and has since spread to the rest of society.

This method – discipline – draws on a myriad of refined techniques which regulate in detail the movements and actions of the body (this is what Foucault calls a 'microphysics of power'). Changes in systems of punishment since 1800, according to Foucault, clearly illustrate this. Criminals, he argued, were no longer tortured but drilled. They were no longer locked away in darkness, but placed in strong light under continual surveillance. Their behaviours were prescribed and recorded minutely. This relates to 'techniques for assuring the ordering of human multiplicities' (Foucault, 1977: 218) because these categorize people in a 'continuous, individualizing pyramid' (p. 220). Discipline utilizes procedures of separation and classification; it separates, analyses, differentiates

and surveys. It differentiates the mass of bodies and powers into a myriad of individual elements. In short, it 'fabricates' individuals. To increase the utility of the separate elements, it uses techniques such as timetables, collective training, exercises and 'hierarchical surveillance, continuous registration, perpetual assessment and classification'. Thus, it is a type of power which insidiously objectifies those on whom it is applied – 'A multiplicity, whether in a workshop, or a nation, an army or a school' by forming 'a body of knowledge about these individuals' (Foucault, 1977: 220).

The panopticon devised by the philosopher Bentham became the model for Foucault's thinking on this type of power: a round building with a watch tower at the centre. Cells, glazed on both sides, circle the tower so as to leave no space within unlit.

All that is needed, then, is to place a supervisor in a central tower and to shut up in each cell a madman, a patient, a condemned man, a worker or a schoolboy. By the effect of backlighting, one can observe from the tower, standing out precisely against the light, the small captive shadows in the cells of the periphery. They are like so many cages, so many small theatres, in which each actor is alone, perfectly individualized and constantly visible. ... The crowd, a compact mass, a locus of multiple exchanges, individualities merging together, a collective effect, is abolished and replaced by a collection of separated individualities. (Foucault, 1977: 200, 201)

The most important point for the current discussion is that through these power techniques of continual surveillance and registration, disciplined people become aware of a permanent visibility through which power can function automatically. They know that they might be seen at each moment, therefore they practise self-control. Hence surveillance has become superfluous.

He who is subjected to a field of visibility, and who knows it, assumes responsibility for the constraints of power; he makes them play spontaneously upon himself; he inscribes in himself the power relation in which he simultaneously plays both roles; he becomes the principle of his own subjection. (Foucault, 1977: 202–3)

It is in these panoptic machines that Foucault saw the emergence of the contemporary subject, the human with an inner being and 'conscience'. In these machines, the individual is installed, the person with an inner identity, recorded in dossiers, through which the machines can function perfectly. The panoptic power mechanism can be applied universally, Foucault argued, and we find it at numerous levels in modern societies, in workplaces and schools, in hospitals, institutions and prisons. The internally motivated self is an effect of these power apparatuses, he believed, and when we study internal experiences, we must study these concrete power practices. It should be noted here that, according to Foucault, these power practices usually exist in the form of

power relations. Power is not a static but rather a dynamic principle of power and contra-power, power and resistance, in which every actor attempts to determine the conduct of the other. But a crucial addition to this concept of power, often criticized as too unspecific, can be found in the work of Foucault's last period, in which he argued that power relations are lacking where people are denied the least freedom. Then we see 'effectively states of domination. In many cases the relations of power are fixed in such a way that they are perpetually asymmetrical and the margin of liberty is extremely limited' (Foucault, 1988b: 12).

Since Foucault has given a place to a concept of domination in his later work, in our view it is justified to incorporate his analysis of disciplinary power into the analysis which was conceived under the umbrella label of totalitarianism by Hannah Arendt and others.²¹ Foucault himself kept his distance from the application of his panoptical power model to so-called totalitarian systems precisely because he wanted to indicate power where no one sought it, in modern western welfare states.²² To our knowledge, thus far his theory has not been applied in research on National Socialism and the Holocaust. As we saw earlier, Foucault himself suggested the possibility that not only armies, schools and workshops could become the object of panoptical surveillance and registration, but whole nations as well.

The Nazi regime, which was characterized by the attempted politicization of every aspect of its subjects' lives, meets Foucault's definitions of panoptical disciplinary power. It prescribes behaviour, organizes, differentiates, registers, dismantles traditions and existing institutions and – in particular – installs a system of transparency through the creation of an all-pervasive system of informers and spies and secret police,²³ a system of permanent control and observation; a system whose power reaches into the most intimate areas of private life, the family, through 'building watchers' and Hitler Youth; a system where everyone is a dossier. In 1938, Erika Mann wrote:

To-day every member of the nation – man, woman, and child – must belong to at least one Nazi organization: to the Party, to a *Fachschaft* [professional union], a Women's or Mothers' *Bund* [union], the Hitler Youth, the *Jungvolk* [Young people], or to the *Bund Deutscher Mädel* [League of German Girls]. These take all the time left after one's profession, housework, or school. Even without a deeper reason ... family life would practically come to an end, just for lack of time. (Mann, 1939: 18)²⁴

Not only the restructuring of social life, but the attempts to dismantle private life as well are characteristic of the Nazi regime.²⁵ In our view, the structure of National Socialism can be conceptualized as a panopticon *optima forma* with Hitler in the watch tower and the whole German nation as object of control. Obviously, this project was not carried out in full, it was not the case that organizations were institutionally linked

together in a perfect way, but the margin of liberty was extremely limited. The restructuring of conservative, religious and modern institutions and traditions could of course not be complete. Remnants remained and offered other subject positions. In this sense, Arendt's concept of totalitarianism is too monolithic, as is her attempt to conceptualize Stalinism using the very same concept. The particularities of the two systems cannot be encompassed by this single general concept, because it has too many limitations, failing among other things to include socioeconomic conditions, or functions and aims of the system. However, if application of the concept of totalitarianism is restricted to the Nazi regime, it is indispensable as a concept that focuses on the relationship of the regime to its subjects.²⁶ It is as such that we want to compare it with the Foucauldian model outlined earlier.

Intentions

According to Arendt, totalitarianism is characterized, amongst other elements, by a stratification of the totalitarian movement. This is composed out of various layers around a core, rather like the layers of an onion. A comparison with Foucault's watch tower is inescapable here. Arendt conceives of a core in which the leader resides, rather than being at the top of the organization. She emphasizes that the leader will not tolerate the formation of groups at any level. All ties between individuals are avoided, among other things by continually introducing changes into their positions which would reduce opportunities for conspiracies as well as limit the acquisition of experience, knowledge and skills.

Foucault's panoptical power model also stresses the atomization of human masses into individuals. Nothing and no one may stand between the individual and the watch tower. The power mechanism in panoptical power, after all, consists of complete transparency, a complete overview of everyone's actions, and its registration in a personal 'dossier'.

There are, however, differences between the two philosophers as well. Arendt searches for an explanation for total atomization in absolute lawlessness which amounts to a total, random terror. This would ensure, she argues, the breakdown of interpersonal ties – after all, the result of total terror is the complete disappearance of trust in each and every one, thereby reducing people to atomized individuals. In the Foucauldian model, the bonds between people are broken at a deeper non-reflexive level. Overt terror is unnecessary: the mechanism of panoptical power is more refined, because of the principle of self-control. From a Foucauldian point of view we could conclude that Arendt's analysis in terms of total terror does not capture power where it is most effective.

Besides pointing out the atomizing effects of totalitarianism, Arendt also indicates its destructive aspects for individuality. With this she refers to the authenticity of people. 'Individuality, anything indeed that

distinguishes one man from another' (1976: 456). This is eradicated by totalitarianism, resulting in the destruction of human spontaneity – and thus of any possibility of resistance whatsoever. Notwithstanding all commonalities, the Foucauldian type of power, as interpreted by us, finds itself opposed to the concept of totalitarianism as construed by Arendt, in so far as the latter upholds that the individual is nothing, or even has been completely eradicated.

In Foucault's model of discipline, the individual, on the contrary, is the extreme, the furthest point in the chain of disciplining power, through which it can work very effectively. Arendt believes that the disappearance of the individual in totalitarianism is accompanied by the eradication of all internal motivation in people. 'Men lose the capacity of both experience and thought' (1976: 474), resulting in a 'consistent elimination of conviction as a motive for action. The ideal subject of totalitarian rule is not the convinced Nazi' (p. 468). In the Foucauldian model, however, panopticism and motivation are reciprocally linked. If we apply this model to National Socialism, what emerges is an atomized individual which certainly is a convinced Nazi: it has a 'soul' in the form of an individual internalization of the central watch tower, or rather of Hitler's will. We could say, with Habermas quoting Gehlen: 'A personality: that is an institution in a *single* instance' (Habermas, 1995: 104 n. 36).²⁷ This type of individuality emerges in, for example, Arendt's *Eichmann in Jerusalem*. Arendt herself believes that the war-criminal Eichmann had no more than 'an extraordinary diligence in looking out for his personal advancement' but had absolutely no concept of the portent of his crimes. In her judgement, Eichmann was not lying when he claimed he was no convinced anti-Semite. His motives were no more than a blind obedience to the Führer and his duty to pursue that obedience to the bitter end. When his immediate superior, Himmler, ordered him to discontinue the *Endlösung* in the final stages of the war, Eichmann's 'conscience' would not permit him to obey. In her book, Arendt concludes that Eichmann 'merely, to put the matter colloquially, *never realized what he was doing*', on which she bases her well-known thesis of the banality of evil. Evil in this case consists of Eichmann's 'thoughtlessness' (Arendt, 1994: 287 and postscript).

But in her work we also see the emergence of an Eichmann who willingly tells his story – there is even an eagerness in his need to talk. His interrogation lasted weeks, and at the end of it he still had not run out of words. He wanted everything to be notified and recorded: with whom he spoke, at which time and place, his exact actions when he heard a particular piece of information, what was his role in this or that meeting, etc. Eichmann proved to be in possession of an infallible memory when it came to his own activities. We cannot but conclude that the individual in him had been anything but eradicated; if anything, it

Foucault's panoptic model provides an explanation for the remarkable apparent contradiction which emerges from Arendt's study of Eichmann: the contradiction of a so-called 'conscience' on the one hand and of 'thoughtlessness' on the other; of an awareness of individuality on the one hand, and complete triviality on the other. Eichmann's conscience and the scope of his individuality concern an internalization of the rigid panoptical (murder) machine of which he had been a functioning part. He is characterized not by total thoughtlessness, as Arendt claims, but by a strong level of internalization of a disciplining power. His zeal did not become proverbial for nothing. This 'thoughtlessness' is just an *uncritical* acceptance, which does not preclude a subjective intentional cooperation; on the contrary, the one may actually favour the other.

A similar kind of zeal emerges from Goldhagen's study of the behaviour of 'ordinary' perpetrators. Their 'zeal' or 'devotion' (*HWE* 237) and cruel fanaticism are Goldhagen's most significant argument for the thesis that perpetrators acted from virulent anti-Semitic convictions. In turn, these convictions can now be positioned more precisely by Foucault's analytical instruments. The internalization of power ensures that people take on both roles – that of the guard and of the guarded. It also ensures that people act independently, with zeal. Foucault argued: 'it is not necessary to use force to constrain the convict to good behaviour, the madman to calm, the worker to work, the schoolboy to application, the patient to the observation of the regulations' (1977: 202). And, we could add, Nazi perpetrators to cruelties. Goldhagen rightly points out the perpetrators' fanaticism. Browning and Arendt, however, also have a point when they conclude that, after the fact, there is little evidence of intentional anti-Semitism in the perpetrators. The panoptical disciplining power brings about an internalization of the watch tower: the will of the leader, or rather the anti-Semitic will of Hitler, became internalized; the perpetrators' eliminationist anti-Semitism exists only in the ties to the panopticon of which they form a part.

In his study, Goldhagen is concerned with the perpetrators' intentional anti-Semitism. He rejects out of hand the image of perpetrators as 'isolated, frightened, thoughtless beings performing their tasks reluctantly' (*HWE* 406). This image is erroneous, he argues, and Hannah Arendt is, of course, the person most responsible for promulgating this image, he adds in a note (*HWE* 406 n. 74). Arendt's concept of men 'losing the capacity for thought and experience' under 'total terror' aims to indicate the elimination of internal motivation and rationalism. But this approach is certainly inadequate in view of the perpetrators' zeal. They definitely earned the 'little Hitler' (Wiesel, 1996) sobriquet through the personal internalization of the will of their leader in the panoptical discipline imposed on bodily conduct. The merit of Foucault's panoptic theory is that it makes room for that internal motivation:²⁸ this is a *disciplined*, rather than a purely ideologically

driven motivation. As a disciplined subject, persons may willingly do things which outside of this context they might not do or possibly even abhor.²⁹ This explains the sharp contrast between the relatively peaceful behaviour and the sudden violent actions of many of the perpetrators.

In addition, the Foucauldian approach has the advantage that it conceives of a continuity between National Socialist and modern societies. The rise of totalitarianism which Arendt can only explain through a caesura can now be seen as the crystallizing of panoptical elements which were already present in a previous social constellation.³⁰ It allows the study of how panoptical power techniques, which in western societies have embedded themselves in schools, workplaces, social and political associations and institutions, were seized upon by the Nazi regime and how they have expanded into other places and corners of society.³¹

How panoptic power machines work and how effective they are – both are revealed by Foucault's theory. Anyone who has used registration techniques in a lecture hall knows the relative ease with which such a machine can be installed. It suffices to simply register a couple of times – visible for all to see – who is and who is not present or who has and who has not handed in assignments to generate self-control within the subjects. It is a rare person indeed who ignores such systems. If potentially dangerous elements in these modern power techniques are to be controlled, it is necessary to frame them in explicit democratic traditions and institutional forms of self-guidance – in the workplace, in schools, in organizations and institutions.³²

However, in our view, the greatest benefit of a Foucauldian approach to Nazi power is that concrete, fine-meshed, behaviour-regulating power techniques become central issues. A 'microphysics of power' was applied to all subjects of the Nazi regime: first and foremost to those that were incarcerated in the concentration camps and to those groups that were hunted and isolated from the rest of society, Jewish people especially. The tactics of individualizing discipline were imposed on these excluded people, a combination, in fact, of two strategies of power: 'that of binary division and branding ... and that of coercive assignment, of differential distribution', as Foucault characterizes the division of the excluded (1977: 199).³³ The technique of power proper to disciplinary partitioning has also been applied to various occupied populations (the Dutch, with their perfect Civil Registry (*Bevolkingsregister*), among them), and last but not least to the German population, thereby producing perpetrators who were 'willing executioners'.³⁴ Because it comprises minute descriptions of behaviour, what comes to light from Goldhagen's study is not total terror but almost invisible, minutely developed power techniques which function in the framework of the panoptical Nazi system,³⁵ such as for example the continual movement and reorganization of people. Police Battalion 101 had no continuity; its constitution was changed continually.

160 What also emerges are the techniques for organizing people, including

the avoidance of large groups; the use of schemes for murder commandos which were hung prominently on bulletin boards; and, of course, the hierarchical pyramid which is typical of (semi-)military organizations; the minutely detailed prescription and regulation of methods of execution (e.g. perpetrator and victim walk into a forest in long rows of twos); detailed instructions for massacres (e.g. instructions for the precise use of the rifle); the prescription of how to act in leisure time and how that time should be spent.⁵⁶

However, what is wholly absent from Goldhagen's own conceptualization is the effect of the personal 'dossier'. Whereas Arendt considers 'total terror' to be the prime mechanism of power, the dossier plays a comparable role in Foucault's model: the observation and registration of the behaviour of a single person (made wholly transparent) forms the core of panoptical power. Goldhagen disproves the notion that terror explains the perpetrators' actions. He frequently refers to the fact that perpetrators did not avoid executions even if they were clearly offered the opportunity to do so. They could have avoided attendance without risking sanctions, Goldhagen reiterates tirelessly. They killed 'even though they did not have to' (*HWE* 277). In his view, the perpetrators were not the victims of terror and were anything but isolated from each other.⁵⁷ As a result, Goldhagen claims to have refuted Arendt's explanation, and in passing every other kind of explanation which fails to use intentionality as point of departure. However, from a Foucauldian perspective, we can argue that the dossier – both literally and figuratively – forms the isolating factor, a factor which is only touched on indirectly in Goldhagen, although he was inspired by the Foucauldian concept 'microphysics of power'. It is only in passing that he notes how people's presence and absence was registered continually, how they were honourably mentioned and distinguished. We can safely assume that dossiers existed in which the perpetrators' behaviour was recorded and registered. Panoptical power as we have seen works through a mechanism of (non-reflexive) anticipation of registration. People are not sure whether they are being checked and thus check themselves, or rather: just to be sure, they act according to Hitler's will, which could not even be countermanded by later commands from lower officials.⁵⁸ This is especially clear in the case of the death marches which in the final stages of the war were carried out against the express will of Hitler's right-hand man, Himmler. The perpetrators 'killed and brutalized Jews even after having received Himmler's own orders to stop the killing' (*HWE* 403). This leads Goldhagen to conclude that 'these were internally motivated killers, moved by a boundless hatred of Jews' (p. 403).

In our view, Goldhagen has indeed demonstrated that the Nazi killers were internally motivated, but his explanation and description are inadequate because he looks exclusively at the level of ideas, i.e. a virulent anti-Semitism, that would produce such behaviour.⁵⁹ That it

could be the other way around, that behaviour produces 'ideas', is Foucault's claim.⁴⁰ Goldhagen has described in a Foucauldian way *how* the behaviour of the perpetrators was moulded on a micro-level, which is the merit of his book, but his *explanation* of behaviour purely in terms of choice and meaning comes close to the view on human agency of the early Sartre, who advocated man's absolute freedom of choice.⁴¹ Goldhagen likewise radically stresses 'the responsibility of each individual as the author of his own actions' (*HWE* 478). His approach can be termed extremely intentionalist not only with respect to the place of human action in history, but also in terms of human action as such.

Practices of freedom⁴²

So is there no longer any place in a Foucauldian approach for free choice and moral responsibility? Are the perpetrators no more than marionettes of a panoptical system? The advantage of Goldhagen's approach was precisely his moral impact, according to Habermas. Where do we find a similar dimension in a Foucauldian approach?

Foucault's theory of subjectivity shows that people can have deeply rooted motives without being the author of those motives. He demonstrates that they have fragmented subject positions. They are not coherent by definition because they act within a framework of social power practices – even machineries – which bring about fragments of meaning in their minds.⁴⁵ This offers an explanation of the fact that the perpetrators were not always consistent but could suddenly change their attitude to the victims, as emerges from Browning's research on the same police battalion. All forms of resistance, physical rather than ethical, against the work as henchmen, such as the practical shirking away, certainly comes to light in his research. The Dutch historian De Mildt, who like Goldhagen has studied the motives of perpetrators of the Holocaust, can only be astounded by the fact that in their spare time some perpetrators communicated reasonably with the very same people they, as henchmen, would soon be driving into gas chambers. This fact remains wholly mysterious for him (De Mildt, 1996).

In our view, it is to Foucault's credit that he makes us aware of the fact that people live as collectives of different, often contradictory subjectivities interlaced with power practices which they rarely take into account. His theory shows that people are often caught up in a maelstrom of things and events without instruments to guide them. What Hannah Arendt considered the shape of evil, the fact that people do not pause to consider their actions, is rule than exception for Foucault because people live in a fragmented manner which, by the way, does not necessarily mean they do not act ethically *per se*. Returning to an original moral self – as Arendt recommends – is no solution: there is no

In his last work, however, Foucault implicitly indicates the need for a unification of self by referring to a tradition of self-guidance in western culture. He shows how, in classical times, people consciously used various techniques to form their own 'self'. Since classical times, there have existed ethical self-practices for developing a certain comportment, a manner of acting visible to others, a way of behaving leading to an ultimate mastery of the self. With these practices, utilized in a 'care of the self', individual persons have attempted to continually take into account the totality of their actions in order to develop these actions into a coherent 'self'. This is no 'deep self', but rather a self at the level of action. These self-practices or techniques of the self ultimately lead to the development of human freedom in the form of a mastery of body, behaviour, emotion and thought, as well as an ensuing mastery in the relation one can have with others (Foucault, 1988a, 1988b, 1988c, 1988d; Rabinow, 1984: 359ff.). This may be termed 'finding' your own self only if this is taken to be merely a metaphor for the construction of this very self on the basis of the actually available contradictory strands of identity;⁴⁴ it is this that Foucault termed 'the deliberate practice of liberty' (Foucault, 1988b: 4; cf. Rabinow, 1984: 351).

Western culture has had a long tradition of these practices of freedom which are aimed at the concrete shaping of one's own existence. But they have become disregarded since nowadays they often are appropriated by panoptic institutions and practices which transform people into docile objects and disciplined, fragmented subjects.⁴⁵ In our view, Foucault is arguing that people in contemporary western societies are in fact cocktails of dominant disciplines and marginal free discourses of subjectivity. If we thus broaden our perspective of contemporary subjectivity, then we are also able to consider free choice and morality in a differentiated way.⁴⁶

Ethical self-practices offer the opportunity for freedom of action. They offer a vocabulary of accountability, responsibility and self-guidance.⁴⁷ Confronted with such practices, we can choose to associate with these, rather than with the available disciplining systems. This approach thus emphasizes both the fact that ethical self-practices must be available, and the moment of individual association with these practices. Now, being a country rich in thinkers and poets, Germany is just as well endowed with the kind of ethical traditions referred to here as most other cultures. And under the Nazis, there did exist individuals who saw the consequences of their actions, who took these into account, and who paused to consider what they were doing (notwithstanding the fact that there also existed all kinds of spontaneous, courageous resistance which could be very effective). But in Hitler's Germany ethical traditions had gradually been dismantled by mechanisms of monolithic panoptical atomization and had thereby become invisible, in particular for the youth who, if they are to understand (ethical) freedom, must at least have heard of it, been

shown it or have learnt it by example. Morality in the sense of obeying a given set of normative rules is no solution, as some people appear to believe. The Holocaust perpetrators often did act according to strict norms. What was missing was a 'practice of liberty'.

Instead of assuming moral responsibility – as Goldhagen does, and as Arendt does when she considers National Socialism as the dismantling of this human characteristic – a Foucauldian approach implies that responsibility should be demonstrated and 'offered' to people.⁴⁸ From this viewpoint, the so-called anti-racism course developed by American teacher Jane Elliott does rather the opposite of what it intends to do. Her 'blue eyes/brown eyes' course only shows how discrimination may occur, but in itself does not increase behavioural resistance to it. Demonstrating panoptical discipline does not provide people with either the vocabulary or the means for ethical self-governance. Rather than working with threats and cautioning intimidation, people must be offered a vocabulary in conjunction with techniques and exercises which enable self-guidance.⁴⁹ A good example built on this insight is the excellent educational programme developed for schools by the Dutch Anne Frank Foundation, entitled *This is me*.⁵⁰

Conclusion

Goldhagen's all too simple view of 'culture' as a given set of values and norms which individuals willingly adopt, seriously misrepresents the various factors leading up to the Holocaust. A socially more sensitive approach allows us to see the complicated way in which such willing executioners were formed. An important factor was the disciplinary power which was all-pervasive in the totalitarian Nazi state, but which is present as well in a less obtrusive manner in modern western societies. To counter the influence of panoptical power regimes, we may turn to ethical self-practices. If Goldhagen's book is to have a real moral impact on contemporary reality, it must be read in the context of endorsement of these ethical self-practices rather than as an exercise in frightening more and more people and thus reducing awareness of the possibility of freedom.

Notes

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1. Hereafter quoted as *HWE*. The 1997 edn (London: Abacus) is identical, up to p. 477, where a new Appendix 3 is inserted ('Foreword to the German edition', pp. 477–83). References will be to the 1996 edn, except for references to Appendix 3.

2. Goldhagen acted rather foolishly by legally suing one of his critics, the Canadian historian Ruth Bettina Birn. Some of the heated discussion can be viewed at the websites www.goldhagen.com and www.normanfinkelstein.com.
3. Habermas (1997) held a eulogy for Goldhagen when his book won a prize in Germany.
4. See for a similar standpoint the many works of K.D. Bracher, noted for his historical studies on totalitarian regimes.
5. 'Die Täter handelten weder in erster Linie aus Zwang noch aus Obrigkeitshörigkeit, weder aufgrund von sozialem Druck noch aus Eigeninteresse, auch nicht aus bürokratische Kurzsichtigkeit. Ausschlaggebend war, daß Sie einen in der ganzen deutschen Gesellschaft virulenten Antisemitismus teilten' (Goldhagen, 1996c).
6. A collection of reviews in the Anglo-Saxon and German press is Schoeps, 1996. Most of the following quotations can be found in here, with the exception of Joffe, Mommsen and Wistrich.
7. See Vries (1996) for Goldhagen's claim of explaining the Holocaust as such: 'Germans' antisemitic beliefs about Jews were the central causal agent of the Holocaust' (*HWE* 9, 13 and cf. 205).
8. See in particular the 'Foreword to the German Edition' (*HWE*, appendix 3), and ch. 5, as well as p. 416.
9. See especially D.J. Goldhagen, 'Foreword to the German Edition', pp. 478 and 482. See further: 'In my book I wanted to show that the perpetrators were not at all robots or marionets, but human beings with their own ideas, who were very well capable of forming judgments on the justness of the politics of the regime, and focus their decisions on that' (Goldhagen, 1996b: 14).
10. In his study, however, he mentions Weber only three times, in passing; in the methodological chapters Weber is entirely absent.
11. 'Against this Goldhagen, who appears to be overstretching the credit of his empirical research in an intentionalist way, and thereby to derive out of that a global explanatory claim, one can put forward Goldhagen himself' ('Gegen diesen Goldhagen, der den Kredit seiner empirischen Untersuchungen intentionalistisch zu überziehen und daraus einen globalen Erklärungsanspruch abzuleiten scheint, kann man Goldhagen selbst ins Feld führen.') (Habermas, 1997: 13–14).
12. See for example his 'Foreword to the German Edition', p. 479.
13. For example, in *The Path to Genocide* (1992b: ch. 5) the American historian Christopher R. Browning, who describes himself as 'moderate functionalist', charts with minute precision the period from Sept. 1939 to Oct. 1941 during which the Final Solution policy was developed in order to demonstrate how the decisions of an increasingly unstable Hitler played an increasingly important role. The moderate intentionalist Eberhard Jäckel, for example, accepts the functionalist notion that Nazi policies had not yet taken on clear form in the years preceding 1941. However, he continues to support the idea that Hitler himself had long envisaged the total annihilation of Europe's Jews. Ian Kershaw (1998) presents a synthesis of intentionalism and functionalism, concluding that it was a process of 'cumulative radicalization' in which Hitler played a crucial role.

14. The term 'super-intentionalism' is used by Gotz Aly (1996) to indicate that Goldhagen has enormously widened the group of people that has chosen the Holocaust. See also Lorenz (1997).
15. 'Foreword to the German Edition', p. 479. Ibid.: 'Explaining the Holocaust and its every feature requires, therefore, attention to many factors other than anti-Semitism.' See also *HWE* 416.
16. 'With regard to the *motivational* cause of the Holocaust, for the vast majority of perpetrators, a monocausal explanation does suffice' (*HWE* 416).
17. As far as we know, the concept of 'microphysics' was introduced in the social sciences by Foucault, in whose 1970s theory of power it was an important constituent. See references to 'Power, micro-physics of' in the index of Dreyfus and Rabinow, 1982. Except for a single note (*HWE* 306 n. 64) we do not find further references to Foucault in Goldhagen's work.
18. In the republished version of this article (in Finkelstein and Birn, 1998), Birn is more explicit about this point.
19. A technical term, not used by Foucault himself, but introduced by us for lack of a better word. Foucault himself has on occasion used the expressions 'forms of subject' and 'kinds of subjects' (Foucault, 1988b: 10).
20. 'this soul ... one would see as the present correlative of a certain technology of power over the body ... it exists, it has a reality, it is produced permanently around, on, within the body by the functioning of a power that is exercised on those punished – and, in a more general way, on those one supervises, trains and corrects, over madmen, children at home and at school, the colonized, over those who are stuck at a machine and supervised for the rest of their lives. This is the historical reality of this soul, which ... is born rather out of methods of punishment, supervision and constraint' (Foucault, 1977: 29).
21. See Arendt (1976). The worlds of Foucault and Arendt have to our knowledge up to now hardly ever been confronted. This may be the consequence of the only gradual disclosing of the work of Foucault's last period. In our view, this work offers an open invitation to a conversation between both philosophers. Incidentally, Foucault himself was familiar with Arendt's work. See his remark in Rabinow, 1984: 378, where he expressed a cautious approval of the Arendtian distinction between power as cooperative and as domination, all the while stressing that no general theory will do but that detailed investigation is necessary.
22. Which is not to say that he wanted to deny that there was a difference between the two.
23. Hannah Arendt spoke of a system of 'ubiquitous spying' in which every individual feels itself as being continually observed (1976: 431).
24. We have modified the translation of the last sentence ('family life ... an end'), which was present in the German original but left out in the translation (Mann, 1938: 29).
25. See Arendt's remark on the totalitarian 'abolition of private life' (1976: 432).
26. The German political scientist and historian K.D. Bracher defends the concept as a useful one throughout his extensive oeuvre. See among others Bracher (1995).

27. The quote is from Gehlen (1957: 118). The quoted phrase is found in the English trans. (Gehlen, 1980: 166) in a slightly different translation. Incidentally, although Gehlen's theoretical concept of institutions as part of his anthropological theory is positive (instead of Foucault's critical stance against institutions), and therefore this quotation has a different meaning in the original context, Gehlen agrees with Foucault in so far as he too observes a process of 'subjectivization' during the last couple of centuries. Both philosophers consider the subject to be a construct of modern society.
28. Further research would have to show how Arendt's rich theory of totalitarianism and Foucault's panoptic theory could be fruitfully synthesized.
29. As Goldhagen seems to imply, saying that 'Hitler leaped across the moral chasm that ordinary Germans on their own could not cross. He also engineered the conditions that enabled the exterminationist version of the eliminationist ideology to become a practical guide for action' (*HWE* 447).
30. Zygmunt Bauman (1989) stresses this continuity all the way. In his eyes bureaucracy and the organization of distance are the crucial factors that made the Holocaust possible. But he, as does e.g. Finkelstein (1997), only deals with the technocratic, bureaucratic killing by the Nazis and not with the brutal and cruel killing by the same. We might point as well to the dominant influence of the militaristic Prussian state in the formation of the German *Reich* in the late 19th century.
31. This may seem to be similar to the study of Horkheimer and Adorno, *Dialectic of Enlightenment*. However, the difference with this classic book (on which Bauman (1989) seems to rely heavily) is that it only describes very general and global tendencies, while the Foucauldian approach zooms in on the detailed construction of disciplinary systems and panoptic individuals. Enlightening in this respect is Foucault's remark (Rabinow, 1984: 378) referred to in n. 21.
32. See for example the proposals for alternative economic and political institutions (Hirst, 1994).
33. An example of the 'efficiency' of panoptic techniques is the persecution of the Dutch Jews. Besides all other kinds of factors, the establishment of a 'Judenrat' was specific to this persecution – in most occupied countries a Judenvereinigung was established, with other orders (Michman, 1992). This council, which carried out and administered the registration of the whole Jewish community in Holland, as executor of the occupier's orders, actually carried out the separation of the Jewish group from the rest of the Dutch population and then subdivided the group into numerous fine-meshed categories, and finally imposed measures which increasingly disciplined everyone's behaviour. First they were curfewed, then prohibited from owning a telephone or riding a bicycle, then they were obliged to turn in valuable possessions, and so on. As executor of the occupier's orders, the Dutch Jewish Council transformed its victims into willing victims which – as has often been said in the past – was probably the cruellest side of National Socialism (De Jong, 1975: ch. 4).
34. Cf. Goldhagen's description of the camp system as the model of the whole of Nazi society (*HWE* 172–7, 458).
35. Goldhagen himself frequently uses the expression 'institutions of killing' (e.g. *HWE* 399).

36. *HWE* 201, 217, 264–5. Goldhagen says earlier (p. 183) that the members of the Battalion received little training. However in the whole context of a totalitarian society they were already predisposed and disciplined to adapt quickly to function in their new role, which only put additional demands on them but did not radically differ from societal disciplining (cf. ‘one of those Germans who was old enough to have been bred not only on Nazi German culture’ (*HWE* 360): here Goldhagen notes how older guards appeared to be less brutal than the younger ones).
37. ‘Contrary to Arendt’s assertions, the perpetrators were not such atomized, lonely beings. They decidedly belonged to their world and had plenty of opportunities, which they obviously used, to discuss and reflect upon their exploits’ (*HWE* 384 n. 23).
38. I. Kershaw (1998) conceptualizes a similar mechanism of power: ‘Dem Führer entgegenarbeiten’ was the verdict of the Nazis: everyone was invited to anticipate the will of the Führer and to imply it.
39. As is apparent from expressions such as ‘it came from within, an expression of their innermost selves’ (*HWE* 369).
40. Back to Marxism, one might say. However, the difference lies therein that the Marxist thesis is that the organization of production as a whole determines the ideology; the Foucauldian thesis is that a set of concrete disciplining measures may lead to concrete ‘convictions’ in action. Arendt’s concept of ‘thoughtlessness’ only describes why there is no counter-power against this disciplining, but fails to take into account the conscious side of the resulting behaviour.
41. See Sartre, 1966: part 4, ch. 1. This is the result of an extreme ‘intentionalism’ grounded in the phenomenological idea of total consciousness: ‘One must be conscious in order to choose, and one must choose in order to be conscious. Choice and consciousness are one and the same thing’ (Sartre, 1966: 595). Although flawed in the end, this theory at least is well developed (see for an intelligent reconstruction and critique: Anderson, 1993).
42. As can be found further developed in Vintges (1996).
43. See earlier as well Nietzsche, *The Will to Power*, par. 490: ‘The assumption of *one single subject* is perhaps unnecessary; perhaps it is just permissible to assume a multiplicity of subjects ...’. (Nietzsche, 1968: 23)
44. Analogous to the concept of ‘finding’ law in so-called hard cases.
45. This is not in itself ‘bad’; it is a necessity of modern bureaucratic western society, which calls for strict separation of social roles within a single individual. But this very same necessity harbours grave dangers, since it undermines the successful moral unification of the subject.
46. A partly similar line may to be found in the recent discussion concerning the concept of moral integrity. See, for one interesting contribution, Grant (1997). See further recent work by Christine Korsgaard.
47. As Nechama Tec concluded (1986: 193, quoted in Bauman, 1989: ch. 1) there are no indications as to what person can resist and act freely on a spontaneous level. It cannot be predicted who would prove to be heroes in resisting Nazi power. The benefit of a Foucauldian approach is that it states that only by explicit contra-power, i.e. the organization and extrapolation of a specific type of power, total disciplining power can be combated in predictable ways.

48. We should not think in terms of liberation of people, but in terms of positive 'practices of freedom', Foucault says (1988b: 3,4).
49. A link can be seen with the question of 'integration' of (ethnic) minorities. As Kymlicka suggests (1989: 145), destroying a person's minority identity does nothing to further integration in the majority culture. On the contrary, strengthening the minority identity stimulates integration by providing a solid foundation for integration of that identity with strands of the majority culture. In a similar way, immigrant children apparently are apt to obtain a better grasp of the national language when they are allowed to simultaneously learn their parent's mother tongue.
50. Based on a similar English programme.

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